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Resilient nations.*

# **GLOBAL CENTRE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE EXCELLENCE: FINAL EVALUATION**

**July 2018<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> This Report was produced by Kevin Deveau, Independent Consultant, and reflects the views of its author and not necessarily those of UNDP or the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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## Acronyms

ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
BDP	Bureau for Development Policy
BPPS	Bureau for Policy and Programme Support
CGF	Core Government Functions
CO	Country Office
CSO	Civil Society Organization
GCPSE	Global Centre for Public Service Excellence
GEPA	Gender Equality in Public Administration Project
GoS	Government of Singapore
GPC	Global Policy Centre
KM	Knowledge Management
MAPS	Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support
MCO	Multi-Country Office
MFA	Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAR	Public Administration Reform
RAI	Responsive & Accountable Institutions
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SP	UNDP Strategic Plan
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## Executive Summary

The Global Centre for Public Service Excellence (GCPSE) is one of six UNDP Global Policy Centres established to provide original research and a brokering of knowledge between academic communities, think tanks, applied research institutes, policy analysts and programme implementers. Based in Singapore, GCPSE started operating in 2012 with a focus on how the “Singapore Model”, especially as it relates to the merit-based, innovative civil service approach, can be shared with other UNDP national partners who are interested in this approach as a path to economic and social development in their country.

As the Centre approaches the end of its second phase (2015-18), it has been evaluated with regard to its programming and its strategic value. For **programming**, the Centre was reviewed based on OECD-DACs five evaluation criteria.

Considering the **relevance** of GCPSE, it is clear that the Centre was designed with a certain amount of flexibility as to what and how it operated. This allowed it to identify emerging issues and to build substantial knowledge with regard to how these issues can be addressed in the development framework. But that same flexibility resulted in the Centre entering into types of work that would be beyond its original mandate, such as advisory services.

Looking at **efficiency**, GCPSE was able to deliver on many of its key outputs in a cost-effective manner. The Centre used a number of inputs, including knowledge sharing, technical advisory services, knowledge brokering and partnerships to deliver outputs. However, the Centre struggled to receive adequate programmatic funding throughout the two (past and ongoing) phases of its work, which resulted in the Centre being distracted from its core mandate as it pursued shorter-term funding options. This forced the Centre to take on work, such as training, which was not part of its original design, but also resulted in the Centre becoming very good at building partnerships to maximize resources.

GCPSE was able to be **effective** to achieve much of what it was designed to implement. It was able to produce original research on cutting-edge topics and to make them useful to policy analysts and practitioners. It was also able to build strong networks of public administration reforms actors and act as a convener or broker of knowledge between the more academic side of the community and those that implement projects in the field. Some consideration should however be given to the methods of communication and how some partnerships could be even more impactful.

There was some **impact** from the programmes implemented by GCPSE. In at least four countries national government partners worked with and applied the work of the Centre to implement reforms in the delivery of public services. The Centre’s work on foresight as a means of visioning for strategic planning was critical to the reforms to the civil services in Cape Verde, Myanmar and Mauritius. The Government of Samoa benefited from the work of the Centre in defining how it will proceed as it delivers public services in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Finally, there was some signs of **sustainability** in the work of the Centre. Its work with certain governments (noted above) did result in institutional changes in the work of beneficiaries. Within UNDP and the broader UN system, its work on foresight was adopted as a means of UNDAF planning with national partners and is starting to be used as a part of the SDG implementation process.

The second aspect of the review relates to the Centre's ***strategic value***. Here we can see that the Centre was under-utilized. To start, its core work – research and knowledge brokering – requires a fully established global architecture that allows the knowledge that it develops to be shared and applied at regional and country levels. However, UNDP was not able to put in place this architecture as it relates to public administration/ core government functions, thus limiting the impact of the work of GCPSE.

Secondly, the Centre was unable to fully leverage its relationship with the Government of Singapore. The expertise in the country and government are significant, yet there was limited use of this expertise in engaging other national governments that requested support from the Centre. The relationship between the Centre and the Government of Singapore didn't seem to have developed as one might expect between a Global Policy Centre and a host government. Lack of regular senior level interaction may have been one factor explaining the limited trust between key actors involved in the partnership. This prohibited more frank discussions on what the GoS expected from the partnership and how the Centre could best provide added-value to the broader foreign policy and development objectives of the GoS.

Thirdly, the focus of the Centre was too narrowly interpreted with regard to public service delivery, although these limitations were imposed by the limited financial and human resources.

GCPSE did an admirable job of delivery of results with limited funding. There was no doubt that the Centre provided value for money, but the lack of adequate, sustained funding did inhibit it from achieving more. It also resulted, at times, in GCPSE "chasing funds" in order to maintain a minimum level of programming.

Overall, GCPSE achieved what it was asked to do when it was formed. Yet there were missed opportunities for greater impact in its work, both with regard to its leveraging the knowledge within Singapore and its place within UNDP global architecture and building stronger links between the two entities.

But in order for a GPC to meet this mandate, it must have (a) adequate programme funding; (b) sufficient UNDP architecture to receive and use the knowledge developed; (c) a network of partners and a platform for the sharing of knowledge; (d) sufficient and capable staff to manage the core functions of the Centre and to build the partnerships and relationships required to deliver on that mandate; and (e) a strong partnership and trusted relationship with the host government.

GCPSE was missing some of these key factors in order to be strategically placed within UNDP and to maximize its relationship with the Government of Singapore. If the Centre is to continue beyond its current project life, key actors must ensure that these foundational elements are in place and remain in place for the Centre to succeed and thrive.

## Key Recommendations

- **Rethink the partnership between UNDP and the GoS;** The Centre must think differently about what are the issues that are strategically most relevant to UNDP and the UN development agenda and appealing to the GoS. This could include more work related to Smart Cities, SDG implementation and financing for development;
- **Focus on Knowledge Development, Brokering and Incubation** – Global Policy Centres have a limited, yet strategic role to play within UNDP and GCPSE must remain focused on these core roles. Engagement of COs should be limited to piloting of its ideas and solutions to ensure they have had some practical application prior to being rolled out across the organization
- **Stronger relationships with other units in BPPS and the regional hubs:** There should be well-coordinated work with the RAI Team within the Governance and Peacebuilding Unit as well as other units working on the SDGs, financing for development and urbanization issues and relevant global programmes.
- **Secure Adequate Funding for Programming** – A future policy centre would need to be adequately funded with at least \$1 million USD in programme funding (\$1.5 - \$2 million USD in total) per year to ensure it has the funds to deliver on its defined mandate;
- **Enrich the Centre's Relationship with the Government of Singapore** – Singapore has much knowledge and expertise to offer other countries as they develop and GCPSE needs a stronger relationship with the Government of Singapore to broker this exchange. That could include increased use of GoS expertise for in-country capacity development, better addressing issues that relate to Singapore's competitive advantage, and more routine and informal engagements at all levels of the joint management

## Context

### Background

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was established in 1966 with a mandate to engage member state governments to support the long-term development of their countries. With offices in 170 countries and territories and an annual budget of more than \$5 billion, UNDP is the largest programme of the United Nations (UN).

Beyond the network of Country Offices (COs), UNDP maintains a global and regional architecture to provide advisory services to programme countries mainly through programmes and projects implemented at the national, regional and local levels. The Bureau for Policy and Programming Support (BPPS) was established in 2014 and is the successor to the merged Bureau of Development Policy (BDP) and the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. BPPS has a network of staff based in New York (Headquarters) and in five regional hubs (Istanbul; Addis Ababa; Bangkok; Panama City; Amman) who provide advisory services and implement global and regional programmes. BPPS is divided into a number of 'clusters' that address key thematic areas. One of the thematic areas is Governance and Peacebuilding.

In order to support the policy and programming function of the organisation, UNDP, in the past number of years, has established within BPPS six Global Policy Centres (GPCs) responsible for policy research and policy dialogue on specific thematic areas. The centres, located in Nairobi, Istanbul, Seoul, Singapore, Rio de Janeiro and Oslo, are established based on funding agreements between UNDP and the governments of the host countries, who, to varying degrees, provide funding in support of the policy centre based in their country.

One of the newer of these GPCs is the Global Centre for Public Service Excellence (GCPSE). Established in 2012, the GCPSE was formed as a result of an agreement between UNDP BDP and the Government of Singapore (GoS). On 25 September 2012 the Administrator of UNDP and the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Singapore signed an agreement to establish the Centre and defined its mandate as:

- (a) A leading research hub, that draws upon the best quality material emanating from the various think-tanks, universities, and from on-going policy practice in the Host Country and other countries, supplementing UNDP's existing knowledge and research capability; and
- (b) A convening hub that maximizes the unique position of the Host Country to bring together and connect diverse experiences for promoting South-South collaboration, sharing, exchange and co-creation. UNDP's global outreach and networks are expected to help the Office to become a global hub for all knowledge sharing and policy thinking on public service capacity for sustainable development.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Agreement between the Republic of Singapore and the United Nations Development Programme Concerning the Establishment of the Global Centre for Public Service Excellence (25 September 2012)

The project document upon which the GCPSE was established provided further details as to the rationale for the Centre. Specifically, the Centre was seen as an opportunity to create a synergy between the experience and knowledge within GoS with regard to its civil service and the network of UNDP Country Offices (COs) that would allow for the sharing of this model with other national governments working with UNDP. The project document noted four key aspects of public service delivery that would be the basis of the work of the Centre:

- **Public Service is Integral to Government Effectiveness:** A government cannot be effective unless its civil service is able to deliver services through good planning and budgeting;
- **Gender Responsive Public Service:** A key aspect of SDG-16 and SDG-5 is the need for a greater representation of women in decision-making positions within government. This includes senior posts within the civil service;
- **Innovation & Technology:** If public services are to be effectively delivered to citizens, civil services must consider the impact and opportunities that arise with new technology and the need to innovate; and
- **Human Development:** Civil services should lead by example and ensure that social and economic development is promoted through an inclusive and participative process that is encouraging an ongoing dialogue with citizens with an emphasis on marginalised groups.<sup>3</sup>

The GCPSE was aligned with the following outcomes from the UNDP Strategic Plan (SP) 2008-13<sup>4</sup>:

**Outcome 2:** Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance

Output 2.2: Institutions and systems enabled to address awareness, prevention and enforcement of anti-corruption measures across sectors and stakeholders

**Outcome 7:** Development debates and actions at all levels prioritize poverty, inequality and exclusion, consistent with our engagement principles

Output 7.5: South-South and Triangular cooperation partnerships established and/or strengthened for development solutions

Output 7.6: Innovations enabled for development solutions, partnerships and other collaborative arrangements

Output 7.7: Mechanisms in place to generate and share knowledge about development solutions

Specific to the Centre, the Project Document noted two outputs:

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<sup>3</sup> GCPSE Project Document (2012)

<sup>4</sup> UNDP Strategic Plan (2008-13): <http://web.undp.org/execbrd/pdf/dp07-43Rev1.pdf>



**Project Output 1:** A credible body of research findings generated and disseminated  
**Project Output 2:** Visible and effective convening for policy exchange established

The GCPSE was established to allow for South-South knowledge transfer from a Southern country (i.e. – Singapore) that has experienced rapid economic development in the past 50 years to other developing countries that are keen to learn lessons from Singapore in the hopes of increasing their own social and economic development.

In particular, the “*Singapore Model*” holds much cache with many governments globally as a model to be emulated. This model – often not well-defined – usually includes within its definition key aspects of an effective and ethical public service. The country’s approach towards fighting corruption, its private-sector inspired pay and recruitment systems, and its use of technology to provide services and to engage citizens are all of interest to many other countries that partner with UNDP.

In addition, in recent years the GoS has been keen to build the Singapore “brand” as a location for global leaders in development and policy formulation, to add to its established reputation as a centre for business and finance. It has established national institutions that are second-to-none globally in the area of public service delivery and policy development (e.g. – Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy; Nanyang Centre for Public Administration).

