

OECD Training Centre on
Public Governance

Towards more inclusive public governance and sustainable development in Africa and MENA

High-Level Forum

6-7 May 2024

Caserta, Italy

SUMMARY NOTE

Context and objectives

The **High-Level Forum “Towards more inclusive public governance and sustainable development in Africa and MENA”** was held on 6-7 May 2024 at the OECD Training Centre on Public Governance in Caserta, Italy. The event provided an opportunity for participants to share experiences, views and good practices on public governance arrangements for inclusive and sustainable development as well as to identify priority areas for further action. Thematic sections focused on infrastructure and public procurement; the role of schools of government in strengthening administrative capacity; green governance; and public governance trends in Africa and MENA. The event also marked the **10th Anniversary of the Centre**, whose activities and regional scope have been scaled up since December 2022, providing an opportunity to reflect on its achievements, renewed strategic priorities and lessons learnt from its experience working with MENA.

The event, organised by the OECD and the SNA together with Italy’s Department for Public Administration and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, brought together **36 participants from 12 countries and 6 regional/international organisations** (see Annexes I and II for list of participants and final agenda). The event built upon the outcomes of the Italy-Africa Summit (28-29 January 2024) and was aligned with Italy’s “Mattei Plan” and its G7 Presidency as well as with the Africa-OECD Partnership and the substantive expertise of the OECD Public Governance Committee.



Participants, peers, OECD and SNA staff at the event in the OECD Training Centre on Public Governance

Indications of impact

At the end of the event, in-person participants were invited to complete a short evaluation survey:

- 90% of respondents were "very satisfied" with the activity
- All respondents thought the activity met its objectives and improved their knowledge
- 82% of respondents thought the activity improved their skills
- 82% of respondents reported being likely to establish relations with the other participants thanks to the activity, with the remaining 18% reporting being “somewhat likely” to do so

Key take-aways

Governance for inclusive and sustainable development

In the high-level opening, speakers from the **Italian National School of Administration (SNA)**, the **Government of Italy**, the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**, **Somalia**, the **International Renewable Energy Agency** and the **European Investment Bank** underlined key priorities to strengthen public governance for inclusive and sustainable development and shared insights on co-operation in this area.

- Governments can consolidate efforts to fight corruption, promote transparency and accountability, strengthen the rule of law and ensure better regulatory frameworks to promote development and deliver prosperity in the context of global challenges.
- Governments can promote inclusiveness by cooperating with civil society organisations and citizens in transparency initiatives, involving people in decision-making processes, taking into account considerations of inclusiveness in the delivery of public services and providing better opportunities for women, young people and vulnerable groups.
- Stronger public governance and institutional capacity are necessary to take advantage of the opportunities offered by transition to renewable energy as well as to mobilise private sector funding in promoting local development.
- Education and training, health, agriculture and food security, management of natural resources, public infrastructure and support to youth and women are key areas for promoting inclusive and sustainable development.
- Success in the implementation of policies and services relies on a strong public administration, which is reactive to global challenges and transitions, equipped with the right technical skills and competences, also considering the opportunities and risks emerging from the spread of Artificial Intelligence.
- Strengthening policy dialogue, peer-learning and joint training activities can allow public administrations to adopt similar standards and approaches, build institutional capacity and accelerate progress.
- Collaboration between OECD Member Countries and African countries is at a pivotal moment, as demonstrated by the Africa-OECD Partnership as well as Italy's "Mattei Plan."



Forum's high-level opening remarks

Public Governance Responses that Support Infrastructure Development and Public Procurement: Towards Enhanced Administrative Capacity and Investment

In this session, speakers from **the African Union, the OECD, Ghana, Italy, Egypt and SNA** as well as participants shared priorities, good practices and lessons learnt on public procurement and infrastructure development.

