



GP GS

Governance for Public
Goods and Services



Governance for Public Goods and Services

Transforming public institutions
to provide better public goods
and services

A Catalogue of Offers

Introduction

A widening gap exists between citizens' expectations for public goods and services and the ability of public sector institutions to meet those expectations. Around the world, trust in government institutions is declining due to challenges in service delivery, inefficiencies, and outdated systems that do not adequately respond to evolving societal needs. According to the OECD (2024), across 30 countries, the share of people with low or no trust in the national government (44 percent) outweighs the share of those with high or moderately high trust (39 percent). These challenges are further exacerbated by the increasing complexity of governance in a volatile, uncertain and ambiguous (VUCA) world.

The consequences of this gap extend beyond governance concerns—slow progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is in part attributable to the inability of public institutions to act as catalysts for change. The perceived ineffectiveness of institutions also contributes to rising social tensions and instability, especially when state services are unable to meet basic needs. Strengthening institutional capacity and efficiency can therefore be a pathway to stability, better living conditions, and broader socio-economic opportunities.

Addressing these structural issues requires bold and systematic reforms that improve institutional effectiveness, efficiency and adaptability, enabling public administrations to be more responsive to people's needs and expectations. Improved effectiveness and agility—combined with greater inclusiveness and willingness to adopt innovative approaches and practices—can help restore trust and legitimacy in public institutions. To meet the demands of an increasingly complex and fast-changing world, institutions must become more agile, anticipatory, and forward-looking.

Public Sector Transformation

A Strategic Priority

The need to transform the public sector has become increasingly evident across UN Member States, driven by growing demands for more effective, inclusive, and responsive governance.

Amid rapid technological advancements, demographic shifts, and complex geopolitical transitions, countries are increasingly recognizing the urgency of governance reform. This recognition is further reinforced by the limitations exposed during recent global crises—from pandemics to conflicts and climate shocks.

For example, between 2018 and 2022, there was a 57% increase in the number of low- or middle-income countries with high levels of e-government, particularly in delivering services related to business registration, public utility payments, and processing of birth certificates (UN DESA, 2022). Yet, despite these advancements, persistent gaps remain. For example, globally, 850 million people still lack any form of legal identification, limiting their access to basic services and opportunities. Among adults without an ID, approximately one in three report facing challenges in using financial services, accessing government support, applying for jobs, or voting (World Bank, 2023). Recognizing this imperative, the UN launched the High Impact Initiative (HII) on FutureGov in 2023, signaling a renewed global commitment to reimagining how countries design, finance, deliver, and evaluate people-centered public services.

UNDP recognizes that a well-functioning and agile public sector is fundamental to delivering essential services—such as education, health care, social protection, and to manage public goods such as water, biodiversity, air quality, internet and Digital Public Goods in an inclusive and sustainable manner. At UNDP, the Governance for Public Goods and Services (GPGS) team plays a central role in advancing this agenda, bridging the growing divide between citizens' expectations and the capabilities of public administrations to deliver high quality public services.

As governments face increasing pressure to deliver public goods and services effectively, GPGS stands ready to support their transformation efforts. By fostering innovation, strengthening integrity, and promoting inclusive governance, GPGS contributes to building institutions that are fit for the challenges of the 21st century, helping accelerate progress toward the SDGs and fostering trust in public administration worldwide.



The Governance for Public Goods and Services (GPGS) team bridges the gap.



By fostering innovation, promoting integrity, and advancing inclusion.



UNDP supports agile, inclusive, and sustainable public sectors.

The three-pronged approach: Inclusion, Integrity, and Innovation

To support countries in their transformation efforts, GPGS follows the "Three I's" approach, which emphasizes mutually reinforcing interventions across three critical governance dimensions:



Inclusion

Strengthening public sector engagement with society to ensure that governance processes reflect diverse perspectives and respond to the needs of all citizens, particularly marginalized groups. This also entails fostering inclusivity within the public administration itself—by promoting diverse, representative, and equitable civil service institutions that better reflect the populations they serve – and their diverse array of “lived experiences”.

Integrity

Enhancing mechanisms for accountability and transparency to prevent corruption, improve public sector integrity, and foster trust in government institutions.