Based on the defined terms noted above, UNDP and GoS agreed to a three-year project to fund the work of the GCPSE from September 2012 to August 2015. In 2015 the project was extended with increased funding for another three years until the end of August 2018. The GoS has not signaled its intention to support an extension of the current project but has indicated its interest in exploring new areas of cooperation with UNDP, possibly through a different centre, with a new mandate.

Total funding for the Centre for the first phase (2012-15) was for \$6.4 million USD. This amount was divided on a 60%-40% split in contributions from the GoS and UNDP respectively, with a contribution of \$3,897,963 USD for three years from the GoS. This contribution was divided into direct funding (\$1.6 million USD) and in-kind funding (\$2,287,963 USD) consisting of two secondees from GoS and the provision of office space.

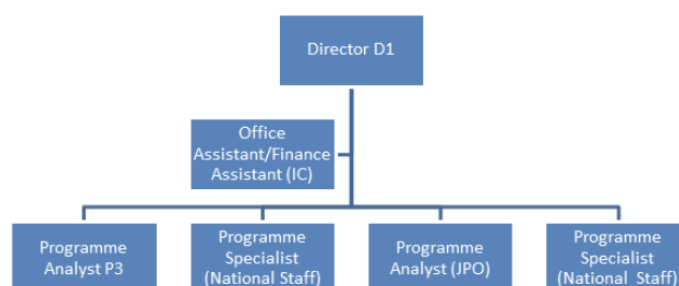
UNDPs contribution was for \$2.5 million USD over three years, split evenly between BDP (later BPPS) (\$1.25 million) and the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (\$1.25 million). However, by the end of 2015, the funding from RBAP was removed from the Centre, leaving the Centre with an annual budget of approximately \$1.34 million per year (not including in-kind contributions from GoS).

When the Centre was established, it was supposed to be working with an annual budget of \$2.13 million USD per year. Yet, in fact, it operated with a budget of just 63% of what was expected when it was opened.

**Table A: Annual Budget of GCPSE**

Year	Annual Budget (USD) <sup>5</sup>
2013	\$1,175,125
2014	\$1,397,972
2015	\$1,460,600
2016	\$1,298,410
2017	\$1,368,203

The original assignment of staff in 2012 anticipated a contingent of six staff, including the two secondees from GoS.



In the past five years, as the Centre has evolved, it has made some adjustments to its staffing, but with the total number of staff remaining constant (i.e. – no more than six staff at any given time). For example, for a two-year period (2015-17) the Centre had a Senior Technical Adviser as a consultant. The JPO post was filled from 2013-15, but not subsequently. A key cost-saving for the GCPSE was that it was to rely on most of its finance and administration support from the UNDP CO in Malaysia.

The Project Document initially called for an independent evaluation within the last six months of the project life (i.e. – first half of 2015). With the extension of the project until August 2018, the evaluation was delayed. This report and its findings and recommendations are the result of the requirement stipulated in the Project Document for a final evaluation.

## Methodology

In March 2018 BPPS (Governance and Peacebuilding Cluster) contracted a consultant to conduct an evaluation of the GCPSE. The review was to look at the work to-date of the GCPSE and to provide specific recommendations with regard to any adjustments that may be required to ensure a viable outcome for the Centre in the future. In addition, the review was to look at the

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<sup>5</sup> GCPSE Annual Work Plans 2013-17

strategic role of GCPSE within UNDPs programming architecture and its relevance to the new SP (2018-22).

The objectives of this review are outlined in the Terms of Reference<sup>6</sup> for the consultant and include:

- Strategic direction taken by the Centre;
- An assessment of whether the GCPSE is on track to achieve its objectives at project end, and its longer-term potential under the new Strategic Plan;
- Appropriateness of the partnerships developed;
- Continued relevance for UNDP of the thematic focus and breadth of mandate and value of the Centre as perceived by UNDP Regional Bureaus and Country offices as well as external partners (e.g. development partners and partner Governments);
- Value for money and financial sustainability of the Centre (compared to other Global Policy Centres and taking into account UNDP's current financial situation);
- Staffing capacity, operations and other delivery issues.
- Relations with the host country and expectations on future UNDP collaboration in a High Income City State.

### ***Criteria***

This is both an impact evaluation and a strategic review of the Centre. Therefore, the standard criteria for an impact evaluation of a development project, established by the OECD, of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, will be applied to this review. In addition, the evaluation will look at the GCPSE from the lens of its strategic positioning within UNDP and its relationship with the GoS and other institutions in Singapore.

### ***Tools***

In order to answer the questions raised with the criteria noted above, the consultant used a limited number of tools to gather data and evidence to answer the questions and to validate any findings.

These included:

**Desk review:** Key operational documents were identified including the Project Document, various knowledge products, quarterly and annual reports, annual work plans, programme outputs, the UNDP 2008-13 and 2018-22 Strategic Plans.<sup>7</sup>

**Semi-structured Interviews:** Key respondents (partners, donors, beneficiaries) were included in an interview process. Each interview was 30-60 minutes in length and included a series of questions with, where possible, follow up based on the need for further information.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The complete ToR is included as Annex 1 to this Report

<sup>7</sup> For a complete list of documents consulted please see Annex 2

<sup>8</sup> For the list of interviewees please see Annex 3

### ***Limitations***

The evaluation was restricted to a limited period of time and was primarily home-based with limited interactions in Singapore and New York, thus limiting the capacity of the consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of all documents and engagement of all interlocutors with regard to the work of the GCPSE. Within the parameters of the review, foundational documents were provided to the consultant and when additional documents were requested they were received. A list of 41 potential interviewees was identified and interviews were conducted, either via Skype or in-person, with 33 stakeholders. The consultant conducted a brief four-day mission in May 2018 to engage directly with GCPSE staff, MFA counterparts and partners based in Singapore and a further three-day mission to New York to engage HQ-based UNDP interlocutors.

## Findings & Analysis

### A. Summary of GCPSE Key Deliverables

Prior to an analysis of the work of the Centre, it is important to provide a summary of some of the key outputs from the Centre. The project document was written in a manner that left the work of the GCPSE open to a flexible approach to what would be delivered. This is noted on page five of the project document where it states that the outputs are intentionally broad and any sub-themes noted in the document are indicative only.<sup>9</sup>

Through the past five years in which the GCPSE operated it has identified four key areas in which it works:

- 1. Intrinsic Motivation:** In the past decades the academic community has produced significant work and research related to the methods and benefits of intrinsic motivation of civil servants, yet such work has been almost exclusively focused on developed countries. GCPSE established a high level working group of academics working in this field and senior civil servants from key developing countries. The group has worked, with GCPSE guidance, on the development of a global motivational survey that is being rolled out in key ministries (i.e. – planning; finance) in a set of countries starting in 2017. The results of the data collected will form a baseline for what motivates civil servants to be productive and effective.
- 2. Transformational Leadership:** GCPSE has established an annual event in which high level officials (i.e. – ministers; permanent secretaries; directors-general) from various countries are convened in Singapore. Originally the goal was to create a developmental leadership programme, but that has more recently transformed into transformational leadership. The goal is to discuss the intersection between politics and bureaucracy and to use the Singapore model as a means of having open discussions as to what is an effective approach in the context of each country. The Centre works through UNDP COs and Regional Hubs to identify participants each year.
- 3. Foresight:** Foresight, put simply, is a process by which planning and policy development are informed by the consideration of different potential futures for any given context. GCPSE has taken a complex concept and has developed a suite of manuals and tools that can be applied in a less complex manner with key decision makers within national government partners of UNDP. The centre has worked with a number of COs and Regional Hubs to support foresight workshops with a number of national (and, in some cases, sub-national) governments to enable them to consider alternative futures as part of their development planning priorities and, in some cases, how these relate to UN and UNDP engagement (i.e. – UNDAFs; CPAPs).

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<sup>9</sup> GCPSE Project Document, p.5

- 4. Innovation:** The Centre has put some effort into the issue of technology and how it will disrupt and/or support public service reform in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This has included an international conference and training workshop on the impact of technology on public services<sup>10</sup>. Being located in Singapore has allowed the Centre to draw upon one of the most tech-savvy governments and bureaucracies in the world and a good venue for UNDP national partners to observe the impact and use of technology by governments. This work has also involved direct CO support in working with national partners to develop plans for digital transformation within government and the broader society (e.g. – Samoa<sup>11</sup>).

## B. Evaluation of GCPSE Project Document

Based on these key interventions (and others) by GCPSE, the report will review the work of the Centre through the lens of the five evaluation criteria for development projects as set out by OCED-DAC.<sup>12</sup> Through the application of these criteria the report will be able to determine if the GCPSE has achieved what was expected of it in its foundational documents.

### Relevance

When considering the relevance of the work of the Centre, it is key to determine the extent to which the GCPSE was designed and has been implemented to meet the needs of its beneficiaries. This report considers the beneficiaries of the Centre to be UNDP country-level programme and project staff, national and sub-national governments and public sector employees and decision-makers.

### Design

GCPSE was designed in 2012 to be a centre for forward-thinking on public services. It has two main programmatic areas – research and convening. Beyond these broad themes, the Centre was given much flexibility in how and what it implemented. This flexibility has resulted in the evolution of certain thematic issues as the demand and interest of beneficiaries has changed. For example, what is now transformational leadership started as a developmental leadership program. Issues, such as foresight, which were not considered during the start of the Centre, have been allowed to develop organically and have resulted in much demand from beneficiaries.

Flexibility has also enabled the Centre to venture into areas that were not part of its original mandate. In order to provide more financial support to the Centre beyond the agreed terms

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/global-policy-centres/publicservice/convening-hub/techPS2017.html>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.ws.undp.org/content/samoa/en/home/operations/projects/democratic\\_governance/together-for-a-digital-pacific0/](http://www.ws.undp.org/content/samoa/en/home/operations/projects/democratic_governance/together-for-a-digital-pacific0/)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

signed in 2015, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs engaged GCPSE to collaborate on technical assistance programmes, where additional funds were disbursed upon successful completion of each training programme. In addition, the direct work with COs was not anticipated. This work has been fruitful and, in some cases, impactful, but, as will be discussed later in this report, was not part of the initial mandate of the UNDP policy centres (after the 2014 restructuring).

### Implementation

The GCPSE has developed a number of tools and provided advisory services to beneficiaries that has been relevant to their needs. The Centre has taken its broad mandate (public service reform) and found niche topics in which it has been able to provide services and knowledge that has been appreciated and valuable to UNDP COs and national partners. The foresight work implemented by the Centre has been a specific intervention that has been used in planning processes in a number of countries, some of which have gone on to develop concrete policy reforms based on this planning work.

A challenge, however, has been how the Centre brokers the knowledge based in Singapore (both government and academic) and applies this to the needs of the beneficiaries. For example, the Centre has relied on convening workshops and trainings in Singapore as a means of sharing this knowledge. However, a natural extension of this approach, after six years, might include more in-country and impactful mentoring and coaching by Singapore experts with counterparts in other countries in which UNDP works. Yet with the exception of the foresight exchanges in Rwanda and Mauritius, there was almost no evidence of Singaporean expertise being integrated into knowledge sharing and capacity development of UNDPs national counterparts in other countries.

### Efficiency

The key issue with regard to efficiency is whether or not the GCPSE was able to deliver its outputs through cost-effective inputs. It is necessary to review what the inputs of the Centre were and if those were delivered in a manner that ensured value for money.

### Inputs

The work of the Centre can be divided into three key inputs:

- **Knowledge Development:** The Centre created new knowledge related to public service excellence, including its work on foresight, the role of technology in delivering public services and the development and collection data on the intrinsic motivation of civil servants. In some cases, the Centre conducted its own research, while in other circumstances it commissioned or facilitated research by others. An example of the latter is the commissioning of research related to peer-to-peer capacity development within the public sector.
- **Advisory Services:** GCPSE has provided direct technical advice to governments and UNDP COs related to public services. For example, in Mauritius, Capo Verde and Myanmar, the Centre provided technical advice to the relevant UNDP CO and worked

with senior officials in the relevant government to support the strategic thinking that resulted in public sector reform plans.

