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Many leading thinkers on development visited the Centre in 2014.
The Centre is committed to delivering on the inspiring vision set out by the Director of Bureau for Policy and Programme Support:

“We have a common vision...We aspire, with modesty, to influence the thinking of our time, and to be a force for reform, a platform for change. ... years from now, as historians come checking on us, we will want to proudly proclaim that we were part of the generation of UN leaders that led the charge in eradicating the most glaring social injustices of our time. Leadership currency today is knowledge, and our contribution to leading UNDP will be a solid input to the new UN entering its eighth decade of life. We can only do this through intellectual might.”
Highlights

In 2014 the Centre:

**Hosted high level visits** including from the Prime Minister and Cabinet Secretary of Tonga, the UNDP Administrator (who delivered the first GCPSE Annual Lecture), top officials from ASEAN countries and the Presidential Public Service Reform Commission of Malawi (whose recommendations were greatly influenced by their visit here);

**Supported** South-South learning through event partnerships with international agencies (UNPAN, EIP) that promote knowledge sharing, the publication of evidence and research featuring experiences of development practitioners and through joint events with government partners that share Southern and Northern expertise;

**Convened** dissemination events including roundtable discussions, research symposia and conferences attended by a Prime Minister, Ministers (Myanmar), heads of Public Service Divisions (Singapore and Cambodia) and Public Service Commissions (Bhutan, Malawi and the Philippines);

**Co-hosted** the UNDP-KPMG International Development Conference which included the Asia launch of the “2013 Change Readiness Index”, a presentation by the Developmental Leadership Programme and breakout sessions and key issues in development;

**Created and maintained** partnerships with leading organisations (such as KPMG, ADB, Bertelsmann Foundation, Commonwealth Local Government Forum, etc.), international research consortia (Developmental Leadership Programme; International Centre for Tax and Development), as well as with Singaporean universities and research centres;

**Organized** themed workshops on public servants’ motivation and public service excellence and the post-2015 development agenda, and held training events on Action Learning and foresight;

**Undertook** foresight prototyping events in Tonga and Rwanda in close collaboration with Government counterparts and the local UNDP office. The events included high-level sessions with the Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers (Tonga) and Governors, Cabinet Ministers and high ranking officials (Rwanda);

**Delivered** a side-event on foresight at the 3rd UN Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in Samoa, hosted by the Governments of Tonga in collaboration with GCPSE and Singapore;

**Supported and advised** a wide range of UNDP Country Offices (including Algeria, Bahrain, Belarus, Bhutan, Ethiopia, India, Jamaica, Myanmar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Uzbekistan and Vietnam), Regional Centres (Asia-Pacific, Africa, Eastern Europe & CIS) and Headquarters;
Successfully negotiated with the OECD-DAC for co-funding as co-secretariat for a major donor initiative – the Effective Institutions Platform;

Invited to the Centre on study breaks the Deputy State Services Commissioner of New Zealand; the former Head of Profession for Governance at the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID); and the Commonwealth Adviser on Local Government;

Hosted visiting research fellows and a UNDP Country Office mentee (STEP programme);

Prepared think-pieces on complexity and *wu-wei* (with the Complexity Institute, NTU), action learning (with the Commonwealth Business School), foresight (with the School of International Futures), public service efficiency (with FutureGov, Collaborate, and the Institute of Government);

Presented at major conferences / knowledge sharing events in Astana, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Kuching, New Delhi, Paris, Seoul, and Yangon;

Produced externally reviewed knowledge products (five discussion and five working papers);

Communicated the Centre’s work via its website, e-newsletters, social media and Teamworks (knowledge sharing platform), expanding followership (facebook +175% likes, twitter > 1000 followers);

Issued regular Newsletters, leaflets and website updates summarising the Centre’s work;

Drew key policy lessons from the Centre’s evidential and convening roles;

Built up the Centre’s capacity & expertise by recruiting consultants, including five ‘Knowledge Brokers’, one ‘Evidence and Communications Manager’ and appointed several specialist project consultants;

Welcomed the second Singaporean public service secondee in September this year as well as two interns from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy Masters programme;

Secured a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) to join the Centre (due to arrive in early 2015);

Upgraded the Centre’s conference facilities to enable the hosting of events for a 100 person audience;

Received the 2014 Amartya Sen Prize, presented to the Director at Yale University.
The Centre’s impact

The impact of a new Global Policy Centre will take time. But it matters. The quality of public service affects rates of economic growth;¹ and citizens’ trust in the state and perceptions of its legitimacy.²

Concern for public service excellence is nothing new. Nearly four thousand five hundred years ago, the first documented public service reform was implemented. In the Sumerian city-state of Lagash in Babylonia about 2378 BC, the ensi or ruler named Uruinimgina carried out public service reform in response to the demands of civil society. As a contemporary cuneiform clay tablet recorded:

>Since time immemorial, since life began, the head boatman appropriated boats, the livestock official appropriated donkeys and sheep, and the fisheries inspector appropriated the catch.... He (i.e. Uruinimgina) removed the head boatman from control over the boats, the livestock official from control over the asses and sheep, the fisheries inspector from control over the haul ...³

In introducing accountability, transparency, the rule of law, and measures for tackling corruption, Uruinimgina was foreshadowing UNDP policy advice by over four millennia; and public service has probably had bad press almost ever since. So reform is doubtless almost as old as public administration.

Even if the reputation of the public service has been low four millennia, in decline for decades and its vilification long a popular pastime. Public service, public services, bureaucracy and officialdom generate strong emotion, adamant opinion and entrenched stereotypes of ‘idleness’, ‘inflexibility’, and ‘stifling’ attitudes. So challenges to delivering better public services are considerable, including politicians using ‘bureaucracy’ as an all too convenient scapegoat. ‘Citizen-centred’ services can reinforce the ego-centric in a post-ideological era.

