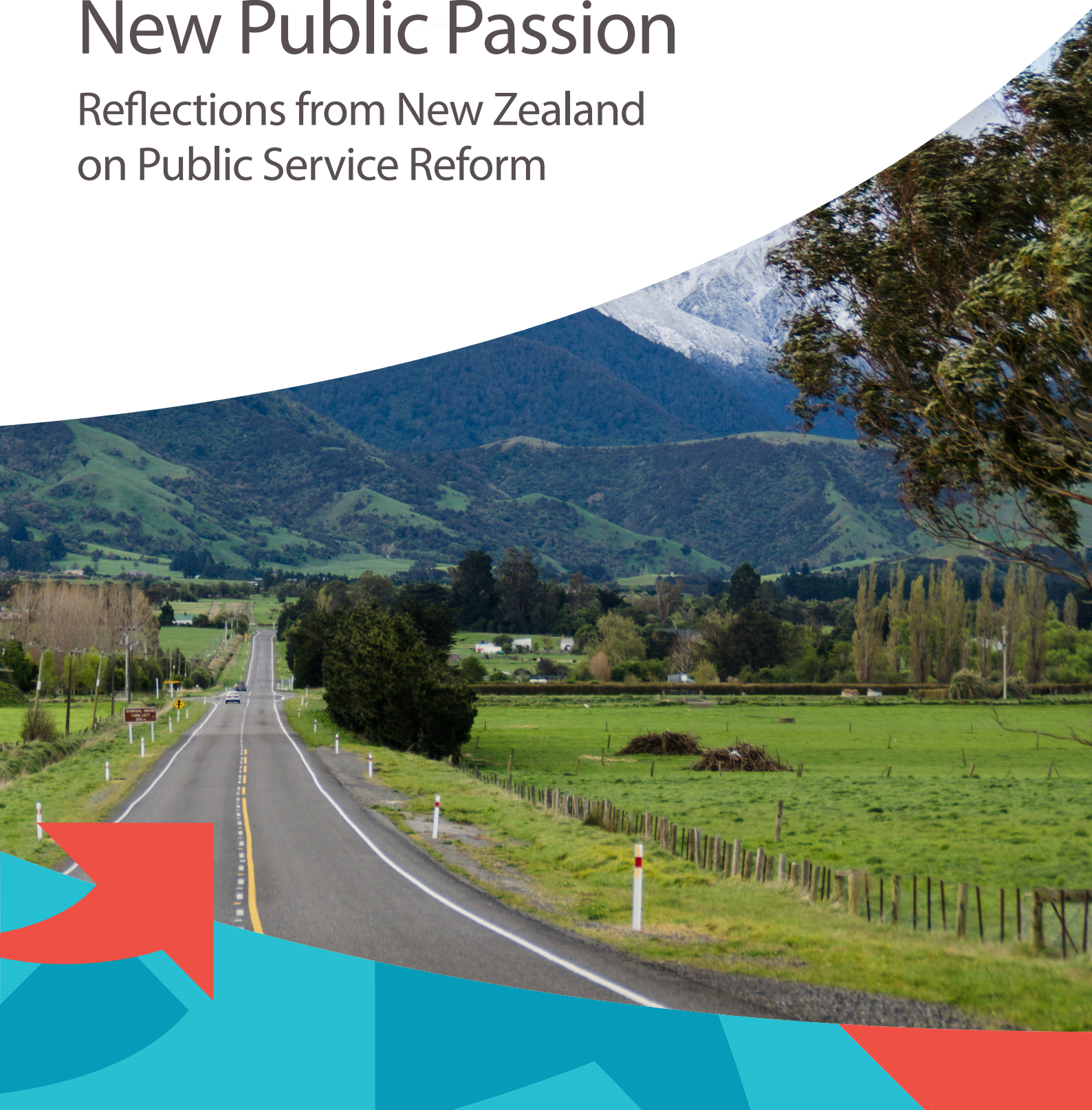


# New Public Passion

Reflections from New Zealand  
on Public Service Reform



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#### **Cover image**

 Tom Hall / *Long road in to Kaikoura*

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## Foreword

I first had the pleasure of meeting the author of this paper, Ryan Orange, many years ago when I was Director of the Governance Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat and I was asked to sit on the jury for public service innovation in the Commonwealth. Ryan, then Deputy State Services Commissioner of New Zealand, chaired the meeting with considerable good humour, insight and competence.

Since moving to Singapore to lead the UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence, I have been delighted to invite Ryan to support the work of the Centre and his contribution has been invaluable. His enthusiasm for public service reform and achieving better results for the public is infectious. His phrase 'New Public Passion', as a neat summation of the dedication and commitment of most public officials to the welfare of the citizens they serve, as well as an appropriate parody of 'New Public Management' that has done so much damage to public administration around the world, has caught widespread attention. Its time has come.

In this discussion paper, he argues that too many civil services around the world focus narrowly on motivating their staff with the promise of rewards and the threat of punishment:

*Intrinsic motivation is important for civil service performance and is essential to dynamism. Dynamism – the ability to adapt at pace to respond to rapid change – is essential for the civil service required in a complex and fast-changing world. If you are working on reform and not thinking explicitly about harnessing the intrinsic motivation of civil servants, you are not heading for the right destination and may be undermining the likelihood of sustainable change.*

As Helen Clark, the Administrator of UNDP, has observed:

*The 'New Public Passion' emphasizes that officials need to be empowered, and to feel empowered, to do what they joined the public service for in the first place, namely to serve citizens. This 'New Public Passion' seeks to nurture high job satisfaction by ensuring that all civil servants feel directly engaged in improving the lives of their fellow citizens.*

Ryan's paper provides an invaluable guide for putting the concept into action. This will empower public servants everywhere to give their best in serving their populations. The message is therefore an important one for promoting the successful implementation of the '2030 Agenda' for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Max Everest-Phillips**  
**Director, UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence**



## 1. Introduction

In a complex and rapidly changing world, delivering and sustaining significant improvements in public services are critical to quality of life and sustainable development. Public service reform is being pursued with mixed results in a great range of jurisdictions to respond to this changing environment. Drawing on the experience of reform in New Zealand and engagement with other jurisdictions' reform endeavours, this paper seeks to identify what is universal and what is contextually unique about public service reform. It then proposes to identify approaches in order to strengthen the chances of successful reform.

Section two of the paper focuses on the idea of New Public Passion and the importance of intrinsic motivation to sustainable reform. The statements that intrinsic motivation matters, that we will try harder if we feel we are doing the right thing, that we will be more engaged if we find our work interesting and that we will be more passionate about the pursuit of our values – do not appear to be controversial. The very idea of public service is a call to intrinsic values of service to our community.<sup>1</sup> However, the importance of intrinsic motivation is being underestimated or ignored in civil service reform all over the world. Too often, we fool ourselves into believing that extrinsic motivation, such as the promise of rewards and the threat of punishment – through compliance and accountability – are enough and that intrinsic

***“Intrinsic motivation is important for civil service performance and is essential to dynamism”***

motivation is not reliable and therefore cannot be systematized. Intrinsic motivation is important for civil service performance and is essential to dynamism. Dynamism, which is the ability to adapt at pace in order to respond to rapid change, is essential for the civil service in a complex and fast-changing world. Those working on reform need to be thinking explicitly about harnessing the intrinsic motivation of civil servants; otherwise, they will not be heading in the right direction and will undermine the likelihood of sustainable change.

While intrinsic motivation is critically important, it is only one aspect of sustainable reform. Section three sets out key lessons from reform experience to identify what else is required for successful and sustainable reform. This section emphasizes the importance of the Reform Moment and the need for reform to be sharply focussed. A Reform Moment requires a clear change gap, change readiness, a trigger opportunity or crisis, and reform leadership. A Reform Moment must arise or be created before it is worth attempting genuine reform. For the reform to succeed, it also needs a specific focus, as it is necessary to pick a few things that are important. After this, it is necessary to get on the path to reform, to get the right mandate/s, to announce one's

1. This paper does not make a distinction between Public Service Motivation (PSM) and intrinsic motivation. The core dimensions of PSM – compassion, civic duty, self-sacrifice and attraction to public policymaking – are treated here as integral to rather than as separate from intrinsic motivation. For clarity, 'recognition' is considered in this paper to be an extrinsic motivator that is given as a reward or withheld as a punishment.

intent, to move at pace and to adapt during the process. While there are universal challenges, the experience of reform in every jurisdiction is unique; section three works through the example of New Zealand's Better Public Services reforms and looks at the potential to apply these lessons to Papua New Guinea's 2016 Reform Moment. From the New Zealand Reform experience, this paper draws three conclusions: 1) do not try to fix everything at once; 2) do not focus on the things that cannot be changed directly in this Reform Moment; and 3) do not ignore intrinsic motivation.

### 1.1 The goal: sustainable development depends on effective public services

Effective civil services are critical to sustaining and improving the quality of life of communities around the world.<sup>2</sup> Civil services exist to ensure that governments today and in the future can be supported in effective decision-making and in the execution of those decisions, including the delivery of services to the public. While there are many ways of describing the essential characteristics of an effective civil service, this paper will use the simple, but expansive trinity of trust, responsiveness and dynamism. A civil service should be trusted by the politicians and the people it serves to act with integrity and to deliver on its commitments. A civil service should be responsive to the demands and requests of decision-makers for policy, regulatory and service delivery constancy or change. A civil service needs to be dynamic in order to ensure that it can respond to current and future changes in expectations about what and how it delivers for decision makers and citizens. A civil service that is trusted but not responsive will not be trusted for long. A civil service that is responsive but not dynamic will not be responsive for long. A civil service that is dynamic but not responsive and trusted is failing to deliver on its purpose to exist.

A trusted, responsive and dynamic civil service underpins the ability of a state to deliver on the needs and wants of its citizens. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) articulate the core development needs of countries, including eliminating poverty, protecting the environment, strengthening communities and providing access to work, education and health services, and gender equality.<sup>3</sup> The SDGs cannot be achieved without effective civil services.<sup>4</sup>

Fortunately, in a complex, interconnected and rapidly changing world, the quality of civil service that a country has is still largely under the control of the citizens and their leaders, as a UNDP mission to Papua New Guinea in January 2016 made particularly apparent. Papua New Guinea is 158th on the Human Development Index.<sup>5</sup> It is a land of great opportunity and challenge and has unfortunately not been able to deliver on

2. This paper focuses on the role of the civil service: a state's professional administration, excluding military, judiciary and elected politicians.

3. <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

4. Clark, Helen. 2015. *Achieving the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda – The Role of the Public Service*, 2015 Manion Lecture. 26 May. <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/speeches/2015/05/26/achieving-the-post-2015-sustainable-development-agenda-the-role-of-the-public-service.html>

5. Of 188 countries measured in 2015. UNDP. 2015. *Human Development Report 2015, Briefing note for countries on the 2015 Human Development Report, Papua New Guinea*. [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr\\_theme/country-notes/PNG.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/PNG.pdf)

any of its Millennium Development Goals.<sup>6</sup> It is one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world, with 840 languages<sup>7</sup> spoken by a population of more than seven million people.<sup>8</sup> It is rich in natural resources, but has very high levels of exposure to movements in international resource prices.<sup>9</sup> With a significant reliance on subsistence farming, many Papua New Guineans are at the mercy of the weather, as was seen in the drought of December 2015.<sup>10</sup>

Papua New Guinea cannot control its cultural context, global resource prices or the weather. It can, however, largely control the quality of its civil service within these constraints. It can leverage civil servants to support the decisions and implement the actions needed to improve Papua New Guinea's development and mitigate its exposure to social, economic and environmental risks over time. This paper will return to Papua New Guinea's Reform Moment opportunity towards the end.

