

AFRICAN ASSOCIATION FOR
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND
MANAGEMENT (AAPAM)



ASSOCIATION AFRICAINE POUR
L'ADMINISTRATION PUBLIQUE
ET LE MANAGEMENT (AAAPM)



CONCEPT NOTE

Theme:

Leadership: Anticipatory Governance and Systems
Thinking – Leveraging Digital Technology for Public
Sector Transformation

Venue:

Kenya School of Government, Mombasa Campus

Date:

22nd-25th September 2026

Introduction

The contemporary governance landscape is increasingly shaped by Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity (VUCA), driven by rapid technological change, climate change, geopolitical shifts, and interconnected global crises. Across Africa, governments face evolving challenges such as health emergencies, cyber threats, unemployment, migration, insecurity, and rising citizen expectations for efficient, transparent, and responsive public services. Addressing these complex and interconnected challenges requires anticipatory, adaptive, and resilient governance systems, underpinned by systems thinking, innovative leadership, and the strategic use of digital technologies to build future-ready public institutions.

In such an environment, traditional leadership approaches that rely primarily on reactive decision-making are no longer sufficient. Public sector leaders must develop the capacity to anticipate emerging trends, understand complex systems, and leverage digital technologies to design innovative, resilient, and citizen-centered solutions. Anticipatory governance and systems thinking have therefore emerged as essential leadership competencies for navigating uncertainty and shaping sustainable futures.

Recognizing this need, the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), in partnership with the Kenya School of Government (KSG), is organizing the 6th Strategic Leadership Seminar under the theme: “Leadership: Anticipatory Governance and Systems Thinking – Leveraging Digital Technology for Public Sector Transformation.”

Background

Africa is experiencing unprecedented transformations driven by demographic shifts, technological advancement, economic integration, climate variability, and evolving governance demands. While these developments present significant opportunities for growth and innovation, they also expose governments to increasingly complex policy challenges that transcend traditional sectoral boundaries.

The African Union Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) call for capable, innovative, and responsive institutions that can anticipate risks, manage uncertainty, and deliver sustainable development outcomes. To achieve these aspirations, public sector institutions require leaders who can think systemically, plan strategically, and harness digital technologies to improve governance and service delivery.

AAPAM has consistently championed leadership development, governance innovation, and public sector transformation across Africa through its Strategic Leadership Seminars, Annual

Roundtable Conferences, Research Seminars, Strong Nations for Africa Programme, Innovative Management Awards Programme, and capacity-building initiatives. Building on these efforts, this year, the 6th leadership seminar seeks to strengthen leadership competencies in anticipatory governance, systems thinking, and digital transformation.

Rationale

The increasingly interconnected nature of governance challenges requires public sector leaders to move beyond siloed approaches and embrace systems thinking. In a VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity) environment, anticipatory governance enables leaders to identify emerging risks and opportunities, strengthen policy coherence, and develop integrated solutions that build resilient and future-ready institutions.

At the same time, digital technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), big data analytics, predictive modelling, and digital platforms are transforming public governance. This seminar seeks to equip leaders with practical knowledge and tools to leverage these technologies for evidence-based decision-making, strengthen transparency and accountability, improve service delivery, and promote citizen-centred governance and sustainable public value across Africa.

Objectives

The Leadership seminar seeks to:

- Enhance understanding of anticipatory governance and its relevance to public sector leadership.
- Strengthen systems thinking competencies for addressing complex governance challenges.
- Promote strategic foresight and future-oriented decision-making.
- Explore the role of digital technologies in transforming governance and public service delivery.
- Strengthen leadership capacity for innovation, resilience, and institutional transformation.
- Foster collaboration and peer learning among public sector leaders across Africa.
- Promote ethical and responsible use of emerging technologies in governance.
- Facilitate knowledge generation and sharing on public sector innovation and transformation.

Sub-Themes

The seminar will tackle various subthemes as indicated below:

- Anticipatory Governance and Future-Ready Leadership
 - Strategic Foresight and Scenario Planning for Government
 - Managing Complexity through Adaptive Leadership
 - Leadership in a VUCA World
- Systems Thinking for Public Sector Transformation
 - Public Value Creation through Systems Leadership
 - Institutional Resilience and Policy Coherence
 - Partnerships for Sustainable Development
- Digital Transformation, Artificial Intelligence and Innovation in Governance
 - Digital Transformation and Public Sector Innovation
 - Emerging Technologies for Public Administration
 - Innovation for Citizen-Centred Service Delivery
- Data-Driven Governance, Ethics and Accountability
 - Data Governance and Evidence-Based Policymaking
 - Cybersecurity and Digital Trust
 - Ethics, Accountability and Responsible Technology Use
- Resilient Leadership for Sustainable Development
 - Building Resilient Institutions in a VUCA Environment
 - Inclusive and Citizen-Centred Governance
 - Resilience, Innovation and Long-Term Public Sector Transformation

Target Audience

The seminar is designed for a diverse group of participants, including:

- Public administrators (national, regional, local)
- Policymakers and development practitioners
- Academics and researchers in governance
- Representatives from international organizations, NGOs, and civil society

Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced leadership capacity in anticipatory governance and systems thinking.
- Improved understanding of digital technologies and their application in public administration.
- Increased adoption of innovative and future-oriented governance practices.
- Strengthened institutional resilience and adaptive capacity.

- Enhanced collaboration among public sector leaders across Africa.
- Development of practical strategies for digital transformation and public sector modernization.
- Strengthened alignment of governance reforms with Agenda 2063 and the SDGs.

Duration of the Programme

22nd-25th September 2026. Onsite registration will commence from Monday 21st September 2026.

Venue

Kenya School of Government, Mombasa, Kenya.

Registration and Payment Details

Participants are requested to register online via www.aapam.org

Registration Fees:

USD \$700 for Local delegates

USD \$800 for international delegates

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About the Hosting Institution

The African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM)

The African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) is an international professional organization that promotes best practice, excellence and professionalism in public administration and management in Africa through research, publications, training, seminars, consultancy, conferences and awards. AAPAM draws its membership from sectors including governments, corporate bodies, private sector, civil society, international organizations, individual members and students. The Association provides its members with a platform for articulation and dissemination of ideas on capacity building and development of Africa. AAPAM operates mainly but not exclusively in Africa.

The Kenya School of Government (KSG)

The Kenya School of Government (KSG) is a State Corporation established to offer management training, research, consultancy, and advisory services to the public sector. The school has been instrumental in setting up fast track management strategies through the observance of high standards of integrity, competence, ethics, and a culture of transparency whilst implementing the provisions of her mandate. Today it offers services to both National and County governments, private sector players as well as those from the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).