The UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence promotes better appreciation of the key role public service plays in achieving development goals.

By acting as UNDP’s catalyst for new thinking and action, the Centre furthers public service excellence in developing countries through promoting effective reform, evidence, and collaboration.

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“… One of Singapore’s most recent contributions to thought leadership and knowledge sharing is through the UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence (GCPSE). Through the GCPSE, Singapore is helping to empower policymakers from around the world to explore new development approaches and frontiers in responding to the increasing and evolving demands and needs of their constituents, and building capacities for an effective 21st century public service. The role of the GCPSE will become increasingly important as the full attainment of the new Sustainable Development Goals will require effective, accountable and transparent institutions and a motivated public service, as well as responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.”

From the speech by Michelle Gyles-McDonnough (UNDP Resident Representative for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam) at the launch on 31 October 2015 of 50 Years Of Singapore And The United Nations, a book edited by Ambassador-at-Large Tommy Koh.
2015 Highlights

Influencing

Hosted high level visits including from:

- Saulos Chilima, Vice-President of Malawi;
- Sheikha Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasimi, Minister for International Cooperation and Development, UAE;
- Jean-Paul Adam, Minister for Finance, Trade and the Blue Economy of Seychelles;
- Ahsan Iqbal, the Minister for Planning, Development & Reform from Pakistan;
- Khamchan Vongseneboun, Deputy Minister for Planning and Investment of Laos;
- Idris Jala, Chief Executive of the Performance Management & Delivery Unit, Malaysia;
- the Mayors of Kingston (Jamaica), Windhoek (Namibia) and Peshawar (Pakistan);
- the heads of Royal Civil Service Commission of Bhutan, the Public Service Commission of Kenya.

Received visits from senior Singapore government officials including 2nd Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the former Head of the Singapore Civil Service; the Group President, GIC and former Head of the Singapore Civil Service; and from the High Commissioners/Ambassadors of Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Rwanda, South Africa and the UK;

Advising

Supported South-South learning through knowledge sharing and event partnerships, with international agencies (Commonwealth Local Government Forum, Regional Hub for Civil Service in Astana, OECD-DAC, UN Global Pulse, the IAB, ADB). This included holding a preparatory meeting for the 2015 Human Development Report;

Advised visiting delegations of senior government officials from Georgia, Laos, Malawi, Kazakhstan, Oe-Couss (Timor-Leste), Nepal, Pakistan, Russian Federation and Seychelles on public servants’ motivation, public service excellence, anti-corruption initiatives and Agenda 2030; the Deputy Commissioner, New Zealand State Service Commission; the Chairman of the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana; the Director of USAID’s Center for of Excellence for Democracy, Human Rights and Governance and the chair of the Kenyan Public Service Commission;

Supported a wide range of UNDP country offices (including Armenia, Bahrain, Belarus, Bhutan, Cape Verde, Georgia, Egypt, Ivory Coast, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Myanmar, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Pacific MCO, Pakistan, Philippines, South Africa, Timor-Leste and Uzbekistan), Regional Bureaux (Addis Ababa, Amman and Fiji), Global Centres and Headquarters;
Presented our research at major international conferences and workshops on:

- Public Servants’ Motivation and Agenda 2030;
- Work in the Public Service of the Future;
- Cities2030: Vision, Leadership and Public Service Excellence; and
- Leadership, Foresight & Excellence in Public Service.

Organised and facilitated strategic foresight (foresightXchange) workshops, in close collaboration with UNDP Country Offices, in:

- The Africa Region (involving 12 African nations) in South Africa
- Mauritius for the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms
- Maldives for the Ministry of Finance and Treasury and the Maldives Civil Service Commission
- The Pacific Region (involving 10 Small Island Developing States),
- Central Asia (involving participating countries of the Regional Hub for Civil Service),
- as well as at UNDP Headquarters;

linked to national development planning, SDG implementation, resilience, the future of work in the public service, public service innovation and civil service reform.

Collaborated with Nanyang Technological University (on complexity; East-West dynamics); National University of Singapore (NUS)’s Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (on public service motivation), and the NUS Institute of Systems Science (on e-Governance);

Singapore’s representative addressing the UN General Assembly in September 2015 cited planned collaboration with GCPSE as a contribution to delivering the Sustainable Development Goals, jointly offering leadership programmes on good governance and public sector institutions for senior officials from other countries, under the Singapore Cooperation Programme of Singapore’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Co-hosted with OECD-DAC the Effective Institutions Platform (EIP) Annual Meeting which brought together representatives from over 35 low- and middle-income countries and 40 institutional EIP members including oversight institutions, civil society, finance ministries, civil service commissions and development partners. Participants identified common challenges to strengthening public sector institutions and the EIP’s role as a multi-stakeholder platform in the implementation of Agenda 2030.

Strong collaboration with the Astana Hub was established, including a joint work programme (joint publication on Meritocracy, research on Public Service Motivation as well as support for an EIP Peer-to-peer Learning Alliance), and the GCPSE Director’s membership on the editorial board of the ACSH Journal.
Organised the Cities2030: Vision, Leadership and Public Service Excellence Workshop jointly with the Commonwealth Local Government Forum and the Centre for Liveable Cities, which convened Mayors and officials from Commonwealth cities in Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, the Pacific and South Asia to discuss strategies for successfully implementing SDG 11 Agenda 2030;

Partnered the Parmenides Centre for the Study of Thinking (University of Munich, Germany) in the potential for applying Cognostics – the science of helping the human brain cope with decision-making in complex contexts - to public sector reform at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government and at the Malaysian Foresight Institute;

Disseminated research and findings at global and regional conferences including the Global Transformation Forum (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), Astana Economic Forum (Astana, Kazakhstan), MENAPAR Conference (Tunis, Tunisia), UNDP Regional Conference on Public Administration in the Arab States (Amman, Jordan), ASEAN Heads of Civil Service Retreat (Putrajaya, Malaysia), and the Nanyang Technological University Conference (Singapore);