- The African Union's Agenda 2063 prioritises continental efforts to accelerate and integrate infrastructure development to ensure affordable and reliable infrastructure that is accessible to everyone, including in terms of potable water, energy and electricity, ICT connectivity and transportation.
- The way governments procure goods, services and infrastructure impact public service delivery and can make a difference to promote sustainability and inclusiveness. For instance, public procurement represents 13% of GDP across OECD countries on average and it represents 20-30% of GDP in Africa, 18-25% of GDP in Ghana.
- Governments can integrate strategic outcomes, including innovation, social and environmental considerations in their procurement processes and in infrastructure decision-making and delivery. Urban-rural divides and gender equality considerations are particularly important elements to take into account to promote inclusiveness.
- Electronic procurement systems can generate better outcomes, but effective governance approaches are needed to avoid potential pitfalls in implementation and uptake across government entities.
- Tackling corruption, simplifying administrative procedures, equipping a central authority with adequate mandate and promoting the digitalisation of processes can enhance existing efforts.
- Gathering lessons learnt, exchanging experiences (including South-South peer-learning) and developing joint trainings (including for young practitioners, civil servants and senior decision makers) can support the dissemination of shared principles, the convergence of regulatory systems, the harmonisation of administrative practices and the professionalisation of the workforce.



Keynote message by H.E. Amani Abou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission



Ghana presenting on public procurement and infrastructure

Reinforcing Administrative Capacity and Public Sector Innovation to be Future-Proof: The Role of Schools of Government

In this session, speakers from **Somalia, the United Arab Emirates, the SNA and South Africa** as well as participants discussed the role of schools of government in reinforcing administrative capacity and

shared their practices and priorities.

- Public sector innovation and strong administrative capacities are key to ensure public administrations remain efficient, effective and responsive to citizens' evolving needs in the context of demographic trends, the digital and green transitions and inclusion efforts.
- Schools of Government have a key role in fostering leadership and building capacities in the civil service through educational and training activities. They can also support public administrations by generating evidence, designing competency frameworks, providing platforms for dialogue and fostering partnerships.
- Attracting, training and retaining young people in the civil service is a key area of work for Schools of Government, which can also enable intergenerational learning between older and young civil servants to maximise peer-learning and avoid loss of institutional knowledge.
- Artificial Intelligence poses opportunities and risks: schools of government can use AI to boost the training activities, while also strengthening their training activities on the use of AI in the public sector.
- More attention can be paid to reinforcing administrative capacities of local government authorities as well as to ensuring access to public sector jobs for people with disabilities.

Steering Government Action for Governing Green in the next Decade

In this session, speakers from **the OECD, Ethiopia, Estonia and Morocco** as well as participants exchanged views on public governance approaches and priorities to strengthen whole-of-government approaches in tackling the green transition.



Ethiopia presenting on green governance

- The climate crisis poses a major challenge for all governments, requiring adequate decision-making processes to steer government action and strong public administration to deliver on commitments, advancing development while protecting the environment.
- Countries are taking different approaches in steering government action on climate change, for instance by giving a leading mandate to the Centre of Government or to “super ministries of environment” to secure strategic and joint approaches.
- Open, transparent and regular communication is key to build trust between the lead government entity and line ministries.
- The public administration should lead by example, for instance setting internal climate and emissions targets for the public sector.
- A clear strategic vision, an effective public administration and the digitalisation and “greening” of public services and public procurement can help deliver on climate goals.

Perspectives on Public Governance in Africa, and the Role of the OECD's Africa Governance Platform

In this session, speakers from **the OECD, Tunisia, Nigeria, the African Capacity Building Foundation, the African Association for Public Administration and Management, the African Union New Partnership for Africa's Development and the African Development Bank** as well as participants

shared perspectives and priorities on governance challenges and opportunities in MENA and Africa.

