GLOBAL ONLINE NETWORK ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

PLAN OF ACTION

The First Interregional Consultative Meeting of UNPAN
Thessaloniki, Greece, 15-17 November 1999

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The First Interregional Consultative Meeting of UNPAN was held in Thessaloniki, Greece from 15-17 November 1999 organized by the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior of Greece. Representatives from eight Regional Centres, six regional and international institutions and two UN Regional Commissions participated in the meeting. After two and one-half days of discussion, the following plan of action was adopted.
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# Concept
INTRODUCTION

Globalization has opened new gateways to opportunities that only a decade ago seemed unimaginable. Seldom in history has the confluence of technology, resources and imagination so dramatically changed the way cultures interact and nations govern. Yet globalization is also creating a world where interdependence is becoming more complex. Countries are now linked by multiple and extensive economic, political and social relationships. New and difficult challenges have been created for policy and decision makers, as public policy issues are becoming increasingly transitional in character.

A powerful force that is driving globalization is information. Information, when converted into knowledge,* can empower a very small segment of a population, resulting in dynamic transformations, ultimately advancing the development of the larger civil society as a whole. Yet when information is ignored or misused, few members of the civil society benefit.

Despite being a remarkable agent of change, the information revolution has created three persistent problems that cannot be ignored. First, the amount of information is growing faster than any person (or organization) can fully absorb, potentially diminishing the effectiveness of the public policy formulation and decision-making processes. Second, the abundance of data in its unadulterated form for the most part has a very limited life span. What was the discovery of the millennium yesterday, may be easily forgotten by tomorrow. Finally, there is the reality of knowledge gaps. In countries where resources are limited, full capacity to absorb, analyse and convert vast amounts of raw data to adaptable knowledge is not always present. Information problems are exacerbated, and existing knowledge gaps are widened both within and outside of a nation, a circumstance that is especially acute in developing countries.

Policy and decision makers are now faced with an exacting challenge of prospecting through enormous volumes of information, extracting the most useful and relevant data, analysing it and ultimately converting it to knowledge that can be adapted to suit their policy and country’s needs. Strategies and activities directed toward the effective acquisition, communication and management of information and knowledge have taken on a greater sense of urgency and are now at the top of most national policy agendas.

The United Nations’ General Assembly has entrusted the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration to develop a pragmatic response to address these issues and ensure that nations can maximize their public policy and public sector management resources --- the United Nations Online Network of Regional Institutions for Capacity Building in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN). As an internet linked network of institutions, UNPAN will provide governments and organizations with information and knowledge on critical aspects of public sector policies and management to facilitate effective decision making and promote sound knowledge management. Connecting the present with the future, UNPAN is linking those who need to know, with those who indeed know.

* Information becomes knowledge as it is interpreted and made substantive in light of an individual’s understanding of the context. Knowledge Management is the systematic process of finding, selecting, organizing and presenting information in a way that improves an individual’s comprehension in a specific area of interest. Management of knowledge through systematic sharing is becoming more common within and between organizations. Knowledge sharing enables an institution to become truly global in character.

MISSION STATEMENT

As a global online information and knowledge network, UNPAN’s mission is to promote capacity building and general cooperation among all Member States with an emphasis on South-South cooperation through the development of sound public policies, innovative management, effective
WHAT IS UNPAN

The aim of capacity building as a process or activity by an international, regional, or national organization, or by any one country is to help those in another country improve their ability to carry out specific functions or achieve certain objectives. UNPAN has been established for just such a purpose. Through the substantive and technical capacities of the regional and national centres, developing countries and countries whose economies are in transition will now have a vital tool for strengthening and enhancing their public sector policy formulation and management capabilities. As a global online information and knowledge network, UNPAN is uniquely structured to facilitate capacity building, foster dialogues among stakeholders at the national level and expand collaboration among the Member States, especially in developing countries.

