GOVERNANCE *Matters*

THE LATEST TRENDS IN GOVERNANCE

LEADERSHIP IN
TURBULENT TIMES
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Hodge and Kenneth Sim*

MASTERING
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Letter from the Editor

Alvin Pang, Singapore, 2024.

Last year's edition of *Governance Matters* presented a world beset by polycrises, testing the capability of governments to shepherd their countries through multiple, concurrent challenges. How well they have done in this regard testifies to each administration's diligence, dexterity, prudence, and ingenuity—and the true quality of their governance—in difficult times.

This year is one in which many countries around the world are looking ahead to the future. At least 64 countries, comprising almost half of the world's population, have held or will hold general elections in 2024, the results of which are set to shape economic and societal trajectories for years to come. It is reasonable to surmise that electorates will take into account their experience of the past few years when deciding on their next government. It is perhaps understandable for public servants to be anxious that such far-reaching decisions could be made not on the basis of longer-term considerations of competence or proven outcomes, but on momentary impressions, good or bad, that might be influenced by fleeting events or even swayed by malicious actors.

In an era where trust in institutions is being eroded, good governance involves both delivering technically good results and also upholding the precious social compact between government and the people. In a rich and wide-ranging panel discussion (p.107), Australia's former Prime Minister Julia Gillard, U.K. government leader Margaret Hodge, and Chandler Institute of Governance (CIG) Managing Director Kenneth Sim discuss how future-ready governments can and must achieve results in the present. This earns confidence in their ongoing efforts and vision for the country, while building government capability to deliver on their promises down the road.

Our three distinguished panellists were speaking at the launch of the 2024 Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI) Report, which, for the first time since the Index's introduction in 2021, sheds light on the trends of national government effectiveness over time. The data indicates a widening gap between countries in the race towards good governance: the winners are pulling ahead, while those who have not been doing as well are falling ever further behind (p.45). The overall picture nevertheless gives some cause for optimism. There are clear signs that progress can and is being made: when attention, resources, and will are directed toward the different aspects of government capabilities that underpin strong nations. *Governance Matters* seeks to explore many of these areas, drawing on the wisdom of experienced practitioners of governance from across the globe.

In this edition, we learn from seasoned hands such as Peter Shergold (p.3), formerly Australia's most senior civil servant, who shares his perspective on how to work with the political leadership to address issues for the long term public good. He also advocates an approach to public service that is authentic, inclusive, and resolutely focused on real needs rather than theoretical targets. Also in favour of engaging stakeholders as part of the governance

process is decorated Indian Administrative Service officer Krishna Bhaskar (p.81), who elaborates on the policymaking finesse and political savvy needed to serve communities in need, earn public trust, and lay a lasting foundation for future growth in his home state of Telangana. Veteran reformer Alikhan Baimenov recalls efforts to professionalise the civil service in post-independence Kazakhstan, in the face of a difficult political legacy (p.9).

Rebecca Sta Maria, Executive Director of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Secretariat and a seasoned trade negotiator, reflects on what it takes to bridge differences, build common ground, and promote shared prosperity across an increasingly fractious global community (p.93). Of course, managing diverse interests and cultivating allies to secure and advance one's governance agenda is a time-tested strategy: as the life and career of Egypt's notable female Pharaoh Hatshepsut reminds us (p.99).

To give our readers and fellow practitioners proven tools for effective co-creation and collaboration, CIG, New America, and the Singapore Government Partnerships Office outline their experiences with impact hubs—an approach that harnesses the power of cross-sectoral partnership in a focused, time-bound, results-oriented way (p.87). The Centre for Evidence and Implementation also recommends ways in which governments can scale successful initiatives up to benefit more people who need them, based on sound data and thoughtful attention to local context (p.69).

We also spotlight present-day practitioners grappling with some of the thorniest issues facing governments now and in the foreseeable future. Mikael Tofvesson, from Sweden's Psychological Defence Agency, reveals how his organisation safeguards his country's interests and values against malign influences and disinformation (p.29), while INTERPOL's Bernardo Pillot explains how the global law enforcement agency is working with governments to address alarming borderless cybersecurity threats that can disrupt businesses and harm lives (p.75). Many countries experience uneven progress, thriving in the metropolises while rural regions languish. This can lead to economic inequality and political disaffection. Slovenia offers an example of steps being taken to reduce regional disparities in development and promote sustainable future growth for all, as the

Cohesion and Regional Development Minister Aleksander Jevšek describes (p.23). This year's cover story is Botswana's Bogolo Kenewendo, who argues that financial institutions and economic frameworks need to be significantly reimagined to allow countries in Africa to reach their full economic potential and recognise their material contribution to sustainable development (p.35). Sônia Guajajara, Brazil's first Minister for Indigenous Peoples, shares a remarkable account of the work being done to preserve cultures and lands under threat (p.15)—and why doing so is vital to the unique heritage of Brazil's Indigenous communities, as well as to the global effort to stave off environmental devastation and climate impact.

As the 21st century advances, the hurdles countries face in their quest towards greater prosperity and societal wellbeing seem ever more daunting, when even attempts to advance can be fraught with hidden risks and unexpected consequences. These challenges and opportunities are highlighted in our in-house review of how governments around the world are tackling the thorny policy issue of immigration (p.63).

CIG founder Richard F. Chandler underscores in his missive for this issue (p.56), how good governance at the hands of a steady, capable, and trustworthy corps of committed leaders and public servants can bring about transformational results for a country, despite the odds. Even when prospects might appear dim, our commitment is to help light the way forward and to share stories of those who have shown where and how progress can be made.

May our readers find inspiration and insight in these pages to help them look to, and look after, the future of their countries—with a renewed sense of purpose, resolve, and optimism.

Dr Alvin Pang
Managing Editor

"It's Dogged that Does It": Authentic Leadership for an Anxious Age

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How do you build trust in government in an increasingly fractured world? How do policy design and policy delivery actually work together? *Peter Shergold*, formerly Australia's top civil servant and Chancellor of the Western Sydney University, explores these and other timely questions.

In your view, what will matter most to governance in the coming decade?
In many ways, things are more challenging now than when I was a full-time public servant. So many of the issues we face go beyond our national borders: war; global pandemic; climate change; world trade; social media. We have a set of very large, long-term global problems, and we are having to address them at the national level, with a political system that is not very well designed to deal with them. All nations have found it difficult to keep our processes of government in pace with change.

A key role of civil servants is to help the political leadership understand this. Ministers may come in with big, bold, strategic ideas. But then the day-to-day pressures and endless crises take up their time. As civil servants we try to give ministers the chance to think longer term and articulate what they can contribute, as their small part in any global response. That said, any sense of a global community or world order is becoming increasingly fragile, which is part of the challenge.

Social media has led people to increasingly communicate only with those who broadly share their views. This lends itself to division and polarisation, as well as to the notion that every political problem has a simple solution, whereas we know public policy issues are wickedly complex. This is compounded by social media accentuating identity politics and allowing views to be broadcast very quickly. What all this ends up doing is to engender distrust and undermine social cohesion.

Dr Peter Shergold, then Secretary to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, appearing before the Senate Committee looking into parliamentary privilege, 3 May 2005.

The key challenge we now face is maintaining trust in the processes of government. By this I mean that citizens must feel that public officials are acting with integrity, and that our public services are accountable, responsible, and answerable for decisions made. This is a deep-seated societal problem, because in fact trust is falling in all established institutions: businesses, faiths, the media.

What can governments do about this challenge?
At one level, we need to avoid having citizens thinking that public leaders are all self-serving "snouts in the trough". We need a high level of transparency, so citizens understand why decisions are being made, who actually made those decisions, and can then assess the way they are being implemented.

We must ensure that when the government makes decisions, people see these decisions being implemented in the way they expect. Citizens are losing confidence in the ability of governments to

deliver results. It does not help that when governments announce a new policy, programme, or service, they tend to overbake the cake: to overpromise, which then leads citizens to believe they are under-delivering.

Here, I believe the civil service and public services have a part to play. When you ask who people do trust, it comes down to those they actually know: trust in teachers, doctors, nurses—professions people interact with—tends to be quite high. That is why frontline public servants are so important. They are the face of public administration.

One fundamental problem is that civil servants often think policy design and policy delivery are different. They may not admit it, but there is an implicit status distinction between those who give ministers policy advice and help to design new programmes, and those, often more junior, who deliver the programmes on the ground. But we know we can only judge how good a policy is by the way it is delivered.

All too often, governments look to community organisations for support, for example in delivering welfare programmes, but do not involve them in the design of these programmes. Time and again, we hear the organisations say that, had they been consulted, they would not have advised designing the programme that way.

We need to live up to the expectations we create. And the only way we can do that is by understanding that the design and delivery of public policy are two sides of the same coin.

> " *We need to live up to the expectations we create.*

Can you give an example of how you wed design and delivery to meet public expectations and engender trust?
As Coordinator General for the settlement of refugees in New South Wales, I get different government agencies to work together to integrate newcomers and displaced persons into Australian society. I realised early on that I could only do this by understanding the experiences of the refugees who come: what it is they want, and what is or is not working from their firsthand knowledge. I have established a working group bringing together community organisations that represent or work with refugees and key government agencies at the state and Commonwealth levels to focus on these issues. I call it a Joint Partnership Working Group.

New South Wales State Premier Mike Baird and Australian Minister for Social Services Christian Porter welcome an Iraqi refugee family, Sydney, Australia, 21 March 2016.

The important next stage is to capture the actual lived experiences of refugees themselves, rather than going through an intermediary, who might be part of the problem as much as the solution. I have established forums to talk to people about their needs and expectations.

I see refugees as people with skills, experience, or entrepreneurial drive. But it is not easy to give people who have a limited understanding of how Australia and the government work a sense that they can contribute and are free to speak their views. People will often tell someone with authority what they think they want to hear. Let me give an example. A refugee with a university degree said he wanted help finding a job as an accountant. We later found out what he really wanted was to start an ice-cream business, but this was not something he felt was the appropriate answer to give a public official.

When you have a mandate from the top, it is not too difficult to overcome the territorial barriers of bureaucracy; you can knock heads together. It is harder to meaningfully involve community organisations, businesses, and the public themselves, to find out how to better design and deliver programmes.

People only trust in government if they feel that they are part of government, rather than government being something done to them, whether good or bad. Many people think of civic participation as going to the ballot box every few years, which we increasingly recognise is not a way that fully engages people.

The challenge is how we can remake government so that people feel they are part of it as citizens—how, on an everyday basis, they feel they can influence public decisions.

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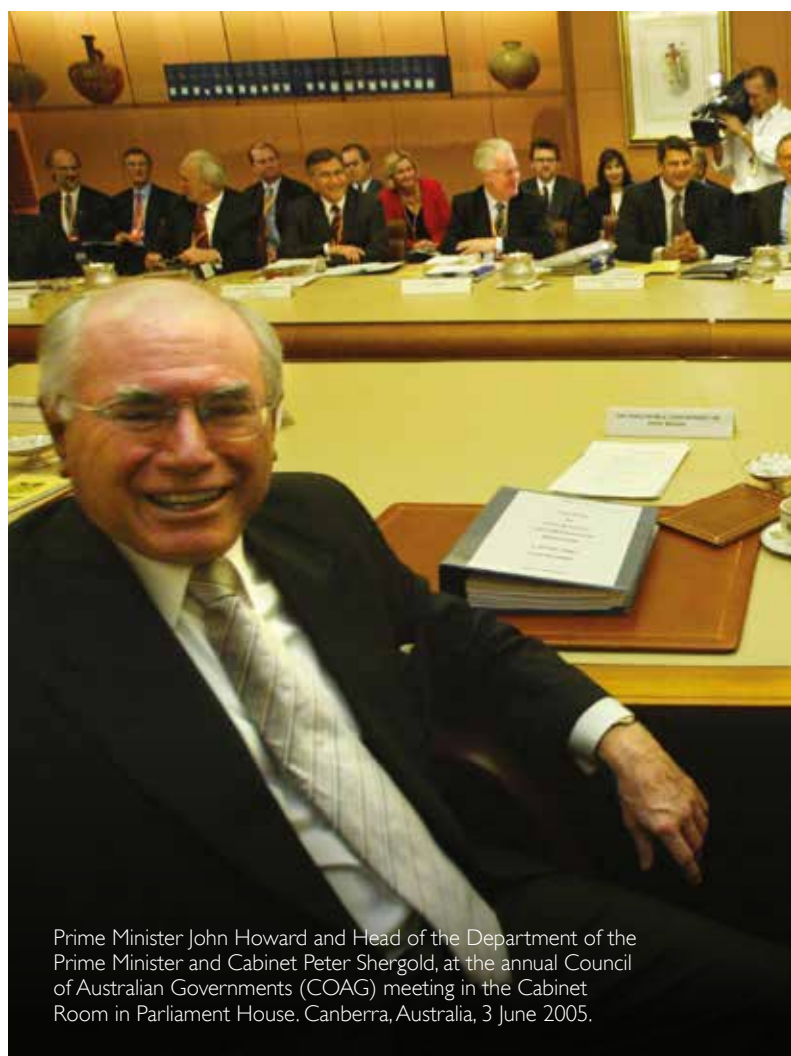
Prime Minister John Howard and Head of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Peter Shergold, at the annual Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting in the Cabinet Room in Parliament House. Canberra, Australia, 3 June 2005.

You have argued that public sector leaders need to be authentic. What does this mean in today's governance context?

Authenticity is important, but it has different aspects. At a very personal level, authenticity is understanding that the life of work and the life of family are not distinct. I have always worried about the concept of a "work-life balance", as if they are on different sides of the scale. One thing to consider in public service at a senior level is the authentic experience you have had yourself and what can be learnt from it.

I have served in several capacities in government on aged care. I myself have experienced ageing, and I have seen my peers going through the physical, mental, emotional, or financial difficulties associated with that process. Understanding all this, and bringing it authentically to policy discussions, does not replace all the skills, experience, analysis, and conceptual knowledge one has. In my view, it is

In many areas of government policy, citizens who are hostile to government and to policy will come to understand what you are trying to do when you start talking through it. At the same time, even public servants who may do wonderful work on solutions may not fully understand what problem they are actually trying to address. Unless you can focus on what government is seeking to achieve, you are very unlikely to communicate effectively to the public what you are doing.

Part of being authentic is also appreciating why some of what we do, such as taxing and regulating, are indeed things people would rather not have imposed on them—our job is to get people to understand that the rights and benefits of citizenship come with responsibilities that they may not like.

Unless you can focus on what government is seeking to achieve, you are very unlikely to communicate effectively about what you are doing.

entirely appropriate to bring emotional intelligence and empathy to bear in public policy: to understand how it is to be in others' shoes.

There has also got to be authenticity in how you communicate: what is possible, what you are trying to do, why you have approached things the way you have.

One of my roles is to oversee schools. My organisation is often perceived as part of the problem teachers face: if only we would get out of their way and let them get on with teaching without all the red tape and paperwork. What this means is we have not been able to adequately convey the reason the regulation is there: why it is important to safeguard children in school, or to improve educational outcomes. They may come back to say the information we are collecting is pointless, and the way we are collecting it is time-consuming. But *that* is the authentic discussion we need to have; not whether the regulation is good or bad.

Government agencies must work together to meet public needs. Having chaired ANZSOG, how do you think national schools of government can help foster a whole-of-government ethos?
The greatest value of schools of government, like our Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG), is not to do with what they are teaching. It is in bringing together public servants from multiple agencies—central and service, large and small, different parts of government, and different jurisdictions—so they get the chance to talk and to know one another. Everything else is almost a bonus.

The best thing you can do to lubricate the wheels of government is to get people to build relationships with those who work in other agencies. When I was Head of the Prime Minister's Department, I made it clear that no one was going to head any department without senior experience in a service delivery

Australian officials host then New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, who delivered a speech titled "Why does good government matter?", in an event organised by the Australia and New Zealand School of Government. Melbourne, Australia, 18 July 2019.

organisation. I wanted people who had had a diversity of experience in three or four different agencies, not the best and brightest economist from a top university who had spent their whole career getting promoted through Treasury.

Schools of government can also assign participants real-world, tricky public policy issues that can only be resolved satisfactorily by different agencies coming together. You have to train and reward people on the basis of whole-of-government thinking. Ideally, performance pay would also be pegged to demonstrating genuine collaborative behaviour.

One difficulty is that once a government policy is decided, even collectively, people may go back to their individual agencies and start to administer their responsibilities in a siloed way again. I worked on Indigenous issues, which are among the most challenging in Australia. You come to realise that the bureaucratic demarcations do not work, and unless you can bring a range of services together in response to what a particular community needs in a particular place, you are not going to solve problems.

So whole-of-government approaches should also be flexible enough to be delivered in different ways to different communities in the real world. In my experience, governments struggle with this, because they tend to look for one-size-fits-all templates that are easier for civil servants to administer.

How can civil servants work with the political leadership to realise whole-of-government approaches and outcomes?

Ministers can be part of the problem in trying to realise whole-of-government policies. A good prime minister will make Cabinet work effectively to consider policy, explore risks, and make decisions. Some prime ministers prefer to make decisions with just two or three of their closest advisors. I would always remind my prime minister, who wanted to see whole-of-government approaches, that they may be the only senior leader to fully hold this view. Other political office holders are looking to prove themselves and move up the ladder, by succeeding in the part of government for which they have been given prime responsibilities. Political career progress

may be even more demarcated by bureaucratic boundaries than with public service careers.

That said, the efficacy of government depends on both the political and the administrative wing working together, to overcome the natural inclination for people to work within their own fields, and in some cases, to protect their own territory from "intrusion" by outsiders.

This problem is not unique to government. Having worked in the private sector, I have seen large, established organisations experiencing the same problem: business units that do not operate effectively together. The same happens in the community sector as well. These bureaucratic structures and demarcations are writ large across all sectors of society.

What advice from your long career would you give to someone starting out in government today?

I have learnt a great deal from watching people who are good. I came into government from 20 years as an academic, joining at a senior level. It would have been easy to have done three years and left. I did not, because of the extraordinary leadership of a person I was able to learn from, without him ever saying to me "learn from this". You can also learn from failure, and from people who are bad role models: seeing what they have been doing wrong and thinking how you could do better.

I saw qualities I wanted to emulate. Being respectful. Being as non-hierarchical as possible, knowing that junior positions are more likely to be filled by younger people, whose views you want to include in policy considerations. Working hard. Keeping a sense of humour: because crisis is inevitable in public service life and you need a sense of perspective.

One quote I have lived by does not come from a public servant, but from the 19th-century novelist Anthony Trollope. His character, a poor bricklayer, advises: "It's dogged as does it. It ain't thinking about it." Here, "dogged" means being persistent and resilient.

As a civil servant, you will hopefully arrive in a position where you can give frank, fearless, and robust policy advice to the minister you serve. But sometimes it will not be taken. People ask how many times I went back

to a minister when I disagreed with their judgement. I never went by numbers; I would go back until I was certain in my mind that the minister, Cabinet, and the government were making a decision with their eyes wide open, having been told of all the risks and alternatives. At that stage, the elected officials make the decision and it is up to civil servants to implement it as well as they can. I used to take pride in the public not knowing whether I privately agreed with the policy I was promoting and delivering.

You need to be resilient and realise that not all is lost when advice is rejected. Situations change. The environment changes. You may get other chances to think of how to articulate the policy issue in a different way.

> *You need to be resilient and realise that not all is lost when advice is rejected.*

There is also the doggedness of delivering: sometimes you have to learn by doing rather than overthinking. Every meeting in public administration should be one conducted with a purpose, about issues that are not just interesting intellectual exercises, but where we can look to turn ideas into action that have a beneficial impact.

It's dogged that does it. It ain't thinking about it.

Peter Shergold spent 20 years at the most senior levels of the Australian Public Service. He served as the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet from 2002-08. Since then, he has chaired boards in the private, public, academic, and community sectors. He is Chancellor Emeritus of Western Sydney University, and presently chairs Opal HealthCare, the NSW Education Standards Authority, Australia for UNHCR, and the James Martin Institute for Public Policy.
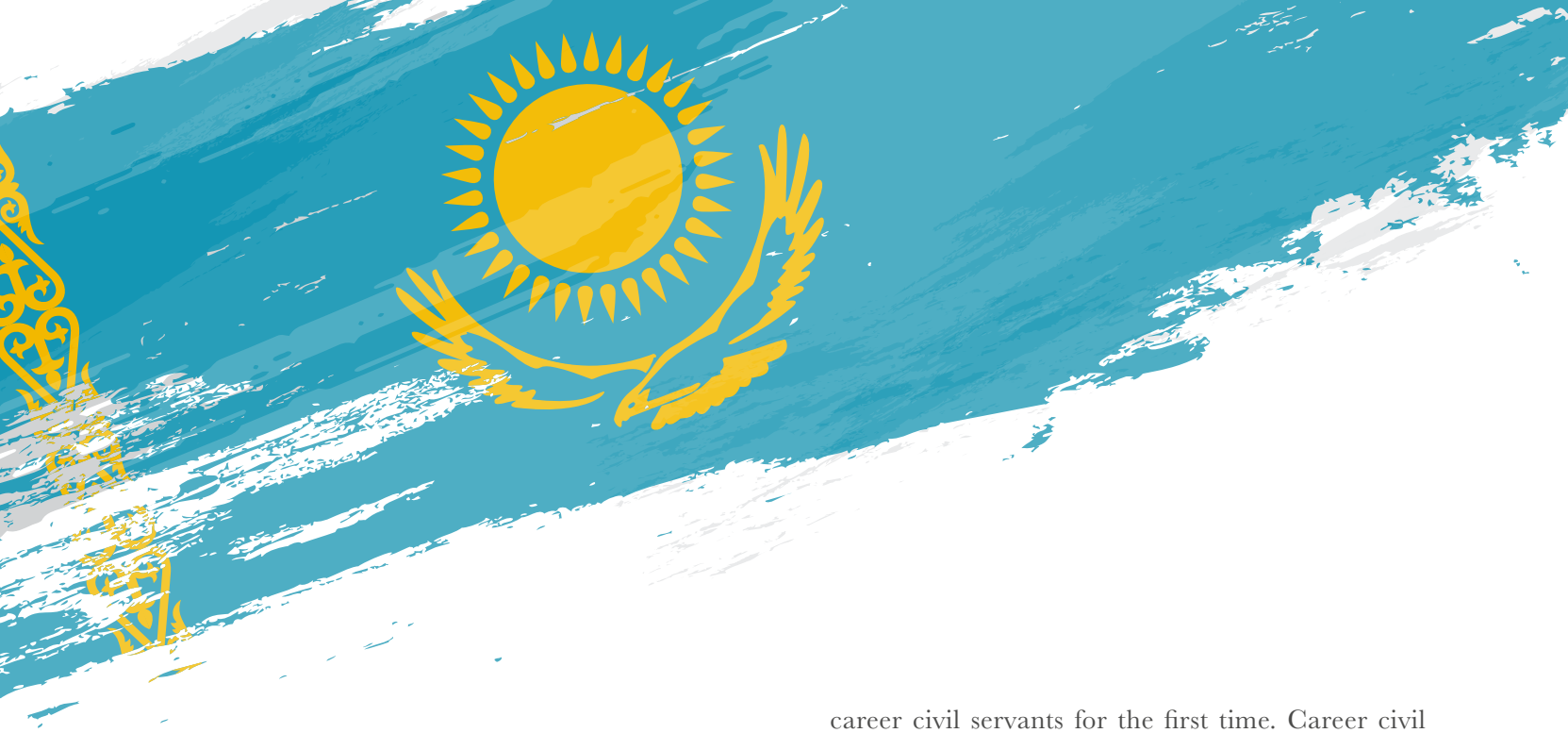
Kazakhstan's New National Story

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Alikhan Baimenov, the Central Asian republic's veteran public sector reformer, recounts his fight to professionalise the civil service, establish accountable institutions, and rediscover Kazakhstan's unique history.

In your tenure as Chairman of the Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan for Civil Service Affairs, you introduced a number of significant reforms. What motivated these moves?

After conducting a study of how countries build efficient civil services, we concluded that, in addition to ensuring institutional certainty and responsibility in government, civil servants had to be professionalised and protected from political interference and instability.

Consequently, we developed a groundbreaking law for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which distinguished political appointees from career civil servants for the first time. Career civil servants were granted protection from dismissal during leadership changes. This was a crucial development: previously, up to half the staff could be replaced within several months of a new minister or governor taking office.

We also made it mandatory for candidates to be admitted to the civil service through a competitive selection process. We adopted a positional model whereby specialists from different sectors could apply openly for positions at different levels of the public service. This was necessary since the country was modernising and undergoing political, economic, and social reforms, as well as a transformation in the role of the state.

Understandably, when the economy is growing rapidly, competition for civil service positions will tend to decrease. The goal is not for all the best talent to work exclusively in the public service. However, given the significant role of the state in post-totalitarian societies, it is important to protect professionals by offering an alternative to high salaries: a guaranteed opportunity to serve the public good and to realise their ideas for their country. One important initiative in this direction has been the Presidential Youth Personnel Reserve, which was created to identify and attract talented young people for the civil service.

Before the move to establish the Agency in 1998, several government bodies, including the Executive Office of the President and the Prime Minister's Office, were able to influence HR processes in the civil services without accountability. Hence, the law

we introduced also provided for the creation of the Civil Service Affairs Agency itself.

Our primary aim was to create a professional civil service dedicated to serving the nation and capable of addressing contemporary challenges.

What are some challenges you faced in pursuing reforms to professionalise the civil service?
In my second tenure as Chairman of the Agency in 2011, the institutional base had already been established, and the legislation had evolved. However, we faced resistance from political appointees in the civil service who were hindering progressive reforms, as well as continuity issues with changing political appointees. Poor attention was being paid to long-term strategic interests, and there was a lack of professionalism in government HR units.

We then amended the law to help professionalise the HR units, and created the Senior Executive Service, known as "A" Corps. We reclassified certain

political positions to reduce the headcount of political appointee civil servants and implemented a more transparent selection mechanism. This move attracted significant public interest and boosted public trust.

Notably, 57 serving district leaders failed to pass the selection. While this made way for new talent to enter the civil service, it also attracted political pressure, leading to the merger in 2014 of the Agency for Civil Service Affairs with the Anti-Corruption Agency. As a result, the selection process for "A" Corps is no longer transparent to the public.

One peculiarity of public service reform is that resistance often comes from within. It frequently arises from colleagues you work with demanding that you explain and debate the proposed changes. Hence, would-be reformers must always be ready to face inconvenience and discomfort, because such reforms are not always welcomed by politicians who want to maintain their privilege under a patronage system. At times, progressive changes may even be rolled back. Ultimately political will, and the readiness of reformers to protect core principles as well as the country's long-term interests, are key.

Among the initiatives you have introduced is the Astana Civil Service Hub (ACSH), a platform for participating countries to exchange knowledge and experiences in the field of public administration. What impact has the Hub made since its founding?
When we began negotiations with embassy representatives in 2012, which eventually led to the establishment of ACSH in 2013, no one anticipated the results we have since achieved.

ACSH has now organised more than 200 capacity-building and research activities for over 12,000 participants from 126 countries and 200 organisations. Furthermore, we have published over 80 knowledge products, which are in high demand. Alongside more established approaches, we have also experimented with new modalities, such as peer-to-peer learning alliances.

Since the inception of ACSH, we have adopted a demand-driven and flexible agenda, with minimal red tape, recognising that government priorities are not fixed: we must respond to changing priorities and

"We must combine our unique heritage with our aspiration to live in harmony with the rest of the world." Alikhan Baimenov at the UN Building, Astana, Kazakhstan, 30 May 2024.

Representatives of institutes and academies of public administration at a Capacity Development Workshop. Such events drive long-term impact by facilitating closer communication and the exchange of experiences. Almaty, Kazakhstan, 7 December 2023.

needs. To achieve this, we conduct needs assessment surveys, as well as informal consultations with heads of government agencies and the ACSH Advisory Board. We have also aimed to create the right expectations: we may now have 43 participating countries, but it does not mean that every one of them will be involved in every activity or be active in all initiatives.

Today, ACSH has evolved into a unique global platform. Our network of partnerships is expanding, and we value the high level of cooperation with government agencies and professional associations on every continent. Some of our partners remain engaged with us even after leaving their positions in their respective countries. The informal aspects of our work at ACSH are also very important. Institutes and academies of public administration, particularly in our region, have drawn closer and now have means for regular communication and the exchange of experiences, which will have an impact in the long term.

We are also discovering new ways to cooperate. An exemplary case is the joint regional project implemented by the ACSH in partnership with the Government of the Republic of Korea (Ministry of the Interior and Safety, and National Information Society Agency) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The project set out to develop the digitalisation capabilities of civil servants in seven countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Due to its success, the project has been extended to 2026 and its scope has been expanded from seven to 12 countries, including participants from the Asia-Pacific region.

How do Peer-to-Peer Learning Alliances work in practice across the 43 ACSH member countries?
In implementing our Peer-to-Peer Learning Alliances, ACSH observes a number of guiding principles. First, there are no silver bullet solutions to issues. Second, we recognise that every government operates in a unique cultural, historical, geopolitical,

and geoeconomic context. Third, no one should feel like either a student or a teacher—we are a community of peers.

We are pleased to have achieved an environment where even representatives of governments from countries who may have tense relationships with one another can feel free to sit around the table and share experience and knowledge.

We have introduced a number of Peer-to-Peer Learning Alliances on the theme of Public Services Delivery, focusing on topics such as creating a "one-stop-shop" for service delivery, e-government development, transformation and innovations in governance, and more recently, artificial intelligence (AI) and new technologies, as well as project management for advancing the sustainable development goals. We also plan to launch an alliance on competency-based selection.

Out of these Learning Alliances, several study visits, seminars, and case studies have emerged. This approach to networking between civil service practitioners has proven to be both popular and an efficient way to exchange knowledge and working practices, helping countries to develop solutions that best fit their own contexts.

To continue supporting knowledge-sharing during the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, ACSH launched a Virtual Alliance of practitioners. This has led to the contribution of more than 40 practical case studies and recommendations, from 30 countries.

ACSH remains at the forefront of seeking innovative learning approaches and opportunities, ensuring that our participating countries benefit from the latest and most effective practices.

> " *Every government operates in a unique cultural, historical, geopolitical, and geoeconomic context.*

You emphasise that every government must operate within their country's unique context and history. What challenges has Kazakhstan had to overcome as a post-Soviet state?
Kazakhstan regained its independence in 1991 after having been under a totalitarian system for a long time. In the last years of Soviet power, a paradox emerged where society condemned those who stole private property, but tolerated those who stole state property. The population's income was often inadequate without engaging in the shadow economy, which led to widespread *nesunstvo*, or petty theft.

This environment created fertile ground for a surge in corruption, allowing certain elite groups to appropriate a significant portion of the wealth under the guise of rapid liberal reforms, especially those to do with privatisation. This legacy persists, as these groups now control a significant part of the country's financial resources. It has become clear that without restructuring the economy and enhancing the role of small- and medium-sized businesses, it is nigh impossible to establish independent public organisations, political parties, and media outlets. This has contributed to a vicious cycle and poor transparency and accountability.