- **Knowledge Brokering<sup>13</sup>:** GCPSE has established in the past five years a network of public service experts and implementers, both within UNDP and externally, that has allowed for the exchange of knowledge within the network and allowed the Centre to be at the centre of a number of interactions and knowledge events that have added to the thinking on the topic.

#### Tools for Implementation

The inputs from the Centre noted above were implemented through a variety of means and methods:

- **Knowledge Products:** The Centre has developed and published a significant number of publications related to public service reform. It has also produced a weekly newsletter that is sent to more than 1,300 recipients in its network (i.e. - Raffles Review) and the UNDP's Governance and Peacebuilding KNN which provides a more digestible look at related topics on a routine basis.
- **Knowledge Events:** GCPSE has conducted a significant number of knowledge events, including trainings and workshops, in which participants from various countries have been brought to Singapore to participate and to hear from experts from that country and others. Examples of this include the transformational leadership workshops and the more recent workshops on the impact of technology.
- **Technical Missions:** In order to provide technical advice for UNDP COs and governments, the Centre routinely was requested to conduct missions to countries. In some cases, the missions were related to foresight workshops. In other cases, missions were related to digital transformation, such as in Samoa, where the Centre has worked with the UNDP MCO and the Government of Samoa to support the development of programming options and an action plan over the past year.
- **Partnerships:** GCPSE has established a number of partnerships that have included academics, researchers, implementers, multi-lateral and bilateral development organizations, media, private sector and non-governmental organizations. These partnerships have been utilized to conduct trainings and workshops, especially in Singapore. They have also resulted in the exchange of information and the commissioning of new research, as was seen in the Centre's participation in the Effective Institutions Platform Joint Secretariat with the OECD.

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<sup>13</sup> The concept of Knowledge Brokering was first explored in the 1970s (Caplan, N. – *The Two-Communities and Knowledge Utilization*; 1979, American Behavioral Scientist). More recent explorations of the topic have confirmed the need to bridge the two paradigms in which academics, on the one hand, and policy analysts and decision-makers, on the other, operate. The use of formal networks where the two can interact is critical to evidence-based decision-making. See: <https://www.knaer-recrae.ca/tips-from-the-experts/111-using-research-to-shape-knowledge-mobilisation-practice> and <https://www.alliance4usefulevidence.org/assets/Science-of-Using-Science-Final-Report-2016.pdf>



### Analysis

Based on the inputs and tools identified above, it is possible to reflect on the effectiveness of the Centre in delivering its work. To start, it is important to note that the Centre delivered significant results with a limited budget. Though its annual operating budget has been consistent over the years, it has been at a level that has been significantly lower than adequate. When compared to other GPCs within UNDP (See table below) it is receiving a lower amount of funding from the host country and, as a result, has an insufficient amount of funding to fully conduct its work. This has been one of the major impediments to the successful development of the centre into a global hub of excellence.

As a result of the limited funds for the Centre, it has been motivated to build partnerships in order to deliver activities. In this regard the Centre has been successful. It has been able to deliver trainings and workshops at minimal cost (especially in Singapore) by sharing the costs with various partners. A good example of this was the Conference on Disruptive Technology held in September 2017 where the GCPSE worked with the Nanyang Technological University to deliver the event. The work of the Centre with the Effective Institutions Platform resulted in funding from USAID for the EIP Joint Secretariat and work on peer-to-peer learning. Other partnerships – such as with Microsoft, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Government of Sarawak (Malaysia) also resulted in extra funding going to the GCPSE, albeit some of these funds were minimal and not sufficient to create longer term sustainability.

**Table: Funding for Global Policy Centres<sup>14</sup>**

GPC	2016	2017	2018
<b>Singapore</b>			
Government	350,000	350,000	350,000
UNDP	516,196	324,865	357,712
Total	866,196	674,865	707,712
<b>Oslo</b>			
Government	2,523,735	1,184,132	2,500,000
UNDP	536,987	457,671	299,000
Total	3,060,722	1,641,803	2,799,000
<b>Seoul</b>			
Government	1,465,487	1,698,537	2,072,000
UNDP	613,000	763,000	518,000
Total	2,078,487	2,461,537	2,590,000
<b>Istanbul</b>			
Government	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
UNDP	745,502	779,484	298,500
Total	1,745,502	1,779,484	1,298,500

<sup>14</sup> Monetary transfers – not including in-kind contributions (i.e. – office space; secondments) and non-predictive contributions

However, as will be discussed later in this report, the ability to leverage the partnership with GoS was less impactful. Though there were clear examples of where different segments of the government were engaged in a workshop or to present at an event, there was limited evidence that the knowledge within GoS and its added value was used to further build the capacity of beneficiaries beyond static knowledge events.

Many of the technical missions that were conducted were funded by UNDP COs as a means of direct project support, again enabling the Centre to deliver technical advice in a cost-effective manner. These missions often had a direct impact on strategic planning and national development plans with limited funds committed from the Centre. Most of these missions were primarily in the form of knowledge events. Through the use of in-house expertise and leveraging partnerships, the Centre could have gone further in sharing knowledge and building capacity of national partners related to key topics. For example, with regard to foresight, the Centre conducted a number of missions that related to workshops in which foresight was introduced and applied to the national context.

There was however limited use of Singaporean expertise in these foresight processes and this despite the strong expertise available on this topic in Singapore. The Centre could have utilized its role as a broker to support the use of Singaporean expertise in-country by UNDP COs who were providing continuing support to national government partners. This would have allowed for ongoing support from such experts, beyond a static workshop, to continue to build capacity through peer-to-peer coaching and mentoring to ensure beneficiaries continue to learn and apply lessons learned.

The Centre was able to utilize its internal capacity and expertise, as well as commissioning other experts, to develop knowledge products that related to new issues and ideas that were not previously considered in a scientific manner. The facilitation of the data collection (which is still ongoing) related to intrinsic motivation is a good example of this approach. The Centre has enticed global experts on this topic, through the establishment of the working group, to engage in the development of the survey that is used for the data collection in developing countries. GCPSEs access to UNDPs global network of COs (and their access to national government partners) has resulted in these experts wanting to participate in the process because they will then have access to the primary data which has not been collected to date by any other source.

A key question with regard to knowledge sharing is the impact of the methods used to communicate the knowledge developed. The use of handbooks and manuals still has a place in development circles, as do newsletters sent via e-mail. But there is a need to consider if other tools should be used to distribute the knowledge produced. More consideration needs to be placed on how the Centre utilizes its partnerships to distribute its knowledge. More modern tools, such as webinars and e-learning courses could also be considered.

Overall, the GCPSE has accomplished much with a limited budget. By developing networks and partnerships the Centre has been able to leverage its limited funding to create a significant suite of knowledge products and new ideas that have been useful to beneficiaries and national

partners. However, some consideration can be given to the methods of communication and how some partnerships could be even more impactful.

### Effectiveness

With regard to evaluating effectiveness of the GCPSE it is key to consider if the Centre achieved its outputs and outcomes.

### Outputs

#### Output 1: A credible body of research findings generated and disseminated

As noted above, the project document upon which the work of the GCPSE was established was written to allow significant flexibility in how outputs were delivered. This output is often referred to within the Centre as the Research Output – the Centre will conduct and generate new research.

It is clear from the evidence gathered for this report that the GCPSE has achieved this output. Internally, the Centre had capacity for conducting its own research. The Director of the Centre came with significant capacity and knowledge that was applied to many ongoing issues related to public administration reform (PAR). This capacity was applied to create the initial concept related to foresight. GCPSE also utilized the work of GoS secondees to develop the intrinsic motivation research, which is still ongoing.

In addition to the internal capacity to conduct research, the Centre commissioned research from external sources. For example, with funding from Microsoft (via the National University of Singapore), GCPSE contracted an expert to develop a knowledge product on policy frameworks for the digital economy.

#### Output 2: Visible and effective convening for policy exchange established

The second output is simplified to be the Convening Output – the role of the Centre in gathering and facilitating the exchange of knowledge and ideas. The evidence gathered shows that the Centre was able to achieve this output as well.

The convening power of the Centre can best be expressed through the key knowledge events and interventions it was able to organize. One example is the transformational leadership annual events held since 2016. GCPSE was able to leverage its access to UNDPs global network of offices and personnel to identify and congregate senior officials from a disparate range of countries and bring them to Singapore to exchange ideas and to hear more about the Singapore model of development. Interlocutors within the GoS were particularly impressed with the range of actors and the level of their status.

In addition, in some cases, the platform resulted in further engagement of UNDP at the country level upon the return of the officials to their home country. A good example of this is Samoa. Originally the Prime Minister of Samoa participated in a study visit to Singapore in 2017, hosted by the Singapore Government. As a result of his participation in a dialogue session at the GCPSE during this visit, the Government invited UNDP, including the Centre, to engage with the Government as it considered how to leverage better and more affordable broadband connectivity (subsea cable) for enhancing its digital services and building a digital economy. This included a number of interventions, most notably the 2018 regional and national conferences that brought 160 regional and global experts and actors to Samoa to discuss regional and national priorities.<sup>15</sup>

### Outcomes

The project document upon which the Centre was established also outlined the 2008-13 SP outcomes that were expected to be met by the Centre through the project.

**Outcome 2:** Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance

Output 2.2: Institutions and systems enabled to address awareness, prevention and enforcement of anti-corruption measures across sectors and stakeholders

This outcome was partially achieved by the Centre. There is evidence that the Centre was able to apply its knowledge and tools to support reforms at the national level that reflect a more inclusive and participative public sector in certain countries (e.g. – Cape Verde, Myanmar; Mauritius).

When the SP outcome is considered with the specific output 2.2 noted, GCPSE was able to show some evidence that it was delivered. In 2015 the UNDP Global Programme on Anti-Corruption – the *Global Anti-Corruption Initiative* (GAIN)<sup>16</sup> (which in 2016 became the ACPIS project (Anti-corruption for Peaceful and Inclusive Societies)) - was co-located within the GCPSE premises, although reporting directly to UNDP HQ. Initially there was limited evidence that the two programmes used their physical co-location to initiate activities or outputs related to the impact of corruption on public sector effectiveness in the delivery of services. However, more recently, there have been concrete examples of a fruitful collaboration allowing the Centre to expand into the area of public sector integrity. Examples of such collaboration are:

(1) Integration of anti-corruption in GCPSE organized events, workshops and training activities with a special focus on motivation, integrity building and innovation in fighting corruption;

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<sup>15</sup> [http://www.sobserver.ws/en/08\\_06\\_2018/local/33858/Samoa-hosts-first-D](http://www.sobserver.ws/en/08_06_2018/local/33858/Samoa-hosts-first-D)

<sup>16</sup> Starting in 2017 the global programme entered a new phase and is known as the *Anti-Corruption for Peaceful and Inclusive Societies* (ACPIS) and is still located within the GCPSE premises. <http://www.anti-corruption.org/2017/08/29/new-undp-anti-corruption-programme-acpis-launched-in-singapore/>

(2) Building synergies in country support (e.g., Uzbekistan, Mauritius and Myanmar, where both GCPSE and anti-corruption team have provided support); and

(3) Joint knowledge products (e.g., Public Service Excellence to Prevent Corruption).