UNPAN will provide ongoing access to the most innovative research, training practices, methodologies and technical assistance. Through its multiple role as an electronic research centre, think tank, consulting firm and library, the capacity of the regional and national centres will be continuously strengthened so they may effectively function as dynamic sources of information and knowledge and address existing and emerging issues in public sector policy and management. To ensure this, UNPAN, where appropriate, will reinforce the necessary capacities of the regional or national centres.

REASONS FOR ESTABLISHING UNPAN

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MANDATES

General Assembly Resolution 50/225, which was the result of the Resumed 50th Session of the General Assembly on Public Administration in April 1996, reinforced previous legislative mandates that defined and reinforced the UN Programme in Public Administration and Finance. It also mandated a central role for the UN as a repository of information and best practices and to utilize the latest technology and resources in disseminating knowledge. Resolution 50/225 stated specifically that the United Nations Programme should carry out its activities through pooling and facilitating access to information in public administration, promoting training and research at all levels, advocacy and exchange of experiences, advisory services, technical assistance, capacity building and human resources development. Resolution 50/225 further charged the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration with the overall management, coordination and substantive development of the Programme in Public Administration and Finance.

SECRETARY-GENERAL’S REFORMS

In 1997, Secretary-General Kofi Annan launched a programme of reform and renewal for the United Nations. Among the principal goals were the organization-wide practice of enhanced coordination and the elimination of duplication and overlapping of responsibilities within the UN system. In a recent
address before NGOs, Secretary-General Kofi Annan emphasized the creative use of the Internet and global policy networks as a medium of research, communication and exchange. "The biggest gap between North and South", he said, "is the knowledge gap. There is no better way to bridge that gap than by fostering truly cooperative networks." UNPAN is exactly what the Secretary-General is referring to, by simplifying the coordination, management, and dissemination of information and knowledge produced by the UN system in the field of public sector policy and management. The project fully realizes the substance of the Secretary-General's intentions in the reforming of UN development activities by creating a cohesive capacity-building programme in information and knowledge management at the regional and country levels.

The UN Programme in Public Administration and Finance

Implemented by the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration, the UN Programme in Public Administration and Finance has for over 50 years been assisting Member States, particularly developing countries, in improving their administrative and financial management systems. UNPAN builds on the strengths of this legacy by combining a deep institutional history with a current substantive and technological dimension that will provide a solid foundation for all network services.

South-South Cooperation

Although information generated from developed countries, aid organizations and academia is proven to facilitate a nation's development, it is the information that is created within developing countries themselves that is commonly the most useful. Policies, reform programmes and well-conceived projects are a valuable source of knowledge. Knowing how a development initiative succeeds, or fails, can in fact be more beneficial than knowing whether the initiative succeeds or fails. Learning from others, assimilating that knowledge and adapting it to local circumstances offers the opportunity to make rapid advances without repeating others mistakes. Local knowledge creation and its transfer from country to country have the potential to transform any national development agenda.

Uniqueness

With communication technologies advancing at a tremendous rate, electronic information centres, online research organizations, and specialized e-networks are becoming increasingly common and increasingly duplicative. UNPAN is different. Its substantive capacity and specialized service combine to create a uniqueness that sets UNPAN apart from conventional web-based information sources. The one feature that is perhaps most unique about UNPAN is its universality and unequivocal clarity as an online public sector policy and management information and knowledge network.

Substantive Uniqueness:

< Far-reaching access to regional experience in the practice of public policy development and management at the regional, national and local levels.
< Capacity building and South-South Cooperation in information and knowledge management.

Service Uniqueness:

< Ease of access to the UN's work in all areas of public sector policy and management.
< Interactive two-way information and knowledge network.
Demand-driven provider of information and knowledge.

Most significantly, UNPAN is a dynamic process and not a static outcome which aims at responding to needs of its users and addresses their most critical areas of work. With a constituency as diverse as the membership of the United Nations, UNPAN's key advantage will be its ability to demonstrate insight, flexibility and reliability in order to ensure that the primary needs of its users are met.

