THE FUTURE
OF PUBLIC
SERVICE

"The powerful thing about foresight, especially if you use causal layered analysis, is that you touch people's emotions and feelings."

04

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inside
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1. Anticipate Malaysia's future possibilities;

2. Promote foresighting at national, sectoral and corporate levels;

3. Identify key technologies to support sectoral development;

4. Outline key future R&D areas.

● **EDITOR'S NOTE**

Initial
Thoughts

GREETINGS & SALUTATIONS,

I hope you are well and safe as you go along conducting your daily activities. It has been a challenging start to the year as we brace for the impact of the pandemic as well as its unintended consequences. Disruptions are everywhere and the new normal has taken root hence forcing upon many who are not yet ready to embrace change. For the past week, I encountered annoyed public members put off by having to queue to get into a small convenient store which only allowed 3 customers at a time and a family of four that were also annoyed for not being able to sit together at a mamak restaurant given the social distancing rules.

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Foresight and
Futures thinking
can be used in
various national
and institutional
settings"

RUSHDI ABDUL RAHIM
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> **"**
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> PhilFutures' mission is to advance futures thinking in the Philippines by providing mentorship and guidance on futures thinking programmes, projects and initiatives; and helps to build connections with potential partners."

I believe these examples are a select few, as a survey conducted recently by MIGHT indicates that as of the end of May, more Malaysians are generally not yet comfortable to return to their "normal" lives. You can read about it in the following pages of this edition. However, regardless of disruptions, life goes on. Certain agendas that were in place prior to Covid-19, will continue to be pursued. One of these agendas is public service transformation. In 2014, myForesight did a "Future of Public Service" project in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Public Service Department (JPA). The project identified policy direction for change to prepare for the public service of the future—with 2025 as the target in mind. Five years later, we thought a review was timely.

We would like to thank the Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU) for arranging a stakeholder's engagement session where a lot of points on public service transformation were discussed. Notably, some suggested a number of creative ways to press forward and all these fresh ideas were duly highlighted during the discussion.

However, I would like to stress that what is presented in this edition are not recommendations but rather some food for thought. I hope members and advocates of transformation from the public service will continue to further this conversation. Granted, the reason we are having this conversation points to the fact that we are consistently seeking improvement and are aware of the challenges facing the public service of the future.

We are not alone in this. In this edition, we have my colleagues, two other futurists giving their thoughts on the public service of the future. Liz Alexander provides insights on finding inspiration outside of the confines of one's own discipline and industry. Whereas Susann Roth of Asian Development Bank (ADB) stresses the need of building foresight capacity for public officials and how ADB has gone about undertaking this. I think all of us agree on the need to equip public officials of the future with "foresight and futures thinking" capability since it can be used in various national and institutional settings.

On a personal note, I have just been appointed to be a part of the Global Advisory Board (GAB) for the Philippine Futures Thinking Society (PhilFutures)—a professional organisation created in collaboration with the Philippine Society for Public Administration (PSPA) and other academic institutions composed of scholars and practitioners in the fields of governance, public administration and strategic foresight management.

PhilFutures' mission is to advance futures thinking in the Philippines by providing mentorship and guidance on futures thinking programmes, projects and initiatives; and helps to build connections with potential partners. Of course, among these networks are MIGHT and myForesight.

I hope all of you are safe and well. From what we have gathered, I hope you will find this edition an interesting read that complements your thoughts in any course of change you are trying to embark on.

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The success of foresight programmes has to do with inspiring people.

In times of slow or minimal change, futures thinking and foresight are luxury planning approaches.

However, in times of rapid change, they are critical for not only the success but also the very survival of an organisation, a corporation, or an institution.

FORESIGHT: "A LUXURY THE DEVELOPING WORLD CANNOT AFFORD?"

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The powerful thing about foresight, especially if you use causal layered analysis, is that you touch people's emotions and feelings.

Susann Roth,
Asian Development Bank

The following touches on how Asian Development Bank (ADB) works with policy makers to bring futures thinking and foresight into decision-making and how ADB monitors something not easily measurable.

ADB'S SUSANN ROTH SPEAKS TO UMAR SHERAZ, *JOURNAL OF FUTURES STUDIES*

We need more bespoke engagement—"co-creation"—with policy makers. It is not about talking at each other but talking with each other. Foresight enables people to use not only evidence but also their imagination and creativity. This is often missing in highly bureaucratic public sectors.

What indicators does ADB use to monitor progress, especially in auditing a foresight program?

How do we prove that our foresight engagement and foresight program add value? The program opens the mind. It looks at uncertainties. It uses creativity to grade these scenarios. Then you can innovate in backcasting policy decisions and the investments that need to follow. The program is one tool for engaging in dialogue on innovation. For an organisation like ADB, evidence that the program works is of the greatest importance. The program should result in, first, better policy dialogue and more sustainable and equitable policies. Second, the program should encourage positive engagement with our member countries so that they want to work with ADB as a knowledge partner on foresight and national policies. The partnership should shape investment decisions. And third, the foresight program should raise the quality of our projects and other programs and make them more efficient, effective, sustainable, and relevant.

What is relevant today is different, of course, from what will be relevant in 10 to 20 years. The success of foresight programs has to do with inspiring people. Yes, we are a multilateral development bank but we must set agendas and help people have the vision and inspire them to do the work. We want to be part of that change and we want to see that change for our children.

ADB still needs to monitor progress. For example, how many kilometers of roads have been financed or has gross domestic product per capita improved?

Our new corporate results framework looks also at all kinds of quality outputs, which go beyond kilometers of roads or transmission lines built. ADB has one of the best corporate results frameworks among multilateral development banks and we are proven to be among the best in development effectiveness.

Our economists are interested in social and sustainable development and in how you link that with GDP. There are discussions about circular economies and green economies. How do you reduce poverty while reducing carbon dioxide emissions? Once we have the answer, then we also have the Holy Grail and a silver bullet. Strategy 2030 makes it clear that innovation needs to happen.

Let us talk about the paradox of a used future. A big issue with e-health, for example, is that it represents a used future. It is glitzy but has not served who it was supposed to serve. How do you encourage your stakeholders not to pursue used futures?

When we developed the e-health or digital health agenda at ADB, we used foresight. We said that is the future and we must use digital tools to reach more people and improve the quality of care. E-health is only as good as the benefits to its users. In the context of foresight, you can have various scenarios. You can have a vision of a certain future, but you must understand what kind of foundations you need to put in place to get to that kind of future. The challenge is in the mistake we sometimes make: let us just leapfrog to stage seven and use new technologies. Although this is wonderful and well-meant, we forget the foundations that need to be in place. But you cannot measure them very well. They do not come in kilometers of roads or transmission lines built. The foundations include good governance—information technology in this case—and basic infrastructure, skills, capacity development, human capital development, and so on, which are difficult to measure. A lot depends on education to realise our vision for the future.

> We said that is the future and we must use digital tools to reach more people and improve the quality of care.

At ADB, do you have capacity-building programs to sensitise policy makers to the need for foresight?

The question for me is not so much about capacity development but about how capacity is developed. First, you need to work with the various development partners. Second, you need to combine peer-to-peer learning with bespoke workshops and so on. I am absolutely against any kind of PowerPoint presentation because I do not think that is capacity development. It must be on-the-job learning. We have engaged in various countries on foresight and have started to build foresight literacy.

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And I do believe this is where we need to invest: in the emotions and feelings we use to make the right decisions.

The powerful thing about foresight, especially if you use causal layered analysis, is that you touch people's emotions and feelings. You might say that you come from a bank and that we work in financing and policy and there should be no room for feelings and emotions. But feelings and mind-sets, that is what life is about, and this is what humans are about. This makes us different from any artificial intelligence. And I do believe this is where we need to invest: in the emotions and feelings we use to make the right decisions. What is right? It comes back to sustainability and equitability and avoiding a situation where only certain people benefit from policies and investments.

CONCLUSION

In times of slow or minimal change, futures thinking and foresight are luxury planning approaches. However, in times of rapid change, they are critical for not only the success but also the very survival of an organisation, a corporation, or an institution. Indeed, as the spread of COVID-19 demonstrates, early warning anticipatory systems for nations and the world economy are foundational requirements for the health of the entire system. Futures thinking and foresight help us do the following:

- Map the future so we gain a better sense of direction.

- Anticipate emerging issues and disruptions so that we reduce risk and can avail ourselves of new opportunities.

- Time the future differently by using a three-horizons framework—the present, the uncertain emerging future, and the envisioned long-term future. Organisations keep an eye on all three horizons.

- Include all stakeholders so that risk is reduced, new ideas are created, strategic success is enhanced through partnerships.

"

Futures thinking and foresight can be used in different national and institutional settings.

- Use scenarios so that different futures are clarified, and distinctions between the used, the disowned, the preferred, and the outlier are understood.

- Move from imagined future to creating desired future. The future imagined is created.

Futures thinking and foresight can be used in different national and institutional settings.

Futures thinking and foresight can help develop water strategies—access to clean water and sanitation—as in Timor-Leste.

> The present shows us that we have focused for too long on short-term gains and that solutions of the past can turn into the problems of tomorrow.

Futures thinking and foresight can help anticipate new opportunities as in recycling and space exploration as in Kazakhstan. They can also be used to determine human resource shifts: which jobs are new, which jobs are disappearing, and which jobs are changing. In Kazakhstan, futures thinking was used as well to rethink tourism, to make it far less decentralised, to use new technologies to create new tourism opportunities.

Futures thinking and foresight can move the portfolio, as in the People's Republic of China, from borrowing for roads to borrowing for knowledge. Futures thinking and foresight anticipate the next development stage and help shift ADB strategy. Knowledge itself must shift, from rote learning to knowledge with wings—both global and applicable to local contexts. ADB in this context changes from being a family doctor to becoming a patient care manager in an increasingly complex development landscape, bringing in global expertise for local change.

Futures thinking and foresight can be used to innovate as in Armenia, which seeks to move toward full green, smart energy, self-sufficient, and inclusive cities. Participants imagined a future of connectivity and renewables with a transformation in education.

Futures thinking and foresight can be used to diversify the economic portfolio as in Cambodia. They can also be used as a lever for economic growth by changing deep social relations, where individuals imagine women as national leaders rather than garment workers. Futures thinking can help tell a new story as in Cambodia, which wishes to shift from a paper-based bureaucracy to a far more efficient cloud-based system, what participants called the e-Buddha (efficient and wise).

Futures thinking and foresight help reshape human resources and educational systems needed to help create the desired future, as with interventions at the Philippines' National Economic and Development Authority. To create an innovative national economy, participants were clear that the current educational system would need to drastically change. Indeed, this was the feature of all workshops: in a world of artificial intelligence, disintermediation, 3D printing, rise of renewable energy, demographic shifts, digitalisation, education was still focused on the previous industrial era, not the emerging fourth industrial revolution.

Finally, futures thinking and foresight can help strengthen partnerships as between the People's Republic of China and ADB as well as with other nations. Partnerships become focused on where nations seek to go—not on where they are today but on where they can be in the future.

Traditional planning thus needs to expand to include the long term, to use the future to change today, and develop a robust strategy to create a new tomorrow. The present shows us that we have focused for too long on short-term gains and that solutions of the past can turn into the problems of tomorrow.

● **INSIGHTS**

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In physics there is a phenomenon known as "the observer effect," meaning that whatever is observed changes as a consequence of being looked at.

Silos are one of the most endemic hurdles to overcome during public sector reform.

Administration is meant to achieve something and not exist in some kind of an ivory tower, following certain rules of procedure and Narcissus-like looking on itself with satisfaction.

LEARNING FROM THE OUTSIDE IN

LIZ ALEXANDER, PhD
Futurist, Author, Consultant, Speaker

Consulting futurist, Dr. Liz Alexander, is co-founder of Leading Thought, whose clients in the United States, UK, Australia, South Africa and India look to them for ways to 'futureproof' their talent and organisations. She combines her futurist skills with a deep understanding of the strategic needs of business, especially as they relate to communicating thought leadership insights and paradigm pioneering ideas.

Dr. Liz is the author/co-author of 21 nonfiction books published worldwide, that have reached close to a million global readers. She contributes to Fast Company's online platform and writes a blog entitled 'Preparing for the Unpredictable' for Psychology Today.

Whenever I teach creativity and innovation to groups ranging from college students to corporate executives, I begin by stressing the value of finding inspiration outside of the confines of their own disciplines and industries. The World Bank echoed that advice in their 2018 report entitled Improving Public Sector Performance through Innovation and Inter-Agency Coordination, writing:

> " Understanding how other countries have tackled their public sector transformation through qualitative case studies can provide inspiration for how to go about the reform."

Such an approach is consistent with foresight work in both looking back and more broadly in order to answer questions that the World Bank document then posed:

> " What were the mechanics of solving the problem in a different country setting?
>
> What pitfalls could have been avoided?
> What features need to be adapted to the local context?"

That report showcased over a dozen global case studies highlighting success factors that the World Bank identified as important for improving public sector efficiency and effectiveness (see Box Out). Three of these case studies stood out to me as illustrations of how public service initiatives have successfully reformed public sector structures, regulatory processes, enhanced productivity and front-line service delivery, not only in terms of innovative features but also altered mindsets.

PUBLIC SERVICES GUARANTEE ACT (PSGA) IN MADHYA PRADESH

It is a sad fact that the most vulnerable in our societies need many public services at one time. Even sadder is the reality in which citizens who are poor and with limited education must navigate multiple bureaucratic structures with slow-moving processes. That was the problem the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh wanted to overcome. They enacted a law—"the first act of its kind in the world"—that legally mandated the right to public services in a timely manner for its citizens, with sanctions against officials who engaged in maladministration and failed to meet the Act's stringent deadlines.

After passing the PSGA in 2011, the state created the Department of Public Service Management (DPSM), a new structure that initiated the setting up of "one stop shops" known as Lok Sewa Kendras (LSKs). These are run by private operators who, using government-provided software, handle citizen applications for numerous public services simultaneously, then electronically forward them to the relevant departments for action. Applicants can opt to be notified of those decisions via SMS, or return to the LSK for a follow-up.

Within seven years of enacting the PSGA, the Madhya Pradesh state government extended coverage to over 400 different public services, most of which can be applied for at LSKs. The reform not only reduced the cost of front-line service delivery but also the time citizens had to spend in numerous government departments.

The PSGA is one example of how a single state can take the initiative and present a "pilot study" that others can learn from and follow. By 2018 the law had been adopted by twenty other Indian states and new services are being brought under its auspices every year. It has also helped to communicate a message that is frequently lost in bureaucratic spheres, as articulated by India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru at the inaugural meeting of the India Institute of Public Administration in 1954:

> " Administration is meant to achieve something and not exist in some kind of an ivory tower, following certain rules of procedure and Narcissus-like looking on itself with satisfaction. The test, after all, is the human beings and their welfare."

That is not to say the Act is without its detractors. One paper published in May 2019, for example, found many areas of weakness, including:

> " There are no accountability norms for higher officials and elected leaders who head the public service departments…despite the provisions for financial penalty, responsible officials find ways to escape."

In contrast, the structure of the next initiative in directly involving the chief minister and senior officials underscores the importance of strong political leadership that, in addition to performance improvements and faster front-line service delivery, enhances political reputations.

THE CITIZEN FEEDBACK MONITORING PROGRAM (CFMP) IN PUNJAB

The idea behind Punjab's CFMP originated with one enterprising district official in Jhang who decided that rather than wait for people to complain and then try to correct those concerns, he would collect phone numbers during service delivery then train people to call those citizens out of the blue to discuss their experience. The initiative came to the attention of the chief minister of Punjab and with the benefit of a US$100,000 World Bank Innovation Fund grant a reform of the complaint procedure was rolled out across the state.

The idea is a simple if elegant one that initially used SMS messaging and "robocalls" recorded by then Chief Minister Shehbaz Sharif (now President of the Pakistan Muslim League), to garner feedback—calls which delighted many citizens, enhancing the chief minister's reputation and boosting levels of trust in the Punjab government. A dashboard system produced simple graphs and monthly reports, helping to highlight those districts with persistent negative feedback. With the tangibility of citizen-centric SMS and recorded calls as evidence, civil servants were unable to claim that reprimands and firings were politically motivated. The reports went directly to the chief minister and other senior officials who had both the political will and the clout to take immediate punitive action where necessary.

As an example of the performance improvements and point-of-service benefits directly due to this reform, the directorate in charge of issuing passports—after routinely calling 100 per cent of applicants—saw processing time drop from three weeks to ten business days. Time spent by citizens in the passport office was also reduced: from almost five hours (in 2015) to just 70 minutes (in 2018). We can infer similar improvements in service delivery from the fact that when the program was first introduced in that directorate, 15 percent of responses were negative whereas three years later complaints had dropped to under five percent.

While measurable results like those achieved in Madhya Pradesh and Punjab are invaluable in persuading others to adopt such initiatives for themselves, there are many nuanced, indirect lessons to be learned from other countries' experiences with reform, as this case study from Armenia illustrates.

REFORMING REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS IN ARMENIA

Policy decisions that become laws that result in yet more regulations are not only the bane of business, they are costly for government to administer and in many cases provide an ideal breeding ground for corruption.

As is the case in many countries, each of Armenia's new regulations require a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), not least to check whether an alternative approach might achieve a better outcome. Before 2016, Armenia's existing arduous regulatory framework did nothing to improve that country's plummeting public trust in policy-makers. The changes that the new RIA methodology and associated training brought about included requiring whoever proposed the regulation to conduct the RIA, rather than spread it across the other five ministries involved in the process. These efforts earned the country a 2017 World Bank Global RIA award for successfully, "influencing the way policymakers think of a policy problem and impacting the regulatory outcome."