This paradox is evident in Kazakhstan's development: while the country excels in digitalisation, public service provision, and legislative and institutional support for civil service reform—ranking highly in international indices—it scores poorly on measures related to the rule of law and corruption, often placing in the lower half of rankings. This contradiction inspired "Progress and its Paradoxes", the title of the chapter dedicated to Kazakhstan in the book "Public Service Evolution in the 15 Post-Soviet Countries: Diversity in Transformation".[1] Kazakhstan's wealth of mineral resources offers a significant opportunity for the country to advance its technological infrastructure for public administration. However, the primary challenge remains: getting our elite to commit to and exercise responsibility for the country's long-term interests.

How is Kazakhstan addressing this critical challenge of fighting corruption?
To fight corruption, we must begin with the state. We have to ensure transparency for all government financial flows and activities, including those of

> " *The ability to listen may depend on qualifications and individual upbringing, but the desire to listen is determined by the political system.*

government agencies, national companies, state transactions, and the benefits and preferences granted to individual economic entities.

In this critical and complex matter, political will is paramount. Without it, any endeavours to combat corruption are unlikely to yield substantial results. At the same time, eradicating corruption within the judicial and law enforcement systems is imperative: this is a fundamental prerequisite for achieving success in the fight against corruption nationally.

With the change in presidential leadership, bold steps are now being taken. In 2022, public outcry over the *Qantar* events[2] led the top authorities to acknowledge the concentration of wealth in the hands of 162 families for the first time in 30 years. This has resulted in a proclamation of economic demonopolisation. President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has initiated the establishment of a Commission for Illegal Asset Recovery, of which I am a member, and our work has now commenced.

To ensure the sustainability of these reforms, further changes to the political system are necessary. Civil servants and political officials still do not feel that their fate is tied to the voice of the people, despite the president's recent pledge of a "listening state". The ability to listen may depend on qualifications and individual upbringing, but the desire to listen is determined by the political system. The fate of political officials' careers should be influenced by public opinion. But such reforms continue to face resistance from some within the state apparatus.

We need to keep making progress. First, it will be crucial to establish restrictions in local *maslikhats* (representative bodies), ensuring that those who receive salaries from the same budget level cannot serve as

deputies. This is essential for controlling executive power. Second, we must ensure the transparency and fairness of elections at all levels. Third, the independence of the judiciary must be guaranteed.

Blockchain technologies represent a powerful tool for enhancing transparency in privatisation and investment transactions, taxation, and the allocation of public resources. We will also need to enact legislation requiring all private companies involved in government procurement and public-private partnerships, using government investments or benefiting from government guarantees, to adhere to stringent transparency standards. This includes disclosing the identities of ultimate beneficiaries, akin to initial public offerings on international exchanges.

Moreover, there is a pressing need to introduce dedicated "conflict of interest" legislation that encompasses all public servants, quasi-public sector managers, and individuals engaged in state asset disposal, including of shares and stocks. We must also safeguard whistleblowers who aid in anti-corruption efforts by reporting wrong-doing to authorised bodies.

These are areas where Kazakhstan still has significant steps to take.

Kazakhstan's rich history was not always celebrated before independence. How vital is a nation's history for creating a shared identity and national vision for the future?
The Soviet regime did not allow us to fully explore our own history.

At the end of the 1920s, our Qazaq alphabet, which had used the Arabic script for a thousand years, was changed to the Latin script. Ten years later, it was replaced by the Cyrillic alphabet. These steps were taken to erase historical memory and damage self-esteem, as well as a sense of pride in our historical past. Today, the Kazakh language is a vital unifying element in a country where more than 120 ethnic groups live.

In the 1920s and 1930s, two famines claimed half the population's lives, and several waves of repression decimated our nation's native elite. During Soviet times, these tragic chapters of history were suppressed. The names of prominent Kazakh figures were banned. For example, in my

The Kazakh 10th-century philosopher Al-Farabi is celebrated in this monument to Kazakh literature. The Kazakh language plays a vital role in unifying a country that comprises more than 120 ethnic groups. Oral, Kazakhstan, 17 January 2019.

generation few share my name "Alikhan" because it was associated with Alikhan Bokeikhanov, the leader of the national liberation movement of the early 20th century. Additionally, the names of those who organised uprisings against the Russian Empire and Soviet power, or who were associated with the prosperous states of the Middle Ages, were banned. When I was a student, we knew more about the history of Russia and other parts of the world than about our own history.

The restoration of independence allowed us to delve deeper into our history. At the same time, it gave us the chance to be open to the entire world: we regained our ability to directly contact, communicate, and exchange experiences and knowledge with other states without seeking permission from a central authority.

We are still recovering lost chapters of our history. We take pride in the remarkable scientific and cultural achievements of our ancestors, who established this region as a global leader a thousand years ago. In the realm of public administration, for instance, our illustrious forebears, such as the 10th century political philosopher Al-Farabi and the

11th century poet and statesman Yūsuf Balasaguni, have made noteworthy contributions.

However, pride in our past should not lead to self-isolation and autarky: we must remain part of the world. Today's sources of innovation and new knowledge lie mainly outside the country, and we must be open to harnessing them for our benefit. The people of Kazakhstan have inherited a culture characterised by adaptability, tolerance, and open-mindedness. We must leverage and build upon these cultural strengths in today's globalised world. This is key to combining our unique heritage with our aspiration to live in harmony with the rest of the world.

Dr Alikhan Baimenov is Chairman of the Astana Civil Service Hub (ACSH), a knowledge and experience-sharing platform comprising 43 countries and over 90 global partners. He has held several governmental positions in Kazakhstan, including Head of the Executive Office of the President, Minister of Labour, and twice Chairman of the Agency for Civil Service Affairs. He has published extensively on social protection, public administration, and civil service.

Brazil's First Minister of Indigenous Peoples

—

As the head of a newly created ministry, *Sônia Guajajara* faces no small task: to protect Indigenous lands, cultures, and communities. She discusses her work to transform political vision into concrete achievements.

A **Need to Protect Brazil's Indigenous Communities and Natural Environment** Attacks on Brazil's Indigenous peoples and invasions of their lands by illegal miners and loggers had been increasing dramatically in recent years. Under the previous political administration, the rights of Indigenous peoples had been systematically dismantled, and violence and exploitation was even encouraged. However the 2022 Presidential campaign of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (now President) signalled a change. During that campaign, he met with and promised the Indigenous peoples a new ministry to address and meet their needs.

The establishment of the new Ministry in 2023 reflects the current government's recognition of the importance of Indigenous peoples and their concerns. Indigenous communities are fundamental to the country's cultural diversity. There is also clear evidence that Indigenous peoples have an essential role in protecting the environment and biodiversity.

The relationship between Brazil's Indigenous peoples and environmental conservation is a close and deeply intertwined one. Indigenous territories play a crucial role in preserving the Amazon rainforest. These lands are often some of the best-preserved areas of the Amazon, with lower deforestation rates and higher biodiversity compared to other

Sônia Guajajara, Brazil's Minister of Indigenous Peoples, speaks at an Indigenous Voices event in London, England. 25 September 2023.

Aerial view of an illegal mining camp in Yanomami territory, Roraima, Brazil. Illegal gold mining causes deforestation and environmental contamination with heavy metals, contributing to birth defects, malnutrition, and other health issues among local communities. 24 February 2023. Photo by Alan Chaves.

regions. Indigenous lands also contain about 50% more carbon per hectare than unprotected areas. By maintaining forest cover, these lands play a significant role in carbon sequestration, which is vital for climate change mitigation and global climate stability.[1]

Indigenous territories account for only 5% of net forest loss in the Brazilian Amazon, despite encompassing over half of the region's forested area: a testament to the effectiveness of their land management practices in conserving forest cover and preventing deforestation.[2] Indigenous territories act as barriers against land speculation and deforestation.

Ensuring Representation and Participation

Beyond the preservation of Brazil's cultural and natural heritage, there is also a clear need for wider participation and representation from Indigenous groups to strengthen Brazil's democratic process and deliver more effective public policies that meet everyone's needs.

Once in office, President Lula revived the National Council for Indigenous Policy (CNPI), a key participatory body between Indigenous peoples and the government. The CNPI, a joint consultative group with 30 Indigenous representatives and 30 government representatives, is responsible for preparing and monitoring the implementation of public policies aimed at Indigenous peoples.

The CNPI's Indigenous representatives are chosen through a regional mobilisation exercise, called the Participa Parente Caravan, the "participatory caravan", which travels through each state. These representatives are elected at their regional bases, with representation from each state. The CNPI is Brazil's primary platform for discussing and reviewing indigenist policy on a wide range of issues.

Indigenous Persons in Indigenous Lands by Municipality - 2022

☐ 0	☐ 251 - 500
☐ 1 - 50	☐ 501 - 1000
☐ 51 - 100	☐ 1001 - 5000
☐ 101 - 250	☐ 5001 - 25000

Map source: The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - 2022 Population Census.[3]
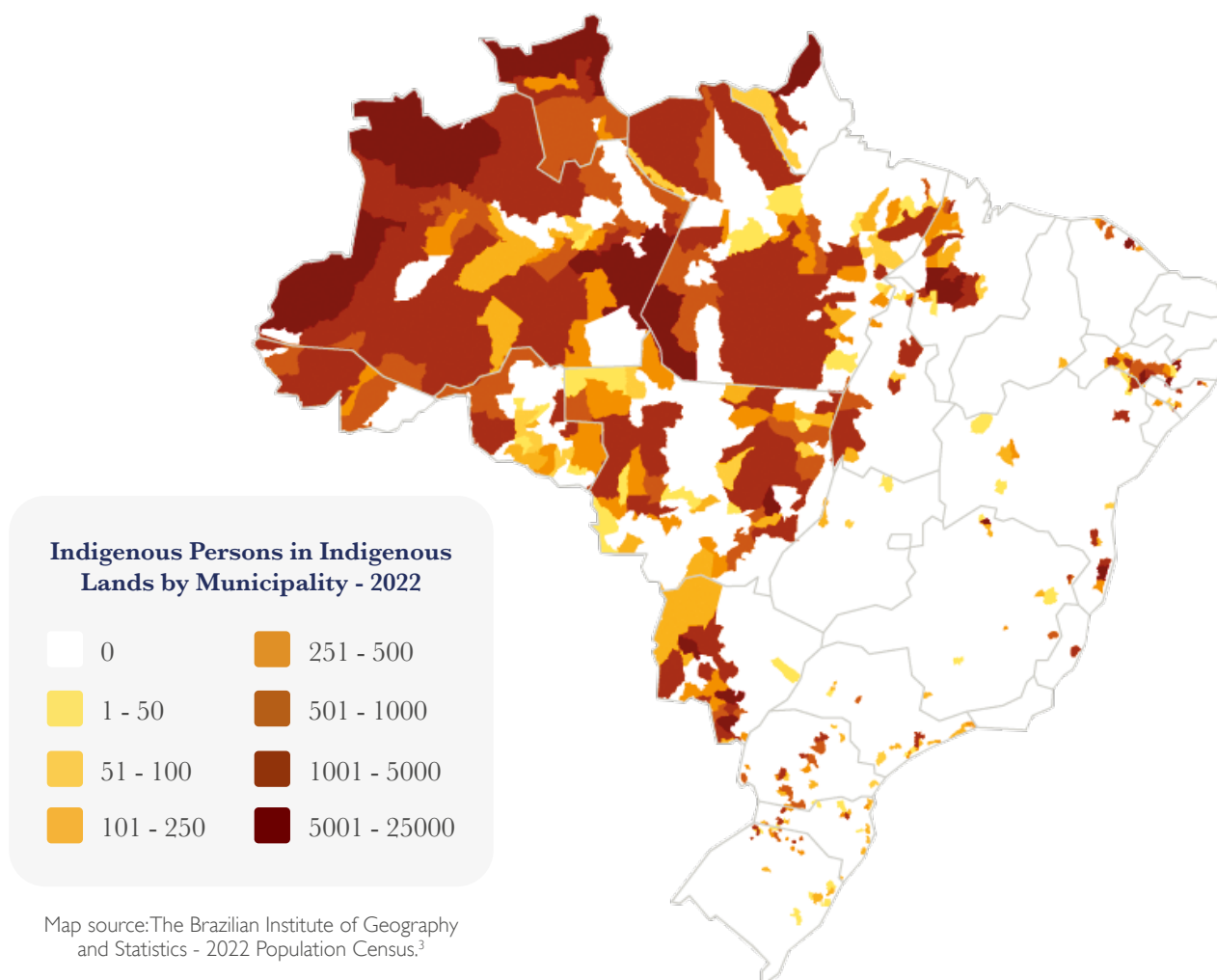
According to data from the 2022 demographic census, Brazil is home to 266 different Indigenous peoples, who communicate in 275 different languages. Their population numbers 1.7 million, which is just under 1% of Brazil's total population. More than half of the Indigenous persons in the country live in the nine federal states that make up the Legal Amazon, known locally as Amazônia. It is a vast territory of 502 million hectares, making it larger in area than the European Union (EU). Although Amazônia is mostly known for its vast natural forests, over three-quarters of Amazonians live in towns and cities. Thirty-six percent of Amazônia's population lives in poverty. Amazônia is home to about 60% of the Amazon rainforest and to parts of other important biomes such as the Cerrado savanna and the Pantanal wetlands.[4]

The Challenge of Safeguarding Indigenous Lands

Indigenous peoples have been forcibly removed from their ancestral lands in Brazil's past and recent history. As such, an important goal of this government is to demarcate new Indigenous lands in Brazil and help protect lands already identified. These lands must first of all be recognised; their protection must then be regularised. However, there are many stakeholders with different interests who hold great political and economic power in this matter.

Our Ministry's approach to this challenge is to raise awareness about such issues among different groups, especially Brazil's legislative body, the National Congress. While President Lula has committed to demarcating more Indigenous lands—for greater

Brazilian Biomes

1 Amazon 2 Caatinga 3 Cerrado

4 Atlantic Forest 5 Pampa 6 Pantanal

Land Types

■ Forest ■ Plantation ■ Others

■ Mangrove ■ Water

Map source: Brazil land-use and land-cover map of 2018 from the MapBiomas Project.[5]

Satellite imagery shows how Indigenous territories (numbered green areas) conserve Amazon rainforest and act as a barrier to deforestation (other colours)

1 Kayapó 2 Xikrin 3 Parakanã

4 Mae Maria 5 Sororo 6 Alto Turiaçú

7 Caru 8 Arariboia

9 Bacurizinho, Porquinhos & Canela

Map source: Survival International.[6]

environmental protection and to help contain the climate crisis—Congress has not been very supportive in this endeavour.

Despite these hurdles, Brazil has recognised and approved ten new Indigenous lands during my first year in office as Minister—more than had been achieved in the preceding ten years. Now comes the important work of continuous dialogue with the governors of the states where these lands are situated, with the Indigenous communities, and with the groups who currently occupy these Indigenous territories illegally. We are working to resettle families who may currently occupy Indigenous territories so that they are not forcibly removed.

There are also many more territories at the various stages of the demarcation process. We continue

Aerial view of the Amazon rainforest in Brazil.

to work very closely with FUNAI (the National Foundation of Indigenous Peoples), the Ministry of Justice, and the President's office at every stage of this process.

Revitalising Indigenous Languages and Cultural Practices

The importance of Indigenous culture is enshrined in Brazil's constitution, which states that Indigenous peoples "shall have their social organisation, customs, languages, creeds, and traditions recognised" (Article 231). The state officially began collecting data on ethnicity and Indigenous languages spoken in households in the national population census of 2010, and again in 2022 with more geographical breadth and depth. Such information is critical so that we can better understand our Indigenous peoples and know what needs recognising and protecting.

Many Indigenous languages in Brazil remain seriously endangered. With less use, these languages are no longer being transmitted to new generations. As minority Indigenous communities assimilate into the mainstream of Brazilian society, thousands of years of linguistic diversity and Indigenous knowledge risk being lost.

To support linguistic and cultural preservation, the government has implemented a variety of programmes such as linguistic studies, educational projects, and ongoing dialogues with communities. Effective strategies have included the creation of teaching materials in the different languages, writing programmes, mother tongue teaching, and the documentation of traditions. Our Ministry is also working to translate Brazil's laws and materials about citizens' rights into Indigenous mother tongues to ensure communities know their rights and responsibilities.
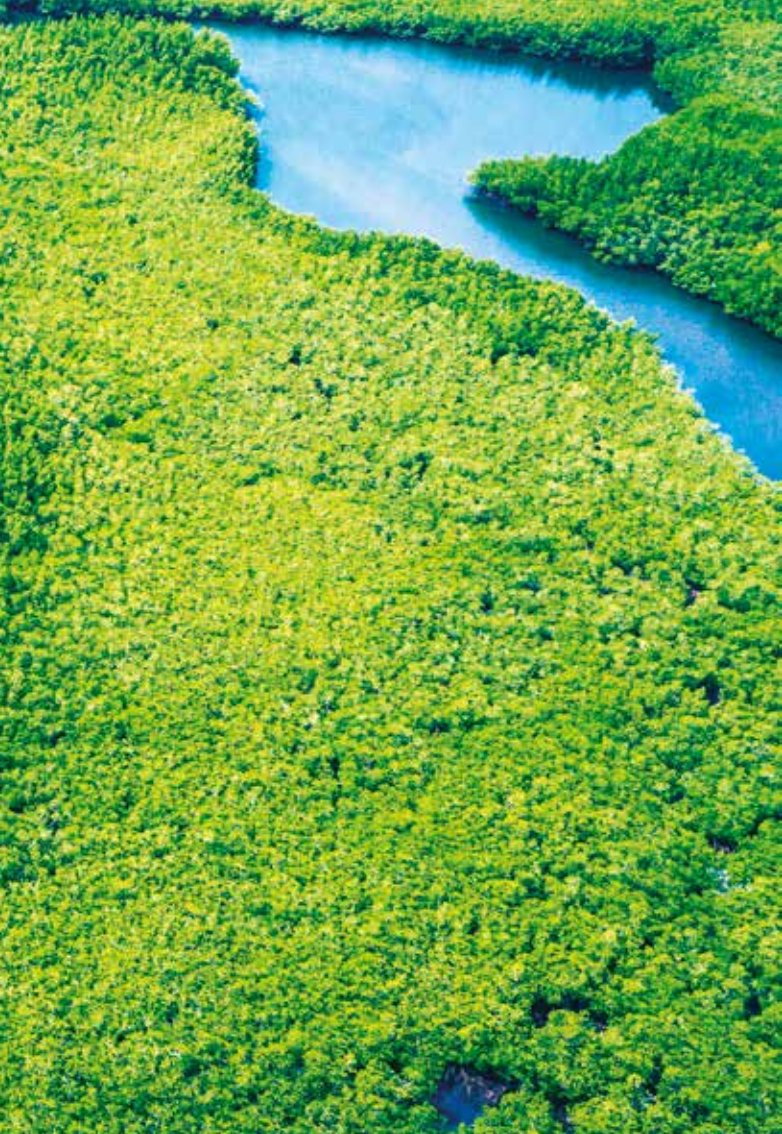
peoples. Through this initiative—a collaboration between our Ministry, FUNAI, and the Agrarian Development Ministry—we want to encourage sustainable consumption, while generating income for Indigenous communities and contributing to regional development.

All of these diverse programmes benefit from dedicated coordinators, ongoing research, and institutional partners who are in constant and direct dialogue with Indigenous communities to support their work. But one of our biggest challenges remains a limited budget, which constrains how much we can achieve.

Promoting Inclusion and Participation in the Conversations That Matter

As Minister, I see it as my responsibility to take part in national and international fora in key areas of interest, whether that be the bioeconomy, environmental protection, gender issues, or the inclusion of Indigenous peoples in decision-making spaces. It is increasingly important to occupy political spaces: to participate in how issues are discussed and determine how our voices are represented.

I recently took over the presidency of FILAC, the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples

We have also invested in a programme to repatriate Indigenous artefacts and objects previously taken from Brazil to other countries. This has progressed with France, Italy, and Portugal.

The Ministry also works to improve the social and economic conditions of Indigenous communities, including initiatives related to sustainable economic development. In January 2024, Brazil introduced the Indigenous Seal of Brazil, which certifies that a product, whether agricultural, artisanal, or extractive, was cultivated or harvested by an Indigenous individual on their ancestral land. It specifies the ethnicity of the producer, whether they are an individual or a company, and indicates the Indigenous territory where the product was cultivated.

The intention of this certification is to value and identify the cultural heritage of Indigenous

The Indigenous Seal of Brazil is used to identify products of ethnic origin produced by Indigenous people.

Minister Sônia Guajajara in the municipality of Amarante in the state of Maranhão at the inauguration of the Tenetehar Tukán Knowledge Centre in the presence of the governor of Maranhão. 11 October 2023. Photo by @leootero.

Illegal deforestation in the Amazon rainforest involves cutting down and burning trees to clear land for agriculture and cattle grazing. Pará, Brazil. 13 April 2021.

of Latin America and the Caribbean. FILAC works with Indigenous peoples, governments, civil society, academia, and industry to support the self-development processes of Indigenous peoples across 22 countries in the region. These fora enable the exchange of ideas, help build consensus around sustainability and Indigenous peoples' rights, and improve the visibility of Indigenous peoples' perspectives.

I urge more government and non-government leaders to promote the inclusion and active participation of Indigenous peoples and marginalised actors in public policymaking, and to ensure that their voices and needs are heard and taken seriously. Respecting the value of cultural diversity and the right for self-determination is the only way to build a more just and sustainable society.

For me, the greatest difficulty is in getting institutions to understand and recognise the importance of

Indigenous peoples. Changing established legal structures— so that they uphold the historical and cultural rights of Indigenous peoples, and respect their role in protecting the environment and in maintaining biodiversity—is an uphill task.

That said, I deeply believe that Brazil, through the work of my Ministry and its partners, is going in the right direction: towards strengthening democracy, towards guaranteeing respect for human rights, and towards protecting Indigenous lands.

The climate crisis and the excessive exploitation of our world's natural resources are global concerns. The worldviews and material practices of Indigenous peoples respect the environment in a way that can better support the continuation of life on our planet. Protecting Indigenous lands is hence vital to the containment of the climate crisis. We are sounding the alarm and making

the call for all peoples to support our cause. The responsibility lies with all of us.

Born to a Guajajara family of the Indigenous Tentehar people, Sônia Bone de Sousa Silva Santos (and known as Sônia Guajajara) is Brazil's first Minister of Indigenous Peoples, and the first Indigenous woman to become a Minister in the country. Her Ministry seeks to address and advocate for Indigenous issues more effectively within the federal government. She has worked in several Indigenous organisations, such as the Coordination of Organizations and Articulations of Indigenous Peoples of Maranhão (COAPIMA), the Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB), and was previously executive coordinator of the Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB). Internationally recognised for defending the rights of Indigenous peoples, their territories, and socio-environmental causes, she was named one of TIME Magazine's 100 most influential people in 2022.

Slovenia's Playbook to Level the Playing Field

—

Every country wants to reduce regional disparity and promote more equitable growth. But how do you actually go about doing it? *Aleksander Jevšek*, who leads Slovenia's Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development, details his country's plans.

P**romoting National Cohesion by Addressing Regional Disparity**
The Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development in Slovenia is responsible for implementing the Cohesion Policy of the European Union (EU), which provides investment funds to support sustainable development, economic growth, and reduce disparities across the EU—enabling all member countries to fully participate in and benefit from opportunities provided by the EU single market.[1]

Slovenia's national cohesion policy is informed by that of the EU. Established in 2023, the Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development is responsible for the efficient management of the different EU Cohesion Policy funds, as well as other sources of grants, to reduce disparities between Slovenian regions by fostering regional development.[2]

Slovenia prides itself on having a well-developed polycentric urban network with numerous small and medium-sized towns.[3] However, as with many member states of the EU, jobs are increasingly being concentrated in the major cities due to economic development, prompting people to move to them from more remote areas, which then become depopulated. As a result, Slovenia has grappled with low productivity in some regions, and an uneven pace of technological development and digital transformation, which impact its overall national economic competitiveness.

In particular, rural areas in Slovenia face challenges in raising the competitiveness of their agriculture, food, and forestry sectors. There is also a shortage of workers in the private and public sectors at both the national and regional levels.

The Ministry's goal is to support all regions in Slovenia in raising their development level, by harnessing the unique development potential of different regions in Slovenia and connecting them to global economic opportunities. This will ensure a better quality of life for everyone in the country and thus foster national cohesion.

Harnessing Regional Strengths for Development

In 2014, after the collapse of the textile industry, which employed around 7,500 people in the Pomurje region, the local community was left in a very difficult situation. The region was revitalised over eight years and today there is practically no unemployment.

The revitalisation strategy was based on promoting the small and medium-sized enterprises that are the result of local knowledge and innovation, and which employ local people.

During the revitalisation period, the region managed to secure approximately EUR 40m in EU funds to develop the local economy and promote tourism, making the most of the region's advantages: its beautiful natural landscape, excellent winemaking conditions, outstanding cuisine, and exceptional people.

Aerial view of the Lendava vineyard region, Pomurje, Slovenia. The region has leveraged revitalisation funds to develop the local economy and promote tourism.

Slovenia uses special development mechanisms to target less developed areas, to help them catch up with more economically advanced parts of the country.

EU Cohesion Policy funding is used to support a number of different regional development instruments.

In addition, Slovenia uses two further approaches to promote balanced regional development:

- **Developmental incentives:** The Slovenian Regional Development Fund (SRDF) was established in 1995 to stimulate social entrepreneurship and development. The SRDF grants loans to businesses with favourable interest rates and long periods of maturity to promote investments. In addition, the SRDF provides incentives in terms of guarantees and subsidies. By the end of 2021, it supported around 150 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The SRDF also transfers unneeded state-owned assets to municipalities and public funds to be used in new development projects, allowing for more targeted support for less developed regions.

- **New economic opportunities:** Slovenia also focuses on providing economic opportunities for specific targeted regions to boost competitiveness, create jobs, and promote sustainable development. For instance, Slovenia's oldest town, Ptuj, located in the northeast of the country, was redeveloped in 2024. Using EUR 21m granted by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and donations totalling EUR 4.9m, the old glassworks factory and its nearby streets were transformed into an award-winning events forum. Thanks to these redevelopment efforts, Ptuj is now a cultural and professional hub, inspiring a renewed sense of purpose and pride in its residents.

Minister Jevšek (third from left) at the Slovenian Global Forum on the internationalisation of the Slovenian economy. The Forum convened companies, trade bodies, regional state actors, and chambers of commerce to discuss new opportunities for sustainable products and solutions. Maribor, Slovenia, 3 June 2024.

Planning for the Future

It is widely acknowledged within the EU that future economic growth will be driven by the twin pillars of green and digital transitions. Our new core development framework, the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030,[4] will align our national development with smart and sustainable development principles consistent with EU Cohesion Policy goals for the 2021-2027 cycle.

While these transitions will bring new opportunities, they also risk creating new disparities, both across the EU and within member states. By promoting inclusive regional development in tandem with sustainability and digitalisation, Slovenia intends to ensure that every region can make use of these opportunities to reach their fullest potential in a way that ensures a high quality of life for all.

Supporting the Green Transition

EU legislation stipulates that at least 30% of ERDF resources and 37% of Cohesion Fund resources must be allocated to climate-related initiatives and the green transition. Slovenia will make full use of this funding to tackle our key challenges and to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon, circular, and climate-neutral economy.

" While these transitions will bring new opportunities, they risk creating new disparities.

EU Cohesion Policy resources will go towards helping Slovenia shift to a zero-carbon economy by promoting initiatives supporting a clean and just energy transition, green investments, the circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable mobility.

Enhancing Energy Efficiency

Improving Slovenia's energy efficiency will contribute to the modernisation of the economy and create jobs. Slovenia's Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan identifies long-term energy targets for 2030.[5] We will also introduce targeted measures for specific regions to ensure a smooth transition to green energy.

For 2021-2027, Slovenia will make a total of EUR 793m available to support investments that contribute to the green transition:

Renewable Energy Sources	EUR 168m
Flood Risk Management and Climate Change Response	EUR 159m
Wastewater Collection and Treatment	EUR 169m
Energy Renovation of Buildings	EUR 103m
Other Related Projects	EUR 194m

Using the EU Cohesion Policy's Just Transition Fund (JTF), Slovenia will make EUR 249m available to support the green transition of two coal regions: Zasavska region and Savinjsko-Šaleška (SAŠA) region. Currently, we are inviting the regional authorities to draw up plans based on the needs of their respective regions. For example, the Energy Agency of Savinjska, Šaleška and Koroška region (KSSENA) submitted proposals in 2020 for transitioning away from coal in a manner that supports the local population. One of the recommendations is a programme to develop a skilled energy workforce, training workers to take on new ventures following the restructuring of the energy sector.

Greening Transport

Transforming Slovenia's transport sector is a key priority, as it is currently the highest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 39% of total emissions in 2022.[6] Upgrading our national

Slovenia's Cohesion Policy Programme for 2021-2027 Includes Measures That Support the Following Objectives:

Energy

- Promoting energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- Promoting renewable energy;
- Developing smart energy systems, grids, and storage outside the Trans-European Networks for Energy (TEN-E).

Transport

- Promoting sustainable multimodal urban mobility, as part of the transition to a net zero carbon economy;
- Developing rail infrastructure to promote sustainable (cross-) regional mobility and connectivity;
- Developing and enhancing sustainable, smart and intermodal, national, regional, and local mobility.

Other Goals:
Economy, Resources, and Biodiversity

- Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy;
- Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity, and green infrastructure, including in urban areas.

transport infrastructure will also boost connectivity between regions and facilitate the flow of goods and services, supporting economic development. Hence, decarbonising and improving the national transport system are intertwined goals in Slovenia's overall pursuit of sustainable development.

In 2020, the EU approved a Cohesion Fund investment of EUR 80m towards the construction of a second railway track between the port of Koper and the village of Divača in Western Slovenia. This second track will reduce bottlenecks along the transportation route and redirect traffic from road to rail, lowering emissions from congestion. It will also generate new economic opportunities once the different regions are linked up.

Cross-Border Cooperation
A more sustainable future is a vision shared by fellow EU member states, and environmental challenges and opportunities often span multiple national jurisdictions. Building on these shared interests, Slovenia's green transition in the 2021-2027 cycle will also be supported by the European Territorial Cooperation programmes, also known as Interreg programmes, through collaborations with Slovenia's neighbours, including Austria, Croatia, Hungary, and Italy. In the previous 2014 to 2020 cycle of the EU Cohesion Policy, a total of 24 projects between Slovenia and Hungary were approved via Interreg,

A new section of rail from Počehova – Pesnica (part of a project to upgrade the Maribor – Šentilj railway line) was co-financed by the EU's Cohesion Fund and Climate Fund. The project will reduce travel times, improve traffic safety, and increase capacity and train speeds. Pesnica, Slovenia, 14 August 2023.

promoting shared sustainable development in border regions. For example, the GO IN NATURE project saw the establishment of a network of nature-friendly tourism infrastructure in protected areas.[7] By preserving the pristine environment while building up tourism infrastructure, the project aims to encourage an appreciation of natural ecosystems and attract visitors.