Hosted global thought leaders - Professor Albrecht von Müller (on Cognostics, complexity and strategic thinking), Professor James Perry (on Public Service Motivation), Phil Mason (on Anti-corruption), Julia Middleton (on leadership and cultural intelligence); as well as ‘thinker-practitioners’ from UNDP Pakistan and UNDP Uzbekistan - to present talks and symposia on their subjects at the Singapore Centre;

Celebrated 50 years of Singapore’s independence with the publication of a well-received monograph on the work of the economist and UN Adviser, Dr Albert Winsemius, to the development of Singapore. The launch event heard reminiscences from former staff of Singapore’s Economic Development Board who worked with Dr Winsemius in the 1960s and 1970s. The monograph has been widely disseminated by Singapore’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs through its Embassies, High Commissions and Missions;

Agreed the 2nd phase of funding with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Singapore, with new funding for leadership training. The Centre also secured financial support from:

- the OECD-DAC as the co-secretariat for the Effective Institutions Platform
- co-funded activities with UNDP Country Offices in Kazakhstan, Malawi and Pakistan;
- global funds, for foresight;
Produced and disseminated externally reviewed knowledge products, including:

- five discussion and three working papers,
- two Notes on Excellence in Public Service and
- thirty-four issues of the weekly Raffles Review;

Issued regular newsletters, leaflets, blog-posts, social media updates communiqués and online publications summarising the Centre's work;

Facilitated UNDP media-appearances on BBC and Channel News Asia's news programmes;

Published:

- an op-ed piece written by the Director in The Straits Times on ‘New Public Passion’,
- two peer-reviewed articles in
  - the International Journal of Civil Service Reform and Practice and
  - the Asian Journal of Public Administration; and an article in
  - Devex, on how Singapore build effective public service institutions.

The editor of the world’s premier peer-reviewed public administration journal, Public Administration Review, commissioned a ‘think-piece’ from GCPSE.

The Centre’s launch of the Winsemius monograph on the occasion of Singapore’s 50th anniversary of independence was covered in Singapore’s national media;

Welcomed three members of the UNDP Global Anti-Corruption Initiative (GAIN) team to their new base in the Singapore Centre;

Hosted visits from UNDP Uzbekistan, UNDP Pakistan and the Astana Hub on short “practitioner-in-residence” assignments;

Supervised internships by two students from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy;

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A participant’s view of the Centre’s foresightXchange workshop:

“[A]…very, very innovative and insightful way of identifying and formulating policies/plans that can address many of our developmental challenges.”

Floyd Lala, Assistant Secretary, UN/EU, AE branch –
Foreign Aid Division, Papua New Guinea.
The Centre’s Purpose

The GCPSE was established in 2012 to act as UNDP’s catalyst for new thinking, strategy and action in the area of public service; promoting innovation, evidence, and collaboration.

GCPSE has built up four themes emerging from the ‘Singapore Story’ to guide the Centre’s work to provide its framework and ‘theory of change’ for effective public service to deliver the SDGs:

1. political/administrative leadership,
2. public service motivation,
3. foresight / adaptive governance, and
4. public service innovation.

GCPSE continues to:

- Pursue research,
- Compile evidence,
- Prototype promising approaches in collaboration with UNDP offices and their partners at varying scales (national, regional, global) in order to catalyse new thinking and encourage innovative practices,
- Convene knowledge sharing events that support South-South Cooperation and Learning, leveraging expert-practitioners from a wide range of partner institutions,
- Maximise the impact and potential of its role as the Effective Institutions Platform co-secretariat with OECD-DAC,
- Offer support to UNDP Country Offices and partner governments, as appropriate,
- Collaborate with the UNDP anti-corruption team based in the Centre, and
- Start the realisation of Agenda 2030 by implementing the comprehensive MAPS Strategy of Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support on the SDGs, as endorsed by the UN Development Group to assist UN member countries.

In this, the Second Phase (2015-18) of the Centre’s work, GCPSE aims to make a tangible difference by helping UNDP and our partner countries to:

1. Build citizens’ trust in public service as fair and impartial.
2. Foster better appreciation of the key roles that the public service plays in every developing country for achieving development.
3. Act as a source for new thinking and action on public service excellence,
5. Question assumptions where the evidence suggests there is a case for re-examining development practice; and
6. Contribute to global research priorities on improving public service.
The Centre’s Ambition

The agreement by the member countries of the UN on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the UN General Assembly in September 2015 highlighted the importance of public service for development, for at least 11 of the 17 SDGs depend primarily on an effective public administration for attainment.

The ambition of the UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence is to assist public service become more effective in fast changing environments around the world. Profound social, economic, political and technological trends are re-shaping ways in which governments think and act, and the contexts they operate in. In parts of the global North, rising demand and financial constraints are driving a mix of austerity, innovation and the need to do more with less. In rapidly-growing parts of the global South, governments are responding to increasing populations and rising citizen expectations by building innovative service infrastructure that exploit new technologies to ‘leapfrog’ traditional service models. For parts of sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia, the politics of high debt and ‘Washington Consensus’ adjustment are evolving into new initiatives focused on institution-building, integrity and adaptive governance.

Each of these trends implies a different concept of ‘public service excellence.’ It also means a different relationship between citizen/taxpayer and the state, including between politicians, the public, civil service (meaning central ministries and sub-national equivalents), public services, and the people responsible for delivering them.

During the first phase of work (2012-15) at the Global Centre, GCPSE identified four relatively neglected but critical themes for development – motivation, leadership at the political/administrative interface, foresight and innovation in public services.

Research in Phase 1 also confirmed that public service is key to development. Yet how or why an impartial, ethical, fair and meritocratic public service comes about and how it can be promoted and fostered remains perhaps the biggest puzzle holding up international development.