**Outcome 7:** Development debates and actions at all levels prioritize poverty, inequality and exclusion, consistent with our engagement principles

Output 7.5: South-South and Triangular cooperation partnerships established and/or strengthened for development solutions

Output 7.6: Innovations enabled for development solutions, partnerships and other collaborative arrangements

Output 7.7: Mechanisms in place to generate and share knowledge about development solutions

SP Outcome 7 relates to knowledge development and sharing and this is where the Centre excelled. The evidence is clear that the Centre was able to achieve this outcome. Looking at each output related to SP Outcome 7:

- *South-South Cooperation:* GCPSE established and built links between Singapore and many other southern countries, allowing the exchange of knowledge and information on numerous platforms (e.g. – transformational leadership). However, as noted above this cooperation was not maximized and a stronger partnership and relationship with GoS could have resulted in more significant exchanges.
- *Innovative Solutions, Partnerships & Collaboration:* GCPSE has been able to develop strong partnerships within the field of public administration reform (e.g. - Intrinsic Motivation Steering Group). It has also built a collaborative network that has been utilized to promote innovative solutions in the field (e.g. – Effective Institutions Platform Peer-to-Peer Learning).
- *Generate and Share Development Knowledge:* As noted under the outputs of the project, the Centre has generated knowledge through its own research and that which it has commissioned from external sources. The Centre has produced a significant number of knowledge products and a weekly newsletter that is distributed through its network. However, newer and more innovative approaches to dissemination of knowledge should be considered.

Outcome/Output	Achieved?	Evidence
<b>SP Outcome 2:</b> Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance	Partially Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foresight work resulted in some public sector reforms (Mauritius; Myanmar);</li> <li>Limited engagement on women's political empowerment</li> </ul>
<u>Output 2.2:</u> Institutions and systems enabled to address awareness, prevention and enforcement of anti-corruption measures across sectors and stakeholders	Partially Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited collaboration between GCPSE and UNDP Anti-Corruption Global Programme</li> <li>Limited evidence of anti-corruption issues being addressed as cross-cutting issue</li> </ul>
<b>SP Outcome 7:</b> Development debates and actions at all levels prioritize poverty, inequality and exclusion, consistent with our engagement principles	Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New &amp; innovative knowledge developed (Foresight; Intrinsic Motivation; Role of Technology in Governance)</li> </ul>
<u>Output 7.5:</u> South-South and Triangular cooperation partnerships established and/or strengthened for development solutions	Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numerous partnerships between GoS and academic institutions and national partners in other countries</li> </ul>
<u>Output 7.6:</u> Innovations enabled for development solutions, partnerships and other collaborative arrangements	Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extensive partnerships and networks established to reduce costs, create new knowledge and to exchange information</li> </ul>
<u>Output 7.7:</u> Mechanisms in place to generate and share knowledge about development solutions	Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numerous knowledge products</li> <li>Raffle Review Newsletter</li> </ul>
<b>Output 1:</b> A credible body of research findings generated and disseminated	Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foresight</li> <li>Intrinsic Motivation</li> <li>Peer-to-Peer Learning Guide</li> </ul>
<b>Output 2:</b> Visible and effective convening for policy exchange established	Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective Institutions Platform</li> <li>Transformational Leadership</li> <li>Foresight Workshops</li> <li>Digital Governance Workshops</li> </ul>

## Impact

The impact criteria of an evaluation of a development project focuses on the intended and unintended and the positive and negative consequences of the work of a given project. Being a governance project, for the GCPSE, the report will focus on where the Centre has contributed to concrete changes to the laws, policies and procedures of a government (national or sub-national) that have been related to the delivery of services to citizens by that government.

With its work in the promotion of foresight as a means of strategic planning and visioning, the GCPSE had its greatest impact. The Centre conducted more than 15 foresight workshops with national governments. In a few cases – outlined below – the result of the foresight processes led to reforms to the civil service.

GCPSE developed the foresight work as a means of encouraging a new way of planning by governments and their officials. Traditionally a government would ask for policy options or strategic thinking from senior officials and would oftentimes receive a report with certain assumptions about what presumed future will be (i.e. – status quo) and any planning would be built on this foundation. Singapore has been a strong advocate of foresight as a means of planning for contingencies and to think differently about what the future might be and to “reverse engineer” what will be required with regard to laws, policies and rules to achieve this future.

The Centre was established in Singapore because many national partners of UNDP see Singapore as a potential model for the development of their country. GCPSE recognised that at the core of the development model of Singapore is the way the GoS plans and thinks about how the country will develop. The Singapore model of foresight is well respected, both within the country and with external experts in the field, yet it is quite a complex process that does not lend itself to adaptation to countries that are at a different point in their development arc. Therefore, GCPSE adapted the foresight process to fit the needs of less developed countries as a means of introducing the concept and promoting its institutionalisation with the civil service of a given partner government.

With the creation of the “foresight-light” Empowered Futures approach to strategic planning, the Centre started to develop the concept into a programme that could be used by UNDP COs in their work with government partners. This could include where UNDP has been asked to support the national development planning process or specific sectoral reforms, such as civil service reform. It could also be used directly by an UNCT and UNDP COs in the strategic planning that is involved in the development of new UNDAFs or CPAPs. The programme included manuals and toolkits and the organization of multi-day workshops in-country with key stakeholders to produce a visioning document that could then be used by government officials that would be producing policy options for consideration by senior officials.

Having created a programme the Centre worked with UNDP Regional Hubs and COs to encourage its use. The greatest traction for the foresight work was in Africa, where the Centre worked with the Innovation Adviser in the Regional Hub, who, in turn, engaged numerous COs who showed some interest in the use of the tool.

Between 2015 and 2017 GCPSE conducted more than 13 in-country missions<sup>17</sup> in support of national and sectoral planning process. In each case a workshop as held with government officials and UNDP CO staff to develop a visioning document that would be used by the government as it initiated its planning process. In at least three cases, the GCPSE support was the start of a process that resulted in reforms to the civil service. Two of those situations – Mauritius and Myanmar - are discussed below.

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<sup>17</sup> South Africa; Rwanda; Lesotho; Cambodia; Mauritius; Myanmar; Kenya; Tunisia; Philippines; Zambia; Mozambique; Uzbekistan; Tonga; Cape Verde

In the case of Mauritius, the country had a new government after elections in 2014 and a key objective of the new government was to reform the civil service. As a middle income, stable, democratic country, Mauritius was at a stage in its development where issues such as service delivery by the government were rising as concerns amongst the citizens.

The new government reached out to the UNDP CO in Mauritius to seek support in developing a civil service reform plan. The CO engaged the Centre in 2015 to help with the early stages of the support required. GCPSE organized the foresight workshop, which, in turn, produced a visioning document. That document, in turn, was the basis of the Government's civil service reform plan which was launched in 2017.<sup>18</sup>

Myanmar also had a change in government in 2015 and the new government there wanted to also consider the reform of the civil service. UNDP already had a public administration reform project with the government and that project reached out to GCPSE for support in the visioning process. In 2016 GCPSE worked with the Country Office in Myanmar on a workshop on public service motivation that led to the development of a visioning document. Like with Mauritius, the Government of Myanmar used the visioning document as part of its civil service reform strategy that was introduced in 2017.<sup>19</sup>

In both these cases, GCPSE played an integral role in supporting the broader work of UNDP and each CO in providing top-line advisory services to the national government partner at a time when it was ready to consider critical reforms in public service delivery.

In addition to the work on foresight and intrinsic motivation, the Centre's work in the area of public service innovation also showed some impact. The Government of Samoa had been considering how it could position itself as a Pacific leader in digital transformation, wanting to invest in the digital economy and to promote reforms that lead to a significant increase in online public services for citizens.

Having attended a study visit and having observed how Singapore has adapted to the digital age, the Prime Minister was interested in receiving advice from GCPSE on how to transition the country to a knowledge-based economy. This coincided with the anticipated arrival of the Tua-Samoa Undersea Broadband Cable which was made operational in early 2018.

Given the relationship developed in Singapore between the Government of Samoa and GCPSE, the Centre was invited to support the UNDP Multi-country Office (MCO) in working with the Government to plan out this transition. This resulted in a scoping mission in November 2017 by the Centre staff in which programming options were proposed. At the time of the writing of this report a regional conference was recently held in June 2018 as the beginning of the planning for the transition. The Government of Samoa now sees UNDP as a valued partner as it continues to

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<sup>18</sup> <http://civilservice.govmu.org/English/Documents/Circulars/2017/CL%20no%2080.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.mm.undp.org/content/myanmar/en/home/library/democratic\\_governance/Myanmar\\_Civil\\_Service\\_Reform\\_Act\\_ion\\_Plan.html](http://www.mm.undp.org/content/myanmar/en/home/library/democratic_governance/Myanmar_Civil_Service_Reform_Act_ion_Plan.html)



move towards online public services, a digital economy and a revamping of their education system to prepare for the knowledge economy.

Looking at all three of these impactful interventions by the GCPSE, it is clear that it has had its best results where it has played a strategic and specific role within UNDPs architecture. It has developed specific tools and knowledge that allow for the Centre to backstop UNDP COs when there is a national government partner that is ready to consider national or sectoral reforms. The Centre's expertise has allowed COs to link to its network of experts, academics and technical advisers who can be mobilized to work through the Centre to provide timely support and advice to beneficiaries.

In addition, the example of Samoa shows an even more integrated approach. It was through a joint event with the Government of Singapore that the Government of Samoa was initially engaged. By attending in Singapore and gaining first-hand experience of that country's model of transition, the Centre was able to leverage multiple relationships and networks (including the private sector) that allow for a fuller suite of tools to be employed.

Therefore, it is possible to conclude from these examples, that the Centre has had an impact in certain countries where it has played a role of knowledge broker and knowledge developer. It is also fair to say that the development of the foresight approach to planning has been incubated by GCPSE and this has now been tested in a number of countries. This incubator role is also critical to the effective work of the centre and its place within the UNDP system.<sup>20</sup>

### Sustainability

Sustainability as an evaluation criterion relates the institutionalization or systematization of practices and procedures within beneficiaries who have received support from GCPSE. In short, have governments and UNDP COs that have received support from the Centre been able to turn that support into permanent or long-term changes to their processes and procedures as they relate to public service delivery.

There is limited evidence that the direct programmatic work of the Centre has already been translated into new systems or procedures for governments or UNDP COs. The foresight approach has been used and demonstrated on a number of occasions, yet with the exception of the Philippines where the government announced that foresight would be included in the planning guidelines, there are no other examples as of yet where this approach has been adopted as a standard way of conducting strategic planning in any country or CO where it was applied by the Centre. Though it must be noted that the introduction of such systems within government take time, beyond the initial testing phase. Some of the impact achieved so far may not yet be fully entrenched.

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<sup>20</sup> The factors that make for a successful Centre (and GPCs in general) will be discussed further under the Strategic Review section of this report.

The work of GCPSE on intrinsic motivation may have long-term implications, but the data collection phase of the work has just recently commenced and there has not been enough time for this to be determined. The transformational leadership and innovation work has primarily been focused on the Centre's role as a knowledge broker and, therefore, has not resulted in sustainable changes to the actions of beneficiaries.

However, looking at sustainability and public service reform a little more broadly, there is evidence of the institutionalization of public sector reforms. Noting the same countries where an impact can be detected, the development of civil service reform strategies in Mauritius and Myanmar and the digital economy transition in Samoa have resulted in new policies and procedures in these countries as a result of interventions by UNDP and the Centre in particular. As noted above, the Centre's role is to work within the UNDP system to provide specific support to regional bureaux and COs. Given this niche role, the Centre has contributed to broader institutionalization of public service reforms.

## Conclusion

GCPSE was given a very specific mandate in 2012 when it was established – to develop new knowledge and solutions through research and network-building to promote new approaches and methods that will result in more effective public service delivery for citizens by governments. Over time, the Centre has built an impressive network of public sector reform experts and knowledge leaders and has leveraged this to the development of practical tools and knowledge sharing opportunities that have benefited the UNDP system and have, in some cases, resulted in institutional reforms in some national government partners. By focusing on its roles of knowledge development, knowledge brokering, advisory services and incubating new ideas into practical approaches, GCPSE has delivered what was expected of it when it was established. And it did so with a very limited budget that has, at times, prevented it from achieving even more results.

## C. Strategic Role of GCPSE

### Strategic Positioning

In addition to the review of the GCPSE as it relates to the outputs and outcomes that were identified in the original project document in 2012, the Terms of Reference for this report also posed a series of questions that can best be described as a “strategic review” of the Centre and its place within UNDP and the key actors it was established to engage.