It is that little nugget that highlights what I think is an important but often overlooked lesson of reform. According to the World Bank, "… the increased rigor and data quality required for policy proposals will eventually result in regulators self-disciplining, leading to fewer, better proposals."

In physics there is a phenomenon known as "the observer effect," meaning that whatever is observed changes as a consequence of being looked at. By paying attention to the number of unique data elements reported for regulatory compliance, for example, Australia's Standard Business Reporting reforms significantly reduced that number from 200,000 items to 4,500. Similarly, any government seeking "reform" might consider looking more deeply at prevailing mindsets. From the Armenian example it is obvious—at least to me—that by provoking a more focused examination of problems and their desired outcomes policy-makers would ideally produce fewer, more robustly devised regulations at the outset. In other words, prevention might be an even worthier outcome than a regulatory overhaul "cure."

Across the globe there are inspiring examples of reports, detailed case studies, and follow-up critiques highlighting how simple, quick-to-implement public service reforms have improved the lives of citizens and boosted the way civil servants provide essential public services. While at the same time enhancing the standing of politicians who know that in order to deliver on their election promises they must embrace the creative ingenuity of all stakeholders through enhanced collaboration and flexible political will.

BOXOUT: SUCCESS!!

The following World Bank framework outlines five key factors for successful public services reform:

As the Punjab example (above) demonstrates, successful reforms require the interest, commitment and political will to act clearly and decisively on the information being made available—at the highest possible levels. The public needs to see in tangible terms that something is changing and "reform" isn't just empty promises.

When a lack of collaboration between the Finance Ministry and their counterparts in health and education in Mozambique resulted in a lack of medicines in hospitals, and supervisor visits in schools, a new Program Coordination Team hired coaches to coordinate between the finance people and the line ministries. These coaches also helped to instil a new way of thinking among civil servants whose lack of effective communication had contributed to service bottlenecks. By focusing on building their institutional capacity on a very practical level, the Mozambique government ensured much needed medical supplies were received in a timely manner, and school grants were allocated on time, among other results.

Think SMS, robocalls and an easy-to-navigate dashboard rather than cutting-edge technology that takes time and resources to educate people to use—which they might never do. Simple tools will be more easy to understand by both citizens and officials.

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING
TECHNOLOGY
TRANSPARENCY
INCENTIVES

1
2
3
4
5

5 KEY FACTORS IN IMPROVING PUBLIC SECTOR PERFORMANCE

Silos are one of the most endemic hurdles to overcome during public sector reform. By prompting the Ministry of the Interior in the Netherlands to merge two competing databases and their corresponding units, independent non-profit organisation the Kafka Brigade (mandate: Breaking through bureaucracy; involving the citizen; empowering front line staff; unleashing change) ensured 150,000 fewer births, deaths and marriage certificates were needed to be issued annually.

"Sticks" can be the most appropriate levers of change in some cases, but in others it's important to reward the performance you want with "carrots." As an incentive during their 2016 VAT reform, while rolling out a performance management initiative among the 800,000 officials of China's State Administration of Taxation, rare (and therefore more prized) merits and commendations were given out to just 510 exemplary individuals who made notable contributions to the initiative's overall success.

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● **VIEWPOINTS**

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Medical capacity, capabilities, facilities and equipment that exist today are unevenly distributed throughout the world.

The capacity to anticipate and prepare means nothing without the willingness to act.

Malaysia ranks 16th in the responsiveness agility category and 2nd across emergency response operations' indicators.

ANTICIPATION & PREPAREDNESS VS WILLINGNESS TO ACT

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In a highly interconnected world, distance matters less. Modern transportation and logistics have increased global mobility and trade that fuel buzzing world economy. The same shared route, however, has also prompted the spread of myriad diseases. For example, a flu in Hong Kong can quickly become a fever in Los Angeles with just one flight, putting larger populations at risk to an outbreak of pandemic diseases.

With the benefits of modern medicine and hindsight, it is thought that we are more prepared to face disease outbreaks. However, medical capacity, capabilities, facilities and equipment that exist today are unevenly distributed throughout the world. Therefore, there is a need to address this at both global and domestic levels.

In September 2019, the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB) released a report of where the world stands in its ability to prevent and contain a global health threat outlining recommendations to be adopted and taken up. GPMB is co-organised by the World Health Organisation and the World Bank Group, created in response to recommendations by the UN Secretary General's Global Health Crises Task Force in 2017.

Then, there is the Global Health Security (GHS) Index that assesses world countries' health security and capabilities across six categories: prevention, detection and reporting, rapid response: health system, compliance with international norms as well as risk environment.

RANKING GLOBAL PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS

This pre-COVID-19 report found that no country was truly prepared to manage a pandemic

The Global Health Security Index measures the state of health security around the world.

PREVENTION
Prevention of the emergence or release of pathogens

DETECTION AND REPORTING
Early detection and reporting for epidemics of potential international concern

RAPID RESPONSE
Rapid response to and mitigation of the spread of an epidemic

HEALTH SYSTEM
Robust health system to treat the sick and protect health workers

COMPLIANCE WITH GLOBAL NORMS
Commitments to improving national capacity, financing plans, and adhering to global norms

RISK ENVIRONMENT
Overall risk environment and country vulnerability to biological threats

Here's how countries scored in terms of health security
Countries with a population of over 5 million

Global Health Security Index Score

1B+ Population
100m-1B
50-100m
25-50m
<50m

U.S. 83.5 — The U.S ranked first in the world in a number of indicators including: Epidemiology Workforce, Biosecurity, and Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning.

77.9 U.K.
75.6 Netherlands
75.5 Australia
Canada 75.3
Thailand 73.2
Sweden 72.1

Italy ranked 126th in the Emergency Response Operation Indicator, and 59th in Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning.

France 68.2
Germany 66.0
Spain 65.9
S. Korea 70.2
Finland 68.7
Switzerland 67.0
Denmark 70.4

Prior to COVID-19 outbreak, China had a plan in place to deal with communicable diseases with pandemic potential.

Japan 59.8
Singapore 58.7
Mexico 57.6
Brazil 59.7
Argentina 58.6
Malaysia 60.3
Portugal
Belgium 60.1
Austria 58.5
Chile 58.3

Vietnam
Czech 52.0
China 48.2
Peru 49.2
Philippines 47.6
Saudi
Poland 55.4
Indonesia 56.6
Italy 56.2
Turkey 52.4
S. Africa 54.8

49.1
India 46.5
Colombia 44.2
Russia 44.3
Iran 37.7
Egypt 39.9
Israel 47.3

Average Score

Nigeria 37.8
Bangladesh 35.5
Pakistan 35.5
Côte d'Ivoire 35.5
Haiti 31.5

Cameroon 34.4
Tunisia 33.7
Afgan. 32.3

Sudan 26.2
Angola 25.2
D. R. C. 26.5
Venezuela 23.0
Iraq 25.8

Iran ranked 108th in Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning.

A cholera outbreak has infected over 2.2 million people in Yemen since 2016.

Yemen 18.5
Syria 19.9
Somalia 16.6
North Korea 17.5

Global Health Security Index Score

73% of the world's population lives in countries that scored below 50 in the Health Security Index

The report found that most countries lack foundational health systems capacities vital for epidemic and pandemic response.

Source: Global Health Security (GHS) Index

NOW, WHERE DOES MALAYSIA STAND?

Currently, Malaysia ranks 18th globally and scored above average in all of the areas concerned. Tellingly, Malaysia ranks 16th in the responsiveness agility category and 2nd across emergency response operations' indicators. Kudos to our front-liners; health care professionals, public safety officials and others. This demonstrates the hard work being laboured to treat and curb the spread of COVID-19.

In comparison, Italy ranks 31st overall, 51st in the responsiveness agility category and 129th in emergency response operations. In fact, what's worrying is that less than 5% of world countries scored high enough to get into the top tier of functional emergency response operations' capability.
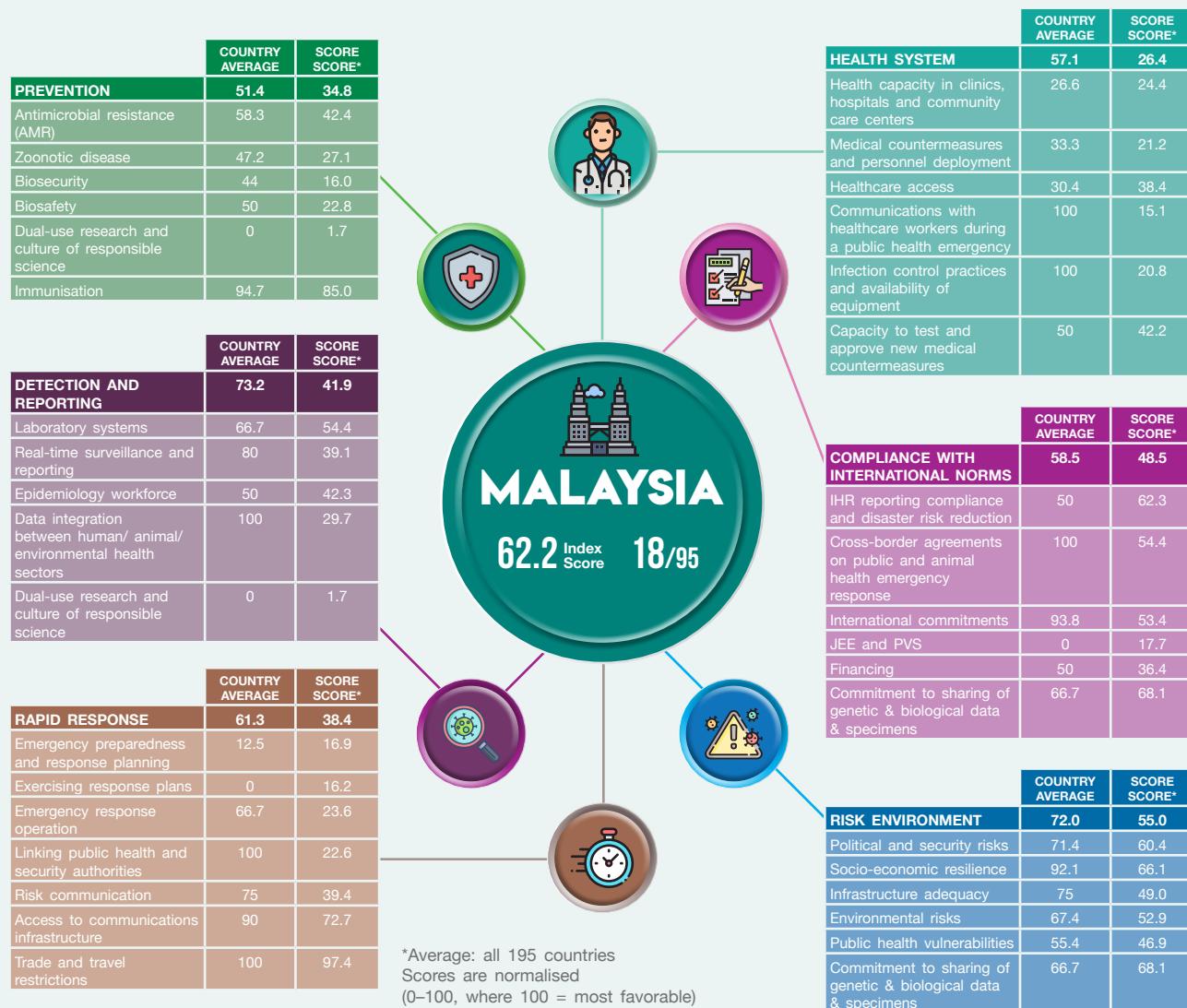
The USA and UK are ranked 1st and 2nd overall respectively. They are also ranked high with excellent scores in response and emergency response operations' categories. Yet, judging by these countries' news cycles, death count and infection rise, they are not better off than lesser countries.

According to JP Morgan, as of March-end, Malaysia's reported mortality rate was 0.77% versus global average of 4.4%. This was attributed to the decisive introduction of risk control measures and border restrictions.

As you can see, the capacity to anticipate and prepare means nothing without the willingness to act. Anticipatory and preparedness capabilities will only take you so far. Above all this, there needs to be a strong desire and willingness to act and take advantage of this preparedness measure.

PREVENTION	COUNTRY AVERAGE	SCORE SCORE*
PREVENTION	**51.4**	**34.8**
Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)	58.3	42.4
Zoonotic disease	47.2	27.1
Biosecurity	44	16.0
Biosafety	50	22.8
Dual-use research and culture of responsible science	0	1.7
Immunisation	94.7	85.0

DETECTION AND REPORTING	COUNTRY AVERAGE	SCORE SCORE*
DETECTION AND REPORTING	**73.2**	**41.9**
Laboratory systems	66.7	54.4
Real-time surveillance and reporting	80	39.1
Epidemiology workforce	50	42.3
Data integration between human/ animal/ environmental health sectors	100	29.7
Dual-use research and culture of responsible science	0	1.7

RAPID RESPONSE	COUNTRY AVERAGE	SCORE SCORE*
RAPID RESPONSE	**61.3**	**38.4**
Emergency preparedness and response planning	12.5	16.9
Exercising response plans	0	16.2
Emergency response operation	66.7	23.6
Linking public health and security authorities	100	22.6
Risk communication	75	39.4
Access to communications infrastructure	90	72.7
Trade and travel restrictions	100	97.4

MALAYSIA
62.2 Index Score   **18**/95

HEALTH SYSTEM	COUNTRY AVERAGE	SCORE SCORE*
HEALTH SYSTEM	**57.1**	**26.4**
Health capacity in clinics, hospitals and community care centers	26.6	24.4
Medical countermeasures and personnel deployment	33.3	21.2
Healthcare access	30.4	38.4
Communications with healthcare workers during a public health emergency	100	15.1
Infection control practices and availability of equipment	100	20.8
Capacity to test and approve new medical countermeasures	50	42.2

COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL NORMS	COUNTRY AVERAGE	SCORE SCORE*
COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL NORMS	**58.5**	**48.5**
IHR reporting compliance and disaster risk reduction	50	62.3
Cross-border agreements on public and animal health emergency response	100	54.4
International commitments	93.8	53.4
JEE and PVS	0	17.7
Financing	50	36.4
Commitment to sharing of genetic & biological data & specimens	66.7	68.1

RISK ENVIRONMENT	COUNTRY AVERAGE	SCORE SCORE*
RISK ENVIRONMENT	**72.0**	**55.0**
Political and security risks	71.4	60.4
Socio-economic resilience	92.1	66.1
Infrastructure adequacy	75	49.0
Environmental risks	67.4	52.9
Public health vulnerabilities	55.4	46.9
Commitment to sharing of genetic & biological data & specimens	66.7	68.1

*Average: all 195 countries
Scores are normalised
(0–100, where 100 = most favorable)

Source: www.ghsindex.org

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Reforms are now a necessity, no longer a choice for most.

Reforms are fundamental shake-ups carried out to super-charge public service efficiency, capability and delivery to adapt to the contours of reality-based situations and changes.

Many countries are facing mounting pressures to overcome the mismatch between public resources and increasing public demand for better services.

PUBLIC SERVICE MODERNISATION: THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE FUTURE

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PLEDGING REFORM COMMITMENT

Reforms have always mattered in public service. In fact, some of the biggest shifts in public service have occurred coming out of a crisis. Oftentimes, reforms are fundamental shake-ups carried out to super-charge public service efficiency, capability and delivery to adapt to the contours of reality-based situations and changes. The context in which public service reforms operate can thus be defined as deliberating change to the structures and processes of public sector's agencies and services. For better or worse, public sector reforms have touched numerous pivotal areas, remaking government structures, sector and service regulations, productivity and front-line service delivery, to name a few.

To design a successful transformation journey, governments and public sector leaders play a key role in sparking fresh reform ideas. However, a number of elements need to come together to tailor a transformation journey that promotes a resilient public sector against fast changing circumstances. Yet, to step away from today's crisis into a much-changed world, governments need to align the micro-battles facing their public sector with the demand and purpose of a new environment, rather than simply fix what is broken.

> "Technologies represent opportunities and threats, but their wide-ranging impact is indisputable."

CREATING SUSTAINABLE RESULTS FROM NOW TO THE FUTURE

NAVIGATING THE SHIFT

From	To
Citizen **under** control	Citizen **in** control
Governing **for** citizens	Governing **with** citizens
Organisation **silos**	Organisation **networks**
Public sector organisation as **big, all-in-one giants**	Public sector organisation as **small, flexible, purpose-driven entities**
Goverment as **service provider**	Goverment as **service facilitator/ broker/commisioner**
Government owning **input and processes**	**Government and Citizen** owning **outcomes**
Forced cooperations based on **enforcement**	**Mutual colaboration** based on **trust**
Trust in the "**strong** leader"	Trust in **each other**, the "**servant** leader"

Source : Future of Government, PwC

Technology convergence in today's public service is expected to strengthen the future in three aspects:

1. **Systemic changes:**
   changes across many sectors and aspects of human life

2. **Societal transformation:**
   Impact on human identities, communities, and economic and political structures

3. **New mental model:**
   Help business, government and society navigate the radical shifts that will occur as these technologies become embedded in our lives

Deloitte's study suggests that rapid technology advancements are triggering a far-reaching and transformative impact across geographies and industries. Technologies represent opportunities and threats, but their wide-ranging impact is indisputable.

For instance, Industry 4.0 brings the integration of cyber and physical systems. Integrated communication technologies and other networking solutions are helping government departments and agencies stay connected while relying less on physical infrastructure. Computers and networks can now monitor physical processes. A CPS component can be divided into two main functions. First, advanced connectivity ensures that real-time data acquisition can be derived from the physical world and cater information feedback from cyber space. Second, intelligent data management, analytics and computational capabilities are the enabling construct of the cyber space.

