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Intergouvernementale
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*Au service de l'innovation,
de la modernisation et de la
construction d'administrations pour
une Gouvernance Publique
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**Pan African
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CAFRAD

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Summary of the Concept Note

16th Pan-African Ministerial Forum on the Modernization of Public Administration and State Institutions
Theme: The Role of Leadership in Implementing Responsible Public Governance to Advance the SDGs and Foster the Emergence of African Nations

The 16th Pan-African Ministerial Forum, organized by the African Centre for Administrative Training and Research for Development (CAFRAD), highlights the critical importance of leadership in modernizing public administrations and implementing responsible governance. This initiative aligns with the pursuit of structural and sustainable transformation across Africa— independent, inclusive, and aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This forum builds on international commitments like the UN's "Pact for a Better Future" adopted in September 2024, as well as the African Union's Agenda 2063, which envisions an integrated, prosperous, peaceful Africa led by its own citizens. It also draws inspiration from King Mohammed VI's vision of strengthening South-South cooperation, African solidarity, and collective resource management.

Despite notable economic growth, Africa has yet to launch deep structural transformation. Weak administrative systems, outdated educational models,

and governance frameworks that do not match current global challenges persist. Africa also faces climate change, energy transition, resource scarcity, inequality, and rapid urbanization. These realities call for a new development paradigm centered on people, ethics, the environment, and innovation.

The document retraces the evolution of sustainable development—from global environmental summits and the Paris Agreement to key UN initiatives such as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. It underlines that implementing the 17 SDGs requires a systemic, cross-sectoral, and inclusive approach, built around people, prosperity, planet, peace, and partnerships.

Education, training, and capacity-building are identified as pillars of this transformation. The goal is to develop leaders capable of navigating a complex and evolving world, mastering new economic models (green, digital, circular, social, and solidarity economies), while embracing responsibility, resilience, and solidarity.

In conclusion, the forum calls for collective awakening and profound reform of African public institutions. It advocates renewed leadership—visionary and action-oriented—to meet the aspirations of African peoples and elevate Africa's role on the global stage. Achieving the SDGs depends on transformed governance, reimagined education, and strengthened continental cooperation.

Problem Statement of the 16th Pan-African Ministerial Forum

With just five years remaining before the 2030 deadline, Africa is significantly behind in SDG implementation. Fewer than 6% of measurable targets are currently on track. Several key objectives—such as ending poverty (SDG 1), achieving food security (SDG 2), addressing climate change (SDG 13), and strengthening governance (SDG 16)—are regressing. A lack of resources, conflicts, structural inequality, inadequate data, and a deep leadership and governance crisis are major impediments.

In a global environment marked by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, and paradox—amid digital transformation, AI, geopolitical tension, and environmental challenges—it is vital to redefine leadership. Achieving sustainable development and responsible public governance demands visionary, ethical, agile, participatory, and transformational leadership capable of uniting institutions and citizens around a shared ambition for Africa's emergence.

General Objective of the Forum

The Forum aims to strengthen the capacities of African decision-makers by equipping them with conceptual, strategic, and operational tools needed to drive responsible public governance and accelerate the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda (SDGs) and the AU Agenda 2063. It seeks to cultivate a new generation of bold, clear-eyed, transformational African leaders capable of driving structural reforms and modernizing public administrations with a focus on inclusive sustainable development.

Specific Objectives

By the end of the Forum, participants will be able to:

- Master the fundamentals, stakes, and tools for sustainable development implementation in Africa.
- Understand new development approaches in complex, changing environments.
- Recognize the central role of ethical, agile, and transformational leadership in development governance.
- Develop soft skills (social, emotional, interpersonal, cognitive) essential for driving change.
- Embrace a leadership style that mobilizes stakeholders and supports responsible governance and co-creation of public policy.
- Identify barriers and enablers for effective SDG implementation within public institutions.
- Propose practical, innovative solutions to overcome obstacles and accelerate progress.
- Design and manage policy and project frameworks related to SDGs and Agenda 2063.
- Promote transparent, inclusive, dialogue-based public governance.

FORUM AGENDA

Central Theme: Leadership, responsible public governance, and institutional transformation for accelerating SDG and Agenda 2063 implementation in Africa.

Introduction

- Official welcome and forum opening
- Session 0: Opening remarks by the Chairperson of the Board

Session 1: SDGs as Instruments for Modernizing Public Administration

Discussion on the concept, evolution, and implementation tools of sustainable development in Africa—emphasizing key performance metrics, identifying institutional challenges, and recognizing success factors in public administrations.

Session 2: Agile, Environmental, and Sustainable Leadership

Exploration of agile leadership principles—acting as team coach, client interface, and change enabler—to guide public institutions toward SDG-driven reform.

Session 3: Digital Transformation and AI for Sustainable Development

Highlighting the role of digital governance, emerging technologies, AI, data analytics, and digital infrastructure in enhancing transparency, service delivery, civic participation, and efficiency via smart government solutions.

Session 4: Transformational Leadership and SDG Governance

Focus on transformational leadership and institutional reform to improve global governance of SDGs. The OQADD tool will be introduced as a public policy assessment framework. The role of local authorities, communities, and citizens in governance will also be highlighted.

Session 5: Green Public Finance

Examination of the state's strategic role in promoting responsible, modern, results-driven public finance systems, with examples from African countries implementing performance and transparency reforms.

Session 6: Innovative Financing Mechanisms for Sustainable Development

Review of existing financing models (Green Climate Fund, GEF, etc.) and exploration of innovations such as green taxation, sustainable procurement, carbon finance, eco-bursaries, and PPPs to support sustainable projects.

Session 7: Ecological, Economic, and Inclusive Transformation

Analysis of alternative development models—green, circular, blue, social and solidarity economies; green industrialization; sustainable agriculture; ecotourism; responsible mobility—all aimed at balancing economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental preservation.

Session 8: Global Public Performance Management

Examining government roles in strategic public policy steering through **New Public Management**, results-based management, public expenditure quality, and managerial responsibility frameworks.

Session 9: Exchange of Best Practices

Each minister and delegate will share country experiences on implementing SDGs and Agenda 2063, creating opportunities for peer learning and mutual support.

Conclusion

- Presentation and adoption of final recommendations by Ministers
- Development of a shared roadmap for 2025–2030

Target Audience

Ministers, ambassadors, senior African public officials, business leaders, diplomats, representatives of public administrations, and technical and financial partners.

Methodology

The Forum employs a participatory, inclusive, and interactive approach based on:

- Sharing real-world case studies and experiences
- Debates following the Chatham House Rule to encourage open and confidential discussion
- Collaborative workshops designed to co-create solutions