**SUBSTANTIVE SCOPE**

**CORE THEMATIC AREAS**

A nation's civil service is the heart of its administrative system. It is the bridge between those charged with the vast responsibility of governing and the civil society. Public administration as an entity, therefore, does not operate in isolation but rather in a series of distinct institutional relationships. As a global online information network, UNPAN will have the advantage of drawing on a large and diverse pool of knowledge in the most relevant areas of public sector policy and management. With new challenges facing the role of the state, particularly regarding its level of involvement in the national economy, UNPAN will monitor existing public sector management processes and practices in critical areas such as:

**Public Policies**

UNPAN will focus closely on state-market relations; regulatory policies; competition policies; institutional issues of economic governance; public expenditure management; tax policy management and administration.

**Governance Systems and Institutions**

Through the Network, users will be able to access the most current practices and policies in areas like legislative systems improvement, executive branch reinforcement, local governance, citizen participation and civil society building.

**Civil Service/Public Sector Reform**

UNPAN will address issues such as: administrative and civil service reform; public sector capacity building and training; ethics and professionalism; civil service performance assessment and human resource management; and public service delivery to the civil society.

**Management Innovation and Development**

Information and knowledge on management innovation and trends for project, programme and policy formulation and implementation; local government election administration; disaster management; benchmarking for the purpose of organizational performance and monitoring are a few of the issues which are fundamental to efficient institutional performance and will easily be accessed through the Network.

**Public Finance**

UNPAN's services will provide users with mobilization of external resources for development; efficient, effective and transparent public financial management; and financial and fiscal decentralization.
As the above-mentioned thematic areas broadly represent the substantive scope of UNPAN, it was agreed at the First Meeting that a Task Force comprised of CLAD, EIPA, the Luis Eduardo Magalhaes Foundation and the Greek Institute of Public Administration along with UNPAN-NY should collaborate on the development of a classification of the emerging and critical issues, other public policies and needed information in public sector management and finance to facilitate the overall thematic focus of the Network. When completed, the classification will be sent to the participants with a view to arriving at an agreed taxonomy. The Task Force will finalize its proposal by 31 January 2000.

SERVICES AND PRODUCTS

What sets UNPAN apart from other information providers is its capacity to deliver a specialized set of services and products that are easily accessed, substantively prescient and readily available. Information management services will include:

**ONLINE INFORMATION CLEARING HOUSE**

As an international focal point of information and knowledge on public sector policy and management issues, UNPAN will collect, disseminate and manage relevant information, and guide users in accessing and navigating the vast resources that will comprise the network, at the global regional and national levels.

Users will have access to information such as:

- Legislation
- Publications
- Case Studies
- Public Administration Country Profiles
- Analytical reports
- Technical Advisory reports
- Public Administration Directories
- Statistical databases
- Major developments in public administration
- Calendar of Events

**ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAMMES**

Long-distance learning is gradually emerging as a valuable and cost effective tool. UNPAN will continuously identify and monitor trends and work to improve training methods and procedures that would enhance the administrative, managerial and analytical capacity of developing countries and countries with economies in transition. UNPAN will develop and implement online training programmes in accordance with the capacity and resources of the Regional Centres. UNPAN online training programmes can be developed in cooperation with international, regional and national institutions that specialize in training. Users will be able to interact in “real time” with guest lecturers, specialists and public sector policy, management and finance experts via the World Wide Web.

**ONLINE ADVISORY SERVICES**
UNPAN plans to develop an international and regional online advisory services network which will present readily accessible information from the available database of UNPAN advisers, experts and consultants in public sector policy and management.

This will include:
< An interactive bulletin board
< UNPAN advisory services
< International and regional technical expert and consultant referral service

ONLINE CONFERENCES

Online Conferences will combine a traditional form of information and knowledge exchange with contemporary technology. The UN has already staged a number of successful online conferences on public sector management issues. Online conferences will present new possibilities in capacity building by enhancing teamwork and partnerships.

