UNIT 2   PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

There is an increasing global realization that public administration can certainly help in achieving the goals of sustainable development. A number of international organizations including the UN have expressed their concern on the urgent need for public administration reforms. It has been demonstrated at various levels world wide that goals of sustainable development can be achieved through a number of institutional innovations and reforms such as democratization and decentralization of decision making; developing legal and institutional frameworks and economic governance systems; implementing ethics and anti-corruption strategies at various levels in and outside government institutions; improving resource mobilization at various levels; introduction of better financial management systems; and tapping the potential of e-governance. In order to update and broaden the scope and the understanding of public administration roles in various sectors of government and non government institutions the UN agencies have been highlighting for greater interest targeting a variety of public administration revitalization measures undertaken world wide, to promote macroeconomic stability and economic growth, human development and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. There is more thrust on the civil society participation in the policy and development process. More and more importance is laid in all development projects for responsiveness to citizen concerns, conflict prevention and resolution efforts, public safety and security. Some of the time tested components of management and governance like transparency and accountability, efficiency and effectiveness are also being considered components in all development projects. In this unit, an attempt has been made to describe, how to build public institutions at all levels, from local to national to global, in order to create a sustainable future.

After going through this unit, you should be able to:
• Describe concept and significance of public administration;
• Explain the scope of public administration in development projects;
• Analyse the role of public administration in meeting the goals of sustainable development;
• Discuss role of various institutions and people in achieving sustainable development.

2.2 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: MEANING, SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE

According to Handbook of Public administration, 1989 “Public administration houses the implementation of government policy and an academic discipline that studies this implementation and that prepares civil servants for this work”. As a “field of inquiry with a diverse scope” its “fundamental goal... is to advance management and policies so that government can function.” Some of the various definitions which have been offered for the term are: “the management of public programs”; the “translation of politics into the reality that citizens see every day”; and “the study of government decision making, the analysis of the policies themselves, the various inputs that have produced them, and the inputs necessary to produce alternative policies.” Public administration is “centrally concerned with the organization of government policies and programmes as well as the behavior of officials (usually non-elected) formally responsible for their conduct”.

Administration is as old as Mankind. It has existed ever since Man began to organize himself. Administration is a process common to all group effort, public or private, civil or military, large scale or small scale. The word ‘Administration’ is derived from the Latin word ‘ad’ and ‘ministrare’ which means to serve. Considered as a concrete activity, administration includes all types of Work necessary to achieve the goal in view it assumes myriad of shapes and forms in various subject matter fields; it is both skill and art and its process is universally identical administration has been practiced from time immemorial only its form and style have been undergoing changes to suit the changing needs over the period of time.

Woodrow Wilson, who is considered the founder of the American Public Administration (the discipline), has worked on American public administration, and the big question for Wilson was how Americans could incorporate Public Administration into the Constitution which did not mention it. Also in developing Public Administration, Wilson’s basic difficulty was how to reconcile the differences in notions of democracy (popular rule) and the systematic rules. To do this he says there are two spheres: “Politics” and “Administration” Politics = choices of government are made by the elected and Administration = carries out the choices by the (popular consent) free of political meddling “politics-administration dichotomy”. Before entering into the science of administration Wilson felt it was needed that first there should be some account of the history of what others have done in the field, secondly there should be an ascertainment of its subject-matter, and thirdly the it should be determined the best methods to develop it and the most clarifying political conceptions to carry into it. Public administration is a segment of the wider field of Administration. Woodrow Wilson defines Public administration as “detailed and systematic application of law”.

Scope of Public Administration

• Public administration is the whole government in action, it includes all operations having for their purpose the, fulfillment or enforcement of public policy.
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• The science of public administration is an enquiry as to how Policies may best be carried in to operation.

• Public administration is concerned with “What” - the technical knowledge of a field which enables the administrator to perform his tasks; and the ‘how’ - the technique of management according to which the programmes are carried to success.

• It involves, managing, directing and supervising the activities of thousands or even millions of workers so that some order and efficiency may result from their efforts.

• The core of the public administration is not the method management but the goods and services that are produced or tendered.