Beyond bilateral partnerships, Slovenia also participates in multilateral programmes that support climate resilience and the green transition as part of their priorities, including the Interreg Alpine Space Programme, Interreg IPA ADRION, Interreg Central Europe Programme, Interreg Danube Region Programme, and the Interreg Euro-MED Programme.[8]

Realising Digital Transformation
For the 2021-2027 cycle, the EU Cohesion Policy has set aside EUR 40 billion for investments in the digital transition, including the development of digitals skills, digital technologies, and access to faster broadband connections in all EU regions. Of this, EUR 147m has been allocated to Slovenia to support its digital transformation.

These funds will go towards the digitalisation of government services to improve access to public services for all citizens, the promotion of digital literacy to empower citizens to use digital services to their advantage, and the digitalisation of business processes in the economy or private sector. We aim to foster integrated public services for businesses, citizens, and public institutions, help our SMEs digitalise, and enable digital transformation in business and finance, as well as in innovation and research environments.

One condition for a successful digital transition is to have infrastructure that can support broadband connections for high-speed and very high-capacity data transmission. On a national level, Slovenia's Ministry of Digital Transformation oversees the Gigabit Infrastructure Development Plan 2030, which adopts the intermediate objective to provide by 2025 all Slovenian households with internet connectivity offering at least 100 Mbps, upgradeable to gigabit speed. The 2030 Plan will guide public funding allocation to support the construction of network infrastructure, especially in areas where

there has been little commercial interest. Broadband coverage in rural areas is significantly lower than in the cities, due to poor broadband infrastructure. This is often compounded by dispersed settlement patterns in rural areas, which may deter businesses (such as telecommunications providers) from investing significantly there. By providing better infrastructure, we can support more equal opportunities for inclusion in the digital economy and digital society.

A cornerstone of Slovenia's digital transition is the digitisation of public services, centring on the needs of the people and businesses. Under the Digital Public Services Strategy 2030, the government will actively engage groups of vulnerable individuals in co-creating digital services. This is to help bridge the digital divide and ensure that such services are inclusive for all users. The EU will also support digital public services that enhance the accessibility, effectiveness, and resilience of key services: including housing, healthcare, and social protection (especially for children and disadvantaged groups). Some approaches Slovenia is exploring include an e-authorisation system for older people to authorise others to carry out a specific e-service on their behalf, and public access points—such as libraries, post offices, and schools—which can be used by individuals without access to digital devices.

Another of our focal areas is flexible upskilling programmes for graduates, especially in priority areas identified in Slovenia's Sustainable Smart Specialisation Strategy. More generally, Slovenia seeks to reap the benefits of digitalisation for citizens, companies, research organisations, and public authorities. Towards this end, EU funding is available to support digitalisation for SMEs to

Slovenia has been investing in multi-modal mobility infrastructure and solutions such as this new pedestrian and cyclist bridge over the Drava river in the town of Ptuj in northeastern Slovenia.

achieve sustainable growth, competitiveness, job creation, and capability building in entrepreneurial and digital skills.

Looking Ahead

Slovenia's policies to usher in a national green and digital transition under the Cohesion Policy's 2021 to 2027 cycle are in their early stages of implementation. While there is more work ahead of us to see them through, we hope our current efforts will set a precedent for future initiatives, and lay the foundations for sustainable, smart, and inclusive regional development.

Ultimately, we want to achieve a peaceful, prosperous, healthy, and secure life for current and future generations of Slovenians, while respecting the limits of our planet and leaving no one behind.

> " *By providing better infrastructure, we can support more equal opportunities for inclusion in the digital economy and digital society.*

Dr Aleksander Jevšek has been Slovenia's Minister of Cohesion and Regional Development since 2022. For three decades, he served in various leadership positions within the Slovenian police, including as the Director of the Slovenian Criminal Police. He was the mayor of the Municipality of Murska Sobota from 2014 to 2022, and served two terms as the president of the Association of Municipalities and Towns of Slovenia. He has been a member of the Slovenian delegation to the European Union Committee of the Regions for seven years, concurrently serving as deputy head of the Slovenian delegation.

Defence Against the Dark Arts: Sweden's Psychological Defence Agency

—

Deputy Head *Mikael Tofvesson*
shares lessons from the frontlines of
"psychological warfare".

W**hat led Sweden to set up an agency dedicated to psychological defence in 2022?**
Sweden has had the concept of psychological defence for over 70 years. However, the earlier agency that dealt with psychological defence was decommissioned in 2008. At the time, the pendulum of attention in government was swinging from the Cold War to crisis management. With no perceived threat to Sweden, many agencies related to the Cold War were shut down as a matter of efficiency. A Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) was set up instead.

All this changed with the 2007 cyber attacks in Estonia, the 2008 invasion of Georgia, and the many events leading up to the 2014 Russian invasion of Crimea. I was head of global monitoring and analysis in the MSB at the time. We were tasked by the government to assess what impact the Crimean situation might have on Swedish crisis management. Our report found evidence of an organised disinformation campaign being conducted. We realised Sweden was under threat. As a result of the annexation of Crimea, the government made a U-turn and began a concerted effort to reevaluate and restore our national defence.

As part of renewed national efforts to strengthen different aspects of defence, my agency was formally tasked in 2016 with developing the capability to identify and counter foreign malign information influences. This was a function we had already spent two years preparing for, when we had found evidence of such influences targeting Sweden.

I became Head of the Counter Information Influence Section at the MSB.

Following a reorganisation, the government decided to set up a dedicated agency for this work in 2018. After going through Sweden's due process the Psychological Defence Agency (*Myndigheten för psykologiskt försvar* in Swedish, or MPF) was established in 2022.

What does psychological defence mean for Sweden today, and how does it differ from the way it was approached in the past?
The Cold War-era organisation that prepared Sweden for psychological warfare was designed in anticipation of actual warfare. It did not have an operational mandate in peacetime.

What we learnt from our findings in 2014 was that when it comes to the psychological arena, the threat begins long before we are aware of it. Furthermore, threats do not always end up with war. We may also be able to defuse conflict with action.

So we do not have to prepare for war per se, because that is not necessarily the intended end state. The end state of an aggressor is to control us, prevent us from doing anything that is against their interests, and perhaps make us do things that they will benefit from.

During the Cold War, the approach was to prepare for armed conflict. Today our aim is to protect our democratic process, our freedom of speech, our individual rights, and so on. If we do not uphold our core values, then we will not need psychological defence, because there will be nothing to protect.

Our agency's mission is to coordinate the work of psychological defence in Sweden, and to support the actors who are part of that. This means we are

> *When it comes to the psychological arena, the threat begins long before we are aware of it.*

not psychological defence ourselves, but we help drive and structure psychological defence in partnership with the whole of society.

We also seek to increase the resilience of the population. We develop knowledge in this field—for our own effectiveness as well as to build capacity in society—through research, training, and exercises. We also have a role in supporting media—free, independent media in Sweden—when they need our help to address disinformation.

Since we are an agency under the Ministry of Defence, our mandate is to protect Sweden against foreign threats—we do not look at internal actors spreading disinformation. This also means we have a mandate not just to defend Sweden, but to support the government and the armed forces, if we were at war or risk of war, in striking against threats. This is where we differ from our colleagues in civil defence, whose priority is national resilience and taking care of the effects of war.

How does the MPF navigate the balance between countering disinformation while also upholding Sweden's democratic values such as freedom of speech?
Researchers and other experts who ask me this question claim it is impossible. I say it is straightforward.

First, you have to take a step back and fundamentally understand that freedom of speech implies the
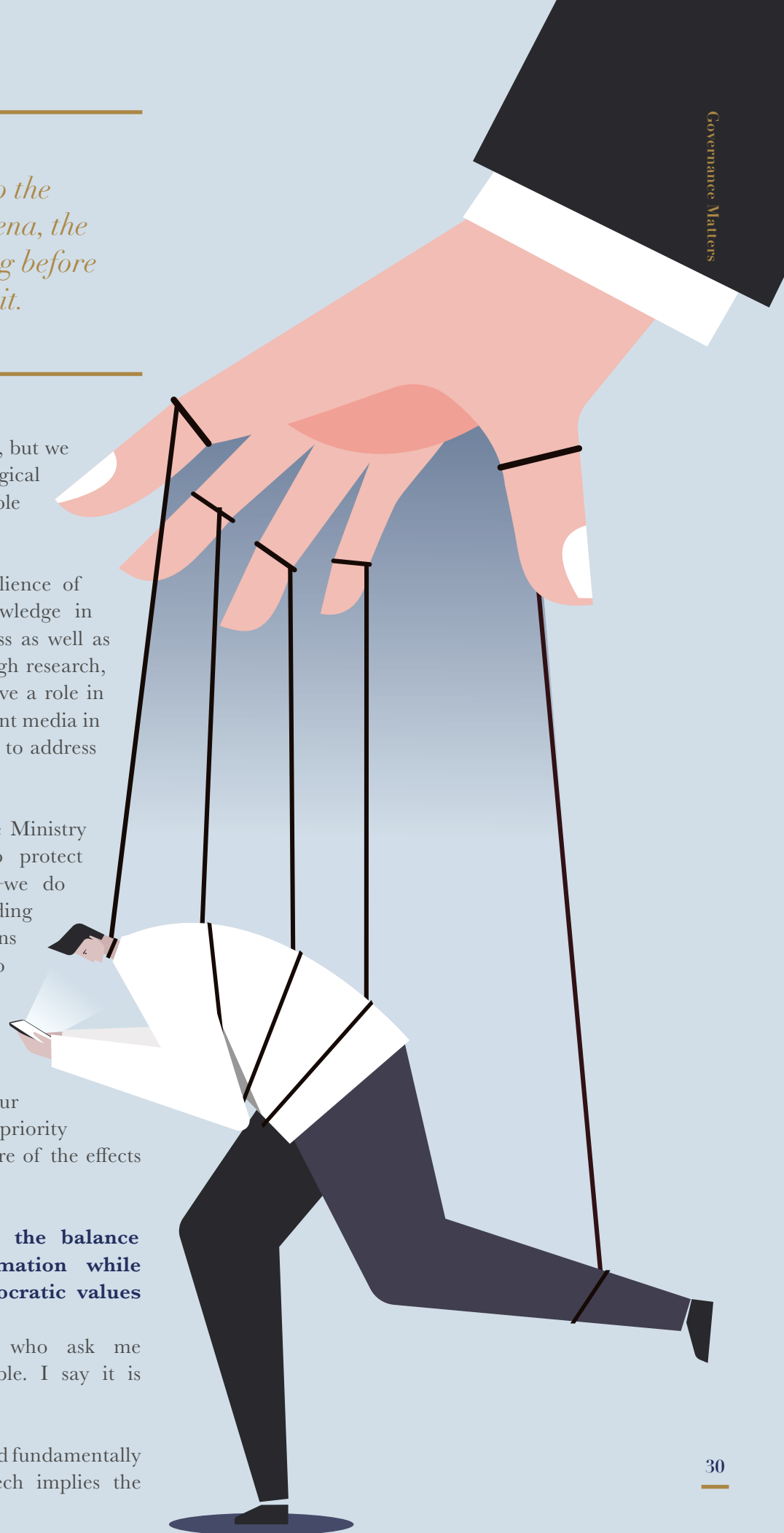
right to be wrong. Freedom of speech therefore also implies protection of the rights of people who are wrong. We do not know if someone has malign intentions. Being wrong could be due to being sincerely misinformed.

So if someone in Sweden is spreading misinformation, we treat them as a *vulnerability*. What we do with vulnerabilities is to mitigate them—in this case, through positive dialogue and correct information. If we cannot stop them from spreading disinformation, we need to inform everyone else. But we do not treat them as a threat.

Foreign powers who are not part of our democracy and do not enjoy our rights can be treated as a threat. By foreign power, I mean any entity that can negatively affect Sweden's national security goals, or our sovereign decision making, or our fundamental values. They could be either misinformed or malign, but since we do not have to accept their behaviour, we can treat them accordingly. So there are different tools to use in each situation.

But how can we finesse our actions given that the ecosystem of information is the same? What we learnt from 2014 is that if you are going to influence someone, you need to reach them first. Over the years, we have studied the different methods, capabilities, narratives, and activities being used to target Sweden.

When we encounter disinformation, we do not risk infringing upon the rights of Swedes exercising their freedom of speech anonymously by digging for its source. Instead, we look for liabilities:

vulnerabilities in our society, topics that generate fear or that create polarisation, or deficiencies in our information environment. We keep regular track of harmful narratives, misunderstanding, and potential areas of social tension, without focusing on who originated this information. Then we see what our rival foreign powers are also saying about these vulnerabilities, and when we find reason to believe that there is an organised threat to exploit them, we develop a plan to counter the threat.

In fact, the first thing we do when we see an influence operation is to do absolutely nothing. People do not have time to scroll through everything. In a week or two, people often stop caring about which contradictory lie is being spread. Most of the time, disinformation becomes diluted in the broader information environment, dies out, and is forgotten. If we cannot eliminate it from the system, we certainly do not want to help spread it. If we have to resort to fighting it, we will, but the best approach is not to get to that point, which is where malign actors want us to be.

> " *If someone in Sweden is spreading misinformation, we treat them as a vulnerability. What we do with vulnerabilities is to mitigate them.*

Is there an example of how your agency has stopped disinformation from causing harm in Sweden?

In 2021 and 2022, Sweden was targeted by a massive influence campaign. It started when an outlet based in Egypt spread disinformation that Swedish social services were kidnapping Muslim children for nefarious purposes. Many people in Sweden, especially among our large migrant community, believed this because they did not know what was going on, nor how our system works. The story was complete nonsense, but it spread like wildfire, becoming amplified even internationally. Social tensions soared. There were demonstrations that were on the verge of becoming violent.

At this time, the MPF had existed as an agency for only two months. We decided that the most important first step was to stop the Swedish public from being fooled by this disinformation campaign. In Sweden, people do have the right to demonstrate for any reason—what we wanted was for people to know that this incident was based on disinformation.

So we went public and let the people know about the active threat, the vulnerabilities that were being exploited, and the negative consequences they posed to our nation. We relied on transparency as part of our defence. From that very moment, things changed. Some media outlets began to investigate the malign actions. Many organisers of the demonstrations started disassociating themselves from the campaign. Having initially lost control of the narrative, we took action to seize it again. This helped the Swedish Institute and other authorities to begin the long process of correcting information for domestic and international audiences.

How do you engage with media and other stakeholders for the media and information literacy aspect of your work?

We are very transparent in what we do. Twice a year, we invite the editors of major media houses to a meeting and share information with them: about our operations, the present environment, current vulnerabilities and threats, as well as new techniques, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and social media, being used to target Sweden. They can request for special presentations on particular topics, ask us questions, and discuss issues with us and among themselves. We invite them to tell us if they want something from us. The basic principle is to share knowledge.

We also finance a research institute at Linnaeus University to train accredited journalists on understanding and identifying information influence. If a journalist or media house is attacked, they can call us for advice, and we can call in the right authorities to make sure they are supported.

We have an open-door policy with the media and try to give as many interviews as possible. On my part, I believe that the best way to talk about our issues is to tell the media what we see. We depend on the media to be our filters and distributors of quality knowledge, to reach out to the public. We have handled many crises simply by conducting interviews.

Social media threat: the changing patterns of media consumption are becoming problematic, especially among particular groups, including the young, and older people.
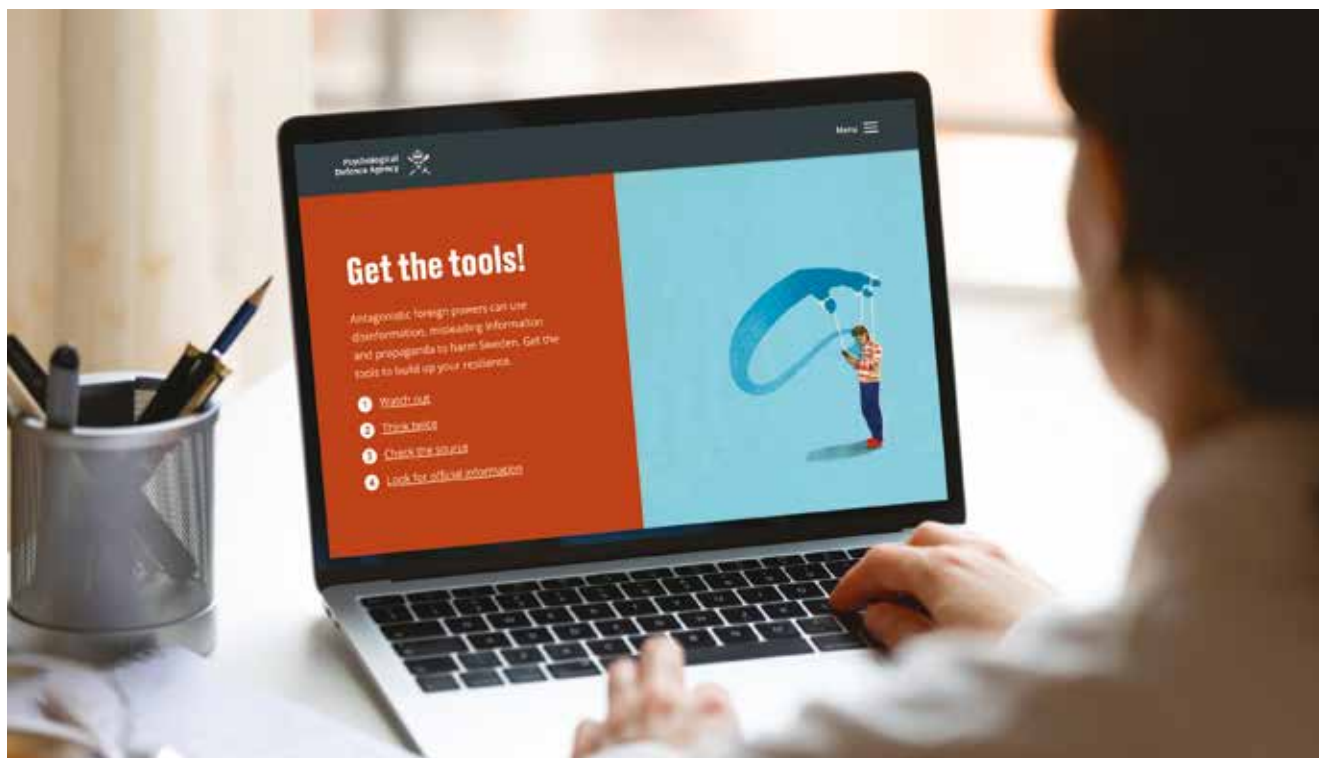
Sweden's "Don't Be Fooled" campaign warns the public about disinformation threats and how to counter them.

The fact is the information environment has changed dramatically. With social media, the changing patterns of media consumption are becoming problematic, especially among particular groups, including the young, and older people. Our population is consuming news that is completely unfiltered. It is not reasonable to expect our public to be experts in every field—but as a result, people are being fooled because they do not have the knowledge and understanding of the topic to be able to evaluate everything they read or receive. The more critical concern is that the understanding of how our society works is deteriorating. And if you do not understand how society works, you cannot appreciate the impact of the news you receive.

The best way to make things happen is through knowledge and engagement. Through these, we can build capability, create standards, as well as broaden and deepen discussion of issues to do with psychological defence. To this end, we have set up a Cooperation Council for psychological defence, including a small number of public agencies: the military, security, and police services, as well as the civil defence and crisis management agencies,

representatives involved in media literacy, the Swedish Institute, embassies, and other civic and business institutions. This council meets at least twice a year to discuss how best to develop resilience and capabilities to do with psychological defence. There is also an operational forum where we can gather these parties to address specific issues.

How is the nature of foreign interference changing, and what developments may be important to pay attention to, looking ahead?
There are many more actors now conducting influence activities. In the old days, there were state actors using different proxies. Today, you have companies for hire—mercenaries conducting these operations—which makes it even more complicated to find out who is behind an operation and what direction it might come from. Information weapons are now available for anyone to use, which makes it a more multipolar, messier environment.

That said, today, we have much better awareness of incipient threats, and Swedes have become fairly resilient to foreign influence campaigns. The war

in Ukraine has led to sanctions against Russian propaganda outlets, which means these cannot be used to reach into our societies. As a result, they have refocused efforts on other countries, in Latin America, Africa, or parts of Asia, where the crude methods they used in 2016 and before can still have an effect to promote toxic narratives.

In terms of new developments, we have been keeping our eyes on machine learning. Generative AI brings brand new information risks because it can produce imagery that is incorrect but looks real. However, for a piece of false information to actually cause harm, it needs to reach you. So our analyst who is working with AI is also working with the analysts dealing with social media and with gaming, which are two different vectors for AI.

> *Public institutions need to talk about what they are doing and be clear about informing the public if there are changes to policies.*

Based on Sweden's experience, how can governments proactively address these challenges?
In general, the main issue is still one of vulnerabilities. Disinformation works because of vulnerability in society. As government officials, we need to step up and decrease these vulnerabilities. The best way to counter disinformation is good governance.

I believe most public organisations do indeed do a good job, but the public may not know about it. Public institutions need to talk about what they are doing and be clear about informing the public if there are changes to policies. Society is always changing. We need to constantly re-educate the people and remind them about how the system works.

We need to help our population understand what they are vulnerable to; what key issues will make them believe disinformation. We need to increase coordination and cooperation, and have people help each other find and counter disinformation. And we need to educate all officials on what to do in the face of an active threat.

The backbone of psychological defence is an informed population. This is a job not just for the public agencies but also the education system and the municipal outfits in direct contact with the public: everyone must work together on this.

Governments can build up resilience by paying attention to strategic communication. Public institutions need to have a communication plan to increase resilience: to inform the population about what is going on, and to also think about the potential impact of information we give out.

This is where transparency is crucial. To give an example: if you are not afraid to talk to the media about something, you are probably doing a good job. If you *are* afraid to talk about an issue, why is that? What are you protecting? You open up a vulnerability for threat actors to exploit. So the more active you are in the information space, the less space malign actors have to play in.

Thinking strategically in communication is a vital part of psychological defence. In the end, it is a race to reach the target audience with the right information.

Mikael Tofvesson is Deputy Head of the Swedish Psychological Defence Agency (MPF) and Director of Operations. He was previously head of the Counter Information Influence Section at the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) and headed three task forces to protect the national general elections in 2018 and 2022, as well as the European Parliament election in 2019, against foreign malign information influence. Between 1989 and 2009, he held various positions within the Swedish Military Intelligence and Security Service.

Africa: "Ripe for an Economic Revolution"

—

Botswanan economist, politician, and UN climate change advisor *Bogolo Kenewendo* sees an opportunity for the continent to take climate action and spur sustainable development.

B ased on your extensive experience in climate action and finance, what are the top three strategies that governments can prioritise to access much needed climate finance?

First, governments should review and revise their nationally determined contributions (NDCs)[1] for 2025, integrating these NDCs into their national development plans. A broad-based approach to climate action extends beyond environmental sustainability: it intersects with sustainable development. This means coming up with comprehensive whole-of-government development strategies that encompass different sectors of their economies. Development considerations could include water source protection and its delivery to urban centres, especially those facing high levels of rural-urban migration. Other approaches might include a more innovative agricultural production strategy that combines both adaptation and agroforestry initiatives.

Second, emerging markets should take this chance to align their NDCs and development plans with more targeted investment strategies for climate finance. There has been an exponential growth in climate finance from both private and multinational sources. Governments should leverage this by engaging not only with multilateral climate funders, such as the European Commission's Just Transition Fund and other adaptation funds, but also by tapping into private sector financing. Over 75% of climate finance now originates from the private sector, so we need to see a more targeted approach to capitalise on this majority funding source.

This is timely as countries prepare for the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which will take place in Azerbaijan in November. Parties to the UNFCCC are set to agree on a New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) after the current annual goal of US$ 100 billion ends in 2025.

Third, projects selected for NDC inclusion must present a clear investment opportunity when viewed from an investor's perspective. African countries in particular have missed out on opportunities because this has not been as well understood. One example is an African government project that proposed expanding its telecom sector capacity, but faced challenges from investors as the project's term sheets were not suitably prepared.

Revising NDC submissions that include clear investment cases and strategies for adaptation and resilience will strengthen capital flow into emerging markets. A targeted approach to incorporating private capital will be crucial, as it represents most of the available climate finance, not only those limited funds available through UNFCCC-based mechanisms.

> " *Over 75% of climate finance now originates from the private sector.*

French President Emmanuel Macron, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula Da Silva, Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz were some of the leaders at the New Global Financial Pact Summit. Paris, France. 23 June 2023.

What are the key capabilities that states need to design and deliver effective climate and development plans?

Coordination is key. Preparing NDCs is not only a Ministry of Environment concern. It needs good coordination to bring together inputs from many ministries, including Finance, Economic Development, Planning, and others. Furthermore, elevating NDC-drafting to the most senior levels of government ensures a more whole-of-government approach that reflects the wider needs and opportunities in the country—not just of those involved in the final NDC negotiations.

The second capability is not so much a specific skill as the broader capacity to assess and derisk projects that require financing. Governments need to support the growth and development of institutions in their own domestic capital markets. Only then can emerging market actors be deemed capable enough to derisk projects, which will afford them access to more foreign capital and blended finance.

Last year, at The Summit for a New Global Financial Pact in Paris, we lobbied strongly for partnerships that help emerging market economies access and share credit scores. African Development Finance

Institutions (DFIs) actually do have the capacity to assist in providing guarantees to attract foreign capital. But they need to ensure that capital is drawn for adaptation or resilience projects that also have economic development co-benefits.

To what extent have climate finance policies been effective at attracting investments and improving development outcomes in Africa?

Several countries have embraced carbon markets as a way of helping them individually fundraise with nature-based adaptation and resilience projects. In Africa, 13 nations have joined the High Ambition Coalition (HAC), a group of countries committed to pushing for ambitious goals in international climate negotiations who want to show themselves to be part of the net-zero solution. But this has still not attracted partners to the extent anticipated.

It is estimated that around 30% of the whole planet's natural sequestration of carbon takes place on the continent due to Africa's vast and diverse ecosystems, including large forests, grasslands, peatlands, and wetlands. In addition, the continent is home to about 30% of the world's mineral resources critical for the global transition to renewable energy and low-carbon

technologies, such as cobalt, platinum, and manganese. Capital will be drawn to those governments that can implement effective green industrialisation policies. However, investments to the continent—at currently only 2.4% of global FDI—are not commensurate with its global mineral endowments and carbon sink potential.

Furthermore, technically, the continent's play in public markets should be well beyond the current 3% that it has been able to raise in the voluntary carbon markets. Africa's contribution is being underpriced and is essentially subsidising the rest of the world's climate action. In the voluntary carbon markets, the price is currently around US$ 10. But if you look at the price in the compliance markets (such as the cap and trade EU Emissions Trading System), some of these markets are trading at around US$ 112. It is very concerning that nine times more capital is still flowing into Africa's "dirtier" sectors, such as oil and gas, than into more "green" sectors.

In your view, how is soaring sovereign debt impacting nations in Africa and their efforts to manage their finances in a sustainable manner?

More than half the countries in Africa currently spend more on debt repayments than on health care. Debt is unsustainable for 30 of these Least Developed Countries (LDCs) on the continent.

How they manage this debt is not just a problem of liquidity: it is compounded by systemic issues that have their roots in history and the global financial infrastructure. What makes this debt burden even more unsustainable is that, according to the latest Global Climate Risk Index, nine of the ten countries most impacted by climate change are in Africa.

We are increasingly seeing that African governments are taking on more debt in response to critical adaptation and resilience issues. So the New Collective Quantified Goal on climate finance, mentioned earlier, should not be setting targets without also tackling the issue of debt. We should be thinking about our responsibilities and the historical pressures that have been put on many developing countries to take on debt to finance their climate change response. Mechanisms including debt relief for adaptation and climate debt swaps are potential solutions under the new goals.[2,3]

One of the good things to come out of COP27 in Egypt was the formation of the Sustainable Debt Coalition (SDC)[4]. This collaborative initiative addresses issues at the intersection of sovereign debt, climate change, and development. The coalition was created to foster a cooperative environment for countries to discuss and implement strategies that enhance the financing of sustainable development initiatives. It focuses on reforming the international debt architecture to

The Africa Carbon Markets Initiative (ACMI) was inaugurated at COP27 with the aim of supporting growth of carbon credit production and creating jobs in Africa. Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. 8 November 2022.

The Atlantic coastline and inland waterways of Loango National Park, Gabon: In August 2023, the country closed the first debt-for-nature swap in continental Africa in a sign that more developing countries are turning to deals that funnel money to conservation while also easing their debt burdens.

better handle the challenges posed by climate change and to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We are seeing some progress. Over the past year, the World Bank has made significant strides in its guarantee programmes, particularly in the context of managing sustainable debt. And in February 2024, the African Union launched the Alliance of African Multilateral Financial Institutions, or Africa Club, which the continent's leaders hope will be a vehicle to push for global financial architecture reforms.

Some African countries are already reaping the benefits of recent reforms that help mobilise climate finance. Kenya is one such example with its Green Bond Programme, which attracts investment into environmentally sustainable projects. Gabon has also launched a groundbreaking financial instrument known as a Blue Bond. These are distinct from traditional green bonds and focus specifically on ocean conservation. Gabon's Blue Bond involved refinancing US$ 500m of the country's sovereign debt and will allocate US$ 125m to support ocean conservation efforts.

But climate shocks are only increasing and LDCs are having to divert funds from elsewhere. This is exacerbated by how slow multilateral organisations are to disburse grants. It takes at least eight months to apply for funds from the UN's Green Climate Fund (GCF), the world's largest dedicated climate fund. Such inefficiencies in these systems means countries are unable to effectively respond to crises, which can be life or death situations for some communities, let alone the attendant economic losses.

Botswana looks on course to achieve its goal of reaching high-income status by 2036. What might other African nations learn from Botswana's approach to governance and macroeconomic management?

Botswana has significant mineral reserves and in particular diamonds. After independence, the Botswana government negotiated those initial agreements with the De Beers mining company with the clear intention that every diamond found should translate into improved social services, stronger national reserves, and greater national development. Such natural resources should not be fully managed commercially. Gaositwe Chiepe was one prominent Botswana politician and diplomat who led these efforts. Hers is a story of brilliant leadership and foresight. As Minister of Trade and Industry, and later of Mines and Natural Resources, she was pivotal in developing Botswana's equitable mineral resources policies.

Dr Gaositwe Chiepe was Botswana's Minister of Trade and Industry from 1974 to 1977, and Minister of Mines and Natural Resources from 1977 to 1984. During her tenure in both Ministries, she played a key role during the crucial Debswana negotiations that saw the Botswana government become a major player in the global diamond industry.

Today, Botswana upholds careful management practices around the mines with thorough economic and ecological assessments for every project. This extends to how mining land will be used and rehabilitated after a mine is retired. Botswana is also home to the largest inland delta in the world, the Okavango Delta, which is renowned for its extraordinary biodiversity and is a major destination for ecotourism: this is another natural resource that must be protected.