Innovation

Leveraging emerging technologies—including new digital tools, AI and behavioural science—to modernize public service delivery and improve institutional effectiveness.

By integrating these three dimensions into public sector transformation efforts, GPGS promotes governance models that are people-centered, accountable, and capable of addressing contemporary governance challenges.

GPGS: Enabling institutional transformation for better service delivery

UNDP recognizes that strong, agile, and effective public institutions are critical to delivering essential services—ranging from health care and education to digital public goods and environmental governance. As the lead UN agency on public sector transformation, UNDP—through the GPGS team—offers comprehensive, field-tested, expertise, tools, and networks across regions to support Country Offices and Governments in delivering institutional reforms that are ambitious, inclusive, and results-driven. Backed by a global cadre of governance experts, thematic specialists, and regional advisors, GPGS provides technical expertise, capacity-building support, and policy guidance to help countries transform institutions in key areas:

FOUR KEY AREAS OF GPGS SUPPORT



Legal identity for all



**Transparency and public
sector integrity**



**Agile, innovative, and digital
public institutions**



**Strengthening core
government functions**



Legal Identity for All

GPGS advances digital legal identity systems to improve access to public services and uphold citizens' rights.

UNDP co-chairs the UN Task Force on Legal Identity alongside UN DESA and UNICEF, working to ensure inclusive and secure identity systems.

For example, in **Somalia** and **Namibia**, GPGS supports government partners in strengthening inclusive, secure and interoperable digital legal ID systems—providing technical and policy assistance to facilitate mass registration campaigns, robust data protection systems, and effective coordination across public and private sector stakeholders within the legal ID ecosystem.



Transparency, Anti-Corruption & Public Sector Integrity

GPGS strengthens governance frameworks and institutional mechanisms to mitigate corruption risks and enhance accountability in public institutions and service delivery.

For UNDP, integrity and anti-corruption is a service delivery issue to ensure that all the people have equal rights to basic services like health care, education, transport, utilities – water, electricity. Transparency, anti-corruption and public sector integrity is also a development financing issue given that resources lost to illicit financial flows each year could support targeted investments in governance, social protection, greening the economy, and digitalization. Most importantly, strengthening integrity and anti-corruption is vital for to establish legitimacy of public authorities, advance credibility and build trust in governance and governments.

More recently, UNDP is promoting effective integration of integrity and anti-corruption measures in various development sectors. For example, in **Zimbabwe**, GPGS supports the government in identifying critical integrity risks across the health supply chain and in rolling out mitigation measures to address those risks, so that end-users can receive better quality and more efficient services. In **Mongolia**, UNDP works with national stakeholders to promote greater integrity in the mining sector—including through innovative social accountability tools for improved local environmental governance—leveraging “bottom-up” and community-centric approaches.

From 2021 to 2024 UNDP also supported the Anti-Corruption Innovation Initiative in 11 countries in Africa and Asia—contributing to more transparent and accountable institutions through digital governance and innovative, citizen-centered, approaches. As a result, public institutions are better equipped to enhance internal processes—such as public procurement processes for medical supplies— as well as citizen-facing public services in a wide range of areas, including management of natural resources to access to justice.



Agile, Innovative & Digitalized Public Institutions

GPGS supports countries in adopting innovative tools such as behavioural insights and e-governance solutions to modernize public service delivery.

For example, in **Bhutan**, GPGS supports public institutions in the adoption of more effective approaches to disability inclusion, using an ecosystem-centered model that brings together elected officials, service providers, civil servants and disability inclusion organizations, alongside end-users to better design public services. Such an approach is capitalized to facilitate empathy-building—going beyond the strengthening of technical skill-sets and prompting changes in mindsets—prompting smarter user-centric modalities of delivery, and better-informed infrastructure audits, with a view to enhancing both the accessibility and the quality of critical services for all.

In **Ethiopia**, GPGS is supporting the introduction of new technologies—such as AI—to enhance internal processes within target public institutions. In **Somalia**, applications of behavioural insights are contributing to inform mass registration campaigns under the newly introduced digital Legal ID system.

Strengthening Core Government Functions

GPGS works with countries to enhance institutional capabilities in areas such as executive decision-making at the centre of government, civil service management, local governance, and aid coordination to improve policy implementation and crisis preparedness.