Conferences can be held in
< *Real Time* -- in which the timing will be synchronized with the participants' locations
< *Relative Time* -- in which the participants will interact via instant messaging, bulletin boards at their convenience

LANGUAGE

Although primary information may initially be made available in a regional or national language, UNPAN members will endeavour to offer full-text translations or abstracts in an official language of the United Nations.

BENEFICIARIES

IMMEDIATE BENEFICIARIES

< *Regional Centres*, as their capacity to collect, manage and disseminate information and knowledge will be strengthened and their roles as focal points enhanced.
< *National Institutions/Centres*

ULTIMATE BENEFICIARIES

UNPAN's service is available to anyone with access to the web. Its ultimate beneficiaries will include:

< *Policy and decision makers*, such as government officials responsible for public policies on economic development, reforms and modernization of public administration and management, public sector financial management, tax reform, etc.;

< *Academics, experts, researchers* and students in universities, academic and research institutes, and other relevant institutions, who are interested in the practice of
administrative science, government systems, public management innovations, and other relevant issues;

< The Civil Society, including non-governmental organizations, interest groups and private citizens;

< The Private Sector, including the business and industrial community, investment analysts and economic development specialists and;

< Donor Community, including the Bretton Woods Institutions, Donor Countries, Development Agencies and Investment Agencies.
As a dynamic online network, UNPAN is being developed so its users can best utilize and benefit from the regional and national centres’ intrinsic capacity and expertise. The flexibility of UNPAN’s structure combined with the technological advances will allow each autonomous regional centre to customize its specific needs so to best address the issues endemic to its region and participating countries. The network is structured in such a way as to fully utilize the substantive, technical and human resource capabilities of each centre, either regional or national, and to build capacity in areas where needed. This component is one of the inherent strengths of UNPAN.

**NETWORK STRUCTURE**

The regional centres will be among institutions geographically balanced representing developing countries and countries whose economies are in transition. National centres will, for the most part, consist of institutions and organizations whose focus is on issues of public sector policy and management most specific to their country. Since UNPAN is a United Nations initiative funded through the Development Dividend under the auspices of the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council, overall coordination of the network will be the responsibility of UN Headquarters in New York.

**NOTE:** ORC = Online Regional Centre

**UNPAN-NY**

One way to describe UNPAN-NY would be as a coordinator of substantive centres. A task force manager who reports directly to the Director of the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration
in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs heads UNPAN-NY. The task force manager works with a team composed of substantive, technical and administrative staff. The team will also work closely with the regional and national centres. This would include the development of operational guidelines to ensure network integrity, substantive clarity and that each centre's specific needs are met.

**MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

**UNPAN-NY**'s **MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES** will include:

- **Overall coordination and guidance**
- **Substantive and technical support in all areas**
- **Monitoring, assessing and analysing the performance of the network in order to report directly to the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council upon their request**
- **Information clearing house, advisory services, online training programmes and online conference**

UNPAN-NY will work closely with each regional centre through the intervention of corresponding regional clusters. The clusters' primary responsibility will be to ensure continuity in the flow of information and communication between the regional centres and UNPAN-NY.

**Regional Centres**
Selected for their prominence as public sector policy and management institutions, the Regional Centres will be responsible for information and knowledge management within their own geographic areas. Substantively, the centres will collect, analyse and communicate information and knowledge on public administration, public economics and finance issues endemic to countries in their geographic sphere. Since the collection, analysis and communication of information and knowledge are the lifeblood of the network, how the regional centres perform these tasks will be critical. A team consisting of a project manager, information/policy specialist and a technical expert would provide the essential core of a basic management structure within each centre.

**MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

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<thead>
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<th>HEAD REGIONAL CENTRES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUBSTANTIVE UNIT</td>
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<tr>
<td>TECHNICAL UNIT</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADMINISTRATION UNIT</td>
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</table>

The Regional Centres will also function as:
- Regional information clearing houses
- Regional online training programme developers
- Regional online conference organizers

**CRITERIA FOR REGIONAL CENTRES**

The Regional Centres of the UNPAN system will play a critical role in the successful implementation of the online network. It is expected that they be rich in data, information and knowledge resources and have the basic facilities for promoting online activities. It is further expected that their existence as an institution devoted to public administration be unchallenged and their commitment to UNPAN be unequivocal. Therefore it is suggested that the Regional Centres should meet the following criteria:

> A well-functioning and committed administrative and management system.
> Adequate financial resources.
> An extensive and well-recognized relationship with other relevant institutions and/or governments in their country or region.
> Stable data/information sources and an established and operational database(s).
> Information and knowledge validation capacity.
> An established website.
> Technical professionals for computer applications and information system development.

A needs assessment of the Regional Centres will be conducted by each member organization with the assistance of DESA, particularly with respect to: national telecommunications capacity; information and validation capacity; technical capacity; human resource capacity and access to information.

* These criteria do not apply to those institutions not receiving financial from the United Nations.
Detailed arrangements and responsibilities will be outlined in an official Memorandum of Understanding between each Regional Centre and the United Nations.

**National Institutions/Centres**

Government agencies, NGOs, academic institutes and development organizations committed to public sector policy and management will be a primary source of information and knowledge at national and subnational levels. They will serve as information and knowledge focal points. The National Centres will be well situated to collect and analyse ‘pristine’ information from the field and share it with other members of UNPAN.

**THE CHALLENGE**

For all institutions committed to the practice of effective information and knowledge management, the real challenge is in the authentication or selection of content. UNPAN members must establish their own information and knowledge bases, authenticate, interpret what is meaningful and customize a knowledge management programme that meets their needs. Criteria and guidelines concerning quality of information will be elaborated by the Task Force on classification. UNPAN-NY will work to ensure that the collection, analysis, and communication of information and knowledge remain a dynamic process and not a static outcome. UNPAN will realize its full potential only if its members take an active role in building and sustaining the network.

**PROCESS**
NETWORK SYSTEM

As an electronic network, the operating platform for UNPAN will be the World Wide Web. Initially, the network will be maintained under the domain of the UN system (www.un.org). This arrangement will allow the UNPAN system to develop incrementally. As user demand dictates, UNPAN may eventually require its own independent server. The network would establish its own domain under the top down domain of the UN, for example, www.un.org/unpan. With an independent server, UNPAN’s web performance will be considerably more efficient.

HOW UNPAN WILL FUNCTION

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Information is the essence of UNPAN. Accordingly, its management will be one of the critical functions of the Network. In order to make relevant information and knowledge easily available to the users of UNPAN, large amounts of data at the UN Headquarters and the regional centres will need to be collected, analysed and ultimately processed for dissemination and uploading onto the web. To ensure network effectiveness, basic guidelines for information/data collecting and quality control will be developed in consultation with the regional centres and will reflect their capacity to perform the basic information management activities. Effective processing and quality control of raw data and information is an issue that cannot be treated lightly.

Software and web-based services provide several options for development of a comprehensive database management system. The UNPAN task force is in the process of exploring all possibilities.

A typical system could include the following features:

< Process data as records, tables, or objects
< Provides query languages (SQL) for searching, sorting, reporting, and other "decision support" activities that help users to correlate data by topics
< Provides multi-user access to data, along with security features

DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

Functioning like a general database, the document management system (DMS) of UNPAN will, by means of document management software, manage all types of documents through their entire life cycle. This includes publications, reports, project documents, etc. in either an electronic or paper format.

It would include:

< Criteria-based searching which will allow the user to find documents easily by using keywords, and other variables
< Automatic archiving to track documents
< Revision control also called "check-in/check-out"
< Security provisions, i.e. passwords, etc.