Another example is the unmanned aerial vehicles or drones contribute to domestic policing, geographical surveys, maritime patrols and delivery of goods, among multiple other commercial and military applications. The future also promises radical improvements in augmented reality with the introduction of gestural interfaces and sensory feedback that fuse the physical world with digital information. As the size and cost of sensors and communication technologies continue to decline, the "Internet of Things" (IoT) is growing by leaps and bounds.

This article shares fitting examples of technology implementations in public service—how the convergence of technology might improve and assist

the workforce, workplace, and delivery. Boundaries are increasingly blurred between humans and machines as well as IT infrastructure and applications. In such environments, shared insights are encouraged, using converged data sources, employing platforms and teams to connect with ecosystem partners, and fuelling innovation through crowdsourcing.

PUBLIC SERVICE REFORMS, WHY?

Many countries are facing mounting pressures to overcome the mismatch between public resources and increasing public demand for better services. Expectations of public reforms typically mean facilitating better service delivery and generating higher 'value for money'. Mckinsey highlights that pressures on governments have multiplied many-fold as a result of a potent cocktail of interlocking emergencies—financial and economic crises, global pandemic issues, major shifts in energy prices, climate change, food supplies, and natural resources.

Reforms are now a necessity, no longer a choice for most. As governments assume a broader, more significant role in response to the crisis, it becomes ever more important that they should be efficient and effective—otherwise, they would compound the severity of the problems.

Reform agendas differ from country to country, but they share a few things in common. First, most governments will need to broaden their approach to reform to a dispersed, sporadic one; a single department or agency at a time can't achieve the level of change now required. Only a few governments have adopted integrated reform programmes, but most will have no choice, but to follow suit.

With the advent of disruptive technologies altering many aspects of our lives, governments need to leverage emerging technology trends for the added benefits of tax payers.

> As governments assume a broader, more significant role in response to the crisis, it becomes ever more important that they should be efficient and effective

TECHNOLOGY TRENDS THAT WILL POWER AND ENABLE FUTURE PUBLIC SERVICE

ENABLING TECHNOLOGY

Digitalisation is driven by these technology drivers

- ADDITIVE MANUFACTURING
- AUTONOMOUS ROBOTS
- INTERNET OF THINGS (IoT)
- ADVANCED MATERIAL
- BIG DATA ANALYTIC
- SIMULATION
- ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENT
- CLOUD COMPUTING
- SYSTEM INTEGRATION
- AUGMENTED REALITY
- CYBERSECURITY

Digitisation will play a key role in impacting public sector's transformation at large. Given its potential, digitalisation will improve productivity and promote inclusiveness of service production and public welfare delivery. In the short term, digitisation will be a precondition for establishing and maintaining sound fiscal policies. Meanwhile, in the long term, it will be equally important to maintain the public sector's credibility in terms of how efficient and effective its delivery is and high quality services that are responsive to citizens' needs. In turn, this nurtures public trust in governments' capacity to boost inclusive processes and growth.

EMERGING TECHNOLOGY FORCES AND CHANGES

In relative terms, technological opportunities are changing the way government services interact with citizens. Data will be an integral part in the welfare sector's policy making. Engagement too, will be a key feature of digital welfare's development and implementation.

In addition, the importance of measurement and collection of public data are underlined as tools to create better dialogues among stakeholders—addressing asymmetrical data and information challenges.

Macro technology forces

The rise of digital experience platforms, analytics, cloud, digital reality, cognitive technologies, blockchain and IT, among others are macro forces that will combine to become formidable trends.

What can the public service do?

To attract and retain top talents, governments must explore creative new ways to converge new technologies to stimulate a modern working environment.

Ethical technology and trust

Governments need to re-evaluate how they manage data to cultivate trust and establish data leadership in regards to their products and services. This includes building a partner ecosystem and training employees, among others.

What can the public service do?

Governments are custodians of personal data. Therefore, governments need to train public service agencies and employees the proper use of data to accelerate security compliance for regulated industries and promote trustworthiness.

The future of IT in finance

Now, governments need to retool their technology strategy and action to adapt to technology innovations, agile methodologies and creative capital.

What can the public service do?

Government agencies need to remain consistent in funding the innovation of new technologies and ideas. In view of this, governments need to build more prototypes to test new ideas and make IT more efficient and effective.

Digital twins

New technologies such as 3D modelling and power visualisation are now able to create highly dynamic and detailed simulations. As these technologies scale bigger, more government agencies and businesses will be using digital twins to design new products, services, and business models to optimise processes and make data-driven decisions in real time.

What can the public service do?

Localities can take advantage of these technologies to create virtual copies of physical infrastructure such as bridges, buildings and air spaces to gain advantage in forward planning and resource optimisation.

Architecture awakens

Governments will need to evolve the way they approach architecture. Changes brought on by the digital economy require more architects to be involved in software development teams to remake IT functions into a competitive edge in the digital economy.

What can the public service do?

Governments need to attract more architects and thrust them into designing operational solutions of government services and functions. Hence, this can further accelerate technology modernisation and revitalisation.

Human experience platforms

AI-powered solutions are revitalising the way we experience technology. By combining AI, human-centred design techniques, neurological research and human experience platforms, governments will be able to humanise digital services.

What can the public service do?

Digital is the lifeblood of future government services. So much so, emotionally sensitive and context-aware interfaces will change the facade of government services.

The next horizon: A look at future trends

Governments need a new approach to sensing, scanning, vetting, experimenting, and incubating future macro technology forces to navigate future unknowns.

What can the public service do?

Future-proofing government action is an important measure to keep up with today's fast pace of change. Sponsoring the development of nascent technologies that will radically shape the future through instruments such as research grants will help to push more innovations out faster.

MEASURING AND IMPROVING PUBLIC SERVICE'S TECHNOLOGY IMPLEMENTATION RETURNS

Some countries are head and shoulders above others in carrying out and measuring public service reforms. From our observation, two key components stand out in reforming the public sector:

1.   Institutional reform and governance:

Granted, the supply and demand sides of government services are quite complex. Reforming the supply side involves overhauling state structures and strengthening public sector management. Conversely, the demand side deals with service recipients and empowering communities to tailor better service delivery.

PUBLIC SERVICE REFORMS AROUND THE WORLD: MAKING SENSE OF NEW PUBLIC SERVICE DEFINITIONS AND DIRECTIONS

CANADA

'Service Canada' provides Canadian citizens a one-stop point of access to all federal services.

The main goal of Service Canada is to provide end-to-end government services and enable integrated service delivery through information sharing.

UNITED KINGDOM

United Kingdom (UK) - Civil service reform:

Digital by Default was launched by UK's **Government Digital Service** (GDS).

It promotes open policy-making by fostering collaborations with experts such as academics and think tanks.

Across government agencies, a policy-related curriculum is implemented to ensure government workforces possess the skills and expertise needed.

AUSTRALIA

Australian government's administration reform blueprint:

Integrated services establish a link that connects multi-tiered government levels

Cultivates strong leadership and strategic directions

Promotes highly capable **workforce** through increased investment in human resource management

Efficient governance arrangements reduce 'red tape' and promote systematic and transparent agency reviews

SCOTLAND

Scotland: The next phase of public service reform

Launches a shift towards **preventive approaches**

Greater integration of services at local levels

Greater **people investment** and workforce development

Greater transparency, stronger innovation and **higher adoption of new technologies**

2. Innovation of public service delivery and system digitalisation:

Safety and security are key considerations when it comes to technology adoption. Platforms and regulations work hand in hand to facilitate transactions between public agencies, citizens and businesses. Thus, managing data security while ensuring seamless service delivery has posed a tough challenge for the public service. Going forward, the challenge can only be overcome through strict regulations and SOPs.

Countries such as Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden have adopted robust reform approaches by applying digital technologies as a key part of their governments' modernisation and innovation strategies.

INNOVATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY AND SYSTEM DIGITALISATION

DENMARK

More than 200 of Denmark's government and private agencies' services are now available digitally.

Following the launch of the country's single sign-on system, a smart electronic identification and signature solution allows citizens to sign legal documents and access government services or websites with sensitive personal data.

A two-factor authentication guarantees high level of security, enabled via a password and a code from printed cards or electronic dongles.

Now, the public, businesses, ministries and government agencies can easily, quickly and reliably access basic data using only one online portal.

FINLAND

Similarly, the Finnish government introduced a new system that simplifies communication across government agency databases by providing an IT-architecture, which enables databases from institutions to communicate.

Through a central database, the Finnish government provides its agencies, businesses, banks, and citizens access to basic data in just one portal.

This new architecture promotes a cost-effective instrument to agile government services.

It simplifies and facilitates citizens, companies and organisations' transactions with the government, thereby improving security and public service's quality.

NORWAY

Norway's government procurement system is now operated via an e-platform.

The system saves agencies and suppliers time without the confines of rigid procurement procedures.

The platform secures alignment and compliance with procurement policies while saving time for both public costumers and suppliers.

SWEDEN

Sweden created an easy and secure access point for all citizens to the Swedish social security system following the launch of its 'Mina Sidor' (My Pages) website.

It allows users to apply for a wide variety of welfare benefits such as unemployment benefits and sick and absence leaves.

The platform was launched with simplicity as its main development criteria to keep costs of development down and make the platform as user-friendly as possible.

> Decidedly, technology should be an enabler, not the driver of public sector reforms. It makes government services more efficient and effective to serve customer needs—the *Rakyat*.

CONCLUSION

At the moment, governments and businesses struggle to integrate evolving technologies and use analytics to winnow insights from data's treasure trove. Inevitably, the post COVID-19 world will accelerate some existing trends and create new ones. With each difficult new week of the pandemic, governments and businesses face an urgent need to improve delivery models in core sectors such as health care, transportation, security, infrastructure and management. To press forward however, IoT's exponential growth could prove to be a regulatory headache despite the technology platform's obvious advantage. Hence, investing significantly to capture the full value of technology-driven growth is indeed a vital decision to avoid under-deploying critical technologies in pockets with limited tools for scaling and delivering sustained impact afterwards.

Decidedly, technology should be an enabler, not the driver of public sector reforms. It makes government services

more efficient and effective to serve customer needs—the *Rakyat*. When thinking about public sector reforms, we should also discuss making smarter use of people in generating new ideas. In many cases, the people with the best understanding of the problems and likely solutions are those working within the public sector itself.

A recent survey by Accenture suggests that modernising reform impact requires actions to be led collaboratively by public service leaders. Urgent as they

are, all these questions require leaders to adopt new technologies well ahead (and in a more deliberate fashion) and reinvest more frequently. Public service leaders need to lay a strong focus on exploiting new technologies with strategies that cut across a diverse network of agencies. Using lessons from other countries' reform narratives and micro-battles' successes and failures, public service leaders have to be ready to exploit and pair up new technologies with the people and processes already in place.

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• VIEWPOINTS

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PUBLIC SERVICE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: SETTING UP PRIORITIES TO FACE A CHALLENGING FUTURE

INTRODUCTION

O ver the years, the Malaysian public service has undergone a defining phase. Quite tellingly, it has survived a long list of acid tests where the sector's capability, efficiency and financial management were put under pressing political and public microscopes. While the public has always been quick to raise criticism of government services and delivery, yet, the challenges thrown at the public sector in the years since have built resilience into it. For example, the sector has been far more adept at reacting and responding to public pressures and constantly changing political will. But when the complexities at play were studied, the public sector was discovered to be highly prone to corruption. Understandably, this is largely due to its weaknesses in financial management. Weak governance in procurement, legal enforcement and administration is often viewed as the sector's Achilles heels.

These weaknesses however, perpetually challenge the integrity of the public service. As far as corruption is concerned, a total of 30 top public officials were arrested for corruption charges between 2015 to 2018. On another note, technology is one of the most difficult challenges facing public service's financial management. In this regard, the Malaysian public service lacks infrastructure readiness and technical resources. Further, the low take up rate of technology adoption somewhat hinders the public service from reaping the full benefits of sophisticated financial planning and design.

UNPREDICTABLE FINANCIAL TURBULENCE

Natural disasters can cause unforeseen calamities often resulting in massive government spending bills. Unfortunate turn of events like flash floods can disrupt daily economic activities, damage infrastructure like roads, railway tracks, vehicles, properties and even cause loss of lives—thus inflicting national chaos. Foreseeably, the impact of COVID-19's pandemic outbreak will not just impact local economies, but will also stutter the world economy when things return to normal. As the outbreak recedes, just months before, the Malaysian government has had to shift resources allocated for spurring economic growth to handle a sudden spike in healthcare expenses to fight the outbreak. While everyone is bracing themselves for an unprecedented financial turbulence caused by unemployment or a rush of businesses going bust, governments now have to provide a sizeable economic stimulus package to help citizens survive the outbreak. This situation has called for a serious overhaul of the public service's financial management. By making sense of the unforeseen trends around COVID-19's chain reactions, the public service can future-proof its readiness to help stretch its financial management ability in handling unforeseen circumstances that may arise in the future.

DISCOVERING ISSUES AND TRENDS

The following are issues and trends that affect the public service's financial management efficiency.

ISSUES

Political interference in financial decision making
- Political interference in public service's decision making affects the sector's transparency and integrity.
- The absence of a clear power and duty separation between political masters and public officials could place an adverse impact on public service's finances.

Political instability
- Political instability will only impede the progress of public service's actions. As a result, government decisions will largely focus only on short term measures to safeguard certain political quarter's good image, undercutting sustainable and innovative measures that are more favourable for growth.

Lack of flexibility in financial management, budgeting, auditing & procurement
- The lack of flexibility in budget management would result in failures to align to emerging trends such as the rise of technology digitalisation with a high tendency to overspend.
- Rigid auditing: Lack of flexibility hinders 'good creativity' to make the public service more risk-averse.
- Unoptimised resource utilisation: Lack of flexibility in financial management may result in the inability to prioritise key initiatives or plans, thus imposing additional cost to governments' budgets and development project implementation

Indecisive public officials lacking experience and skills
- A lack of competencies in public officials' attitudes, skills and knowledge make them Incapable of executing decisive actions.
- Specific skills and knowledge such as financial management, strategic thinking and policy-making are required to create a sense of urgency in the delivery of services and policy execution.

TRENDS

Globalisation challenges posed by the emergence of new world superpowers
- Global trade sabotage, e.g. tariffs and trade barriers could place a huge strain on smaller countries like Malaysia.
- Governments' financial planning needs to consider the legal cost needed to comply with new international conventions and rules.

Changing demographic challenges
- Aging population, demographic polarisation, prolonged life expectancy and social disparity pose some of the toughest challenges for the public service's financial management.
- A large financial capacity is needed to provide social security for vulnerable groups by providing services that can improve quality of life and prevent inequality.

Managing the gig economy
- The absence of proper legislation and policy to govern the gig economy could result in a decline in gig-economy activities.
- Gig economy holds great promise as a potential solution to reduce unemployment rate. However, the government may lose out on tax revenue generated by the gig economy without a proper policy in place.

Better safety & security
- Safety and security threats come in many forms such as natural disasters, climate change, pandemic diseases or even cyberthreats. Without a crisis management plan in place, all these threats could place a dire strain on a country's social and economic prosperities.

GEARING UP FOR CHANGE

Gearing up for change to improve public service's financial management should focus on three determinants. Firstly, tackling integrity issues and promoting greater transparency are of utmost importance. Secondly, the public sector needs to explore innovative new ways to improve efficiency in financial governance and management. Thirdly, the sector needs to explore innovative new ways to plan and deliver its services.

CULTIVATING GREATER TRANSPARENCY IN FINANCIAL PROCESSES

Transparency is important to public service's financial management. It reflects the sector's accountability and integrity in managing and governing financial matters. Below are a few considerations that the public sector can review to improve its financial processes' transparency.

- Enhance procurement decision-making through policy and public engagement: It is therefore crucial to implement a clear policy guideline in order to provide a well-defined demarcation of ministers and their political secretaries' involvement roles in public service. Also, there is a moral imperative to implement an appropriate mechanism or platform to allow the public to get involved in procurement processes. In turn, this will improve procurement decision-making transparency as well as act as a check and balance measure visible to the public.

- Introduce a new legal framework and approach in managing public finance: A new legal framework for financial processes and designs can add depth to the accountability and transparency of public sector funds and resource management. For example, soon, the Malaysian government will introduce a Fiscal Responsibility Act (2021) to prevent uncontrolled spending in a bid to rein in the public sector's mounting debts. In addition, an accrual accounting practice will also be introduced to enable a widely comprehensive management of public finance.

- Digitalisation of government financial systems: Changing manual financial processes to digital is a move that is urgently needed to increase efficiency and improve public sector transparency, especially concerning procurement. For example, an open platform that brings government buyers and digital sellers together simplifies the procurement process and makes it easier for businesses of all sizes to access government contracts. However, the public service needs an adequate allocation of funds to implement cybersecurity measures to safeguard government financial systems from cyber-attacks.

ENHANCEMENT IN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCIES

To drive financial management efficiency, public service leaders need to target improvement in financial operating models and process designs. In part, this will consolidate existing processes, tackle lingering issues and bump up the sector's preparation to deal with future uncertainties.

- Project enhancement through monitoring and evaluation: Any errors that occur should be measured against existing approaches and systems. In turn, this will make room for better approaches to be introduced. Creating a platform that allows widespread public participation is equally as important as having sound government systems. It must be noted that public service relies on feedback and participation from its stakeholders to improve its services.

- Preparation towards future uncertainties: To avoid ad-hoc financial aid straining government budgets, governments need to prepare for uncertainties that come from unforeseen shocks and unexpected events such as natural disasters. Events such as flash floods could cripple a country in just a matter of weeks. However, the consequences of such events are uncertain and are hard to gauge. Therefore, budgeting for disasters can prevent a budget disaster in the future. Financial readiness in emergency situations such as fighting a pandemic outbreak and bracing for economic shocks are similar in some ways to preparing to a natural disaster. Quite significantly, this will determine the vitality of a country's economy and decide the fate of its citizens.