Botswana is well regarded for efforts to promote gender equality: ensuring women have equal access to education and jobs and can rise to senior, better paying roles. How does women's empowerment impact economic development in Africa?
Botswana has taken a very deliberate and consistent approach to instituting and revising legislation that can positively impact women's economic participation. This of course begins with access to education. But it even extends to programmes that

support bringing teenage girls back into school after pregnancy. And once women enter the workplace, their participation is high: at 57% in the private sector, a little higher than men. Additionally, ever since reforms were made to property rights, 70% of households in Botswana are now headed by women.

The women's empowerment and advocacy movement in Botswana has been cultivated from a grassroots base for decades, exemplified by women's rights organisations such as Emang Basadi (which translates to "stand up, women" in Setswana). During my time in parliament there was always a consensus on instating laws that empower women. What I observed was that personal safety for women is essential—for women to feel safe at work, at home, and in their communities. Safety is a basic human right, but it also leads to economic opportunity. When people are safe, they have more equal access to labour, capital, and employment, which really unlocks tremendous resources and capacity in society.

But there are still significant issues facing women in Botswana, and across the continent. Femicide, or gender-based violence resulting in the death of women, has been a significant concern. Recognising this issue, the Botswanan government has been working on strengthening the legal framework and enforcement measures to protect women from violence. This includes revising laws related to sexual and domestic violence, to increase protections for women and ensure harsher penalties for perpetrators.

But cultural norms are still lagging the law. A survey has shown that more men feel threatened and disempowered if women are perceived to be gaining more economic independence. So, governments also need to communicate better that economic growth is not a simple zero-sum game and that they are growing the pie for everyone.

In your view, what should countries seeking to govern well in the next decade pay most attention to today?
This is a difficult question because I have personal passions and I have professional passions. My personal passion is promoting the importance of women's economic agency. My professional passion is the broader democratisation of economic

The Okavango Delta in Botswana is a vast inland delta teeming with wildlife. This UNESCO World Heritage site features stunning landscapes and rich biodiversity, making it a prime destination for eco-tourism, with activities including safaris and boat rides.

Bogolo Kenewendo speaking at The Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center's Amujae High-Level Leadership Forum in Kigali, Rwanda, with 28 Amujae Leaders from across Africa. The event featured interactive workshops and sessions to enhance leadership skills and strategies, aiming to boost women's representation in public life and prepare leaders for future elections. 19 April 2024.

opportunity. This means making systemic changes and reforms that allow individuals more access to personal finance and to start a business. If people cannot do that without calling on their personal connections, then we are failing.

Africa moved forward in the 20th century with a political revolution that democratised the continent. But on the economic front, the informal sector across Africa is still too high, and the market is not self-correcting as it is supposed to. This is hindering concerted indigenous economic development, which we have seen lifting economies elsewhere, such as in Asia. Africa is ripe for an economic revolution. Our job is to make it happen.

Bogolo Joy Kenewendo is a prominent economic diplomacy professional with diverse experience in trade and investment, finance and development, and public policy. She has held several notable positions, including serving as Cabinet Minister of Investment, Trade, and Industry in Botswana, successfully negotiating key trade agreements, and improving the country's business environment. She was also the Special Advisor to the UN Climate Change High-Level Champions, contributing to climate action projects, such as the US\$ 20 billion UN Compendium of Climate-Related Initiatives in Africa. Additionally, she is involved in several corporate and philanthropic boards.

The Chandler
Good Government Index 2024

—

The Winners

1

🇸🇬

Singapore

Maintained rank
from 2023

2

🇩🇰

Denmark

Improved 2 places
from 2023

3

🇫🇮

Finland

Maintained rank
from 2023

4

🇨🇭

Switzerland

Declined 2 places
from 2023

5

🇳🇴

Norway

Maintained rank
from 2023

6

🇸🇪

Sweden

Maintained rank
from 2023

7

🇱🇺

Luxembourg

Newly ranked in
2024

8

🇩🇪

Germany

Maintained rank
from 2023

9

🇳🇱

Netherlands

Declined 2 places
from 2023

10

🇮🇪

Ireland

Improved 1 place
from 2023

11
United Kingdom

Declined 1 place from 2023

12
Canada

Improved 3 places from 2023

13
New Zealand

Declined 4 places from 2023

14
United Arab Emirates

Improved 6 places from 2023

15
Australia

Declined 2 places from 2023

16
United States

Declined 1 place from 2023

17
Estonia

Improved 1 place from 2023

18
France

Declined 2 places from 2023

19
Austria

Declined 7 places from 2023

20
South Korea

Declined 1 place from 2023

Government Effectiveness Around the World

—

The Chandler Good Government Index has been measuring government effectiveness, in terms of capabilities and outcomes, each year since 2021. Digging deeper into the data, certain countries stand out with their achievements.

Winners by...

...Geography

Africa
🇲🇺 **Mauritius**

Oceania, Asia
🇸🇬 **Singapore**

Europe, North America
🇩🇰 **Denmark**

Latin America, Caribbean
🇺🇾 **Uruguay**

Central and West Asia, Middle East
🇦🇪 **United Arab Emirates**

...Level of Development

High Income
🇸🇬 **Singapore**

Upper-middle Income
🇨🇳 **China**

Lower-middle Income
🇻🇳 **Vietnam**

Low Income
🇷🇼 **Rwanda**

...CGGI Pillar

Leadership & Foresight
🇸🇬 **Singapore**

Robust Laws & Policies
🇫🇮 **Finland**

Strong Institutions
🇸🇬 **Singapore**

Financial Stewardship
🇦🇪 **United Arab Emirates**

Attractive Marketplace
🇸🇬 **Singapore**

Global Influence & Reputation
🇫🇷 **France**

Helping People Rise
🇳🇴 **Norway**

Uruguay

Uruguay ranked 31st in CGGI 2024, and overtakes Chile to be the top performer from Latin America and the Caribbean for the first time. Uruguay has done particularly well in the **Leadership & Foresight** pillar, coming in 7th place globally, a remarkable improvement from 27th place in 2021. Also notable is Uruguay's 21st place in the **Attractive Marketplace** pillar, with improved performance in several constituent indicators within this pillar, such as Property Rights, Macroeconomic Environment, and Stable Business Regulations.

Vietnam

Ranked 50th in CGGI 2024, Vietnam gets first place amongst its peers in the lower-middle income group. Vietnam improved eight places from CGGI 2021, which is the 3rd biggest improvement globally. Like Uruguay, Vietnam does well in the **Leadership & Foresight** and **Attractive Marketplace** pillars, ranking 28th and 27th respectively. To continue this positive trajectory, Vietnam would need to overcome challenges in some areas that have dragged down its overall performance, such as in the **Strong Institutions** and **Global Influence & Reputation** pillars.

Rwanda

Ranked 56th in the CGGI this year, Rwanda has maintained its position as the best performing low-income country in the CGGI for the fourth consecutive year. Although higher income countries generally perform better on the CGGI than their lower income peers, Rwanda has consistently stood out as an outlier, outperforming not only all countries in the low-income group, but also many others at more advanced stages of development. This achievement is particularly remarkable given that just 30 years ago, Rwanda was devastated by one of the worst humanitarian crises in recent history.

Movers and Shakers
in the Governance Landscape

Countries with the greatest movements (2021 – 2024)

Government capabilities take time to build. Progress that is often invisible day to day can produce significant change when it is sustained over months, years, or even decades. In that sense, the governance competition is more of a marathon than a sprint—a race that is ongoing. In these two pages, we recognise and celebrate countries that have made significant progress since 2021, while sounding a cautionary note for countries that are lagging, as no nation should be left behind by the global community.

United Arab Emirates

No country has improved more over the past four years than the **UAE**, which jumped ten places in the overall rankings between 2021 and 2024 (from 24th to 14th). It is also the only Middle Eastern country in the top 20. The UAE's progress has been broad-based, with rank improvements in six out of the seven pillars of the CGGI. Of note is its strong performance in the **Financial Stewardship** and **Leadership & Foresight** pillars, where it ranked 1st and 2nd respectively in 2024.

Honduras
(▼23 places)

Lebanon
(▼18 places)

The Largest Declines

🇬🇷 Greece

Greece moved up nine spots from 50th in 2021, to 41st in 2024, which is the largest improvement amongst European countries and the second largest globally. The country improved in four pillars of the CGGI, with notable jumps in **Leadership & Foresight** (from 89th to 40th) and **Attractive** **Marketplace** (from 101st to 75th). As *The Economist* magazine aptly said, while naming Greece as its "Country of the Year" for 2023, "Greece shows that from the verge of collapse it is possible to enact tough, sensible economic reforms, rebuild the social contract, exhibit restrained patriotism—and still win elections."

The Biggest Improvements

Mongolia (▲8 places)

Vietnam (▲8 places)

Greece (▲9 places)

UAE (▲10 places)

North Macedonia (▲7 places)

Namibia (▼14 places)

Ethiopia (▼14 places)

Sri Lanka (▼16 places)

Journey Towards Better Government: Where Are We Headed?

East Asian countries pull ahead, as the best performers improve their lead and the stragglers slip further behind.

W ith the benefit of several years of CGGI data, we can discern trends in the global governance landscape. For the first time, we bring out the stories that the data is telling about the global governance competition.

Trend 1: Widening Governance Gap at the Regional Level
At the regional level, we see CGGI overall scores clustering into four distinct bands (see next page).[1] Apart from East Asia, the gap between these bands has not closed over the past four years.

Governance Gap Between Regions is Widening
CGGI Scores by Region (2021 - 2024)

Band 1
- Western Europe
- Northern Europe
- North America
- Australia & New Zealand

Band 2
- East Asia
- Southern Europe
- South-East Asia
- Eastern Europe

Band 3
- Central & West Asia
- Middle East & North America
- Latin America & Caribbean

Band 4
- South Asia
- Sub-Saharan Africa

CGGI Overall Score

2021 2022 2023 2024

Indeed, the gap between regions appears to be widening—we call this the "Governance Gap". Even with a small decline in performance from Western Europe and Australia & New Zealand, countries from Band 1 regions continue to maintain a commanding lead. On the other hand, both South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa— already the weakest performing regions— have seen a consistent and notable decline in CGGI scores.

China and Mongolia are Driving Regional Improvement
Changes in Scores for East Asian Countries (2021 - 2024)

DECLINE   **IMPROVEMENT**

China

Mongolia

South Korea

Japan

Legend:
- Leadership & Foresight
- Robust Laws & Policies
- Strong Institutions
- Financial Stewardship
- Attractive Marketplace
- Global Influence & Reputation
- Helping People Rise

Trend 2: East Asia is Rising

East Asia stands out as the only region that has seen sustained and significant progress. Comprising four ranked countries—China, Mongolia, Japan, and South Korea—the region has seen relatively broad-based improvements. Between 2021 and 2024, the region, on average, improved in five out of seven CGGI pillars, with slight declines in the other two.

China and **Mongolia** drove the region's stellar performance over the past four years—China climbed five places in the overall rankings, while Mongolia improved eight spots. China's progress was driven by significant improvements in the **Leadership & Foresight**, **Helping People Rise**, and **Attractive Marketplace** pillars. Mongolia's improvements were seen largely in the **Financial Stewardship** and **Attractive Marketplace** pillars.

South Korea's score improved slightly between 2021 and 2024, allowing it to stay within the top 20 best performing countries on the CGGI, while **Japan** dropped out of the top 20 for the first time this year. This is also the first time that South Korea has overtaken Japan.

Trend 3: Government Performance Slips Globally

A deeper look at the country-level data shows that the quality of national governance has generally declined between 2021 and 2024.

Over the past four years, 67 countries saw their overall scores decline—while only about half that number (35) saw their scores improve. We also saw a drop in the average CGGI score over that same time period.

Less economically advanced countries were disproportionately affected. All low-income countries saw a decline in CGGI scores, while only 57% of high-income countries suffered in the same way.[2]

On average, there was a decline in performance across five out of seven pillars. The pillars that saw the largest declines were **Financial Stewardship** and **Global Influence & Reputation.**

Trend 4: Gap Widens Between Leaders and Stragglers

The data also shows a widening Governance Gap: the best performers are getting better while the worst performers are declining further.

As the chart below shows, countries with the biggest improvements in CGGI scores come almost entirely from the top half of countries in the CGGI rankings, while those with the most significant declines have generally come from the bottom half of the Index. This mirrors the widening Governance Gap that we have observed between regions.

Uplifting Government Capabilities and Closing the Governance Gap

Among the many lessons that have emerged over the past four years, one in particular stands out: progress is possible. Yet, the data also demonstrates such progress has eluded most governments.

These struggles are not surprising, given how many voices in this year's *Governance Matters* agree that the challenges facing government have never been greater. But if the challenges are historic, so are the benefits of overcoming them, with concerted action and political will.

The governance competition, more than any other, will determine the rise and fall of nations, and the fate of billions of people they represent.

Declining Government Performance; A Growing Governance Gap
CGGI Overall Scores 2021 vs 2024
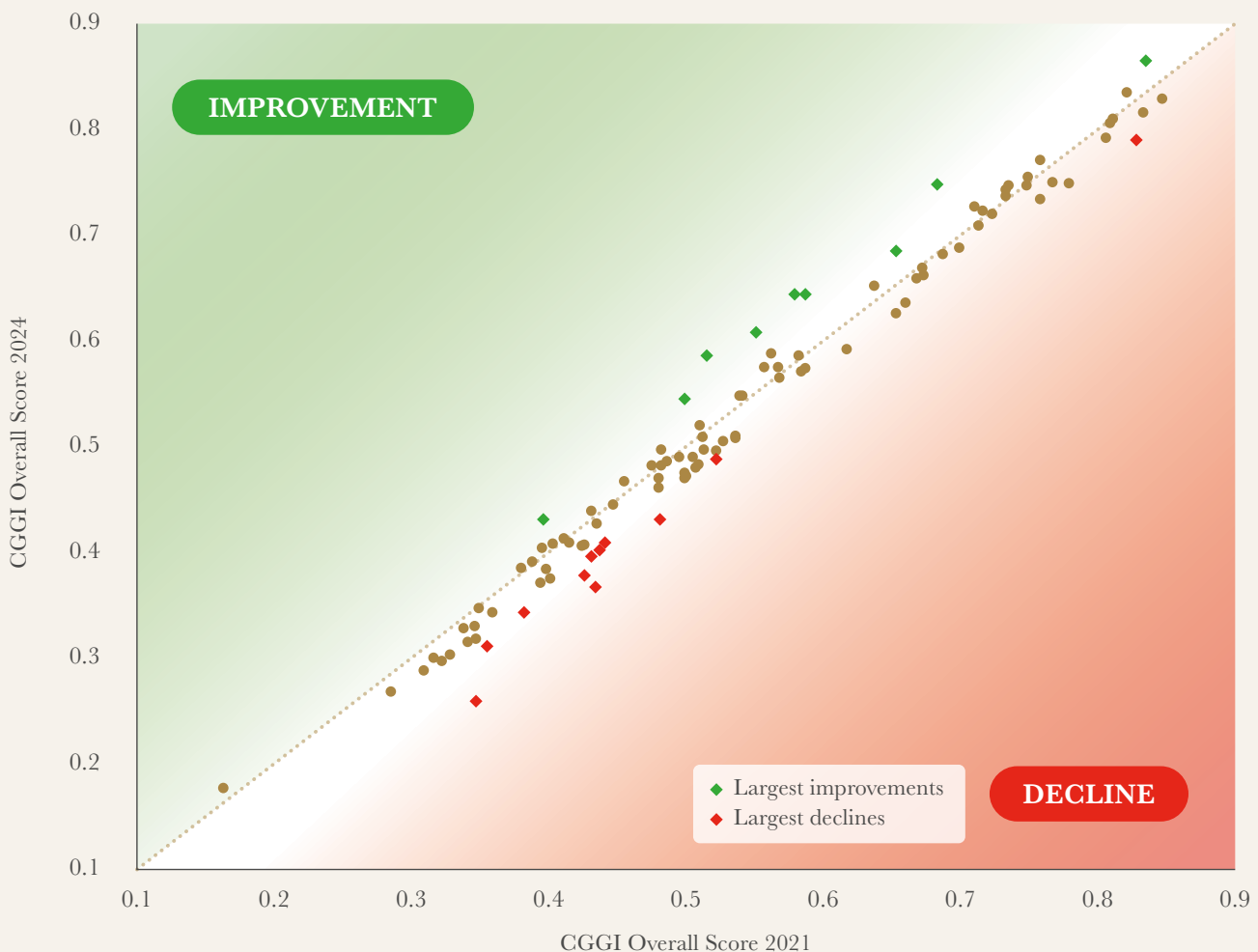
The Chandler Good Government Index

Published annually, the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI) is developed by government practitioners, for government practitioners. It measures the effectiveness of 113 national governments by using 35 equally-weighted indicators that are grouped into seven pillars. The CGGI helps us to better understand and benchmark government performance, and to foster honest conversations about opportunities for progress.

The CGGI is unique in its focus on government capabilities that are important for all countries, regardless of political system or ideology. It is also the most comprehensive index of its kind.

PILLARS

Leadership & Foresight	Robust Laws & Policies	Strong Institutions	Financial Stewardship	Attractive Marketplace	Global Influence & Reputation	Helping People Rise
Ethical Leadership	Rule of Law	Coordination	Government Debt	Property Rights	International Trade	Education
Long-Term Vision	Quality of Judiciary	Data Capability	Country Budget Surplus	Macroeconomic Environment	International Diplomacy	Health
Adaptability	Transparency	Implementation	Spending Efficiency	Attracting Investments	Nation Brand	Satisfaction with Public Services
Strategic Prioritisation	Regulatory Governance	Quality of Bureaucracy	Country Risk Premium	Logistics Competence	Passport Strength	Personal Safety
Innovation				Stable Business Regulations		Environmental Performance
						Income Distribution
						Social Mobility
						Gender Gap
						Non-Discrimination

Chandler Good Government Index: 2024 Country Rankings

Overall Rank			Leadership & Foresight	Robust Laws & Policies	Strong Institutions	Financial Stewardship	Attractive Marketplace	Global Influence & Reputation	Helping People Rise
1		Singapore	1	9	1	2	1	26	4
2		Denmark	3	4	3	5	6	11	=2
3		Finland	5	1	2	11	3	13	=2
4		Switzerland	16	2	10	6	4	9	5
5		Norway	9	3	9	3	=19	20	1
6		Sweden	4	5	=7	9	13	12	8
7		Luxembourg	8	=14	18	4	2	34	7
8		Germany	26	12	12	7	7	3	13
9		Netherlands	21	7	28	8	8	8	6
10		Ireland	12	10	15	15	5	19	14
11		United Kingdom	20	13	=7	27	18	2	19
12		Canada	10	20	6	16	12	25	=21
13		New Zealand	15	6	5	10	22	35	25
14		United Arab Emirates	2	=29	22	1	16	44	=27
15		Australia	25	8	4	=17	14	23	23
15		United States	6	16	=16	13	9	7	36
17		Estonia	13	11	13	=17	15	30	16
18		France	24	21	14	34	=19	1	18
19		Austria	27	19	25	23	10	17	11
20		South Korea	17	24	11	12	=32	21	=21
21		Belgium	19	18	30	33	23	15	12
22		Japan	32	17	20	=51	17	6	15
23		Iceland	29	=14	26	19	26	42	10

The use of an equal sign indicates that two or more countries hold the same position in a given pillar ranking.
Data cut-off for the 2024 Chandler Good Government Index was 1 December 2023.

Overall Rank

Rank		Country	🔭	⚖️	🏛️	🔍	🏪	🌐	🪜
24		Czech Republic	41	27	29	20	36	18	17
25		Lithuania	23	22	23	24	30	32	29
26		Slovenia	38	35	19	38	=34	29	9
27		Portugal	47	33	32	42	25	10	24
28		Israel	36	25	31	26	11	46	34
29		Spain	48	36	=16	=54	=59	5	20
30		Latvia	34	=29	21	41	=32	36	31
31		Italy	30	=31	27	93	42	4	32
		Uruguay	7	23	39	=51	21	51	40
33		Malta	46	41	42	25	24	40	26
34		Poland	=61	50	33	32	44	13	=27
35		Chile	37	28	24	35	38	28	48
36		Slovakia	65	39	34	36	=51	30	30
37		China	11	67	64	28	28	36	43
38		Saudi Arabia	18	46	=51	14	39	69	41
39		Malaysia	44	=44	56	=21	31	39	50
40		Georgia	33	26	37	53	29	55	59
41		Greece	40	43	36	99	75	15	33
		Hungary	=59	59	38	69	40	22	38
43		Costa Rica	39	=31	40	86	=34	48	47
		Croatia	=88	=51	43	44	=51	27	35
45		Bulgaria	64	48	44	=21	49	33	56
46		Mauritius	35	34	35	63	54	59	44
47		Romania	0	47	75	72	50	24	37
48		Indonesia	31	40	60	30	43	58	=65
		Serbia	66	68	53	40	45	54	39
50		Vietnam	28	64	73	39	27	65	57
51		Albania	43	=56	48	70	58	70	55
52		Kazakhstan	=78	=73	41	29	84	75	42
53		Botswana	14	37	49	31	78	78	94

Overall Rank

Rank	Country							
54	Thailand	94	58	72	37	47	61	51
55	Montenegro	=59	=60	59	=77	68	66	46
56	North Macedonia	68	77	46	73	71	63	54
56	Rwanda	22	=44	66	50	37	93	87
58	Russian Federation	77	87	69	61	88	49	45
59	Armenia	73	=56	77	=54	65	68	58
59	Colombia	=61	=60	57	74	56	49	82
61	Panama	85	=83	65	60	41	52	69
62	Brazil	86	55	47	95	=51	40	=77
63	Mexico	105	70	45	=56	66	43	76
64	Jamaica	=51	54	=70	=58	57	85	68
64	Jordan	=51	42	76	89	64	83	=60
66	Peru	98	=71	55	43	63	47	83
67	Dominican Republic	50	=51	74	84	55	82	67
67	Philippines	92	66	=61	=46	=59	74	63
69	India	67	63	58	62	=69	56	=85
70	Morocco	45	=73	85	=58	62	67	=77
70	Türkiye	83	85	=51	67	104	36	72
72	Moldova	88	=60	78	76	87	72	49
73	Ukraine	69	=73	63	107	96	53	52
74	South Africa	=57	38	50	=82	99	57	=100
75	Egypt	53	80	80	100	46	77	79
76	Paraguay	=88	91	84	65	=72	60	84
77	Argentina	=101	89	54	106	109	45	53
77	Mongolia	82	65	=61	88	80	96	70
79	Senegal	42	79	82	79	61	88	96
80	Tanzania	=57	=93	92	=46	67	90	93
81	Ghana	49	53	67	108	=90	86	88
81	Kyrgyzstan	=101	92	86	68	106	90	=60
83	Ecuador	95	=93	81	97	92	72	71

Overall Rank

			Voice	Justice	Institution	Anti-corruption	Business	Global	Ladder
84		Bosnia and Herzegovina	108	95	102	45	83	76	62
85		El Salvador	99	101	=70	104	85	62	64
86		Tajikistan	56	109	111	48	74	106	=65
87		Namibia	=54	49	87	=82	82	84	103
88		Tunisia	93	=73	79	101	=100	80	81
89		Algeria	72	=103	90	96	86	87	=73
90		Cambodia	97	=107	101	64	=76	105	=73
91		Bangladesh	87	98	88	66	=90	108	=85
91		Kenya	63	=71	89	92	=76	89	99
93		Sri Lanka	74	81	68	111	107	90	75
94		Guatemala	109	90	94	49	81	63	98
95		Uganda	71	=83	83	85	=69	111	104
96		Benin	=78	69	96	75	48	102	111
97		Honduras	110	97	95	=56	79	71	97
98		Nepal	96	86	=106	87	103	107	90
99		Malawi	=54	78	91	109	102	95	102
99		Nicaragua	111	111	=104	71	95	81	89
101		Pakistan	75	82	99	102	=97	94	108
102		Burkina Faso	76	88	98	98	=93	101	109
103		Cameroon	91	=99	100	=77	=97	113	107
104		Madagascar	103	105	=104	94	=100	112	95
105		Zambia	81	96	93	110	89	100	105
106		Ethiopia	=78	=107	=106	81	108	104	110
107		Iran, Islamic Rep.	107	112	103	80	112	98	80
108		Mozambique	104	=103	97	103	=93	103	=105
109		Mali	84	106	112	91	=72	110	113
110		Nigeria	106	=99	110	90	105	97	112
111		Zimbabwe	100	102	108	105	111	109	=100
112		Lebanon	112	110	109	112	110	98	91
113		Venezuela	113	113	113	113	113	79	92

How Good Governance and the Marketplace Can Bring Prosperity to the Global South

—

Richard F. Chandler, founder of the Chandler Institute of Governance, explains the essential and complementary roles of government and business in building strong nations.

The Rise of a Multipolar World
The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) chose what seemed an ironic topic at its summit in early July this year. While leaders discussed "Global Unity for a Just World and Harmony", their meeting could be better understood as a further step in the fracturing of global geopolitics.[1]

During the 1990s, many commentators observed the post-Cold War ascendancy of the United States and concluded that the world was on course to adopt its system of liberal democratic capitalism. Instead, a new generation of emerging economies is reshaping the global order.

The SCO, founded in 2001, now comprises ten nations: China, Russia, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, and Belarus, the last of which was admitted in 2024. Originally focused on border security in Eurasia, it has taken on an increasingly geopolitical role.
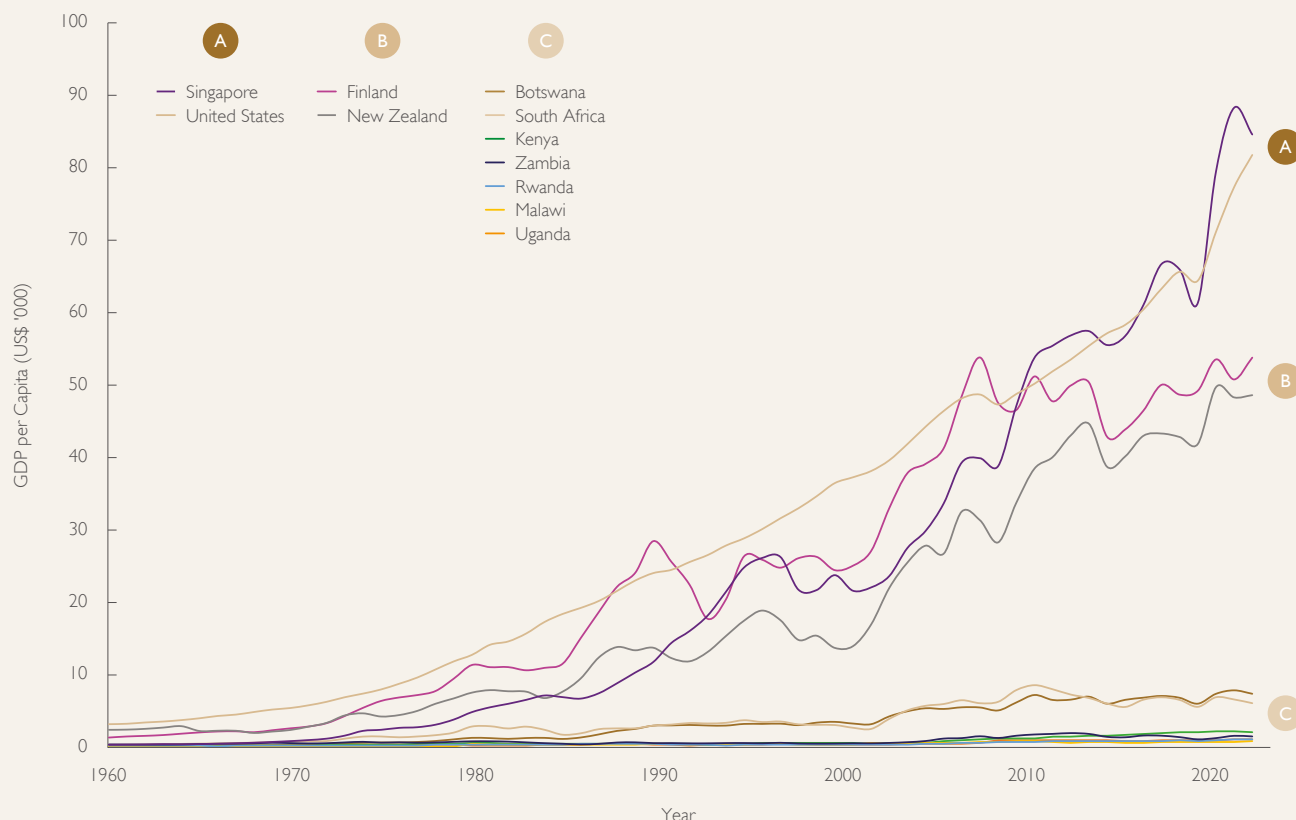
It is not the only expanding group challenging the dominance of the West. In 2023, a meeting of the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) earned global headlines for its members' criticism of developed nations. In early 2024, five more countries joined the bloc—Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).[2]

From left: President of Brazil Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of China Xi Jinping, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, and Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov during the 2023 BRICS Summit, Johannesburg, South Africa, 23 August 2023.

The Global South Has Been Left Behind
GDP Per Capita, 1960 – Present Day

GDP per Capita (US$ '000)

Legend:
- Singapore
- United States
- Finland
- New Zealand
- Botswana
- South Africa
- Kenya
- Zambia
- Rwanda
- Malawi
- Uganda

Year

Source: World Bank (2023)

Opportunities and Challenges in the Changing Global Landscape

The multipolar world will create opportunities for competition, conflict, and collaboration. The U.S.-led "rules-based order", which has been in place since the end of World War II, is evolving. New players will seek to set new rules. Many of these players will come from the large economies in the less developed "Global South". They include the world's most populous country, India, and fastest-growing continent, Africa, whose population will comprise more than 25% of the planet's by 2050.[3]

These shifts are already impacting multilateral institutions and modes of government. Challengers include the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, China's Belt and Road Initiative, and its associated organisations such as the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, and the SCO.

Putting Good Governance and Self-Reliance Before Development Assistance

At the same time as economic development has enabled new players to graduate to the top table of geopolitics, many others have been left behind. For the poorest nations, a century of aid, loans, and philanthropy has not created the intended outcomes. The strategy of creating broad-based prosperity by providing financial support for poverty alleviation and economic development has failed.

Missing in this strategy has been a consideration of why many recipient nations have been unable to steward the financial assistance they have received. Issues such as corruption, weak civil service capabilities, dysfunctional domestic institutions, poor performance management systems, and a lack of accountability for results at all levels have too often been seen as second order concerns.

History teaches us that no country has created prosperity by depending on development aid. *Self-reliance has been key*. There is no path to development that does not include building a capable, trustworthy government, and a national culture that values education and hard work. Nations that achieve this do not need foreign aid— and in fact soon become donors to their neighbours.

Singapore: A Governance Success Story

This was the path followed by Lee Kuan Yew, the founding father of Singapore. As the island city-state's first prime minister, Lee inherited a post-colonial and ethnically diverse nation. It was small, reliant on its neighbours for food and water, and had no natural resources and few obvious economic advantages. Lee famously wept on television when Singapore was ejected from Malaysia in 1965.[4]

Singapore's experience of going from third world to first holds five critical lessons.