**Figure 1: Which is the odd one out?**



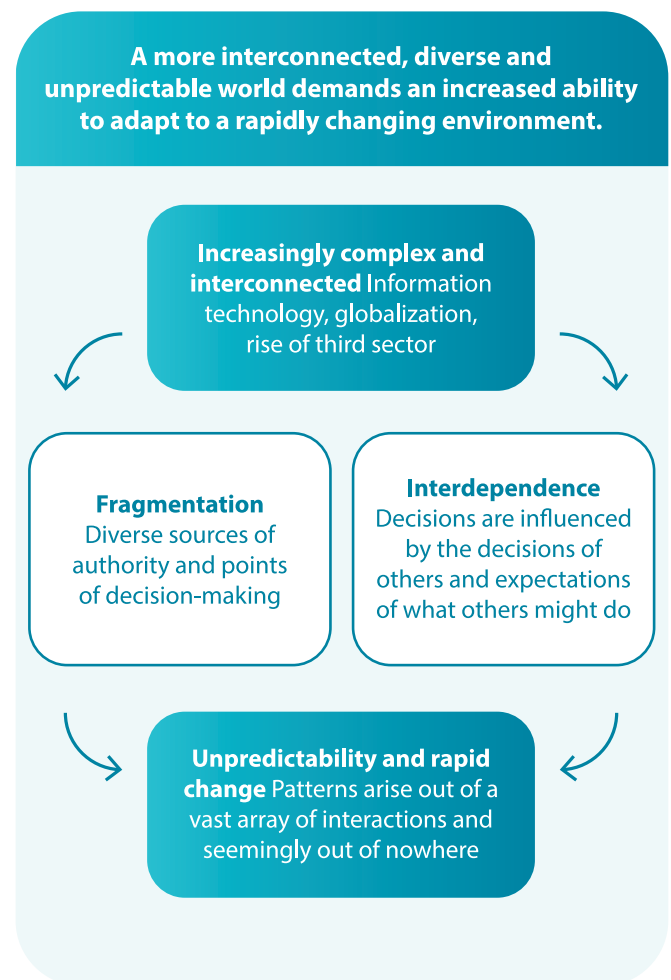
### 1.2 The challenge: change is accelerating, complexity abounds, money is short and morale is low

The challenge is that the goalposts keep shifting for the public, private and the non-profit sectors. The rate of change is accelerating in an increasingly complex globalized and interconnected world.

In a public management setting, Peter Ho has been a clear voice on this challenge. As Head of the Singaporean Civil Service in 2007, he spoke of the need for increasingly networked and experimental government to better cope with uncertainty and the speed of change to enable Singapore to “thrive in a turbulent

world”.<sup>11</sup> This idea has underpinned most recent thinking on public management systems – grouped in this paper under the collective heading of New Public Governance. A leading example of this is the New Synthesis of Public Administration work led by Jocelyne Bourgon.<sup>12</sup> The key components of the environment in which a New Synthesis is required are set out in Figure 2. In complex networks, decision-making is fragmented but interdependent, leading to unpredictability and rapid change as “patterns arise out of a vast array of interactions and seemingly out of nowhere”.<sup>13</sup>

**Figure 2: change is accelerating and complexity abounds**



6. Inter Press Service. 2015. *Papua New Guinea reckons with unmet development goals*. 27 May. [http://www.pg.undp.org/content/papua\\_new\\_guinea/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2015/05/27/papua-new-guinea-reckons-with-unmet-development-goals.html](http://www.pg.undp.org/content/papua_new_guinea/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2015/05/27/papua-new-guinea-reckons-with-unmet-development-goals.html)

7. <http://www.ethnologue.com/country/PG>

8. The 2011 census records the population as 7,275,324. <http://www.nso.gov.pg/index.php/population-and-social/other-indicators>

9. UNDP. *Human Development Report 2015, Briefing note for countries on the 2015 Human Development Report, Papua New Guinea*.

10. ReliefWeb. 2015. *Papua New Guinea: Drought and Frost – Information Bulletin*. 5 September. <http://reliefweb.int/report/papua-new-guinea/papua-new-guinea-drought-and-frost-information-bulletin>

11. Ho, Peter. 2007. *Thriving in a Turbulent World*. Opening Address at the Public Service Staff Conference, 18 September. In: Low, Donald and Kwok, Andrew (eds.) 2009. *In Time for The Future: Singapore's Heads of Civil Service on Change, Complexity and Networked Government*. Civil Service College.

12. Bourgon, Jocelyne. 2011. *A New Synthesis of Public Administration: Serving in the 21st Century*, Queen's Policy Studies.

13. Bourgon, Jocelyne. 2009. *New Governance and Public Administration: Towards a Dynamic Synthesis*. Public lecture hosted by the Australian Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra, Australia, 24 February.

If a significant increase in adaptability is required, it would be ideal to be operating in an environment with resource flexibility and an enthusiastic appetite for change. However, even as demands increase, many civil services are confronting tighter financial constraints and low levels of morale. Max Everest-Phillips argues that “morale and motivation in the public sector have collapsed in many countries across both the developed and developing worlds [...] which] represents a major obstacle to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.”<sup>14</sup> He cites as evidence an OECD report<sup>15</sup> showing that this is a “systemic problem, not just reflecting fiscal austerity, for while 58 per cent of OECD countries undertaking strict austerity measures reported a decrease in workplace commitment, so, too, did 36 per cent of ‘non-austerity’ countries.”<sup>16</sup>

For many civil servants, the world of increasing complexity and change is not a welcoming place, as they are devalued, disempowered and buffeted by change. Yet there is a pressing need for civil services that can deliver trust, responsiveness and dynamism in a world of change and complexity often while cutting costs and from a base of low morale. The Sustainable Development Goals cannot be achieved without overcoming this challenge.

## 2. New Public Passion

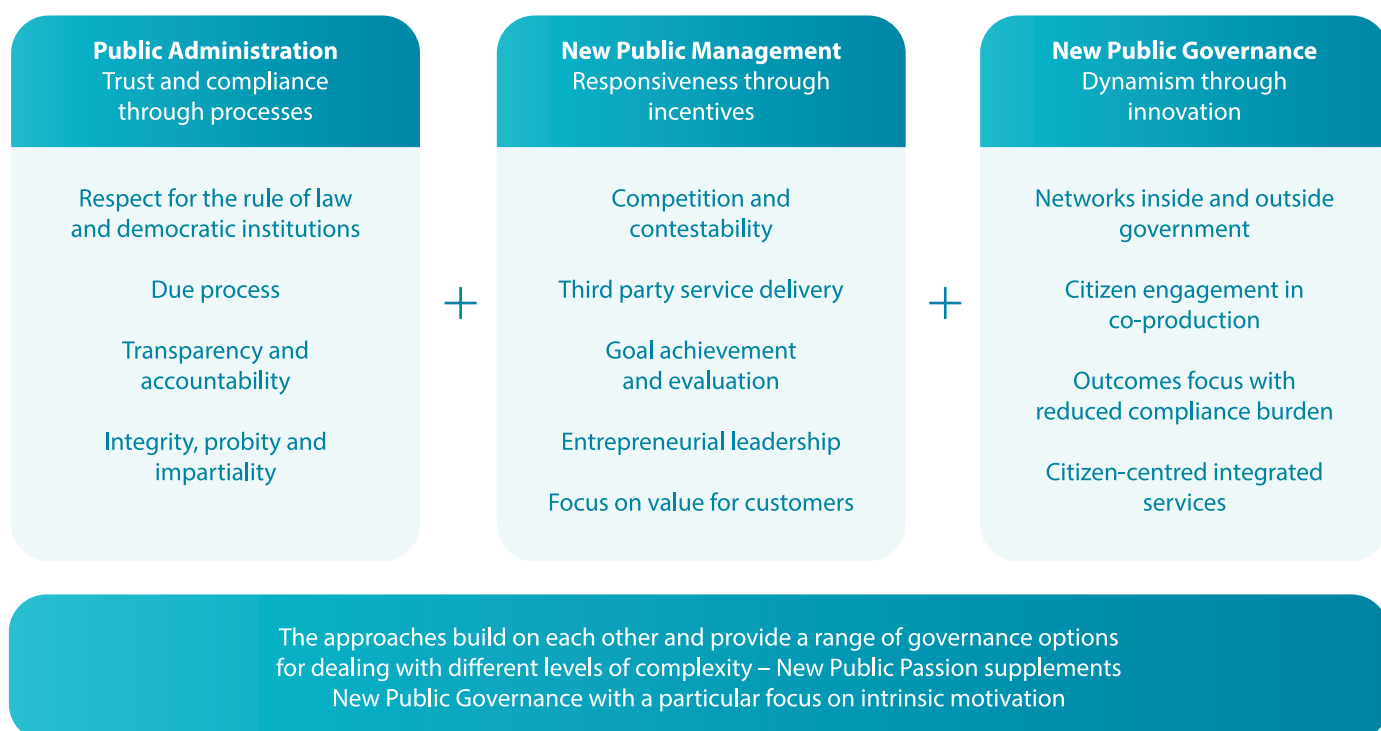
### 2.1 The toolkit: necessary, but insufficient

The obvious solution to this challenge is to employ superheroes in every seat. If every civil servant could only be trustworthy, collaborative, citizen-centred, creative, driven and brilliant, then surely this challenge would be surmounted. However, in the absence of a steady supply of superheroes, we have to rely on very ordinary civil service heroes and the quality of the public management systems they work in really matters.

The public management toolkits that we rely on were not designed for managing complexity and rapid change. The historical toolkit is necessary, but no longer sufficient. New Public Governance is attempting to bridge that gap. It will succeed only if it harnesses intrinsic motivation and builds New Public Passion.

It is no coincidence that three major approaches to public management of the past 100 years – Public Administration, New Public Management and New Public Governance – are centred on the three central goals of trust, responsiveness and dynamism. Figure 3 draws on Stephen Osborne’s discussion of

**Figure 3: The toolkit**



14. Everest-Phillips, Max. 2015. *The power of 'new public passion'*. The Strait Times. November 5. <http://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/the-power-of-new-public-passion>

15. Demmke, Christoph. 2014. *Public Administration Reform and reform effects in Western Europe*. SIGMA. <http://www.slideshare.net/SIGMA2013/presentation-by-dr-christoph-demmke-oecd>; and Demmke, Christoph, Moilanen, Timo. 2013. *Governmental Transformation and the Future of Public Employment: The Impact of Restructuring on Status Development in the Central Administration of the EU-27*. Peter Lang.

16. Everest-Phillips. *The power of 'new public passion'*.



the three regimes to make the case that they build on each other and provide a range of governance options for dealing with different levels of complexity.<sup>17</sup>

The values established by Public Administration remain the lifeblood of an effective civil service. Integrity, professionalism, merit-based appointment and political neutrality take different forms in different contexts, but any jurisdiction that does not have a clear and consistent approach to these issues is in trouble. New Zealand is able to draw on 100 years of largely fulsome and consistent application of these values and, as a result, it is the only non-Scandinavian country to appear consistently in the top four countries with the lowest perceived corruption.<sup>18</sup> Effective Public Administration builds trust, and trust is critical.