- Auditing improvement to reduce non-compliance risks: Public service's auditing practices require some degree of flexibility and a good deal of creativity to improve financial design and planning. At best, the introduction of auditing compliance is necessary to mitigate any non-compliance risks throughout government projects' implementation.

INNOVATIVE FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS

To refresh the public sector's purpose and power, it needs fitting technology tools to unlock value-based services. At the same time, to raise revenue, the public sector needs to tune up its capability and adopt new approaches that can have a dramatic impact on service delivery.

- Develop a new business model to fund project implementation: Collaborative approaches and shared-funds can significantly reduce the burden of public sector projects. In terms of budget planning, governments should take into consideration providing cross-agency budgets to boost development outcomes. Alternative financing sources such as crowd funding for inter-agency projects can also be explored.

- Reassess the impact of technology in financial management: Technologies such as blockchain, big data, artificial intelligent and cloud computing provide access to a whole new suite of sophisticated solutions. Apart from what governments can do differently to achieve better results with technology, the aforementioned technology solutions are also compatible with most existing e-government platforms. As a result, governments can improve revenue collection through user-friendly means, reduce budget expenses and avoid overspending.

- Reduce public service financial burden: Given that the public sector is in desperate need of a reboot, it needs to identify a new circle of influence or create a new potential market for the private sector to invest in. Done right, this can generate a vibrant economic stimulant that supports the creation of more economic opportunities for the private sector. Alternatively, formulating a plan for action that leverages prevailing economic trends such as the gig-economy to outsource certain public sector roles can help reduce governments' overhead costs. For example, getting social workers on board to aid government causes can help governments reduce their financial burden.

CONCLUSION

The promise of financial management sophistication can only be realised by having a clear view of the current economic landscape in order to understand where future opportunities lie. Significantly, this diagnostic aims to provide a quick snapshot of the public sector's financial management to promote new planning and design approaches. Despite being bundled with a broad set of issues, the drawbacks or damages that had transpired over the years can be shifted towards the formulation of better future strategies. Last but not least, with better strategic approaches, governments can then discontinue ineffective strategies in order to prevent incurring bigger losses in the future.
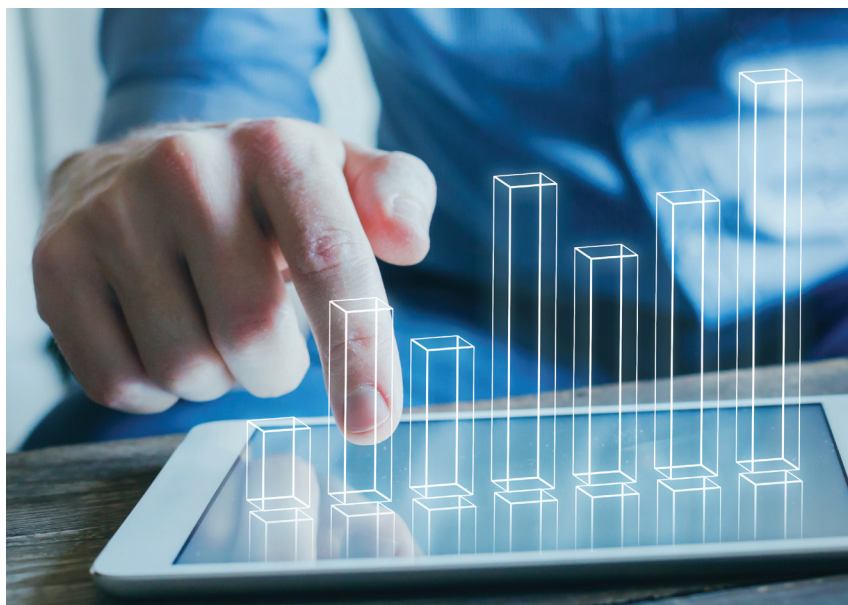
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> " Last but not least, with better strategic approaches, governments can then discontinue ineffective strategies in order to prevent incurring bigger losses in the future.

● **VIEWPOINTS**

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Well thought through legislation is a component of regulatory policy.

Conversely, poorly drafted legislation creates legal ambiguity and insecurity, therefore poses a hurdle to the consistency of government delivery systems.

In times of crisis, regulations, policies and laws are required to be agile at best.

PROCEDURE & LEGISLATION: PROTECTING SERVICE'S ECOSYSTEM THROUGH RESPONSIVE REGULATIONS

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Identifying and challenging our assumptions about "wild card factors" is critical if we're ever going to be able to weather no-notice catastrophic events that could dramatically alter the status quo. Events such as political instability, unrest, terrorism, cyber security breaches, regulatory compliance failures, natural disasters, supply chain disruptions and many more are looming crises that could be triggered beyond government control.

Beyond the immediate fallout of a crisis, governments all over the world are starting to feel pinched. As a result, most governments view tightening the law as a way to get a handle on future needs and withstand future shocks. By doing so, governments can empower their agencies and regulatory bodies with the ability to enforce and penalise perpetrators who commit offences they couldn't have imagined some distant 20 years ago.

> " Governments can empower their agencies and regulatory bodies with the ability to enforce and penalise perpetrators in ways they couldn't have imagined some distant 20 years ago.

Well thought through legislation is a component of regulatory policy. It provides governments with a clear guidance on certain issues. To be clear, it advises governments on the effective use of regulation to achieve better political, social, environmental and economic prosperities. What accounts for the success of legislation? Regulatory policy and legislation are increasingly recognised as a precondition to implement better governance. Conversely, poorly drafted legislation creates legal ambiguity and insecurity, therefore poses a hurdle to the consistency of government delivery systems.

The assumption that regulation can be crafted slowly and deliberately, and then remain in place, unchanged, for long periods of time, has been upended in today's fickle environment. As new business models emerge and unprecedented events forcing a sudden economic shift, governments' hands are forced to modify and enforce regulations.

Therefore, regulations play a significant part in the reform of public services. But for change to occur, it largely depends on how public service's systems are organised. As public service's long overdue transformation requires a mighty endeavour and a sense of urgency, so does the sector's regulatory systems.

For one thing, this article deliberates the need for the public service to reform through a legislation lens. Essentially, this article probes public service's most complex regulation challenges to provide suggestions whether enacting new laws to cater to a fast-changing ecosystem will result in better public service delivery. Also, by looking at the sector's performance determinants, this article explores the intermingling of law and current affairs to protect the public service ecosystem.

AGILE LEGISLATION BEYOND TIMES OF CRISIS

Today's public service leaders are under immense pressure to do more with less. They are tasked to address a complex range of ever-expanding issues. And, government leaders at the top require them to be quick-thinking and responsive to their whims and escalating demand. However, public service leaders face difficulties to keep up. As information travels very fast these days, policies become out of date even before they are completed. No single leader, no matter how senior they are, is able to orchestrate the solutions alone. In turn, public leaders struggle to act effectively as a result of weak signals of changing needs.

Being ready and responsive public service is paramount. However, there are limitations imposed by legislation, community will and resources.

As a countermeasure, the public sector needs to be creative and entrepreneurial.

In times of crisis, regulations, policies and laws are required to be agile at best. In weathering the COVID-19 pandemic, unforeseen circumstances have pushed us to consider doing things differently. For instance, the way we work, shop, exercise will be altered as does the way we value things. People are shutting in and vocal citizens have raised their grave concerns over how the public service should comply with the pandemic environment. Social and business gatherings need to act in accordance with legal provisions. Perhaps, it is time for governments to start looking into this and consider the transition. Who knows, this could be the X factor that could contribute to a public service reform.

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REMOTE WORKING

Although some might be at odds with some vague remote working polices, working remotely has become commonplace in today's working environment. With the ease of plugging in and connecting from just about anywhere, employees have the flexibility and convenience of working from home, coffee shops, libraries, and so on.

A work from home policy offers a variety of benefits to both remote employees and their employers. According to Forbes, remote work can lead to increased productivity and more efficient employees as they are less distracted than in an office setting. Remote workers experience less stress as they don't have to deal with the hazards of commuting, and lower stress levels lead to higher morale. Yet, with remote working, employers incur lower overhead operating costs while still ensuring work runs smoothly. As a result, employers may also see a reduction in severity compensation.

In a nutshell, the working landscape is changing. Regardless of the current situation, be it a pandemic outbreak or a natural disaster, proactive steps need to be taken to put governments and businesses in a better position for the new normal. In addition, governments and businesses need to look into working from home as an pilot experiment as a groundwork for proper policy formulation in the future.

DATA ONLINE PRIVACY

Data is now the new social good. And governments need to think of some form of data legislation that guides private sector and other data owners of their responsibility in collecting, managing and sharing data. Saliently, governments need to keep a close watch on these entities' conduct in order to prevent data breaches.

In addition, governments need to design a new system for advanced data processes and management. The capacity to capture and process large swathes of data as well as store data in a way that captures its context must be scaled. To enable such processes,

governments must review several laws and regulations to ensure there is no contradiction to the quality and value of data captured, as the decision making may be jeopardised if the data is not accurate or timely.

MANAGING THE SHIFT TO VIRTUAL HEALTH SERVICES

The future of healthcare systems will be supported and strengthened by telemedicine. Through seamless and almost universal availability of information and virtual services, telemedicine will dramatically change the way the public and healthcare professionals interact with their healthcare systems. People will access healthcare services and manage their personal health in an empowered and knowledge-rich environment. Telemedicine will also significantly reshape the working environment of healthcare professionals, as new technologies and services are introduced to directly support front-line personnel.

Appropriate laws and regulations have been developed to support telemedicine (e.g., Telemedicine Act, Digital Signature/Contract Act, Computer Crime Act, Multimedia Intellectual Property Act, Electronic Government Act) while protecting the people's rights. This is to avoid technological innovation in health services outpace its regulatory capability. However, telemedicine may need modification from time to time to ensure its development continues to be relevant. An enabling framework of appropriate laws, policies, regulations and standards will be required to underpin the processes and ensure effective operation of virtual healthcare delivery.

REMOTE DRONES

With recent advances in Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) technology, it is now possible to deploy autonomous UAVs to assist public service officers. Equipped with handy features such as in-progress call for service, remotely deployed UAVs can be used to provide officers with real time information, making their jobs safer and at the same time, increases crime solving and documentation efficiency.

Currently, Malaysia has no firm framework for commercial drone operations. However, the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM) has jurisdiction over the sector. In light of recent COVID-19 outbreak, CAAM has given authorisation to the police force to operate drones for surveillance and enforcement during the second phase of the Movement Control Order (MCO).

Therefore, having an agile legislation is crucial especially in cases like this, as it would help public service officials working as front liners to collect data in an environment or a condition dangerous to humans. Drones should be able to help in various ways to mitigate public service staff shortage and reduce their exposure to the virus. Another potential benefit is the use of drones to sanitise cities.

> **"**
>
> Governments can empower their agencies and regulatory bodies with the ability to enforce and penalise perpetrators in ways they couldn't have imagined some distant 20 years ago.

3D PRINTING TECHNOLOGY

Nearly all technological advances pose challenges to law and governance. Although it has become clear that some new technologies are here to stay, as far as legislation is concerned, there is no single law that governs the 3D printing technology in Malaysia. Plenty of businesses and the public need to understand the legal implications surrounding the technology as 3D printing and design may fall under the purview of the copyright, trade dress and patent law.

Given the emergence of the 3D printing industry and the state of flux in the law, it is recommended that brand owners and IP-related associations continue to monitor the law of trade dress, copyright, design and patent. While a public policy might support the barring of 3D printing of regulated and contraband items such as pharmaceuticals and guns, such printing activities would not implicate trade dress or other design laws if the designs are not protectable.
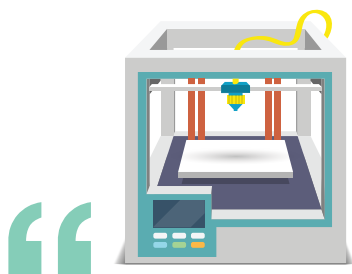
> "Given the emergence of the 3D printing industry and the state of flux in the law, it is recommended that brand owners and IP-related associations continue to monitor the law of trade dress, copyright, design and patent.

DIGITAL-READY LEGISLATION

With many people quarantined in their homes, governments all around the world are under pressure to become more efficient. Digital experiences matter more than ever now as COVID-19 is radically accelerating a digital future.
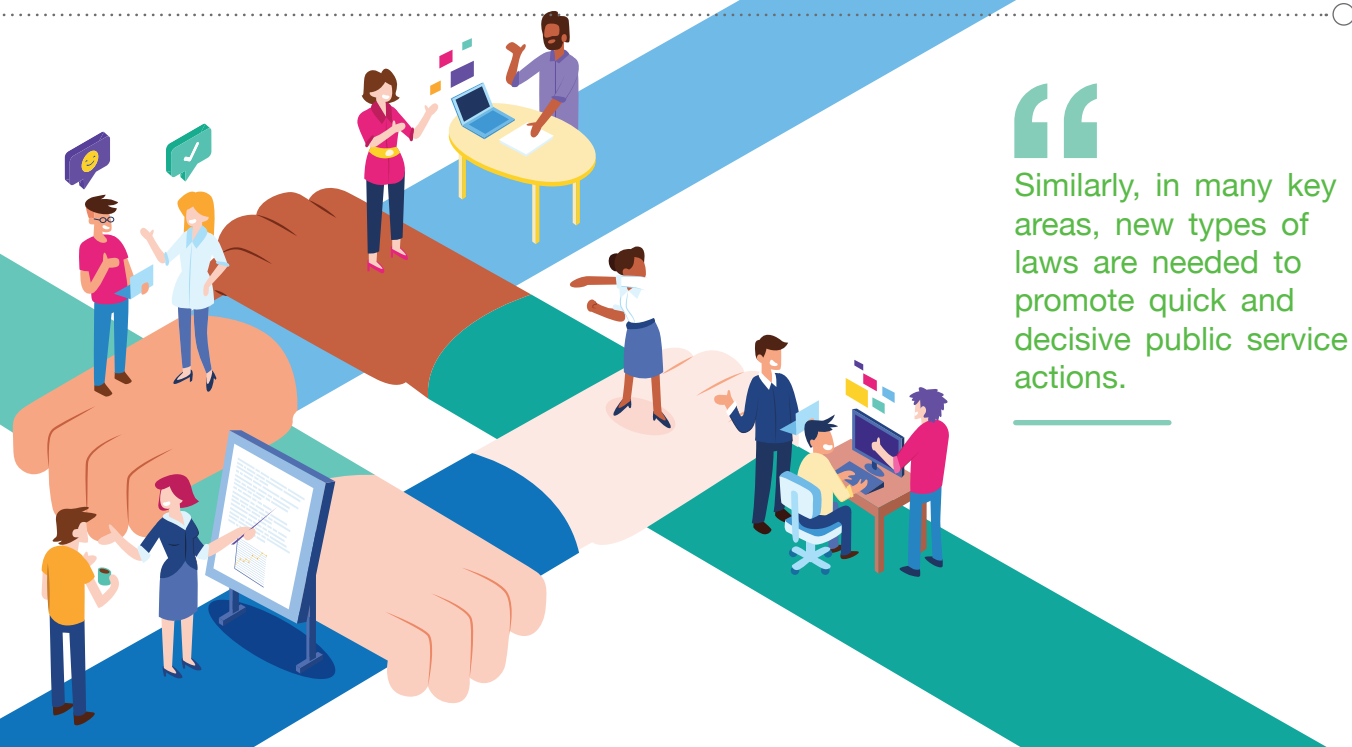
Today's legislation is so complex that it may be difficult for citizens and businesses to understand what rules apply. Legislations with many exceptions, unclear concepts or multiple case processing requirements are difficult to administer and can result in long delays and prevent efficient management of digital opportunities. In today's digital society, it is important that effective administration of new rules is taken into account across legislative work.

This means, in the future, as we are moving towards digital by default, legislation should strive towards using terms and concepts that have a clear definition across all legislative domains, and rules should be designed for a whole or partial automation of the case processing involved.

For instance, Malaysia can readily adopt best practices carried out by other countries. Case in point, the Danish parliament drafted a new legislation anchored around seven principles to ensure that the administrative consequences of its legislation become clearly delineated in the country's policy-making processes. Meanwhile, this will definitely help lawmakers in Malaysia to assess whether the new legislation is ready for digitisation.

According to the Danish government, the seven principles for digitalisation-ready legislation are as follows:

Simple and distant rules	Legislation should be simple and distant, thus contributing to a more uniform legal administration
Digital communication	Legislation should underpin digital communication between citizens and corporations
Enable automated digital case processing	Legislation should underpin fully or partly automated digital case processing while still taking into account the legal rights for citizens and businesses
Consistency across public authorities with uniform concepts and re-use of data	Data and definition of concepts are re-used across public authorities
Safe and secure data management	Data security should be prioritised
Using public ICT infrastructure	Public ICT solutions and standards should be applied
Legislation should prevent fraud and errors	Legislation must be designed to support the use of ICT for purposes of control

> **Similarly, in many key areas, new types of laws are needed to promote quick and decisive public service actions.**

OVERCOMING REGULATION ROADBLOCKS

For virtually every government navigating today's highly fragile and complex world, regulations are subject to frequent adaptations. Viewed from one perspective, lawmakers are constantly improving and updating regulations to cope with rising technology advances, jarring economic and political instability as well as social and environmental crises. If left unchecked, regulations can become a roadblock in all possible cases. And yet, excessive rigidity in regulation is an obstacle to innovation.

For the public service to adhere and appreciate law, it is important that when lawmakers enact laws, they should avoid using ambiguous content in all texts and provide a clear guidance to all the law is intended for. In addition, to enable a longer term alignment in the future, governments need to evaluate the impact of complex existing regulations and monitor the plausible implications of proposed changes.