For example, in 2024, support was provided to **Lebanon's** Prime Minister's Office on executive decision-making, policy coherence, and aid coordination.



Integration and Portfolio

Recognizing that Public Service Transformation (PST) requires a “whole-of-society” and “whole-of-government” approach, UNDP applies a multi-nodal strategy that aggregates the expertise and tools of UNDP’s thematic and sectorial teams. At the heart of this strategy, the GPGS team acts as a connector—consistently leveraging the technical expertise and diverse experiences of UNDP teams across BPPS, the Crisis Bureau, Strategic Innovation Unit, the Chief Digital Office, and the Accelerator Labs, the Gender Team, and others.

Building on this foundation, UNDP approaches public sector transformation through a structured and layered portfolio lens.

At the first level, we look at public sector transformation from multiple perspectives and entry points, including strengthening institutions, empowering civil servants, centering people and users, and applying the “Three I’s” approach. The second level focuses on connecting and leveraging impacts and results across our four sub-workstreams, recognizing the synergies among digital legal identity, core government functions, public sector innovation, and anti-corruption. At the third level, we connect the GPGS portfolio with broader UNDP priorities, ensuring that our work contributes meaningfully to advancing gender equality, driving climate action, and fostering inclusive governance.

Collaboration and strategic partnerships

Collaboration is central to GPGS’s approach, encompassing engagement with countries, UNDP Global Teams, Regional Hubs, Country Offices, UN agencies, international financial institutions (IFIs), and other partners. A strong emphasis is placed on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, supporting countries to align their efforts with the SDGs and bringing new partners, including non-DAC countries, into international cooperation frameworks.

GPGS drives public sector transformation through strategic partnerships with actors such as UN DESA, the OECD, the World Bank, and the Astana Civil Service Hub, leveraging their technical expertise, policy guidance, and global networks and fostering knowledge exchange, policy innovation, and technical support on key governance priorities. In particular, GPGS co-leads the FutureGov platform with UN DESA, offering a new space for countries to exchange experiences and shape future governance models.



A High Impact Initiative

A UN High Impact Initiative

Co-led by UNDP and UN DESA, FutureGov is one of 12 UN High Impact Initiatives accelerating SDG progress by strengthening public sector capabilities through Inclusion, Integrity, and Innovation.

Supporting Transformation Journeys

FutureGov helps Member States improve how they design, finance, deliver, and evaluate public services, guiding them through their public sector transformation efforts.

Driving Global Collaboration

The initiative brings together Member States, partners, and experts to exchange experiences, reinforce commitments, and shape future governance models. It aligns strongly with SDG 16, but contributes across all SDGs to promote strong, effective, and responsive governance for the 2030 Agenda.