- The OECD presented its African Governance Platform (AGP) that will facilitate policy dialogue and constructive engagement on governance between African and OECD governments, leveraging on the experience of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme. It will help advance reforms and strategic priorities, and create the space for the dissemination of good governance practices.
- The MENA-OECD Governance Programme can offer inspiration as a platform that has enabled MENA governments in advancing public sector reforms in line with their priorities and international standards through peer-to-peer learning, policy dialogue, peer reviews and targeted bilateral support.
- Regional institutions shared their priorities and on-going initiatives to strengthen public administrations in Africa and stressed the importance of comprehensive and complementary support from across multilateral and international organisations.
- The current context in many African countries that are experiencing democratic backsliding underscores the importance of such platforms for exchange where lesson learning and knowledge sharing can help influence decision makers and shape policies.
- Investing in building the capacity of the public servants is central to ensuring effective transparent and accountable public institutions, that are trusted by citizens. The wider link between good governance and investment also needs to be reiterated.
- Priority areas on public governance were shared including on governance for prosperity, institution-building and resilience in the context of fragilities, public sector effectiveness, inclusive and accountable governance, public financial management, social inequalities, climate change, youth empowerment, gender equality and support for vulnerable groups (including people with disabilities, elderly and refugees).



Nigeria presenting on public governance in Africa

Way forward

The High-Level Forum identified priorities and next steps for future action of the OECD Centre on Public Governance and co-operation between the OECD, MENA and African countries. In the wrap-up session on the first day, the **Chair of the OECD Public Governance Committee (United States)** outlined the role played by the Public Governance Committee in exchanging practices, information and evidence and emphasised its role in disseminating governance standards through global outreach, including through the upcoming OECD Global Forum on Building Trust and Reinforcing Democracy (taking place in Milan, Italy, on 21-22 October 2024). **Italy** underlined the importance of international cooperation and policy dialogue in addressing global



Italy outlining conclusions of Day 1



Chair of the OECD Public Governance Committee outlining conclusions of Day 1

challenges and emphasised the role of the Centre in building strong and accountable public institutions in Partner countries.

During the course of the High-Level Forum and in the closing session on the way forward, speakers and participants:

- **Called** for the OECD to continue creating synergies with existing efforts of African regional institutions and strengthen platforms for policy dialogue and peer-learning on public governance, building a community of practice, including across regions of the world (notably MENA and Africa).
- **Highlighted** the importance of exchanging good practices, generating and disseminating new evidence as well as promoting activities for capacity-building on a wide array of governance areas, underlying the value-added of a broad, coherent and encompassing approach.
- **Emphasised** the important role of the OECD Training Centre on Public Governance in building capacities in public administrations of MENA and African countries, including through activities delivered “on the ground”.

Annex I: List of Participants

Name	Position	Institution	Country	Attendance
Ambassador Ashraf Rashed	Advisor to the President	Central Agency for Organization and Administration	Egypt	In-person
Keit Kasemets	Secretary General	Ministry of Climate	Estonia	Virtual
Semegne Wube Haile	Deputy Commissioner	Civil Service Commission	Ethiopia	In-person
Victor Kwame Agyeman	Chairman	Public Services Commission	Ghana	In-person
H.E. Mr. Paolo Zangrillo	Minister for Public Administration	Prime Minister's Office	Italy	Virtual
Professor Paola Severino	President	National School of Administration	Italy	In-person
Lucia Pasqualini	Counsellor	Italian Task Force for the execution of the Mattei Plan for Africa, Prime Minister's Office	Italy	In-person
Martin Lorenzini	Head of Office I	Directorate General for Global Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation	Italy	In-person
Francesco Leone	Diplomatic Advisor to the Minister for Public Administration	Prime Minister's Office	Italy	In-person
Raffaella Campanati	Counsellor	Permanent delegation of Italy to the OECD	Italy	In-person
Gian Luigi Albano	Head of Research	Consip S.p.A.	Italy	Virtual
Marco Macchia	Professor	National School of Administration	Italy	In-person
Dr. Sabrina Bandera	Coordinator of the Service for Research, Innovation and Strategy	National School of Administration	Italy	Virtual

