

ACSH Brief No 1

Results of the 2nd Baseline Study

The Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana

The Republic of Kazakhstan together with UNDP have initiated the creation of the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana in order to (i) serve as a multilateral institutional platform for continuous exchange, prototyping, and upscaling experience and knowledge through established regional expert networks in the field of civil service development; (ii) stimulate civil service transformation in the region, through capacity development and south-south and triangular cooperation mechanisms; and (iii) produce innovative approaches to civil service development through evidence-based solutions informed by a comprehensive research and policy agenda.

The Hub now comprises more than 30 participating countries with a geographical range from the OECD members to the CIS and Central Asian countries (more information may be found at www.regionalhub.org).

The 2nd Baseline Study

Two and a half years after the first baseline survey was completed, the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana (ACSH) launched the second baseline survey on 15 April 2015, which was open to potential respondents until 31 May 2015. The findings of the second baseline survey provide sufficient information to discern the priority areas of cooperation in civil service management and development and in public service delivery. It also gauges interest in potential activities supporting civil service development and public service delivery enhancement.

The survey consists of 26 questions, which are grouped in four parts:

- [a] identification of the Hub's priority areas (15 questions);
- [b] civil service (4 questions);
- [c] service delivery (4 questions); and
- [d] other issues (3 questions).

By 31 May 2015, 55 responses were registered in the electronic survey platform, from the participating countries and organizations interested in the Hub. The results presented in this report are based on 50 responses, as five of the responses received were not complete, and thus excluded from the analysis. Of these 50 responses 22 were provided in English and the remaining 28 in Russian.

Given the limited space of this note, the results are reported in brief, and split into three main areas:

- [a] research-related initiatives;
- [b] capacity building activities; and
- [c] experts network enhancement.

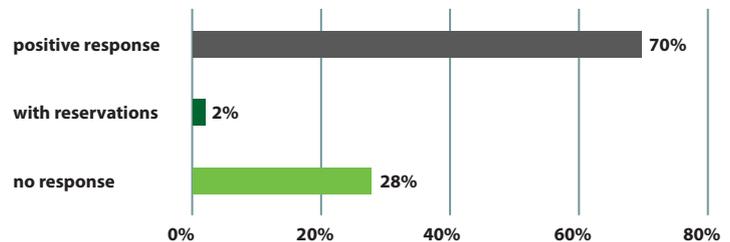
Please turn to the inside pages to see the results.



ACSH FULFILLED ITS MANDATE ADEQUATELY TO DATE

Most survey respondents believe that the ACSH delivered an adequate number of research and capacity building activities along the priorities highlighted through the 1st baseline study completed in the autumn of 2013. Hereinafter, the percentage indicate the share of the respondents who chose a particular option.

ACSH response to research and capacity building interventions



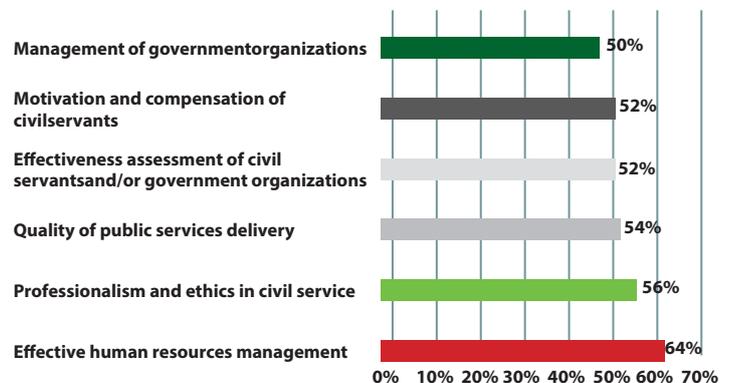
Research initiatives

RESEARCH TOPICS IN DEMAND

Survey respondents were provided with 17 possible topics of interest for research in civil service and public administration reform, and asked to pick the 5 most important and most relevant to their work. These were:

- [a] effective human resources management;
- [b] quality of public service delivery;
- [c] professionalism and ethics in civil service;
- [d] effectiveness assessment of civil servants and/or government organisations; and
- [e] motivation and compensation of civil servants.