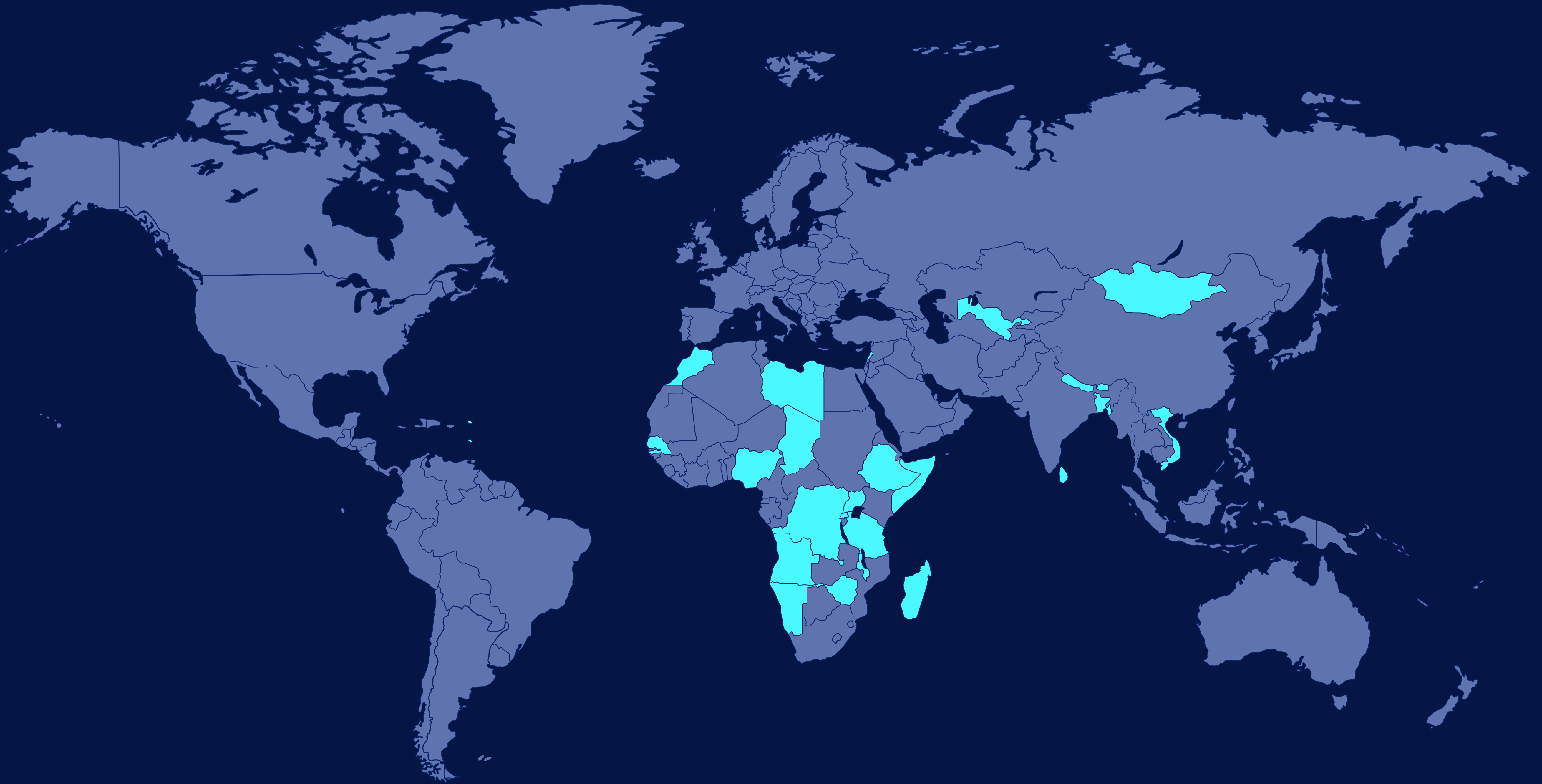
FutureGov is a dynamic initiative designed to support Member States in their transformation journeys to enhance how they design, finance, deliver, and evaluate public services. By convening Member States, partners, and experts—such as during the 21th session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) in 2025 —FutureGov fosters dialogue on the centrality of public sector transformation. It also provides a platform for sharing experiences, building capabilities, and reaffirming collective commitments to more effective and innovative public administration.

At the heart of the FutureGov.org platform is an AI-powered Knowledge Bank, featuring curated resources to help practitioners shape the public administrations of the future. Member States, international organizations, research institutes, and other public and private entities are encouraged to contribute through financial support or in-kind resources such as knowledge products, case studies, tools, and technical expertise.

www.futuregov.org

A network of experience across 20+ countries

On-going and completed projects.



GPGS provides a range of services and resources

As UNDP strengthens its commitment to public sector transformation, GPGS provides a range of services and resources to support Country Offices and Member States:



TOOLS AND TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

A suite of diagnostic frameworks to analyze governance challenges in key areas such as anti-corruption, digital identity, and public administration, along with access to UNDP's in-house tools to address identified challenges.



EXPERT DEPLOYMENT

Identification of governance experts available for technical assistance and capacity-building missions and for the sharing of best practices and lessons learned.



TRAINING AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Specialized training modules to enhance governance capabilities, alongside South-South exchanges to facilitate learning between countries.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

GPGS serves as a connector between Country Offices and key partners—including IFIs, regional organizations, and development agencies—to mobilize resources and technical expertise.



ADVOCACY

GPGS promotes the importance of strong, inclusive, and effective public sectors by supporting global dialogue, sharing knowledge, and raising awareness on the critical role of governance as key for sustainable development.

GPGS TOOLS OFFER

As an integrator, GPGS offers a comprehensive package of tools and services that empower countries to deliver inclusive, transparent, and effective public goods and services.