1 *Leadership and Vision*
Wisdom, foresight, and the ability to take the long view are invaluable. Lee once said, "I am calculating in terms of the next generation; in terms of the next 100 years; in terms of eternity." Many nations have had success through clear vision plans that set out coherent multi-year or multi-decade strategies, such as Saudi Arabia's "Vision 2030" programme.

2 *Cultures of Integrity*
Lee and his cabinet took their oath of office symbolically dressed in all-white attire and then embarked on a zero-tolerance policy towards corruption. For a country, as for any organisation, the culture one gets is the culture modelled by the leadership. Lee's stance against corruption encouraged a culture of integrity in government and across the nation that helped to build trust, a crucial ingredient in establishing a thriving economy and society.

3 *Public Service Capabilities*
Singapore's rise has been enabled by its excellence in national governance, reflected in its first place position in the 2024 Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI). The country's leaders successfully architected and engineered strong institutions and attracted highly capable public servants by offering them salaries comparable with the private sector.

4 *Financial Discipline*
Lee keenly understood the need to steward his nation's finances. Singapore's government has prioritised balanced budgets and the building up of financial reserves. At a time when U.S. gross federal debt has reached US\$ 34 trillion[5]—more than 120% of GDP—Singapore still maintains and proactively manages substantial financial reserves, the use of which is clearly defined by the terms of the nation's constitution.

As interest rates have risen, Singapore has been spared the dangers of debt servicing that have had a tremendous impact elsewhere. In Africa, the cost of servicing external public debt reached 18.6% of government revenue in 2024: a serious handicap to further development.[6]

5 *Building a Middle Class*
While other developing nations sought foreign aid, Lee wanted Singapore to build a vibrant marketplace and to be a partner to the world's wealthy countries and large companies. As businesses build vibrant economies and create employment, they provide opportunities for people to climb the social mobility ladder. In turn, this increases the size of the nation's middle class, a reservoir of capital and creativity that further accelerates economic development.

As the middle class grows, it generates its own momentum as export-led growth models evolve into consumption-led economies. Leaders who want to build prosperity understand the power of helping people into and through the middle class.

Lee Kuan Yew, then Senior Minister, waves to supporters, Singapore, 25 October 2001.

The Chandler Governance Model

GOVERNMENT ARCHITECTURE

Government
Constitution & Laws, Institutions, Civil Service

Basic Public Goods

Marketplace Infrastructure

SOCIETAL TRUST

Political Leadership
Vision, Stewardship, Change Management

IDENTITY & CULTURE

SOCIAL MOBILITY

Cities & Communities
Wealth & Wellbeing, Livable Cities, Social Cohesion

Marketplace Companies & Entrepreneurs
Business Climate, Business Innovation, Productivity & Competitiveness, Small-Medium Enterprises

Creative Society

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

ECONOMIC SYSTEM

Understanding Nation Building: The Chandler Governance Model

One of the things that marked out Lee was his intentional approach to architecting the country's institutions, public service, economic model, national identity, and culture. As he set about this process, he was inspired by what he saw working and failing in other countries. He was able to integrate these lessons and bring a holistic approach to building a strong nation.

In the face of their daily pressures, many political and public service leaders can struggle to find the space to think strategically about long-term development. It is easy for governance to become all about solving today's problems—not about building a stronger nation for tomorrow. The Chandler Governance Model (CGM) has been designed to address this by helping national leaders and governance practitioners to understand the essential features of a strong government and where their own nation may be succeeding or struggling.

The Responsibility of Political Leadership

The CGM posits that national development begins with wise, competent, and ethical political leadership that is committed to national development and shared prosperity. Political leadership is built on a compelling vision, responsible stewardship of the nation's story, culture, and resources, and effective policy-making. Great leaders demonstrate good judgement in navigating challenges, while also strengthening the national economy and government capabilities.

The Unseen Forces of Transformation

Surrounding political leadership is the "transformation ring", comprising three forces that determine the speed, direction, and success of national development: societal trust, social mobility, and identity and culture.

High-Trust Nations are Prosperous Nations

Trust enhances collaboration and reduces social frictions, impacting everything from crime rates and

public health to business confidence, interest rates, and capital markets.

Governments have tremendous power to influence levels of trust. High-trust nations are bound together by cultures of integrity—shared norms and codes of behaviour that operate at all levels of society. When a government clamps down on corruption and serves the population in a trustworthy manner, it does not just support trust in government, it cascades down to build trust in the marketplace and in communities.

Social Mobility Supports Economic Strength
Few people expect or even desire a world where economic and social outcomes are equal—but most hope for one where the same opportunities are open to all. This is the essence of a meritocratic and socially mobile society.

Social mobility builds the economic strength of a nation by giving people the chance to join the middle class. There are also cultural benefits. When people believe that success is based on ability and effort rather than factors such as gender, race, or family wealth, they have more faith in society and its institutions.

Building a Unified and Dynamic Nation
Many nations are struggling with disunity, whether it is caused by political polarisation, migration, or the legacy of historical events such as colonialism. In addressing this challenge, nurturing a common national identity is vital. This does not emerge in a vacuum; it can be cultivated and reinforced through conscious efforts by national leaders.

Closely related to a nation's identity is its culture. This can be beneficial or harmful to a nation's chances

Prosperous Societies Have Attractive Marketplaces

CGGI Attractive Marketplace Score vs GDP per Capita

Source: Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI) 2024; World Bank (2023)

People on bicycles on the streets of Copenhagen, Denmark, June 2022. Liveable, well-governed cities, that are home to healthy and cohesive communities, are economic powerhouses that benefit the whole nation.

of achieving development. It can either reward hard work, risk-taking, innovation, and fairness—or not. Political leaders who shape culture so that it aligns with national development priorities will find that it is a powerful force supporting the implementation of policy across a broad range of issues.

Strong Government Institutions

The important distinction between political leadership and government is one of the critical revelations of the CGM. The former refers to the leader and their office. The latter refers to the constitution and laws, institutions, and bureaucracy that govern the country and comprise the public service.

A nation's constitution and laws embody its core beliefs and guide the translation of abstract concepts into practical regulations. Alongside this robust legal framework, a government must build and maintain strong institutions to administer and enforce them.

Government also needs the skills and capabilities to implement policies, deliver public services efficiently, and respond to the needs and aspirations of its citizens. This requires training civil servants and ensuring that ministries are effective.

Supporting Marketplace Companies and Entrepreneurs

Within the CGM, the marketplace companies and entrepreneurs domain highlights the importance of business and trade in establishing the strength and success of the nation. No amount of domestic government intervention or foreign aid spending can generate sustainable, broad-based prosperity. This can only be done by the people of the nation through their own creativity, entrepreneurship, and hard work. A functioning market economy is the engine room of national progress.

People in every country have the creativity and latent potential to drive a thriving economy. What is not so evenly distributed is the opportunity to do so.

The role of government in ensuring a vibrant marketplace lies in setting the right enabling conditions. These include physical, legal, and financial infrastructure, strong contract law and property rights, public services such as power, a healthy and well-educated workforce, and a culture that values hard work and risk-taking. When governments provide these conditions, companies will in turn fulfil society's needs by providing employment, creating goods and services, and contributing tax revenue.

The Attractive Marketplace pillar of the CGGI measures government success in delivering this. The strong correlation between a nation's GDP per capita and its Attractive Marketplace score demonstrates that only governments that succeed in empowering business will build a strong and prosperous nation.

Strong Cities and Communities

The final domain of the CGM is strong cities and communities. World Bank statistics show that 56% of the world's population lives in cities, contributing more than 80% of global GDP. The rise of cities is only expected to continue, with nearly 70% of people living in urban areas by 2050.[7] Liveable, well-governed cities, that are home to healthy and cohesive communities, are economic powerhouses that benefit the whole nation.

Policy Drivers: Basic Public Goods, Marketplace Infrastructure, and Creative Society

The final aspect of the CGM is the National Development Flywheel, represented by the "blades" of the model. These three policy drivers—basic public goods, marketplace infrastructure, and creative society—establish priority areas for government and show how the different domains are connected.

The government provides basic public goods to support cities and communities, and marketplace infrastructure to enable companies and entrepreneurs. Creative society policies focus on giving people the ability to fully express their talents and passions. These policies encourage a healthy, skilled, and aspirational workforce.

When all the parts of the model work together, we see strong leaders implementing visionary and ethical governance that creates an environment conducive to private sector innovation, and strong, healthy communities.

The CGM in Practice

Examining case studies across the world shows how the CGM can offer a practical framework for assessing government performance. For example, the U.S.'s long-term economic success has been underpinned by a governance system that has valued marketplace companies and entrepreneurs. The rise of the culture wars suggest that its leaders have been less successful in maintaining a sense of national identity.

In Western Europe, many countries have struggled with productivity and GDP growth, a sign that governments may have neglected marketplace companies and entrepreneurs. In Singapore, the country's new Prime Minister, Lawrence Wong,

has spoken of redefining success to focus less on material goods and more on collective well-being.[8] This could be interpreted as an understanding that, while Singapore has enjoyed great success across the CGM, the cities and communities domain may require greater focus.

For nations at the bottom of global development rankings, the CGM's primary revelation is the importance of wise and competent political leadership. Given the challenges of finding such figures, this might seem disheartening. Yet I believe it is a tremendous source of hope as it shows the great potential that exists for all nations that manage to get this first step right.

CIG: Focusing on Strong Governance

I have been considering questions of governance ever since I wrote my Masters thesis on corporate governance as a student in the 1980s. In the decades since, as an investor and entrepreneur in emerging markets, I have seen the damage done by weak national governance and corruption. I have also experienced the struggles that traditional philanthropic and charitable ventures face in trying to make a scalable, sustainable impact.

I founded CIG in Singapore in 2019 to bring a new and more practical approach to national development, focusing on good governance as the foundation of strong and prosperous nations. Guided by the revelations of the CGM, CIG's tools and services for governments are designed to help other nations around the world follow in the city-state's footsteps. There are no shortcuts on this path, but the effort is worthwhile. Just ask the people of Singapore.

Richard F. Chandler is the founder of the Chandler Institute of Governance, a global non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting excellence in national governance through training programmes, practical projects, and knowledge creation and sharing. He is also the Founder and Chairman of the Clermont Group, a diversified conglomerate with industry-leading companies in healthcare, financial services, and aerospace.

Turning the Challenges of Immigration into Opportunity

—

Immigration has become a thorny issue for governments around the world. Faced with rising migration, how can governments ensure migrants integrate into their new communities, while addressing the concerns of their citizens?

I mmigration is becoming increasingly charged and politicised, even in some countries with long traditions of welcoming migrants. According to research by Gallup in February 2024, Americans believe immigration is the most important "problem" the country faces today—ahead of the economy, inflation, and poverty.[1] In an August 2024 survey in the U.K., conducted in the aftermath of anti-immigration riots, immigration was cited as the top concern for the country.[2] In Canada, concern over immigration has quadrupled between 2020 and 2024, and is being linked to the high cost of living and housing unaffordability.[3] Immigration was also cited in polls as the top concern in Chile, Türkiye, Germany and the Netherlands in August 2024.[4]

Unsurprisingly, immigration is a polarising topic and one that regularly makes the front pages across the world. Headlines range from tragic tales of fatal migrant family journeys to stories about violent immigrant gangs, and from heartwarming accounts of families welcoming refugees into their homes to worrying statistics about the brain drain from the global south. For many nations, immigration flows are rising faster than at any point in history.[5]

The issues around immigration differ by country, but the broad concerns revolve around lives and livelihoods. Conflicts can arise from differences in traditions and culture, and worries about migrants taking jobs and draining already strained social services. Meanwhile, those in favour of immigration point to research and anecdotes suggesting immigrants in fact enrich a nation's economy, society, and culture. Inevitably, immigration is playing a pivotal role in election campaigns across the world.[6]

Concerns about overwhelming numbers of immigrant arrivals and their potential lack of skills, or aptitude for integration, remain a constant refrain from many host nation residents. These sentiments are a reality that governments can ill afford to ignore. As a result, many governments are increasingly employing stricter border controls to limit and even prevent migrants from entering their countries. Harder-line approaches include increased border security and enforcement, immigrant detention and deportation policies, asylum offshoring and restrictive visas and quotas.

Transforming a "Fact of Life" into an Opportunity

The debates show no signs of abating, and the topic itself is likely to remain an especially contentious policy area for governments worldwide. As the back-and-forth continues, so will the movement of migrants themselves. Citing historically high migrant flows, a 2023 World Bank article declared that "migration is a fact of life".[7]

Some governments are responding more effectively to that fact than others. They are doing so by creating conditions for migrants to meaningfully contribute to the economy and collective identity in their new home, while enacting thoughtful policies and programmes to help new arrivals build a greater sense of belonging and concrete skills. In short, rather than focusing on barriers alone, they are also actively building bridges. Regardless of where a government sits on the political and ideological spectrum, practices that integrate migrants into a country deliver better economic and societal results than ones that leave them isolated.

Each nation's circumstances are, of course, unique, and a thoughtful approach to integrating immigrants must reflect those differences. The point is not that any single government has "perfected" the issue of immigration, nor that their approach could be replicated exactly. It is simply that the principles and mindsets these governments employ, the results their programmes produce, and approaches they adopt all contain lessons from which others might benefit.

Holistic Planning

Integration involves all aspects of migrants' lives and livelihoods, from education and employment, to culture and identity. It is only natural that such an extensive issue should require extensive planning. A practical place to begin is by developing a holistic and comprehensive national plan backed by legislation.

Finland's comprehensive integration policy stands out in this regard. In 2010, the country's parliament passed the "Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration", which provides the legal basis for its policies. The country has mechanisms in place to help newly arrived migrants learn Finnish or Swedish, and access the labour market, social services, and education. This is all part of an integration plan given to every migrant or migrant family, a plan which is mapped to their skills, education, and employment history.[8, 9] Social service agencies at the local level provide further support in helping migrants settle into Finnish society.[10]

Another country where comprehensive policies have led to better integration is Canada.[11] Canada has one of the highest naturalisation rates in the

> *Given the highly local impact of immigration, coordination needs to cascade down to regional and local government authorities.*

world, with about 85% of newcomers becoming citizens. Overall, migrant and refugee earnings match the Canadian average about 12 years after arrival. Migrants are active in Canadian society with high rates for volunteering and being active in social organisations.[12] The work begins before a migrant sets foot in Canada, as numerous government agencies work together to smooth a path to integration. Through a pre-departure support programme, migrants access information and assistance in areas including employment and settlement.

Coordinated Implementation

Implementation has to be as coordinated as the planning. Of particular importance is the cooperation of different government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), as the successful integration of migrants will inevitably cut across the responsibilities of multiple MDAs.

Two steps seem particularly fundamental: appoint a single lead organisation, and establish platforms and structures to coordinate across government. In Finland, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment oversees the general development, planning, and guidance of migrant integration policies. It does so in collaboration with the Ministries of Interior, Education and Culture, and Social Affairs and Health, as well as with bureaux such as the Finnish National Agency for Education. It also proposes legislation and steers the activities of the 15 regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport, and the Environment.[13]

Given the highly local impact of immigration, coordination needs to cascade down to regional and local government authorities. Canada's Immigration Act, which was passed in 1976 following a review of

existing immigration policy and public consultations across the country, mandates the federal government and provinces to work together to establish immigration targets.[14] As soon as migrants arrive, settlement officers from their respective provinces help them to navigate the systems for health, welfare, education, taxes, and ongoing immigration matters. Federal, provincial, and territorial ministers regularly meet to review and refine policies.

Denmark has a dedicated Ministry for Immigration and Integration and has simplified its policymaking along three core questions: 1) Who may enter and stay in the country? 2) How to ensure that foreigners contribute to and take part in society? and 3) How to ensure that persons without legal residence leave the country?[15] The ministry works closely with the Danish Immigration Services, the Agency for International Recruitment and Integration (SIRI), and local municipalities. Integration policies in Denmark fall under three core work streams: 1) housing placement and employment-oriented efforts, 2) language learning and civic education programmes, and 3) managing honour-related conflicts.[16]

A New Place to Live

Migrants can often cluster in communities of those from similar backgrounds, but this is not always the best outcome for them or their host countries; areas with high concentrations of migrants might not have the most economic opportunities or the resources to provide migrant services. Isolated migrant enclaves, or mono-ethnic neighbourhoods, also represent missed opportunities for greater interaction and integration with locals.

The Brazilian Army in São Paulo sends more than 400 military personnel to welcome Venezuelan immigrants in Roraima, Brazil, 19 November 2020.

People singing the Canadian national anthem, "O Canada", at a citizenship ceremony, Vancouver, Canada, 2018.

Resettling migrants—and doing so sensitively yet effectively—is a key policy challenge. Brazil, for instance, has faced increasing immigration from neighbouring countries, particularly Venezuela. But it has used this opportunity to settle migrants across the country, while respecting the wishes of migrants to establish connections with family members and social networks.

In 2018 the government adopted an innovative relocation programme, "Operação Acolhida" (Operation Welcome), which helped to ease the pressure on its border state of Roraima. The programme has a three-fold purpose: provide immediate humanitarian assistance, support integration, and facilitate voluntary resettlement to other parts of Brazil. After providing emergency support such as food, water, and medical care at reception centres, the programme helps migrants register and obtain legal status. This helps them gain legal employment, access public services, and move freely within Brazil.[17]

Through cooperation between government agencies, NGOs, and international organisations, migrants are given help as they relocate to areas where local governments and communities have the resources to better support integration. The decision to relocate is voluntary, but suggestions on where to move are based on factors such as migrants' skills, local economic needs, family connections, and social networks. The programme has successfully relocated more than 100,000 migrants, and a 2021 survey found that Venezuelans in the programme had better access to housing, healthcare, education, and formal jobs after being relocated.[18]

A New Place to Work

Successful integration programmes provide a pathway to employment. Canada, for instance, has a targeted and comprehensive employment programme for skilled immigrants to become self-sufficient relatively quickly. Even migrants without a formal job offer can gain permanent residence via the Express Entry programme, which considers an applicant's skills, work experience, English language proficiency, educational background, and financial resources. Once a migrant resides in Canada, the government's approach focuses on accelerating language acquisition, career-specific training and apprenticeships, bridging programmes, job-seeking assistance, and digital skills training.

Successful integration programmes also adapt when necessary. As recently as 2023, Canada proposed changes to address delays that prevented skilled migrants from finding jobs quickly.[19]

More than three-quarters (76%) of the world's refugee population are hosted in low- and middle-income countries.[20] Some of these countries have piloted policies and programmes that help refugees become self-sufficient in tandem with wider economic development goals.

Jordan, for example, has hosted nearly 700,000 Syrian refugees since 2011, giving the country the second-highest share of refugees per capita in the world.[21] In 2016 the Jordanian government made it easier for refugees to participate in the labour market, and easier for employers to hire them. That entailed waiving work permit fees and setting up mobile work-permit stations. Non-employer-specific work permits allowed refugees to find work across the country in sectors such as agriculture and construction.

In collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the government also expanded infrastructure development projects, which helped create jobs for both Syrians and locals. Collectively, these initiatives helped reduce unemployment rates among Syrian refugees, and Jordanians reported greater trust in the refugees.[22]

Language: A Cultural Bridge

Beyond the practical matters of employment and housing, the more intangible cultural issues are no less important. Programmes anchored in teaching practical skills are also an important cultural bridge.

Mastering the host-country language, for example, is widely considered an important factor for a migrant to participate and succeed in the host-country's labour market[23]—and it also has a profound effect on their ability to integrate into society.[24]

Effective language training programmes tend to have three key traits: they are accessible, affordable, and tailored to match migrants' individual abilities. But as anyone who has tried to learn a language knows, the motivation to learn a new language is also central—and even here governments have tools at their disposal.

Svenja Schulze, Germany's Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, sits with young women in an IT course on a visit to the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, 6 November 2023. The camp is the largest in the region with around 84,000 refugees.

To encourage migrants to learn the host-country language, some countries implement tangible benefits or rewards systems for attending courses or reaching a certain language level. Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, and Switzerland all link completion of language programmes clearly to incentives or rewards, including speedier access to residence or citizenship. South Korea offers additional points on the residency applications of migrants who complete the Korea Immigration & Integration Program (KIIP), which comprises five levels of language proficiency plus 50 hours of "Understanding Korean Society".[25]

"Cultural Mentors" and "Neighbourhood Mothers"

An interesting policy arena for facilitating integration is the creative use of "cultural mentors", who help migrants learn the new way of life while building social networks and a new community.

Since 2004, Germany has used the "Neighbourhood Mothers" (*Stadtteilmütter*) Programme to integrate immigrant women and families by building social networks and promoting cultural exchange. These Neighbourhood Mothers are women from immigrant backgrounds who have been trained to provide information and support, and who speak the same languages as the migrant communities.

These women help newcomers navigate the public system, understand local norms, and access healthcare, education, and childcare. Using public

Refugee children at a German language class in Puchheim, Germany, 2015.

spaces such as schools and community centres, they host workshops on topics ranging from parenting to civic participation. In group activities, migrant families can discuss their concerns, learn about German culture, and improve their language skills.

The Neighbourhood Mothers Programme has raised school attendance in several cities (including Berlin) and also improved healthcare access. The benefits have extended beyond those in the programme, helping foster greater social cohesion in neighbourhoods with high immigrant populations.[26]

Stewarding the Nation's Story and Culture

As the number of migrants are projected to increase in the coming years, so too will the pressures on governments. Amid that rise, there may be temptation to stick to ideological positions. But there is perhaps a more meaningful and productive discussion around the best approaches for integrating new migrants. Governments that do this well stay focused on safeguarding livelihoods—for migrants and current citizens alike—but also pay attention to cultural differences and issues of identity.

As new migrants join a nation, they contribute to an ever-evolving national story—the collective narrative that is shaped by a nation's history, identity, and culture—which in turn influences the values, traditions, and norms that the people hold dear. Effective government leaders will harness the opportunities inherent in immigration, while stewarding a rich and resonant national story.

> *As new migrants join a nation, they contribute to an ever-evolving national story—the collective narrative that is shaped by a nation's history, identity, and culture—which in turn influences the values, traditions, and norms that the people hold dear.*

Scaling What Works:
If Only it Were that Simple
—

Why do so many promising small-scale innovations never get the chance to make large-scale impact? The Centre for Evidence and Implementation (CEI) unpacks the nuances of scaling up effective policy innovations.

From education and mental health to early childhood, eldercare and more, many public service ideas that have been shown to work are not reaching everyone who could benefit from them. Numerous innovations are rigorously trialled each year, and many show promise. But effective models almost never make the leap to widespread impact. While there are pockets of excellence, lasting systemic change—at a scale that can improve population-level outcomes—remains elusive.

Why do innovations often shown to work in small-scale tests, then disappear? Why is it so difficult to bring effective new practices and programmes to greater numbers and diversity of people? And what might governments do to create the conditions to enable solutions that work to be scaled—so more people can benefit more quickly?

In short: what is meant by scaling, and why is it so hard?

Understanding Scaling

What, Exactly, is "Scaling"?

Scaling is different from testing a promising programme at more sites, and it is more than expansion or replication. It is an intentional process, defined in the literature as "maximising the reach and effectiveness of a range of actions, leading to sustained impact on outcomes".[1] Scaling is achieved when *reach* is maximised alongside *effectiveness*—when everyone who could benefit from an innovation has experienced it, and when benefit is optimised for all.

This nuance is important because it brings two key challenges of scaling into sharp relief.

First, when considering reach, there is the centrally important challenge of equity. Without a focus on maximising reach to society's most marginalised groups, scaling can inadvertently increase inequity. Studies show that when there is only partial spread of evidence-backed innovations, people who are already advantaged tend to benefit more than disadvantaged groups. The irony is that in spreading good practices and innovations we might, perversely, be *entrenching* inequality—when the intention is the opposite. For example, an intervention to ensure girls stay in school might work well in urban settings, but risks deepening rural-urban inequality if the delivery model is not suitable to reach children in remote communities.

Second, there is the importance of sustaining effectiveness when something is scaled. It is not enough for an intervention to reach everyone; it must also maintain quality and impact at scale. A common challenge is optimising the benefit of an innovation when it is introduced into complex social, economic, and political systems. As a simple example, efforts to scale a population-wide vaccination programme would be in vain if frequent electricity "brown-outs" mean refrigerated vaccines lose their protective benefits.

What Should be Scaled?

Clearly, we should only scale things that are shown to be effective. In practice, however, many innovations are scaled without robust evidence about whether or not they *actually work*.

Scaling without good evidence creates risks, the greatest one being that an innovation causes harm. A well-documented example of this is the programme Scared Straight, which aimed to deter young people from criminal activity by taking them on prison visits. This and similar programmes spread across the U.S. and other geographies, but rather than reducing offending, they actually increased the rate among young people.[2]

Even if an innovation is shown to be effective, scaling one thing necessarily involves trade-offs and opportunity costs. Leveraging resources for any scaling effort—whether public funds, healthcare providers' time, or scarce political capital—means not investing in scaling something else. And it could (and often should) mean disinvesting in an existing service or approach.

So scaling is a choice, and one that needs to be carefully made.[3]

Common Pitfalls on the Road to Scale

Even when good, well-evidenced choices are made about what and how to scale, the path remains challenging.

Innovations are Too Complex

New interventions often prove too complex to be adopted and sustained at scale.

An intervention may be too complicated for the system it operates in, is too expensive, or makes too many demands on participants. It might involve multiple components in proscriptive sequences or combinations. A model might only be deliverable by practitioners with advanced skills or qualifications, or require specialist roles that do not exist in many countries. Many interventions involve a complex architecture of training and re-training, certification and re-certification, supervision, and quality assurance—important for maintaining quality and "fidelity" to the original model, but a tall order for many hard-pressed public service systems.

Some innovations, particularly if tech-based, are beautifully simple and require only a mobile phone. These include mobile money services targeting unbanked people, apps for farmers allowing them to track crop prices and weather, or automated call services providing free parenting advice.

More complex interventions might have sufficient support when they are part of a

well-managed evaluation or have government attention, but they often slip away when there are new priorities, or when key champions depart. An instructive example is the U.K.'s investment in a set of parenting programmes in the early 2000s.[4] Despite a clear need for intervention, a proven model, and good early support, the programmes proved too demanding to scale effectively. Their presence waned significantly—as political support changed, and stakeholders moved on.

“ *Simplification is key to optimising innovations for scale.*

Simplification is key to optimising innovations for scale. Innovators should always aim to start as simple as possible: develop and test the *least complex* version of the model you think will work, and build up from there *only* if early testing suggests it is too simple.

Lack of Adaptation for Different Contexts

There is one truism about effective implementation at scale: "context is king". Innovations must be actively adapted to local conditions. If an innovation is not well aligned with the particular environment it will operate in—the social conditions, the capacity of local delivery organisations, and the wider ecology of policy and funding—then it simply will not scale.

Not only do all these factors make scaling complex, but they are also all constantly changing: systems are not static. So innovations need to be adaptive, in a "dance" of alignment and re-alignment. Some innovations are unable to scale because they do not have adaptation baked in.

For an innovation to be scalable, we need to clearly understand its essential components—the "active ingredients"—that must stay unchanged to maintain effectiveness. Other optional or non-core elements can be adapted to suit different contexts.

Governments play an important role in supporting continued adaptation on the road to scale, with local leaders often best placed to support this work. One example of how local government played a key role is the scaling-up of Teaching at the Right Level in Côte d'Ivoire (known locally as Le Programme d'Enseignement Ciblé). This strongly evidence-backed approach was developed by Indian NGO Pratham and expanded to several African countries in a joint venture with Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL).[5] It was scaled through a donor-backed, multi-year programme of support that was government-led. When the Côte d'Ivoire programme ran into implementation challenges managing vital process monitoring data, local officials had the system context to address this.[6] The core component—the availability and use of monitoring data—was maintained, with a different local delivery model.

"Voltage Drop": Loss of Expected Benefits at Scale

Often, an innovation shows promise when tested in one or a few settings, only for impacts to dissipate

CEI has supported the scaling of social and educational programmes for Care Corner in Singapore, Education Endowment Foundation in the U.K., UNICEF, and men's health charity, Movember.

or disappear when scaled up or applied in different contexts. This is known as "voltage drop"—the loss of expected benefits at scale. A recent analysis estimates this affects 50% to 90% of social innovations.[7]

Voltage drop often arises because the version of the innovation and its delivery tested is not the version scaled. Early tests are often done under "ideal scenario" conditions, which are not the same as when the innovation is promoted and delivered at scale in the real world. For instance, a health programme might have been tested in clinics that volunteer for research studies—with a culture of excellence and highly trained staff—whereas at-scale delivery would happen in all types of settings, not just the "best" ones.

Testing with scale in mind means doing so in real-world conditions: if we want to understand how an innovation will perform when scaled, we need to test the model under the conditions it will face at scale. John List, author of *The Voltage Effect*, gives

up a licensing system, to cascade an innovation widely. They could consider passing their innovation to a third party capable of funding and delivering it. They might partner with like-minded organisations. In some cases, the innovation may be so simple that it can be freely accessed online or purchased, with no support needed.

Many social innovations will aim for a path to scale through public service infrastructure. In fact, it has been said that "the road to scale runs through public systems",[8] as governments are uniquely placed to act as both delivery system and funder. It would usually be impossible for a social innovator or programme developer to establish a service delivery architecture as extensive as the existing public system. Thus, it is generally more effective and efficient to use the public system.

Each of these possible endgames might significantly influence models, partnerships, and data—so early thinking about the desired endgame is vital. Whatever the pathway, we encourage innovators to identify people and organisations critical to scaling their effort—and to engage them early.

an illustrative example: if we want to fly around the world, we cannot just test an aeroplane on a short journey from Chicago to Indianapolis.

We need to build scaling thinking and trialling into how programmes are built from the very start.

Innovators' Capacity for Scaling

Innovators may be individuals, academic teams, start-ups, or groups working within NGOs or the public service system. Some have all the skills and capacity needed to take their innovation to scale. But many do not. They may be a small team, a hospital or health service with a local mandate, or an academic team invested in proving what can work rather than scaling it up.

Innovators need to think right from the start about their endgame for scale. They might "spin out" from their current organisation, creating a start-up dedicated to scaling their innovation. They could set

> " *For an innovation to be scalable, we need to clearly understand its essential components—the "active ingredients"—that must stay unchanged to maintain effectiveness.*

Too Little Attention to Markets

In scaling commercial products, demand and market dynamics are important factors for success. But market viability is an oft-neglected concept when it comes to scaling social innovations.[9]

It is tempting to think "if we build it, they will come", but scaling is never this easy. Understanding likely demand, as well as how an innovation fits into the existing marketplace of programmes and services, is

as fundamental for social innovations as commercial ones. To scale, any innovation must secure its place in the market, through focus on factors such as competitive advantage, funding sources, pricing strategy, customer needs and buying behaviour, and target market segments. This is true even when the customer is the public sector.

Exploring such questions takes some innovators into very new territory. University enterprise zones, present in many countries, show—for example—how academics can be supported to advance real-world impact by bringing in commercial considerations, including industry and funder partnerships and capital to support testing and commercialisation.[10]

How can Governments Nurture an Ecosystem for Scale-Up?