Nevertheless demands on public service continually increase. Yet public services contributed much of the success achieved by the Millennium Development Goals in improving the lives of poor and vulnerable people; the same will apply even more to the Sustainable Development Goals from 2016 to 2030, because their scope is likely to be even more ambitious.

How has the Centre made an impact after its de facto first full year of operations? Round the world, reforms of public service and services

¹ Evans and Rauch, 1999; Rauch and Evans, 2000.
have too often not been the result of well-informed carefully researched arguments. Rather the ambitious official, the self-opinionated politician and the fee-seeking consultant have too often been peddling populist attacks on 'bureaucracy' and offering pet solutions for an often ill-defined or poorly understood problem. 

Declared aims may be: strengthening oversight; improving public services; managing performance, accountability and leadership; cost savings; strengthening the capability of civil servants; altering the structure and constitutional role of the civil service; empowering public officials to take more control and more responsibility; or enhancing the Government's accountability to the legislature and citizenry.

All too often real impact has been unsatisfactory, the process highly disruptive: for example, a recent study of public sector reform in the UK over the last thirty or forty years summed it up as being “erratic, episodic, incoherent … and wasteful.” 

Such is the degree of failure generally in developing countries, and continued weaknesses of governments after reforms are completed that a leading academic categorises success as the ‘positive deviant’ of public sector reform.

Public service performs the essential functions of the state and its importance includes a close statistical connection between the quality of public bureaucracy and rates of economic growth; and that impartial, not just effective or efficient, public administration builds trust between the state and citizenry, and fosters state legitimacy.

Indeed research suggests trust and legitimacy are not principally created by democracy, the rule of law, efficiency and effectiveness, but are the outcomes of “the impartiality of institutions that exercise government authority.”

Moreover, citizens' perceptions of ethics in public administration systems shape satisfaction with services, trust in governmental institutions, and attitudes to politics and political leaders.

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8 Evans and Rauch, 1999; Rauch and Evans, 2000.
Ideas, values and political vision give meaning to citizens’ grander collective ambitions. The state and its public service exist not solely to deliver services efficiently and effectively. They exist too to tackle excessive inequality, right unacceptable injustice, and articulate the collective desire for a sustainable environment for generations yet to come. Political vision – putting a man on the moon – for the greater public good that only the state can provide should be reawakened to deliver the SDGs.

The Centre has started on a journey that began some 4,500 years ago. It has a long way to run. Nevertheless, in a short time, much has been achieved.
Awards & distinctions

The Director, Max Everest-Phillips was awarded the first Amartya Sen Prize at Yale University in November 2014. The annual prize is named in honour of Professor Amartya Sen, the Nobel Prize winning economist whose book 'Development as Freedom' has been a major inspiration for developing practitioners around the world ever since it was first published in 1999.

Professor Amartya Sen, Nobel laureate in Economics (left) with Max Everest-Phillips at Yale University (November 2014).
Outlook for 2015

The Centre’s contribution to UNDP efforts in 2014 was to foster greater awareness of the importance of the public service, to present the evidence, and to support informed reform.

Building on the work to date, in 2015, the Centre will:

- Advocate the importance of public service and services for the SDGs.
- Promote South-South Learning Alliances through the Effective Institutions Platform.
- Address the increasing disconnect between the expectations of the public service, and the widespread disillusionment and low morale of officials at all levels. ‘Public Service Motivation’ not only, or primarily, extrinsic but the intrinsic strive for excellence, must be improved in many country contexts.
- Urge recognition that change is now a constant. Once in a generation, structural public service reform is highly disruptive and often ineffectual. Reforms must institutionalise the capacity to manage continual adaptation.
- Challenge normative thinking such as ‘Citizen-centred’ approaches to public service and public services where they risk exaggerating current needs over inter-generational ‘stewardship’.
- Develop ‘Public official-centred’ approaches to reform that deliver genuine participation with citizens through partnering, co-creation and co-design.
- Improve the interface of political and administrative leadership using new skills and better politics. Ministries should not be run for ministerial zero-sum power when complex problems require collaboration and coordination across organisational boundaries.
- Promote ‘Innovation’ through research (in collaboration with the Government of India, UNDESA and CAPAM); but innovation as novelty should not be over-emphasised at the cost of sensible replication and incremental improvement.
- Aim to be the ‘Foresight Hub’ of UNDP. Foresight is not a luxury just for developed countries. It is a tool for empowerment and resilience for all. Rwanda, for example, is committed to becoming a middle-income country by the year 2020 and the Rwandan leadership believes that to attain this, the use of foresight is paramount.
- Query, where necessary, the benefits of private sector approaches into the public service. The public sector is by definition political and, acting as guardian of the long-term public interest is not driven only by profit.
• Highlight the key capability for the public sector is one about which no clear guidance yet exists – how to rebuild trust and strengthen state legitimacy in an era when ever greater responsiveness, transparency and accountability seem unable to reverse declining trust.

• Contribute research, insight and direction on the nexus between governance, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, in keeping with the dynamic vision outlined in the UNDP Strategic Plan and the creation of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS).

• Ensure that the planned transfer of UNDP’s anti-corruption team from New York to the Centre strengthens capacity across all areas.

Recommendation

In light of the progress to date, the Director recommends:

• An extension of the Project (Document) with the necessary financial commitments until to 31 August 2018.

This will require the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Singapore to offer an extension of the current commitments until the end of the fiscal year (01 April 2015 – 31 March 2016), and the further commitment for the period from 01 April 2016 until 31 August 2018.