Significance of Public administration

The full scope of public administration would cover administrative theory and applied administration. The wellbeing of the nation (society) is increasingly dependent on the efficiency of the government (i.e.) public administration. The future of the civilized government and even the civilization rests on the competence, efficiency and efficacy of the Public administration. Every Individual in the modern society is concerned with and totally interlinked with public administration at every form of his or her life right from the cradle to the grave; nay even before his or her birth (in the form of pre-natal care of the expectant mother) to even after his or her death (proving his will and thereby taking care of his property in certain ways). Thus on account of the importance of public administration, it has been rightly described as the “Heart of Modern civilization”.

Public administration deals with the organization of government policies and programs and the behaviour of officials who are responsible for this conduct. The role of a public administrator is to analyze public policies so that they come out in the right context and are eventually implemented as policies that benefit people at large. They are basically public servant and their role is seen across all government departments and agencies and they include police officers, cabinet secretaries, city managers, municipal budget analysts and census analysts. In other words, the aim of public administration is to ensure that all government bodies function normally and that there is no corruption in the handling of government activities. It further seeks to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public services. UNDP has tried to define the role of public administration in the following words “Public administration seeks to foster relationships that are guided by respect for human rights, information sharing, and gender equality, rule of law, integrity and transparency. Our initiatives focus on building robust institutions at both national and sub-national levels, and are therefore closely integrated with UNDP’s work in the area of local governance”.

The UNDP focuses its support of public administration in four priority areas:

• Public administration and democratic change: UNDP promotes incremental steps towards reform, supporting the efforts of developing countries to shape public administration institutions into robust, representative, responsive and democratic institutions.

• Public administration and the MDGs: Public administration can play a key role in the equitable distribution of benefits and opportunities to all —
especially the poor, women and minorities — which is of particular significance in areas directly linked to the achievement of the MDGs.

- Public administration for state- and peace-building in post-conflict societies: UNDP seeks to increase attention to public administration and civil service management as an essential component of state-building in post-conflict societies.

- Public administration for environmental sustainability: UNDP works to strengthen public administration to better address climate change challenges, environmental sustainability and disaster risk reduction.

The role of public will need to provide the legitimate rules and organizational capacity required to promote societal transformations at all levels for a greener and more equitable economy. Many governments and public administrations still operate in an old development paradigm and do not have the capacity to mobilize the full range of stakeholders and introduce the wide spectrum of policies involved in bringing the three pillars consisting of society, economy and environment components of sustainable development together in an effective manner. In addition to the challenge of implementing cross-sectoral policies, they are struggling to translate global concerns into local action and local concerns into global actions. The mismatch between the international governance system and national and sub-national administrations leads to ineffective agreements and regimes with regards to implementation (Pinto and Puppimde Oliveira, 2008). The capacity to accelerate the transition to a greener economy rests necessarily on how public administrations can effectively incorporate the concept of sustainable development into their objectives and translate these objectives into results in practice.

2.3 ROLE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF NATION STATES

According to the Report of the Secretary General of the United Nations, in its 60th Session Item 43, Report of the Economic and Social Council, “Africa is a case in point. The dominant public policy and management issues in this region of approximately 650 million people are how to sustain ongoing governance and public administration reforms, alleviate poverty, restore normalcy to countries emerging from conflict and reconstruct institutions devastated by civil strife and, in some circumstances, by decades of dictatorial rule. Under the leadership of the African Union, and within the context of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), wealth creation is being pursued as a new strategy in the war on poverty”.

At the present time, access to the basic necessities of life (food, potable water, housing, fuel and energy) is highly restricted in Africa. Social services and infrastructure have largely collapsed owing to a lack of resources for their upkeep. Life expectancy in the region declined from 49 years in 1999 to 46 years in 2001 owing largely to the impact of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.3 However, life expectancy in Africa is projected to rise to 51.3 years by the end of 2010 and to reach 69.5 years by 2045.4 Nevertheless, recent forecasts indicate that, in the absence of a substantial infusion of resources, child poverty in the world’s poorest countries (a significant number of which are in Africa) will not be reduced within
the 15 years expected by the Millennium Development Goals, but in 150 years. The Human Development Index has not improved significantly from 1997 (0.463) to 2001 (0.468). Between 1975 and 1999, 22 countries suffered setbacks in the human development index. Of that number, 13 (that is, more than half) were in Africa (UN, 2005).