Most popular topics for collaborative research



REFORM SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION

Survey respondents named many countries with successful reforms, which could be developed into case studies as good practice examples. Although some further probing is needed to find out more about all the specific success stories in each country mentioned, some cases were: in Georgia, the anti-corruption policy implementation in the police; in Kazakhstan, e-government application vis-à-vis public service delivery and the establishment of a Senior Executive Service - Corps A; in Azerbaijan, the ASAN centres and the results public service delivery enhancement; in China, the efforts made against street-level corruption and the development of core competencies for civil servants; and in Pakistan the highway patrol police reform effort. The ASCH aspires to turn these successful reform stories into case studies and disseminate them widely across the countries of the region.



ANTI-CORRUPTION IMPLEMENTATION STUDIES CONSIDERED VITAL FOR SUCCESS

As anti-corruption efforts seem to be at the forefront of government policy priorities in many countries of the region, several activities

could be implemented to satisfy the demand for information sharing and to assist in reaching the desired objectives. A major initiative would be to undertake studies of anti-corruption policy implementation around the region, which could be very helpful in mutual learning and understanding of the crucial issues involved.

Capacity Building activities

THEMATIC TRAININGS/SEMINARS CONSIDERED A MUST FOR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

According to the results obtained, professional training is a pivotal capacity building activity. The respondents expressed their preferences among numerous choices, of which the following 5 were the most popular:

- [a] effective human resources management in the public sector;
- [b] anti-corruption policy initiatives;
- [c] professionalism and ethics in civil service;
- [d] motivation and compensation of civil servants;
- and
- [e] strategic state planning.

It should be highlighted that as the first four topics fall directly within the ACSH mandate, several capacity building initiatives could be developed for immediate delivery.

PREFERRED TRAINING MODALITIES

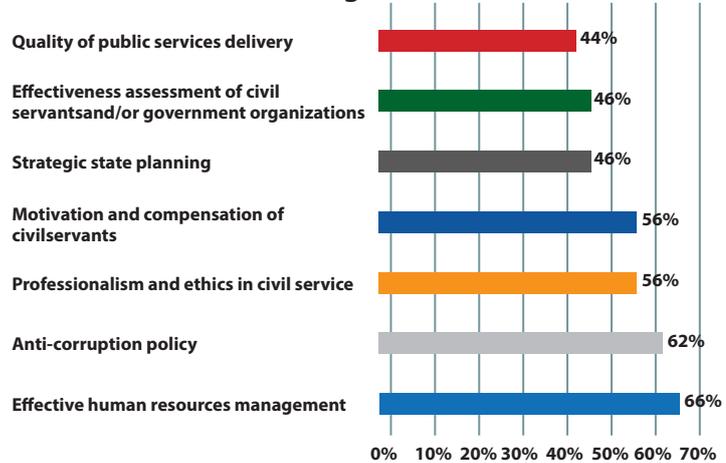
Out of seven choices provided, the following five were given the most preferences:

- [a] training for analysts and researchers in leading research centres;
- [b] exchange of good practices through remote channels of communication;
- [c] short-term trainings for civil servants;
- [d] secondment to research centres; and
- [e] distance learning. In this connection, the ACSH web portal could serve as the gateway to provide the platform for exchange of good practices remotely, as well as distance learning courses.

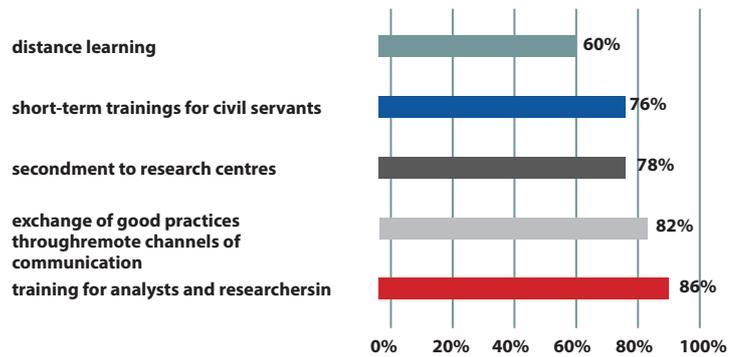
CIVIL SERVANTS PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT INTERESTS

Based on the survey results, it seems that civil servants in the region would like to devote some time for personal development. The most preferred topics were development of capacity to motivate employees and build professional trust and effective human resources management.