This will also mean the Public Service Division, Government of Singapore to extend the commitment of the staffing support provided to the Centre for the period until 31 August 2018.
The Centre’s purpose

The Centre acts as a catalyst for new thinking, strategy and practice in the area of public service and enhances the quality of UNDP’s activities in more than 170 offices in developing countries, regional centres and headquarters by:

i) Functioning as a hub for evidence and knowledge; and

ii) Acting as a convening and collaboration hub bringing together scholars, practitioners and policymakers to review evidence and best practice from around the world.

The Centre supports UNDP’s 2014-2017 Strategic Plan by:

- Scanning the horizon for challenges, opportunities, horizons and trends;
- Promoting South-South learning on public service;
- Building evidence on core themes that are crucial to public service;
- Convening thinker practitioners to share experiences; and
- Expanding collaborations and networks through communities of practice.

The Centre’s vision of its long-term purpose around “Promoting Open Governance through Improving Public Service” is driven by a conceptual framework and sense of comparative advantage in providing evidence-based knowledge for UNDP around key challenges that public service faces, such as:

- Tackling extreme inequalities, promoting trust and deepening the legitimacy of the state;
- Engaging more effectively with citizens;
- Accelerating public service innovation and scaling it;
- Achieving greater sustainability and inclusiveness; and
- Building resilient institutions and excellence in public services.
Singapore & the Centre

While the Centre is independent, its vision of public service excellence is inspired by the success of the “Singapore Story”, which has justifiably attracted attention from all around the world.

Its location in Singapore has provided the Centre with opportunities to learn from and share innovation in Singapore, and for engaging government, universities, think tanks and the private sector.

The Centre, generously co-funded by the Government of Singapore, therefore is pleased to report it is working effectively with partners in Singapore and has been very grateful for the active goodwill and collaboration received, including the invaluable input of two excellent secondees from the public service.

The Centre is also grateful for support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Public Service Division (PSD), Economic Development Board (EDB), Civil Service College (CSC), the Centre for Liveable Cities, and from academic bodies such as the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD)'s Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities, the Nanyang Technological University (NTU)'s Nanyang Centre for Public Administration and the National University of Singapore (NUS)'s Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP).

In 2014 examples of the Centre’s collaboration included:

- The LKYSPP hosted the Centre’s conference on Complexity in SIDS;
- A talk at the Centre by the Assistant Dean of LKYSPP on meritocracy;
- Negotiation with NTU on collaboration on a $1m. research proposal on public service motivation;
- Participation in the CLC’s World Cities Summit in June (attended by the UNDP Administrator with several speaking engagements);
- The Centre mentored an impressively bright group of SMU students who produced a board game on bureaucracy; and
- Consulted with partners on the publication on the wider relevance of the work of Dr Albert Winsemius, a former EPTA (now UNDP) consultant, who served as Singapore’s economic adviser (1961-1984) on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Singapore’s independence.
The Centre’s four core thematic areas of leadership, motivation, foresight and innovation are derived in part from research on the causes of Singapore’s success in building public service excellence over the last 50 years. This coherent, conceptual framework that grounds the Centre’s thematic priorities and activities has helped it establish a profile that is distinct from other UN agencies and Centres while adding value and depth to UNDP’s democratic governance mandate.

At the January 2014 meeting the Centre’s Board, in approving the 2014 work plan and the new budget, agreed with the Director to focus the activities on three major issues:

(i) The contribution of public service excellence to poverty eradication and reduction of extreme inequalities;
(ii) The role of motivation and leadership in public service excellence; and
(iii) The leadership of women in public service.

The Centre in 2014 focussed on these areas – with success.
The Centre in 2014

The following sections outline the Centre’s work on its four thematic areas:

**Leadership for development**

In April, the Centre invited Niheer Dasandi of the University of Birmingham and the major donor-funded Developmental Leadership Programme (with which the Centre retains close links), to review the “Political-Bureaucratic Leadership Interface” in successful developmental states, such as Singapore and how key lessons from these can be used to inform the policy reform process in poorer nations with weak institutions. After the production of a working paper for the event, a discussion paper on this subject by Dr. Dasandi is being prepared for publication in 2015.

Also in April, the Centre partnered with KPMG on hosting a major international conference titled “Leadership and the Challenge of Change” that also featured the Asian launch of the “2013 Change Readiness Index”. The Index is a unique tool for measuring the key determinants that impact a country’s ability to react to and manage change. The conference also included a keynote address by the Prime Minister of Tonga, as well as a discussion on key findings from the Developmental Leadership Programme. Duncan Green (Senior Strategic Adviser, Oxfam) and one of the most influential authors and bloggers on international development, also contributed to the proceedings.

In June the Centre was honoured to host UNDP Administrator Helen Clark, who gave the inaugural lecture at the Centre on “Women’s Equal Participation and Leadership in Decision-Making”. This was followed by a panel discussion featuring women public service leaders from Malaysia, Singapore, South Africa and Vietnam. Patrick Keuleers, then UNDP’s Director of Democratic Governance, supported the Administrator’s “soft launch” of the “Gender Equality in Public Administration (GEPA) Report” at the event. During her visit, the Administrator also addressed the World Cities Summit where she outlined why excellence in public service matters and the importance of the work of the Centre. The Centre produced a book (‘What Really Works?’) in commemoration of the visit.