Yet three preliminary findings from Phase 1 indicate that:

1. Development is hampered by the lack of a credible theory of change to explain how or why an “impartial, ethical, fair and meritocratic public service” comes about and how it can be promoted and fostered;
2. That excellence is embodied by an “impartial, ethical, fair and meritocratic public service”. It also explains citizens’ trust in government, which is essential for development and legitimacy, and how public service is experienced (co-creation) and actually delivered; and
3. The risk of a demoralised and demotivated public service (in both developing and developed countries) represents a potential crisis facing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

GCPSE at the UN General Assembly

Speaking at the UN General Assembly on 27 September 2015, Singapore’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, Vivian Balakrishnan, noted: “Many issues of sustainable development cannot be addressed unilaterally, and [require] renewed commitment and enhanced partnerships from all … As a responsible global citizen Singapore will continue to give back to the global community … Singapore will work with our friends to develop capacity … at the senior leadership level we will partner with the UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence to jointly offer leadership programmes on good governance and public sector institutions. Singapore will work with our friends to develop capacity … in the developing world.”
The Centre’s Impact

GCPSE aspires to promote new research and, where necessary, provide a challenge function, in support of UNDP’s work.

▶ The Human Development Report (HDR): In 2015 the Centre supported the HDR through a symposium, with international experts from the public, private and voluntary sectors, on *Work in the Public Service of the Future*. Key questions the meeting addressed were: (i) What will work in the public service of the future be like? (ii) How much will public administration differ from today? and, (iii) What skills and attitudes will be required of the public servant of the future? We aim to continue working closely with the HDR Office to address emergent themes from the perspective of public service reform and delivery.

GCPSE developed and promoted new thinking on:

▶ Urbanisation: A UNDP strategy paper on *Inclusive Urbanisation in the Asia-Pacific* (2013) indicated that urbanisation linked to economic growth was transforming the region. Subsequently the SDG 11 targeted, among other things, enhancing the prospects of inclusive and sustainable urbanisation. Yet the emphasis on urban governance has remained relatively low. The success of the *Singapore Story* demonstrates that urban governance is inextricably linked to the welfare of the city’s population and underpins the performance of all investments in infrastructure and service delivery, and that participation and civic engagement are critical for good governance. The Centre has been working with organisations like the Commonwealth Local Government Forum, Singapore’s Centre for Liveable Cities and the Mayor’s Offices of various cities to help embed foresight-informed, innovative and participatory approaches in order to achieve higher quality of service delivery and more inclusive governance.

▶ Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) for development: Public-Private Partnerships can help to increase the access of the poor to basic services such as water, waste, energy, education and health by promoting inclusive partnerships between local government, business and communities. Yet PPPs can be beguiling. While PPPs allow governments to share the costs and risks of essential investment with the private sector, who really benefits in the long-term? Are such arrangements between private investors and the government in the long-term national interest? Are public service officials really more incompetent than private sector staff, or are they limited by multiple, complex and conflicting aims, not merely the ‘bottom line’? A forthcoming think-piece raises points to consider.

▶ Cognostics: The Centre worked closely with the Parmenides Institute to introduce public service and UNDP officials to the emerging field of “Cognostics”. Cognostics is the science of helping the brain cope with complexity. The aim is to develop pathways to apply it to the field of public sector reform and SDG implementation. GCPSE developed state, civil service and reform typologies and, prototyping them using EIDOS, the decision-making software developed by the Parmenides Foundation, sought to develop a ‘reform decision-making tool’ that would clarify the trade-offs of reform options for policy makers.
Peer to Peer Learning Alliances: Despite widespread reform efforts, knowledge about public sector reform in general and knowledge about public sector reforms in context remains limited. The traditional emphasis on standard solutions and best practice is giving way to more context aware problem-driven approaches. The Centre worked on piloting Peer-to-Peer Learning Alliances (P2P-LA) on large public sector reform. The pilot initiatives was guided by the research undertaken through the Effective Institutions Platform, which developed a user-friendly guide to help development partners in conceptualising effective peer-to-peer support and learning in the public sector.

New Public Passion: Implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) depends on effective public service, and public services. Yet, almost everywhere, public service appears in crisis. Morale and motivation in the public sector has declined in many countries across both the developed and developing worlds. Public servants seem to have little trust in their own leadership. The extent of this crisis within public administration is unclear, yet the evidence suggests that in many countries it needs to be acknowledged as potentially a major challenge to the achievement of the SDGs. Reversing several decades of decline in public service will require ‘New Public Passion’ (NPP) through job enrichment, co-creation and credible leadership that values effective public service. The Centre’s recent working and discussion papers on the subject set the scene for how to address these topics, and support delivery of the SDGs through public service excellence driven by strong commitment to the public good.

Foresight: The Centre’s eight foresight events in 2015, and the diversity of their scope and potential impact, allowed the Centre to further deepen the theoretical underpinnings of its approach, to test and contextualise its application to public service organisations in developing countries and to explain “foresight for development”. This emphasised the benefits for developing countries of the ‘creative’ process of imagining alternative futures, incorporate strengthening local foresight capacity, applying foresight methodologies as a crucial ‘visioning’ and ‘ground preparing’ activity before more technical interventions, such as reform, innovation and skills development, for instance, in imaging the future public service as in the Maldives and Mauritius and the future public servant in Kazakhstan).
Moreover, the Centre was able to identify and further explore the multiple advantages that foresight offered to UNDP Country Offices. In some cases, it enabled existing Country Programmes to provide new impetus to activities that were losing some momentum or risked getting stuck (e.g. in the case of both foresight activities in the Maldives). Other Country Offices productively used the Centre’s ‘foresight service offering’ to position themselves in the evolving development market for (higher) middle income countries, as in the case of Mauritius. Regional partners such as PIFS in Fiji and ACSH in Kazakhstan collaborated with the Centre’s expertise on foresight.

Foresight not only proved its worth as a vital public service capacity to adapt flexibly in a rapidly changing world; it also turned out to provide a new impetus to existing and new development activities. These insights suggested important preconditions for further research, codification and guidance on operationalisation by UNDP at large. For example, it showed its potential value in planning processes such as UNDAF, project development and implementation, innovation and different kinds of collaborations with partner governments, especially in middle income countries. So on Strategic foresight approaches, the Centre continued with partner Government institutions, to document findings and experiences.