Similarly, with respect to the Middle East and North Africa, the dominant revitalization concerns are how to enhance the capacity of public administration systems to engineer high economic growth rates, respond to the needs of the people (particularly young persons) and ensure peace and security within and across countries. Like sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa is confronted with the challenges of economic growth and, to a lesser degree, of poverty alleviation. Not so long ago, the Middle East and North Africa achieved high (almost 10 per cent) gross domestic product (GDP) growth rates. Impressive economic performance enabled the region to invest in human and infrastructure development. In recent years, GDP growth rates within the region have averaged less than 2 per cent. Trade deficits and falling per capita growth continue to pose significant public policy and management challenges in the diversified (non-oil) economies.

With regard to Asia and the Pacific, the revitalization of public administration has to address enormous poverty alleviation and human development challenges. With a population of 3.4 billion, Asia and the Pacific is faced with enormous challenges in the area of human development. Of the 1.2 billion people living in extreme poverty (living on less than one United States dollar per day) worldwide, two thirds are in Asia. While the aggregate poverty ratio has fallen in recent years (rural poverty declined from 39 to 28 per cent and urban poverty fell from 24 to 20 per cent between 1990 and 2000), poverty remains a formidable challenge in the region. The solution would at first appear to lie in the design and implementation of policies geared towards economic growth. However, the tsunami tragedy of December 2004 introduced another dimension in public policy — the need for the capacity to anticipate climatic, environmental and other changes impacting on the life and well-being of the people. Therefore, in addition to economic growth and poverty alleviation concerns, public administration revitalization must of necessity include the competence to read early warning signals and institute the necessary proactive measures (UN, 2005).

The challenges facing the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) include how to build and strengthen the institutions capable of engaging in a variety of activities, among them, sustaining the wide-ranging governance and economic transformation that started in the 1990s; confronting the risk of State capture by organized crime; generating economic growth; creating gainful employment; improving the people’s living standards; and ensuring regional peace and stability. Proximity to the European Union (EU) serves as an additional incentive to public administration reform in a number of the CIS member States. 17. Latin America and the Caribbean, with a combined population of 518.8 million, face a major challenge in poverty eradication. Of the total population, close to 221 million, or 44 per cent, live in poverty. Of the 221 million classified as poor, 19 per cent are in a state of extreme poverty. The incidence of poverty is higher in rural than in urban areas (54 per cent of rural and 30 per cent of urban households can be classified as poor). The region made substantial progress towards poverty reduction in 1997 only to backslide since then. Between 1999 and 2002, the
incidence of poverty rose from 43.8 to 44.0 per cent, while the ratio of people in extreme poverty stayed at 19.4 per cent. Over-reliance on market mechanisms contributed to jobless growth, the gradual collapse of public services and the deepening of poverty and inequality. There are, however, growing signs of a turnaround. Besides taking proactive measures at home, Governments within the region are sponsoring regional cooperation initiatives aimed at stimulating economic growth and improving people’s living standards (UN, 2005).

2.4 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development can be defined as the environmental, economic and social well-being for today and tomorrow. The term ‘Sustainable Development’ became popular in the beginning of the 1990s, particularly after the 1992 Rio Conference (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development) and the release of the Brundtland Report. The term definitively broke the competition between environmental protection, economic and social development objectives, offering the possibility that all three could come together without a trade-off, at least in theory. However, this has not always held true in practice. Even though social and environmental awareness have increased and there are many good examples of sustainable development at the small scale, the world has become dangerously more unsustainable over the past two decades. The challenge of sustainable development cannot be underestimated. It will require a substantial transformation of the present economic development model, analogous to the transition economies underwent with the industrial revolution. According to the most frequent definition as given by the Brundtland Report, which defines sustainable development as the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It has two key concepts of needs and the idea of limitations.