The last major event in the Centre’s 2014 calendar was the November workshop on “Public Service Excellence and the Post-2015 Development Agenda”. This event brought together eighty participants from 33 countries, including experts, development practitioners, government representatives, and academics to consider the research, evidence and knowledge needs of the post-2015 public service reform agenda. Participants explored

“On behalf of a very diverse group of public sector reform practitioners and experts, I would like to thank the facilitators and the GCPSE team for what has been a fascinating and enriching journey … For me, the main takeaway from the workshop [Public Service Excellence and the Post-2015 Development Agenda] has been the recognition that PSR is a continuous journey and not a destination to be arrived at.”

Chairman, Royal Civil Service Commission, Kingdom of Bhutan (November 2014)
alternative futures of the public service in 2030 and identified topics to be pursued under the umbrella of the Learning Alliances on Public Sector Reform of the Effective Institutions Platform.

**Motivation of public service officials**

Public service excellence requires highly motivated officials. How do we get there? The Centre’s discussion paper, “Motivation of Public Service Officials: Insights for Practitioners”, published in November, pulls out key lessons based on evidence from selected research, underscoring the differences between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and providing examples and principles to attract and retain motivated frontline public service officials.

In July, GCPSE convened a troika of knowledge-sharing events on public service motivation. First was the “Public Service Post-2015 (PSP-15): Research Workshop” on 21 July that brought together an international group of academic researchers, development practitioners and public service officials. Speakers presented short perspectives on motivation and how it relates to public service ethos. This was followed by a discussion on a proposed multi-country research project to examine public service motivation in developing countries, in partnership with a leading Singaporean university.

On 22 July, the Centre hosted the Public Service Post-2015: Public Service Leaders’ Congress “Restoring the Public Service Ethos” in partnership with Singapore’s Public Service Division. Building on the success of the Public Service Dialogue in 2013, this event brought innovative public sector leaders and influential thinker-practitioners together to discuss the needs of public service in the post-MDG world. Participants sought to identify and promote policies and practices that improve the ability of the public sector to deliver in a complex, rapidly changing world, with a specific focus on public service motivation and ethos.

The next day saw a lecture on “How relevant is the ‘Carrot and Stick’ approach in public service motivation?” by the Lead Research Economist at the World Bank, Dr Phil Keefer. The lecture was jointly organised by the Centre and the LKYSPP. This was followed by a panel discussion featuring representatives of the Asian Development Bank, the LKYSPP, the Singapore Public Service and the World Bank on motivation and the adequacy of incentives, specific to public servants.

The Director and other Centre staff undertook several invited speaking assignments and delivered trainings for civil servants on the theme of
“motivation”. These included a mission to Myanmar in September, to address the Senior Management Course at the Central Institute of Civil Service at Phaungyi in Lower Myanmar.

Foresight as empowerment

The theme of foresight in public service attracted strong demand. Its importance was confirmed by a consultation convened in April on “Developing Foresight Capacity within the Public Service” to engage thinkers and practitioners in discussion and to advise UNDP on approaches to building government foresight capacity in developing countries.

In 2014 the Centre published a discussion paper on the theme of foresight, “Foresight as a Strategic Long-Term Planning Tool for Developing Countries”, aimed to support decision and policymakers in developing countries to maximise the strengths and benefits of national foresight programmes, which require embracing levels of risk and uncertainty outside a typical bureaucrat’s comfort zone.

In October, UNDP Rwanda, the Rwanda Governance Board and the Centre brought together senior public service stakeholders at Kigali for the Rwanda foresightXchange (fsXc). This second fsXc workshop explored how foresight could complement traditional strategic planning approaches and help the public service become more resilient to shocks, responsive to emerging opportunities and adaptive to change. A mission to Rwanda to scope plan the event preceded this. Again, the UNDP Innovation Facility provided co-funding.

Also in October, the Centre in partnership with the UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Centre, USAID Asia, the UN-Habitat Bangkok Office, and United Nations Global Pulse brought together thinker-practitioners from the development community and members of the science and technology sectors to discuss the rising challenges and opportunities facing Asia as the result of both rapid urbanization and climate change at the “Asia Urban Futures Workshop”.

Earlier in the year, a similar event organised in collaboration with the UNDP Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (ECIS) Regional Centre in Istanbul, Turkey, brought together UNDP practitioners from the Eastern European and Commonwealth of Independent States (ECIS) region and international experts for exposure to state-of-the-art practices in foresight and strategic planning.

“I would like to express my gratitude for the support given to my Government in hosting the side-event on Foresight …. I am appreciative too of the opportunity afforded to my Government in mid-August to collaborate on the first ever efforts to apply foresight methodologies in Tonga.”

Former Prime Minister, Kingdom of Tonga at the 3rd UN Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa (August 2014)
In October, the Director visited MyForesight, the foresight institute of the Government of Malaysia in Cyberjaya, Malaysia to advise on building the institute’s network across a broad spectrum of individual futurists, private think tanks and academic institutions.

In November the Centre welcomed Dr Noah Raford (Founder, Futurescaper and Advisor, Futures, Foresight & Innovation / UAE Prime Minister’s Office) to the Centre for a presentation and discussion of his projects with the UNDP in Eastern Europe and the Futurescaper platform.

“I was honoured to be able to be part of the event in Samoa as part of the SIDS conference [3rd UN Conference on Small Island Developing States], thanks to the kindness and assistance of the members of the UNDP team. I hope we can continue the Hawaii Centre’s partnership with the UNDP.”