Ikram Himmi	Director for the Organisation of the Administration	Ministry of Digital Transition and Administration Reform	Morocco	In-person
Dapo Oyewole	Senior Special Assistant to the President on International Cooperation	President's Office	Nigeria	In-person
H.E. Yusuf Mohamed Adam	State Minister of Labour and Social Affairs	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Somalia	In-person
Ahmed Hassan Ismail	Senior Advisor	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Somalia	In-person
Edmond Mudau	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist	National School of Government	South Africa	In-person
Slim Ben Jrad	Public Services Advisor and General Director of Governance and Prevention of Corruption	Presidency of the Government	Tunisia	In-person
H.E. Ali Bin Sebaa Al Marri	Executive President	Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government	United Arab Emirates	In-person
Fadi Salem	Director of Research and Advisory	Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government	United Arab Emirates	In-person
Dustin Brown	Chair of the OECD Public Governance Committee and Chief of Staff	Social Security Administration	United States of America	Virtual
H.E. Amani Abou-Zeid	Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy	African Union Commission	N/A	Virtual
Francesco La Camera	Director-General	International Renewable Energy Agency	N/A	Virtual
Gelsomina Vigliotti	Vice President	European Investment Bank	N/A	Virtual
Mamadou Biteye	Executive Director	African Capacity Building Foundation	N/A	In-person
George Scott	Secretary General	African Association for Public Administration and Management	N/A	In-person
Daphine Muzawazi	Head of Institutional Development Unit	New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), African Union	N/A	In-person
Carina Sugden	Chief Governance Officer	African Development Bank	N/A	Virtual
Fabrizia Lapecorella	Deputy Secretary-General	OECD	N/A	In-person
Gillian Dorner	Deputy Director	OECD Public Governance Directorate	N/A	Virtual
Ambassador Massimo Gaiani	Executive Director	OECD Training Centre on Public Governance	N/A	In-person
Paulo Magina	Acting Head of the Infrastructure and Public Procurement Division	OECD Public Governance Directorate	N/A	In-person
Dag Strømsnes	Senior Policy Advisor	OECD Public Governance Directorate	N/A	In-person
Tonaina Ngororano	Policy Analyst	OECD Public Governance Directorate	N/A	In-person
Pietro Gagliardi	Policy Analyst	OECD Public Governance Directorate	N/A	In-person

Annex II: Final Agenda

Day 1 - Monday, 6 May 2024

Master of Ceremony: Ambassador Massimo Gaiani, Executive Director of the OECD Training Centre on Public Governance

10:30 – 12:00	High-Level Opening
	Welcome remarks • H.E. Mr. Paolo Zangrillo, Minister for Public Administration, Italy (virtual) • Professor Paola Severino, President, National School of Administration, Italy • Ms. Fabrizia Lapecorella, Deputy Secretary-General, OECD High-level addresses • H.E. Yusuf Mohamed Adam, State Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Somalia • Mr. Francesco La Camera, Director-General, International Renewable Energy Agency (virtual) • Ms. Gelsomina Vigliotti, Vice President, European Investment Bank (virtual) • Ms. Gillian Dorner, Deputy Director, Public Governance Directorate, OECD • Ms. Lucia Pasqualini, Counsellor, Italian Task Force for the execution of the Mattei Plan for Africa, Prime Minister's Office, Italy
12:00 – 13:30	Session 1 – Public Governance Responses that Support Infrastructure Development and Public Procurement: Towards Enhanced Administrative Capacity and Investment
	This session will focus on ways in which governments can leverage existing governance tools, such as infrastructure planning procedures and public procurement practices to improve public governance and development outcomes. Keynote message: H.E. Amani Abou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission (video message) • Paulo Magina, Deputy Head of the Infrastructure and Public Procurement Division, OECD Public Governance Directorate (moderator)

- **Victor Kwame Agyeman**, Chairman, Public Services Commission, Ghana
- **Gian Luigi Albano**, Head of Research, Consip S.p.A., Italy (virtual)
- **Ambassador Ashraf Rashed**, Advisor to the President, Central Agency for Organization and Administration, Egypt
- **Professor Marco Macchia**, National School of Administration, Italy