Operating a global policy centre by a UN agency requires many actors and variables to be considered. GCPSE, like other UNDP GPCs, was established with a number of mandates to:

- Provide forward-thinking ideas and solutions on a given thematic area (in the case of the Centre, as related to public service reform);
- Build and maintain a working relationship with the host government;
- Provide a backstopping role within UNDPs architecture in support of COs and Regional Bureaux;
- Strengthen UNDPs relationship with partner organizations through the establishment of platforms and networks to share knowledge and identify opportunities for collaboration; and
- Coordinate work with other components of UNDPs global policy and programming efforts.

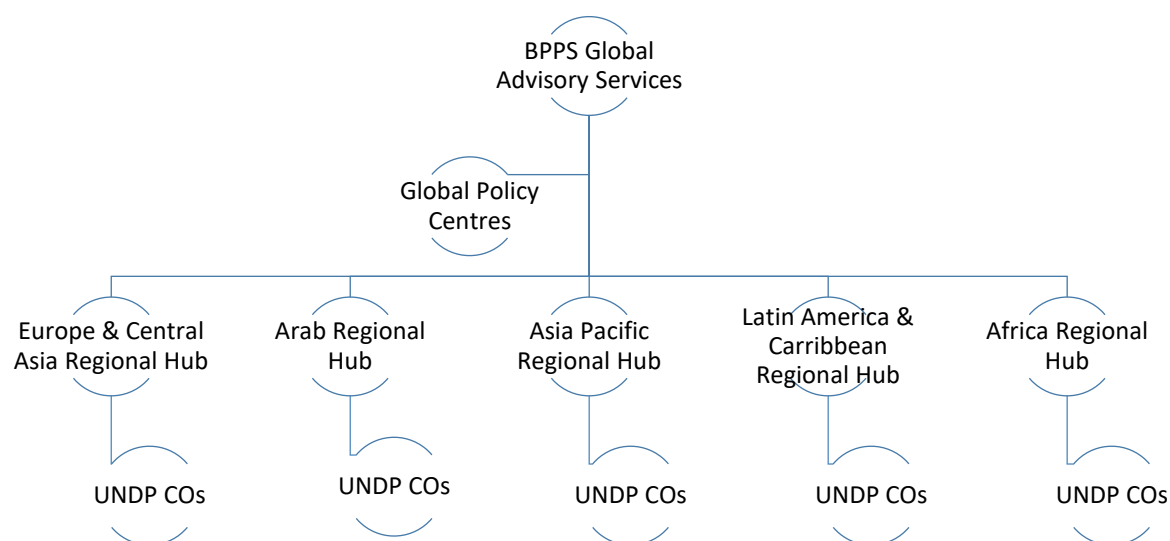
Each of these points will be discussed below; however, at this stage, it is important to understand how GCPSE fits within UNDPs system. With the reorganization of UNDPs internal policy development capacity in 2014, the agency established the Bureau for Policy and Programming Support. Within that Bureau there are a number of thematic units, each with global policy advisers and specialists who work in New York (Headquarters) and provide policy direction, technical support and quality assurances for UNDP regional and country-level programmes. In certain circumstances, where funding is secured, global programmes are established to provide extra funding for the enhancement of the services noted above.<sup>21</sup> Within the Governance and Peacebuilding Cluster is the Responsive and Accountable Institutions (RAI) Team, which is responsible for Core Government Functions (CGF) work (which includes public administration reform). However, RAI is focused essentially on post-conflict and fragile countries. Its advisory services have limited engagement with countries that are not transitioning from conflict or fragility although the team does work also in Middle Income Countries and non-crisis affected countries, in particular through the Open Government Partnership. Other parts of BPPS are also engaged in public sector initiatives, the most notable being the “Inspectors without Borders Project” implemented by the Strategic Policy Unit in BPPS in collaboration with the OECD.

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<sup>21</sup> An example of a global programme is *Anti-Corruption for Peaceful and Inclusive Societies*

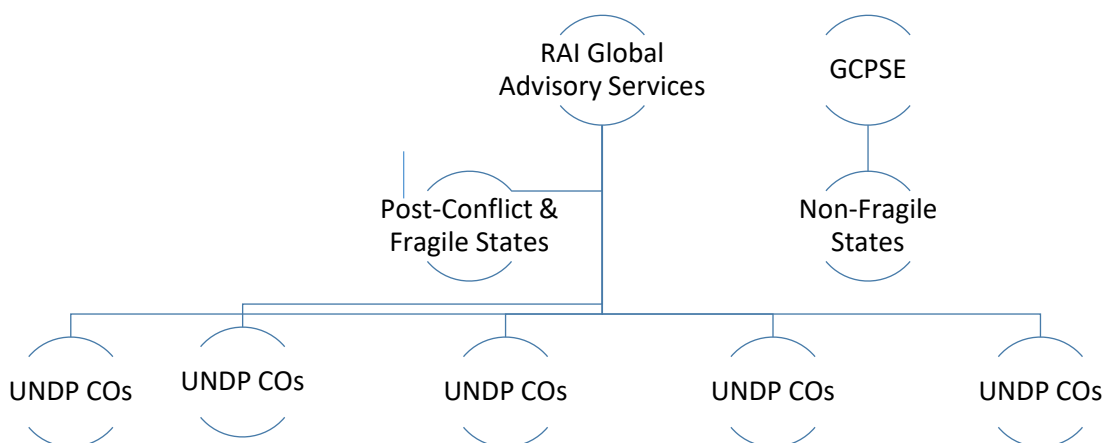
In addition to the global advisory services, five regional hubs<sup>22</sup> were established in 2014 – one per regional bureau. As originally envisaged, depending on demand within each region, the hubs would have advisory and programming capacity related to the mandates of most of the units within BPPS at UNDP Headquarters. For example, there was an expectation that there would be an RAI or CGF advisor in each hub. However, shortly after the reorganization, limited funding resulted in a number of posts being frozen and not filled. These included the RAI posts in Addis Ababa and in Amman. Over time, the two Local Governance positions in Istanbul and in Panama were also frozen (after the departure of the incumbents). The only CGF position is in Bangkok, but that that post focuses on parliamentary work and not on public administration reform. Therefore, at the time of writing of this report, there are no regional advisory services in UNDP to support CGF or PAR work with national partners.

### UNDP Policy Services Architecture: Theory



<sup>22</sup> Panama City; Istanbul; Addis Ababa; Bangkok; Amman

## UNDP Policy Services for Core Government Services: Practice



The practical implication of the current set up for CGF/PAR advisory services is that a significant number of UNDP COs have no other place to seek knowledge and technical advice than the RAI team in HQ, the GCPSE or external consultants. Without regional advisory services and with a global team in HQ that is mainly focused on post-conflict and fragile states, the vast majority of COs have limited access to internal advisory or technical services with regard to PAR. Providing direct support to COs was however not part of the original mandate for the Global Policy Centres, leaving it to fill a void in the UNDP architecture. Given the Centre's limited programmatic funding and quest for additional resources, the Centre evolved, in part, into an advisory service centre for UNDP COs. A similar evolution was also visible in other GPCs, and the corporate directive vis-a vis the centres mandates started to be adjusted, allowing them to also engage in direct CO advisory support.

Yet the provision of these advisory services has created confusion and a consistent question amongst UNDP staff about the role of the GCPSE. The Centre is not alone in trying to define its role within UNDP, as other GPCs have also struggled to define their role within the organization. However, unlike the other GPCs, the GCPSE has faced a set of challenges that are unique and are discussed below, that have resulted in the need for a reboot in the mandate for the Centre.

### Alignment with Strategic Plan

The 2018-2021 UNDP Strategic Plan<sup>23</sup> is the third plan under which GCPSE is operating. The original Strategic Plan (2008-13) was the basis for the establishment of the Centre in 2012. Under the current Strategic Plan UNDP is focused on the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), neither of which were created when the Centre was opened. In general, given that the original Centre was established under the 2008-13 SP, it

<sup>23</sup> <http://strategicplan.undp.org>

is important that the Centre be aligned effectively with the current SP which may require some further consideration.

As noted in the 2018-21 Strategic Plan:

*“Guided by the integrative approach embodied in the 2030 Agenda, the UNDP approach aims to effectively support sustainable development across these three broad development settings. The UNDP vision for the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 is therefore:*

*to help countries to achieve sustainable development by eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, accelerating structural transformations for sustainable development and building resilience to crises and shocks.*

*The scale and ambition of the 2030 Agenda require analytical, planning and implementation capacities that can address links, choices and connections across many issues and sectors of government. Many programme country Governments have recognized the need for additional system capacities in fields such as planning, finance, data and analytics, equality and universality (leaving no one behind), gender, innovation and partnerships, amongst others, to be able to apply integrated, multidimensional approaches.*

*There are as yet no comprehensive, widely applicable systems or methodologies for integrated approaches to interconnected development challenges. Helping countries to build such capacities is therefore one of the key objectives of the UNDP Strategic Plan in the coming years.”<sup>24</sup> (Emphasis added for this report)*

Under the current SP governance issues have become cross-cutting issues as they are integrated to ensure the achievement of three core outcomes – poverty alleviation, structural transformation and crisis resilience.

Effective governance is critical to the success in achieving each of these outcomes and the broader SDGs. Governments cannot be effective unless there is the effective delivery of public services by motivated and capacitated civil servants. The Strategic Plan also speaks of new solutions and ideas in order to support government partners in achieving the SDGs.

A challenge has been in how the Centre links its work with this broader 2030 Agenda. The Agenda and the SDGs were endorsed three years ago and the GCPSE has been producing knowledge products since 2015 on how an effective public service is critical to the achievement of the Goals.<sup>25</sup> Its work on foresight, in particular, lends itself very well to the SDG implementation process at the country level. The tool can be an effective part of the national and sub-national planning processes that will define in the early years of the SDGs how and what a country will prioritize for implementation.

The UN has established a process for supporting these country-level planning process. Known as the MAPS<sup>26</sup> – Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support – the UN system is offering support to member states and their governments as they embark on their implementation

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<sup>24</sup> UNDP Executive Board Decision establishing the 2018-22 Strategic Plan, October 2017, pp. 10-11  
<http://undocs.org/DP/2017/38>

<sup>25</sup> See for example: Foresight Manual (2015) and The SDGs and the New Public Passion (2015)

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/qcpr/doco-summary-brief-on-maps-march2016.pdf>

journey. The role of foresight in this process is currently being considered. Recently efforts have been made by the Centre to otherwise showcase its work as part of flagship SDG implementation events, including the 2018 High Level Political Forum. This link between some of the work of the Centre – foresight in particular - and the implementation of the SDGs (and the UN system’s support for such implementation) should continue and be operationalised.

The work of GCPSE on foresight has also had some impact on the UNDAF development process for UN country teams. The work of the Centre has been picked up by the UN Development Group (UNDG) as it provides advice and support to UN country teams as they formulated UNDAFs with their national government partners. UNDG had piloted the foresight approach in a number of Balkan countries and in 2016 produced a manual – Applying Foresight and Alternative Futures to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.<sup>27</sup>

### Partnership Development

As has been noted above in this report, the GCPSE has done an excellent job of expanding UNDPs network of partners and in providing added-value to those partners in their work. All of which has resulted in UNDPs reputation being enhanced with organizations and experts in the field of PAR. For example, the work of the Centre on intrinsic motivation has enabled UNDP to be the facilitator of the steering group that includes some of the world’s top academic thinkers on the topic. These academics have acknowledged the value added by UNDP and its network of COs and links to developing country governments as providing access to new data.

GCPSEs work on the Effective Institutions Platform with OECD, and others, has enabled UNDP to provide high level engagement with other multi-lateral and bilateral organizations working on the same issues. UNDP does engage in other aspects of PAR – notably on CGF in fragile states, the Open Government Partnership as well as on revenue policies through the Tax Inspectors without Borders Initiative with the OECD. But given the limited architecture within UNDP for CGF/PAR work, the Centre certainly filled a gap and was able to enhance UNDP’s position at the table to discuss key issues as they arise and are addressed by development partners.

