

# UNITED NATIONS PROJECT OFFICE ON GOVERNANCE

## ACTIVITY BRIEF

### ***“The Impact of the Challenging Economic Times on Local Governments: Strategies on Coping with the Economic Crisis”***

UNPOG-Organized Plenary Session during the MOPAS/COTI/EROPA  
Conference on “Public Governance in Challenging Economic Times”  
19-23 October 2009; Seoul, Republic of Korea

The Ministry of Public Administration and Security (MOPAS) of the Republic of Korea, through its Central Officials Training Institute, and the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA) will organize the 22<sup>nd</sup> EROPA General Assembly and Conference on “Public Governance on Challenging Economic Times” on 19-23 October 2009 in Seoul, Republic of Korea.

The Conference seeks to examine how the world economic crisis impacts on public administration systems around the world, and to formulate appropriate governance strategies and approaches that can help mitigate the impact of the crisis. Specific attention is also being given to the role of human resource development in combating economic challenges and sharing innovative strategies and approaches among stakeholders.

The Conference will address the following themes and sub-themes<sup>1</sup>:

- a. *Theme A: Reforming institutions and enhancing human resource development in a period of economic downturn: rethinking the role of government as a catalyst for reform*
  - *Public Sector Reform in Challenging Economic Times*
  - *What Can and Should Governments Do to Make Financial Institutions Work Better: Experiences and Lessons*
  - *Addressing Economic Recessions Through Human Resource Development*
- b. *Theme B: Strategic human resource development in an era of green growth: sustainable human resources for environmentally sustainable economic growth*
  - *Addressing the Economic Challenge: Creating Opportunities through "Green Growth"*
  - *Strategic Human Resource Development in an Era of "Green Growth"*
  - *Climate Change and Global Warming: Partnerships for Effective "Green*

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<sup>1</sup> Please visit <http://eropa2009.coti.go.kr> for more details on Conference themes and sub-themes.

### *Growth" Strategies*

- c. *Theme C: Migration and development: utilizing global labor forces in combating economic recessions*
  - *Migration and the Global Labor Forces: Teaching Migrant Workers to Sustain Development*
  - *Remittances for Economic Development: Issues, Lessons, and Win-Win Solutions*
  - *Reciprocity of Economic Benefits: Policy Options for Labor-Sending and Labor-Receiving Countries*

Policymakers, high-ranking officials, practitioners of public administration and governance, including EROPA members, as well as representatives from governments, civil society and academia from Asia and the Pacific are expected to participate in the event.

### **UNPOG Plenary Session on Local Governance**

In line with its mandate of improving the quality of governance and public administration systems particularly in developing countries, and to provide a platform for sharing of experiences and approaches on good governance, UNPOG will participate and contribute to the Conference by organizing one of its Plenary Sessions.

Within the Conference's sub-theme on "Public Sector Reform in a time of Economic Debacle", UNPOG's session focuses on the impact of the world economic crisis on local governance in Asia and the Pacific, seeking to elucidate on the ramifications of the crisis on local administration and public service delivery.

The Plenary Session, entitled "*The Impact of Challenging Economic Times on Local Governments: Strategies on Coping with the Economic Crisis*", will be held in the morning of 22 October 2009 (Thursday), the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the Conference.

The Plenary Session will address the following key questions:

- How are local governments (in Asia and the Pacific) affected by the ongoing world economic crisis? (e.g. in terms of local government revenues; public service delivery; provision of safety net services; local development; etc.)
- How are local governments coping with the crisis? Are there any existing strategies/approaches on coping with the crisis that can be emulated by other local governments?

- Are eGovernment tools and technologies useful in addressing the impact of the crisis? Are there existing local eGovernment strategies that can serve as a model for other local governments?
- What local governance reforms should be in place to minimize the impact of similar crises in the future?

## **Objectives**

The specific objectives of the Activity are the following:

- To examine the effects of the world economic crisis on local governments
- To identify innovative approaches, including eGovernment strategies, that help reduce the impact of the crisis on local governance, administration and public service delivery ;
- To promote a sharing of lessons and experiences among local government stakeholders and propose solutions to mitigate the impact of similar crises in the future.

## **Methodology**

The Session will be organized as a one-to-two-hour Plenary Session scheduled in the morning of 22 October 2009.

The Session will begin with brief remarks from the Head of UNPOG. The Session Moderator will then introduce the theme and objectives of the Panel Session, and the experts.

Each panelist will be given 20 to 30 minutes for his/her presentation.

After all presentations, a 30-minute interactive discussion will follow.