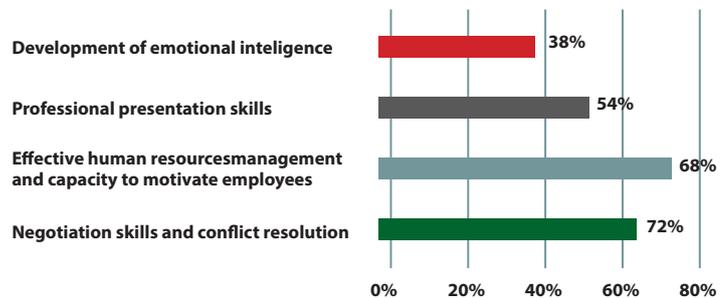
Most popular themes for professional development trainings/seminars



Most popular training modalities



Most popular topics for personal development



Experts Network Enhancement

BENEFITS FROM PARTICIPATION IN ACSH ACTIVITIES

The majority of respondents said that they have derived many benefits for their work by participating in the ACSH activities and events. The development of an institutional framework for knowledge exchanges in several aspects of public administration have been most beneficial. Some suggested that the network should be geared toward peer-to-peer learning for achieving most effective learning results.

JOURNAL CONTENT

The Journal is viewed as a medium to providing useful material for practical problems faced in the civil service. As a result, it is often recommended among colleagues as a source of useful information.

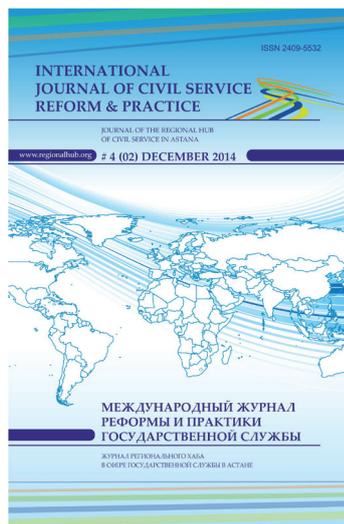
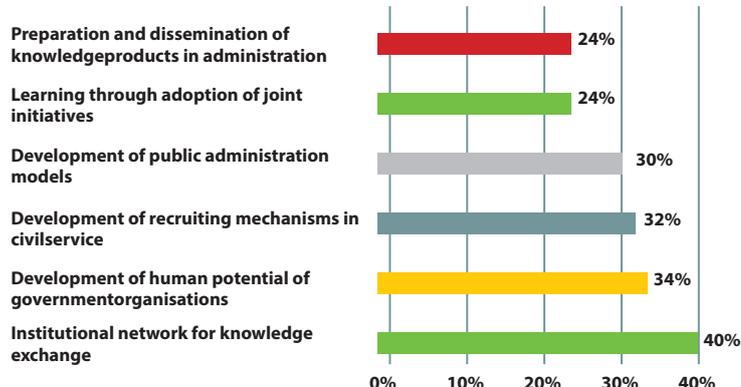
The most desirable topics for inclusion in the Journal are international and regional experience and good practices in civil service, as well as scientific analysis of civil service practical issues and problems, in addition to anti-corruption practices and methods.

Several respondents expressed their interest and willingness to join the peer review panel of the Journal. For this reason, the ACSH is pleased to include them in its peer review roster for the future editions of the Journal.

THE ACSH WEB PORTAL AS A PRIMARY GATEWAY TO INFORMATION

In general, the ACSH web portal is adequate, however there is a lot of room for improvement to turn it into a repository of useful information. Respondents suggested that the portal should contain information on ACSH events and activities, and more news from the region concerning civil service and public administration reform development. It should also contain more reports and studies, and more reference material in the form of a well-functioning searchable e-library. The web portal should also serve as the gateway for distance learning initiatives. In addition, the portal should include information on the participating countries, such as progress reports and publications related to the on-going reforms, their effects, results and outcomes.

Most beneficial ACSH activities



The Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana
14, Bukey Khan Street, Astana, Kazakhstan, 010000,
Tel. +77172 790 335, Email: yernar.zharkeshov@undp.org, www.regionalhub.org