Roundtable discussion: participants will be invited to reflect on the following questions

1. *Why public procurement and infrastructure governance matter for citizens?*
2. *What are the main challenges your country is facing in these areas?*
3. *How to improve the capacity and capabilities of staff involved in public procurement and infrastructure implementation? Are you applying some of the tools and frameworks just presented?*

13:30 – 15:30

Lunch Break

15:30 – 16:45

Session 2 – Reinforcing Administrative Capacity and Public Sector Innovation to be Future-Proof: The Role of Schools of Government

This session will explore the role of Schools of Government in ensuring institutions are future-proof. Participants will explore capabilities required by the public service to execute ideas that are innovative, facilitate digitalisation, promote inclusion, and ensure strategic foresight. The session will draw on experiences of governments represented, as well as OECD's role in supporting public institutions for this purpose.

- **H.E. Yusuf Mohamed Adam**, State Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Somalia
- **H.E. Ali Bin Sebaa Al Marri**, Executive President, Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, United Arab Emirates
- **Dr. Sabrina Bandera**, Coordinator of the Service for Research, Innovation and Strategy, National School of Administration, Italy (virtual)
- **Edmond Mudau**, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, National School of Government, South Africa

Roundtable discussion: participants will be invited to reflect on the following questions

1. *How can innovation in the public sector promote inclusiveness and sustainability?*
2. *What administrative capacities are required for public officials to execute innovative ideas and ensure positive impact on people's outcomes?*
3. *How has digitalisation impacted and/or transformed the way your institution operates?*
4. *What role do you see for Schools of Government in ensuring institutions are future-proof and have adequate capabilities? For ministries, how do you work with Schools of Government to ensure that your priorities and objectives are aligned?*

16:45 – 17:00 **Wrap up and Conclusions**

- **Dustin Brown**, Chair of the OECD Public Governance Committee and Chief of Staff, Social Security Administration, United States (virtual)
- **Martin Lorenzini**, Head of Office I, Directorate General for Global Affairs,

Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Italy

17:15 – 17:30	Group Picture
17:30 – 18:15	Tour of Caserta Castle
19:30 – 21:00	Reception and Dinner

Day 2 - Tuesday, 7 May 2024

Master of Ceremony: Ambassador Massimo Gaiani, Executive Director of the OECD Training Centre on Public Governance

10:00 - 11:30	Session 3 – Steering Government Action for Governing Green in the next Decade The session will focus on the interconnection between public governance and climate action, and how the former can contribute to the latter. Speakers will discuss good practices and know-how in the civil service and advise on how to best engage public officials from Centres of Government and other relevant governmental entities. • Dag Strømsnes, Infrastructure and Public Procurement Division, OECD Public Governance Directorate (moderator) • Semegne Wube Haile, Deputy Commissioner, Civil Service Commission, Ethiopia • Keit Kasemets, Secretary General, Ministry of Climate, Estonia (virtual) • Ikram Himmi, Director for the Organisation of the Administration, Ministry of Digital Transition and Administration Reform, Morocco <i>Roundtable discussion: participants will be invited to reflect on the following questions</i> 1. <i>The Centre of the government (CoG) has a crucial role in securing strategic and coherent approaches on climate objectives throughout the government and ministries. How to build a trusted relationship between the CoG, the political-administrative sphere and line ministries?</i> 2. <i>Based on your experience, in which areas do governments face the biggest challenges in terms of capacities to lead in the green transition?</i> 3. <i>It is essential to measure the impact of different tools and approaches for the green transition. What are good practices, experiences and challenges in this area?</i>
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee Break
12:00 – 13:30	Session 4 - Perspectives on Public Governance in Africa, and the Role of the OECD's Africa Governance Platform

This session will explore the evolving landscape of public governance in Africa and introduce the role of the OECD's Africa Governance Platform. It will also provide some insights and lessons learnt from the MENA-OECD Governance Programme. Regional institutions will then share perspectives on the governance challenges and opportunities that they observe, and their respective approaches to strengthening public sector institutions and societal resilience.