This offer combines tools developed in-house by the GPGS team with selected tools led by other UNDP teams across the organization. Together, these resources form a cohesive and customizable portfolio that supports a wide range of governance needs, across a wide range of programming contexts. This integrated portfolio ensures tailored, flexible support that meets a range of governance needs—from building strong legal identity systems to reforming public institutions and combating corruption. This is not an exhaustive list of tools; additional tools can be made available upon request, and we would be happy to provide additional information based on specific interests.

STOOLS

TOOLS

Legal Identity

Good governance of digital legal identity is a foundational component of digital public infrastructure (DPI). As countries expand digital ID systems, it is essential that these systems are inclusive, rights-based, and well-governed. UNDP supports partners with the tools and frameworks needed to assess, design, and implement legal ID systems that are transparent, accountable, and human-centric.

UNDP model governance framework for digital legal identity system (in partnership with CDO) – Helps countries assess and design legal ID systems by applying eight governance criteria—from legal safeguards to equality and data protection—to ensure ID systems are accountable, inclusive, and people-centered.

Blockchain-Powered Legal Identity Systems (pipeline – in partnership with CDO) – leveraging blockchain technology to strengthen the reliability of digital legal ID systems in a cost-effective manner.



TOOLS

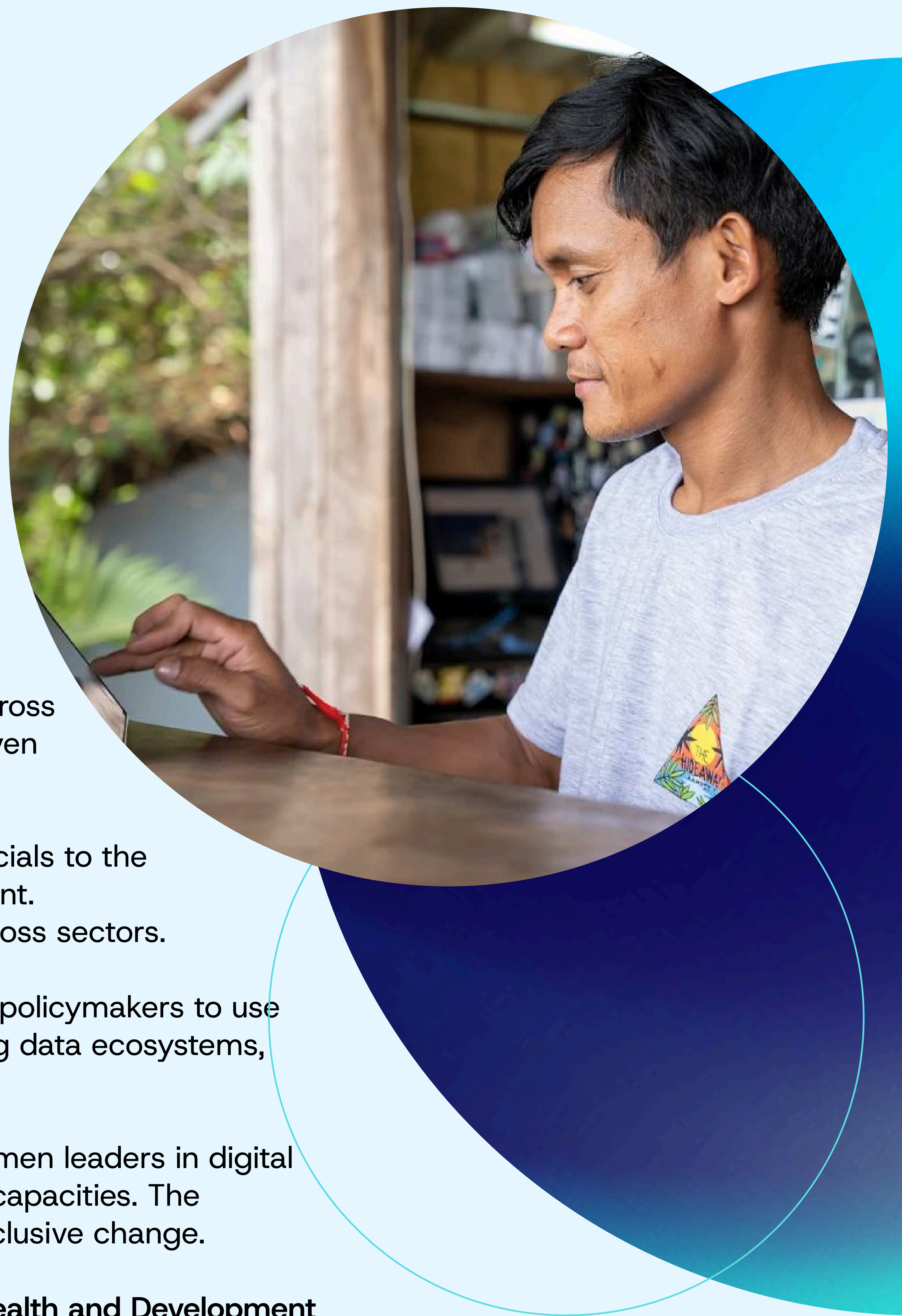
Public Sector Transformation

Public sector transformation is essential to building institutions that are inclusive, responsive, and equipped for the future. UNDP supports countries in advancing public sector transformation by offering tools that assess institutional readiness, promote inclusive design, and mainstream gender and disability considerations—enabling public services that are both innovative and accessible.

- **The “Three I’s” Diagnostic Tool: appraising the future readiness of public administrations** – Helps institutions evaluate and enhance their capacity in inclusion, integrity, and innovation to guide transformation efforts.
- **“Deep Listening”: user-centric design for better public services** – Introduces development practitioners to a people-centered approach through rapid systems mapping and ethnographic research to inform portfolio design.
- **The Collective Intelligence Design Playbook (UNDP-NESTA)** – Enables teams to design collective intelligence projects by combining people, data, and technology to solve complex public challenges.
- **Behavioural insights for civil servants** – Supports public servants in applying behavioural science and its application to public policy and service design.