The system should maintain a central library management function to enable the system manager to monitor all document transactions across the network. The DMS of the UNPAN will be Web-based so as to be consistent with the current trend of document management, i.e., utilizing Web technologies.

NETWORK MANAGEMENT
The regional and national centres are a critical component of UNPAN and will play a key role in the successful implementation of the online network. It is expected that they will have the capacity to perform the expected role of collecting, analysing and connecting. This would include the basic resources and capacity for conducting online activities (i.e. their own URL/website).

UNPAN will make full use of the Internet technology and other current information technologies to ensure cost effectiveness and efficiency. The existing computer and telecommunication facilities within the Division and the UN and the regional and national institutions to be selected will be fully utilized for cost effectiveness. In cases where appropriate, the UN will assist in upgrading the regional centre’s hardware and software components.

Necessary telecommunication bandwidth is important to ensure the quality of services to be provided by the UNPAN. Lower bandwidths could compromise performance by delaying or hindering specific online activities. Telecommunication bandwidth available at the regional centres generally depends on the capacity of the national telecommunications and information infrastructure. Regional centres should be encouraged to explore the possibilities of acquiring the best facilities available.

**DIRECTORY MANAGEMENT**

UNPAN will provide quick and easy access to the most useful public sector policy and management websites allowing users to make full use of the internet for information and knowledge. These will include government, UN, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, academic institutions, think tanks and related associations. Each site will be reviewed for its content and relevance, and summarized in a brief abstract which will introduce the site.

As far as the technical aspects of all UNPAN participants are concerned, emphasis should be placed on making full use of existing computer and communication facilities. Any upgrading of equipment with UN assistance will take place only if the need presents itself.

At these stage of development, the effective collection, processing and management of information is more critical than then reinforcing the technical platform UNPAN operation. Therefore, Regional Centres should pay strict attention to and make special efforts with respects to this area.

**WORKPLAN**

Six phases are included in the life cycle of the UNPAN project headquarters, i.e., (I) conceptual system design; (II) needs assessment and detailed system design; (III) system development, data/information consolidation; (IV) system implementation; (V) system trial use and acceptance, and (VI) establishment of national centres and stimulation of publicity.
Phase I: Conceptual Design

The main task of this phase is to achieve a common understanding within DPEPA on the basic concepts of UNPAN, such as the objectives and goals (where are we going?), the main contents and business of UNPAN (what are we doing?), and the implementation strategies of UNPAN project (how are we going there?). This conceptual system design report intends to provide a framework for the staff of the Division to discuss, comment and make suggestions on these important issues of UNPAN. This phase may take about two months.

Phase II: Needs Assessment of Regional Centres and Detailed System Design

This phase aims at understanding the needs of regional institutions in order to develop UNPAN, and, accordingly, accomplishing a detailed system design of UNPAN – a blueprint of UNPAN. Another important task is to receive recognition as to the importance and mandate of UNPAN and full support and cooperation of the regional institutions through the efforts of this phase. This phase is going to take four months.

Phase IIIa: System Development at Headquarters

A set of software systems for the UNPAN Centre, including a database system, document management systems, Web site, and various online functions, will be developed in this phase. Coordination with UN/ITSD on the domain name of the UNPAN Web site, IP address, and other UNPAN network management arrangements will be carried out. This phase spans about six months.

Phase IIIb: Data/Information Consolidation at the UNPAN Centre and the Regional Centres

During this phase, data/information with respect to public administration and finance will be indexed and categorized. The existing data/information will be cleaned, consolidated and computerized,
and be ready to be entered into the UNPAN servers. These jobs are very time consuming and need
sedulousness and perseverance. Data/information consolidation will be carried out both at the UNPAN
Centre and the regional centres. This phase is planned for six months.