The Centre has also built good links with applied research and policy institutes in Singapore that have enabled the Centre to organize more and better workshops and conferences in the host country. The Centre has drawn upon Singaporean experts from the National University of Singapore (Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy; Institute of Systems Science), Nanyang Technological University (Centre for Public Administration; Technopreneurship Centre), Singapore University of Technology and Design (Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities) and GovTech (the Singapore Government’s Technology Agency).

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<sup>27</sup> <https://undg.org/document/applying-foresight-and-alternative-futures-to-the-united-nations-development-assistance-framework/>

All of these partnerships have enabled the Centre to produce and share more knowledge of its own making and from collaboration. It has also extended UNDPs links within the CGF/PAR field of work, especially in Asia.

### Relevance of the Thematic Focus of GCPSE

The report addresses relevance as a project evaluation criteria under Part A of this section. However, there is also a strategic question with regard to the relevance of the thematic focus of the work of GCPSE. Is public service excellence today the optimal area to be addressed by a GPC?

There is no doubt that public administration reform or public service excellence is a significant area of work within the development field known as democratic or good governance. UNDP has numerous projects, programmes and initiatives related to PAR stretching back for more than 20 years. As noted elsewhere in this report, an effective and functional civil service that is able to deliver public services in a timely manner is a critical building block to resilient, peaceful and thriving nations that are focused on human development. Agenda 2030 and the SDGs will not be achieved without a robust and well-performing public service.

In addition, one of the key factors that has made Singapore a model for others in their development is the manner in which its public service is organized. As described by a number of interviewees for this report, GoS has nurtured a public service that is routinely rethinking and retooling how it provides services to the public. It also allows a certain amount of autonomy for ministries and agencies to experiment and engage the public in order to enhance the quality of the services delivered. This movement is known as Public Sector Transformation. It is formerly called Public Service for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and was introduced in the country in 1995. Public Sector Transformation emphasizes the need for the Singapore Public Service to stay relevant through continuous improvement and preparedness for change. The core challenges to be addressed by this model have been described as follows:

*The three-fold challenge in PS21 can be described as:*

- *anticipating the future with scenario-based strategic planning;*
- *fostering positive attitudes among staff towards a continuous change;*
- *executing change as effectively and efficiently as possible.*<sup>28</sup>

Therefore, given the importance of public service delivery to the success of Singapore in its development and the demand for knowledge and capacity development on the issue with UNDPs national government partners, there is a space for a unit within UNDP to focus on public service excellence that is closely linked to the Singapore model.

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<sup>28</sup> *The Reform of Public Administration in Singapore: A Model to Follow in Italy?*, Francesco, B.; Munich Personal RePEc Archive Paper No. 52685 (2013) [https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/52685/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_52685.pdf](https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/52685/1/MPRA_paper_52685.pdf)



However, is it fair to ask whether or not the Centre has too narrowly interpreted its mandate to focus on PAR and the enhancement of civil services? Though this field, even if interpreted narrowly, has a rich vein of potential areas of research, new ideas and solutions. But by focusing narrowly, the Centre may have missed opportunities to engage on other relevant issues and topics that are of interest to national government partners and would enrich the partnership with GoS to allow for stronger links between the two with the Centre as the facilitator.

For example, public service excellence no doubt includes local government services, yet little dedicated attention has been paid to local government public services by the Centre (apart from a joint workshop with CLGF titled “Cities 2030”). *Smart Cities*<sup>29</sup> are those that use emerging technology, access to data and connectivity to produce more livable and workable cities for residents. Singapore is a world leader in developing solutions based on this approach. Recently there have been linkages made between GoS, the Centre and national government partners that may have an interest in accessing Singapore’s knowledge to support their own efforts at the local level to make a transition to 21<sup>st</sup> Century cities. The development of relationships with regard to this topic should be further explored.

Another example of a broader perspective on public service excellence is *Financing for Development*<sup>30</sup> - a catch-all concept for the various means in which resources can be raised to fund development, in general, and the SDGs, in particular. Almost all types of financing have some link to the government (national; sub-national; local) that will either raise the funds nationally (i.e. – taxes) or receive sources from outside (i.e. – FDI; ODA) and disperse those funds to promote development. The role of government is critical in this process and the raising and managing of resources will be left to civil servants.

Therefore, by expanding the concept of public service excellence to include some emerging issues, such as Smart Cities and Finance for Development, the Centre could increase its relevance within UNDP and the broader UN system and international development community, while still reflecting at its core the need to enhance the capacity of how governments deliver public services.

However, the reasons why the Centre was not able to significantly expand its work into these areas are well known: resources (both financially and in terms of human resources) were simply not available to take on a more ambitious and expanded mandate. The challenge of limited resources is addressed in the next section.

### Value for Money and Financial Sustainability

The issue of whether or not the GCPSE provided value for money was addressed in some detail earlier in this report under the analysis of its efficiency under Part A of this section. Given the

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<sup>29</sup> <http://www.centreforcities.org/reader/smart-cities/what-is-a-smart-city/1-smart-cities-definitions/>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/index.htm>

limited budget provided for the Centre to conduct programming, it produced a significant number of knowledge products and organized numerous knowledge events. Its use of DPC to recover costs for technical missions has enabled the Centre to provide advisory services at minimal cost. Its use of partnerships to share costs of events and the delivery of activities has been nothing short of impressive.

The key strategic issue is whether or not the current funding envelope is sustainable? As noted in the table in Part A of this section, the GCPSE receives significantly less funding than other GPCs, even with the inclusion of in-kind resources. Recent experiences with other GPCs have shown that to be sustainable a GPC requires at least \$1 million USD per year in programme funding (\$1.5 - \$2 million USD in total costs). If the Centre cannot secure this amount of funding it will not be able to deliver the services that are required to be relevant to UNDPs network of COs and its support to national partners.

The GoS expected the Centre to become self-financing over time. This is however a challenge for a centre located in a high-income country. Notwithstanding some smaller grants and projects that may be funded by other partners including the private sector, donors are reluctant to provide core funding to a GPC in a high-income country and have an expectation for host countries to provide sufficient funding to ensure the functionality of the GPC. Therefore, the Centre, going forward, will need to rely essentially on two sources of core funding – GoS and UNDP. Given the limited core resource base of UNDP, the bulk of that funding will likely need to come from GoS, as is the case for the other GPCs located in middle or high-income countries. That will require a business model that is attractive to the GoS and possibly new areas of work that are appealing to decision-makers in the GoS and will compel them to provide more resources to the functions of the Centre.

### [Relations with the Government of Singapore](#)

Based on recent experiences with other Global Policy Centres operated by UNDP, there appears to be a clear and decisive link between the success of a GPC and a strong relationship with the host country's government. For sure, the provision of adequate funding by the host government is critical to such success, but the relationship needs to be more substantial than that of a donor-recipient relationship.

As has been discussed previously in this report, the Singapore model has much to offer other governments globally who are striving to develop their countries, both at the national and local levels. Since it has opened, the GCPSE has used its location in Singapore to convene high level government officials from various partner countries who are keen to learn more about the Singapore model of success and to more broadly gain knowledge as to how they can reform their civil service and deliver public services.

Yet, programmatically, the link between Singapore and other countries seems to have been limited to knowledge events, mostly in Singapore. There is an obvious next step which has not been taken – the provision of other forms of capacity development in-country. This may include

the short or medium-term exchange of counterparts between GoS and other governments to allow for a richer exchange of knowledge. It may also include coaching and mentoring of counterparts in other countries through in-country visits and technical advice. This was not accomplished during the first six years the Centre was operational.

There are likely two key reasons why the Centre was not able to take this next step in its relationship with GoS. First, GoS is not part of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee and does not formally provide Overseas Development Assistance (ODA).

However, there are clear examples within GoS of such support being provided to other countries. Some ministries and agencies have their own international technical cooperation units (e.g. – Singapore Land Transport Authority).

Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs there is the Singapore Cooperation Programme. This unit has provided financial support to GCPSE through the funding of additional "knowledge events" or capacity-building programmes which supports Singapore's technical assistance for developing countries. It also has promoted Singaporean knowledge and capacity in working with other countries, especially countries in the region. Since 2000, Singapore has operated four training centres in the capitals of four ASEAN member states – Yangon, Hanoi, Vientiane and Phnom Penh. These centres, though originally focused on training and knowledge events, have started to evolve into capacity development centres.

Therefore, there is evidence that GoS is also transitioning into an exporter of knowledge and capacity development support. Assuming this transition continues, there is a potential entry point for UNDP, and the Centre in particular, to support GoS in finding receptive governments with which GoS can engage to build links and longer-term partnerships.

A second reason for the limited relationship between the Centre and GoS is related to the lack of regular senior level interactions between the leadership in both institutions. Meetings between the Centre and GoS, particularly the MFA, have remained at the formal level. Over time, it should have been expected that the leadership in both organizations would have developed a more informal relationship and moved towards a trusted relationship in which discussions can be more frank and open with the exchange of information and interests. Yet this did not materialize, at least not at the more senior level.

GoS is not a classic "donor" and, therefore, UNDP must approach its relationship with the government in a different manner. Add to this the fact that there are cultural and professional differences in the approach to interactions in Singapore, as compared to more traditional donors. Therefore, it is possible that something got "lost in translation" as the relationship developed between the Centre and GoS. This prohibited the building of a stronger relationship that, in turn, would result in a fuller discussion as to what Singapore expected from its engagement with UNDP and the Centre and how the Centre could provide added-value to the broader foreign policy and development objectives of GoS.

As it now stands, the relationship has become, in part, one of the GCPSE as an implementer or collaborator of technical assistance that receives funds ex-post and upon submission of reports mandated as per rules of the additional engagement with the GoS in order to be audit-compliant. Though this is not what was envisaged in 2012 when UNDP and GoS signed the agreement to establish the Centre, both parties did, to varying degrees, benefit from this arrangement. The Centre received some additional funding beyond the terms agreed in Phase II, while the GoS leveraged UNDP's network to bring in foreign officials whom the GoS would otherwise have had limited contact with. Both sides also benefitted in expanding their ability to promote South-South Cooperation.

#### D. Staffing & Delivery Issues

##### Staffing

GCPSE operated with a minimal contingent of staff – one Director at a D1 level, a programme specialist at a P3 level, two secondees from GoS and one administrative assistant. From 2013-15 the Centre had a Junior Professional Officer and from 2015-17 a full-time technical adviser/consultant at a P5 level who worked on the implementation of the foresight programme. Other consultants were also contracted from time to time as funds and demand provided.

It is beyond the scope of this report to evaluate individual staff of the Centre, but it is important to note the expectations of key staff based on the standards set by other GPCs.

All GPCs are led by a D1 Director. This post plays a critical role in the success of a GPC. The person in the post must balance a number of roles and skills, including:

- **Content Expert:** The Director must be seen as a leading thinker on the thematic topic of the GPC;
- **Manager:** It is vital that a Director have experience as an effective manager of multi-million dollar programmes, both from the financial and the human resource perspectives;
- **Relationship Builder:** In addition to the above roles, a Director has to be effective at building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders – donors, technical experts, academics, government officials and implementers in the field of work; and
- **UN/UNDP Engager:** Beyond the normal relationships that must be built for a think tank or similar centre to a GPC, a Director of a GPC must also have the requisite skills to engage within the UN and UNDP systems. As very large, global organizations, there are unique opportunities and cultures that must be respected and nurtured in order to ensure the work of a GPC fits well within the given architecture.

GPCs will also often have at least one P5-level technical adviser. This is a crucial link between the development of knowledge that may occur internally or externally and its practical application in the field. It is a role that includes the taking of more esoteric knowledge and

incubating it and testing its applicability in real life circumstances. This will include the need for experience in working as an implementer in the thematic area and strong links within the UN system. Unfortunately for the Centre it did not have adequate funding to keep such a post on a full-time basis for more than two years and was limited by UNDP rules on long-term consultancy contracts. It was during these two years that the Centre was able to transition its work on foresight into a practical tool that resulted in direct application of the tool in a number of countries, to the benefit of the national partners and UNDP COs. In the future, if there is agreement going forward with a future centre, then the Centre requires sufficient funding to ensure it maintains a P5 adviser post in addition to other full-time positions<sup>31</sup>.