Since the start of COVID-19's pandemic outbreak, the ultimate wild card in strengthening legislative resilience and supporting reform initiatives requires governments to conduct a base evaluation of every legislation they currently have. Nevertheless, it is time for governments to identify which laws and acts are no longer relevant to the public service. Some laws might be obsolete as a result of technology sophistication sweeping out old working ecosystems. If not revised, these laws may become a hindrance for the public service to move forward. While some laws require an update or an amendment to accommodate a new digital working environment, other critical laws that haven't shown their teeth need to be beefed up. Similarly, in many key areas, new types of laws are needed to promote quick and decisive public service actions. Surely, the lessons learned from the catastrophic virus outbreak will definitely be a sore reminder of why governments need to bump up their public sector readiness to prepare for unprecedented circumstances that may shake up the future yet again.

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● **VIEWPOINTS**

PUBLIC SERVICE INSTITUTIONAL REFORM: POST CRISIS AGENDA

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OVERVIEW

Thinking in new boxes: Global crisis to spark public sector transformation

Six months into 2020, the world is a very different place. Although physically distant, the world must now stand together as it unites to fight COVID-19's pandemic outbreak. Foreseeably, when COVID-19 recedes, it will leave behind a severe crisis. However, a lot of the post crisis management will be navigated by the public sector. Although the macro view of traditional public service is not encouraging, it is an opportune time for change simply because there is no better time to act, but now.

Currently, the public sector is under immense pressure. Amid intensifying scrutiny over efficiency, transparency and service delivery, vast sections of the public all around the world are heaping pressure on the public sector. This assault is happening on multiple fronts. Most rampant, however, takes place on social media. Despite this, it is a good example of public impact.

Clearly, the public sector needs to deliver better outcomes for citizens, such as through improved digital services. Governments, inevitably, have to wake up to this. It underscores the public sector's competency deficit and why an institutional reform, or a revamp of the public sector's core activities needs to be seen through with a sense of urgency.

> " Clearly, the public sector needs to deliver better outcomes for citizens, such as through improved digital services.

Increasing urbanisation, greying world population and a workforce that needs reskilling and adapt to technological innovations compound to make the public sector vulnerable. Essentially, to bring meaningful change requires cultivating a new mindset and a renewed focus on inclusivity, innovation, accountability and integrity.

Against today's sobering backdrop, this article attempts to identify the main shifts and reform agendas needed to transform public sector's services. All of this points to the need to address cost pressure and foster better alignment with public attitudes and expectations. In this article, we will look at a number of key milestones the public sector needs to reach to equal the challenges of the 2020s.

A | Crisis an opportunity to embrace change

Crisis is a good time to retool the public sector's emphasis on creating a high performing government and stakeholder synergies. While there is certainly no shortage of ideas, there must be a renewed focus on value. In short, the public sector should prioritise services that are most important to its citizens, especially in areas where satisfaction is low. By adopting collaborative technologies and platforms, governments can achieve a much greater focus that puts their citizens' shared-interests first.

>> CONSEQUENCES & IMPLICATIONS

■ **Review the empowerment of institutional and public service integrity.**
In an attempt to speed up development, decentralised power and work delegation will increase as governments battle overwhelming workloads. Though this may give rise to bribery and corruption, law empowerment needs to be tightened.

■ **Review legal framework to ensure good governance is in place.**
As many regulations are being suspended temporarily, not all will return to normal. Much more attention will be paid to whether lighter-touch regulations are needed to stimulate economic growth. Legal systems will likely be clogged-up for some time with contractual disputes and arguments over 'force majeure'.

■ **Institutional change will be key in addressing concerns over security, risks, legal issues, and compliance as well as combine to slow things down.**

B — Making sense of public attitudes and expectations

Currently, the public is placing historical demands on the public sector. Public members are also seeking more engagement in decisions about public service delivery. It is abundantly clear that citizens have been much less willing to interact with governments in traditional ways. The rapid emergence of mobile apps, cloud computing, social media, and big data—all unheard of not that long ago—is a vivid reminder that digital is a revolution that is far from complete. To date, governments have succeeded in bringing a large number of services online, but there is much still to do. In this regard, dignity, respect and transparency of the services offered by the public sector are core satisfaction drivers for a digital government. Admittedly, this won't be straightforward. These days, just downloading or filling in online forms in is no longer good enough. Citizens want easy-to-navigate and intuitive user interfaces, one-click or no-touch servicing, and easily accessible online support and service. It is time to boost investments in seamless end-to-end capabilities. While COVID-19 has caused a severe international health and economic crisis, the World Health Organisation's head calls the spread of false information on the virus an "infodemic". Misleading information circulates rapidly on social media. "Overabundance" of information makes it difficult for citizens to tell apart truthful and trustworthy sources from false and misleading ones. With ever-increasing numbers of online users and mobile devices, governments must continue to meet this challenge head-on and not flinch from any barriers that may arise.

> Today, it must be noted, when public sector's multi-stakeholder coordination goes awry, it could set off hostile public attitudes and expectations, a damage that is costly to rectify.

Thus, to combat misinformation, a policy-driven communication plan needs to be prepared beforehand to manage the integrity and flow of crucial information when a crisis occurs. The plan should define who should be given specific information, when that information should be delivered and which communication channels will be used to deliver the information. It's essential to support multi-stakeholder actions with the right messages and reinforcements. Looking at the ways information travels nowadays, this requires the public sector to work closely with citizens across various social media sites. As the battle against fake news is likely to last as long as the virus, managing expectations on social platforms will be key in managing public attitudes and expectations. Today, it must be noted, when public sector's multi-stakeholder coordination goes awry, it could set off hostile public attitudes and expectations, a damage that is costly to rectify.

>>
CONSEQUENCES & IMPLICATIONS

■ **Insight-driven anticipatory approaches.**
As more people voluntarily surrender personal data (such as medical, genomic, contact and location data) to contribute to shared causes these days, a robust governance structure that protects personal data is pivotal to cultivate government trust.

■ **Entrepreneurial mindset among government agencies.**
So it begs the question, will governments' economic priorities and policies shift away from productivity towards employment to ensure a safety net for all?

> Today, it must be noted, when public sector's multi-stakeholder coordination goes awry, it could set off hostile public attitudes and expectations, a damage that is costly to rectify.

C — Public sector readiness to embrace change despite resource limitation

As pressures on funding and demand for services grow, governments need to persevere as the impact of basic improvements, such as the ability to access all government services digitally, is huge. Although the public sector constantly faces questions over funding, if the allocation of resources continue to be curtailed, can the degree of improvement be sustained? This is the question that needs to be addressed to allow the public sector to attain a focus on cost optimisation.

>>
CONSEQUENCES & IMPLICATIONS

■ **Restructuring and streamlining government agencies' tasks for better organisational design**
New collaboration modes between public and private sectors will emerge to scale future capacity. For example, hotels designed and partly funded by governments will act as hospital overspill when the need arises. There have been many instances the world over where governments nationalising hospitals and healthcare providers to combat the spread of COVID-19. In Malaysia, it took only three days to transform Malaysia Agro Exposition Park's (MAEPS) exhibition halls into huge makeshift temporary hospital for COVID-19 patients.

■ **Practice good governance through collaborative technology platforms.**

Technological solutions may help combat the epidemic, cope with the movement restriction, and ease economic consequences. Despite the crisis, it will lead to many new innovations, including permanent changes in the use of digital solutions and distributed governance models. There will also be an increased interest not only in collaboration-over-distance, but in fully decentralised organisations, together with governance structures and decentralised technologies that will enable these future shifts.

■ **The public sector should prioritise services that are most important to their citizens where satisfaction is low.**

Recently, South Korean and Taiwanese governments organised local distributions through partnerships with private pharmacies and four large convenience store chains. Evidently, this is a good example of what organisational agility can do in times of crisis.

> Ultimately, the rewards in efficiencies achieved and impact enhanced should fuel the public sector's journey in the years ahead.

CONCLUSION

Currently, the public sector faces a capability gap brought on not only by technological disruption, but also striking generational differences. Taking a unified, coordinated approach to improve service delivery can be challenging, particularly when the bottlenecks cross a large number of departmental dividing lines. How fast can the public sector bring about change? This question is best left to governments' top leadership. However, what can be said is, it is time for the public sector to retool its talent strategy to keep up with change in digital and attract modern talent. While institutionalising a new culture and replacing some of the public sector's outdated practices will inevitably take time, joint-effort to reskill the public sector's human capital should be implemented consistently. Ultimately, the rewards in efficiencies achieved and impact enhanced should fuel the public sector's journey in the years ahead.

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TOWARDS BETTER PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Government services are now on the brink of disruption. On one hand, government services need to manage the public as "consumers". Yet, the public sector needs to provide the best services while facing tough scrutiny over cost management in order to sustain economic stability.

While public service reform is nothing new, it requires a high degree of collaborative efforts to constantly improve public service delivery over time. It is also be defined as impacting change to the structures and processes of the public sector—its organisations and services, tied to the objective of improving efficiency and capability. Various reforms had taken place in past years to structures, sectors, service regulations, productivity arrangements and front-line service delivery, to name a few. However, in addressing public sector digitalisation, a white paper in 2017 titled "Government with the People: A New Formula for Creating Public Value" published by the World Economic Forum (WEF) labelled governments as "the dinosaurs of the digital age: slow, lumbering and outdated".

Earlier in 2013, World Bank's Development Impact Evaluation (DIME) and the Governance Global Practice launched ieGovern. The programme produced rigorous evidence in a bid to improve governance and push the frontiers of knowledge regarding other evidences on what would work best in governance reforms. Now, the programme has 31 Impact Evaluation (IEs) portfolios world-wide that study four main themes:

- civil service reform;
- public financial management (tax and procurement);
- justice;
- decentralisation/subnational public-sector management.

Saliently, the study examines the landscape of reform frameworks centred on incentives, demand and top-down accountability, constraints, and delivery mechanism.

> "
> Malaysia's public service reforms seek to establish a link between the public sector and the country's national vision, e.g. Shared Prosperity Visions 2030 (SPV2030).

POLICY DIRECTIONS

To put things into perspective, Malaysia's public service reforms seek to establish a link between the public sector and the country's national vision, e.g. Shared Prosperity Visions 2030 (SPV2030). Now, reforms are aimed at addressing global concerns such as Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDGs 2030) and megatrends. Also, the change agenda takes into account critical factors like the adoption of emerging technologies, for example, Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) technologies to generate a shift in thinking and cultivate a new approach in delivering services.

Productivity is a main emphasis in public service reforms. Productivity gain however, involves shaping the right mindset and coaching public officials to optimise resources, explore innovative business models and embrace emerging technologies. To ensure a smooth implementation, from getting ideas in motion all the way to execution, clear policy directions and strategic approaches are needed.

> "
> Business process re-engineering or BPR is a tool that can be implemented to avoid redundant and unnecessary processes.

KEY AREAS FOR BETTER SERVICE DELIVERY:

RESOURCE OPTIMISATION

Resource optimisation is a practice in public service that determines how services are delivered to the public. Optimisation of resources minimises the impact public service activities have on the environment. Sustainable practices such as innovating to zero, the circular economy and green energy are key to commit to active optimisation. In addition, the public sector needs to explore alternative business models that avoid process redundancy and promote personalised services.

BUSINESS MODEL DELIVERY

Business process re-engineering or BPR is a tool that can be implemented to avoid redundant and unnecessary processes. However, a digital mindset and a unified approach to business processes are needed to ensure the right business models are in place. Prior to COVID-19, Morocco instructed its Digital Development Agency to create a 25-year digital strategy called "Morocco Digital 2025." The digital transformation plan outlined key priorities and laid down a marker by evaluating the viability of past programmes including Digital Morocco 2013. Going forward, the plan has been designed to position Morocco as a regional digital hub and enhance the country's digital governance. But given the severity of the pandemic outbreak, some of the plan's digital services are being sped up ahead of their implementation schedules by the Moroccan government. This highlights a compelling reason why governments need to be progressive in implementing and adopting new business models as behavioural psychology and economics often appear to play a bigger role in designing interventions.

COLLABORATION IN SERVICE DELIVERY

Service delivery is a shared responsibility of multi-sided government stakeholders and agencies. Case in point, Malaysia's Shared Prosperity Visions 2030 outlines the nation's inspiration to work together as a strong unit for the greater good of its society. Collaboration models such as public-private partnerships (PPP) are broad sets of tools that can be helpful in the effort to deliver quality services. PPPs in governance and the public service are akin to contractual arrangements between public and private sector entities. Of these, the public sector gets to take advantage of deploying private sector efficiency to deliver public services. For hundreds of years, diverse forms of PPPs have been used to deliver infrastructure services. Today, PPPs still remain a relevant tool to increase and improve the delivery of infrastructure services.

However, implementing PPP is complex. To navigate the complexity, governments must be committed and thoughtful in crafting appropriate PPPs especially in regards to mega infrastructure projects. To bring focus to the effort, the public sector plays a pivotal role in building awareness of government initiatives, goals, perceptions and acceptance by soliciting stakeholder engagement and involvement.

PUBLIC SERVICE DIGITALISATION

The main intent of the introduction of service digitalisation is aimed at improving public sector service integrity. In digitalising government services, legal instruments are an important support function to improve service delivery. Of these, legal provisions such as legal risk management and cybersecurity-related acts are needed, and existing ones will require strengthening.

Cybersecurity has never been more important to government services these days. However, it has not kept pace with formidable threats that have become increasingly sophisticated. Top cybersecurity threats include weaponised email attachments and links, ransomware, micro-breaches, and browser-based password hijackers. COVID-19 does not only witness the rise of everyday e-conference, but also the birth of 'Zoombombing', a growing nuisance involving unscrupulous hackers gate crashing group video chats. Recently, Ernst & Young (EY) outlined a few key measures governments can adopt to combat cyber threats as follows:

- Understand their citizens better and achieve better outcomes
- Provide services more effectively and efficiently
- Find new solutions to policy challenges
- Engage with external partners to develop new delivery models
- Commercialise some public services and develop fresh sources of revenue

DIGITAL DIVIDE

The overarching goal of digital governance is to place an emphasis on shared-values and integrity. Similarly, public service's digital governance needs to deliver on these mandates. With millions of Malaysians working and attending virtual schools from home during COVID-19's movement control order, the longstanding gap between those who have reliable, affordable internet and those who don't has never been so clear. Evidently, the internet makes for a crucial information gateway for citizens to access information about the virus. Human Rights Watch says that closing this digital divide is a necessary measure to preserve human rights during the outbreak. Quite significantly, addressing the digital divide will be essential in public service reform.

DIGITAL IDENTITY

Malaysia is currently moving towards a national digital identity. Malaysia's National Digital Identity, is a verifiable platform of trust aimed at verifying virtual identities on the internet. Considerable efforts have been undertaken to ensure Malaysia is ready to accommodate a move to digital backed by sound telecommunication infrastructure. Given that most government services are already online, Malaysia needs to bump up its digital and telecommunication infrastructure readiness. This is to make sure that the public service's digital transformation is able to support the nation's digital economy growth. Also, the transformation needs to encourage an inclusive digital lifestyle as promoted by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission's (MCMC) National Fiberisation and Connectivity (NFCP) strategy.

DIGITAL TRUST

To achieve digital trust, the public sector needs to create a digital working environment that is both safe and trusted. For example, Estonia's e-government system uses a number of robust digital principles to keep its data secured. The Estonian government includes the "once only principle", which promises that only one government department or group can hold a certain kind of data at any one time. Estonian addresses, for example, are only held on the

population register. This means that if one address is needed by someone else, they need to ask the registry for permission. Data isn't held on multiple servers to prevent hackers from stealing information and striking an attack on areas viewed as weak links. Another guiding mantra embraced by the Estonian government is its "digital by default" principle. All information submitted on paper must be stored into a digital system where it can be better protected. Although the Estonian government can't track instances like nosy public service employees sniffing around looking at personal information on a sheet of paper, it keeps a log record of these digital files' viewers. This way, the government is able to manage how its public sector manages personal data.

TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENT

Malaysia's plan to implement 5G is currently in the works. This will enable citizens to connect more devices to the Internet, store and process on virtual clouds and automate mundane tasks. Inevitably, all these tasks will create new behaviours and lifestyles. Therefore, this calls for the public service to retool its capability. And in 5G's terms, it spells out digitalisation. By shifting the sector's mentality to digital, this will allow the nation to leapfrog traditional stages of development. Modernising service delivery and adopting breakthrough technologies such as fiberisation, 5G, AI, blockchain, and big data are pivotal tools to exploit economic opportunities that digital technologies can offer.

Digital banks and e-wallets are seeing an uptick in demand as the world scrambles to fight COVID-19. Social distancing measures are rapidly turning digital transactions into a necessity. Cash handouts no longer require physical presence. As a result, world economies will be positively influenced by digitalisation. This sudden shift will place an even stronger basis for the maturation of a cashless society. All these advances will lay more focus on public experience—seamlessly integrating digital payments, banking, payroll, and government services. In response, the public sector needs to reassess the viability of predictive services and adopt emerging technologies. By this, governments can better prepare for the kinds of services expected from the public sector.

In the fight to beat COVID-19, governments around the world have resorted to be bold with new technologies such as facial recognition, mobile apps and big data to track the spread of the outbreak and monitor people under quarantine. In China, app monitoring observes daily temperature of students preparing to return to school or assigning people colour codes based on their travels, time spent in outbreak hotpots and exposure to potential carriers of the virus.

Meanwhile, in South Korea, private software developers have set up websites and apps to help people track cases and shun places visited by infected patients. The information enabled web developers to build detailed maps in order to track the movements of patients. Those in quarantine are monitored through a mobile app and people who breach self-isolation rules will be made to wear an electronic wristband, according to local media reports. This strategy outlines how South Korea has managed to keep the virus outbreak at bay. Similarly, all these capabilities can be applied in other life threatening situations like floods, earthquakes and social unrest.