What can policymakers do to support scaling, in the face of these challenges?

Build Supply and Cultivate Demand for Evidence Use in Policy and Practice
The first principle for governments in choosing what to scale is to prioritise innovations backed by robust evidence.

What Works Hub for Global Education brings together governments, NGOs, and academics to scale what works, enabling learning in low- and middle-income countries, Nigeria, June 2022.

Over the past couple of decades, governments have been investing in different approaches to incentivise or mandate the use of evidence in policy and practice. Countries such as the U.S. and Canada have established evidence "clearing houses"—online catalogues that identify proven approaches in specific service areas and provide summarised insights. More recently, in the U.K. and elsewhere, government-backed "what works" centres do the same work in compiling databases of evidence-backed interventions and sharing evidence about proven approaches in more accessible ways.[11] Integrated data systems enabling deep analysis of trends and needs (for example, leveraging de-identified tax, benefits, and health system data) can further support decision-making, either within public systems or managed within state-aligned, privately-funded institutions—such as the California Policy Lab or Research Improving People's Lives in the U.S.

Governments can also mandate evidence use as a tool to spur evidence-informed decision-making, integrating this into their day-to-day business. For example, the Socio-Economic Impact Assessment System (SEIAS) in South Africa has, since 2015, required all policies that go before Cabinet to build an evidence-informed argument for policy options. Aotearoa New Zealand has created an independent expert function to advise the Prime Minister directly on how science can inform good decision-making.[12]

Initiatives like these are important aids to effective scaling, as they help ensure that policymakers focus on proven approaches when they look for what to scale.

Invest in Evidence and Skills for Scaling
There are many publicly funded evaluations under way for interventions that have no plans for—and no viable path to—eventual scale-up. This is a form of research waste.[13] Scaling must be on the agenda of innovators.

Governments, their agencies and other funders of innovation and its testing, can play their part in asking tough questions of innovators that put scaling on the agenda from the start. Governments need to:

• encourage innovators to think about their endgame and work towards it from as early as possible, and
• encourage evaluations that replicate what would be the delivery and use conditions at scale.

Cultivate Institutions and Networks to Bridge Research and Practice

Scaling requires ongoing links and dialogue between the worlds of innovation, industry, evidence generation, service delivery, and policy-making. There needs to be an ecosystem of institutions and relationships to facilitate this work.

Governments can play a valuable role in cultivating platforms that bring these worlds together. For example, the Singapore government initiated a Families for Life Council as an intermediary to connect community service delivery partners and provide a platform to scale and sustain evidence-informed programmes that promote resilient families. A significant scaling effort was planned and initiated in partnership with corporate and public sector organisations over ten years. The initiative led to reductions in child behaviour problems and parental stress, and an increase in parental competency.[14]

City networks—such as the mayor-led Resilient Cities Network, or the Cities Idea Exchange, launched by Bloomberg Philanthropies to scale up innovations—can help government actors, programme developers, and funders learn from each other to advance projects and maximise reach and effectiveness.[15]

At a broader level, What Works Hub for Global Education, a new initiative led by the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford, brings together governments, NGOs, and academics to scale what works, enabling learning in low- and middle-income countries.[16] The Hub is supported by the U.K.'s Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, the World Bank, UNICEF, USAID, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the British Council.

These and other examples illustrate ways in which governments are acting as connectors and brokers to develop the infrastructure needed to support scaling.

An Urgent Need for Government Action

To reduce inequity and improve social conditions for those most in need, we urgently need to scale up impact. The use of good evidence should underpin government policy-making and resource planning, but it is also important to remember that scaling is a team sport.

Sometimes capital resources are needed, sometimes political agility, and sometimes well-nurtured talent. Policymakers can be most effective in supporting scaling if they consider the multiple actors that need to be involved, support the development of the connective infrastructure, and nurture the local champions necessary to lead scaling efforts.

We must get out of the habit of adopting things that do not work. And get into the habit of investing in the evidence, partnerships, and infrastructure needed to get what does work scaled.

Jane Lewis, CEI Managing Director, U.K., is a longstanding advocate for evidence and implementation science, with a special interest in scaling, and extensive experience of leading projects focused on the development, implementation, scaling, and testing of social innovations.

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Dr Robyn Mildon, CEO of CEI, is internationally recognised in the fields of implementation science, evidence synthesis, knowledge translation, and programme and policy evaluation across health, education, and human services.

Dr Cheryl Seah, CEI Director in Singapore, is a developmental psychologist and researcher in child development, mental health, disabilities, and implementation science, with extensive experience in intervention design and evaluations across government, social service, philanthropic, healthcare, and university settings.

Fighting Cybercrime on the Frontlines

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AI, ransomware, cryptocurrencies, the Internet of Things—INTERPOL's Assistant Director of Cybercrime Operations, *Bernardo Pillot*, outlines practical steps for countries facing new threats on the digital frontier.

What cybersecurity threats do countries face today, and how are these threats evolving?

The most prominent cybersecurity threat in the current state of play is ransomware. It is not a new threat, but we are seeing increasing ransomware attacks on critical infrastructure, particularly on the healthcare industry. Hospitals worldwide have come under attack by ransomware groups.

Cybercrime is borderless and can happen from anywhere around the world: no region is spared. As long as people have access to computers, the internet and the infrastructure, you will see people becoming involved in cybercrime and cyberattacks.

Likewise, ransomware attackers can be based anywhere in the world. What we see is that these attackers are becoming more organised. Ransomware hacker groups are offering ransomware as a service: they hire out their services or infrastructure to other bad actors. As a result, it now takes far less sophistication to launch cyberattacks and to commit cybercrimes.

How is INTERPOL addressing global cyber threats and helping governments tackle cybercrime?
INTERPOL is the biggest international law enforcement association across the world, with 196 member countries. This global reach matters because of the borderless nature of cybercrime, which often places it beyond any one country's jurisdiction. National law enforcement agencies are often not equipped to handle cross-border matters on their own.

In a typical cyberattack, the cybercriminal will be in one country, the infrastructure in another, and the victims in yet another country. Our job is to bring these countries together: that is what my Cybercrime Operations team does at INTERPOL.

What often happens is that a member country in which a cybercrime has been committed reaches out to INTERPOL for help. We collect intelligence from them, and work with private partners to trace the infrastructure behind the attack to the country from which it has been launched. We reach out to that country's law enforcement organisations and let them know this is occurring. We then bring governments together to take down either the infrastructure or the organisation behind the cybercrime.

To successfully prosecute cases, law enforcement agencies need to have information from the victims. Oftentimes countries are not even aware that these victims exist until we bring it to their attention. Much of the information we need to build and coordinate cases lies with private industry. Through a programme called Project Gateway, we partner with 13 private industry partners—including major cybersecurity companies such as Kaspersky and Trend Micro, as well as non-profit cybersecurity organisations such as the Shadowserver Foundation—to gather and share intelligence that we use to benefit our member countries. INTERPOL's operational group ensures justice is served by bringing different stakeholders together across borders and sectors.

> *In cybersecurity, we need to know who is there, each other's capabilities, and how we can depend on one another when something happens.*

Recently, we carried out a programme called Operation Synergia[1], where we focused on the top three threats our members identified as impacting their countries: phishing, banking-related malware, and ransomware. Operations and intelligence teams collaborate on a plan to work with infrastructure located in different countries across the globe.

In an operation over a four-month period last year, we used the information gathered from our member countries and private partners to create an intelligence package we call a Cyber Activity Report. We identified over 50 different countries to share this intelligence with, so that they could help us take down infrastructure based in their countries that was being used for either phishing attacks or ransomware. This led to many command and control servers being taken down and several cybercrime groups being identified. This demonstrates how the private sector and law enforcement in different jurisdictions can have significant success in fighting cybercrime when they communicate and work together.

How can governments and their law enforcement agencies better communicate and collaborate with different stakeholders to fight cybercrime?
Communication is key. It is important to continually build trust, and not wait for an incident to happen before you communicate. It is also useful to conduct and keep up joint exercises and get to know people in the industry, so that law enforcement personnel are familiar with their counterparts in the private sector, and vice versa.

INTERPOL President Ahmed Naser Al-Raisi addresses delegates at the annual Heads of National Central Bureaus (NCBs) meeting. The conference welcomed 321 police officials from 136 countries to identify initiatives to expand access to INTERPOL's global databases to encourage greater operational criminal data sharing. Lyon, France, 23 April 2024.

Knowing whom to contact, what capabilities exist, and having conversations early on to stay in touch with trends and with one another, is invaluable. This is just a basic approach of law enforcement in general: in policing, we do not wait for a tragedy to happen before getting to know the people in the field. We need to know everyone's response times, and what to do in an incident. Similarly, in cybersecurity, we need to know who is there, each other's capabilities, and how we can depend on one another when something happens. It is like knowing your community, your neighbourhood, so that in an emergency you know who to call, who might have seen what, and so forth.

At INTERPOL, we help foster these relationships in several ways. Apart from Project Gateway, where we work with the private sector, we also hold regional and specialist conferences around the world. We have just wrapped up a regional conference in Nigeria, where we brought in 49 African member countries, the private sector, and other international organisations to discuss the threats in the region. We discussed the players working in the region, what the private sector is doing, what they are seeing, and cases that the countries are working on, so we can foster collaboration and address these threats together.

What are the biggest challenges that national governments face in dealing with cybercrime?
A major challenge is capacity building: having the technology and the knowhow to investigate and pursue cybercrime. We recognise that not every country has the same capabilities to do this well. That is why my unit is working on training and capacity building.

One example of our capacity building initiatives is GLACY-e (Global Action on Cybercrime Extended), a programme funded by the Council of Europe, through which INTERPOL offers training in different regions across the world.[2]

and newer gadgets rolling out every year. The more the devices, the more our vulnerability grows. Faster connectivity through 5G means more IoT devices will be connected more easily, which is a trend cybercriminals will also exploit. As always, anything with a potential for good will attract someone looking to use it for nefarious ends.

From the perspective of cybersecurity, how should countries view the rise of artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and related technology?
Cybercriminals are using AI to commit crimes, so governments must also take advantage of this technology for law enforcement. This is just how the future is going to look. If countries do not get on board, they are going to be left behind and become vulnerable to criminals who are using technology to become more and more sophisticated and to take advantage of people around the world.

If used well, this technology could help automate the way we look at cybersecurity, assist in threat intelligence, and identifying vulnerabilities. But law enforcement agencies do tend to always be a step behind, because we need to take into account public concerns about privacy and how such technologies are going to be used.

We are also focusing on capacity building that is targeted to each country's particular needs. For example, there is increasing cybercrime dealing with cryptocurrency, or digital currency. We are now aiming to deliver training on how to carry out investigations dealing with cryptocurrency or even malware analysis. The weaker a particular country's security apparatus, the more vulnerable they are. If this activity is cross-border, these vulnerable countries may become nodes from which attacks on other countries are launched. When a country builds its cybersecurity, it benefits everyone.

A growing new area of concern is the Internet of Things (IoT). These devices and their connectivity are another avenue where cybercriminals can potentially enter a network, greatly expanding the potential attack surface. Now you do not need to have a computer or mobile phone to get hacked: any connected device could be vulnerable—including car devices, pacemakers, watches, medical devices,

" *Cybercriminals are using AI to commit crimes, so governments must also take advantage of this technology for law enforcement.*

One area INTERPOL is exploring is the use of data. This is a complex issue, because countries have different ways of looking at data. But we are looking to grow our databases and to bring in more information, taking advantage of AI. AI and machine learning technologies are more efficient than having people looking through gigabytes and gigabytes of

data, which would be impossible to keep up with on a global scale. We are exploring how to bring these large datasets into play, to spot global trends that no one country can easily do. As a neutral organisation with no geopolitical affiliations, INTERPOL has the trust of our member countries: it makes sense for us to be the conduit for such information for the collective good.

What are best practices and capabilities that governments should pursue to be resilient against global cybercrime?

My team focuses on law enforcement. We always have our eye on catching the criminals. However, one thing we always try to reemphasise to our member countries is awareness. Cybersecurity and cyber resilience are not just about catching bad guys: it is also about making sure that people are aware of threats. Preventing cybercrime is better than trying to correct it afterwards. We conduct a global awareness campaign every year and focus on the top three cyber threats. We work with our Gateway partners to get the word out on what the public can

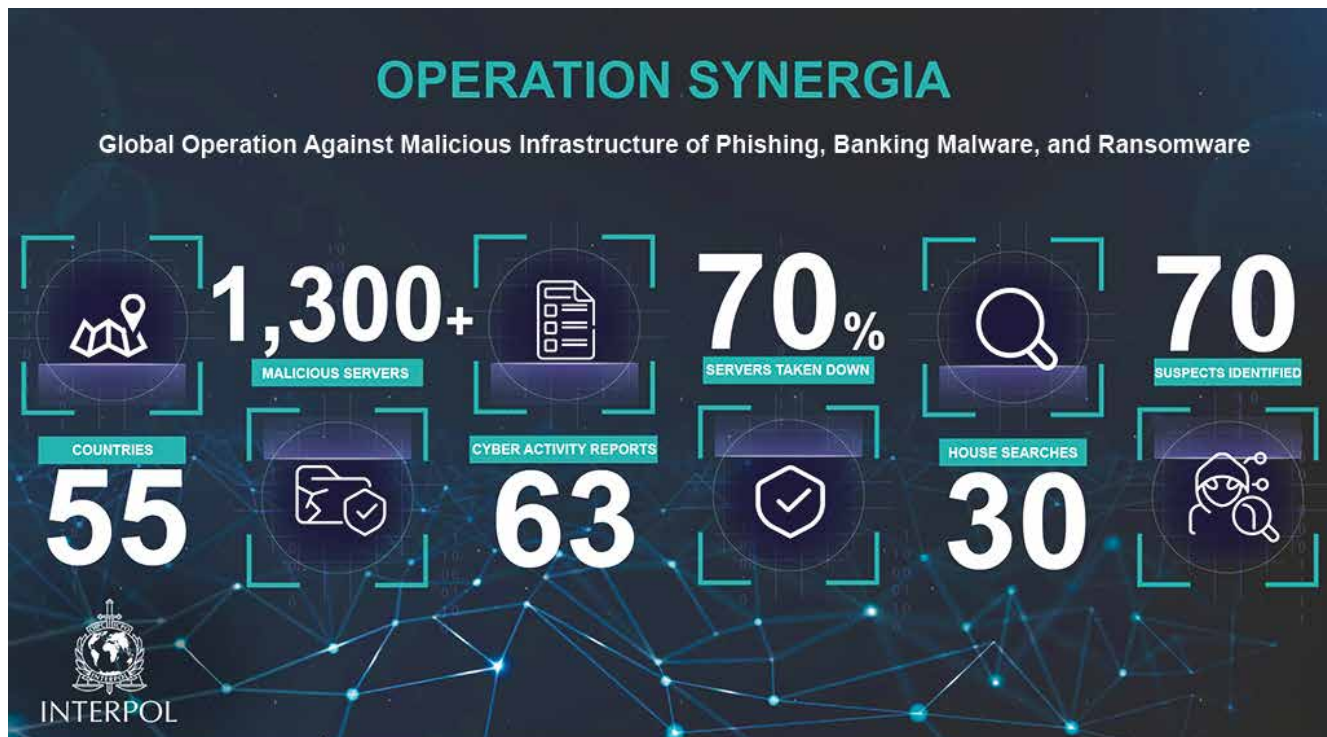> *"Preventing cybercrime is better than trying to correct it afterwards.*

do about behaviour on the internet, either to defend themselves or to be more proactive and take better precautions. This includes making businesses more aware of current and emerging threats.

An area of concern that we see is that certain population groups are particularly vulnerable: the elderly community, and also children. Younger and younger children are going on to the internet. They come across cybercrime and start exploring. It seems to them that no one gets harmed by such crimes: there are no victims, it is not a big deal. Then things start to escalate and they learn to become hackers

Two major NHS hospitals in London were the subject of a ransomware cyberattack in June 2024. The attack disrupted services including blood tests and transfusions, with hospitals unable to connect to the servers of a private company that provides pathology services. More than 800 planned operations and 700 outpatient appointments had to be rearranged. One of those affected was St Thomas' Hospital, London, U.K., 4 June 2024.

OPERATION SYNERGIA
Global Operation Against Malicious Infrastructure of Phishing, Banking Malware, and Ransomware

1,300+ MALICIOUS SERVERS

70% SERVERS TAKEN DOWN

70 SUSPECTS IDENTIFIED

55 COUNTRIES

63 CYBER ACTIVITY REPORTS

30 HOUSE SEARCHES

INTERPOL

Operation Synergia, which ran from September to November 2023, was launched in response to the clear growth, escalation, and professionalisation of transnational cybercrime and the need for coordinated action against new cyber threats. The operation involved 60 law enforcement agencies from more than 50 INTERPOL member countries, with officers conducting house searches and seizing servers as well as electronic devices.

> " *Making the field more diverse will benefit everyone, because having different points of view is vital.*

or cyber criminals. For example, in Nigeria, young people look at cybercriminals almost as celebrities.

Trying to get them early is the way to go. There is a programme in the Netherlands where law enforcement is reaching out to these young people, before their behaviour becomes a problem. Instead of making an arrest, they go and speak to them. Early intervention and messaging help persuade young people that cybercrime is not cool; that it impacts communities and other people elsewhere: that there are actual victims and there is harm.

I also hope to see governments increasing investment in training more people to come into this field.

I do not see many women in the industry: not just in cybercrime, but law enforcement is very male dominated. Bringing in women and making the field more diverse will benefit everyone, because having different points of view is vital. Sometimes when you have people who think the same way as you, you go down a certain path. Having different points of view paints a bigger picture. It reduces blind spots, and offers a broader perspective and fresher ideas.

That said, I am optimistic about the future. There is more dialogue between law enforcement and the private sector, more collaboration and information sharing across stakeholders. There is a lot more that we can do, but we are going in the right direction.

Bernardo Pillot has extensive experience in cybercrime and global security, including a tenure at Homeland Security Investigations. As Assistant Director of Cybercrime Operations and Threat Management at INTERPOL, he launched a cybercrime project supporting 49 African countries, managed over 300 global investigations, and significantly enhanced the international response to cyber threats.

Mastering the Nunchaku

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Twice winner of the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration in India, *Krishna Bhaskar* shares hard-won lessons on what it takes to become an effective practitioner in the civil service—including wisdom from the martial arts.

O f your many contributions to infrastructural development, where do you think you have made the most difference?
I have been involved in two kinds of infrastructure development. The first is as a facilitator of very large state or national projects, such as national highways, bridges, logistics corridors, and some institutions of importance.

The second are more geographically specified projects for which I have had to bring various governmental and non-governmental stakeholders on board, persuading them of the need for these interventions and getting the work commissioned. These are the projects where I believe I have made the most difference.

One example is a large housing colony in my town of Sircilla in Telangana state, with about 1,300 apartments along with playgrounds, parks, community centres, day care centres, and schools. We gave house ownership certificates to deprived families, whom we identified through database analyses as well as open village meetings.

For another project—now a textbook case for training civil servants—we increased water levels by six metres over two years in our district, through large scale afforestation and water regeneration with multiple initiatives: tree planting (in millions), hill trenching, creating new farm ponds, and building local reservoirs, along with a massive programme across 330 habitations to handle solid and liquid waste to prevent pollution.

A third example is how we rapidly set up and staffed immunisation centres in Siddipet district. In a record time of three months, we were able to push the total immunisation rate (11 doses of different vaccines) beyond 100%—including the floating population of migrant labourers.

Your case study "How Many Bottom Lines is One Life Worth?"[1] discusses the dilemma of a community trapped in abject poverty. What lessons can you share with government practitioners seeking to help those at the bottom of the economic pyramid?
The Harvard Business Review case discusses how government interventions supported and uplifted a community of handloom weavers impacted by industrial-scale manufacturing in Sircilla. The community had been experiencing profession-related suicides at about 40 times the national average rate. From our interventions, three prominent lessons stand out.

The first lesson is how normal rules of thumb do not scale down to the bottom of the pyramid. In most conventional governmental interventions, effectiveness and efficiency move in unison.
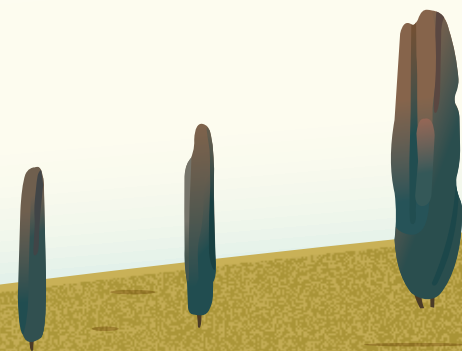
However, in some complex cases the lead time needed for policies to sink in can pull these two indicators apart. Ultimately, effectiveness over the long term should be the measure of success, rather than quarterly indicators of spending efficiencies.

Previous attempts to support this community—all well-meaning, meticulous exercises—had each taken different approaches: psychological counselling, technical upgrading and training, and a huge increase in available credit. What we did, against prevailing policy norms, was to combine these approaches and implement the full package in one go. We also added a defined marketplace to provide long-term growth: tying up with the annual Dasara festival, we arranged for the Sircilla weavers to supply nearly 10 million sarees to be distributed across the State, paid for by the government. This created economies of scale *and* scope. More importantly, it sent a powerful message that the government was willing to do whatever it took, however long it took, to resolve issues. This helped us gain traction with an otherwise sceptical community.

The second lesson is to respect the wisdom of the local community and its natural leaders. Start any intervention with humility.

Any presumption that you "know" what is wrong, before carrying out enough due diligence, will backfire

An Indian weaver works on a saree. Weavers from India's southern states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are renowned for their handloom work.

and negate any goodwill generated. A good rule of thumb is to just listen for the first few weeks, while always being on call to handle emergencies. Solutions are usually there in the community, and will reveal themselves in time.

The third lesson is that it usually gets worse before it gets better. Despite precautions, there was pushback in the first few months of the project. Respected members of the community were unconvinced by our efforts and vocal about their doubts. We were only able to get considerable traction later because we took time to engage with all the stakeholders, even though it slowed our project down initially.

In carrying out a policy intervention, it is vital to be clear-headed about long-term plans and resist

" *Be clear-headed about long-term plans and resist the temptation to course correct just because there is criticism.*

the temptation to course correct just because there is criticism (unless new facts emerge). Besides, what comes as criticism can serve as a sort of free-form debugging before you run the programme. Learning to harness this to improve policy interventions is a valuable art.

Based on your experience in advancing e-governance, what strategies have you found to work best in narrowing the digital gap, particularly in rural regions?
In my first job in this field, I created a successful multipurpose app for navigating a religious festival Maha Pushkaram, in collaboration with Google Maps. The approach was top-down, based purely on parameters we set.

Subsequent attempts showed my first success to be an exception. Unless you plan to provide a standardised essential service that does not already exist, the best way forward may be to facilitate large-scale digital literacy, make a genuine choice available to users, and then let them lean toward their preferred option. Otherwise, users will go their own way anyway, rather than follow your intended design path.

Unless there is a clear consensus *and* an overarching need, keep away from setting and imposing standards.

> *Make a genuine choice available to users, and then let them lean towards their preferred option. Otherwise, users will go their own way anyway.*

When this is not the case, allow different standards to proliferate and a clear choice to emerge on its own, based on actual user experiences.

Telangana is known nationwide for its strong network of self-help groups comprising low-income, rural women. These groups have probably the lowest debt default rates in the State and beyond: they are already good producers, and know what they need to be even more effective. For instance, one of the parameters they surfaced to us, based on their actual work needs, was for technology that could help them better evaluate employee productivity.

We may find it more effective to let standards, technological choices, training modules, and monitoring mechanisms be as bottom-up as possible, leaving some small room for exceptions.

Women often form self-help groups at the village level to share knowledge, and to gain better collective access to support and financing.

As you suggest, civil servants often have to work with stakeholders outside government, including the private sector, in order to realise policy objectives. What practical strategies have you found most effective in these collaborations?

I have worked with remarkable colleagues in the private sector and have learnt a lot from them. There is no fundamental difference between the two domains. However, I try to brief my counterparts about the different contexts before any engagement.

First, government decisions are not necessarily taken with a single end goal in mind: they are often collectively taken to reduce the risk of litigation later. The challenge is to find common ground between the government instinct to play it safe and the entrepreneurial instinct to push ahead. Once we establish common ground, it is easier to find a path of least resistance forward.

Second, the gestation period for many government initiatives is very long. There is often a change of guard by the time any project is completed, which may cause hiccups towards the end of a project. It is useful to plan with this in mind right from the start.

Third, the basic process of decision-making does differ in private and government organisations. A market-oriented organisation can, if necessary, crack the whip on any decision made, and the decision will be seamlessly and clearly transmitted through the ranks. In government, however, instructions are wielded more like the nunchaku. There are multiple centres of mass as the instruction passes through the ranks, and each may alter the message as it passes through. This is a feature, not a bug, of the government system, which must ensure different aspects of a decision are legitimate, legal, and publicly accountable. This dynamic has to be accounted for in planning. And as martial arts practitioners know, it takes years, if not decades, to learn to wield the nunchaku well.

You are a member of the Indian Administrative Service, an elite cadre of professional civil servants. How might a country's public sector develop an esprit de corps and common purpose among its public servants in order to address national needs?

An elite cadre of civil servants faces two challenges: that they might drift apart without a shared set of

values, or they might become too homogenous to think independently or dissent when the situation calls for it.

Today, civil servants who enter service at the same time train together for a combined period of two years. This affords a measure of common purpose and camaraderie among the cohort. The general emphasis on esprit de corps has also increased in recent years.

The opposite problem is less frequently discussed. Given that a civil service is expected to deliver on a political mandate, cohesion is relatively easy to create. It is significantly more difficult for any organisation to encourage divergent opinions, especially if it involves working with counterfactuals that can disrupt, if ever so slightly, the status quo. For instance, a civil servant may be criticised for proposing an inconvenient and expensive system that might in fact prevent a disaster.

If a system were to consider counterfactuals and reward those who strengthen the system by thinking differently, it may have to encourage the *opposite* of camaraderie, in a thoughtful and mature manner. This is a challenging mindset shift because the civil service is expected to prioritise legitimate and speedy delivery of the government agenda.

> Cohesion is relatively easy to create. It is significantly more difficult for any organisation to encourage divergent opinions.

In your view, what is the appropriate working relationship between civil servants and the political leadership? What advice might you give a younger officer learning to approach this relationship productively?

Constitutionally speaking, the civil service reports to the political executive. It is expected to remain anonymous and impersonal. My own experience is that the more an officer keeps this in mind, the better placed they are to discharge their responsibilities.

There has recently been a temptation for civil servants to build a "brand": to run personal social media accounts and engage with stakeholders directly or through a personally appointed intermediary—blurring the line between professional and personal engagement. This can cut through red tape, but often also encroaches on the political domain and violates the established principle of bureaucratic anonymity. This could potentially lead to conflict with the political executive, which has come to expect, to the extent possible, a faceless bureaucracy.

However, to be faceless is not to be heartless. Indeed, being faceless often empowers one against being heartless. When civil servants clearly strive to observe the ideal norms of accountability, there is usually a mutual respect that follows from the political executive. In this relationship good fences (as Robert Frost puts it) do indeed make for good neighbours.

I vividly remember a piece of advice from my first mentor—to think of this relationship as one might treat a fireplace, to be close enough so that you can feel the warmth, but far enough so you are not singed. I find this advice still very applicable today.

> Be close enough so that you can feel the warmth, but far enough so you are not singed.

What does it mean to be a good civil servant today? How can a civil servant seeking to both do right and do well prepare themselves to govern for the future?

To "do right" is to ensure the letter and spirit of the law, and to "do well" is getting the job done. One can choose to just do well, without necessarily seeking to do right ("the mercenary"); one can seek to do right, without necessarily seeking to do well ("the straightlaced"); one can choose to do neither ("the demotivated"). But the real gold standard is when someone chooses to get work done consistently without falling past the guardrails of principle. How does one do this?

First, as civil servants we should recognise that every single decision that passes through our hands involves at least one human being. Each case file represents something vital for someone of flesh and blood. If you try to put yourself in their shoes, the way forward usually becomes a lot clearer.

Second, build your own domain, interests, and expertise. Find something that interests you, and go down a rabbit hole (or ten). The dots will join up at some point; but more importantly, you will have created a unique basket of experiences that will override the human instinct to compare yourself with your peers.

> **Every single decision that passes through our hands involves at least one human being.**

Third, on all the dimensions that matter (speed of work, interpersonal relationships, integrity, and many more), find your own sweet spot. This is neither a sprint, nor for that matter a marathon; it is a trek across mountains. Choose a trail *you* like, instead of what is popular, vet your own gear, and find your own comfort level.

Finally, to be good and to do well is to make a choice every single day. That includes the days on which it is difficult to show up to work, whether for personal reasons or external obstacles. It is to be ready to work with everyone (including those you might not like to work with), on anything (including those policies you disagree with) every single day, until the day you see traction.

To quote surgeon and author Atul Gawande, whose insights on practising medicine at the cutting edge also resonate with public service in the trenches, "making medicine go right is less often like making a difficult diagnosis than like making sure everyone washes their hands".[2]

There are no easy fixes in this work. A hundred steps need to go right, and everyone must pitch in, but it can be genuine good fun. This is what drives so many of us, and hopefully will drive many more.

> **To be good and to do well is to make a choice every single day.**

D Krishna Bhaskar is a member of the Indian Administrative Service, which he joined in 2012. He is currently Special Secretary to the Deputy Chief Minister, as well as Special Secretary (Finance and Planning) for Telangana State. He has previously served as Director of Industries, District Collector in Rajanna Sircilla and Siddipet districts, Municipal Commissioner, as well as Assistant Superintendent of Police in the Indian Police Service. He has twice been awarded the Prime Minister's award for excellence in public administration (in 2019 and 2020), and has received several national and state awards for excellence in fields related to urban development and management. He completed a Masters in Applied Science (as a Robert Solow Fellow) from the Economics Department of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2023. He was also selected as a Fulbright-Nehru Scholar for 2023-24 and a John F Kennedy Fellow/Reid Marsh Denis Fellow at Harvard University for the following year.

Better Together:
Tackling Complex Challenges

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"Impact Hubs" are a new model of cross-sector collaboration that stand out for their sharp focus—and ability to deliver results—as the work of the Singapore Government Partnerships Office shows.

Landmines, Tuberculosis… and Trained Rats?

Although they appear to have little in common, landmines and tuberculosis in fact share several similarities. Despite having straightforward solutions, both persistently hurt some of the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities: as many as 110 million landmines remain buried across more than 60 countries,[1] while tuberculosis, though easily treatable, kills more than 1 million people a year.[2] Also uniting both is a core challenge—detection—and an unconventional solution: African giant pouched rats, which have a powerful sense of smell, can be trained to sniff both out.

Belgium-based nonprofit APOPO (a Flemish acronym for Anti-Personnel Landmines Detection Product Development) developed this novel solution and scaled it to 12 countries. Too light to trigger a blast, the rats skitter across minefields and scratch the ground wherever they smell a trace of explosive—enabling mined fields to be cleared more safely, more quickly, and at a lower cost than other methods. Trained rats can also detect the presence of tuberculosis in a human sample more quickly and accurately than a lab technician can using a microscope.