Public Administration relied on the power of intrinsic motivation from the start – seeking an alignment with these values in its appointments and largely relying on voluntary compliance with codes of conduct in a pre-digital world where actions were harder to audit. But that passion for service was, and is, often channelled into routine compliance activities where the enforcement of rules and the tyranny of process supersede real service to citizens.

The primary motivation becomes one of compliance or, even worse, of self-preservation in the face of the forces of change. If change is accelerating and the civil service is rigid rather than adaptable, responsiveness is bound to suffer. Without responsiveness to political decision makers and citizens, the civil service is not serving.

Enter New Public Management. New Public Management addresses shortcomings in responsiveness through a central focus on accountability. What gets measured, gets done – and, if accountability for delivery is clearly assigned and incentives for performance aligned, then responsiveness will follow. As a result, New Public Management tends to favour competition and clarity of focus over collaboration and joint responsibility. New Zealand is a classic example of its implementation, where sharp accountability have driven high levels of responsiveness on complicated issues, but not the stewardship and dynamism required to ensure long-term delivery on complex issues where sole accountability cannot be assigned.<sup>19</sup> Extrinsic motivation is king, with performance incentives aligned to clear accountabilities and key performance indicators.

New Public Management is a powerful tool for improving performance, but it struggles to provide a framework for effectively addressing rapid change in a complex interdependent environment. New Public Governance seeks to address this shortcoming by harnessing networks inside and outside of government to enable dynamic responses to complex issues. New Public Governance emphasizes an outcome focus with a reduced compliance burden, the integration of citizen services, and citizen engagement in the coproduction of services.<sup>20</sup>

New Public Governance recognizes a greater role for intrinsic motivation as a force for enhancing public value,<sup>21</sup> strengthening coproduction<sup>22</sup> and triggering innovation.<sup>23</sup> There remains, however, a significant risk of underplaying the critical role of intrinsic motivation in achieving adaptability. Particularly in environments where the public discourse on public service bureaucracy is focused on waste- and cost-cutting, attempts to implement New Public Governance-style reforms may continue to exclusively rely on extrinsic incentives and measures to drive change. Or, as was the case in New Zealand, decades of New Public Management practices can make it challenging for institutions and leaders to harness intrinsic motivation beyond the boundaries of an individual agency.

The standard public management toolkit is necessary, but not sufficient and New Public Passion is an attempt to bridge the motivational gap to enable sustainable dynamism in a complex and rapidly changing environment.

## 2.2 The idea: intrinsic motivation really matters

New Public Passion involves harnessing the intrinsic motivation of public servants to improve performance. It explicitly focuses on the role of motivation in New Public Governance and seeks to rebalance the use of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in improving civil service delivery. The central message is that intrinsic motivation really matters – as much as professionalism, accountability and networks. As noted in the introduction to this paper, this message risks assertion of a simple truism – that what people care about impacts on what gets done – but the idea is critically important, given the tendency for civil service reform efforts to take for granted or to ignore intrinsic motivation at a time when its importance is increasing.

*“New Public Passion (...) seeks to rebalance the use of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in improving civil service delivery”*

Focusing primarily on accountability and managerialism, our public management systems rely too much on extrinsic motivation. The alignment of incentives to drive extrinsic motivation is a critical tool for improving performance, but will work best in partnership with the alignment of values to harness intrinsic motivation. This is to some extent recognized in the greater emphasis placed on ‘performance management’ in the civil services of a range of countries over the past decade. But many performance management systems rely too much on formality and accountability at the cost of seeking insights into

17. Osborne, Stephen P. 2010. *The New Public Governance? Emerging perspectives on the theory and practice of public governance*. Routledge.

18. Transparency International, *Corruption Perceptions Index*, <http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview>

19. New Zealand Government. 2011. *Better Public Services Advisory Group Report*. November. [https://www.ssc.govt.nz/sites/all/files/bps-report-nov2011\\_0.pdf](https://www.ssc.govt.nz/sites/all/files/bps-report-nov2011_0.pdf)

20. Osborne, Stephen P. *The New Public Governance? Emerging perspectives on the theory and practice of public governance*.

21. Bryson, J. M., Crosby, B. C. and Bloomberg, L. 2014. *Public Value Governance: Moving Beyond Traditional Public Administration and the New Public Management*. *Public Administration Review*. 74(4): 445–456. DOI: 10.1111/puar.12238

22. Pestoff, V., Brandsen, T. and Verschuere, B. (eds.) 2011. *New Public Governance, the Third Sector and Co-production*. Routledge.

23. Daglio, M., Gerson D., Kitchen H. 2014. *Building Organisational Capacity for Public Sector Innovation*. Background Paper prepared for the OECD Conference “Innovating the Public Sector: from Ideas to Impact”. Paris, 12-13 November.

what motivates an individual. Public service is often a calling as well as a career.<sup>24</sup> High levels of intrinsic motivation are the public services' natural advantage, but that advantage needs to be encouraged and stewarded or it is lost.<sup>25</sup>

Harnessing intrinsic motivation enables dynamic and adaptive civil servants to respond to increasing change and complexity. While not every civil service role has to be an empowered decision maker or a change agent, these skill sets are increasingly required for every role that matters. With the increasing ability to digitize and automate rules-based services, the future role of frontline staff will be to exercise discretion and to respond to the complex needs of citizens. With new technology and increased expectations driving continuous change to business models, managers need to be change managers, not just overseers of standardized delivery.

In environments with constrained resources and low morale, more effectively harnessing intrinsic motivation is a critical lever for maintaining performance during periods of change. Too often, reforms are implemented without any real effort to engage civil servants in the drivers or benefits of reform in a language they can understand or through the lens of values they can relate to.

Reform is ultimately not sustainable if it does not understand and design around the motivation of public servants. Successful reform is dependent on the performance of civil servants and sustained performance is dependent on engagement and motivation. New Public Passion is not a brand new idea, but a timely drawing together of important thinking about the link between motivation and performance in a public service context. In addition to practical experience, the idea is based on well-established theory and the direction of private sector thinking about how to respond to the changing nature of the global marketplace.

It draws on Public Service Motivation and seeks to build the lessons from this body of research into the heart of public management models. James Perry defines Public Service Motivation (PSM) as "an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions".<sup>26</sup> He identifies motives that are characteristic of PSM as including attraction to public policymaking, commitment to the public interest, civic duty, social justice, self-sacrifice and compassion.<sup>27</sup> Perry's measurement methodology has laid the foundation for empirical analysis of the importance of PSM.<sup>28</sup> Perry's own 2010 review of 20 years of PSM research argues that the studies indicate

that high PSM improves the attraction, selection and retention of individuals as civil servants, that PSM matters for performance (but that there is more evidence of this at the institutional rather than the individual level) and that high PSM has an inverse relationship with preference for monetary rewards.<sup>29</sup>

PSM research has shown a link between having a mission of public good, reform and effective transformational leadership. Wright found that "the importance of an organization's mission increases employee work motivation in the public sector by making the job more important, even after controlling for the effect of performance-related extrinsic rewards".<sup>30</sup> Moynihan and Pandey's research indicates that red tape and length of organizational membership are negatively related to PSM, whereas hierarchical authority and reform efforts have a positive relationship. They conclude that "public organizations have both an opportunity and a responsibility to create an environment that allows employees to feel they are contributing to the public good".<sup>31</sup> Together, Wright, Moynihan and Pandey concluded that "given both the public service orientation of public organization missions and the attractiveness of such goals to many public employees, public sector transformational leaders may be in a better position to activate the higher order needs of their employees, and to encourage them to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the organization and its clientele".<sup>32</sup>

While the public sector has a potential advantage in motivating organizational-level performance and change, it is less clear that there is a substantial difference in the importance of individual intrinsic motivation between the public and private sectors. Houston drew on US General Social Survey data to conclude that "public employees are more likely to place a higher value on the intrinsic reward of work that is important and provides a feeling of accomplishment, and they are less likely to place a high value on such extrinsic reward motivators as high income and short work hours" compared to private sector employees.<sup>33</sup> However, Frank and Lewis, using 1989 and 1998 General Social Survey data, found that the differences in a range of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards between the public and private sectors did not approach statistical significance. This led to the unsurprising conclusion that an interesting job that allows one to help others, and a strong desire for job security appeared to increase the probability that one will put in extra effort and that the size of the effect appeared to be about the same in both sectors.<sup>34</sup>

24. Perry, James L. 1996. *Measuring Public Service Motivation: An Assessment of Construct Reliability and Validity*. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*. 01/1996; 6(1). DOI: 10.1093/oxfordjournals.jpart.a024303

25. Wright, B., Moynihan, D. P. and Pandey, S. K. 2011. *Pulling the Levers: Transformational Leadership, Public Service Motivation, and Mission Valence*. *Public Administration Review*. 72: 2: 206–215. DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-6210.2011.02496

26. Perry, James L. and Wise, R. S. 1990. *The Motivational Bases of Public Service*. *Public Administration Review*. 50: 367–73.

27. Perry, James L. *Measuring Public Service Motivation: An Assessment of Construct Reliability and Validity*.

28. A review of 200 key PSM studies from 1990–2014 found that about three quarters of studies are based on empirical data and 80 percent of the studies using a measurement scale largely apply Perry's methodology: van der Wal, Zeger. 2014. *Scoping for International Study on Public Service Motivation in Developing Countries*. Global Centre for Public Service Excellence. Unpublished report.

29. Perry, James L., Hondeghem, Annie and Wise, Lois R. 2010. *Revisiting the Motivational Bases of Public Service Motivation: Twenty Years of Research and an Agenda for the Future*. *Public Administration Review*. 70(5): 681–90.

30. Survey of managers and professionals from a large New York State agency with approximately 2,200 employees: Wright, B. E. 2007. *Public Service and Motivation: Does Mission Matter?* *Public Administration Review*. 67: 1: 54–64. DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-6210.2006.00696.x

31. Interviews with managers engaged in information management activities at US state-level primary health and human service agencies: Moynihan, D. P., Sanjay, K. P. 2007. *The Role of Organizations in Fostering Public Service Motivation*. *Public Administration Review*. 67: 1: 40–53. DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-6210.2006.00695.x

32. A nationwide sample of senior managers in U.S. local government jurisdictions with populations of more than 50,000: Wright, B., Moynihan, D. P. and Pandey, S. K. *Pulling the Levers: Transformational Leadership, Public Service Motivation, and Mission Valence*.

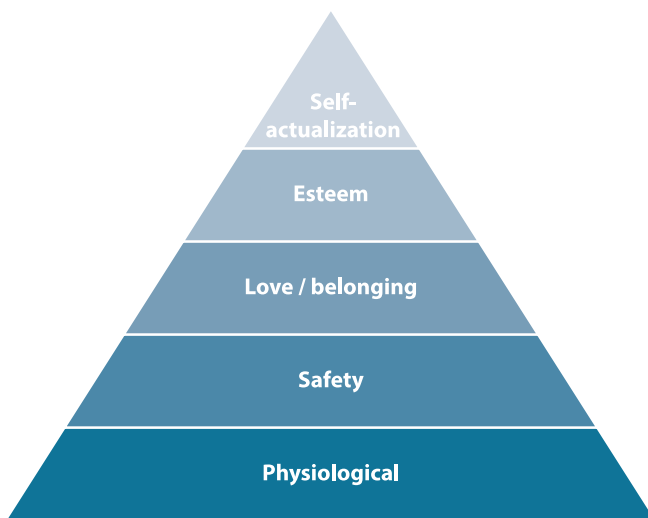
33. Samples from the US General Social Survey covering 101 public sector and 1,356 private sector employees: Houston, David J. 2000. *Public Service Motivation: A Multi-Variate Test*. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*. 10 (2000): 4: 713–727.