- **National Innovation Ecosystems (NIEs) Toolkit (in partnership with the Accelerator Lab)** – Helps the Country Offices that are moving to support their government partners in nurturing national innovation ecosystems.
- **System Thinking and Deep Listening** – Build deep listening skills and cross-agency learning aimed at frontline staff for better orchestration of societal assets.
- **Managing Uncertainty for Large Societal Transformations** – Equip ministers and senior leaders with capabilities to navigate uncertainty, create conditions for and incentivize sectoral teams to pursue different ways of working and new policy instruments.
- **Gender Equality Seal for public institutions (in partnership with the Gender team)** – This global certification programme supports public institutions in integrating gender equality across their operations and recognizes excellence with Gold, Silver, or Bronze seals.
- **Reasonable accommodations: advancing a disability empowering agenda in public administration** – Provides training, advisory support, and guidance to help public administrations become more inclusive of persons with disabilities.

STOOL

Public Sector Transformation



Digitalization of Governance

- **Digital For Government (D4G) (in partnership with CDO)** – Equips policymakers with the skills to lead digital transformation across government. The course covers digital public infrastructure, data-driven governance, and inclusive service design.
- **AI For Government (in partnership with CDO)** – Introduces public officials to the fundamentals of AI, its governance, and responsible use in government. Participants learn to design AI policies and collaborate effectively across sectors.
- **Data to Policy (in partnership with CDO)** – Strengthens the ability of policymakers to use data for evidence-informed decisions. The course focuses on building data ecosystems, applying governance frameworks, and ethical use of data.
- **Women Digital Champions Programme (GPGS-CDO)** – Supports women leaders in digital transformation by building their advocacy, leadership, and technical capacities. The programme fosters a network of female digital champions driving inclusive change.
- **Smart Supply Chains – Health Sector (in partnership with the HIV, Health and Development team)** – Supports governments in enhancing transparency and responsiveness in health logistics using digital tools and user-centered design.
- **Digital Solutions Sprint for Government (in partnership with CDO)** – A hands-on training that teaches government officials to design and manage digital solutions using agile and human-centred methods. Participants prototype real services and build digital leadership skills.
- **“Whole-of-Government” Oversight: digital dashboards (in partnership with SIGOB)** – The Integrity and Management Indicators Dashboard (DIG) enables institutions to monitor transparency, performance, and resource management.