Director, The Hawaii Research Center for Futures Studies (August 2014)

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

The Centre produced a paper, “Complexity in Small Island Developing States”, highlighting the prospects and challenges involved in applying ideas from complexity theory to reforming public service and tackling related development problems in small countries, and especially in SIDS. This was for the half-day conference on “Development on Small Islands – What does a complexity approach have to offer?” organised in April by the Centre in collaboration with the LKYSPP to consider the value of complexity-aware approaches to tackling development issues on SIDS. The conference focused on exploring the nonlinear nature of development and highlighted that there are no simple answers, even in the SIDS context. In August, at Nuku’alofa, Tonga, the Centre presented public service foresight as a complementary approach to traditional strategic planning to Ministers of the Tongan Government and CEOs of Government Ministries, who appreciated the potential of its application in the context of policy development, strategic planning and implementation.

Earlier that week, at the invitation of the Tongan Government, the Centre organized foresightXchange, a participatory foresight workshop that prototyped a facilitation tool with participants from a cross-section of Tongan civil society and public service leaders. Both sets of activities were extremely well received and are expected to substantively inform the next iteration of Tonga’s 3-year Strategic Development Framework (2015-2017). The event received co-funding from the UNDP Innovation Facility.

In September, Tonga’s former Prime Minister, Lord Tu’ivakano featured the country’s experience with foresightXchange and underscored the utility of foresight in boosting the adaptive capacity and future-readiness of public services in SIDS at a side event of the 3rd UN Conference on SIDS on “Building Resilience In SIDS through Foresight”. Apart from the Prime Minister as the host, the side event was graced by eminent speakers from the UNDP (Administrator Helen Clark), the Singapore Government (Sr. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Home Affairs, Masagos Zulkifli) and the University of Hawaii (Prof. Jim Dator).
Participatory foresight

Designed to enable collaborative foresight, the foresight explorer is a facilitation tool that provides the building blocks for modelling and exploring alternative and preferred future(s) scenarios on any policy issue. The foresight explorer’s hexagonal game cards offer an intuitive way for players to examine and discuss the connections between existing ‘values’, ‘behaviours’, and ‘structures’, their relevance for the future and the critical ‘challenges’ and ‘opportunities’ that lie ahead. The game deck also includes ‘wild cards’ (i.e. complexity, chaos, and contradictions) – as well as black swans, black elephants, and black jellyfish – to help players think through potential shocks and disruptions.

Blank cards are available in every category of game cards so that new concepts can be introduced and captured. The strength of foresight explorer lies in its inclusive and participatory game design. Successfully prototyped during the Centre’s first foresightXchange workshop in Tonga, foresight explorer was subsequently adapted by its designers for a climate change futures workshop, conducted by UNDP Macedonia. With minimal further work, the designers were able to adapt and contextualise the tool. The Tongan edition of foresight explorer is available to purchase online and readily accessible to the planning agencies that are embarking on the development of the new Tonga Strategic Development Framework.
Innovation for effectiveness

Published in May 2014, the discussion paper “Social Innovation for Public Service Excellence” identifies three important features of social innovation for public managers: first, that social innovation brings an experimental approach to public service; second, social innovation requires distributed systems where innovation and initiative are dispersed to the periphery and connected by networks; and third, citizens and service users can bring insights and assets to help public managers.

A second discussion paper, on “Design Thinking for Public Service Excellence”, published at the same time supports UNDP’s evidence-building by illustrating how design thinking approaches have contributed to solving public service challenges, and exploring its untapped potential. It also outlines forms and degrees of institutionalization of design thinking within public service administrations.

The year started with the inaugural “Activate: Singapore 2014”, a high-profile global platform organised by The Guardian newspaper that highlighted transformational changes in development. The UNDP board members and the Director participated in panel discussions and highlighted the opportunities for public service to leverage digital innovation.

In March, Dr Henry Kippin, Director of Collaborate, a leading think-tank on public sector reform in the UK, spoke on ‘Collaborative Capacity in the Public Service of Tomorrow” at a discussion hosted by the Centre. Dr Kippin suggested that the challenge for public service was to move from short-term adaptations and crisis management to a realignment of the state around a fundamentally new social, economic and political context. A discussion paper on the subject is being prepared for publication in January 2015.

In July, the Centre hosted a roundtable conversation on “Driving Radical Transformation of Public Services” where Dominic Campbell, the founder of FutureGov (an influential civil service reform consultancy), showcased digital and design approaches being used as drivers for radical transformation in public services. He drew on examples from FutureGov’s work in UK and Australia, and with UNDP in Albania, Georgia, and Macedonia to show how design thinking can introduce innovations in public service.
In October, the Director chaired the international jury of senior public service professionals, representing a wide range of Commonwealth countries, for the 2014 Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM) International Innovations Awards. Presented as the finale of the 2014 CAPAM Biennial Conference at Putrajaya, Malaysia, these prestigious international prizes recognize and celebrate innovation in public service and are awarded to projects and initiatives from the Commonwealth in four categories.

The Centre has won the agreement of the UN and CAPAM to research into the impact of projects that have won innovation awards. This research will examine the sustainability of award-winning innovations, and consider how awards programmes could be strengthened to enhance the impact of innovation in the public sector.
November also saw delegates from national and sub-national level governments in Bhutan, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, as well as colleagues from UNDP Country Offices attending a workshop on action learning, facilitated by Dr Clive Kinder of the Commonwealth Business School. The workshop examined ways in which action learning, or ‘learning by doing’, could support better implementation of government strategy, with a focus on the needs of public service reform and improving the performance of civil servants.

“My sincere thanks to the excellent team at GCPSE for the rewarding three days spent at the Centre. The discussions on the proposed Goal 16 for the post 2015 framework and the challenge of measurement provided a useful update for many of us working in the field. The cutting-edge, new and innovative tools and methods introduced to participants … were very exciting and we could try to bring these into our work with government partners.”