WORKPLACE DESIGN

Enabling a digital workplace that incorporates online and virtual collaborations can lead to a number of productivity gains. Nonetheless, this remote working concept has been a common practice by progressive companies in developed countries, long before the pandemic hit. Perhaps the practice is here to stay, and it has proven to positively impact businesses with better outcomes.

> "
> Modernising service delivery and adopting breakthrough technologies such as fiberisation, 5G, AI, blockchain, and big data are pivotal tools to exploit economic opportunities that digital technologies can offer.

WORKFORCE OF PUBLIC SERVICE

To boost future workforce's readiness, governments need to be proactive in reskilling and upskilling public service's talents. On to public service delivery, the public sector needs to equip its workforce with the ability to engage teams that are dispersed through various locations. Pandemic situations like COVID-19 have made it mandatory for public officials to work remotely from home, although for some, it's their first time doing so. This shift also highlights the ability for public officials to be 'prosumers' and tech savvy to cope with workplace changes in the future. An innovative working culture needs to be cultivated, where ever it may be, at the office or home, for the public service to strive after better results in service delivery.

POLITICS AND POWER

From a purely governance standpoint, the formulation and implementation of public policies are prone to political and power plays. Evidently, the World Bank pointed out that decentralisation of federal power is a popular reform agenda for many countries, including OECD, middle-income, and poor countries. Yet, changing political will could result in inconsistent policy directions and changes. However, for public service officials, they need to uphold and maintain political neutrality in performing their duties. Therefore, policy directions need to consider the erratic nature of politics to 'future proof' government strategies and actions as well as decouple public service decisions from political interventions.

CONCLUSION

In times of crisis, only true leadership and leaders will stand out. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries were already facing economic and social instability. While some countries will inevitably descend into a deeper crisis when a number of health and economic factors combine to worsen their circumstances, a few others will emerge from the crisis with their workforces, economies, and political institutions largely intact. But others will experience human and financial devastation on a scale never seen before in generations. Thus, public service leaders should not only manage the crisis well but seize the opportunity to reform the sector. Some will do well well while others flounder. However, the difference in outcomes will largely depend, above all, on leadership. Maybe an aphorism of the 19th century by German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, "what doesn't kill you make you stronger" can be used as an affirmation of resilience.

> "
> ...policy directions need to consider the erratic nature of politics to 'future proof' government strategies and actions as well as decouple public service decisions from political interventions.

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● **VIEWPOINTS**

**SRI WIDIAS TUTI
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RE-ENERGISING PUBLIC SERVICE :
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SECTOR

"**W**e, who are appointed to serve the Government of Malaysia, hereby pledge that during and throughout the service with the Government, we will obey and practise the cores of the service while performing our duties. Towards achieving these, we:

- are determined to improve the quality of service;
- fulfil the responsibility of work;
- strive to eliminate self-centredness;
- serve with goodwill and courtesy;
- work towards developing people's mindset and national development;
- unite to eradicate national weaknesses and the enemies;
- obey the religious teachings"

The vow above is an extract taken from Malaysia's public sector pledge. Underneath it all, governments' capacity to deliver policies and services largely hinges on the professionalism and integrity of its civil servants. In the light of Malaysian public service, Malaysia's Public Service Department (JPA), the governing body that oversees the nation's public sector, established the principles above to guide its staff. Essentially, these principles have been formulated to restore public trust. Although civil servants must be loyal to the government of the day, they must exercise their duty professionally by upholding the law and institutional governance without any fear or favour. Given Malaysia's recent political upheaval, the newly minted political leadership has since undertaken a new approach to human capital development to improve public service delivery. As a "LEADER OF REFORM, DRIVER OF CHANGE", JPA has been tasked to mobilise a reform agenda to scale the sector's human resource development and management competencies. To implement it, JPA has come up with the following outcomes to push Malaysia's public sector growth.

- Towards developing leadership that is agile and practises holarchy;
- Having human capital that is mobile, able to multi-task and multi-talented;
- Establishing an organisation that is creative, digitised, and hybrid;
- Possessing self-leadership and a work culture that is customer-focused, flexible, innovative and open; as well as providing service delivery with integrity and professionalism.

As a point of reference, below are some snippets of international standards and European Union's (EU) public service policies:

- An effective and efficient institutional set-up, well-defined roles and responsibilities
- Human resource policies and strategies that are fairly and consistently applied
- Merit-based recruitment and promotion, transparent and fair remuneration, professional development system of civil servants
- Political neutrality

Two weeks after China reported its first Covid-19 case on the 10th of January, Malaysia reported its first case on the 24th of January. Amid the pandemic outbreak, in particular when cases spiked to 22, Malaysia was shocked by the sudden resignation of its Prime Minister, Tun Mahathir Mohamed. In the thick of the political crisis, although politicians come and go, the public service stayed put. Following a brief political impasse and a new government taking office, reform is on the cards yet again. This time however, the reform agenda is set to focus on promoting economic transformation driven by social development, public administration and governance. After all, Malaysians hold high expectations of the public sector to drive growth.

"Given Malaysia's recent political upheaval, the newly minted political leadership has since undertaken a new approach to human capital development to improve public service delivery.

"

During a crisis, it is important to decouple political interference from the public sector's actions particularly in relation to the sector's top management.

A REVIEW OF LEADERSHIP EMPOWERMENT IN PUBLIC SERVICE

Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah is the Director General of Malaysia's Ministry of Health. He has held the position since March 2013 and is now recognised the world over for his leadership in Malaysia's tenacious fight against COVID-19. The recent crisis has also uncovered the fact that Malaysia's Health Ministry (MOH) has been doing a good job in curbing the pandemic under his watch. As a result, The World Health Organisation (WHO) has chosen Malaysia to be a member of the its global mega–research team in the race to formulate a COVID-19 vaccine. Currently, eyes of the world are on him as he time and time again proves to be a reliable figure and an exemplary public service leader in mitigating Malaysia's COVID-19 infection risks. So much so, the nation's citizens have largely rallied around him as Malaysia tightened its movement order to battle the disease. But what do we have to do to produce more leaders like him?

During a crisis, it is important to decouple political interference from the public sector's actions particularly in relation to the sector's top management. In the heat of a crisis, it is pivotal to empower the public sector's division heads to ensure effective cross-departmental coordination and carry out viable solutions at speed. Against COVID-19's sobering backdrop, non-related crisis issues that arose should be left to the discretion of the governing body, in this case, the JPA. As Datuk Dr Noor Hisham's leadership puts spotlight on his ministry, the public sector needs to place a strong emphasis on succession planning— grooming successors who are just as capable as their seniors retiring in the near future. On the other hand, the public sector needs to identify ahead of time the kinds of talents it needs to ably weather other tumultuous storms that may hit in the future.

COMPETITIVE EMPLOYEE RENUMERATION PACKAGE TO RETAIN AND ATTRACT TOP TALENTS

Since the spread of COVID-19, Malaysia's front-liners' outstanding courage and dedication have really shone through. They are out there putting their lives on the line to curb the outbreak. While we cannot thank them enough, we can show them our appreciation and support by staying home and doing our bit. In return, government staff directly involved in COVID-19's containment efforts will be eligible for a special monthly critical allowance. This is an example of what governments can do to recognise their unsung heroes' contribution. However, in view of their hard-fought contribution, a remuneration package that includes performance-based bonus and reward should also be considered. Otherwise, the public sector risks jeopardising its people's performance and motivation with a rigid bonus structure that negates rewarding its star performers.

STREAMLINE THE COMPETENCY OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS THROUGH SPECIALISATION SKILLSET

Competent employees are an important source of competitive advantage. The changing landscape of global economy, technology and politics is heaping pressure on government performance. These global changes are also drawing intense scrutiny over the complex set of public sector skills and capacity. New technologies, new ways of organising work and delivering public service are putting an increasing reliance on temporary employment that has redefined the nature of Malaysia's public sector. In current practice, the country's widespread intakes of *'Pegawai Sambilan Harian'* (PSH) or temporary staff cater to a vast segment of the nation's millennials and the gig economy, albeit, on a short-term basis.

Governments and their agencies, the likes of national training institutions need to pay more attention to enhancing the skills and competency of their public service officers. A coordinated effort at all levels is needed to make sure public service officers' capability is in line with advances in technology. It has become abundantly clear that, in the digital age, conventional wisdom about transformation no longer works.

Consequently, governments might need to reshuffle their human capital resources especially for members of staff who are affected by disruptive technologies. Besides this, governments should also strengthen their human capital development in critical new fields such as data science to build a sufficient talent pipeline for the future.

> " A coordinated effort at all levels is needed to make sure public service officers' capability is in line with advances in technology.
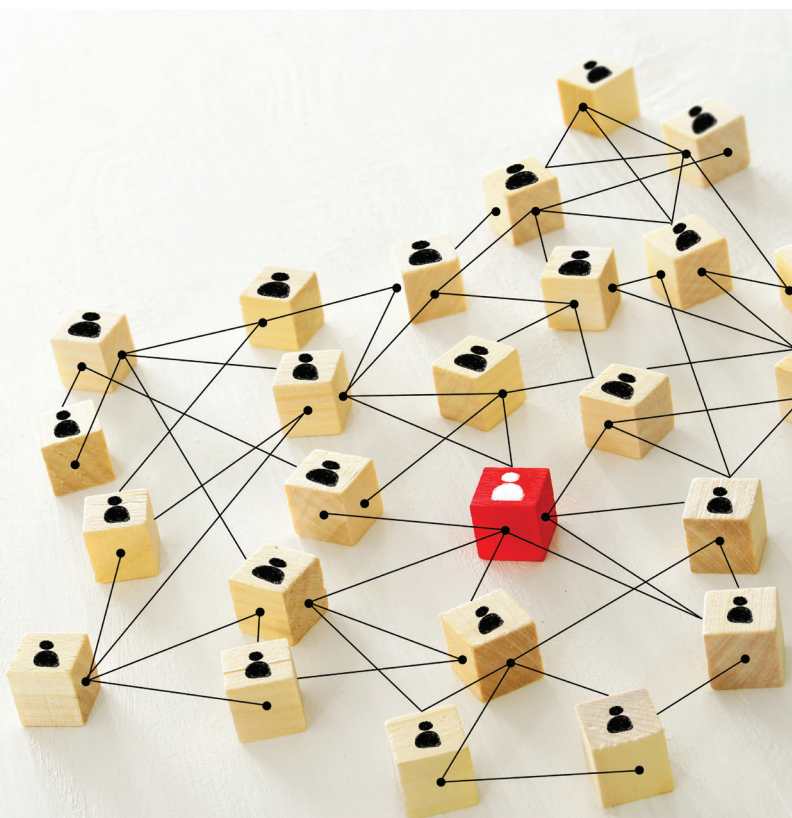
CONCLUSION

A recent World Bank report cites that Malaysia is currently doing better than its peers in South-East Asia. There is a "big gap" in the performance of Malaysia's civil servants compared to other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. The report also suggests that Malaysia should look into re-energising its public sector to take the development further. This includes:

- Intensifying efforts to ensure equal treatment in public sector employment and improve public perception of the public administration's impartiality.

- Conducting merit-based recruitment, decentralisation, and the use of competency frameworks to induct the best talent.

- Facilitating an open environment in the public service. To achieve this, it is necessary to build an institutional and legal framework that encourages pro-active sharing of information and data in a user-friendly and impactful manner.

- Embracing new technologies and skills to digitalise and automate for improved public service delivery.

Last but not least, the Malaysian government should take full ownership of planning and accelerating the development of the nation's public sector human capital. Strategies formulated should realistically reflect the needs and capacity of the country. Plus, adequate budget should be allocated. As the country continues on an upward development path, it will need more reforms to boost its human capital and accelerate productivity growth. Admittedly, this won't be straightforward. However, to thrive on such pivotal moments, we need to stay safe and work together to turn the situation around into an opportunity for growth and progress rather than anxiety and uncertainty.

> "
> As the country continues on an upward development path, it will need more reforms to boost its human capital and accelerate productivity growth.

FACTS AND FIGURES

The number of civil servants as of March 2019: **1.71** MILLION

For the core service sectors

Armed forces
152,957
personnel

Police
128,536
personnel

Civil servants of various schemes
665,068
personnel

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• VIEWPOINTS

TOWARDS A NEW GENERATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE

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The world today is experiencing an exponential growth brought about by global megatrends. Technology breakthroughs, global economic power shifts, changing demographic trends, rapid urbanisation, scarcity of natural resources and climate change are the forces at play shaping the contours of future status quo. As the world evolves with new science and technology innovations thriving alongside the rise of digital platforms, the public sector too has to adapt very quickly to disruptions. Evidently, a number of reforms are long overdue as the public sector now needs to do better in managing public attitudes, expectations and trust. Being at the epicentre of this structural global shift, citizens are scrutinising government actions and consequently, government actions will determine the fate of global economic recovery and sentiment. Although much of the economy remains frozen for now, balancing innovation, effective governance and forward-looking regulations strategically via actionable solutions is pivotal to weather this perfect storm.

STOCK-TAKING OF CURRENT PUBLIC SERVICE

There are about 1.7 million public servants, equivalent to about 5.3 to 100 Malaysian citizens. Roughly 30% of the total number of public servants are employed in the education service while another 12% are employed in the health sector. The General Federal Public Service employs 38% of the total number of public servants.
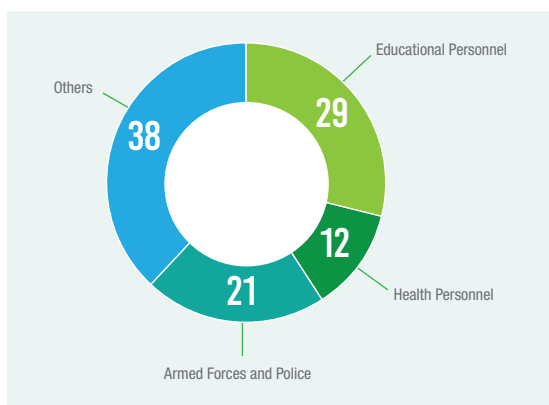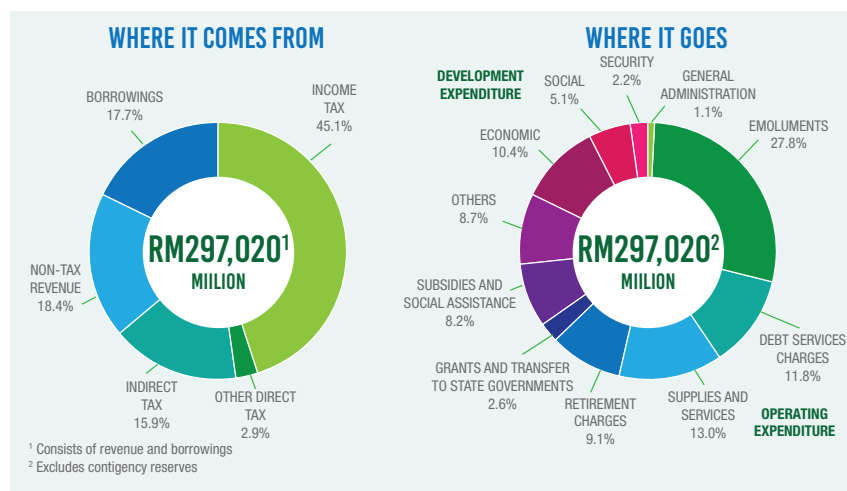
With this size, about 45-50% of the government's operating expenditure goes to the salary and wages of civil servants; fixed allowances, overtime allowances including other financial benefits, pension payments, gratuities and cash in lieu of leave not taken.

For 2020, the operating expenditure allocated was RM241 billion, 27.8% of which is allocated for the emoluments of civil service compared to 36.8% in 2019. 9.1% goes to retirement charges in 2020 compared to 11.6% in 2019. The public service wage bill for Malaysia in the year 2000 was below 20%. Data also shows that two thirds of public servants are earning less than RM5,000.
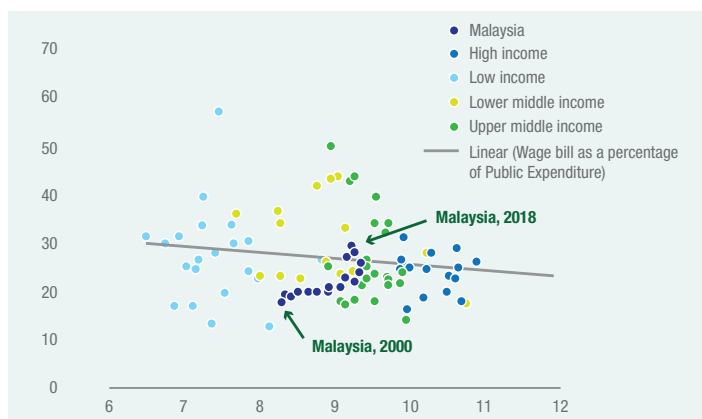
The World Bank's Public Expenditure Review (PER) found that the emolument-to-revenue ratio (wage-bill) is about 27% in 2009, which then steadily increased to 34.3% for Malaysia in 2018. As a comparison, Canada spends 13.7% of its revenue on wages, Norway at 12.5%, Australia at 10.6% and South Korea at 9.6 %. The significant increase in wages is attributable to the large increase in the number of public servants, increase in the number of posts, the conversion of contract staff into regular employees and increases in salaries and allowances.