‒ Agenda 2030: The SDGs spell out a set of universal Global Goals that represent the complexity of the development agenda. What, however, the 2030 Agenda does not provide insights into how the Goals will in practice be delivered. The vital role of the public service is simply assumed away. The complaint that governments do not deliver because civil servants are unmotivated and don’t perform, has an obvious solution, which is: reward officials for performance – not just or even primarily financially, but through ‘job enrichment’: as in Singapore in the early years after independence, making sure everyone in public service knows why their job matters for national development.

GCPSE’s Theory of Change

The GCPSE theory of change is that development requires public service excellence – which is

‒ Adaptive, impartial and merit-based;
‒ Able to build citizens’ trust
‒ Empowers the state by implementing incremental reform through continuous learning; and
‒ Avoids the ‘Tyranny of Normative Expertise’.
The research suggested the following key questions that GCPSE hopes to tackle during the 2nd phase of its work:

‣ How does a public service that is impartial, based on ability, and promotes continuous learning and incremental change – become institutionalised?

‣ How can public service best innovate and change, using new technology and addressing citizen expectations?

‣ To what extent do public servants have the capabilities that equip them for different ways of working that are emerging?

‣ Are governments doing enough to build professional expertise, underpinned by regulatory and policy-making competence, that creates motivating careers in public service?

‣ Do reformers simply want to rush into “effective” technocratic solutions, or do they recognise the importance of trust, legitimacy and fairness by public service explicitly upholding public good and the interests of future generations?

‣ How, in turn, can these underlying principles inspire future reform strategies - where cautious incrementalism and ‘learning by doing’, is much more likely to succeed than ‘big bang’ reform?

‣ And, whilst New Public Management (NPM) and other more traditional thinking on bureaucracy are clearly well past their usefulness, where is new conceptualisation of effective institutions going to come from?
While the Centre is an independent entity, GCPSE’s vision of public service excellence is inspired by the success of the Singapore Story, which continues to attract justified attention from around the world. The Centre’s location in Singapore is a strong attraction for visitors keen to learn from Singapore’s achievements, and for engaging government, academic institutions, think tanks and the private sector in sharing public service innovation.

The Centre, generously co-funded by the Government of Singapore, is therefore pleased that it continues to work effectively with partners in Singapore and remains grateful for the active goodwill and collaboration received, including the invaluable inputs of two excellent secondees to the Centre from Singapore’s public service.

The Centre is particularly grateful for the support from its key partners, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Public Service Division, the Economic Development Board, Civil Service College, Centre for Liveable Cities, and from academic institutions such as Singapore University of Technology and Design’s Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities, the Nanyang Technological University’s Nanyang Centre for Public Administration, and the National University of Singapore’s Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and the Institute for South Asian Studies.

The 2015 highlights in the Centre’s collaboration included:

- Publishing a monograph titled UNDP and the Making of Singapore’s Public Service: Lessons from Albert Winsemius, to mark over fifty years of cooperation between Singapore and the UNDP. Almost 4000 copies of the publication are being distributed worldwide through Singapore’s missions abroad and the Civil Service College.
- Singapore’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs request to jointly run with GCPSE leadership programmes on good governance and public sector institutions for senior officials from other countries, under the Singapore Cooperation Programme of the MFA. An announcement to this effect was made at UNGA in September 2015.
- The Centre for Liveable Cities, in partnership with the Commonwealth Local Government Forum and the Centre organised a workshop on Cities2030: Vision, Leadership and Public Service Excellence which explored how political and administrative spheres of leadership intersect to handle the complexity of the urban system and ways to reform governance models to deliver SDG 11 on urbanisation.
- The Centre collaborated with the NTU on complexity research and East-West dynamics, and with the NUS’s Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy on public service motivation in low and middle-income countries.

University of Technology and Design’s Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities, the Nanyang Technological University’s Nanyang Centre for Public Administration, and the National University of Singapore’s Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and the Institute for South Asian Studies.
At the January 2015 meeting the Centre’s Board, approved the 2015 workplan and the new budget. The Centre’s four core thematic areas of leadership, motivation, foresight and innovation in public service, 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 underpinned the Centre’s thematic priorities and activities in Phase 1 (2012-15) has also helped it establish and develop a profile that is distinct from other UN agencies and UNDP Centres while adding value and depth to the UNDP’s democratic governance and sustainable development mandates.

GCPSE’s 2015 activities started off with the Centre hosting a group of up and coming political leaders from several Asian countries, as part of the Konrad Adenauer School for Young Politicians (KASYP) 2015-16 programme. KASYP is a political training programme of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation to strengthen political parties and develop a cadre of accountable and responsible young political leaders. A short presentation on the Centre’s work and objectives was followed by a private screening of a critically acclaimed film that focused on themes such as corruption, leadership, power, governance and ethics. After the screening, participants shared their thoughts on these themes and discussed their experiences as young leaders in their respective countries.

In March the Centre partnered with the Parmenides Centre for the Study of Thinking (at the University of Munich), to present a workshop on new ways of dealing with complexity and pervasive structural change, decision-making and strategy development in a complex public service environment. This two-and-half day event, hosted by the Malaysian Foresight Institute, introduced public service and UNDP officials to the emerging field of “cognostics” and the EIDOS tool, developed by by Parmenides Foundation. Later that week Professor Albrecht von Müller, Director of the Parmenides Centre, also led a workshop in Singapore.

A joint meeting was also held at the Kennedy School, Harvard University in December, chaired by Professor Merilee Grindle. Proceedings at these events agreed on the the importance of public service reforms for achieving the SDGs, and the complex decision-making involved in prioritising among 169 SDG targets. They highlighted the Centre’s role in helping UNDP and partner countries embrace public service innovation, building citizen’s trust in public services, creating knowledge networks and contributing to global research on public service reform and agreed on further collaboration to operationalise a toolkit.
In March, the Centre hosted a symposium on **Leadership, Foresight and Excellence in Public Service** which explored how leadership at the political-administrative interface affects the effectiveness of institutions and how the alignment of political and administrative leadership, political vision and public service foresight to create an effective public service, can be best supported by the UNDP. The workshop convened a select group of expert thinker-practitioners including Maryantonnett Flumian (Canada), Professor Margaret Kobia (Kenya), Lim Song Guan (Singapore), Graham Teskey (Australia), Professor Albrecht von Mueller (Parmenides Foundation, Germany) and Martin Alessandro (Consultant, formerly IADB). The event also heard from the Vice-President of Malawi and senior members of the Malawian Public Service Reform Commission. The event concluded leadership training on practical ways to build trust between elected representatives and officials was required.