The ecosystems have been suitable examples of sustainable biological systems along with the biogeochemical cycles. A condition of unsustainability occurs when the natural resources are used up faster than it can be replenished. The long-term result of environmental degradation is the inability to sustain human life and such degradation on a global scale would result in the extinction of the humanity. On our planet’s 20% of the population consumes 80% of the natural resources making sustainable development almost impossible.

The history of sustainable development is littered with well-intended but ill-designed or ill-executed policy initiatives. The past 20 years has witnessed a number of institutional innovations at the local, national and global levels to facilitate the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development and better align global, national and local actions. Developing countries have an opportunity to introduce these policies, managerial and technological innovations in the early stages of economic development and to avoid the costs associated with some of the unsustainable paths taken by today’s developed countries. This write up tries to examine some of these innovations and to discuss options to scale them up to produce wide-reaching governance and economic change. A broader policy dialogue on public administration reforms is needed if we are to steer a course towards a new ‘industrial’ revolution towards sustainability. The role of public administration discusses the political, managerial and social challenges of
translating the concept of sustainable development into action. It reviews the two-century-old debate surrounding the existence of limits to growth and the different economic development paradigms rooted in this debate.

Industrial revolution had resulted in an exponential increase in the human consumption of resources and an increase in health, wealth and population. The combination of population increase in the developing world and unsustainable consumption levels in the developed world poses a challenge to sustainability. Other human impacts like air pollution, the pollutants like nitrous oxide, sulphur oxides, particulate matter, carbon dioxide etc accumulate in the atmosphere lead to the global warming and climate change. The impacts of global warming have resulted in the unsustainable conditions for the humans as well as ecosystems. The rising sea level, increasing temperature, variable precipitation and drought conditions, increasing weather extremes like cyclones, heat and cold waves are all impacting the sustainability. The corals are bleaching due to ocean warming and ocean acidification due to increasing levels of dissolved carbon dioxide. Increasing urbanization pollutes clean water supplies hence making it unfit for use. The changes in the land use change pattern by the humans are resulting in the loss of biodiversity due to habitat loss and fragmentation. Land use change is fundamental to the operations of the biosphere because alterations in the relative proportions of land dedicated to urbanization, agriculture, forest, woodland, grassland and pasture have a marked effect on the global water, carbon and nitrogen biogeochemical cycle and this can impact negatively on both natural and human systems. The environmental costs of food production are topsoil depletion, erosion and desertification, overgrazing, salinization, sodification, water logging, high levels of fossil fuel use, reliance on inorganic fertilizers and synthetic organic pesticides, reductions in genetic diversity by the excessive use of monocultures, water resource depletion, pollution of water bodies by run-off and ground water contamination. In the second half of the 20th century world population doubled, food production tripled, energy use quadrupled, and overall economic activity quintupled. Unsustainable economic growth has been compared to the malignant growth of a cancer because it eats away the Earth’s ecosystem services which are its life-support system. All of these environmental problems associated with industrial agricultural and agribusiness are now being addressed through such movements as sustainable development and organic farming and more sustainable business practices.

In this session you have read about public administration: concept and significance, role of public administration in development of nation states and public administration and sustainable development. Now answer the questions given in Check Your Progress-1.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: a) Write your answer in about 50 words.

b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the unit

1) What is the meaning and significance of public administration?

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2) What is the relation between public administration and sustainable development?

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2.5 MEASURES FOR REVITALIZATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The complex and dramatic challenges facing the world place a heavy burden on public administration. The signs on the horizon also point to increasing awareness on the part of Governments and their civil society partners that the world of public administration is on the threshold of change and that assistance is needed in making the right choices. The countries that responded to the questionnaire confirmed this observation and provided concrete evidence of measures instituted to reform and revitalize their public administration systems during the past 10 years. The measures adopted by many countries in recent years to reform and strengthen public administration systems differ from those instituted in the 1980s and the early 1990s. First, in contrast to the revitalization agendas of the 1980s, which were formulated at the insistence of external financial and donor institutions, recent reforms are more likely to be “home-grown” and directed at specific problems and challenges. Second, rather than focusing narrowly on cost-cutting issues and seeing public administration revitalization from a doctrinaire, supply-side economics angle, recent revitalization measures have multiple objectives and rely on a variety of pragmatic change management strategies. Above all, contemporary revitalization measures differ from earlier ones in terms of the emphasis given not only to the application of “business” and “customer satisfaction” techniques — a carry-over from the early days of New Public Management — but also to the entrenchment of fundamental public service values and ethics.