Assistant Country Director and Head, Democratic Governance, UNDP India (November 2014)
For me the most important aspect of the foresightXchange workshop was to see collaboration in action between the different public service institutions. It enabled us to take into consideration diverse points of view and leverage on the experience of people on the ground.

— Deputy Head of the Strategy and Policy Unit, Office of the President, Rwanda (October 2014)

**Imihigo and a fund for the future**

As a follow-up to the Rwanda foresightXchange, UNDP Rwanda is supporting the Government in the design of an Innovation Facility that is anchored in the Government performance management scheme *Imihigo* (plural of *Umuhigo*, which in Kinyarwandan means “to vow to deliver”) and based on a model successfully used by Singapore’s Reinvestment Fund. *Imihigo* forms the basis of performance contracts for public service staff in Rwanda.

The Government of Singapore had introduced a system of across-the-board budget extractions from departments’ budgets as “reinvestment dividends” to build a reinvestment fund that is then reallocated to finance promising new initiatives. The extraction rate is calculated based on the total budgets and was, for instance, set at 5% for 2006. Departments then bid competitively to obtain funding for new projects and all bids must address the common goals and priority areas identified for that year, be cross-sectoral, promote inter-agency collaboration, be innovative, and in line with the Whole-of-Government approach.

UNDP Rwanda has offered to support the design of the facility for Rwanda. The result of the process is meant to be presented at the next Leadership Retreat of the Government of Rwanda in March 2015 for adoption and integration in *Imihigo* for a launch during the next budget cycle.
In April, at an event organised jointly with the NUS Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Dr Claire Smith of the University of York presented a paper on “Accounting for Endings to Mass Violence in Southeast Asia: Military, Civilian and International Models Compared”. Dr Smith’s research challenged the notion that liberal endings to mass violence have more success in establishing long-run stability and peace rather than outright military victories or mediated states created by political patronage networks and bargains.

The Centre supported a wide range of Country Offices (COs) from all regions in response to requests for assistance for technical insight, detailed inputs and expert referrals, including Algeria, Bahrain, Belarus, Bhutan, Ethiopia, India, Jamaica, Myanmar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. These interactions also help evidence building and knowledge sharing processes.

In August, the Centre hosted a Bhutanese parliamentary delegation, including Secretaries General from both houses of Bhutan’s Parliament, and facilitated a study-visit to Singapore’s Parliament.

A group of eminent Commissioners serving on the Malawi Public Service Reform Commission visited the Centre in September and participated in a programme on public service reform delivered by the Singapore Civil Service College. The visits were requested by the COs in Bhutan and Malawi and organised in coordination with the Country Office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The Centre made a presentation on trends in public administration reform and predominant reform models, highlighting the need for a highly context-specific approach to reform and the “developmental state” model (e.g. Singapore) at the Institute for Monitoring of Current Legislation in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Shortly after, the Centre presented itself at an international conference organised by the Regional Hub of Civil Service (ACSH) in Astana, Kazakhstan, followed by an agreement on an expansion of the collaboration between the Centre and the Regional Hub (covering mainly Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States).

In December, the Centre welcomed back Ryan Orange, Deputy Commissioner in the State Services Commission of New Zealand, to share his experiences of public sector reform in New Zealand and making services more citizen centred. His presentation to Singaporean public servants at
the Civil Services College was well received, as was his contribution to the workshop on “Performance Assessment of Civil Servants: International Experiences and Vietnam’s Practices” in Hanoi, Vietnam. Mr. Orange’s visit and the mission to Hanoi were organised at the request of the Vietnam Ministry of Home Affairs and the Vietnam CO.

**Thinker-Practitioners at the Centre**

The Centre appointed the following Emeritus Fellows in 2014:

- Mark Robinson, until recently head of Governance at DFID visited the Centre in April. His discussion paper “From Old Public Administration to the New Public Service: Implications for Public Sector Reform in Developing Countries” will be published in early 2015.
- Dr Munawwar Alam, a former senior Pakistani civil servant and adviser to the Commonwealth Secretariat on local government gave a seminar at the Institute of South Asian Studies at NUS. His discussion paper on “Integrating Decentralisation with Civil Service Reforms” is also being published in 2015.
- Dr Henry Kippin, Executive Director of Collaborate, gave a talk at the Centre in March. His paper on “Collaborative Capacity in the Public Services: Towards a Framework for Practice” will be published in February 2015.
- Cyrus Rustomjee, formerly South Africa’s Executive Director at the IMF and the World Bank, accompanied the Malawian Presidential Public Service Reform Commission delegation to the Centre in September, and contributed to the Public Service Excellence and the Post-2015 Development Agenda workshop and the Rwanda foresightXchange.

Shakeel Ahmad (UNDP Pakistan) visited in November to develop his research on “Institutional Integrity in Pakistan’s National Highways & Motorway Police”. The Centre commissioned a comparative study into the role of the public service in addressing urban inequality through nine country case studies (including Colombia, Ethiopia, Haiti, Honduras, India, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mozambique and South Africa). A revised analytical framework will enable publication in 2015.
The Centre, with the Administrator’s agreement, accepted the request to produce recommendations for improving leadership in the 21st Century. A chapter for a book on the topic, in honour of the 70th and 50th anniversary of the deaths of the two founding fathers of the United Nations10, and a high-profile conference to be hosted by the Centre in Singapore is planned for June 2015.

As part of a collaborative project with Singapore Management University (SMU), a group of SMU students produced a board game called WOGA, which stands for ‘Whole of Government Approach’. Set in a developing country context, the game illustrates how actors within a bureaucracy negotiate among themselves to solve complex problems.