THE 2020 FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET

WHERE IT COMES FROM

RM297,020[1] MIILION

- BORROWINGS 17.7%
- INCOME TAX 45.1%
- NON-TAX REVENUE 18.4%
- INDIRECT TAX 15.9%
- OTHER DIRECT TAX 2.9%

WHERE IT GOES

RM297,020[2] MIILION

- DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURE
- SOCIAL 5.1%
- SECURITY 2.2%
- GENERAL ADMINISTRATION 1.1%
- EMOLUMENTS 27.8%
- ECONOMIC 10.4%
- OTHERS 8.7%
- SUBSIDIES AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE 8.2%
- GRANTS AND TRANSFER TO STATE GOVERNMENTS 2.6%
- RETIREMENT CHARGES 9.1%
- SUPPLIES AND SERVICES 13.0%
- DEBT SERVICES CHARGES 11.8%
- OPERATING EXPENDITURE

[1] Consists of revenue and borrowings
[2] Excludes contigency reserves

Source : Ministry of Finance, Malaysia

TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLIC SERVANTS

- Others 38
- Educational Personnel 29
- Health Personnel 12
- Armed Forces and Police 21

Source: Public Service Department, "Annual Report 2018"

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WAGE BILL AS A PERCENTAGE OF PUBLIC EXPENDITURE PLOTTED AGAINST LOG OF GDP PER CAPITA, MALAYSIA: 2000-18 AND COMPARATOR COUNTRIES FOR MOST RECENT YEAR AVAILABLE

- Malaysia
- High income
- Low income
- Lower middle income
- Upper middle income
- Linear (Wage bill as a percentage of Public Expenditure)

Malaysia, 2018

Malaysia, 2000

Source : World Bank staff calculations based on Worldwide Bereaucracy Indicators and Ministry of Finance Malaysia data

THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

In achieving Vision 2020 which was coined roughly 30 years ago, Malaysia has made a good economic progress by introducing several reforms. However, the pace of reforms and development has not been consistent, resulting in Malaysia's struggle to meet its Vision 2020 goals. This is partly due to the capacity of the public service which is reflected in the government's inability to implement key policies needed to meet its development priorities.

Malaysia's public service rating so far is well or at par with its regional standards but falls short relative to its OECD comparators. According to the World Bank's Doing Business index, Malaysia's performance with respect to the Government Effectiveness has remain stagnant or fallen in recent years especially for openness and transparency in public service employment as well as overall governance. Malaysia's index for voice and accountability is also below what would be expected with indicator like political stability to have worsened over time. The public perception index in terms of equal treatment in public sector employment was rated very poorly. Its index with regards to impartiality of public administration was also below the regional and OECD comparators.

RE-ENERGISING THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Malaysian scores comparatively well in terms of overall government effectiveness, but has been on a declining trend...
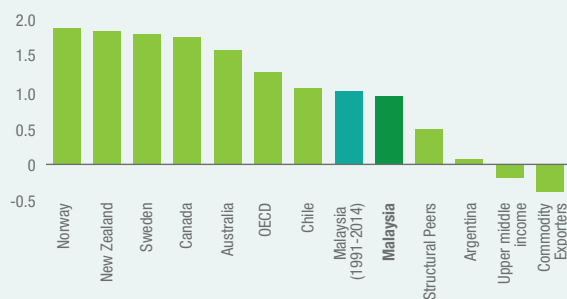
Source : Government Effectiveness Ranking, 2018

...and compares poorly in measures of open gevernment, especially compared to high-income economies
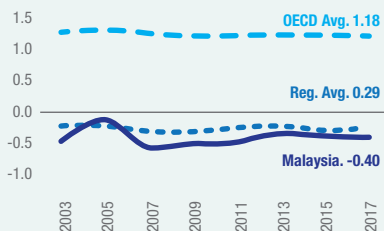

Source : Open Government Index, 2018

Malaysia's public service is at par with the region, but shows a stagnant or declining trend; and a huge and widening gap with high-income comparators

Worlwide Governance Indicators, Selected Dimensions, Comparative Performance for Malaysia, Developing EAP Region and OECD Countries, 2013-2017
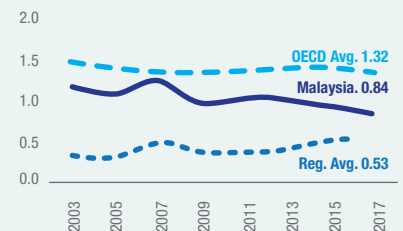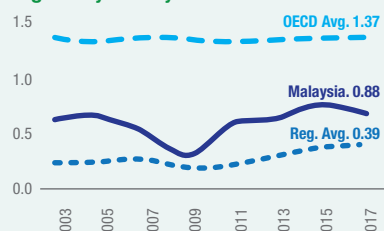
Voice and Accountability

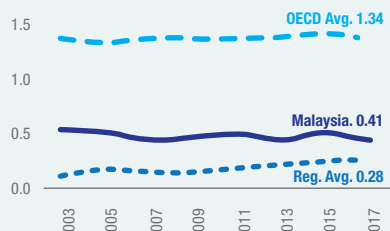### Political Stability and Absence of Violence
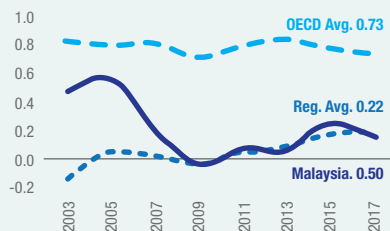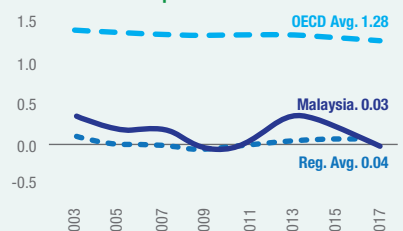

Government Effectiveness

Regulatory Quality
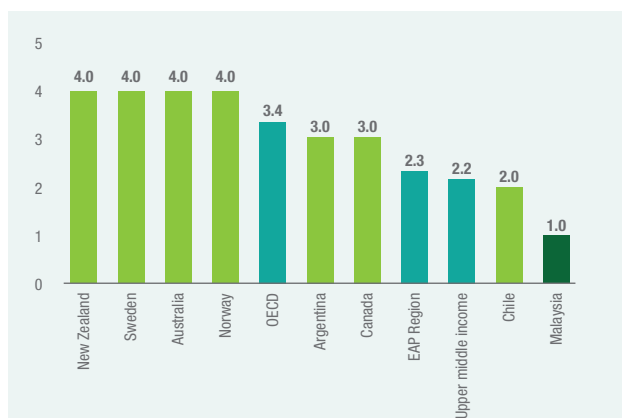

Rule of Law

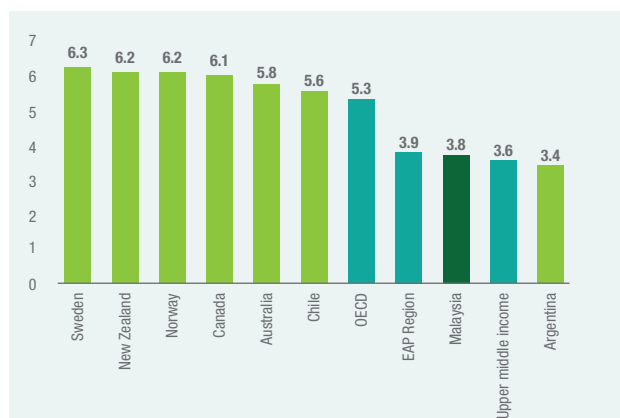### Control of Corruption

Source : Worldwide Governance Indicators

CITIZEN PERCEPTIONS ON EQUAL TREATMENT WITH REGARD TO ACCESS TO PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, 2018

Source : Institutional Profiles Database

CITIZEN PERCEPTIONS ON IMPARTIALITY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, 2018

Source : Quality of Government (QoG) Expert Survey

WHAT IS AHEAD OF US?

In 2018, a special public service reform committee made a decision that new public service appointments starting 2020 will no longer be made under the permanent and pensionable scheme to reduce pension burden on the government which currently stands at RM28 bill. Appointments will be made on a needs basis and by an improved contractual scheme. This initiative is expected to save the government by RM5 bill a year.
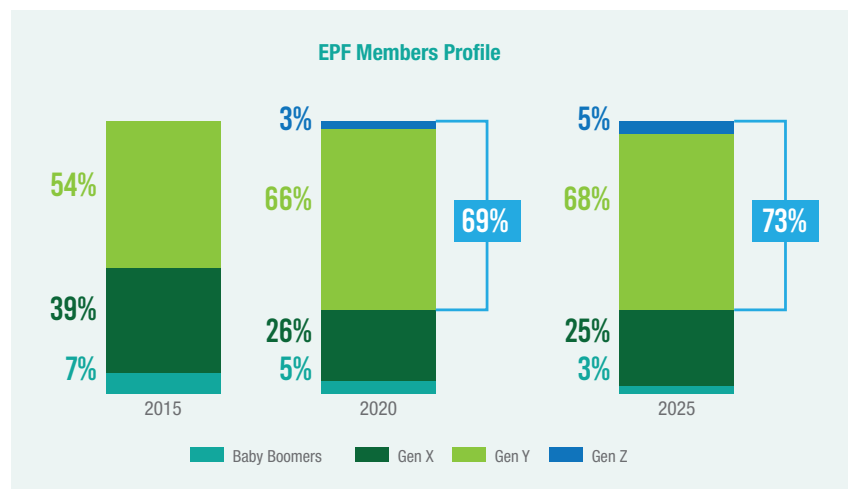
For many countries, the workforce age pyramid is a mushroom shaped with narrower base and a wider top. With such demography, a disproportionate number of experienced workers will be retiring in the next few years while Gen Z will slowly enter the workforce anticipating greater flexibility driven by different expectations. Looking at the data collected by EPF, baby boomers will shift into retirement at a net rate of 2% every 5 years. By 2025, a significant portion of the workforce will be dominated by Gen Y and the Gen Z. With this shift and work culture as well as the expectations brought on by new generations, hierarchical structure and management may change or slowly move into obsolescence.

With the advent of IR4.0 and workplace generational shifts, many companies worldwide are racing to be at the apex of this transformation wave. IR4.0 refers to new trends the likes of automation and data exchange to optimise processes and increase estimation and prediction accuracies. It can be done via AI or blockchain or any other means that could make the intent possible.

The influence of AI on the future of work will result in an inevitable shift for industries. From a predictable environment, AI will move global workforce towards work that involves more cognitive finesse, i.e. thinking, creativity and decision making to lead a work culture transformation, be it in private or public sectors.

Intelligent systems may eventually take over decision making with human traits irreplaceable by machines to become more valuable. For a workforce to become sustainable in a human-machine atmosphere, they need to be nimble and adaptable to the changing environment where skills like emotional intelligence, creativity, persuasion, innovation, problem solving, leadership, collaboration, innovation and agility are essential. Under this environment, keywords such are disruptive innovations, radical thinking, new business models and resource scarcity will be prominent. PWC Global produced a report in 2018 on the workforce of the future where four different scenarios were anticipated.

SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF GEN Y AND GEN Z IN WORKFORCE

Source: Datuk Shahril Ridza Ridzuan, 2017, "Embracing Industry 4.0: Will Universities make the difference for Malaysia", UM CEO Tech Talk

THE FOUR WORLDS OF WORK IN 2030

BUSINESS FRAGMENTATION:

Small is powerful.

Large business lose their dominance as customers seek relevance and organisations find scale a burden rather than benefit. Social bubbles and affinity groups take on a new importance. Many couls not exist without digital platforms.

COLLECTIVENESS:

**Fairness and equality dominates.**

The common good prevails over personal preference, e.g. collective responsibility for the environment, social good and 'fairness' over individual interest.

INDIVIDUALISM:

Where 'me first' rules.

A fovus on individual wants; a response to the infinite choices available to consumer.

CORPORATE INTEGRATION:

Big business rules all.

Companies get bigger and more influential - the biggest have more sway than some nations. Brands span many business areas.

FRAGMENTATION
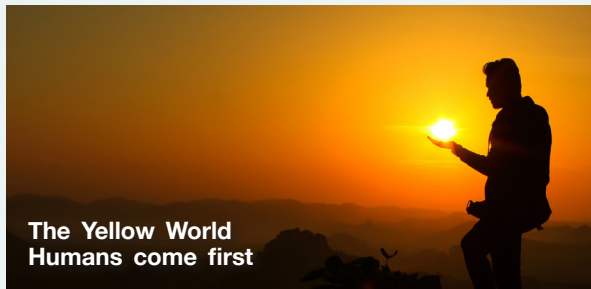
**The Yellow World
Humans come first**

Social-first and community business prosper. Crowfunded capital flows towards ethical and blameless brands. There is a search for meaning and relevance with a social heart. Artisan, makers and 'new Worker Guilds' thrive. Humannes is highly valued.

**The Red World
Innovation rules**

Organisations and individuals race to give consumers what they want. Innovation outpaces regulation. Digital platforms give outsized reach and influence to those with the winning idea. Specialises and niche profit-makers flourish.

COLLECTIVISM

INDIVIDUALISM

**The Green World
Companies care**

Social responsibility and trust dominate the corporate agenda with concerns about demographic changes, climate and sustainability becoming key drivers of business.

**The Blue World
Corporate is king**

Big company capitalism rules as organisations continue to grow bigger and individual preferences trump beliefs about social responsiblility.

INTEGRATION

Source: PwC, 2018. "Workforce of the future: The competing forces shaping 2030".

With these scenarios laid down, the best strategies/actions needed to prepare for the future should be enabled by any organisation including the public service to digitalise processes and capture new opportunities. PWC has also outlined the outlook for future governments to adapt the change brought about by the megatrends shaping future scenarios.

PAST AND FUTURE OF GOVERMENT

Citizen under control and trust in strong leader

Governing for citizens, forced cooperation based

Organisation sites

Public sectors organisations as all-in-one giants

Government as service provider owning inputs and processes

Past of Government

Future of Government

Citizen in control and trust in each other and the 'servant' leader

Governing with citizens based on mutual collaboration and trust

Organisation networks

Small flexible purpose driven public sector entities

Government as facilitator, owning outcomes with citizens

Source: PwC, 2019, "Public Sector Readiness in the Age of Disruption: Seven Imperatives to Navigate your Journey to Readiness"

GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC SECTORS IMPERATIVES IN AGE OF DISRUPTION

Enabling trust and transperancy — 1

Building disruptive public-private partnership — 2

Balancing innovation and regulation — 3

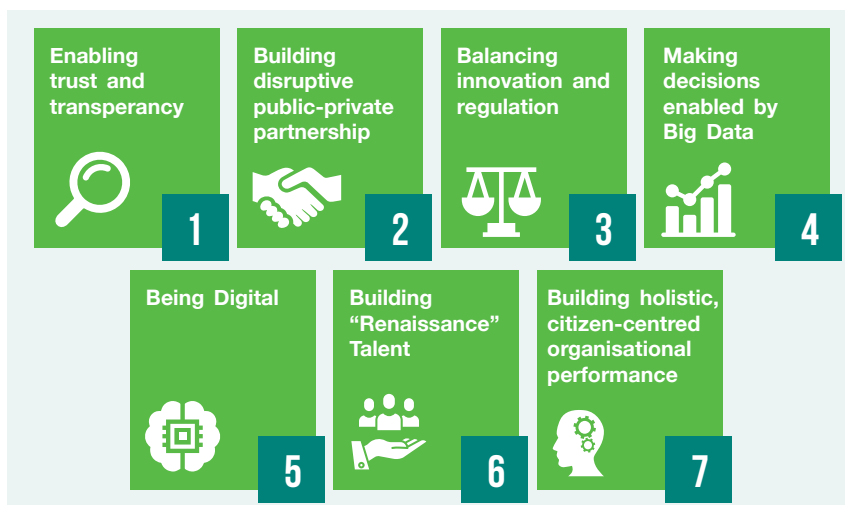**Making decisions enabled by Big Data** — 4

Being Digital — 5

Building "Renaissance" Talent — 6

Building holistic, citizen-centred organisational performance — 7

Source: PwC, 2019, "Public Sector Readiness in the Age of Disruption: Seven Imperatives to Navigate your Journey to Readiness",

Strategies to adapt and adopt to the changing environment should then include, but not limited to,

- Finding and retaining workforce with the right skills, flexibility and agility to evolve with time,
- Embracing digitalisation to foster rigorous use of data and digital models and adopting advanced technologies
- Exploring new opportunities through collaboration and integration across the value chain
- Reviewing and updating various portfolios and opportunities

QUANTITY VS QUALITY?

The public sector plays a pivotal role in Malaysia's socio-economic development. As a result of the sector's efforts to eradicate poverty and boost growth through economic diversification and industrial expansion, Malaysia has seen a rise in its middle to high-income population over the last few years. The growing population within this income bracket means that expectations for a better and more responsive public service delivery have been greatly increased. It is then pertinent for Malaysia to enhance its public service effectiveness for a successful transition to a higher state of economic development. However, despite unwavering reform efforts sustained by the Malaysian government, the perception that the quality of public service remains stagnant and lacks economic transformation congruence still lingers.

To move towards a high-income developed nation, Malaysia needs a public service with its full potential realised. To achieve the aspiration, a radical transformation is required to build a high capacity and high capability workforce and environment in the public service. Human resource management of the public service will need to be reformed to encourage

an open and transparent environment while manoeuvring efficiently along the impact of new and emerging IR4.0 trends which will change the very nature of how we work. The government can ease the routes to training and retraining, encourage and incentivise adaptability while increasingly value skills of leadership, creativity and innovation. Bear in mind that burnout is eminent for complacency and this maybe the cause of low performance and productivity. Extra attention is also needed on employee value proposition. Apart from the tangible benefits, intangible value proposition would also be useful in line with the future of work trends. A new remuneration and reward framework needs to be considered. This includes reviewing policies and establishing a link between compensation and employee performance to be at par with industry standards to sustain the motivation of civil servants and high performers.