The Centre, in partnership with UNDP Malawi supported the launch of the Public Service Reforms Programme in 2014 and assisted the Malawian Public Service Reform Commission draw up its report. In 2015 this was followed by a visit to Singapore by the Vice-President Saulos Chilima, the Cabinet Secretary and other top officials to investigate how to implement the reforms needed as an important step towards promoting an effective and efficient public service. The Centre hosted the delegation and facilitated briefings and meetings with a wide range of international experts, Singaporean officials and the staff at GCPSE. The delegation's visit ended with the signing of a letter of intent, confirming GCPSE's and the Government of Malawi's commitment to collaborate on implementing Malawian public service reform.

In May, colleague Laura Rivera (UNDP El Salvador) visited the Centre to present the challenges faced by her country and the state of the public service in the small Central American nation. El Salvador is struggling to generate jobs, ensure personal security and inclusive growth for its citizens. The effectiveness of its civil service will be an essential component to the success of any efforts at reform being undertaken there. The meeting benefited from the presence of several leading thinkers and reform practitioners from France, India, Malaysia, the UK and the Gambia who provided our UNDP colleague with ideas and reflections on what might add value to the public service reform work that UNDP is supporting in El Salvador.

**GCPSE in the Middle East**

- The GCPSE was fortunate to secure, under the Kuwait JPO Scheme, the services of Nouf Alammari
- The Centre participated in the UNDP Regional Conference on Public Administration (Amman, Jordan) and at the 2nd Middle East and North Africa Public Administration Research (MENAPAR) Conference (Tunis, Tunisia)
- The Centre has started the process of translating its key knowledge products into Arabic for online publication.
Following a scoping mission earlier in the year, the Centre teamed up with the Maldives’ Ministry of Finance and Treasury to use strategic foresight to map out the National Development Strategy for the island nation. Fifty ministry and government agency officials came together for three days on the Strategic Foresight for National Development Planning event to actively learn and apply strategic foresight for the development of vision, cross-sectoral scenarios and resilient policies for the National Development Strategy.

Soon after this event, the Maldives Civil Service Commission and the Centre joined forces for a foresightXchange workshop for the formulation of the new Strategic Plan for the Maldives Civil Service. The workshop identified external trends and organisational drivers, explored possible futures within which the civil service has to do its job, and laid the groundwork for an inspirational, appropriate and realistic vision for the Civil Service. Subsequently, different strategies and activities were tested for their resilience in achieving the vision in different futures, providing the agile building blocks of the new Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

In May 2015 the Centre, in partnership with the Public Service Division of the Prime Minister’s Office of Singapore, convened a workshop on Work in the Public Service of the Future featuring international experts from the public, private and voluntary sectors and international development practitioners. This workshop continued the Public Service Post-2015 (PSP-2015) series of events organised by the Centre with various partners, looking at public service beyond the 2015 target date of the Millennium Development Goals.

This workshop was held to support the 2015 Human Development Report “Rethinking Work for Human Development”. Some of the questions that the workshop sought to address were:

- How will motives and aspirations shape the quality, delivery and experience of public services?
- Will the future of work in the public service be the same for developed and developing nations, or will there be divergent, equally valid ‘futures’?
- Could approaches like New Public Passion hold the key to producing engaged and motivated public officials of the future?

These questions underscore the urgent need for a rethink of assumptions and new approaches to how policy should be designed and public servants can be motivated to deliver more efficient, effective and sustainable public services.

The Centre supported the UNDP Administrator’s participation in the 2015 Astana Economic Forum. The director addressed the Forum on the topic of meritocracy and, in partnership with the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana (ACSH), organised a foresightXchange workshop titled Strategic Foresight: Shaping the Future Civil Servant of 2030 with civil service representatives from Central Asian countries. This event explored the disruptive force of technology and demographics.
on the future of work in the public sector in Central Asia. By examining different scenarios for technology in society and in the public sector, a new profile of the civil servant of the future emerged, with a significantly different skill and competency set. The results were presented at a workshop on Civil Service Excellence at the UN in New York, organised by the Kazakhstan Permanent Mission to the UN and the ACSH.

On 20 August 2015, to mark the occasion of Singapore’s completing 50 years as a nation, the Centre published a monograph on the contribution of Dr Albert Winsemius to the development of Singapore’s public service. Dr Winsemius worked for UNDP’s predecessor organisation (Extended Programme of Technical Assistance, EPTA) and led the first Industrial Survey Mission to Singapore in 1960. He subsequently served as an adviser to the Singapore Government for over two decades. The event at the Centre was attended by former EDB chairman, Ngiam Tong Dow who shared his reminiscences of working closely with Dr Winsemius in the 1960s and 1970s, with the invited audience; and NUS senior fellow in economics, Lee Soo Ann, commented on the impact of Dr Winsemius work on Singapore’s development.

Also in August, our colleague Aziza Umarova (UNDP, Uzbekistan) visited the Centre as part of our Thinker-Practitioner in Residence programme. As part of the visit, Aziza led a webinar on Making Reform Happen: Catalysing Change in a Complex Environment, covering Uzbekistan’s recent reform initiatives on public finance management (PFM), decentralisation, public service delivery and motivation of public servants. Aziza also introduced the UNDP projects aimed at supporting specific reform initiatives in Uzbekistan, including plans for developing medium- and long-term strategies for civil service modernisation, improving local government performance, increasing citizen participation in local governance, and supporting accountability and transparency.

The Director was invited to judge the Second ASEAN Youth Debates on Human Rights held in Singapore on 5-6 September. The event was organised by the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), with support from the Singaporean and Norwegian Ministries of Foreign Affairs, and held at Tembusu College, National University of Singapore.