WOGA promotes awareness of important public service challenges and immerses players in a realistic experience of collaboration and negotiation. Up to 6 players can play at a time and their goal is to solve problems and collect reputational credit points. Players often find themselves bound by limited resources and motivated to collaborate with other players, which creates the central tension of the game. The WOGA game was officially released at a symposium organised by SMU, where it generated much interest and excitement among the students present - with several staying back to actually play the game.
Partnerships

The Centre deepened organisational partnerships in the interest of securing sustainability and ensuring continued quality output. These include:

- **Funding partnerships**: building on the agreement with the OECD’s DAC to form a co-secretariat for the Effective Institutions Platform (EIP), further relationships with donors are being developed;
- **Event partnerships**: expanding its growing network with highly regarded institutions;
- **Research partnerships**: formalising research partnerships with experts and academics and developing novel evidence building approaches;
- **Informal partnerships** that strengthen our evidence building and convening hub functions, and facilitate South-South and trilateral knowledge sharing.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of organisation</th>
<th>Type of Partnership</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Astana Regional Hub of Civil Service, Kazakhstan</td>
<td>Event partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Agence Française de Développement (AFD), France</td>
<td>Research partner</td>
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<td>3. Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Secretariat, Singapore</td>
<td>Event partner</td>
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<td>4. Asian Development Bank (ADB), Philippines</td>
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<td>5. Bertelsmann Foundation, Germany</td>
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<td>6. Centre for Liveable Cities, Singapore</td>
<td>Event partner</td>
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<td>7. Centre for Postnormal Policy and Futures Studies (CPPFS) / East-West University, United States</td>
<td>Event &amp; research partner</td>
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<td>8. Centre for Strategic Futures / Prime Minister’s Office, Singapore</td>
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<td>9. Civil Service College International, Singapore</td>
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<td>10. Cognitive Edge, United Kingdom</td>
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<td>11. Collaborate, United Kingdom</td>
<td>Event &amp; research partner</td>
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<td>12. Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM), United Kingdom and Canada</td>
<td>Event partner</td>
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<td>13. Commonwealth Business School, United Kingdom</td>
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<td>14. Design Public / Center for Knowledge Societies (CKS), India</td>
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<td>15. Developmental Leadership Programme (DLP), United Kingdom</td>
<td>Event &amp; research partner</td>
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<td>16. Division for Public Administration and Development Management, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, United States</td>
<td>Event partner</td>
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<td>17. Effective Institutions Platform (EIP), France</td>
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<td>18. Future-Moves Group, Singapore</td>
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<td>19. FutureGov, United Kingdom</td>
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<td>20. Futurescaper, United Kingdom</td>
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<td>21. GSDRC / University of Birmingham, United Kingdom</td>
<td>Research partner</td>
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<td>22. Hawaii Research Center for Futures Studies (HRCFS) / University of Hawaii, United States</td>
<td>Event &amp; research partner</td>
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<td>Housing Development Board (HDB), Singapore</td>
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<td>Institute for Monitoring of Current Legislation, Uzbekistan</td>
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<td>Institute for South Asian Studies (ISAS) / NUS, Singapore</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Institute for Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore</td>
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<td>Institute for State Organisation Science, Vietnam</td>
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<td>Institute on Governance, Canada</td>
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<td>Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), United States</td>
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<td>International Centre for Tax and Development (ICTD), United Kingdom</td>
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<td>International Organisation Office, Economic Development Board (EDB), Singapore</td>
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<td>KPMG, United States</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) / Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Chile</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) / NUS, Singapore</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>Lien Centre for Social Innovation / SMU, Singapore</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>Middle East Institute (MEI) / NUS, Singapore</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>Nanyang Business School / NTU, Singapore</td>
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<td>Nanyang Centre for Public Administration (NCPA) / NTU, Singapore</td>
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<td>NESTA, United Kingdom</td>
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<td>OECD Development Co-operation Directorate (OECD-DAC), France</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>Prime Minister’s Office, Tonga</td>
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<td>Public Service Division / Prime Minister’s Office, Singapore</td>
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<td>Public Utilities Board (PUB), Singapore</td>
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<td>Research Department / World Bank, United States</td>
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<td>Rwanda Governance Board (RGB), Rwanda</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>School of International Foresight (SoIF), United Kingdom</td>
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<td>SCOPE Group, Malaysia</td>
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<td>Singapore Management University (SMU), Singapore</td>
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<td>UK Department for International Development (DFID), United Kingdom</td>
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<td>UN Association, Singapore</td>
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<td>UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), United States</td>
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<td>UN Staff College, Italy</td>
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<td>UNDP Global Policy Centre Seoul, Republic of Korea</td>
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<td>UNDP Pacific Centre, Fiji</td>
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<td>UNDP Regional Centre for Africa, Ethiopia</td>
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<td>UNDP Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific, Thailand</td>
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<td>UNDP Regional Centre for Eastern Europe and the CIS, Turkey</td>
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<td>Union Civil Service Board, Myanmar</td>
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<td>Urban Regeneration Authority (URA), Singapore</td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>USAID, United States</td>
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Partnerships with other Global Policy Centres

The Centre has initiated collaborations with other Global Policy Centres. The UNDP Seoul Policy Centre for Global Development Partnerships and the Centre were jointly represented at the UN Public Service Day and Award Ceremony (Seoul, 23-26 June 2014) where the Director spoke on Public Service Excellence.

The two Centres have also initiated their research collaboration as researchers at the Korea Institute for Public Administration (KIPA) are now working on a study on the Public Administration Reforms in Korea. In January 2015, the Seoul Centre is hosting the Seoul Debates on Anti-Corruption – an international dialogue among scholars and practitioners to share lessons learned from anticorruption policies in Korea, Singapore and other countries. The Centre is facilitating the Singaporean Government’s contribution and will be presenting at the event.