APOPO works closely with national, regional, and local governments in its operations, and deploys its rats and methodology through existing demining and tuberculosis detection programmes. Its work has been supported by multilateral agencies, NGOs, philanthropies, and the private sector, while APOPO itself involves community members and poor and vulnerable populations in its projects.
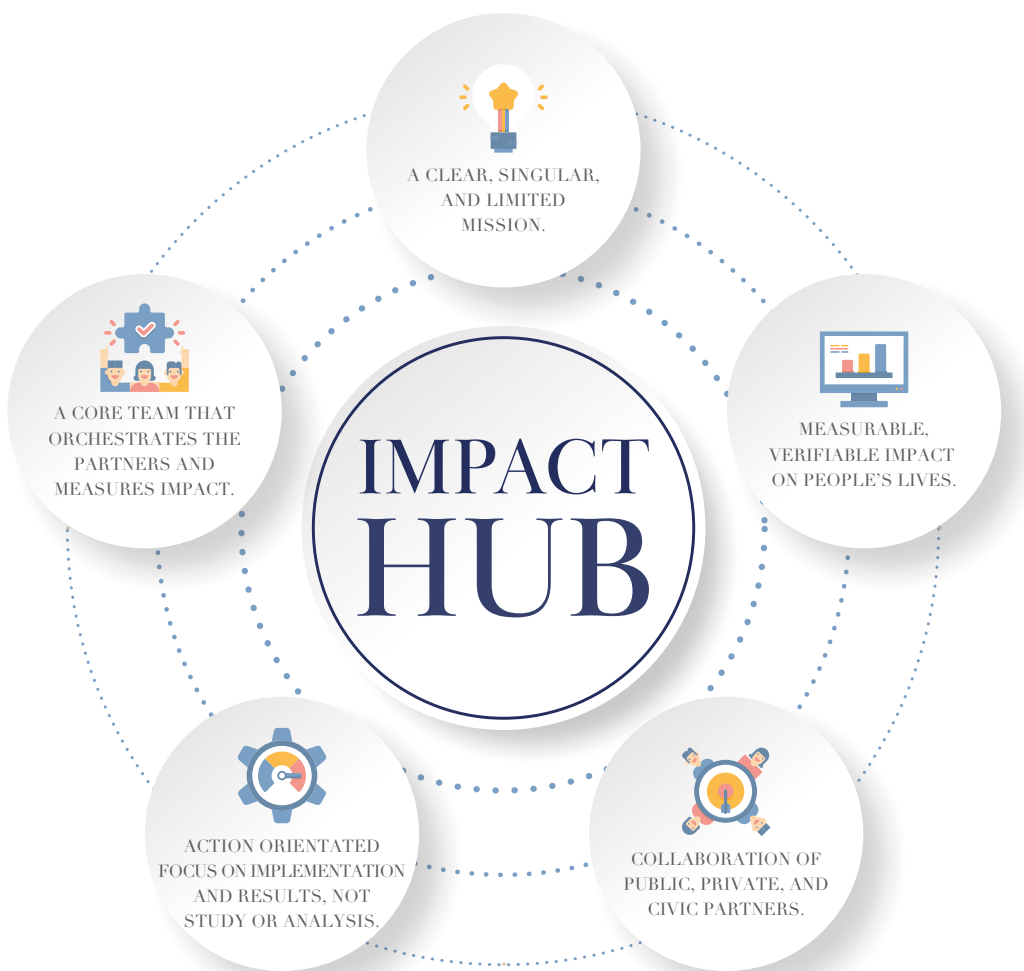

A handler trains a mine-detection rat.

> " *Impact hubs bring together partners from across sectors to address a specific, clearly defined challenge. They complement—rather than replace—existing efforts and institutions.*

An Impact Hub Has Five Key Features

IMPACT
HUB

A CLEAR, SINGULAR, AND LIMITED MISSION.

A CORE TEAM THAT ORCHESTRATES THE PARTNERS AND MEASURES IMPACT.

MEASURABLE, VERIFIABLE IMPACT ON PEOPLE'S LIVES.

ACTION ORIENTATED FOCUS ON IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS, NOT STUDY OR ANALYSIS.

COLLABORATION OF PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND CIVIC PARTNERS.

To date, **APOPO** has cleared more than 160,000 landmines and detected more than 27,000 cases of tuberculosis.[3]

APOPO exemplifies an impact hub—a mode of public problem-solving that can be applied to everything from complex global crises to local issues. Impact hubs bring together partners from across sectors to address a specific, clearly defined challenge. They implement focused solutions, track the impact of that work, and complement—rather than replace—existing efforts and institutions.

The Chandler Institute of Governance, and think tank and civic enterprise New America, are working together to develop and share tools that help policymakers and civic entrepreneurs better understand—and implement—impact hubs.

> *An impact hub does not spread itself too thin; it avoids the temptation to broaden its focus and become a permanent fixture.*

### Collaborative, Focused Initiatives Producing Real Impact

From public health to public safety, farming to climate adaptation, housing to environmental protection, impact hubs can address a wide range

of problems in a wide range of areas. An impact hub can limit its work to a locality or region, or it can operate at a national or global scale. They can be started by anyone searching for an innovative approach to solving a public problem: an official in a national government; a local community leader; a philanthropist; a CEO; a professor; a faith leader; the head of a UN agency; your neighbour.

Whatever its focus, an impact hub addresses a specific, concrete problem, uses clear metrics for success, and works with partners from across sectors. Impact hubs might exist for a few months or a few years (or even decades), but since they are intended to solve a specific problem and then close or transition into something else, impact hubs are time-bound institutions. An impact hub does not spread itself too thin; it avoids the temptation to broaden its focus and become a permanent fixture in the political system.

The Impact Hub Field Guide.

> " *Impact hubs emphasise achieving specific policy goals over broad agendas; they are meant to not only discuss issues but actively contribute solutions.*

A New Approach to Tackle New Kinds of Problems

Today's proliferating crises demand cooperation, collective action, and new ways of organising and acting in global politics. And yet all too frequently, institutions respond to these complex challenges by returning to a familiar playbook: they form committees or agencies. More often than not, this leads to increased administrative workload and institutional bloat, rather than focused results.

Impact hubs represent a shift in both mindset and practice for how governments, communities, businesses, and citizens can collaborate to solve problems that transcend traditional borders and silos. They emphasise achieving specific policy
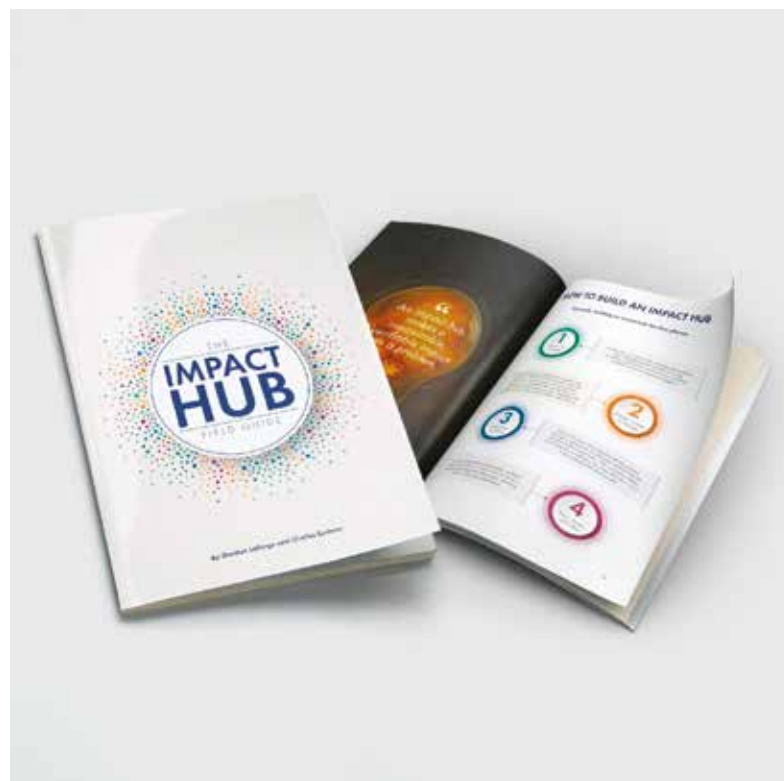
goals over broad agendas; they are meant to not only discuss issues but actively contribute solutions. Importantly, an impact hub is not simply about establishing something new. Even within thriving institutions, increasing engagement and co-creating solutions can produce better, more inclusive outcomes. Impact hubs are a means to do this in a focused and targeted way.

A Blueprint for Success

In January 2024, the Chandler Institute of Governance and New America jointly published an Impact Hub Field Guide on how to build and shape an impact hub—giving readers a sense of where to begin, and how to get started.[4] Drawing on real-world case studies, consultations with practitioners and scholars, and an interdisciplinary body of research, the Field Guide offers concrete steps and insights for how to collaborate across silos to solve public problems.

The Field Guide's recommendations are meant to be tailored to the nature, scale, and context of the problem that an impact hub is solving—it is a map to help people navigate new territory, rather than a list of instructions to be rigidly followed.

The Four Phases of Building an Impact Hub

Among the principles and practices outlined in the Field Guide are the four phases that successful impact hubs tend to follow:

Phase 1:
Frame and Formulate

An impact hub starts by framing the problem, formulating a clear and concise mission, and establishing metrics to measure progress. This helps clarify whether an impact hub is suitable for solving the problem (which is not always the case).

The problems impact hubs are best suited to solve tend to have three features. First, they are measurable—as in, they can be quantified. Second, they are achievable—the problem can be solved with current means and has a clear endpoint. And finally, they are singular—the work is focused on one problem, not a cluster of related problems. Impact hubs are not the solution for every problem, but they are very effective at solving certain kinds of problems.

Phase 2:
Engage, Create, and Design

Organisationally, an impact hub has two main components. The first is a set of partners from the public sector, private sector, and civil society. The second is a core team that coordinates and orchestrates the work of those partners. Together, the partners and core team work to design interventions.

Partnerships are the engines of an impact hub. Partners work together to carry out the hub's mission. Some partners will be permanent; others will be temporary. Some will be close; others will be more distant. Through its life, an impact hub will continually bring in new partners and drop old ones.

Phase 3:
Orchestrate the Work

Like a conductor directing a symphony, a core team orchestrates the partners in an impact hub. The core team makes sure everyone is aligned, but it is the partners that do the work. A hub relies not on command-and-control, hierarchy, or rigid structures. Rather, it depends on voluntary association, relationships, and trust. While an impact hub can set overall parameters and timelines, the partners should be given sufficient autonomy to conduct their own research, propose deliverables, plan their own work schedule, and secure external resources where needed.

Phase 4:
Track, Assess, Adjust

An impact hub makes a measurable, verifiable impact on a problem. That requires the ability to track progress, assess impact, and make adjustments. As management expert W. Edwards Deming wrote, "If you can't measure something, you can't understand it. If you can't understand it, you can't control it. If you can't control it, you can't improve it."

Alliances for Action highlighting to children the work that lower-wage workers do, at an "Experience Day" event.

Field Stories to Inspire and Educate

Following the publication of the Field Guide, CIG and New America released several comprehensive case studies of impact hubs in action, to share real-life examples of how they work in practice from inception to implementation.

One case study spotlighted the work of APOPO, the non-profit organisation using trained rats to detect landmines and tuberculosis.[5] Another detailed Singapore's Alliances for Action (AfA), featuring six separate initiatives to address issues ranging from supporting lower-wage workers to combating online harm, nurturing stewardship of public parks, and co-creating climate action plans.[6]

Impact Hubs in Action: Singapore's Alliances for Action

The six AfAs profiled in the Singapore case study closely align with the impact hub concept: they are action-oriented, and address complex issues that demand cross-sector collaboration. They were also not designed to continue indefinitely: most AfAs set clear timelines on when they were to be concluded.

From their inception, the AfAs were inclusive. The approach emerged from a taskforce convened by the government during the pandemic that comprised more than 20 representatives from government, private sector, trade unions, and academia, and which reached some 2,000 individuals from more than 900 organisations.[7] The AfAs then became vehicles for people to take action on problems they themselves had helped identify.

Uplifting Lower-Wage Workers

One of the six AfAs saw the Ministry of Manpower, the National Trades Union Congress, the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF), and 50 members of the public come together to help improve conditions for lower-wage workers.

This group began by taking a potentially broad challenge and focusing on four specific areas of action, including strengthening public respect and appreciation for these workers, and fostering more supportive working environments. They produced clear problem statements, sourced ideas to tackle these problems, shortlisted ideas, researched and refined their ideas, and then implemented pilot projects.

The first run of eight projects included campaigns to raise awareness of lower-wage workers among Singaporeans, initiatives to encourage employers to show more empathy to their lower-wage workers, and programmes to develop rest areas for these workers. The success of the AfA approach led to a second run of nine projects over a span of 17 months. Some of those projects were continued from the first run, while others were new, including one that matched individuals from lower-income families to suitable jobs, and another that made it easier for lower-wage workers to access training and development opportunities.

Sunlight AfA members and guests taking a stand against online harms, solidifying their commitment through a powerful pledge.

Spreading Sunlight

Another AfA tackled the issue of online harms, especially those targeted at women and girls.

Again, the process was inclusive from its inception. The Ministry of Communications and Information worked with 48 members of the public between 2021 and 2022, and in the months before the AfA launched, there were engagement sessions with more than 300 stakeholders across the public and private sector. AfA members were organised into five workstreams based on their respective passions and areas of expertise, and they helped produce a number of concrete outcomes: raising awareness through webinars, working with helplines and pro bono legal clinics, and establishing a new charity, SG Her Empowerment (SHE).

Government as Supporter and Enabler

Although the details of the AfAs differ, each offers a glimpse of how a government can orchestrate and encourage collaborative initiatives. The Singapore Government Partnerships Office, housed under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, served as a coordinating node: it supports public sector agencies in adopting effective public-private-people collaboration models such as the AfA. The government did not set targets on how many AfAs each ministry or agency should have, nor did it micromanage the AfAs themselves.

Instead, the government helped identify situations where AfAs were more likely to succeed—such as having people involved who were both willing and able to act, and where partners shared clear alignment on outcomes—and played a supporting role.

Encouraging Impact and Action

If you do not change direction, as the saying goes, then you might end up where you are heading. Whether it is climate change or biodiversity loss, economic inequality or global health, altering the course of today's crises will require new ways of cooperating, organising, and acting—exactly what an impact hub looks to inspire.

People all over the world motivated to tackle all sorts of problems can adopt and adapt the impact hub model to fit their needs. It is available to anyone skilled and driven enough to pull together partners to pursue a mission with measurable impact—and it is nimble enough to respond to a changing environment to accomplish its mission.

A number of impact hubs already exist, whether or not they use the term to characterise themselves. Identifying their common elements, developing a common vocabulary to capture their attributes, and sharing their stories can, we hope, offer a template to inspire the creation of many more.

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Gordon LaForge, a Senior Policy Analyst with New America, researches, writes, and lectures on global institutions, the future of democracy, and the geopolitics of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence.

Dawn Yip is Coordinating Director of the Singapore Government Partnerships Office in the Ministry of Culture, Community, and Youth. She and her team work on empowering government-citizen engagement and partnership.

Kiara Kijburana is Senior Manager (Government Projects and Legal Affairs) at the Chandler Institute of Governance. She and the Government Projects team support governments and public sector organisations in institutional and system design and implementation. Kiara previously served as a Member of the House of Representatives in the Parliament of Thailand.

Finding Common Ground in a Fracturing World Order: Reflections of a Trade Negotiator

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Rebecca Fatima Sta Maria is no stranger to turning grand ambitions into consensus and concrete change—she is APEC Secretariat Executive Director and a former senior Malaysian civil servant. She tells *Governance Matters* what needs to change for countries to foster more inclusive growth.

Sustainable, Inclusive Growth Through Trade

Every year, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum is hosted by one of the different 21 APEC member economies and they each drive a shared agenda for that year. Since 2020, APEC as a regional economic forum has been committed to the shared Putrajaya Vision, which calls for an open, dynamic, resilient, and peaceful Asia-Pacific community by 2040.

Preceding this vision, APEC's Bogor Goals, set in 1994, had been mainly focused on market access, investment, and trade facilitation. But the world has changed much since then. While trade facilitation and market access are still important, other aspects have become equally important, including innovation and digital transformation, as well as socio-economic considerations such as inclusion and sustainability.

In the same vein, APEC Thailand 2022 highlighted the Bio-Circular-Green economy, while APEC U.S. 2023 focused on greater engagement and connecting more stakeholders such as workers, indigenous peoples, and small and medium enterprises. In this year's APEC Peru 2024 meetings, with the overarching theme of "Empower, Include, Grow", we continued our story of inclusion, sustainability, and resilience with more emphasis on the social dimension of economic growth and development—one that empowers the most vulnerable, harnesses digital opportunities, and gives a new impetus to economic growth.

APEC works by providing capacity building and technical cooperation to support our shared vision. While APEC is not itself a negotiating body, a lot of our traditional work has been around helping our members build capacity to negotiate their free trade agreements and achieve good outcomes.

For instance, a Free Trade Area for the Asia-Pacific has been mooted since 2004: we are now working hard with all our working groups to help realise this agenda, which could do with much stronger commitments to inclusivity, and provisions in the digital sphere. But to do this well, economies need to seek inputs from different affected stakeholders and communities, and not just rely on one committee focusing on trade or investment. They could benefit from discussions with other groups within the APEC framework that look at micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), at the role of women in the

> " *Broader, freer conversation can help to surface less heard views relevant to our shared goals of engendering more inclusive growth.*

Dr Rebecca Sta Maria with the former Minister of Women and Gender Equity of Chile, Isabel Plá (middle) and Carolina Cuevas Merino, former Undersecretary for Women and Gender Equity of Chile, at a news conference following the annual APEC Women and the Economy Forum held in Chile in 2019.

economy, and so on. Governmental and related organisations tend to be quite rigidly structured, so this broader, freer conversation can help to surface less heard views relevant to our shared goals of engendering more inclusive growth.

Making the Informal Sector Count

APEC comprises economies at various stages of development—we have highly developed economies, and developing economies. Many APEC economies do not have a fully functioning formal sector. Hence, APEC has a new drive to move people from the informal sector to the formal and global sector so that the benefits of trade and investment can flow to all.

This calls for policies that encourage and incentivise those in the informal sector to move into the formal sector. Many of them ask, "Why should I? I'm quite happy in the informal sector. You just want me to pay taxes." But there are good reasons for this move. Workers in the informal sector lack access to finance and other benefits that registered companies enjoy. Bringing informal actors into the formal sector means they will be better able to tap into the global value chain, to bridge the digital divide, and unlock value for their countries' economies, as well as for themselves. Informal actors also lack social protections. We saw during the COVID-19 pandemic that many of those in the informal sector suffered a huge loss of income. Those in the informal sector also tend to overwhelmingly be women. So, this is an issue not just of trade and investment, but also of social inclusion and women's empowerment, which governments need to pay more attention to.

> *If a country's formal sector is not working efficiently, especially for MSMEs, then there is little incentive to formalise. Governments must therefore first get their formal sector in order.*

Prior to this year's APEC meetings in Peru, we had not had this important conversation on the informal sector. This is why it is significant that earlier in May, ministers in charge of women's economic empowerment held joint meetings with trade ministers. Such discussions and guidelines are helping to move the needle for domestic policy reform and for spurring greater action, for example in the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The joint ministers' meeting also made clear that if an economy's formal sector is not working efficiently, especially for MSMEs, then there is little incentive to formalise. Governments must therefore first get their formal sector in order with structural and regulatory reforms, good regulatory practices, efficient border and customs systems, and access to finance.

In my experience, when bringing these issues to the attention of both policymakers and the public, it can help to focus on the benefits: on the carrots, instead of the sticks.

How Governments Should Communicate the Benefits of Trade

In many circles, when people hear about trade, they unfortunately link it to job losses. Let me share a simple example. I was in the Malaysian civil service when Malaysia was negotiating joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). The trade numbers at the time showed that imports were going up. When we analysed what was being imported we saw that it was being driven by finished goods, and in particular, clothes. This would normally ring

Trade Negotiations in Practice: Rising to the Occasion

As a civil servant in Malaysia, I led negotiations for my country to join the TPP, now the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). This effort obliged us to raise our standards. The CPTPP is in many ways the gold standard for instituting concepts and discipline not seen in other agreements. It demanded transparency, predictability of policies, and compliance with international obligations, which meant countries signing up to it had to get their house in order.

Malaysia had to ratify and implement many International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions, for example. It also had to ratify other multilateral environmental agreements. Today, trade is not just about goods crossing borders: it is about services; how people move and work across borders; the role of digitalisation; environmental impact. All these now raise important considerations.

As a country, Malaysia also has government-linked corporations (GLCs), which are like state-owned enterprises. Many of these companies have policies tied to Malaysia's national affirmative action policy. So, we had to tread carefully to ensure policy space and differentiate the commercial from the social parts of these enterprises.

alarm bells because importing finished goods can mean that the receiving country is not benefiting from the added value of processing goods at home. But we realised these imports were being driven by the opening of new stores of a regional clothing

to the exclusion of the other. Otherwise, they run the risk of becoming stuck in their own policy bubbles and echo chambers. The wider impact of trade must consider human rights, labour rights, environmental impact, and social impact. All this can be challenging for governmental practitioners. As public officials, you must be prepared to be confronted with very different views on what trade means, from people who may not like you. But you must listen to them to get the whole picture.

How these conversations take place is therefore important. Even how you set up the room matters. For instance, at APEC we do on occasion use casual sofas and comfortable chairs, instead of formal boardroom setups, to facilitate free-flowing discussions and open, easy conversations.

The Tradecraft of Negotiation: Principles and Good Practices

As a negotiator, I always ask what we want to get out of an agreement and what we are prepared to give up. It is a question of balancing these trade-offs. It is important to bear in mind that one's counterparts in other countries will also have their own internal trade-offs to balance. A practical approach is to clarify what is in it for each party, what each absolutely needs to have, and what they are prepared to give in exchange. In my experience, this can move the negotiations away from being fixed on an initial single issue, to broader terms that allow all parties to move forward together. It is possible to find a middle ground that will benefit both your economy and that of your trading partner. It need not be a zero-sum game.

Dr Sta Maria during her engagement with stakeholders from Silicon Valley and the Bay Area, discussing the importance of economic cooperation in Asia and the Pacific region, trade, inclusive growth, and what to expect for APEC U.S., 2023.

brand in Malaysia. Diving deeper, we found that these new stores were in fact growing the economy through not only the real estate sector, but also other parts of the services value chain. We were then able to explain that not all increases in imports are bad for the economy.

Such stories show how governments need to communicate better that trade is not a simple zero-sum game. We need a more holistic perspective that looks at how trade can affect investments, job creation, and domestic value chains.

One way that policymakers can better understand and communicate the benefits of trade is by inviting a more balanced representation of stakeholders to share their experiences, so that it is not only big business driving the conversation. They need to hear the voices of those who do indeed benefit from international trade, but should also listen to local MSMEs, other government departments, civil society, youth, and different underrepresented groups who may have not benefited in the same way. Many of these may even be critics and sceptics. Trade ministry officials should not have one end of the spectrum in the room

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As public officials, you must be prepared to be confronted with very different views, from people who may not like you. But you must listen to them to get the whole picture.

Geopolitical realities do come into the room, and whether we like it or not, we must navigate these carefully. Part of this is about identifying and emphasising common ground, so that there can be movement forward. In this regard, I must credit the U.S. for how they, as Chair of APEC 2023, were able to get consensus in the 2023 Leaders' Declaration, focusing on the breadth and depth of the achievements of the year, while providing flexibility for member economies to issue their own statements on their individual geopolitical stances.

For government practitioners, fora such as APEC and the WTO are excellent for building competencies in negotiation. They provide a good understanding of the intricacies of international trade agreements, including what the many technical terms mean, and the legal consequences of signing up to and implementing these terms and conditions.

A good individual negotiator is open-minded enough to listen to all the different voices in the room, from the many stakeholders, without necessarily agreeing with them. The negotiator needs to be able to understand different perspectives domestically, and also spend time with their foreign partners to build rapport. You are cultivating a partnership: coming at it as adversaries is a waste of time and energy. At the end of the day, it is a human being, not a faceless institution, who negotiates.

Nora Todd (centre), 2023 APEC Alternate Chair of the Senior Officials' Meeting, highlights economic policy deliverables for "Creating a Resilient and Sustainable Future for All". San Francisco, U.S., 12 November 2023.

Navigating Different Parts of the System

A trade agreement for market access is just one part of the story. It is not a panacea. Trade will only flow smoothly once the necessary structural and regulatory reforms and systems are in place at home: for instance, once the logistics and supply chains are efficient. So, trade negotiators should see this as an opportunity, even while they are negotiating, to review what needs to be done domestically.

Engaging and negotiating with the home ministries and agencies can sometimes prove more difficult than engaging external partners. For example, the Ministry of Labour could have completely different views on how trade will impact its constituents from the Trade Ministry. An agreement could well benefit the agenda of one ministry and not another. It is useful to provide these different counterparts with good data and feedback from all the stakeholders we have consulted. Sometimes it helps for this research to be conducted by an independent think tank, to help allay some of their concerns—it is more homework to be done, but can be essential for securing the changes needed.

> " *Everything we do has an impact on other parts of the system.*

We must bear in mind that everything we do has an impact on other parts of the system. Pressure on logistics could come from international obligations, for instance. You cannot only work inside your own cocoon and then wonder why things are not progressing.

APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade gather for a meeting chaired by Elizabeth Galdo Marín, Peru's Minister of Foreign Trade and Tourism, Arequipa, Peru, May 2024.

My experience in the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry prepared me well for my role in APEC. It was a good transition from the domestic perspective of international trade to a large and diverse international forum, where I now manage the many different perspectives of our 21 member economies. Coming from a very vocal multicultural, multiracial, and multireligious country such as Malaysia has helped a lot.

Tan Sri Datuk Dr Rebecca Fatima Sta Maria is the Executive Director of the APEC Secretariat, which serves as advisory body, implementation arm, and custodian of institutional memory for the 21 member economies that make up the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. She is the first woman appointed to the role.

In her previous role as Secretary-General of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry in Malaysia, she oversaw the formulation of international trade policies and positions. She was also Malaysia's chief negotiator for bilateral and regional free trade agreements, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.

Dr Sta Maria is also an award-winning academic in the field of human resource development, and an accomplished author. In 2024, she was featured in Forbes' third annual 50 Over 50: Asia list, which showcases 50 inspirational women over the age of 50 from across the Asia-Pacific region.

> *You are cultivating a partnership: coming at it as adversaries is a waste of time and energy.*

A 3,500 Year-Old Pharaoh's Lessons for Today's Leaders

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1,500 years before Cleopatra's reign, a remarkable woman led Egypt as king and pharaoh: Hatshepsut. Under her leadership, the kingdom opened up new trade routes, commissioned hundreds of important construction projects, and created an environment for innovation and experimentation—yet she was nearly erased from history. Egyptologist *Kara Cooney* unearths her tale.

The statuary of Hatshepsut's early reign shows her taking on a more female form. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, U.S.

Early Rise to Authority: From Consort to Regent

Hatshepsut was the elder daughter of the 18th-Dynasty king Thutmose I, and the consort of her half-brother, who would soon become king Thutmose II in 1492 BCE. When Hatshepsut was very young, around 16 years of age, her husband-king Thutmose II passed away—after only three years of rule. Hatshepsut had a daughter, Neferure, but no sons. From among the dead king's sons by one of his lesser wives, a new king, Thutmose III, was chosen by the oracle of the god Amen-Re, as revealed to the powerful royal priesthood. Thutmose III was then a boy of not more than three years of age, and could well have been chosen by the priests because his birth mother was more pliable, allowing Hatshepsut to serve as the boy's regent. While it is likely that they considered Hatshepsut the most competent royal figure remaining, it should be assumed she was also intended to serve as a means for the elite to preserve the status quo—and their power—in the kingdom.

Navigating the Corridors of Power

From 1497 BCE, Hatshepsut's informal rule on behalf of the boy-king allowed Egypt's elites to maintain their lucrative positions in the royal court. This was an era in which, elsewhere in the world, the boy-king might well have been assassinated by jostling warlords weeks after his ascension. Yet Bronze Age Egypt was protected from outside invasion by deserts to the east and west, a sea to the north, and giant granite boulders that blocked the river Nile to the south. The bounty of the Nile, which flooded its banks every year leaving behind fertile black soil to grow wheat and barley, meant a stable and plentiful food supply that afforded Egypt societal and hence governmental stability. This stability also gave the young queen regent time to

> “ *Hatshepsut had the wherewithal to discuss military campaigns, tax income and budgets, and manage diplomatic visits with grace.*

Statue of Senenmut, who was appointed high steward and chief architect by Hatshepsut. He was also the tutor of Hatshepsut's daughter, Neferure, seen here cradled in his arms. Collection of the Field Museum, Chicago.

understand the workings of the state and make sound decisions in the boy-king's stead.

Hatshepsut had the wherewithal to discuss military campaigns, tax income and budgets, and manage diplomatic visits with grace. This practical knowledge was probably part of her early upbringing: she would have learnt by witnessing the example of her father Thutmose I—a military man not born to the kingship, who fought Levantine warlords and won, and who created new agreements with polities in West Asia.

Hatshepsut also showed practical savvy in court affairs. For example, in filling an important position, she named two men to the role, thus limiting any one of them from acquiring too much power. Her appointment of so-called “new men”—up-and-comers disconnected from old elite families—led to the rise of courtiers loyal exclusively to her rather than to the agenda of the old order, which did not always align with her

goals. She worked closely with one such hire, a man named Senenmut, on her most important projects, including the construction of two huge granite obelisks: a construction order that would take at least a decade to fill.

Egypt's surviving material shows that even as soon as Hatshepsut had taken informal power as queen regent, her elite followers began building grander and more elaborate tombs and other structures, using new building materials, showing how her supporters benefited from her reign. In his autobiography, Ineni, one of her courtiers, calls her a "mistress of command with excellent plans" that had advanced him, and made him and others wealthy.