The work of the GoS secondees was of some added-value to GCPSE. It was/is the secondees that have been the primary driver for the development of the intrinsic motivation research (which is still ongoing). One seconded, who was present at the Centre for four years, worked diligently to build the process and structures required to enable the research to commence in 2017. It has now been handed over to another seconded to continue the work.

However, it is fair to say that UNDP had originally anticipated that the secondees sent to the Centre by GoS would be of a senior level within the GoS. This may have been an unrealistic expectation, given the limited motivation to be seconded to a unit of an international organization in a country where the government's international engagement is very limited and there is limited reward for gaining knowledge as to how an UN agency operates.

For a GPC the Policy Specialist post (P3 level) can be a bit of a "jack-of-all-trades". Depending on the needs of the GPC, the P3 post can focus on knowledge management or can support the P5 advisor or Director in their work. In the case of the Centre, the P3 post has very much fit all of these roles and operated de facto as the deputy director and has been critical to the success of the GCPSE.

In the end, the Centre accomplished as was expected of them with a small contingent of staff. With the inclusion of a full-time P5 adviser to the current staff levels, the Centre would have sufficient staffing to deliver on its outputs and outcomes. But again, this would require additional resources as UNDP cannot be expected to allocate scarce core resources to positions in a GPC in a high-income country.

### Delivery Issues

The role of a GPC within UNDPs architecture is to research and develop new thinking, ideas and solutions that have been tested and are ready for practical application by programmes and projects at the regional and country levels by UNDP and other development partners. This involves a GPC performing the following key functions:

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<sup>31</sup> By way of comparison, the Oslo Governance Centre currently employs in addition to the D1 director (paid by UNDP core funds) three P5 advisors, a P3 knowledge management specialist and several consultants, the latter all paid by project funds provided by the host government.

- Knowledge Broker
- Knowledge Developer
- Incubator
- Network Manager

GCPSE met these roles. As noted in some detail under Part A of this section, the Centre’s work on foresight, for example, shows the Centre building new knowledge and incubating its practical application. Its work on intrinsic motivation is a good example of managing a network of experts and national partners that could benefit from new data and knowledge. And its work on transformational leadership and innovation showed how the Centre can broker knowledge between high level officials in a number of countries.

However, GCPSE went beyond its mandate and engaged in advisory services and direct CO support. It also relied heavily on the provision of trainings during recent years – driven by the need to raise additional funding. This occurred for two reasons. First, UNDP did not have the planned architecture that was anticipated when the Centre opened in 2012 to allow it to play its focused role within the organization. As noted in the charts above, in theory there were to be regional technical advisers that were to provide advisory services to COs. Yet, in reality, there have been no PAR advisors in the regional hubs and the global RAI advisers were mainly focused on post-conflict and fragile states. Therefore, the Centre was drawn in to this vacuum created by the lack of advisory services and was enlisted on many occasions to provide direct support to COs – especially those that were not labelled post-conflict or fragile states – to meet the demands of UNDPs national government partners.

Second, the lack of adequate programme funding resulted in the Centre having to “chase funding” to secure sufficient resources to meet its core mandate and even to pay for its staff. The provision of advisory services to COs on a direct project cost recovery basis and the recent provision of trainings for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a cost-recovery basis are a direct result of this lack of core funding.

Beyond the type of activities conducted by the GCPSE, it is worth noting its methodology as well, especially as it relates to the Centre’s interaction with the RAI Team at Headquarters. Given the overlap in their mandates – both the Centre and RAI had as part of their mandate PAR work – there could have been stronger coordination and collaboration between the Centre and the RAI Team. Apart from one joint advisory mission (Cape Verde) and participation of RAI staff in GCPSE events, this did not materialize. Perhaps the fact that the RAI Team was focused mainly on post-conflict and fragile states was a factor, but the lack of coordination was a missed opportunity for synergy amongst UNDPs global CGF/PAR resources.

## Conclusion

There are many variables that contribute to an effective Global Policy Centre within UNDPs architecture. The centres play a limited, yet important, role in the development of cutting-edge knowledge that can be turned into practical ideas, solutions and programmes that can be delivered to global, regional and country level UNDP advisory and programme services. However, in order for a GPC to meet this mandate, it must have (a) adequate programme funding; (b) sufficient UNDP architecture to receive and use the knowledge developed; (c) a network of partners and a platform for the sharing of knowledge; (d) sufficient and capable staff to manage the core functions of the centre and to build the partnerships and relationships required to deliver on that mandate and (e) a strong partnership and trusted relationship with the host government.

GCPSE was missing some of these key factors in order to be strategically placed within UNDP and to maximize its relationship with the Government of Singapore. If the Centre is to continue beyond its current project life, key actors must ensure that these foundational elements are in place and remain in place for the Centre to succeed and thrive.

## E. Cross-cutting Issues

In addition to the delivery of outputs and outcomes and its strategic place within UNDP, it is important to briefly look at how GCPSE managed cross-cutting issues.

### Gender Equality

SDG-16 speaks to the need for effective, accountable and inclusive institutions to deliver on the other SDGs. This includes, as an indicator of this SDG, the need for political empowerment of women and an increase in the number of women in decision-making roles. This would include senior government officials, both elected and within the civil service.<sup>32</sup>

Therefore, a key measurement of public service excellence would be the reforms required by national government partners to increase the number of women within the senior ranks of their civil service. In turn, GCPSE should have provided as part of its mandate some focus on how this could be achieved, both from technical and practical perspectives. Unfortunately, there is limited evidence of this area of work being a focus of the Centre. Perhaps it was mainstreamed in the work of the Centre, but it is widely understood that to achieve gender equality there is a need for both mainstreaming the issue and for targeted interventions in support of women.

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<sup>32</sup> Indicator 16.7.1: <https://www.dst.dk/en/Statistik/Sdg/16-fred-retfaerdighed-og-staerke-institutioner/delmaal-07/indikator-1#>

The issue of gender equality and women's empowerment in the public service is addressed by the RAI team in headquarters (through the Gender Equality in Public Administration (GEPA) project). That project focuses on the collection of data, research and CO engagement related to the impact of gender on public administration.<sup>33</sup> It has also worked in Myanmar in the testing of its research and the application of some of its ideas in a real world scenario. However, apart from a workshop organized in Singapore by the headquarters team in collaboration with the GCPSE in June 2014 the project has had limited collaboration with GCPSE, even though they have similar mandates and are working in very similar thematic areas.

The existence of GEPA may have limited the need for the Centre to address gender equality in the public service in a targeted manner, but should not have prevented the Centre from mainstreaming relevant gender issues in its other work. The lack of collaboration, though, was a missed opportunity that could have added greater value to the work of the Centre.

### Anti-Corruption

SDG-16 has a specific focus on accountability and the fight against corruption as a key indicator of achieving the SDGs:

#### **16.5. Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms**

**Indicator 16.5.1:** Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months

**Indicator 16.5.2:** Proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months

This speaks directly to the need to support national government partners in ensuring public services are delivered without corruption. Given the primary focus of UNDP in its current Strategic Plan is the achievement of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, the work of GCPSE should have included some addressing of the issue of corruption and its impact on the delivery of public services. Yet there is limited evidence that the issue was a focus of the Centre.

In addition, since 2015, the UNDP global programme on anti-corruption – ACPIS – has been co-located with GCPSE in the same office in Singapore. The latter was able to build a relationship with the national counterparts, and more recently, there have been several joint initiatives. These include: (1) Integration of anti-corruption in GCPSE organized events, workshops and training activities with special focus on motivation, integrity building and innovation in fighting corruption; (2) Building synergies in country support (e.g., Uzbekistan, Mauritius and Myanmar, where both GCPSE and anti-corruption team have provided support); and (3) Joint knowledge products (e.g., Public Service Excellence to Prevent Corruption and Motivation Service Motivation).

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<sup>33</sup> See: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/democratic-governance-and-peacebuilding/responsive-and-accountable-institutions/GEPA/>



But overall, collaboration has been limited and the anti-corruption team operated almost as a separate unit within the Centre, reporting directly to the Director for Governance and Peacebuilding in Headquarters. This is considered a missed opportunity to integrate the work of the Centre and ACPIS and to build a synergy related to addressing public service corruption, an obvious topic for joint work given the mandate of the GCPSE and the ACPIS project.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis of this report, the following changes to the GCPSE are recommended:

**Broaden Defined Work Related to “Public Service”:** The work of the Centre, pending adequate resources, should reflect a broader definition of “public service” to include emerging issues that have a significant component related to the effective operation of the public sector. The Centre must be prepared to take on issues that are strategically relevant to the work of UNDP, the UN system and the international development community. It is recommended that the following topics be given consideration for attention from the Centre:

- Smart Cities: Leveraging the experiences of the Government of Singapore to work with national and local governments to support transitions to innovative cities; and
- Financing for Development: There is a need for support to governments on how they adjust to ensure they have the capacity to raise revenue and resources to implement the SDGs.
- SDG Implementation: How can the work of the Centre be better organized to ensure its ideas and knowledge is linked to the need for enhanced delivery of public services if the SDGs are to be achieved in each country?

**Focus on Knowledge Development, Brokering and Incubation:** GCPSE must have a clearly defined role within UNDP and then implement according to this role. GPCs should be focused on the:

- (i) Research new ideas and solutions (Knowledge Development) – both internally and commissioned, building platforms;
- (ii) Networks and partnerships to exchange and share ideas related to public service excellence (Knowledge Brokering), and
- (iii) Trying and testing of new concepts and ideas to ensure they are of value to technical advisers and programme and project implementers (Incubation).

**Build and maintain strong relationships with BPPS colleagues:** GCPSE must find its place within BPPS and manage its relationship with those in the Bureau who are working in the same field. There should be well-coordinated work with the RAI Team within the Governance and Peacebuilding Unit as well as other units working on the SDGs, financing for development and urbanization issues and relevant global programmes. The Centre should have stronger links with each regional hub and enhance its ability to build and share the knowledge it is developing.

**Limit engagement of Country Offices to Incubation:** The Centre should not see its main role as a direct provider of advisory services to COs, but consider Country Office engagement as an opportunity to test ideas. As was largely the case in the past, its engagement of COs should be limited to piloting of its ideas and solutions to ensure they have had some practical application prior to being rolled out across the organization. This will require discipline on the part of the

Centre and a commitment from UNDP to ensure COs have access to advisory services in each regional hub.

**Secure Adequate Funding for Programming:** GCPSE requires at least \$1 million USD per year in programme funding and a total operational budget of at least \$1.5 million - \$2 million USD per year and UNDP should avoid creating new centres if these conditions are not present at the outset. Sufficient resources will enable the staff to focus on their mandate and not on resource mobilizing to ensure delivery of its outputs. Realistically, given its location in Singapore, the Centre must be able to rely on the Government of Singapore and limited UNDP funding for its operations.

**Minimum Staffing Requirements Should be Enhanced:** The Centre must ensure it has the following posts to ensure it can deliver on its mandate:

- D1 Director (1) – core UNDP funding
- P5 Technical Adviser (1) – project funded
- P4 Specialist (3 – either FTAs or secondees from GoS) – project funding
- Finance & Administrative staff (1 G6) to ensure internal management and liaise with the Malaysia CO services.

**Enrich the Centre's Relationship with the Government of Singapore:** GCPSE must make a concerted effort to understand the added value that the GoS can bring to UNDPs work and nurture a relationship that is evolving towards one that is perceived as a trusted relationship by both parties. Potential avenues for enrichment include:

- Increased Use of Government Experts for In-Country Capacity Development: Working with GoS to identify a pool of experts that can be utilized by UNDP COs when they are engaging in public service reform with national government partners. This would allow the Centre and GoS to go beyond trainings and to allow for more impactful knowledge sharing and capacity building with beneficiaries.
- Addressing Issues that Relate to Singapore's Competitive Advantage: Issues such as Smart Cities allow the Centre to leverage the knowledge in Singapore that can be of interest to national government partners.
- More Routine and Informal Engagements: The Centre management needs to regularly be engaging counterparts in the GoS at multiple levels, to share opportunities for collaboration and to build a relationship that is organic and adaptable.