The Strategic Foresight for Resilient Island States in the Pacific event in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea was organised as a side event to the 46th Pacific Islands Leaders’ Meeting in September. The meeting took note that Pacific Islands are at the forefront of adapting to new realities and of realising sustainable development in an increasingly complex and volatile environment. The event
introduced participants to strategic foresight and ways in which this can be used in the Pacific to enable governments and national institutions in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to seize emerging opportunities and respond more effectively to incipient challenges.

The second regional foresightXchange was in collaboration with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat in Fiji, and titled Pacific foresightXchange: “Resilience for New Realities”. The event saw SIDS decision makers and policy planners explore new ways of strategic thinking using strategic foresight as well as innovative ways for planning and policy design that could improve resilience and national adaptability to change. This workshop also marked the soft-launch of the Effective Institutions Platform (EIP) Peer-to-Peer Learning Alliance on Foresight and Resilience in SIDS.

Since 2014, the Centre has served as the Joint Secretariat with the OECD of the Effective Institutions Platform (EIP). The Joint Secretariat is responsible for: (a) the development of the EIP as an organisation, (b) the delivery of the EIP programme activities, and (c) catalysing trends and identifying of thematic areas and external networks of relevance to the EIP.

In August the Centre participated in the meeting of the EIP Advisory Group – the representative body that guides and oversees the operations of the platform and advises on its strategic direction. In November the Centre hosted the Annual Meeting of the EIP, which was held for the first time in Asia. The meeting brought together 40 members, from over 35 countries, with participation from both low income and middle income countries, including representatives from oversight institutions, civil society, finance ministries, civil service commissions and development partners.

The keynote speeches were delivered by Dato’ Sri Idris Jala, Chief Executive of PEMANDU, Malaysia, and Professor James Perry, Distinguished Professor of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University. The meeting marked a turning point for the Platform in enabling participants to identify common challenges in strengthening public sector institutions and exchanging ideas on how to face them, laying out the Platform’s priorities for the year ahead. Members expressed strong interest and demand for peer learning activities on topics such as strengthening accountability eco-systems, making institutions more inclusive, encouraging motivation in the public sector and understanding what Sustainable Development Goal 16 means at the country level.
The Centre, in partnership with the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) and the Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC), hosted a two-day event on Cities2030: Vision, Leadership and Public Service Excellence. This consultative workshop brought together mayors and officials from Commonwealth cities in Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, the Pacific and South Asia for an in-depth discussion on the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Among senior officials attending the meeting, were the Mayors of Kingston (Jamaica), Windhoek (Namibia) and Peshawar (Pakistan). It explored how the political and administrative spheres of leadership intersect to handle the complexity of the urban system and ways to reform governance models to address the new Sustainable Development goal on urban development (SDG 11). At the event CLGF launched a new Commonwealth Sustainable Cities Network (CSCN) which will continue to engage urban leaders from across the Commonwealth and partner agencies on the 2030 Agenda, particularly SDG 11.

November 2015 also saw the next in the series of the Centre’s events on the Public Service Post-2015 theme – a conference titled Motivation in Public Service - What’s Next for Developing Countries? Building on the Centre’s earlier events and published knowledge products on Public Service Motivation, the forum brought together a diverse group of top professionals working in the area to rigorously examine the topic of motivation of public officials from academic, government and international development perspectives. Speakers at the conference included Professor James Perry, Dr Philip Keefer (Principal Economic Advisor, Inter-American Development Bank), Karma Tshiteem, (Chairman, Royal Civil Service Commission, Kingdom of Bhutan) and Peck-Kem Low (Chief HR Officer, Public Service Division, Prime Minister’s Office, Singapore).

A key outcome of the meeting was the identification of research directions and practical interventions by government or international development agencies in relation to successful implementation of the SDGs. A half-day, UNDP-internal workshop followed the conference, which provided an opportunity to delve further into the implications of global developments on motivation of public officials for SDG programming in general and the governance work of the UNDP in particular. Seeking to answer the question, What does this mean for UNDP? Colleagues from Country Offices, Regional Centres and Headquarters explored the immediate programming relevance of Agenda 2030 and found clarity on actionable steps that could be taken.
The Civil Service of Mauritius has great ambitions for its national development, including the attainment of high incomes status as a country, and it believes that one of the key steps in that progression is a significant role of innovation in the civil service. In this foresightXchange workshop held in Balaclava, Mauritius titled Towards an Innovative Public Service and partnered by UNDP Mauritius and the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms, Government of Mauritius, the Centre's foresight experts shared the potential of applying strategic foresight and service design futures approaches in the process of planning for Mauritius's national development.

The Centre organised a design workshop, in partnership with the Ash Center at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, on The Complexity of Public Service Reform, which had the noted author and political scientist Professor Merilee Grindle as a speaker. Discussions at the workshop emphasised the importance of public service reforms for achieving the SDGs, the complex decision-making involved in prioritising among 169 targets. It also highlighted the Centre's role in helping UNDP and partner countries in public service innovation, building citizen's trust in public services, creating knowledge networks and contributing to global research on public service reform.

The final foresight related event that the Centre participated in was the Africa foresightXchange held in Johannesburg, South Africa, and organised in partnership with the UNDP Regional Service Centre (Addis Ababa), the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) and UNDP South Africa. Government officials and development practitioners from twelve African countries came together to discuss the practice and potential of using strategic foresight, the need for adopting inclusive visioning, resilient planning and public innovation for development in the region.
Visitors to the Centre

In 2015 the Centre received visits from various dignitaries, including:

- **Saulos Chilima**, Vice-President of Malawi, visited the Centre heading a delegation from the Malawian Public Service and signed, with the GCPSE Director, a Letter of Intent, confirming UNDP GCPSE and the Government of Malawi's commitment to collaborate on implementing public service reform in Malawi.

- **Sheikha Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasimi**, Minister of International Cooperation and Development of the United Arab Emirates was an honoured guest of the Centre in November. The Sheikha's discussions with the Director covered an introduction to the Centre and areas of future cooperation, which included the possibility of developing partnerships between the UAE and UNDP on aspects of Public Service Excellence.