Governance of Digitalization

- **UNDP Model Governance Framework for Digital Legal Identity System (in partnership with CDO)** – A framework to guide multi-stakeholder governance approaches to digital identity, ensuring alignment with rights-based standards.
- **Governance of Data Exchange Systems (in partnership with CDO)** – This assessment framework appraises national data exchange systems to ensure they are inclusive, secure, and aligned with sustainable development objectives.
- **Leadership programme for women involved in digitalisation of public services (in partnership with CDO)** – supports women leaders in the field of state digital transformation.

TOOLS

Core Government Functions



Core government functions—such as executive decision-making, civil service management, and local governance—form the backbone of state capacity. In fragile and crisis settings, UNDP provides critical advisory and technical support to restore and strengthen these functions to ensure responsive, resilient, and inclusive governance.

Advisory services, technical assistance and assessment of core government functions in crisis settings – UNDP supports countries in crisis-affected contexts to assess and strengthen key government capacities, including aid coordination, executive management, and civil service reform.

- **(Re)building core government functions in fragile and conflict-affected settings** – This diagnostic provides guidance on identifying priorities and actions to re-establish governance structures in post-conflict environments during the first three years of recovery.
- **Strengthening centres of government in fragile and conflict-affected settings** – This guidance note supports the design of interventions to enhance strategic management, coordination, and coherence at the centre of government.
- **Supporting civil service restoration and reform in fragile and conflict-affected settings** – This tool provides practical advice and frameworks for restoring or reforming civil services in fragile settings to re-establish government functionality.
- **Local governance in fragile and conflict-affected settings** – Helps programme teams navigate the complexities of supporting local governance in high-risk environments, with a focus on resilience and peacebuilding.

Advisory Services, Technical Assistance and Capacity Building on Political Economy Analysis – Targeted support to integrate political economy analysis into programming, ensuring context-sensitive approaches to governance challenges.

- **Political economy analysis masterclass** – This hands-on course builds capacity for understanding and applying political economy insights in policy design and implementation.
- **Institutional and context analysis for the SDGs** – This tool aids stakeholders in identifying institutional and political dynamics that can accelerate or hinder SDG implementation.

STOOL

TOOLS

Integrity & Anti-corruption



Integrity is essential for building trust and ensuring the effective delivery of public services. UNDP seeks to strengthen governance mechanisms, systems, and institutions to help address integrity risks—including risks of corruption. By helping advance the agenda for greater transparency and accountability, including corruption measurement, UNDP also contributes to improving the way public goods and services are delivered.

- **Direct and dedicated advisory support on anti-corruption:** Working together with UNODC and other relevant partners, UNDP's global integrity and anti-corruption team provides support to develop, revise, and implement national integrity and anti-corruption legal frameworks (e.g., anti-corruption laws, anti-corruption and integrity policies, and strategies), and strengthen the capacity of key anti-corruption institutions to monitor service delivery, procurement and other processes to prevent corruption.
- **Promoting the use of integrity and anti-corruption tools to identify red flags and integrity risks in public service delivery (health, education, water):** UNDP's global integrity and anti-corruption team, working together with UNDP Health Team, UNESCO, UNODC, and other partners, has produced several tools to assess corruption risks, develop and implement risk mitigation plans to integrate anti-corruption in service delivery sectors and also provides support to establishing effective corruption reporting mechanisms online and grievance handling systems.
- **Tailored policy and programme support to integrate anti-corruption in emerging areas of development, such as climate change and economic governance:** Building on an integrated approach, a tailored policy and programme support is also provided to mitigate corruption risks in climate, energy transition, biodiversity and environmental programmes and strengthen anti-corruption building blocks (e.g., procurement integrity, business integrity, beneficial ownership transparency, tax and fiscal transparency, etc.) in economic governance.
- **Support to improving corruption measurement, data and statistics:** As part of the Governance, Rule of Law and Peacebuilding (GRP) Hub, UNDP has launched a "Global Initiative on Measuring Corruption" to help countries develop evidenced-based indicators at the country level to evaluate progress and on anti-corruption. The global integrity and anti-corruption team provides methodologies, data and indicators as well as tailored-made training to to measure the extent of corruption and evaluate the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts.

TOOLS



Partner with UNDP's GPGS Team

to strengthen institutions, enhance the delivery of better public services, and advance inclusive governance for all.

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