The challenges highlighted in the preceding paragraphs have in one way or another informed the actions taken to revitalize public administration systems in the past 10 years. While the responses to the questionnaire administered by the Secretariat pointed to the differences in the Member States’ priorities, they also highlighted issues of common concern. Fine-tuning and consolidating New Public Management reforms and applying information and communication technologies to internal management and external service-delivery processes are among the dominant concerns in well-established public administration systems. By contrast, in the former command economies of Central and Eastern Europe, the western Balkans and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and in many of the emerging market economies of Asia, Latin America and, to some extent, the Middle East and Africa, the raison d’être of public administration revitalization was to prepare public administration systems for the challenges of democratic governance and for the implementation of market reforms. In countries emerging from conflict, revitalization was expected to be an integral part of the State
reconstruction process, and a means of stemming the decay of State and civil society institutions.

Within the European Union (and among the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries), public administration revitalization is at once a straightforward and complex exercise. For the older members of the European Union, whose administrative systems are founded on more or less similar and deep-rooted values, revitalization simply entails reorienting internal processes towards external demands, rather than subjecting the systems to radical, roots-and-branch restructuring. In recent years, however, the longer standing members of the Union have had to grapple with complex public policy challenges, not the least of which is the reconciliation of citizen expectations with fiscal and budget constraints. The recent “No” vote in France and the Netherlands is putatively a rebuff to the draft constitution of the European Union, but the verdict actually highlights a deepening concern on how to resolve the crisis of the welfare state. That crisis has far-reaching implications for public administration revitalization in the EU as a whole. For the new members, entry into the Union marks a major turning point at which difficult public choices have to be made, and substantial adjustments in institutions, management practices, and processes become absolutely essential. Since the EU is a community of values, the new entrants would, in forging ahead with their public administration revitalization plans, need to bring recruitment, promotion and service-delivery standards up to the EU level and ensure that public officials subscribe to a common code of professional ethics (Glemarec and Oliveira, 2012).

2.5.1 Emerging Revitalization Measures and Trends

According to Glemarec and Oliveira (2012) there are strong indications of commitment to the revitalization of public institutions worldwide. The recent eagerness to embrace change goes against the trend that started in the 1980s when public service reform was, in many countries, a part of cost-cutting economic restructuring programmes, implemented at the urging of international financial and donor institutions, and widely perceived as an “external imposition”. In much of today’s world, and as Governments acknowledge the necessity to reassess the workings of public administration and to orient public institutions towards citizen concerns, revitalization is viewed not as a bitter pill to be reluctantly swallowed, but as a natural and prudent response to escalating challenges. The major challenge is how to make a transition from commitment to action. This requires forging strong coalitions for change.

Notwithstanding differences within and across regions, the rationale frequently cited for embarking on revitalization efforts includes the following:

a) Promoting ethics, transparency and accountability;

b) Enhancing public service efficiency and effectiveness, especially in the delivery of public services (however, interest in performance and productivity management and in value-for-money auditing has been particularly observed in developed economies, emerging markets and economies in transition);

c) Ensuring the responsiveness of public administration to citizen needs and legitimate demands (through the adoption of citizen charters, dissemination of service pledges, and implementation of quality service initiatives);
d) Promoting human development (and achieving the Millennium Development Goals);

e) Promoting economic growth and macroeconomic stability (by acquiring and applying the capacity to implement programmes geared towards promoting investor confidence and creating an environment conducive to private sector participation in development).