34. Frank, S.A. and Lewis, G. B. 2004. *Government employees: Working hard or hardly working?* *American Review of Public Administration*. 34(1): 36–51.



The importance of intrinsic motivation is not unique to the civil service. Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides an influential framework for why intrinsic motivation is critical to high performance in any complex environment.<sup>35</sup> While the empirical merits of the hierarchy are contested, the idea that internal drivers matter as much as external rewards has significantly influenced management practices.<sup>36</sup> Esteem, as the penultimate tier of the pyramid, reflects the powerful motivation of extrinsic factors. The apex of the hierarchy is self-actualization, which is critically dependent on intrinsic motivation.

**Figure 4: Maslow's hierarchy of needs**



A similar set of ideas is explored in Daniel Pink's Motivation 3.0.<sup>37</sup> The basic 'operating system' Motivation 1.0 is driven by biological needs including food, water and sex. Motivation 2.0 ups the ante with the use of the extrinsic motivators of rewards and punishments – the carrot and the stick. Motivation 3.0 seeks to harness intrinsic drive through self-directed *autonomy*, the *mastery* of getting better at something that matters and purpose through making a difference for others.<sup>38</sup>

Gary Hamel, an influential thinker on improving the performance of private sector businesses, argues that the future of management is about reinventing management in order to deliver innovation and requires shifting from hierarchies to communities of purpose.<sup>39</sup> His recipe for success is a workforce motivated to be creative rather than obedient and he argues that engagement of this workforce will be driven by passion (35 percent), creativity (25 percent), initiative (20 percent) and intellect (15 percent), while diligence (5 percent) and obedience (0 percent) cease to be strong drivers.<sup>40</sup>

35. Maslow, A. 1954. *Motivation and personality*. Harper.

36. Kremer, W. and Hammond, C. 2013. *Abraham Maslow and the pyramid that beguiled business*. BBC. 1 September. <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-23902918>

37. Pink, D. H. 2009. *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*. Riverhead Books.

38. Pink, D. H. *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*.

39. Hamel, G. 2012. *What Matters Now: How to Win in a World of Relentless Change, Ferocious Competition, and Unstoppable Innovation*. Jossey-Bass.

40. Hamel, G. *What Matters Now: How to Win in a World of Relentless Change, Ferocious Competition, and Unstoppable Innovation*.

For the public and private sectors, the world is becoming a more complex and rapidly changing environment. To adapt to this environment, we cannot afford to look only to extrinsic motivation, but must harness intrinsic motivation to drive performance.

### **2.3 The benefits: generating trust, supporting responsiveness and enabling dynamism**

In a world of scarce resources, constrained budgets and impatience for improvements, cost-benefit analysis of the value of pursuing a particular action or intervention has become established best practice. Focusing on intrinsic motivation is not cost-free. It takes time and energy, particularly from leaders who are often already stretched with day-to-day tasks. It requires an investment in understanding people and would ideally be grounded in quality PSM research. If greater empowerment is given to frontline civil servants to make decisions and to innovate, then risk, which can be driven by misuse of this power or just increased inconsistency of experience, increases. The benefits being sought need to be clear in order to justify this cost. Harnessing intrinsic motivation can generate trust, can support responsiveness and is critical to building and sustaining dynamism.

In the spirit of Maslow's hierarchy, trust is foundational. It is very difficult to have a civil service that is responsive and dynamic if there is a deficit of trust, either between citizens and civil servants, between political decision makers and civil servants, or between senior civil service leaders and the civil servants they work with. Effective responsiveness is dependent on a clear two-way communication about what is required and two-way communication works best in an environment of mutual trust.

Trust has a strong relationship with predictability. If the execution of a particular action or service is consistent and reliable, then it is known, predictable and trustworthy. Public Administration looks to clear rules and compliance with established processes to develop an environment of predictability and trust. Sustainable trust, however, has always been about values as much as it is about rules. Voluntary compliance must be relied upon most of the time for any complicated process that cannot be perpetually audited. Corruption can be reduced by monitoring and through control, but it can sustainably be minimized only by culture.

In environments with low levels of trust, a vicious circle of helplessness, apathy and self-interest can eventuate. Harnessing intrinsic motivation is one of the few ways to break out of this vicious cycle. Overlaying accountability mechanisms on a low-trust environment is seldom enough to break this cycle. Passion can break this cycle and build responsiveness and trust in partnership with a clear focus on accountability and transparent measurement of performance.

*Responsiveness* is vital and accountability is the chief engine of responsiveness. Wherever it can be, accountability should be clearly defined and rigorously accounted for. While the work of Perry, Pink, Hamel and many others shows that intrinsic motivation will strengthen the effectiveness of extrinsic incentives and that an alignment of values is critical for sustainable performance, intrinsic motivation particularly matters in times of financial constraint and low morale. Tapping

into intrinsic motivation more effectively may be the only way to deliver more for less, for a period of time, and create the momentum to get over a change ‘hump.’

*Dynamism* is critical for responding to complex and rapidly changing environments and effectively harnessing intrinsic motivation is essential for enabling dynamism. Dynamism is an engine for sustaining and managing change through risk tolerance, innovation and adaptability. As Hamel argues, traditional managerialism is largely about efficiency, but the ability to manage change and generate new ways of thinking increasingly determines success.<sup>41</sup> Dynamism is difficult within the rigid hierarchies of traditional bureaucracy, where decisions need to be constantly run up the line and change filters slowly down from the top. Many of the key features aspired to by a high-performing modern civil service – one that can collaborate on complex cross-agency issues, real-time frontline decision-making, citizen engagement and co-production of services – are dependent on dynamism drawn from harnessing intrinsic motivation to work effectively.

Collaboration needs to be enabled by the realignment of extrinsic incentives, but, even in a well-designed environment, collaborating across different agency cultures, objectives and working styles is hard work and depends on the commitment of all the parties involved to work together despite the barriers and challenges.

There are growing opportunities to automate and digitize traditional frontline transactional or rules-based roles and to increase the role of the frontline civil servant to make decisions where the rules do not provide a pre-determined answer. Empowered frontline civil servants with clear accountabilities, measureable performance indicators and high levels of intrinsic motivation are required for delivering bespoke services responsive to the diverse needs of challenging cases.

With changing citizen expectations, strengthened and sustained citizen engagement becomes increasingly important to building and retaining trust between citizens and civil servants. New Public Governance provides for a strong focus on co-production with citizens.<sup>42</sup> Citizen engagement can be reduced to a measureable accountability, but it also provides the opportunity to harness and refresh intrinsic motivation as civil servants work closely with the citizens whom they signed up to help.

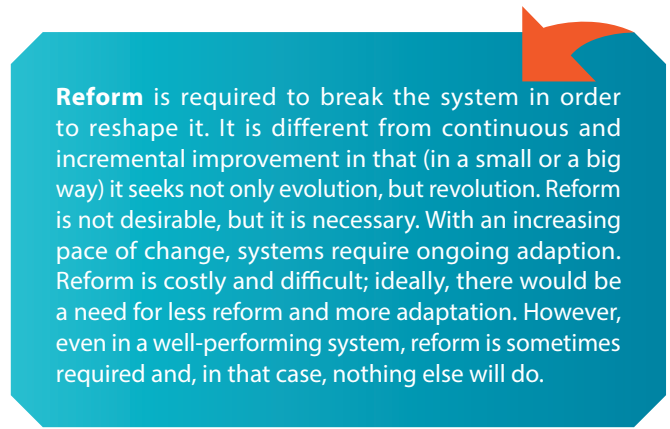
Understanding the intrinsic motivation of civil servants also improves the ability to focus on sustainable change. The effectiveness of a reform programme can obviously be undermined by failing to consider what motivates civil servants and by reducing productivity through increased discontent and reduced employee engagement. A reform programme's chances of success will be greatly improved by including the intrinsic motivation of civil servants in the determination of where to focus reform efforts. The next section of the paper will look at this connection between New Public Passion and reform.

### 3. Sustainable Reform

#### 3.1 The approach in practice: sustainable reform

Intrinsic motivation as a tool should be seen as part of a toolkit. If used in isolation – for example, by the passionate leader fighting to change the system through vision and influence alone – it is a recipe for burn-out and non-sustainable change. Here we will look at it as part of the toolkit of civil service reform.

Five years of working on and leading reform in New Zealand have provided the opportunity to share experiences of reform with a range of jurisdictions through New Zealand's interest in their reforms and their interest in New Zealand<sup>43</sup> and through partnership with the UNDP Global Centre for Public Sector Excellence to promote reform.<sup>44</sup> The practice of reform has revealed the perils of underestimating the transformative potential of intrinsic motivation.



**Reform** is required to break the system in order to reshape it. It is different from continuous and incremental improvement in that (in a small or a big way) it seeks not only evolution, but revolution. Reform is not desirable, but it is necessary. With an increasing pace of change, systems require ongoing adaption. Reform is costly and difficult; ideally, there would be a need for less reform and more adaptation. However, even in a well-performing system, reform is sometimes required and, in that case, nothing else will do.

The key lessons about the practice of reform are summarized in Figure 5. The four key ideas shall now be examined and will involve digging into the five steps around effective focus and then working through the examples of New Zealand's Better Public Service reforms and Papua New Guinea's current Reform Moment.

#### Diagnosis

Diagnosis is an obvious first step in an attempt to fix or improve anything. If you do not understand the problem, it is impossible to effectively focus on the way to improve. The obvious risk with reform, however, is over-diagnosis leading to delay, paralysis and potentially to missing a significant Reform Moment. Most jurisdictions already know what is wrong with their systems, but they may not be having an honest conversation about it. They frequently are confounded by the entanglement of political dynamics (that civil service reform cannot directly address) with bureaucratic dysfunction and feel that change is too hard. But, in a Reform Moment, if there is an honest conversation focusing directly on the role of the civil service, the identified problems are usually clear and long-standing.