**Embrace New Forms of Knowledge Sharing:** GCPSE has built a strong network of partners and beneficiaries who receive the Raffles Review each week, but it must do more to embrace newer forms of communication to promote the knowledge it is developing and the information it is gathering. This may include webinars, e-courses video presentations (e.g. – TED Talks).

**Monitor the relevance of its services:** GPCs do not only operate on demand as is the case with other units in UNDP. GPCs also have an important mandate to think out of the box, explore new

areas of work and, therefore, have a supply function for new knowledge. There is however a need to take the pulse within UNDP on whether some of these services receive an audience. The Raffles Review is produced every week, but there is limited data available on how many staff in UNDP (or outside) really use and benefit from this offer. Regular monitoring of the usefulness of some of the services provided by the GCPSE and GPCs in general is recommended.

**Further Integrate the Work of GCPSE:**

- (a) *Internal Integration*: The linking up of the various outputs and activities of the Centre will lead to greater synergy and opportunities for knowledge development and brokering. The Centre should ensure its use of knowledge events is well integrated into a broader capacity development methodology. For example, the use of the transformational leadership courses as an entry point for other engagements should be seen as a main objective of the high level events when they are organized.
- (b) *Within UNDP & UN System*: The work of GCPSE must be closely linked to the priorities of UNDP and the broader UN system. This is most relevant to how the Centre can ensure it is contributing to the achievement of the SDGs. Effective public services are both an objective of the SDGs (SDG-16) and a significant contributing factor to the achievement of all of the 17 Goals. The Centre's work must be focused on this outcome in the years to come.

## Annex 1: Terms of Reference

# Review of the Singapore Policy Centre on Public Service Excellence

### Background

In September 2012, UNDP and the Government of Singapore signed an MOU, and agreed on a project document establishing the Global Centre for Public Service Excellence ([www.undp.org/publicservice](http://www.undp.org/publicservice)). 2013-2015 was the first period of operations of the Centre, at the end of which, a second three-year phase of the project was agreed (September 2015 to August 2018, which is the current project end-date).

The Global Centre for Public Service Excellence (GCPSE) aspires to be UNDP's catalyst for new thinking, strategy and action on building effective, accountable and transparent public institutions [SDG Target 16.6]. GCPSE does this by bringing officials, policy-makers and expert-practitioners together to facilitate continuous learning, stronger evidence, and South-South Cooperation.

Over the years, the Center has managed to carve out a niche by focusing on four major areas of work which are considered the cornerstones of the GCPSE evidence building and convening agenda:

- Effective cooperation at the interface of political and administrative leadership.
- Motivation of public service officials (changes to effectively reform the public service need to build on a better understanding of the intrinsic motivation of public officials).
- Strategic foresight as a vehicle for adaptive governance in an increasingly complex environment. Activities have been implemented in collaboration with a wide range of partners and funding sources (incl. UNDP/BPPS Innovation Facility).
- Innovation in Public Service, testing and promoting novel approaches, such as design thinking, social innovation and disruptive technologies.

In response to internal and external demand it formulated a suite of services (see [www.bit.ly/GCPSEservices](http://www.bit.ly/GCPSEservices)) which GCPSE offers to UNDP Country Offices and partner Governments. These services leverage internal capacities and the body evidence and expertise that GCPSE has created over the years. Services also include the delivery of training programmes for which the Government of Singapore has provided additional funding for during the Centre's second phase. The Centre, in partnership with the OECD-DAC, is also the Joint Secretariat for the Effective Institutions Platform, a partnership of more than 65 countries and organisations (multilateral and bilateral development agencies, civil society, think tanks) which aims to support countries in strengthening their public sector institutions through initiatives such as Peer-to-Peer Learning.

The Center is part of the Democratic Governance and Peacebuilding Cluster in UNDP's Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS) with a research link also to the Director of the Strategic Policy Unit in BPPS. The Center's Director reports twice a year to the Project Board, co-chaired by the BPPS director and the DG International Organisations of the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Other members of the board are: the RC Malaysia, a senior official of the Prime Minister's Office in Singapore, as well as

one independent board member (Prof. Shake, CEO of the Rwanda Governance Board). The Centre has no operations unit and is supported by the Malaysia Country Office and UNDP HQ.

The second phase of the project is ending in August 2018 and UNDP project management regulations require an end of project evaluation. The evaluation will also feed into the discussion between UNDP and the GoS on the prospects of and if so, the focus of, a third phase of the project.

## **Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation**

In line with UNDP regulations the project needs to be subject to an independent evaluation. The project document stipulated that a joint evaluation would be carried out in the final six months of the project. That did not happen in the first phase of the project, but is now warranted in light of the review of UNDP's business processes and the role of the Global Policy centres, and in light of the ongoing discussions with the Government of Singapore on the relevance, direction and sustainability of the Centre.

The evaluation will examine not only to what extent the centre, given its funding and staffing, has been able to position UNDP as a thought leader in the area of public service excellence and its role in achieving major development objectives, but also whether the centre has been able to identify and sustain its potential position for the future, financially with the support of the host government and intellectually, as the go-to think tank for UNDP's guidance on public service excellence.

The evaluation will therefore need to examine the following areas:

- Strategic direction taken by the Centre;
- An assessment of whether the GCPSE is on track to achieve its objectives at project end, and its longer-term potential under the new Strategic Plan;
- Appropriateness of the partnerships developed;
- Continued relevance for UNDP of the thematic focus and breadth of mandate and value of the Centre as perceived by UNDP Regional Bureaus and Country offices as well as external partners (e.g. development partners and partner Governments);
- Value for money and financial sustainability of the Centre (compared to other Global Policy Centres and taking into account UNDP's current financial situation);
- Staffing capacity, operations and other delivery issues.
- Relations with the host country and expectations on future UNDP collaboration in a High Income City State.

The final evaluation of the project will cover the period project from the start of Phase 1 (September 2012) until now (with a projection of results and accomplishments until the end of Phase 2 in August 2018).

The evaluation will be undertaken by an independent evaluator selected by UNDP/BPPS.

## **Duties and Responsibilities of Consultant**

### **Approach and Methods**

The review will be based on relevant documentation, including the project document, annual work plans, project board meetings, workshop reports, face-to-face or telephone/video interviews with government officials in Singapore, GCPSE staff, UNDP staff at HQ and in regional centres and regional bureaus and country offices, the UNRC Office in Kuala Lumpur (for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei), key partners such as the OECD, USAID, NSGI/DFID, UNOSSC, the Astana Civil Service Hub (ACSH) in Kazakhstan, the EIP Co-Chairs, Singaporean government officials, and other key stakeholders in the research and public administration community.

### **Key Duties and Output/Deliverables**

The key output of this consultancy will be an independent evaluation presented in a 20-25-page report, reflecting on the key issues outlined in this ToR.

### **Timeline**

A first draft of the report will be presented to BPPS by 16 March 2018. The report will be shared by the BPPS director with the Singapore Government and Board members by 23 March. The consultant will receive feedback from UNDP, the GoS and the Project Board by 30 March.

A final version of the report will be submitted by 6 April 2018.

### **Activities and Outputs over 22 working days**

- Interviews (remotely and in Singapore and New York) gathering of information and review of documents (15 days);
- Finalising draft report (20-25 pages excluding annexes - TOR, list of people interviewed, list of documents reviewed (4 days);
- Presentation of draft report (remotely ½ day)
- Revision of draft report based on comments received from UNDP, GoS, Board members (2 ½ days)

### **Institutional Arrangements and Reporting**

The consultant will report to the Director/Chief of Profession, Governance and Peacebuilding, BPPS (NY).

### **Travel**

The assignment would include a full three-day mission to Singapore to conduct interviews with the GCPSE staff and government officials, and a full three-day mission to UNDP HQ in New York. All other work on this assignment is desk-based.

## Annex 2: List of Documents Consulted

Annual Project Board Minutes (2013-17)  
GCPSE Annual Report (2013-17)  
GCPSE Annual Work Plans (2013-17)  
GCPSE Financial Reports (2013-17)  
Director's Reports (2014-17)  
Singapore Scoping Mission (2012)  
GCPSE Project Document (2012)  
Agreement on Global Centre (2012)  
Side Letter to Agreement for Global Centre (2012)  
Singapore Government Letter of Funding (2012)  
USAID Funding Agreement  
Empowered Futures Initiative  
Strategic Options for GCPSE (2014)  
Is the Private Sector More Efficient? (2015)  
Virtuous Cycles: The Singapore Public Service and National Development (2011)  
From Old Public Administration to New Public Service (2015)  
Foresight Engagement Reports  
Public Service 2030 & Beyond: Evaluation Report 92018)  
Africa and Foresight: Better Futures in Development (2017)  
Towards and Innovative Civil Service in Mauritius (2015)  
Mauritius Public Sector Business Transformation Strategy (2017)  
BTOR Samoa Mission (2017)  
Readying Samoa's Public Service for the Digital Age (2018)  
The SDGs and New Public Passion (2015)  
Public Service Motivation and the SDGs – An Acknowledged Crisis?  
The Raffles Review (Select Issues)  
Foresight: The Manual (2015)  
Foresight as a Long-term Planning Tool for Developing Countries  
UNDP and the Making of Singapore's Public Service (2015)  
Myanmar Civil Service Reform Strategic Action Plan (2017)  
UNDP Strategic Plans  
A Guide to Peer-to-Peer Learning (2016)



## Annex 3: List of People Interviewed

Name	Organization
Tege Gettu	Associate Administrator - UNDP
Patrick Keuleers	UNDP – BPPS - G&P Cluster Director
Max Everest-Phillips	GCPSE Director
Niloy Banerjee	UNDP-UN System Affairs Director
Pedro Conceicao	UNDP-BPPS – Strategic Policy Director
Arndt Husar	GCPSE Policy Specialist
Kevin Chai	GCPSE Policy Specialist (Seconded from GoS)
Sky Tan	GCPSE Policy Specialist (Seconded from GoS)
Nigel Goh	GCPSE Policy Specialist (Former) (Seconded from GoS)
Pieter Vanderpol	GCPSE Policy Adviser/Consultant
Aida Arutyunova	ACPIS Programme Manager
Liheng Tang	GoS – Public Service Division (Project Board Member)
Poon Kang Wang	LKY Centre for Innovative Cities (SUTD)
Liu Hong	Nanyang Centre for Public Administration Director (NTU)
Joshua Chambers	GovInsider
Lynette Long	Singapore MFA – Director of International Organizations Division (Project Board Member)
Deborah Koh	Singapore Economic Development Board
Mitchell Lee	Singapore MFA - SCP
Stefan Priesner	UN Resident Coordinator – Malaysia & Singapore
Jose Cruz Osorio	UNDP – BPPS –G&P - Team Leader, RAI
Jos De La Haye	UNDP – Team Leader - Governance and Peace Building Arab States Hub
James Perry	School of Public & Environmental Affairs – Indiana University
Neil Levine	USAID
Christian Echle	Konrad Adenauer Foundation
Panos Liverakos	Astana Regional Hub for Civil Service
Gay Hamilton	Commonwealth Association of Public Administration and Management
Pierre Schoonraad	Government of Singapore – Centre for Public Service Innovation
Marc LePage	Innovation Policy Adviser – UNDP Regional Hub Addis Ababa
Christophoros Politis	Chief Technical Adviser – UNDP Myanmar
Ranooka Beejan	UNDP Mauritius Programme Manager
Aziza Umarova	GCPSE Consultant
Minerva Novero	BPPS Policy Specialist
Ciara Lee	BPPS Consultant – Gender Equality & Public Administration Project