Other reasons cited for revitalizing administrative systems, though less frequently than the preceding ones, are as follows:

a) Preventing and resolving conflict, and development of emergency preparedness and community policing (for countries faced with threats to security or emerging from conflict);

b) Applying information and communication technologies to improve internal management processes and external service delivery systems, and promoting civil service automation (this is especially the case in well-established and rapidly changing administrative systems);

c) Repositioning the public service for the challenges of democratization and economic liberalization (Africa, Central, Eastern and South eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States);

d) Promoting popular participation in local governance and implementing decentralization programmes (an aspect of democratic reform);

e) Creating an environment conducive to private sector growth and development;

f) Coupling pay and employment reforms with the reassignment of posts and miscellaneous redundancy management programmes.

Among the issues on which there is a convergence of views are those relating to the integrity, efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of public institutions, as well as to the significance of the role played by those institutions in promoting economic growth, macroeconomic stability and human development. Without reading too much unanimity into the responses from the Member States, it is possible to add that the measures and strategies frequently applied by countries in achieving their revitalization objectives include the enactment of new laws and regulations (cited by 73.7 per cent of the respondents), personnel and human resources management and training (68.4 per cent), organizational restructuring (65.8 per cent), the adoption of anti-corruption measures (55.3 per cent) and the deployment of information and communication technology capacities to provide quality service (55.3 per cent). At the same time, privatization and enhancement of the law-making capacities of the legislature were among options not frequently cited (36.8 and 39.5 per cent respectively). A few of the responses indicated the challenges encountered in outsourcing essential services, particularly the challenges of accountability and quality control (Glemarec and Oliveira, 2012).

For countries emerging from dictatorial rule, particular emphasis has been given to the enactment of career-oriented civil service laws; the creation or strengthening of institutions responsible for public service management; the review of recruitment practices to ensure that they conform to the highest standards of integrity, competence and professionalism; entrenchment of the values of political
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impartiality and non-partisanship; adoption of measures to insulate the “career service” from political influences; and the organization of programmes to provide training and upgrade skills. Reports of experiences in “engaged governance” in some countries further testify to the importance accorded by recent revitalization programmes to issues of concern to the people. In addition to promoting the adoption of participatory development planning and budgeting approaches, the programmes have led to the establishment of one-stop service-delivery centres in national public administration systems. Variously termed “citizen centres”, “service assistance to citizens”, or “people first”, these quality service initiatives have one common objective — to place public administration at the service of the people and, by so doing, to alleviate poverty and promote development.

One item that consistently appears on revitalization agendas in all regions of the world is public integrity. It is a revitalization challenge that transcends geographic, economic, socio-political and cultural boundaries, and it serves as a linchpin in contemporary revitalization efforts. The growing interest in public integrity (also referred to as “ethics and values”, “ethics and accountability”, “transparency”, etc.) should not come as a surprise. Aside from its role in consolidating the gains of fiscal, macroeconomic, management, institutional and other “technocratic” reforms, the focus on integrity proves critical in reviving and reasserting traditional public administration values and ethos, particularly those that had, in a number of countries, succumbed to systematic politicization or had been subverted by the tendencies of New Public Management towards “corporatization” and the downgrading of rules.

Over and above the measures reported by the respondents, the actions taken to date attest to the importance accorded to public integrity worldwide. Particularly in the last five years, when reports of ethical violations have undermined citizen trust in public and business organizations, Governments in different parts of the world have mounted multipronged assaults on grand and petty corruption. Among the measures adopted are the enactment of strict anti-corruption laws; the establishment of anti-corruption, assets declaration and allied watch-dog bodies; the restructuring of judicial and law enforcement agencies; and the enhancement of the agencies’ investigative, data-gathering and information-sharing capacities. Freedom-of information laws were enacted in a few countries, and in many others civil society organizations and the media were enlisted as allies in the fight against corruption. Over time, a broad measure of consensus was reached on the outline and contents of global and regional anti-corruption conventions — examples of which are the United Nations Convention Against Corruption;9 the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;10 the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption adopted by the Organization of American States on 29 March 1996; the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Officials in International Business Transactions, adopted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on 21 November 1997; and the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union on 11 July 2003.