The Centre also recently welcomed to Singapore a colleague from the RIO+ Centre for Sustainable Development for conversations on possible collaboration.
Outreach & media

This year the Centre:

• Published discussion papers on: design thinking, social innovation, foresight, public servants motivation, complexity in small islands in “brief-summary-full paper” formats, targeting thinker-practitioners in the development sector, academics and senior management in public services;
• Published proceedings of e-discussions and consultations;
• Published newsletters and posted blogs, reflecting the Centre’s activities, approaches and positions;
• Developed a corporate design identity and promotional material;
• Hosted meetings, seminars, roundtable discussions, workshops and conferences; and
• Launched social media channels and maintaining the Centre’s presence and output on the UNDP website, Teamworks, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

The Director addressed:

• The UNDESA’s UN Public Service Day and Forum annual conference in Seoul, South Korea;
• The “ASEAN Good Governance Forum” organised by the Union Civil Service Board and UNDP Myanmar at Yangon;
• The “International Symposium on Excellence in Public Service / Public Administration”, convened in New Delhi by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India in collaboration with UNDP India, In October. The aim of the symposium was to showcase global best practices in public administration and public service delivery;
• The Global Economic Symposium on “Consensus Building in Transformation Processes”, which was jointly organised in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia by the Kiel Institute for the World Economy and the Bertelsmann Foundation;
• The Sarawak State Annual Public Service Conference on "Innovation in Public Service", held in Kuching, Malaysia.
• The Director helped launch the “Young Spikes Integrated Competition” at the “Festival of Creativity” in Singapore in September. Participants
aged 28 and under from the advertising and creative industries were asked to enhance and enrich the International Anti-Corruption Day (IACD) campaign to engage and inspire a younger audience, and their submissions met this challenge exceptionally well. UNDP will now consider using some of these ideas in future IACD campaigns.

The Director wrote the ‘Foreword’ to the book “Governance for Development: Towards Excellence in Global Public Service”, that was jointly produced by DESA, GCPSE and Nexus Strategic Partnerships (London) and launched at the UN Public Administration Network Forum held in Seoul, South Korea in June 2014.

The Deputy Director presented the keynote address at the United Nations Association of Singapore’s “Model UN Preparatory Conference” in December, where an auditorium full of future change-makers heard about key issues like corruption, urbanization and public service excellence. An overview of the Centre’s work with various stakeholders, including its collaboration with country offices such as UNDP in Rwanda to help countries develop national capacities, kept the students enthusiastically engaged.

**Mobilisation and representation:**

The Director and Deputy Director joined the new Effective Institutions Platform (EIP) Advisory Group and represented UNDP at its Annual Meeting, held at OECD Headquarters in October. After lengthy negotiations, the GCPSE and OECD-DAC successfully agreed to a significant deepening of this partnership. The Centre will form the EIP co-secretariat with OECD-DAC and receive significant funding to carry out work aligned to its existing mandate (first until June 2015, with a possible extension beyond). The November workshop hosted at the Centre on “Public Service Excellence and the Post-2015 Development Agenda” was the first event organised jointly by the EIP and the Centre which received significant funding support from the EIP.

The Centre’s Director was awarded the inaugural Amartya Sen Prize at Yale University. The Director addressed the related conference, as did Professors Amartya Sen and Jeffrey Sachs.
Promoting Public Service Excellence in 2015:

The Centre will support of the UNDP Strategic Plan, the BPPS Strategy paper on governance, and other corporate priorities. This is likely to include deepening awareness of the importance of public service in work on:

- **Sustainable Development Goal 16** which aims to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”;

- States and societies in **transition from conflict** situations;

- **Inequality**, specifically urban inequality, and the role of public service in its alleviation;

- The challenges of public service in **Middle Income Countries**;

- **Public-private-partnerships** and collaborative capacity;

- **Fairness, trust and legitimacy** in the public sphere;

- **Political settlements** and **public administration reform**;

- **Anti-Corruption** efforts;

- The specific challenges of **Small Island Developing States and Small States**;

- Making **Cities** and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable - in line with SDG Goal 11.
Management of the Centre

Mark Robinson, until recently head of Governance at DFID, at the Director’s request undertook an informal review of the work of the Centre. His recommendations, such as on improving access to academic journals, have been actioned.

**Staffing**

The Centre’s current staff strength stands at 11, along with various part-time, project-specific consultants. A Senior Foresight Adviser (consultancy position) and a Junior Professional Officer (UNDP staff position) are joining the team in early 2015, to add further experience and capacity.

**Board meeting 2015**

On 23 January 2014, the 3rd Board Meeting of the Centre was co-chaired by Mr. Magdy Martínez-Solimán, UNDP’s Assistant Administrator and Director, BPPS, and Ms. Vanessa Chan, Director-General, International Organisations Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Singapore. The Board commended the Centre for progress achieved. 2015 marks the end of the first phase of the partnership between UNDP and the Government of Singapore.
I am deeply grateful for the continuing excellent guidance and enthusiastic support we receive from the Government of Singapore; from UNDP colleagues in New York, Kuala Lumpur and Country Offices, Regional Centres, and other Global Policy Centres; from our independent board member from Rwanda; and from all the current and former employees, advisors, consultants, interns and volunteers who have all contributed enormously to the success of the Centre to date.

**Acknowledgements**

*Things fall apart; the Centre cannot hold;*
*Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,*
*The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere*
*The ceremony of innocence is drowned;*
*The best lack all conviction, while the worst*
*Are full of passionate intensity.*

(from ‘The Second Coming’ by W. B. Yeats)