The role of intrinsic motivation in framing the need for reform is standard and often taken for granted. Civil servant disengagement, apathy and low morale are pointed to as

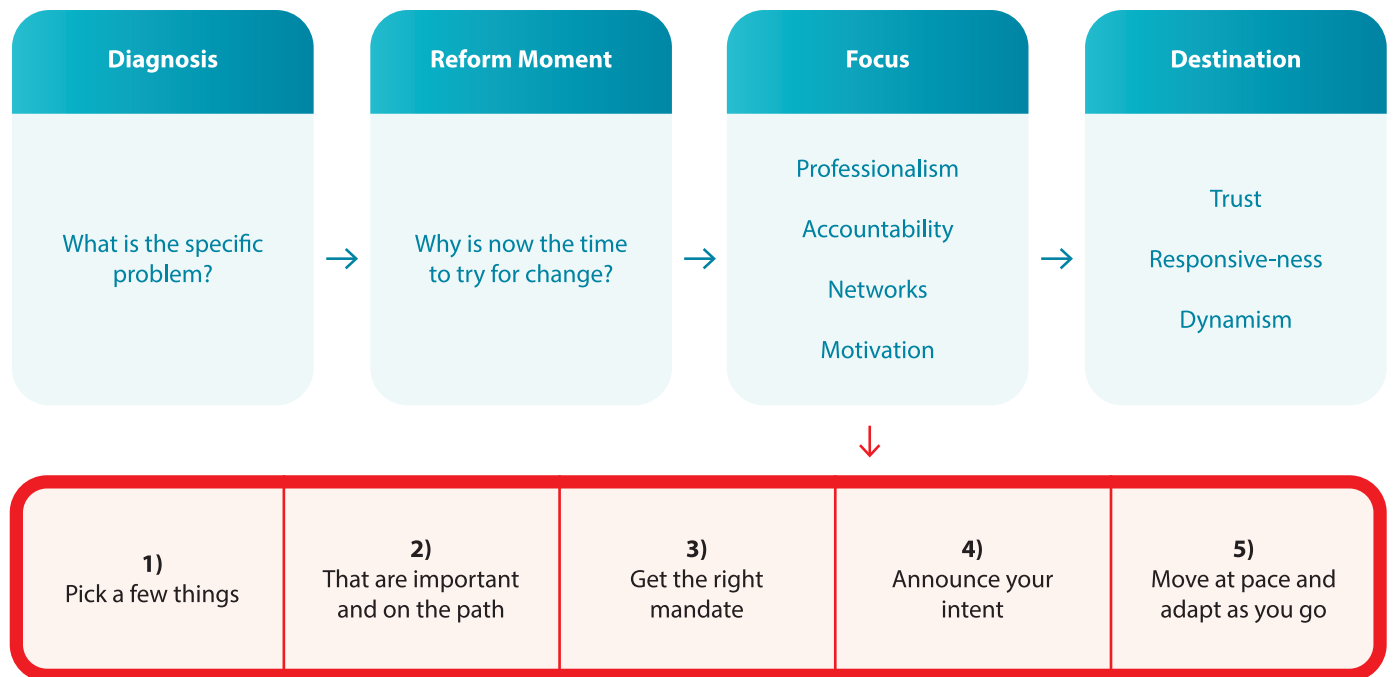
41. Hamel, G. *What Matters Now: How to Win in a World of Relentless Change, Ferocious Competition, and Unstoppable Innovation*.

42. Pestoff, V., Brandsen, T. and Verschuere, B. (eds.). *New Public Governance, the Third Sector and Co-production*.

43. Predominantly, Asia, Pacific and Anglo-Saxon: Singapore, China, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Tonga, Samoa, Australia, UK, Scotland, Ireland, Canada

44. Iraq, Viet Nam, Papua New Guinea, Myanmar

**Figure 5:** Key lessons for sustainable reform



drivers of the need for change. The trick here is not to confuse identifying symptoms with diagnosis. If civil servants are underperforming due to disengagement, the cause of the discontent needs to be identified and addressed.

#### **Reform Moment**

Timing is everything in comedy and civil service reform. In a perfectly dynamic system, continuous improvement would avoid the need for reform, as civil service change would keep pace with the environment in which it operates. However, we do not work in perfect or even particularly dynamic systems and step-changes in technology, expectations and complexity demand periodic reforms that break parts of the system in order to remake them in a fit-for-purpose fashion.

Many reforms fail because systems are naturally resistant to change that involves breaking the way things work. Four features are conducive to a Reform Moment in which there is real stimulus for significant change and a chance of success.

1. **Change gap** – Where a system can do what is required or expected but obviously falls short, there is a change gap. Change gaps are apparent in most civil services most of the time, but scandals, major failures, technological change and big shifts in citizen expectations can highlight a gap that has become unmanageable or unsustainable. Change gaps are necessary for a Reform Moment, but are not enough without the following three aspects being aligned.
2. **Change readiness** – Any system has a threshold for how much change it can handle. Reform that breaks and remakes a system takes time to settle and requires recovery time before a system can take on reform in the same areas again. Repeated change, regardless of whether it is successful,

leads to change fatigue and can have a catastrophic impact on the harnessing of intrinsic motivation. Picking a Reform Moment requires an understanding of the appetite for change and the capacity for the system to take on change at that time.

3. **Trigger crisis or opportunity** – Even if a civil service has a clear change gap and has a degree of change readiness, a specific trigger crisis or opportunity creates a catalyst for change and the potential for focus to build reform momentum. A crisis event can force change to deal with those unexpected circumstances that can be turned into sustainable reform. Equally, an opportunity to deliver a service or event that cannot be achieved under current settings can generate focus and energy around change. Triggers create only potential opportunities for reform, as systems can deal with the symptoms of the moment without making sustainable change. Systems can rise to the specific crisis or opportunity by behaving and acting differently, but then return to default settings once that moment has passed; alternately, systems can harness the moment as a conscious lever for sustained change.
4. **Reform leadership** – Leadership is vital for successful reform and, if there is no reform leadership, then there is no Reform Moment. Reform leadership is required to break with past practice and to take the risk of doing things differently. While it may be possible to build continuous improvement into a system without dependence on individual leaders, reform is inherently disruptive; it requires passion and the instilling of passion in others to break and remake something. Strongly positioned reform leaders can generate their own trigger opportunity or crisis by focusing attention on an area of pressing need for change or they can respond to an existing crisis or opportunity.



If you neither have nor can generate a Reform Moment, do not attempt reform. Reform is hard, expensive and disruptive, with a high risk of failure. There is no point in attempting significant change without conditions conducive to success. This seems like a strange warning to have to give, but, in a world in which governments wish to appear to be doing something – particularly if they are developing countries seeking the support of donor countries – reforms may be announced without any real prospect of success.

### Focus

The greatest reform lesson concerns the need to focus. The number of things that would benefit from change will always exceed the capacity to change them. Depending on the nature of the Reform Moment, there may only be very limited resources, time and energy to direct at system change, so the choice of their use is critical.

Most importantly, do not waste time and energy on things that you cannot change in this Reform Moment. While the ultimate destination may be to change cultural norms in your system, reform will fail if you start by trying to change all of these at once. Harnessing intrinsic motivation really matters for choosing where to focus and for ensuring that the things you chose to focus on build momentum.

Focus is the driver of five key reform steps.

1. *Pick a few things* – Do not try to be comprehensive, as the number of things to change will always exceed the capacity to change them. In a system that is clearly badly broken, it is tempting to try to change everything at once, but, unless you already have very strong reform momentum and buy-in, it is critical to keep a sharp focus to sustain reform in an environment that will be highly resistant to change.
2. *Pick those that are important and on the path* – You do not have to focus on the absolutely most important things. It is better to move with urgency and commitment to address selected issues that are clearly important and on the path to your destination than to run an expensive and time-consuming process to be sure about what to do. Certainty is not achievable. The best areas to focus on will align intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, so pick areas that will make people excited and passionate about making a difference and align incentives around making them a priority.
3. *Get the right mandate* – Know who the critical decision makers are and ensure that they are signed up to the reform endeavour. If they are not convinced of the diagnosis, committed to acting on the Reform Moment and aligned around the areas of focus, do not waste precious energy and resources on attempting reform. This does not mean that you need comprehensive buy-in from all stakeholders from the start; that can be built over time.
4. *Announce your intent* – Reform is hard, as a system always resists being broken and remade. Announce your intent to ensure that critical decision makers and actors are openly committed to change in order to help sustain their resolve through the difficult times ahead. If your system is open to

the transparency of public-facing measures and reporting of progress, then use this tool.

5. *Move at pace and adapt as you go* – Focus improves your chances of moving at pace, which is important for capturing the Reform Moment. In a complex environment, it is simply not possible to predict the full impact of change, so be prepared to adapt as you go in order to sustain momentum.

### Destination

Effective prioritization is impossible without a clear vision of the destination. Therefore, knowing your destination is vital for choosing where to focus. Any worthwhile destination will not be achieved during a single Reform Moment, but your reform focus needs to move you as far as possible in the right direction.

The destination should not be a static point and increasingly needs to be a dynamic state. In a complex and rapidly changing environment, reform is a tool for improving the ability of a system to continuously respond to change. While no system can afford to see trust, responsiveness and dynamism as sequential and to wait for perfection in the former before moving on toward the latter, they are heavily interdependent and you need to have sufficient levels of trust and responsiveness to get to sustainable dynamism.

Achieving a dynamic destination requires an understanding of where you are trying to get to by harnessing intrinsic motivation. A destination that builds and sustains New Public Passion will be more effective at delivering for citizens than a destination that ignores or undermines intrinsic motivation.

### 3.2 The question: what does this mean for you?

Each Reform Moment is unique and will require a different response to enable change. There are no silver bullets for successful reform.

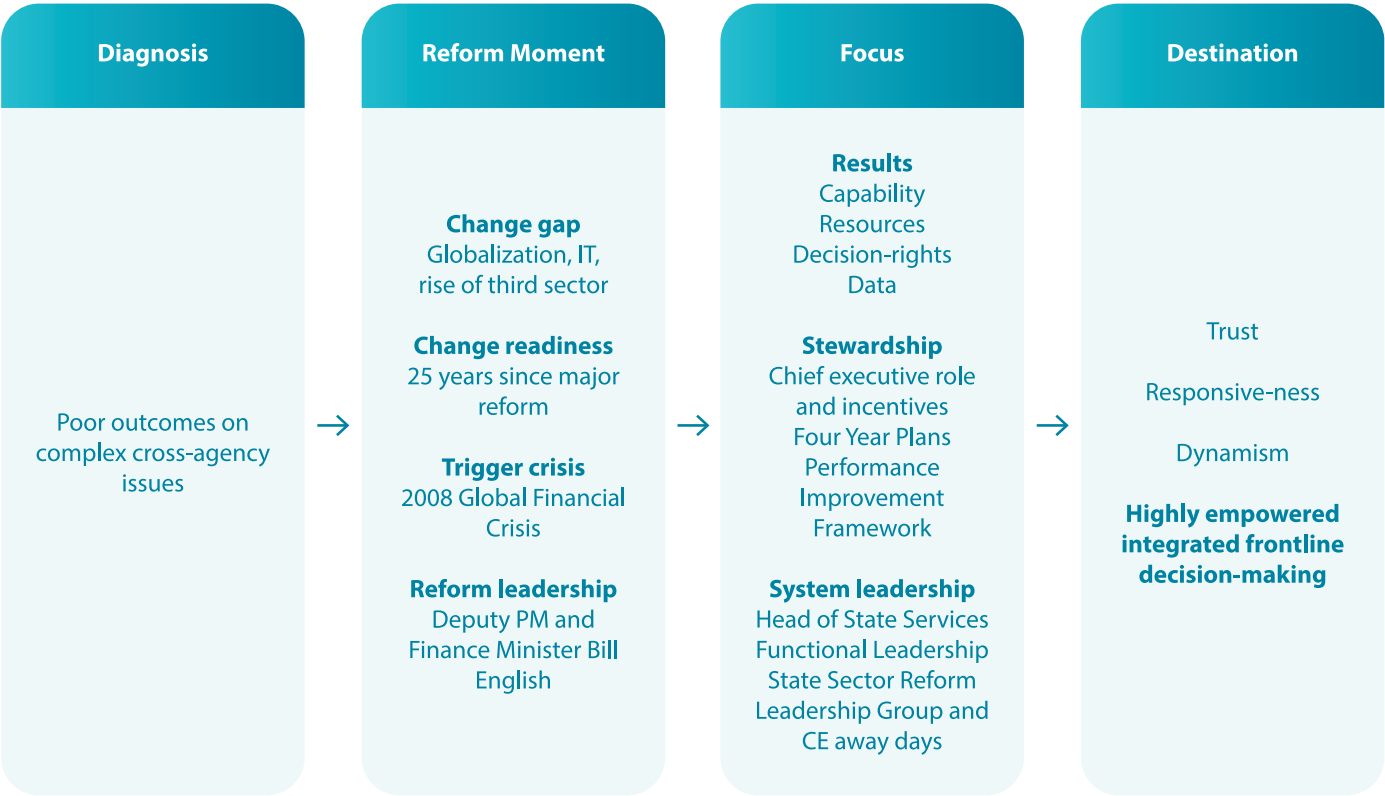
However, the challenges of reform and enhancing civil service performance are a universal experience. Every community will struggle with that challenge in its own context. The problems are common (e.g., politicization, fragmentation, poor implementation, corruption, information deficits, cultural barriers, performance measurement), but the experience is unique to that particular environment.