The measures adopted within and across countries to entrench the principles of merit, professionalism, accountability, “customer care” and citizen responsiveness complement efforts at mainstreaming high ethical standards in public administration systems. From the western Balkans, through Central and Eastern
Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, to Latin America, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, and Africa, a great deal of effort has gone into the enactment of laws and the formulation of codes aimed at delineating the “career service” from offices falling within the political patronage net. Examples include the miscellaneous civil service laws enacted in countries preparing to join the EU, the Charter for the Public Service in Africa adopted in Windhoek, Namibia, by the Third Pan-African Conference of the Ministers of Civil Service in February 2001 and the Ibero-American Charter of Public Service adopted in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, by the fifth Ibero-American Conference of Ministers for Public Administration and State Reform on 27 June 2003. The “customer care” and the supporting productivity measurement and performance management initiatives launched in various countries should, if vigorously pursued, give concrete expression to the quest for professionally competent, ethically sound and citizen-responsive public administration systems, and strengthen the capacity of public institutions to meet development challenges. The challenge, however, is how to ensure enforcement of those measures (Glemarec and Oliveira, 2012).

### 2.6 RECENT GLOBAL CHALLENGES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

There is a global consensus that urbanization and economic development are complementary to each other. Global urban population being only three per cent in 1800, 13 per cent in 1900 and 30 per cent in 1950 has crossed 50 per cent mark in the year 2007 (UN, 2007). This journey of urbanization has witnessed a rapid pace of industrialization and expansion of business, industry and trade covering a sequence from Europe to America, Japan, NICS (Newly Industrialized Countries), ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations), China and South Asia. This dispersal of economic activities associated with competitive edge confirms that cities and towns are specifically known for their economic function and have economies of scale and economies of settlements (Michael Cohen, 1990). It is noted that urban economies account for 55 per cent GDP in low income countries, 73 per cent in middle income countries and 85 per cent in higher income countries (World Bank, 1999, Elements for a New Strategy on Urban Development and Municipal Issues, Washington, D.C., World Bank). Therefore, cities and towns being engines of economic growth acquire crucial role to achieve national policy objectives of a welfare state. Accordingly national policies across the board are giving emphasis on urban development and associated delivery of services and infrastructure to a cross section of households (Pandey, 2012).

In order to address the issues arising due to the process of urbanization and other related unsustainable economic issues, increasing gap between rich and the poor, unsustainable harvesting of natural resources at different levels and increasing social maladies led to grow pubic concern at national and international levels. As a result, in 1992 the world leaders met at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, the largest gathering of heads of states or governments to have ever been organized until then, promising to chart a development path that is equitable, environmentally just and economically rewarding. They recognized, under the call for ‘sustainable development’ that a different kind of development was needed, one which would simultaneously achieve the economic, social and environmental objectives of
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human development. Twenty years after UNCED, the Rio + 20 Summit again met to reaffirm past commitments, but, even more importantly, accelerate their implementation by focusing on the greening of the economy, promoting social equity and improving environmental governance. A fundamental and often overlooked pre-requisite to achieve sustainable development is the role and capacity of public institutions. Practice has shown that public institutions faced a number of challenges to translate political will and policy change into action. Therefore, to deliver a new development paradigm, we need to strengthen the ‘visible hand’ of public institutions worldwide to supplement the so-called invisible hand of markets. In view of these initiatives by the UNCED, there started more discussions and actions on the role and newer dynamics of public institutions all across the world particularly after liberalization and globalization of economy all across.

The social and economic fibre of global societies have undergone tremendous change due to the process of urbanization, modernization, increased awareness and public participation in development and decision making. The processes of globalization and political and economic change have introduced socio-economic changes taking place worldwide. The challenges confronting public administration systems as the developed and the developing countries have implemented different types of innovative and capacity-strengthening initiatives at different levels. All these have also multiplied and introduced new challenges into the realm of public administration worldwide. The world has also witnessed the accelerated development of information and communication technologies, the emergence of trading blocs and economic unions. The rural to urban mass migrations accompanied by the increasing pressure on urban resources and the increasing number of urban poor and unemployed youths have posed serious rich and poor divide in developing countries particularly India are some of the new challenges before the government and the public administration. The other types of new emerging challenges include growing intercultural interactions economic liberalization, expanding opportunities for the movement of goods and capital, climatic and environmental changes with catastrophic consequences. Some of the more recent ones include the marketing of new drugs and genetically modified food products and the discovery of mysterious diseases that recognize no political or geographical boundaries have compounded the ever increasing challenges for public administration.