**Phase IV: System Implementation at the UNPAN Centre and the Regional Centres**

This phase is designed to implement all the functions of UNPAN. In particular, all the data and
document management systems will be established and ready for users to access. Other functions, such as
online training and online advisory services, should be materialized at the end of this phase. It is planned
that the first online training programme will be launched during this phase to see how UNPAN can play its
role in assisting developing countries in capacity building and to accumulate experience for the future
operation of UNPAN. This phase may take five months or more.

**Phase V: System Trial Use and Acceptance**

All the functions that UNPAN is supposed to have will be put on trial use in this phase in order to
find out if there are any bugs in the system, any problems in operation, and any room for improvement. In
the mean time, the workflow of the Division for the smooth operation of UNPAN should be designed and, if
necessary, the business processes of the Division should be re-engineered. Operational and maintenance
manuals and corresponding rules and regulations should be developed and established. All these activities
are very necessary to ensure the smooth operation and sustainability of UNPAN. This phase needs at least
three months to be carried out.

**Phase VI: Establishment of the National Centres and Outreach Activities**

The purpose of this phase is to extend the coverage of UNPAN as broadly as possible. A standard
package, including hardware and software, for the establishment of the national node of UNPAN will be
developed and distributed to selected least developed countries under the support of UNPAN project. The
software package of the UNPAN national node will also be available free of charge to any other country
which wants to join UNPAN and has indispensable hardware and other facilities to run the UNPAN system.
Every effort will be made in this phase to stimulate the publicity of UNPAN and try to attract as many users
as possible. This phase needs at least three months to be carried out.

The entire period for the implementation of the UNPAN project will span about two years. The
workload involved in the UNPAN project implementation is very heavy. It is obvious that Phase III (i.e., IIIa
& IIIb) is the most critical one in the UNPAN project implementation, because all the functions to be
materialized for UNPAN, the performance of UNPAN, and the smooth progress of the UNPAN project
depend on the outcomes and qualities of this phase.

**Targeted Completion Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 December 1999</td>
<td>The revised Plan of Action will be finalized and distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 December 1999</td>
<td>UNPAN working website will be established as a tool for internal</td>
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communication among partners

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31 January 2000</td>
<td>Finalization of Task Force on Classification will submit its initial recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 February 2000</td>
<td>A team at each regional centre will be organized and a self-needs assessment will be completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 March 2000</td>
<td>A field visit to each regional centre will be carried out, and substantive and technical capacity will be reviewed; a work plan for each regional centre will be developed, procurement strategies will be agreed upon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 April 2000</td>
<td>The system design of UNPAN will be completed by UNPAN-NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 June-31 December 2000</td>
<td>The capacities of the regional centres will be upgraded, and UNPAN will be built up at regional centres; a set of applications of the software system will be developed and installed in the regional centres as appropriate; data/information will be entered into the UNPAN servers at the regional centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 December 2000</td>
<td>Application systems of UNPAN will be in trial use in the regional centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 December 2000-1 January 2001</td>
<td>An online meeting of UNPAN partners will be conducted to test the Capability of the system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 March 2001</td>
<td>UNPAN system will be fully operational, however, functional features will be added whenever they become available or necessary</td>
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CONCLUSION

Clearly there is a need for an international network of this nature, as none currently exists in the area of public sector policy and management. The General Assembly accepted this proposition and allocated the necessary resources for its development. Accordingly, the First Interregional Consultative Meeting recognizes that there is a demand for a global online information and knowledge network in order to enhance capacity building and further promote South-South cooperation, through the development of sound public policies, effective public administration and efficient civil services. The participants of the First International Consultative Meeting, therefore, conclude that the United Nations Online Network of Regional Institutions for Capacity Building in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN) as presented at this forum is a viable and necessary initiative.

Based on this conclusion, the Meeting fully appreciates the necessity for UNPAN and endorses its concept as detailed in this plan of action. The Meeting, therefore, recommends that the process continue with alacrity to the next phase of development. Since UNPAN is the result of a General Assembly legislative initiative, a strict compliance to the development schedule is paramount.