In this universal and unique change environment, New Public Passion proclaims the importance of thinking about the intrinsic motivation of civil servants in the design of public management systems and of planning and driving reform efforts to change the design of public management systems.

The paper will finish with two practical examples: 1) New Zealand's Better Public Services reforms and 2) Papua New Guinea's potential Reform Moment, which may develop into significant reform of the civil service.<sup>45</sup>

45. For general advice on actions to take to enhance intrinsic motivation see: Global Centre for Public Service Excellence. 2015. *The SDGs and New Public Passion: What really motivates the civil service?* UNDP. [http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/capacity-building/global-centre-for-public-service-excellence/PSM\\_SDGs.html](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/capacity-building/global-centre-for-public-service-excellence/PSM_SDGs.html)

Figure 6: New Zealand's Better Public Services reforms



New Zealand's Better Public Services reform

New Zealand's Better Public Services reforms (2010-2015) successfully rewrote the rules of the New Zealand public management system to enable focused work across agency boundaries in order to deliver results, longer-term planning to support stewardship, and changed leadership roles and incentives to strengthen system leadership. The reforms are notable for capturing a Reform Moment that could have been used to drive austerity, but instead achieved the most significant realignment of the New Zealand system in 25 years. The features of the reform are summarized in Figure 6.

The *diagnosis* of the central problem with the design of the New Zealand system was already well established by previous attempts to mitigate the weak points of the operating environment created by New Zealand's radical reforms in the 1980s. New Zealand went furthest and fastest on the implementation of New Public Management, instilling corporate discipline on government agencies through sharp accountability matched with strong agency autonomy to marshal and compete for the resources to deliver on their outputs.<sup>46</sup> This generated significant gains in efficiency and short-term responsiveness through allowing highly independent agencies to best organize their business to deliver against their accountabilities. However, this independent strength had a downside when it came to agencies needing to work together

to address issues that crossed agency boundaries and did not fall clearly within the accountabilities of a single chief executive.<sup>47</sup> The incentives in the system pushed towards competition and fragmentation rather than collaboration and integration. This challenge is compounded by New Zealand's short three-year electoral cycles leading ministers and agencies to focus on short-term deliverables at the expense of medium- and long-term stewardship. These issues were clearly diagnosed by the Schick Report in 1996<sup>48</sup> and attempts at addressing them were made with the Strategic/Key Result Areas approach in 1994-1999 in the Review of the Centre in 2001-2002 and Managing for Outcomes in 2003-2008.<sup>49</sup> With increasing complexity and change, the need for reform became more pressing and an updated diagnosis of the same issues was carried out by the Institute for Policy and Governance's Future State project,<sup>50</sup> two joint Central Agency review teams in early and late 2010, and the Better Public Services Advisory Group that was established in May 2011 and reported to the government on the need for reform.<sup>51</sup>

46. Government Management: Brief to the Incoming Government 1987 Volume I, The Treasury, 1987, p. 2; <http://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/briefings/1987i/>

47. Core public Service agencies in New Zealand are led by a Chief Executive. The Chief Executive is appointed on a fixed term contract (typically five years) by the State Services Commissioner.

48. Schick, A., The Spirit of Reform: Managing the New Zealand State Sector in a Time of Change, New Zealand State Services Commission, 1996, <https://www.ssc.govt.nz/spirit-of-reform>

49. New Zealand Government. 2002. *The Review of the Centre One Year On - Getting Better Results for Citizens, Ministers and Staff*. State Services Commission. <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/resources/3114/all-pages>

50. Government Management: Brief to the Incoming Government 1987 Volume I, The Treasury, 1987, p. 2; <http://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/briefings/1987i/>

51. Better Public Services Advisory Group Report, New Zealand Government, November 2011 [https://www.ssc.govt.nz/sites/all/files/bps-report-nov2011\\_0.pdf](https://www.ssc.govt.nz/sites/all/files/bps-report-nov2011_0.pdf)

The Advisory Group's re-articulation of a clear and long-standing diagnosis of the problem positioned New Zealand to capture a ripe *Reform Moment*. Four key factors – described generally in section 3.1 – made this the strongest Reform Moment in New Zealand since the 1980s reforms:

- ▶ *Change gap* – The increasing complexity and rate of change of the world in the 2010s was impacting on New Zealand through globalization, information technology and the rise of the third sector. Private and public sector thinking was arguing that new ways of working were required to harness networks and manage through complexity.
- ▶ *Change readiness* – Radical change comes at a high cost and, after a reform as large as New Zealand's, New Public Management changes the system can take a while – 25 years in this case – before it is ready to take on large-scale change again.
- ▶ *Trigger crisis* – The 2008 global financial crisis shifted New Zealand from surplus to deficit and fundamentally constrained the financial flexibility of the civil service. While New Zealand did not enter a period of significant austerity, agency budgets and staff numbers were capped after a decade of year-on-year growth. Delivering better services while absorbing annual inflationary pressures requires new ways of working.
- ▶ *Reform leadership* – Bill English, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance from November 2008, had been a minister in the previous National Party government in the 1990s and had seen the unsustainability of austerity-driven reform efforts. In 1990-1999, the National Party government compounded significant Labour Party government-led New Public Management reductions of the 1980s with further deep cuts in the number of civil servants, only to see these numbers build back up over the Helen Clark-led Labour Government of 1999-2008.<sup>52</sup> Bill English was a visionary champion of the results-led reform approach, recognizing that significant sustainable cost reductions for New Zealand taxpayers would come from an investment in improving outcomes.<sup>53</sup> English was a critical champion of change and was able to secure the support of the Prime Minister and Cabinet for the reform effort. He was also highly skilled at using the language of results-led reform to harness the intrinsic motivation of civil servants to want to make a difference to the lives of New Zealanders in the greatest need, while not moving away from providing extrinsic motivation through clear articulation of his expectations of senior officials in order to sustain reform momentum.

52. "Major state sector reforms during the 1990s saw a 20% contraction of the workforce from 343,000 people in 1989 to around 273,000 in the mid-1990s. [...] Since 2001 the public sector workforce has grown by 29%, to 353,000 people in 2015." New Zealand Government. 2015. *Human Resource Capability in the State Sector*. State Services Commission. p. 9.

53. English, Bill. 2013. Speech to IPANZ (*Institute of Public Administration New Zealand*). New Zealand Government. 21 February. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/speech-ipanz-institute-public-administration-new-zealand>

Excerpts from Bill English's 2013 speech to the Institute of Public Administration of New Zealand

"The most recent development along that path has been the 2012 Cabinet signing up to a set of 10 results that we believe are important for New Zealand. And we have not only signed up for those results but we have signed up to the publication of them and the regular reporting of them in a way that no other Cabinet has ever done.

"It's quite a big step for politicians to voluntarily cut down their room for manoeuvre about what they are trying to achieve. But we've done that because of the confidence we have in our public service to achieve those results.

"So we are allowing for the possibility of failure. I don't think that is such big deal because we owe it, particularly to those New Zealanders who are very dependent on our public services and who are themselves in a situation of vulnerability and powerlessness that we at least tolerate the potential embarrassment of failure in an effort to make significant changes to their lives.

"So where does the Minister of Finance's obsession with the track to surplus, and the Government's obsession with the track to surplus fit into this picture? Well it fits in very simply: What works for the community, works for the government's books.

"When we have one less prisoner reoffending, we save a lot of money. When we turn around one sickness beneficiary on the road to the Invalids Benefit, we save an enormous amount of money.

"So our fiscal objectives are not contradicting the drive for better public services. Rather, our fiscal objectives will be achieved by better public services and that is why we put such a strong focus on improving those public services and a stronger focus, in fact, than we actually put on saving money."

The *focus* of the Better Public Services reforms were quite expansive and, during the first two years of implementation, the failure to sharply delineate the areas where reform was needed to drive change and could have the most impact, threatened to stall the momentum for change. The Reform Moment was effectively captured to drive policy and legislative change to remove barriers to stewardship and collaboration and enable resources and decision-rights to be better used across agency boundaries.<sup>54</sup> However, enabling change is not enough to improve outcomes for New Zealanders and the New Zealand reforms provide some valuable lessons on what to do and what not to do to drive reform.

54. See the range of Cabinet minutes on Better Public Services at: <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/bps-cab-papers-minutes>



The Prime Minister's Better Public Services Results for New Zealanders have been the central focus of successful reform implementation [see figure 7]. These results were selected because they were important and were long-standing problems that had proven resistant to previous attempts at change, where making meaningful progress was reliant on multiple organizations collaborating with each other.

## Results

As set out in Figure 7, the *10 Results* cover a range of key social services related to workforce participation, the health, education and safety of vulnerable children, educational attainment, reducing crime and improved digital interactions with government for business and citizens. The results were launched in 2012 with five-year targets to be achieved in 2017. All of the results have seen progress towards the target since 2012. Results 1 (welfare dependence), 6 (certificate-level qualifications) and 7 (reducing crime) were achieved or were on track to achieve the target early and have had a more challenging target set for 2018. In contrast, Results 4 (assaults on children) and 8 (reoffending) are areas where a trend in the wrong direction has been arrested, but sustained year-on-year gains to hit ambitious targets remain challenging. The February 2016 Results progress update<sup>55</sup> rates three Results (3a, 7 and 10) as 'green' and on track; five Results (1, 3b, 4, 8 and 9) as 'amber' and on track, but with the changes not yet embedded; and three Results (2, 5 and 6) as 'yellow' and making progress, but with issues to resolve.<sup>56</sup>

From a reform perspective, the success of the Results approach is of even greater consequence than the achievement of the individual results. Delivering effectively on complex cross-agency issues requires a new way of thinking and working. The approaches and techniques being developed to deliver on the *10 Results* have the potential for much broader application and demonstrate that the New Zealand public management system can deliver in these spaces and how it needs to continue to change.

The Better Public Services Results have worked as a reform tool because of their degree of focus.

1. *Pick a few things* – There are only 10 results: they are not every important thing that the government is doing in New Zealand and they are not even necessarily the 10 most important things that government is doing. They also do not attempt to cover every sector and agency. They are, however, 10 very important results for New Zealanders that are broadly accepted as important and demand different cross-agency ways of working in order to deliver better outcomes.
2. *They are important and on the path* – The ministerial decision to not engage in a lengthy analytical and consultation process for determining the 10 Results was key to capturing the Reform Moment in early 2012. The prime minister had received the Better Public Services Advisory Group Report in November 2011 and announced the *10 Results* with targets and the

lead ministers and chief executives in March 2012.<sup>57</sup> Moving at pace created a breakthrough moment that made it very clear that the government expected real change from officials. Other important results could have been included, but the 10 that were selected proved to be largely non-controversial and created an immediate focus on taking action.