Many developing and under developed countries are still struggling with the new realities of globalization and liberalization and are yet to introduce few desired and required reforms in governance and economic policy. While the developed nations have already moved much ahead in terms of certain reforms in the functioning of the government and administration, but many developing countries are yet to begin their reforms in order to meet the new challenges due to liberalization and globalization of world trade, production and economy. Some of the events, which have far reaching consequences world wide like the events of 11 September 2001, which has placed security firmly on the public policy agenda in a number of issues and countries. Now, there is more realization that security needs to be broadly defined to include human concerns, particularly concerns for the socio-economic welfare of the people.

It is also important to understand here that how quickly the developing countries, particularly the least developed ones, improve their economy, and emerge from
poverty and achieve improved living standards depends partly on the support of
the international community but also on the effectiveness of national public
administration systems in implementing the poverty reduction components of
the Millennium Development Goals. Those concerns explain the attention given
in recent years to measures aimed at enhancing the policymaking capacity and
the service-delivery capacities of public administration systems worldwide. The
objectives and strategies of public administration revitalization are as varied as
the challenges encountered at different times and places. This is to be expected.
In a world characterized by diversity of culture and by disparities in socio-
economic and political conditions, public administration revitalization cannot
be projected in a monochromatic format, but rather in a way that vividly brings
out the various hues and circumstances distinguishing one environment from
another (UN, 2005).

In this session you have read about means for revitalizing of public administration,
recent global challenges and public administration. Now answer the questions
given in Check Your Progress-2.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: a) Write your answer in about 50 words.
b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the unit

1) What are some of the measures for revitalizing public administration?
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2) Discuss some of the recent global challenges with regard to public
administration?
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2.7 LET US SUM UP

Public Administration can certainly help in achieving the goals of sustainable
development. Sustainable Development can take place in a more efficient manner
if public administration officials are honest and willing to take risks to perform
better. For this there is an urgent need for public administration reforms. It is has
been demonstrated at various levels worldwide that goals of sustainable
development can be achieved through a number of institutional innovations and
reforms such as democratization and decentralization of decision making; developing legal and institutional frameworks and economic governance systems;
implementing ethics and anti-corruption strategies at various levels in and outside
government institutions; improving resource mobilization at various levels;
introduction of better financial management systems; and tapping the potential
of e-governance. Ultimately, an efficient government is an instrument of change,
a change which will secure and preserve resources for the future generations.

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2.9 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS - POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

1) **What is the meaning and significance of public administration?**
   
   Public administration is the whole government in action; it includes all operations having for their purpose the fulfillment or enforcement of public policy. The wellbeing of the nation (society) is increasingly dependent on the efficiency of the Government (i.e.) Public administration. The future of the Civilized Government and even the Civilization rests on the competence, efficiency and efficacy of the Public administration.

2) **What is the relation between public administration and sustainable development?**
   
   The role of public administration discusses the political, managerial and social challenges of translating the concept of sustainable development into action. Public administration can implement ethics and anti-corruption strategies at various levels in and outside government institutions; improving resource mobilization at various levels; introduction of better financial management systems etc.

Check Your Progress 2

1) **What are some of the measures for revitalizing public administration?**
   
   Some of the measures for revitalizing public administration are:
   a) Promoting ethics, transparency and accountability;
   b) Enhancing public service efficiency and effectiveness, especially in the delivery of public services
   c) Ensuring the responsiveness of public administration to citizen needs and legitimate demands

2) **Discuss some of the recent global challenges with regard to public administration?**
   
   Some of the recent global challenges include growing intercultural interactions, economic liberalization, expanding opportunities for the movement of goods and capital, climatic and environmental changes with catastrophic consequences. The marketing of new drugs and genetically modified food products and the discovery of mysterious diseases that recognize no political or geographical boundaries have compounded the ever increasing challenges for public administration.