Hatshepsut had not only been the highest-ranking royal wife of the previous king, but also served as Egypt's most powerful priestess—the God's Wife of Amen—having probably been positioned in that role by her father King Thutmose I. These roles afforded her the vantage point to acquire a keen
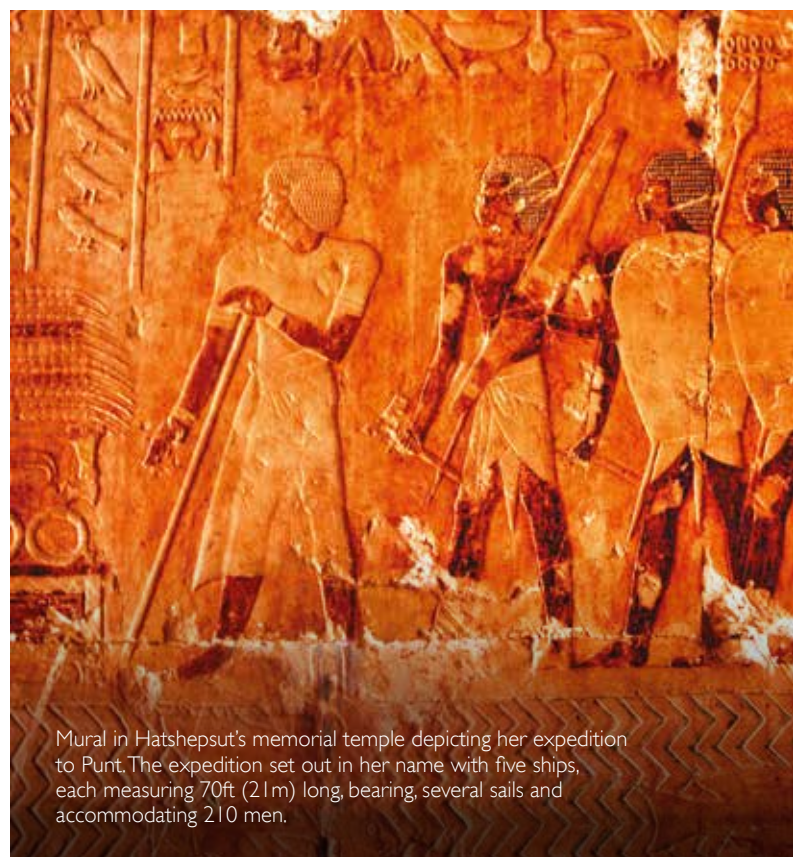
Mural in Hatshepsut's memorial temple depicting her expedition to Punt. The expedition set out in her name with five ships, each measuring 70ft (21m) long, bearing, several sails and accommodating 210 men.

Relief of Hatshepsut (left) depicted wearing the male attire of the shendyt-kilt and a false beard to convey her kingship. Hatshepsut is embraced by the god Amen-Re (right). Red Chapel of Hatshepsut, Karnak, Egypt, c1460 BCE.

understanding of Egyptian statecraft, which always went hand in hand with religious considerations. As a girl, Hatshepsut was thought wife of a god to whom the King was considered chief priest. Hatshepsut's priestly training helped her to see that every political decision was best communicated by the temple. If the gods had decreed something, no man (or woman) could be blamed for making that decision, and there could be little political pushback against it.

Consolidating and Legitimising Power: From Queen to Pharaoh

As regent, Hatshepsut's first years of rule were uneventful. She made sure the young king was educated, brought up in the temple rituals, and trained in the military arts, even as she was ruling in his stead. Her initial claim of power was an informal one.

Then from around the second year of her rule, an inscription from Semna describes Hatshepsut performing rituals as the "heir of the king and daughter/son heir of the gods": a title usually reserved for kingship. Later, early in her reign, there is an image from Karnak showing Hatshepsut wearing queenly dress but with a king's headdress.

> " *Under Hatshepsut's rule, what had been an authoritarian, military kingship became a bustling court of priests and officials.*

Kingly Acts: Opening up Trade and Keeping the Peace

One of Hatshepsut's notable achievements as Pharaoh was to reestablish the trade networks that had been disrupted during the Hyksos occupation of Egypt in the previous century. She appointed men to make arduous journeys north and south to advance this goal. This increase in trade further bolstered the wealth of the 18th Dynasty Egyptian kingdom.

By the seventh year of her reign things have changed dramatically. For political reasons that have not been recorded, Hatshepsut's informal power was made real.

When the young King Thutmose III was just eight or nine, Hatshepsut was crowned king alongside him, with the full support of her courtiers, Egypt's elite families, and its powerful temple priesthoods. Hatshepsut became king—not a "queen", which was a subservient role at the time that implied no direct political power. From that point, Hatshepsut presented herself and acted as ruler. In statuary, in reliefs, and probably in rituals before the court and the populace—she appears as a man. Breasts bound, wearing a masculine kilt, sporting the long beard of kings: in images from this period, she is the Pharaoh.

Under Hatshepsut's rule, what had been an authoritarian, military kingship under her father and husband-king became a bustling court of priests and officials, all vying for influence. Hatshepsut cultivated an elite sphere of increasingly competitive and restricted knowledge, veiling her royal power in deep religious mysteries and obscure codes: if you knew how to read a cryptographic version of her name, you were in her much sought after inner circle.
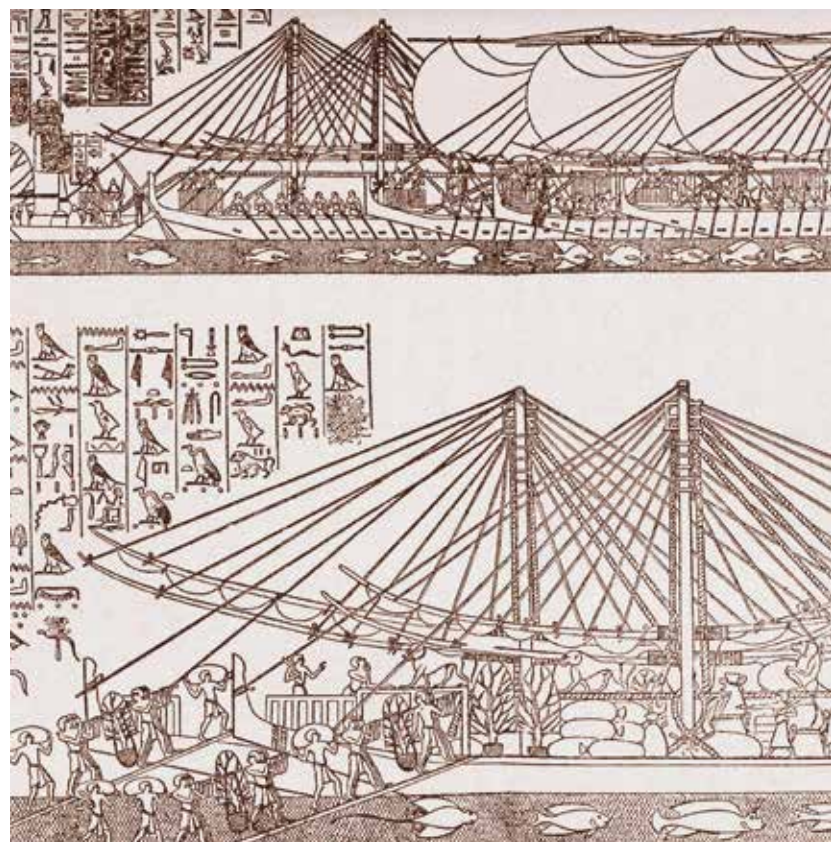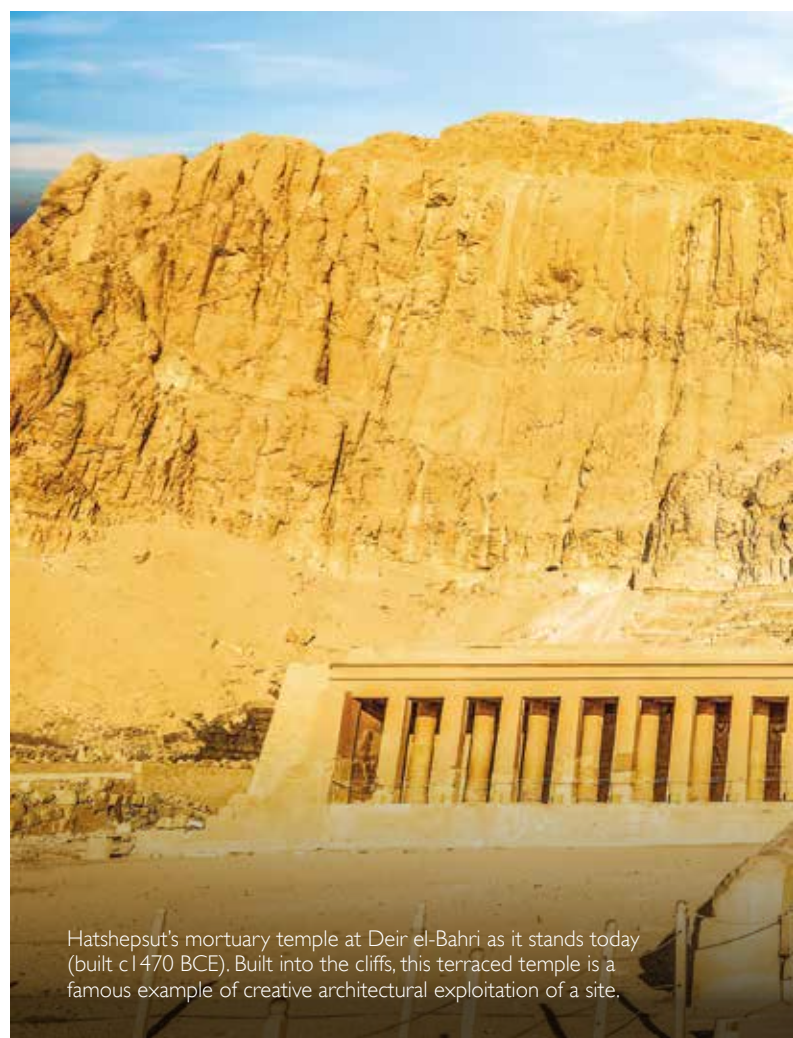
Scenes from the great series of the Expedition to Punt reliefs in Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Thebes (present-day Luxor). The upper row shows the departure of the fleet, while the lower row shows vessels being loaded and myrrh trees being carried on board.

It also demonstrated Hatshepsut's keenness to revive ancient models of kingship and royal practice, and reaffirm her place within these traditions.

Hatshepsut oversaw preparations and funding for a trading expedition to the Land of Punt (in modern-day Eritrea or Ethiopia): an act depicted on the walls of her mortuary temple. This successful expedition brought back vast riches, including gold, ebony, ivory, spices, and incense trees to be planted in the temple gardens. Artefacts from the era show how new oils, musical instruments, and weapons entered Egypt under her kingship. Hatshepsut's appointed vizier—the king's second-in-command—fulfilled her orders on these trading ventures and also helped put down insurrections in Kerma (in modern-day Sudan). According to a tomb inscription written by her overseer of the treasury, Hatshepsut personally oversaw the collection of the spoils of war.

Hatshepsut also probably oversaw several new diplomatic agreements that consolidated Egypt's power in the north. Indeed, there were no military campaigns in the Levant during Hatshepsut's reign: she appears to have settled all international issues there through coalition building and communication, rather than violence. In the south,

Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri as it stands today (built c1470 BCE). Built into the cliffs, this terraced temple is a famous example of creative architectural exploitation of a site.

An artist's representation of Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at the height of its grandeur. The grand walkway would have been surrounded by lush gardens and pools, and the whole complex was ornately decorated with sculptures and reliefs. The mortuary complexes of Mentuhotep II and Thutmose III are adjacent.

however, she brutally put down rebellions in Upper Nubia, while extracting as much wealth as possible in minerals and labour from Lower Nubia.

Building a Great State

Hatshepsut was an ambitious builder, and commissioned hundreds of embellished construction projects across Upper and Lower Egypt. These projects served various purposes: they showed her piety to the gods, and made conspicuous her income from increased trade, proving her god-given might and mandate as an Egyptian pharaoh.

Among Hatshepsut's most famous monuments is her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri near Luxor, known as Djeser-Djeseru (the Holy of Holies). Built into the cliff in front of what now is called the Valley of the Kings, it is renowned for its grand architecture and detailed relief sculptures, with a

series of terraced stages for ritual performance and a link to her tomb on the other side of the cliff.

The site of the temple was carefully chosen, being next to the tomb of one of Egypt's most respected and powerful pharaohs—Mentuhotep II (ruled c2009–c1959 BCE) of Egypt's 11th dynasty, who had ushered in a period of Theban might that Egyptologists now call the Middle Kingdom.

Hatshepsut's massive Deir el-Bahri project was the first time any Egyptian king had created a mortuary temple primarily presented as a temple of the god Amen. A king's mortuary temple was meant to serve as a space that architecturally bound regal and divine authority in death. But this temple was also a living monument, because she had it constructed at the culmination point of an important festival called the "Beautiful Festival of the Valley", a

These projects served various purposes: they showed her piety to the gods, and made conspicuous her income from increased trade, proving her god-given might and mandate as an Egyptian pharaoh.

Theban festival of the dead ancestors whereby the cult statue of the god Amen was transported across the river to the temple to symbolically access the gods' power. Hatshepsut further remodelled Thebes and Karnak more than any previous king and built several grandiose projects for new ritual routes.

By commissioning new monuments, developing new ritual structures, and changing the relationship between king, god, and dynasty, Hatshepsut manufactured a divine mandate for her rule through ritual and oracle, established through a newly constructed landscape. Perhaps she had to do this because of her unique position as a woman in the role of a king. Nevertheless, it changed Egypt's kingship

> " *Hatshepsut refined Egypt's governance from an arbitrary decision-making process into an organised bureaucratic system.*

forever: subsequent pharaohs would continue to seek the blessing of their gods, rather than imposing political rule upon their subjects.

End of a Legacy?
When Hatshepsut died after 22 years as Pharaoh, Thutmose III buried her in state in the Valley of the Kings. He helped finish her Temple of Millions of Years in the great cliffs sacred to the goddess Hathor. And he finished her Red Chapel in the heart of Karnak, upon which he was shown alongside her on its deep magenta quartzite blocks as king in a subservient position to his masculine-presenting aunt, walking behind her, rarely appearing in the company of the gods without her.

But only a few years after her death, Thutmose III sought to erase her legacy by defacing her monuments and removing her name from the list of kings. Statues of Hatshepsut were smashed. Her relief images as king were chiselled away, replaced with plaster forms of other kings in Thutmose's lineage, as if she had never existed at all. Hard stone like the red granite of Hatshepsut's Red Chapel is very hard to cut, yet Thutmose III took the time and care to have the chapel dismantled and discarded, no doubt to make a statement.

Hatshepsut had left Egypt richer and more confident of its place in the world. So, what motivated this desecration? Perhaps it was Thutmose III's need to legitimise an heir not connected to the Hatshepsut family lineage. To fend off competition from among Egypt's elites, the destruction of Hatshepsut's material legacy signalled the end of her influence for good. Even her priestly office of God's Wife was greatly reduced, ensuring that no king's daughter

Hatshepsut's obelisk in the Great Temple at Karnak is the tallest obelisk (30m) still standing in Egypt. It was one of two erected at the temple entrance but one fell in an earthquake in antiquity. Inscriptions on the obelisk pronounce Hatshepsut's legitimacy and authority as ruler in detail.

Images of Hatshepsut were posthumously desecrated and erased from monuments during the reign of Thutmose III. Here is an example of how her image was defaced, with her erased figure still visible between the gods Thoth and Horus in the temple of Amen at Karnak.

would be able to gain political power through that means again.

Despite these fervent attempts to erase Hatshepsut's legacy, the modern rediscovery of her monuments and her story, particularly during the 19th century, has led to a reassessment of her role and contributions. We now know that in her time, Hatshepsut had consolidated the priesthood into an institution that could successfully take on the throne. She reformed official positions, establishing a system of governance with built-in checks and balances to curb overreach. She professionalised her police force by employing able desert men called Medjay. Hatshepsut refined Egypt's governance from an arbitrary decision-making process into an organised bureaucratic system.

Today, Hatshepsut is celebrated as one of ancient Egypt's most successful pharaohs, and a leader who thrived in the most remarkable of circumstances.

After Hatshepsut, it would be another 1,500 years before a pharaoh's daughter would once again reign in Egypt: a woman named Cleopatra.

Kara Cooney is a professor of Egyptology at UCLA and Chair of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures. Specialising in social history, gender studies, and economies in the ancient world, she received her Ph.D in Egyptology from Johns Hopkins University. Her popular books include "The Woman Who Would Be King: Hatshepsut's Rise to Power in Ancient Egypt", "When Women Ruled the World: Six Queens of Egypt", and "The Good Kings: Absolute Power in Ancient Egypt and the Modern World". Her latest books include "Ancient Egyptian Society: Challenging Assumptions, Exploring Approaches" (Routledge, 2023) and "Recycling for Death: Coffin Reuse in Ancient Egypt and the Theban Royal Caches" (The American University in Cairo Press, published in August 2024).

Governance Matters

Leadership in Turbulent Times

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At the launch of the 2024 CGGI in London, three distinguished leaders and practitioners sat down for a wide-ranging discussion on governance: former Australian Prime Minister *Julia Gillard AC*, former U.K. government minister *Dame* (now *Baroness*) *Margaret Hodge*, and CIG Managing Director *Kenneth Sim.*

O**n Future-Ready Government: Challenges and Core Attributes**
Julia Gillard: One thing always in short supply is time. It is hard to slow down in an age where everything is coming at you so quickly, but governments need to make time for deeper reflection and thinking—within their political structures and in their intersections with the civil service and stakeholders. They will then be better able to prioritise, reflect on the nature of their institutions deeply, think about future challenges, and improve their governance.

That said, I do not underestimate how difficult it is to do that while on the job. When I was the Australian Prime Minister, I would try to carve out time for that deeper reflection, even though we did not have quite enough of that while in the whirlwind of government.

Margaret Hodge: Prioritising and giving yourself time to think is essential. When I was Minister for Children in the U.K., there was one day when I had 16 meetings scheduled. Prioritising might mean that you do not achieve everything, but you do get what you focus on done better.

I think you need to be absolutely clear on your purpose and priorities. Government is complex, so you must choose what to focus on. It took me time to understand this in my various government roles. Only in my last job did I fix on six clear objectives that I wanted to achieve. I did not let go of those, and that enabled me to go further.

I also think flexibility matters: while you should have clear goals, you also cannot be rigid in responding to issues as they emerge.

Leadership is central to good governance. You see that across the world where you have more capable and collaborative leadership, you probably get better

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Panel discussion at the global launch of the CGGI 2024: (from left to right) Kenneth Sim (Managing Director, CIG), Baroness Margaret Hodge (the then MP for Barking, U.K.), Julia Gillard AC (former Prime Minister of Australia), and moderator Lucy Fisher (Whitehall Correspondent for the Financial Times). The Royal United Services Institute, Whitehall, London, U.K., 15 May 2024.

governance. In my experience, it is vital to have a good working relationship with your civil service. In the U.K., we have seen how confrontation between civil servants and politicians is deeply destructive and leads to poorer governance. You need to recognise each other's strengths.

We also need to think of governance differently than we did a generation ago. Governments have a more limited reach today, because of the impact of global events and international companies such as the Googles of the world. So you will have to build good relationships with other stakeholders, in the private sector and in civil society.

> *Governments have a more limited reach today, so you will have to build good relationships with other stakeholders.*
>
> **Margaret Hodge**

Kenneth Sim: I am going to take a different slant. Globally, there has been a slow but pernicious trend of declining trust in government. One Pew report shows that Americans' trust in their government used to be close to 80% in the 1960s; it is now about 20%. A similar pattern shows up in different indicators related to trust elsewhere.

> " *A future-ready government is one where trust in government and governance is restored and growing.*
>
> **Kenneth Sim**

So, for me a future-ready government is one where trust in government and governance is restored and growing. This is important because research tells us that compliance to policies and the ability of government to execute policies is related to trust.

On Restoring Public Trust in Government and Governance Processes

Margaret Hodge: I spent a lot of my time in public health talking to politicians in different countries about accountability and anti-corruption measures, which are vital to public trust. One way to motivate officials on this issue is to make use of the fact that most politicians have a big ego. You might persuade them that if they were to use their authority to get corruption out of their system, that it would help them relate to their voters. They want to be popular with their voters and earn positive media coverage. It is a form of encouragement to them to be seen as advocates and leaders in trying to achieve a less corrupt administration.

Another thing I have found has helped is to build networks with women politicians. You can encourage them to develop new ways to practise good governance and show that there are other ways to succeed. That is

Addressing the impact of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) for the public good will require international cooperation. The 2023 AI Safety Summit, hosted by the U.K., was attended by many world leaders from government and the AI industry. Bletchley Park, Buckinghamshire, U.K., 2 November 2023.

not to say that what we do in the U.K., or the developed world, is the best. We also have much to learn from other countries, which may have less sophisticated governance structures, but which succeed in other ways, in terms of outcomes for their population that engender trust.

Julia Gillard: One thing for us to do is to interrogate the gap between what indicators and indices are telling us about government capability, and what the public thinks about government capability. We can see that with the democracies having elections this year. If you asked someone from the U.K. today where the country is on a good government index, they would probably say bottom 10. A happier person might say it ranks in the middle, but no one would place it in the top 20. We need to understand why there is such a difference between public perception and what the metrics are telling us.

Part of the issue may have to do with the way social media is shaping public perception in our societies.

to require international cooperation. Governments need to play a role in driving that and someone needs to be the one to initiate the diplomatic dialogue that gets everyone thinking about the intergovernmental arrangements and attention needed. Good governance is not just thinking about AI but also driving action—not waiting for someone else in the international community to be doing it.

To give an example: when mapping human DNA first became possible, there was a debate about whether it ought to be done commercially or by the non-profit sector. Ultimately, sections of DNA were mapped in various parts of the world until we had the whole human genetic code. This knowledge was then made available as a free scientific asset to researchers and healthcare providers around the world.

More recently, Google's DeepMind AI has been used to determine how biological proteins fold. Knowing how proteins are structured is important to scientific research, but identifying the fold is hugely cumbersome to work out without AI. Google DeepMind released its AlphaFold platform free of charge to the global community and scientists are using it today. The developers could have made this proprietary technology and charged people to use it. That is just an early example of the questions around public good that could come up with AI. Many of these AI-led outcomes are so resource-intensive that no one government could fund them on its own, let alone try to regulate such technologies when they are moving around the planet in a borderless way.

I do not think any government has figured out how to pursue deep, complex, long-term reforms in an environment of fractured attention and people's ability to pick their own facts and truth, all of which could get worse with artificial intelligence (AI).

But our understanding of what the problems are is better than it used to be, and consumers of social media are also more knowledgeable now. Nor do we want to romanticise the past, when you could also get perverse outcomes with a few entitled and powerful media moguls deciding who they thought the government should be and what they should do. Today, it is more of a kaleidoscope, with more pieces in play and the picture changing all the time.

On Addressing Emerging Technologies Such as AI for the Public Good

Julia Gillard: AI is an issue that goes beyond national boundaries, and therefore beyond the realm of nation-states. It is something that ultimately, like climate change and other global challenges, is going

> *" AI is an issue that goes beyond national boundaries... Good governance is not just thinking about AI but also driving action.*
>
> **Julia Gillard**

In AI, there is a vast knowledge gap between the specialists, the decision-makers and policymakers, and the public. Thus, building the independent expertise will be hugely important. I think what we need is a global architecture that features an independent expert panel that figures out the science and relevant perspectives to bring to the decision-making table. You see this in climate change where a scientific panel brings updates on issues to Conference of the Parties (COP) and nation-states during negotiations.

Margaret Hodge: One concern I have with AI is that, unlike climate change, there may not be the same binding sense of common interest. In trying to achieve international agreement for AI, we are likely to be met with more competitive approaches. We may then end up with lowest common denominator outcomes that are not enough to address the attendant needs and risks in the longer run.

Another consideration is that while AI has become central to conversations in government, there is a danger that it and other advances in technology become regarded as self-evident solutions: whereas they ought to be seen as tools that fit into broader strategies, not strategies in themselves.

On Balancing Short-Term Political Priorities with Long-Term Planning and Capability Building

Margaret Hodge: I think the idea of short term versus long term planning is a false dichotomy. If your party comes into government in the next election, it is imperative in the first 100 days to demonstrate real change, so the short term does matter. You must earn the confidence and trust you want, and set a sense of direction and forward momentum.

In the U.K., we face an incredibly difficult governance legacy, with a sluggish economy, high taxes, a public service in disarray, the impact of Brexit, and abject public trust in politics and government. If I were in government, I would first find a way to gauge where we are, so we have a baseline against which to measure the progress we make over time. I would also want to have an agenda for how we would clean up government and how we are going to govern in a way that is more transparent and accountable: to reset the social compact.

During the Labour government in the late 1990s, we had five simple and specific pledges, which we would list on little cards. Some of these were pledges such as reducing class sizes in primary schools and reducing

Margaret Hodge arrives at Downing Street on her first day of work as the U.K.'s first Minister of State for Children. London, U.K., 13 June 2003.

The then Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard (centre, white jacket) in a group photo following her swearing in as Prime Minister by Governor-General Quentin Bryce (centre, in peach) along with Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries at Parliament House, Canberra, Australia, 14 September 2010.

in the context of your wider aspiration for public outcomes is a considerable challenge in government.

In terms of capability, we need to not just develop policies, but also manage delivery and services well in a fragmented environment. Like many other societies, the U.K. now has a very mixed economy, with over half of our public services being delivered by private sector institutions. The skills and capabilities needed in the civil service are therefore completely different from a generation ago.

Julia Gillard: What is terrifying about the first 100 days of being in government is that there are no great systems of capability building for politicians and special advisors. In my experience, you are literally told that you are now the Minister of X, this is your office, you are entitled to these staff, here are the promises we made in the electoral campaign, knock yourself out. The strongest survive, and the weakest get caught in controversy in the first 12 months, while the rest try to keep their heads down and hope no one notices that they are not doing particularly well.

" *Short term vs long term is a false dichotomy... You must earn the confidence and trust you want, and set a sense of direction and forward momentum.*

Margaret Hodge

waiting lists in healthcare. The moment we started to deliver on these, we realised we had gotten them wrong. We wanted to raise standards in education and healthcare, but class sizes and waiting lists were not the key factors. Getting the policy specifics right

Political parties are usually smart enough to start capability building in the opposition, but sustaining it when in office is difficult. It requires some thought before you get there. You are under a lot of pressure and tension, so you do need people who can be your wise counsel. I would recommend building up this capability even as you are rolling out your 100-day plan.

The difficulty is bridging from what you have promised in the electoral campaign to the longer-term rhythm of government. Political promises only come in three flavours: you promise a thing, you promise a law or regulation, or you promise a process, such as to have a commission or inquiry once you are in office. In government, you will get quick advice about how to deliver a thing, and plenty of help to draft legislation. But you normally come out of an electoral campaign with multiple process promises. To thoughtfully programme these in a cross-governmental fashion so they come together in a rational and digestible way is work that needs to be done in the first 100 days. If you do not get it right in this time, you will be left with landmines to trip over for the rest of your term. Such preparatory work is less visible, but it is incredibly important.

How you put together your electoral manifesto, how you build robust systems in government so you can recalibrate programmes as situations change, how resilient and agile your governance is: all these have partly to do with character and leadership. But it is also about having good processes, and how well people

Officers from different agencies in Brunei's public service in discussion, as part of a whole-of-government executive programme designed to sharpen policy development skills. Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, May 2024.

can come together to deal with any changes that may be needed as they arise.

Kenneth Sim: At the Chandler Institute of Governance, we work with government leaders all over the world. In my conversations with them—both politicians and public servants—two things frequently come up.

The first is the issue of resources: fiscal envelopes are tight. Unfortunately, this often builds pressure to cut funding for government capability development, such as civil service colleges or national schools of development. The second issue is that of mutual recrimination between politicians and civil servants. The politicians may say, "Hey I have a great idea", but lament that the civil servants are lethargic and are not following their agenda. Conversely, civil servants may say, "I want to do more, but I have no political support and they cut my funding [for training and capability development]". The truth is probably somewhere in between.

> " *The difficulty is bridging from what you have promised in the electoral campaign to the longer-term rhythm of government.*
>
> **Julia Gillard**

❝ *It would be unfortunate if governments were to ignore capability building across the whole of government.*

Kenneth Sim

It would be unfortunate if governments were to ignore capability building across the whole of government because of these issues. Government is made up of many different entities and operates at many different levels. But effective service delivery and policy implementation require each of these disparate parts to work closely together. This calls for having a strong corps of public service leaders, who speak the same language and share the same ethos, and can coordinate among themselves. After all, a government is only as strong as its weakest link.

Julia Gillard AC was the 27th Prime Minister of Australia (2010-13) and is currently the Chair of Wellcome, a global charitable foundation, which supports science to solve urgent health challenges. Julia was the first woman to serve as Deputy Prime Minister and Prime Minister in Australia and has written two books about women in leadership and a life in public service. During her tenure, she transformed education and healthcare in Australia, and is a former Chair of the Global Partnership for Education. Julia is also Patron of the Campaign for Female Education, Inaugural Chair of the Global Institute for Women's Leadership at King's College London, and Chair of Beyond Blue, a mental health charity in Australia. In 2017, she was awarded a Companion of the Order of Australia for services to economic and social development in Australia. She was named one of BBC's 100 Women in 2018.

Margaret Hodge, Baroness Hodge of Barking, was the Labour Member of Parliament for Barking from June 1994 to May 2024 and was elevated to the House of Lords in August 2024. She has served in government, holding portfolios across education, work and pensions, business, and culture. In 2010 Margaret became the first elected Chair of the Public Accounts Committee and was also its first female Chair. Margaret was the Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Anti-Corruption and Responsible Tax, where she relentlessly campaigned against financial crime and dirty money. Margaret is also a Visiting Professor at The Policy Institute at King's College London, and Chair of College Council for Royal Holloway, University of London.

Kenneth Sim is Managing Director (Strategy and Research) at the Chandler Institute of Governance, a portfolio that includes oversight of the Chandler Good Government Index. An experienced public policy practitioner, Kenneth spent almost 20 years in the Singapore civil service, where he held key appointments in varied portfolios including industry development, casino regulation, education, energy policy, and environmental sustainability. Kenneth had also served as Special Assistant to the Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore.

Endndes

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Journey Towards Better Government: Where Are We Headed?

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2. CGGI's income classification follows World Bank's income classification (https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/378834-how-does-the-world-bank-classify-countries)

CGGI Region Classification	Countries
Australia & New Zealand	Australia, New Zealand
Central & West Asia	Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Türkiye
East Asia	China, Japan, Mongolia, South Korea
Eastern Europe	Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Ukraine
Latin America & Caribbean	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela
Middle East & North Africa	Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Islamic Rep., Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates
North America	Canada, United States
Northern Europe	Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom
South Asia	Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
South-East Asia	Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam
Southern Europe	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain
Sub-Saharan Africa	Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe
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Photo Credits

Cover: Bogolo Kenewendo. Lisle Photography
Page 3. Dr Peter Shergold. Fairfax Media/Getty Images
Page 4. New South Wales State Premier Mike Baird and Australian Minister for Social Services Christian Porter welcome an Iraqi refugee family in Sydney, Australia. Xinhua/Alamy Stock Photo
Page 5. Annual COAG meeting with state premiers. Fairfax Media/Getty Images
Page 7. New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern with Melbourne's Lord Mayor Sally Capp and councillors. Scott Barbour/Getty Images
Page 14. The Kazakh 10th-century philosopher Al-Farabi is celebrated in this monument to Kazakh literature. Noel Boardman/Alamy Stock Photo
Page 15. Sônia Guajajara, Minister of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil. Dave Benett/Getty Images for The Caring Family Foundation
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