3. *Get the right mandate* – Labelling the results as the *Prime Minister's Results* sent a clear message to ministers and civil servants that the results mattered and that they needed to be prioritized against other work. The Better Public Services Advisory Group Report was addressed to the Prime Minister and all of the key decisions flowing out of that report were formally considered by Cabinet.<sup>58</sup> To facilitate rapid Cabinet decision-making, a State Sector Reform Ministers group was formed and chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister (who was also the Minister of Finance), the Minister of State Services and the Minister for Economic Development, who were also the two associate Ministers of Finance. The reforms cut across established decision-rights and already tight prioritization in a period of financial constraint and could not have gained momentum without senior ministerial support.
4. *Announce your intent* – Given the short window from agreeing on the Results to publicly announcing them in early 2012, most Result areas did not have an established cross-agency plan for how those Results would be delivered. This radical step of publicly declaring the Result, the target and accountable ministers and officials before having an agreed approach was a catalyst to cross-agency engagement in a system where most incentives ran in the other direction. This was not just a general ambition to reform the machinery of government that citizens never see, but instead a measurable commitment to leveraging changes to the machinery to deliver better results. Six monthly reports have been publicly released on the progress on Results, including the Cabinet paper, dashboard and underlying data.<sup>59</sup>
5. *Move at pace and adapt as you go* – There was a clear imperative for agencies to develop an approach with urgency to deliver on ministerial expectations and to meet public reporting requirements. Each of the Results has its own story about the challenge of bringing together cross-agency leadership and resources and the pace at which they could move was largely determined by how much cross-agency governance and common

**"The Better Public Services Results have worked as a reform tool because of their degree of focus."**

55. Available at: <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/sites/all/files/Snapshot-March2016.pdf>

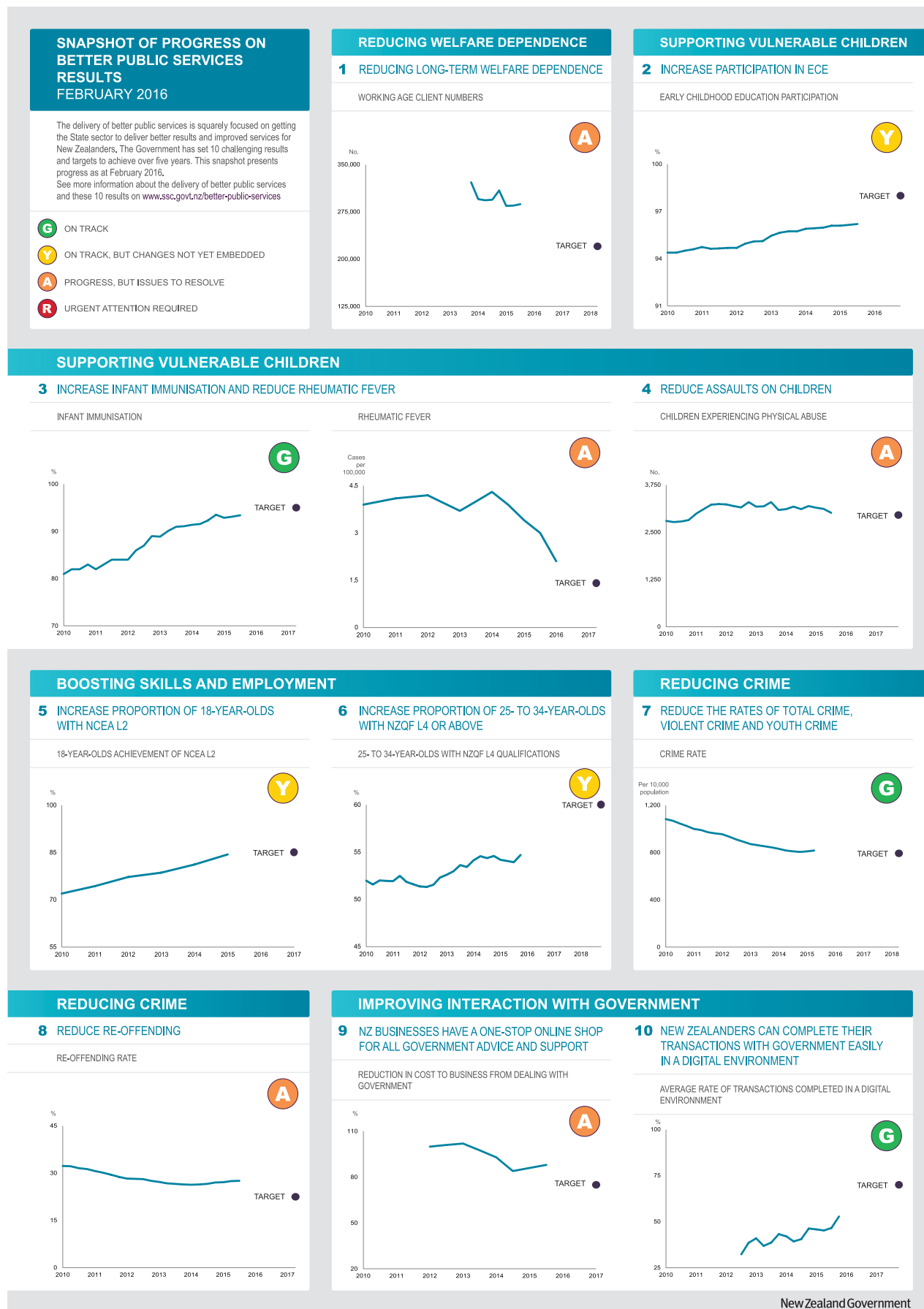
56. Note that there are 11 progress ratings across the *10 Results* because Result 3 bundles two different lead indicators of the health of vulnerable children – immunization and rheumatic fever – that are assessed separately.

57. Key, John. 2012. *Govt sharpens focus on public sector results*. Media Release, 15 March. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/govt-sharpens-focus-public-sector-results>

58. New Zealand Government. 2012. *Cabinet Minute: Better Public Services: Reform Programme*. CAB MIN (12)1/1. 25 January.

59. See State Services Commission Website: Better Public Services: <https://www.ssc.govt.nz/better-public-services>

Figure 7: New Zealand's Better Public Services Results



language was already in place. All of the Results had to rapidly identify lead measures and targets and develop a public-facing Results Action Plan to set out how this target would be achieved. For Results 7 and 8 (reducing crime and recidivism), there was an established Justice Sector Board with the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Justice, the Chief Executive of the Department of Corrections and the Commissioner of Police as members and long-established indicators in place. For Results 9 and 10 (improving digital services to businesses and citizens), there was a range of agencies that needed to build a way of working together and develop new measures for progress and success. The measures and targets are by definition imperfect, not primarily because many of them were developed in a hurry on the basis of limited experience, but because targets and measures are inevitably simplified markers of a complex destination. Having a target in place provided a catalyst for action and the targets and measures in turn can be strengthened on the basis of experience. This has occurred in three ways:

- i. Where the five-year target set proved to be insufficiently ambitious, the ministers worked with agencies to reset the target to be more challenging.<sup>60</sup>
- ii. Where the lead measure needed to be complemented by additional measures, these were built into the Result Action Plans and the public reporting on progress by those agencies. This was done without adding additional lead measures to keep the overall public reporting clear and relatively simple.<sup>61</sup>
- iii. Where the lead measure has been found through practical experience to not be the best indicator of the core objective of the Result, there is the opportunity, particularly as the original five-year target date approaches in 2017, to consider changing the lead measure. There is a risk, however, of this sort of change appearing to sidestep accountability for delivery on the original commitment; only Result 1 has been changed in this way to date, with the establishment of a new measure and a clearly ambitious target.<sup>62</sup>

While the Results have created a successful central focus for reform, the challenging reform environment and difficulties implementing broader change highlighted a number of key lessons about what not to do:

1. *Do not try to fix everything at once.* Through the early phases of the reform process, significant amounts of time were spent trying to generate grand structural solutions and comprehensive frameworks to describe, measure and 'fundamentally transform' the New Zealand public management system. With the power of hindsight, these

efforts carried the seeds of their own failure. The models were flawed in their inevitably simplistic approach to a complex system. While the key features of the diagnosis were common across the system, the required changes were bespoke to the different results to be achieved. The reforms progressively gained momentum by shifting the focus from comprehensive restructuring to improving the rules to enable change and then focusing on specific areas for implementation.

2. *Do not focus energy on the things that cannot be changed directly in this Reform Moment.* Whenever civil service leaders were brought together to discuss reform, chief executives and senior officials would focus on the role of ministers and the interface between ministers and chief executives as a key barrier to effective cross-agency collaboration. While this is an issue in the New Zealand system, it was not the opportunity for change presented by the Reform Moment. Changing the role of ministers was not up for debate and concentrating on it reduced rather than increased the potential for significant change. As a consequence of focusing on change to the behaviour of civil servants, the reforms have ultimately had some impact on ministerial arrangements and behaviours. Ministers have focused on the achievement of Results and have come together at times as groups of ministers to support groups of officials organized around a specific Result.
3. *Do not ignore intrinsic motivation.* The policy and design work for the reforms sought to harness accountabilities, incentives and performance measurement to drive change. However, coming from a New Public Management mind-set led to underplaying the importance of capturing hearts and minds in reform implementation. The *10 Results* successfully aligned intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, but this was more by accident than design. The Results spoke to the key drivers of why many of the people working on the Results had become public servants in the first place. The passion of the leaders and teams for improving the lives of New Zealanders was essential in sustaining their efforts to overcome resistance to working differently. All of the Results teams met significant opposition to breaking from previously established approaches to governance, decision-making, funding, partnerships and delivery. The levels of energy and determination to overcome these challenges could not be driven by extrinsic motivation alone, as leaders and expertise remained in demand across government and many senior public servants were not working on the reform changes and the results. Most of those who worked on reform chose to do so because they were passionate about the need for change and the difference it would make. The reform programme as a whole has not matched this balancing of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and has missed opportunities to engage and energize the broader New Zealand public service in understanding, owning and being excited about the opportunity to deliver better results for New Zealanders.

