ONLINE

19 MAY 2026 - 21 MAY 2026

UN Leadership Catalyst Series - Adaptive Leadership Accelerator (Edition 1)

CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION   **LEADERSHIP**

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

LANGUAGE
English

DURATION
Three days, covering three webinar sessions (each 4 hours in duration)

ENROLL BY
13 May 2026

PRICE
1,200 USD

LOCATION
ONLINE

TARGET
UN Only

CONTACT   leadershipandmanagement@unssc.org

Designed exclusively for UN system directors (D1/D2), the UN Leadership Catalyst Series provides a reflective, high-impact learning space to examine, adapt, and elevate leadership practice in the face of volatility and uncertainty.

Introduction

The **UN system** is **operating in an environment of unprecedented complexity** - characterized by competing priorities, constrained resources, shifting mandates, and increasing demands for agility and coherence. In such contexts, **the challenges leaders face cannot be solved through technical expertise alone; they require new ways of seeing, thinking and mobilizing** others across boundaries

The **UN Leadership Catalyst Series: Adaptive Leadership Accelerator** invites senior UN leaders to step into a **live learning and experimentation space** to explore how they can lead through uncertainty, exercise influence beyond authority, and build collective capacity for change. **Grounded in the principles of adaptive leadership, systems thinking, and collective sense-making**, it offers a reflective, action-oriented space t**o transform one's leadership practice for the realities of today's UN**.

Objectives

As participants go through the UN Leadership Catalyst Series - Adaptive Leadership Accelerator**, they will:**

- **Recognise and distinguish adaptive from technical challenge**s in their operational context.
- **Strengthen their ability to mobilise people and systems** to navigate uncertainty and advance new ways of leading
- **Build personal and collective resilience** in navigating political, institutional, and cross-boundary complexity
- **Develop experiments and learning loops that foster adaptive capacity** within themselves, their teams, and entities.

Course methodology

The programme combines structured learning, reflective and peer dialogue over **three webinars, each four hours in duration.**

Learning modalities will include:

- **Expert input and dialogue:** Each session will be led by faculty with deep expertise in adaptive leadership and systems thinking.
- **Live case analysis:** Participants bring real-time leadership challenges and test new approaches with peer and faculty support.
- **Online learning platform:** A resource hub of supplementary readings and reflection tools accessible throughout the programme.

Course contents

The programme will comprise **three deep-dive sessions**, covering the following themes and topics:

Session 1: Seeing the System Anew: Diagnosing the Challenge

- Understanding complexity and distinguishing between technical and adaptive challenges;
- Expanding perspective: from problem-solving to pattern recognition;
- Introducing the concept of staying on the balcony - observing and intervening with purpose.

Session 2: Mobilising People and Systems: Working with Resistance and Energy

- Understanding the social dynamics of change and the loss it provokes;
- Tools for mobilising stakeholders and working across boundaries;
- Navigating conflict, tension, and uncertainty as productive forces for adaptation;
- Practising interventions in live cases through peer consultation.

Session 3: Leading in Motion: Experimentation, Learning and Renewal

- Designing safe-to-fail experiments and iterative learning processes;
- Building personal and organisational resilience under pressure;
- Reflecting on presence, courage, and purpose in leading change;
- Crafting a personal Action Plan - a roadmap for continued experimentation beyond the programme.

Target audience

Senior UN staff at the D1/D2 levels;

Senior staff operating in relevant fields of international cooperation in complex, fast-changing contexts.

By open enrolment or nomination. (Please note that some UN organizations follow an internal nomination process to identify candidates for the programme).

Cost of participation

The **tuition for the programme is $1,200,** inclusive of access to all sessions, materials and access to the learning platform for one year.