- **Tonaina Ngororano**, Policy Analyst, Governance Reviews and Partnerships Division, OECD Public Governance Directorate (moderator)
- **Slim Ben Jrad**, Public Services Advisor and General Director of Governance and Prevention of Corruption, Presidency of the Government, Tunisia
- **Mamadou Biteye**, Executive Director, African Capacity Building Foundation
- **George Scott**, Secretary General, African Association for Public Administration and Management
- **Dapo Oyewole**, Senior Special Assistant to the President on International Cooperation, President's Office, Nigeria
- **Daphine Muzawazi**, Head of Institutional Development Unit, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), African Union
- **Carina Sugden**, Chief Governance Officer, African Development Bank (virtual)

Roundtable discussion: participants will be invited to reflect on the following questions

1. *What key public governance challenges and opportunities do you see as the most prominent in Africa?*
2. *What are your priorities in your respective institution, and to what extent does your mandate contribute towards strengthening public sector institutions and supporting societal resilience?*
3. *How best do you think the OECD could complement your ongoing efforts to enhance good governance across the public sector in Africa?*

13:30 – 14:00

Way Forward and Next Steps

- **Gillian Dorner**, Deputy Director, Public Governance Directorate, OECD
- **Francesco Leone**, Diplomatic Advisor to the Minister for Public Administration, Italy

14:00 – 16:00

Lunch

Departures (7th and 8th)

The OECD

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international body that promotes policies to improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world. It is made up of 38 member countries, a secretariat in Paris, and a committee, drawn from experts from government and other fields, for each work area covered by the Organisation. The OECD provides a forum in which governments can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems. We collaborate with governments to understand what drives economic, social and environmental change. We measure productivity and global flows of trade and investment.

The MENA-OECD Governance Programme

The [MENA-OECD Governance Programme](#) is a strategic partnership between MENA and OECD countries to share knowledge and expertise, with a view of disseminating standards and principles of good governance that support the ongoing process of reform in the MENA region. The Programme strengthens collaboration with the most relevant multilateral initiatives currently underway in the region.

The Programme acts as a leading advocate of managing ongoing public governance reforms in the MENA region. The Programme provides a sustainable structure for regional policy dialogue as well as for country specific projects. These projects correspond to the commitment of MENA governments to implement public sector reforms in view of unlocking social and economic development and of meeting citizens' growing expectations in terms of quality services, inclusive policy making and transparency.

The OECD Training Centre on Public Governance in Caserta is hosted and supported by the Government of Italy, notably through the Italian National School of Administration (SNA), Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and Italy's Department for Public Administration. The Centre supports the Programme in developing and conducting capacity-building activities aimed at public officials in order to pursue efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector and good governance.

Suggested Background Readings

Infrastructure and Public Procurement

- [OECD Public Procurement Recommendation \(2015\)](#)
- [OECD Public Procurement Toolbox \(updated 2023\)](#)
- [OECD Recommendation on the Governance of Infrastructure \(2020\)](#)
- [Infrastructure Governance Toolkit and Indicators](#) (updated 2024)

Public Employment and Management

- [Recommendation of the Council on Public Service Leadership and Capability](#), OECD/LEGAL/0445
- OECD (2021), [“Public Employment and Management 2021: The Future of the Public Service”](#)
- OECD (2017), [“Skills for a High Performing Civil Service”](#)

OECD standard and work on women’s leadership in public life

- [OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life](#), OECD/LEGAL/0418

MENA-OECD Governance Programme

- [2021 MENA-OECD Ministerial Declaration](#)
- [Brochure on regional networks and programme of work](#)
- [Activity Report 2019-2020 and Programme of Work](#)

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