The *destination* for reform in New Zealand is an environment in which stewardship is central to decision-making; agencies

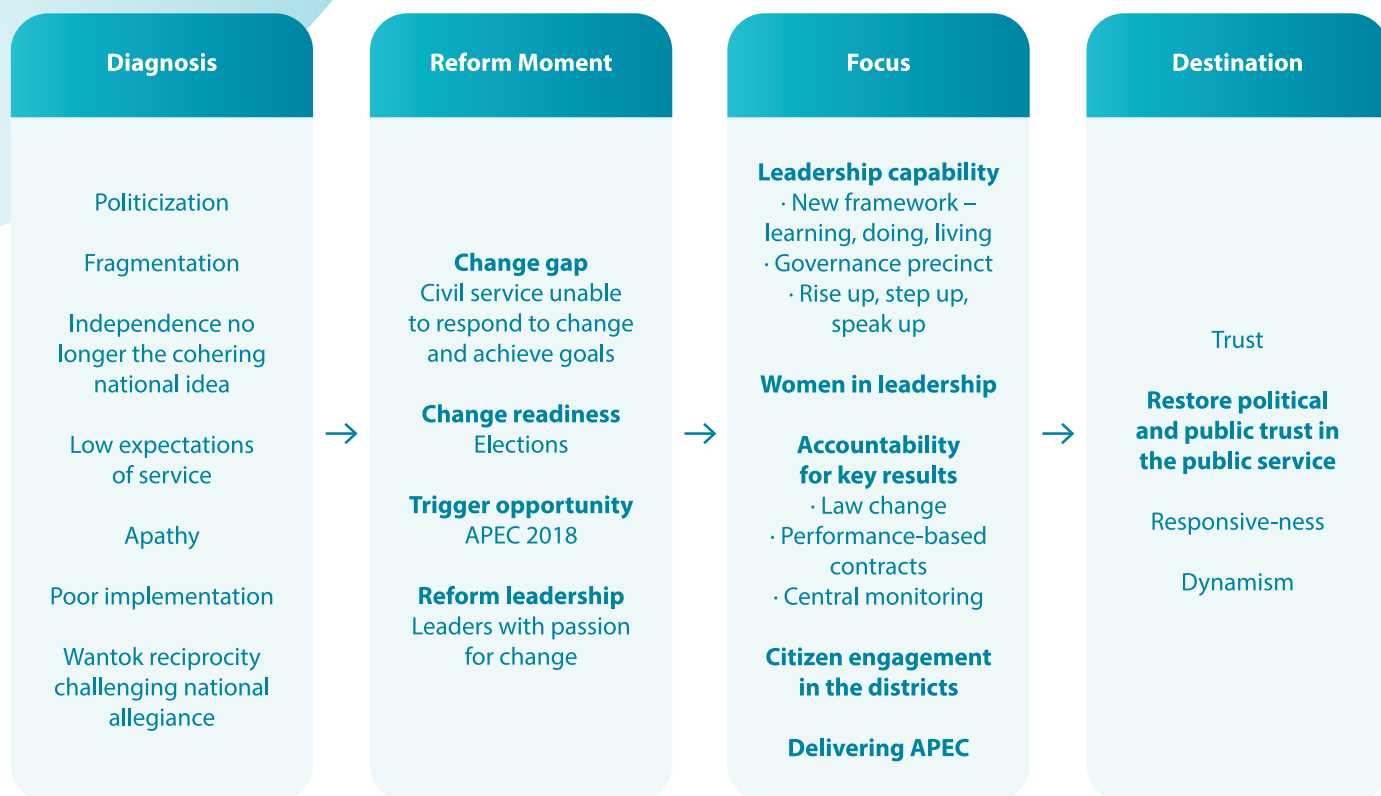
60. Results 6 and 7: New Zealand Government. 2014. *Cabinet Minute: Better Public Services: Refresh of Targets and Measures*. CAB Min (14) 38/8. 1 December. Paragraphs 12, 14.

61. Results 6 and 7: New Zealand Government. 2014. *Cabinet Minute: Better Public Services: Refresh of Targets and Measures*. CAB Min (14) 38/8. 1 December. Paragraphs 12, 14.

62. *Cabinet Minute: Better Public Services: Refresh of Targets and Measures*. Paragraphs 2-6.



**Figure 8: Papua New Guinea's Reform Moment**



and non-governmental partners work together when they need to and people receive integrated and responsive services from government. It sounds like a great place to be. This destination will not be achieved without harnessing high levels of intrinsic public service motivation. At the institutional level, collaborating across agencies and organizations is always difficult and inherently more challenging and expensive than just going it alone. Effective collaboration requires a very clear purpose and strong accountability mechanisms that can align extrinsic incentives; it also requires people who are dedicated to making the partnership work because they think it is the right thing to do. At the individual level, the ideal frontline worker of the future will be able to draw on integrated real-time information to make on-the-spot decisions about how to work with families and people with complex needs across a range of issues. These individuals will need to be appropriately rewarded for their challenging jobs, but they will also need to be self-actualizing, with autonomy, mastery and purpose. They will need to be passionate about what they do.

#### **Papua New Guinea's Reform Moment?**

As was mentioned in the first section of this paper, Papua New Guinea is a distinctively challenging environment in which to develop a national civil service. Eight-hundred-forty languages are spoken by more than 7 million people across 22 provinces and 87 districts, most of which are not connected to each other by roads in a country with an average GDP per person of US\$2,852 and a high degree of exposure to fluctuations in global

commodity prices and weather events.<sup>63</sup> While we continue to learn about just how much diversity is a strength rather than a weakness,<sup>64</sup> it is also a daunting challenge for developing public services and public management systems. Despite a decade of relative economic growth, Papua New Guinea has not been able to achieve any of its Millennium Development Goals.<sup>65</sup> In an uncertain economic environment are there 'triggers' for reform that might enable the strengthening of the civil service to make a critical contribution to momentum on the Sustainable Development Goals?

Conversations with stakeholders identified seven connected components of the diagnosis centred on the particular challenge of building commitment to a national civil service and public services in Papua New Guinea's context. The areas of diagnosis are universal and they are challenges present in every jurisdiction in the world, but they have a unique expression in Papua New Guinea and a particular level of prioritization for change.

1. **Politicization** – Over recent years, there has been a significant shift in the allocation of resources for the delivery of services at a provincial level from civil servants

63. UNDP. *Human Development Report 2015, Briefing note for countries on the 2015 Human Development Report, Papua New Guinea.*

64. Levine, S. S. and Stark, D. 2015. *Diversity Makes You Brighter*. New York Times. 9 December. [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/09/opinion/diversity-makes-you-brighter.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/09/opinion/diversity-makes-you-brighter.html?_r=0); Swedish Research Council. 2015. *There is strength in diversity!* [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2015-09/src-tis091715.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2015-09/src-tis091715.php)

65. Inter Press Service, *Papua New Guinea reckons with unmet development goals.*

to the local political representative.<sup>66</sup> This has tended to increase the politicization of service allocation decisions and significantly reduced the ability of local civil servants to do their jobs.

2. *Fragmentation* – A degree of fragmentation is inevitable in a highly diverse and geographically separated country, but, in the capital city of Port Moresby, core government agencies do not have strong lines of communication with each other even when working on areas of common interest. This departmental fragmentation appears to some extent to be compounded by weak lines of communication between members of parliament and the civil service.
3. *Lack of cohering vision* – The shift to independence from Australian rule in 1975 created a strong focal point for building a national civil service. Most of Papua New Guinea's civil service leaders had served through independence and shared the common experience of that challenge and opportunity. On the 40th anniversary of independence, it no longer has the same immediacy as a cohering national idea to build and bind the civil service around. The Papua New Guinea Vision 2050<sup>67</sup> was launched in November 2009 and lays out a common vision for the country, but requires practical measures to be fully owned and achieved across Papua New Guinea.
4. *Low expectations of service* – Most Papua New Guineans have subsistence lifestyles with limited experience of service provision from government and low expectations of this changing in the foreseeable future.
5. *Apathy* – Civil servants can feel disempowered by politicization, fragmentation, lack of vision and low expectations of service. This can make a challenge like the December 2015 drought appear to be an insurmountable challenge rather than an opportunity to make a difference.
6. *Poor implementation* – A truly universal problem compounded in Papua New Guinea by the vicious circle of low expectations of service, limited capacities and high levels of apathy. Effective implementation requires the right capability deployed on the right task and, in a rapidly changing world, Papua New Guinea often finds that it does not have the capability in its civil service that it needs.
7. *Cultural barriers* – Wantok is a pervasive feature of Papua New Guinean society.<sup>68</sup> Clan and family obligations and reciprocity challenge notions of national allegiance and identity.

Given this challenging and complex diagnosis, it is clear that reform is required, but less clear that a Reform Moment exists. Knowing there is a problem is not enough if there is not a trigger for change. Four features in Papua New Guinea point towards a Reform Moment with the potential for generating real and sustained change.

66. Discussions with public officials in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 13-15 January 2016

67. National Strategic Plan Taskforce. 2011. *Papua New Guinea Vision 2050*. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1496png.pdf>

68. Nanau, G. L. 2011. *The Wantok System as a Socio-economic and Political Network in Melanesia*, OMNES : The Journal of Multicultural Society. Vol. 2 No.1, pp. 31-55.

1. *Change gap* – Papua New Guinea has an uncontested change gap, with the civil service widely perceived as unable to play its role in responding to the challenging development needs of a country buffeted in 2015 by falling international commodity prices and drought. Papua New Guinea has not been able to achieve any of the Millennium Development Goals and significant change will be required if the new Sustainable Development Goals are to be achieved by 2030.
2. *Change readiness* – Strong readiness for change requires a robust political consensus on the need for change; this is not clearly evident in Papua New Guinea. With elections due in June 2017, there is a limited window for building sufficient momentum on reform to drive action by the elected government. Even if the election does not lead to a change in prime minister and dominant party, recent elections in Papua New Guinea have seen a greater-than-50-percent turnover in elected officials.<sup>69</sup> Any reform will have to be designed around the impact of this level of change.
3. *Trigger opportunity* – Papua New Guinea is seeking to more clearly find its place in the world; this is generating opportunities for strengthening the national identity 40 years on from independence and, in turn, is creating trigger opportunities for civil service reform. When asked in interviews about the good news amongst the many challenges, civil servants and other stakeholders in Port Moresby consistently referenced the hosting of the Pacific Islands Forum, and particularly the Pacific Games in 2015, as evidence of the ability of the civil service to work together to make a difference. Papua New Guinea has been selected to host APEC in 2018; this represents an interagency implementation challenge for a fragmented civil service. While successfully hosting APEC does not absolutely require reform, as a special one-off effort could be made by local and international bureaucrats to get it across the line, the opportunity will be wasted if it is not used as a platform for initiating, focusing and giving momentum to sustainable change.
4. *Reform leadership* – The presence of political and civil service leaders with genuine passion and vision for change strongly suggests that Papua New Guinea does have a Reform Moment. The ability of such officials to speak frankly about the challenges and barriers, urgently about the need for change and passionately about the required changes shows the real potential for reform and the level of challenge in gaining momentum. These leaders will have to harness a

*"Knowing there is a problem is not enough if there is not a trigger for change."*

69. Discussions with public officials in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 13-15 January 2016

trigger opportunity in order to establish a strong focus and line up the right mandate for change to capture the Reform Moment. Their hand will be strengthened by an increasing focus on the role of women in leadership roles in the Papua New Guinea civil service.

Focus is critical for reform in Papua New Guinea. The scale of the challenge is daunting and any attempt to move on every front at once has little chance of success. The resources that can be applied to change are also limited and need to be used selectively. This will require identifying the few critical things that have the potential to be changed in this Reform Moment and accepting that other problems will have to wait to be fixed.

Papua New Guinea is obviously an environment in which extrinsic and intrinsic motivation will matter for improving civil service performance and driving reform. The accountability framework has been strengthened through legislative changes to introduce some performance-based contracts and through central monitoring of performance on key results.<sup>70</sup> These extrinsic incentives are required, but civil servants need to listen to the people and work in close partnership with politicians, as this collaboration and co-production will not be driven by incentives alone.

The current range of loosely connected change activities needs to be bundled into a reform endeavour that seriously considers how to generate passion for change in the Papua New Guinea civil service. A trigger opportunity, like APEC in 2018, may help reform leaders to narrow the focus, harness enthusiasm and align the required decision makers around the changes to be made.

Change will be difficult and the current vicious cycles of low expectations and apathy will be hard to break. The Papua New Guinea civil service is trying to take the opportunity to engage and excite current and future civil service leaders and to build a virtuous cycle of confidence and trust between civil servants, politicians and citizens. Their success in moving towards this destination will be a determining factor in Papua New Guinea's hopes of achieving their Sustainable Development Goals in 2030 and their national vision for 2050. Harnessing the intrinsic motivation of civil servants matters if Papua New Guinea Vision is to become a smart, wise, fair and happy society, ranked in the top 50 in the UNDP's Human Development Index.

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<sup>70</sup>. Discussions with public officials in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 13-15 January 2016



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