- **Jean-Paul Adam**, Minister for Finance, Trade and the Blue Economy of Seychelles visited the Centre in March with the aim of exploring ideas for collaboration with UNDP on Public Service Excellence. The Minister briefed on UNDP GCPSE's thematic focus areas, including its work in promoting the application of foresight to address the complex challenges faced by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and to increase their resilience.

- **Professor Ahsan Iqbal**, Pakistan's Minister for Planning, Development and Reform visited the Centre in March. During the interactions, the Pakistani delegation were briefed on Public Sector Reform & Challenges: The Singapore Experience by Mr. David Ma, a former senior official of the Civil Service College, Singapore.

- **Khamchan Vongseneboun**, the Deputy Minister for Planning and Investment of Laos was an honoured visitor to the Centre;

- **Dato’ Sri Idris Jala**, Chief Executive of Performance Management & Delivery Unit, Malaysia was the keynote speaker at the Effective Institutions Platform Annual Meeting that the Centre co-hosted in November;

- The Mayors: **Angela Burke Brown** of Kingston (Jamaica), **Musesee Kazapua** of Windhoek (Namibia), and **Muhammad Asim Khan** of Peshawar (Pakistan) were guests of the Centre at the **Cities2030: Vision, Leadership and Public Service Excellence** event.
The Centre also played host to senior Singapore government officials including:

- **Albert Chua** (2nd Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs),
- **Peter Ho** (Senior Advisor to the Centre for Strategic Futures and former Head of the Singapore MFA and Civil Service) *(pictured)*, and
- **Lim Siong Guan** (Group President, GIC and former Head of the Singapore Civil Service);

The High Commissioners/Ambassadors of Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Kuwait, The Netherlands, Pakistan, Rwanda, South Africa and the UK; and a delegation from the Public Service Development Agency of Georgia also attended events at the Centre this year.

**The Astana Hub**

Visits by the Chairman of the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana, Kazakhstan, Alikhan Baimenov *(pictured)*, Yernar Zharkeshkov (Project Manager/Head of Research Team) and Daniyar Nurmakhatov (Project Expert), consolidated excellent working relations.

**Thinker-Practitioners at the Centre**

The Centre was pleased to welcome the following ‘Emeritus Fellows’ and ‘Practitioners in Residence’ this year:

- **Henry Kippin**, Director of Collaborate, a leading think-tank on Public Sector Reform, visited the Centre twice this year, and wrote a discussion paper on Collaborative Capacity in Public Service Delivery that was published by the Centre; *(pictured)*
- **Aziza Umarova** (Programme Officer for Democratic Governance, UNDP Uzbekistan);
- **Shakeel Ahmad** (Assistant Country Director and Chief, Development Policy Unit, UNDP Pakistan)

**Other visitors in 2015 included:**

- **Geoff Mulgan**, Chief Executive, Nesta,
- **Julia Middleton**, Founder and Chief Executive, Common Purpose, *(pictured)*
- **Phil Mason**, Senior Anti-Corruption Advisor, Department for International Development,
- **Sarah Billiald** (Managing Director) Collaborate.
The GCPSE Partnership Network

The Centre deepened organisational partnerships. 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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<tr>
<th>Name of organisation</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. ACSH - Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana, Kazakhstan</td>
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<td>2. Agence Française de Développement (AFD), France</td>
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<td>3. Ash Centre, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, USA</td>
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<td>4. Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Secretariat, Singapore</td>
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<td>7. Centre for Liveable Cities, Singapore</td>
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<td>9. Centre for Strategic Futures / Prime Minister’s Office, Singapore</td>
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<td>10. Centre for Public Service Innovation, South Africa</td>
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<td>11. Civil Service College International, Singapore</td>
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<td>13. Collaborate, United UK</td>
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<td>14. Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM), UK and Canada</td>
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<td>16. Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), UK</td>
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<td>17. Common Purpose Asia Pacific, Singapore</td>
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<td>18. Design Public / Center for Knowledge Societies (CKS), India</td>
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<td>19. Developmental Leadership Programme (DLP), UK</td>
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<td>20. Division for Public Administration and Development Management, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, USA</td>
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<td>27. Hawaii Research Center for Futures Studies (HRCFS) / University of Hawaii, USA</td>
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<td>29. Institute for Monitoring of Current Legislation, Uzbekistan</td>
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<td>33. Institute on Governance, Canada</td>
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<td>38. 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>39. Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSSP) / NUS, Singapore</td>
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<td>40. Lien Centre for Social Innovation / SMU, Singapore</td>
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<td>41. Malaysian Foresight Institute, Malaysia</td>
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<td>42. Maldives Civil Service Commission, Maldives</td>
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**Partnerships with other Global Policy Centres**

The Centre has strong collaboration with other UNDP Global Policy Centres. In January, the Director attended the “2015 Seoul Debates: Lessons Learnt on Anti-Corruption from Korea and Around the World” event held in South Korea.
Publications

The Centre launched the following knowledge products in 2015:

**Discussion papers**
- Collaborative Capacity in Public Service Delivery
- From Old Public Administration to the New Public Service
- Stewardship of the Future - Using Foresight in 21st Century Governance
- The SDGs and New Public Passion
- Meritocracy for Public Service Excellence
- Is the Private Sector more Efficient? A cautionary tale

**Notes on Public Service Excellence**
- From New Public Management to New Public Passion (Issue 1)
- Public Service Motivation and the SDGs - An unacknowledged crisis? (Issue 2)

**Working papers**
- Work in the Public Service of the Future
- Integrating Civil Service Reform with Decentralisation (Case Study: Pakistan)

**The Raffles Review** – a weekly literature review that summarises insights on public service matters to challenge assumptions and question the status quo:
- Issue 34 - Misunderstood Millennials
- Issue 33 - Adaptive Development to Preserve Power
- Issue 32 - Innovating for Reform from Within
- Issue 31 - From Reform to Transform
- Issue 30 - I serve, therefore I rightfully am?
- Issue 29 - Two sides of Public Service Motivation
- Issue 28 - To Compete or Complement?
- Issue 27 - Measuring Corruption
- Issue 26 - Pay for Performance or for Ability?
- Issue 25 - No-one left behind
- Issue 24 - Local Participation in Service Delivery
- Issue 23 - Trust and the SDGs
- Issue 22 - A Nudge or a Wink: Comply, or else?
- Issue 21 - Looking Back to Look Forward: What’s really New?
- Issue 20 - Never the twain shall meet?
- Issue 19 - Back office blues in the bureaucracy
- Issue 18 - PFM in Context
- Issue 17 - The Unacknowledged Crisis facing the SDGs
- Issue 16 - Getting Crafty with Public Administration
- Issue 15 - At the Other End of Engagement
The Foresight Manual
This manual features a selection of methods and techniques suited for framing development or policy discussions, carefully chosen from the many approaches that inform foresight and futures analysis. These span the gamut from long-term processes and quantitative data collection/analysis to participatory workshops and qualitative assessment of narratives.

A commemorative booklet
The Centre produced a monograph on the work of Dr Albert Winsemius, a UN Adviser to Singapore, to commemorate Singapore’s Golden Jubilee and celebrate over fifty years of cooperation between Singapore and the UNDP. Over 4000 copies of this publication were distributed worldwide through the GCPSE, Singapore’s diplomatic missions abroad and the Civil Service College. The monograph was included as a Masters’ level text for courses on Economics, History and Public Administration at the National University of Singapore.

A festive surprise!
To close the year’s publications, the Director authored a tongue-in-cheek cartoon pamphlet titled How to Demoralise the Public Service as a surprise ‘gift’ for the subscribers of our knowledge products for the year-end festive holidays. Originally a part of a speech to the annual meeting of the Effective Institutions Platform in November 2015, the pamphlet outlined seven ways in which public service had been subject to unfair criticism in different parts of the world. It proved popular and versions of the list have been widely quoted in publications and online posts around the globe.
Outreach and media

This year the Centre:

- Published discussion papers, working papers, a commemorative booklet and a running series of literature reviews, 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 and distributed several items of promotional material incorporating the Centre’s visual identity;
- Hosted meetings, seminars, roundtable discussions, workshops and conferences;
- Communicated extensively on social media channels and maintained the Centre’s presence and output on the UNDP website, Teamworks, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.
- Facilitated UNDP media-appearances on BBC and Channel News Asia’s news programmes;
- Published an op-ed piece written by the Director in The Straits Times, and refereed articles in the International Journal of Civil Service Reform and Practice and the Asian Journal of Public Administration.
- the Centre’s launch of the Winsemius monograph on the occasion of Singapore’s 50th anniversary of independence and commemoration of the UN Anti Corruption Day were covered in Singapore’s national media;

The Centre’s staff made presentations on our work at the following events:

- The Astana Economic Forum (Astana, Kazakhstan)
- The Global Transformation Forum (Putrajaya, Malaysia)
- 2015 Seoul Debates organised by the UNDP Seoul Policy Centre (Seoul, Republic of Korea)
- UNDP Regional Conference on Public Administration (Amman, Jordan)
- The Annual UN Anti-Corruption Day celebrations (Singapore)
- National Economic and Development Authority (Manila, Philippines)
- The Annual Lecture hosted by the United Nations Association of Singapore
- A symposium hosted by the Pakistan Institute for Development Economics (Islamabad, Pakistan)
- The Chief Innovation Officer Summit (Singapore)
- An Executive Forum organised by Royal Civil Service Commission (Thimpu, Bhutan),
- Government Executive Officials Management Course organised by Union Civil Service Board (Mandalay, Myanmar)
- A Strategic Foresight and Public Administration event organised by the Office of the Prime Minister (Windhoek, Namibia)
- A side event at the 46th Pacific Islands Leaders’ Meeting (Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea)
- The 2nd Middle East and North Africa Public Administration Research (MENAPAR) Conference (Tunis, Tunisia)
Outlook for 2016

The Centre’s current staff strength in Singapore stands at 8 with additional part-time associates and honorary fellows. The Centre also hosts the UNDP Global Anti-Corruption Team with two staff. To add further experience and capacity, the Centre plans to hire project-based consultants. The Centre is also seeking additional part-time associates (Regional Reality & Relevance Representatives) based out of UNDP Country Offices who are deeply engaged in reform efforts and contribute to expanding the Centre’s reach and insight into regional issues. We plan to strengthen the operational support received via UNDP Malaysia and are hiring a consultant on fund-raising to assess and enhance the Centre’s potential to be self-funding from 2018.

The Centre is looking to:

- Outsource some of its publishing to gain greater bandwidth;
- Pursue funding from the private sector and foundations, such as the Bertelsmann Foundation (Germany) and the Centre for Public Impact (UK);
- Undertake research on ‘Big Data’ in collaboration with institutions interested in the challenges and opportunities for the public service;
- Support public sector reform in countries of strategic interest, such as Pakistan, Malawi and Bhutan;
- Launch and facilitate peer-to-peer learning alliances, in collaboration with the Astana Civil Service Hub, the Pacific Island Forum and other members of the Effective Institutions Platform.

STAFF PROFILE: A Junior Professional Officer at GCPSE

“*My experience at the Singapore Centre has been very educative and enriching. It has taken me on a learning journey, from writing straightforward studies and reports for a Ministry in Kuwait to understanding how international organisations work. Initially I was unsure about what “public service excellence” meant but working at the Centre has helped me to grasp the concept and begin to apply it to analyse international development. I now have a much better understanding of its significance in the contemporary world, especially in the Arab region on which my work currently focuses. My work at the Centre has also helped initiate promising links with government counterparts and UNDP Country Offices in the Middle East and North Africa. “*

(Nouf Alamarri joined the Centre in February 2015 from the Kuwaiti Ministry of Oil)
Acknowledgements

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Pictured here is a visualisation of approaches to ‘strengthening resource management and service delivery’ as proposed by participants at the Effective Institutions Platform (EIP) Annual Meeting in November 2015.