With growing fiscal constraint along with complex public scrutiny and expectations, the public sector will also have to work smarter. Government spending on public service salaries and pensions constitute a large portion of operational expenditure. Hence, more impactful and aggressive

initiatives need to be executed to enhance public service efficiency. The public service needs the right people with the right skills and attitudes along with the right tools to perform its role effectively. A fundamental restructuring of recruitment and employment strategies are required to focus on scaling new competencies by recruiting candidates with appropriate skills, knowledge, capabilities and attitude to be thrusted into the public service instead of recruitments that are based on "schemes of service" that are career-based rather than position-based. There should also be a firm value proposition with each recruitment exercise; i.e. it has to be based on strong needs. The process of appointments and promotions too should adhere to high moral and ethical standards.

HOW ABOUT THE NEW WORK CULTURE THAT COMES WITH A GENERATIONAL WORKFORCE SHIFT?
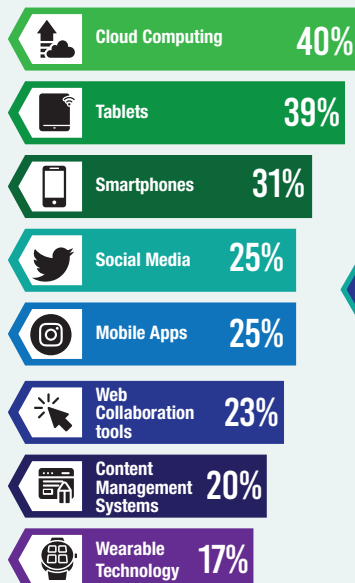
Millennials and Gen Z hold different expectations of work and life compared to previous generations

because of the way they were brought up by baby boomers and Gen X. They prefer 'softer' cultural and behavioural approaches as performance enhancer rather than structural approaches like frameworks, systems and processes. In short, they like to be more "engaged". Millennials prefer to work in teams and use technology. They have high expectations of themselves and this is reflected in their strong desire for speedy execution and results because they grew up in a time where information is readily available everywhere. This is why the generation is very particular about career opportunities and progression despite having a high sense of entitlement.

The generation has a very high need for social interactions and validations. Work-life balance is their utmost importance and hence, they prefer work flexibility. They are creative problem solvers who love working on new and tough problems. The generation also prefers clear and specific feedback on their performance instantly, as opposed to delayed feedback in a more formal setting preferred by previous generations. They are interested to know if they have done well to stay motivated.

TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL NATIVES CHANGING WORK ENVIRONMENT

Which digital technologies will have the most impact over the next 5 years?

Technology	%
Cloud Computing	40%
Tablets	39%
Smartphones	31%
Social Media	25%
Mobile Apps	25%
Web Collaboration tools	23%
Content Management Systems	20%
Wearable Technology	17%

FUTURE OF WORKS

The Generational Swing of Device Usage

	TV	Laptop/PC	Smartphone	Tablet
Gen Y	77%	58%	77%	30%
Gen X	86%	67%	60%	34%
Baby Boomers	91%	71%	42%	26%
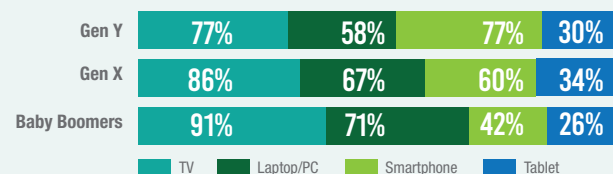
Who values work flexibility?

	%
Baby Boomers	91%
Gen X	91%
Gen Y	77%
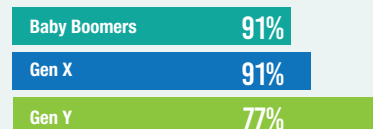
Top 4 elements that most appeal to young Europeans in a Digital Enterprise:

- User friendly systems
- Mobile Technologies
- Environmentally sustainable technologies
- Internal Communication

Source : Reconteur 2016, Digital Dividend, Harvard Business Review

IN SUMMARY..

FUTURE SKILLS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE AS MALAYSIA'S LOOK TOWARDS DEVELOP COUNTRY STATUS			
An effective state...	**Professional**	**Strategic**	**Innovative**
...needs civil servants who are	• Qualified • Independent • Values driven • Ethical	• Outcomes driven • Evidence based • Future Oriented • Proactive • Networked	• Iterative • Data literate • Citizen centered • Curious • Storytellers • Insurgent
...in a civil service which is...	• Merit based • Capable of integrating soft skills, ethics, talent management (future potential vs. past performance) • Able to structure the right balance of generalise and specialist professions and career paths	• Agile • Attractive to skilled job seekers • Planned and managed to ensure the right skills and competencies are effectively allocated to areas of current and emerging need • Future oriented and responsive	• Open and collaborative cultures, leadership and management • Engaged • Autonomous (e.g. work design) • Mobile • Diverse • Learning oriented
...led by senior civil servants who are..	• Trusted policy advisors and effective transactional managers	• Transformational leaders and change managers	• Collaborative leaders and adaptive managers

Source : Adapted from World Bank Report

01
A NEW COMPOSITION OF HIGHER SKILLED STAFF IS REQUIRED.

To move in parallel with technology advances, the public service needs to the restructured. The public service needs highly skilled government personnel to ride upcoming global challenges. Currently, in the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) for instance, more than 85% of positions consist of clerical and support positions with less than 15% of the department's human resource are professional and managerial positions. This will have to change. With a limited fiscal space, increasing the number of highly skilled staff is normally entailed by the elimination of lower-skilled positions as a higher skilled workforce comes at a higher price. The political consequence, if these were to be done, will be dire and this is why the public sector is slower to shed workers than the private sector. Other initiatives such as redeployment and incentives for early separation from the public service can be considered as the alternatives

02
RETRAINING, RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING IS ESSENTIAL.

Achieving a greater ratio of highly and multi-skilled workforce can be accelerated by retraining, reskilling and upskilling. The public sector workforce now needs advanced cognitive, socio-behavioural and interpersonal skills, as well as adaptability to perform changing, nonroutine cognitive and analytical tasks to meet the demand of the future. Skills like data entry clerks need to be phased out and replaced with data analysis skills. Moving in parallel with IR4.0 does not mean that people will be made totally redundant. Initiatives to digitise and digitalise public service delivery should be received as a complementary effort rather than a replacement. With data entry/data checking tasks to be hollowed up by digitisation and digitalisation, ground work can then be empowered for higher value, personalised and impactful activities.

03
STRUCTURAL REFORM TO HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IS EMINENT.

Reforms should include adoption of a merit-based recruitment, decentralisation and the use of competency frameworks to recruit the best talents with the right capability, skills and attitudes. The performance management system should be transparent to determine rewards and promotions. Promotions should be based on clearly formulated and transparent practices. The highly centralised and lengthy recruitment process limits flexibility by respective ministries to plan for their own human resource needs, and thus requires interventions. To boost creativity and quality of jobs further, performance conversations should be carried out regularly by trained managers with purpose and clarity in order to optimise the benefits rather than taken as a compliance exercise or an administrative burden. There should be a mutual agreement of set performance objectives with some sense of empowerment injected in two-way conversations. If done correctly with pragmatism and positivity, staff would be more motivated and energised to think creatively and perform not only to achieve their department's goals, but also exceed their personal development.

04
MODIFICATIONS ON HRM POLICIES MAY BE REQUIRED FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE TO BE MORE AGILE AND RESPONSIVE.

The policies should include flexibility for work-life-balance, enhancing diversity in the public service workforce as well as encouraging continuous leaning. Rewards and promotions should also be based on new initiatives and ideas brought forward to encourage innovative and critical thinking. Ratings on performance should also be based on the success of these ideas which should be closely related to citizen outcomes. Purpose, mastery and autonomy should motivate success with shared ownership and accountability to be enhanced.

05
CONSOLIDATION OF AGENCIES AND MINISTRIES TO LEVERAGE ON SHARED SERVICES.

Governments of the future need to be more agile, flexible, responsive and less centralised. Restructuring driven by technology and Big Data may be needed to promote critical decisions and efficient processes as well as minimise overlapping functions and contradicting policies. To integrate big data into decision making, governments need to ensure that all quality data is captured and data silos removed by establishing agencies or ministries' digital purpose and tuning up current operating models to be more citizen-based. Governments also need to gradually move from a descriptive to a predictive governing model. Finally, prescriptive data analysis will be central in engaging various stakeholders. The digital transformation is all about speed, information access and simplification and hence, the mindset shift is critical to ensure success.

06
RECONSIDER GRATUITIES AND CASH IN LIEU AND ADOPT PERFORMANCE-BASED REWARDS FOR BETTER FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY.

Currently, civil servants can be compensated in cash for up to 120 days of accumulated leave when they retire. The government can follow the corporate sector in capping the accumulation of leave to lower the number of days and encourage staff to utilise their annual leaves for a better work-life balance.

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HOW READY ARE MALAYSIANS TO RETURN TO NORMAL?

As the anticipation of further easing of the Movement Control Order (MCO) is upon us, organisations & people are facing challenges to operate and behave in the new environment.
We asked: **"How ready are Malaysians to return to normal?"**

A short survey was conducted between 25th to 29th May, asking the public how comfortable they are to return to selected "normal" behaviours. The following are some of the key takeaways. The Malaysian respondents are:

RESTAURANT

Dine in is not something the respondents are fully comfortable in doing

Events and gatherings will not be attended by most respondents

Public transport usage continues to be a challenge

SOCIAL DISTANCING

More comfortable **shopping in malls/supermarkets** than sundry shops/wet market

Generally not comfortable returning to the old "normal" yet

Not at ease for their children to be in **school/universities**

SECONDARY SCHOOL

HOW COMFORTABLE ARE MALAYSIANS* TO DO THE FOLLOWING

🔴 Not very comfortable/Not comfortable 🟢 Very comfortable/Fairly comfortable

	Not very comfortable	Very comfortable
Go to place of worship - mosques, churches or temples	69	31
Go to workplace/universities	56	44
Eat in cafes & restaurants	85	15
Go to events & gatherings - sports events, concerts etc.	95	5
Go to malls & supermarkets	71	29
Use public transport - road, rail, air or sea	91	9
Go to sundry shops & wet markets	79	21
Children go to school/universities	89	11
Meet friends & family outside their household	63	37

*based on 4000 adults surveyed
Source: MIGHT

A COMPARISON WITH A SIMILAR SURVEY DONE IN THE UK SHOWS MALAYSIANS ARE MORE CAUTIOUS AND NOT READILY COMFORTABLE TO RETURN TO THE OLD "NORMAL"

🔴 UK 🇬🇧 🇲🇾 Malaysia

	UK	Malaysia
Comfortable to go to their place of work/universities	49%	44%
Comfortable to eat in cafes & restaurants*	29%	15%
Go to events & gatherings - sports events, concerts etc.	17%	5%
Comfortable to shop in malls & supermarket*	51%	29%
Comfortable to use public transport	21%	9%
Comfortable to shop in shops & wet markets*	49%	21%
Comfortable for their children to go to school or universities*	41%	11%
Comfortable to meet friends or family outside their household	62%	37%

*Slight difference to allow context
Source: MIGHT, IPSOS

OTHER NOTES ON THE SURVEY...

Although **focusing on Malaysia,** the survey has attracted responses from **15 other countries**

93%
of respondent answered via the use of **mobile phones** & took a little more than **one minute** to complete

Those in **Klang Valley** are the most comfortable to go to **their workplaces**

The **Northerners** are the **least comfortable** amongst respondents almost across all questions

The **Southerners** are the ones most uncomfortable to attends **large events & gatherings**

People in the **east coast** are the most comfortable to **meet friends or family outside** their household as well as go to their **place of worship**

Amongst the respondents in Klang Valley, those in **Putrajaya** are more comfortable to do **"normal"** than others in Kuala Lumpur & Selangor

Source: MIGHT

MOVING FORWARD:
HOW DO WE ENSURE THE PUBLIC IS COMFORTABLE?

Organisations need to create trust, enabling "comfort" feeling that requires demonstration of the following

Maintaining Cleanliness & Hygiene
Maintaining good environmental cleanliness & hygiene reduces the risk of infection and is a necessary element of due diligence in terms of protecting both employees, customers and the public. This could mean using technologies to disinfect environment or minimise the need to touch common surfaces.

Enabling Social Distancing
Social distancing is the most recommended means of preventing the spread of COVID-19. Organisations must use tools, process procedures that help reduce interactions or minimise the need for physical presence. For organisations looking to operate during COVID-19 times, finding ways to enforce social distancing will be key.

Monitoring of Workers' & Customers' Health
The use of tools to monitor employees, customers and the public for signs of infection. No one solution is optimal, so organisations should be prepared to use a combination of solutions for maximum effectiveness.

MOVING FORWARD:
THERE ARE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

However when deploying technology solutions, organisations need to be mindful of the following:

- Use "fit for purpose" solutions to obtain the best results in terms of both workers' & customers' safety
- Solutions selected are better suited to target population, size of organisation, public engagement etc
- Solutions that claim protection against COVID-19 are leveraging its ability against viruses in general. While such general purpose solutions is valuable, they need to be validated
- Claims of regulatory compliance that do not apply to the current crisis, unrelated to COVID-19
- With all the marketing hype and jargon, questions still remain around which of these technologies are mature, scalable, and cost effective
- There are proposed evaluation criteria*:
  - COVID-19 efficacy
  - Any virus validity
  - Cost
  - Regulatory recommendations
  - Population fit
  - Solution maturity
  - Scalability

*Source: MIGHT/*Lux Research*
'How ready are Malaysians to return to normal?' survey by MIGHT, May 2020.

● **INTERCONNECT**

myForesight®
HAPPENINGS

REBOOTING A TRADE AND CONSUMER MARKET TRANSFORMATION
6th May 2020, KPDNHEP

In a bid to adapt to shifting global consumer markets, recently, MIGHT® and Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP) launched a collaboration role to develop KPNDHEP's 2021-2025 strategic plan. Given the fact that global trade is rapidly reinventing supply chains and traditional businesses, the strategic plan, in short, will outline the best steps for government departments and businesses to take now and in the future. Also, the strategic plan involves rebooting a digital transformation for local businesses.

The collaboration involves a series of engagements and workshops with KPDNHEP's internal stakeholders. On the 6th May 2020, MIGHT® was given the opportunity to share the final outcomes of the strategic plan with KPNDHEP's newly minted Secretary General, Y.Bhg Datuk Seri Haji Hasnol Zam Zam Haji Ahmad and its senior management at KPDNHEP's headquarters in Putrajaya. Following the sharing session, the strategic plan's final draft was formalised by MIGHT®'s CEO, Datuk Dr Mohd Yusoff Sulaiman who was accompanied by Senior Vice President, Rushdi Abdul Rahim and Principal Analyst, Azmil Mohd Amin.

## LEADING THROUGH UNCERTAIN TIMES
21st May 2020

Despite being kept socially distanced during the movement control order (MCO), MIGHT® remained collaboratively close crafting strategies and solutions alongside the industry in the past few months. Evidently, on the 21st of May, MIGHT® convened an online webinar to share with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Malaysian experience in building its foresight capacity.

Facilitated by MIGHT®'s Principal Analyst, Dr. Tan Shu Ying, the webinar focused on introducing foresight and futures thinking and their potential applications into the daily work of researchers at the UNDP. Ideas on the possible applications of foresight in identifying subnational and biodiversity actors to be integrated into UNDP's themes and service lines came to light among others.

● INTERCONNECT

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BOOK CLUB
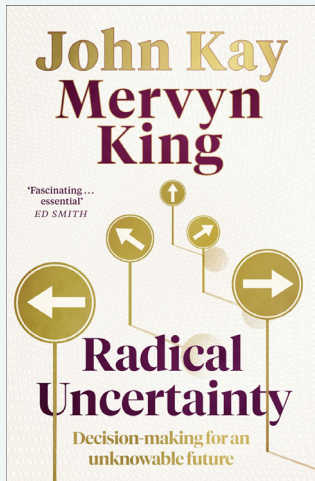
RADICAL UNCERTAINTY:
DECISION-MAKING FOR AN UNKNOWABLE FUTURE

When uncertainty is all around us, and the facts are not clear, how can we make good decisions?

We do not know what the future will hold, particularly in the midst of a crisis, but we must make decisions anyway. We regularly crave certainties which cannot exist and invent knowledge we cannot have, forgetting that humans are successful because we have adapted to an environment that we understand only imperfectly. Throughout history we have developed a variety of ways of coping with the radical uncertainty that defines our lives.

This incisive and eye-opening book draws on biography, history, mathematics, economics and philosophy to highlight the most successful - and most short-sighted - methods of dealing with an unknowable future. Ultimately, the authors argue, the prevalent method of our age falls short, giving us a false understanding of our power to make predictions, leading to many of the problems we experience today.
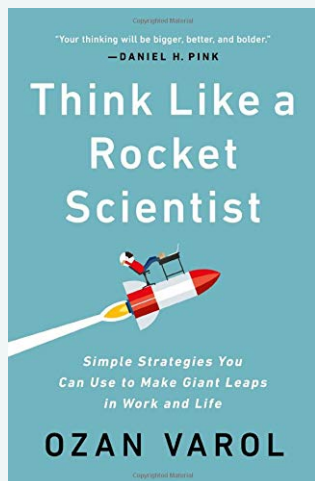
Tightly argued, provocative and written with wit and flair, Radical Uncertainty is at once

ISBN-10: 1408712601
ISBN-13: 9781408712603
Author: John Kay and Mervyn King
Publisher: Little, Brown (March 5, 2020)

THINK LIKE A ROCKET SCIENTIST:
SIMPLE STRATEGIES YOU CAN USE TO MAKE GIANT LEAPS
IN WORK AND LIFE

One of Inc.com's "6 Books You Need to Read in 2020 (According to Bill Gates, Satya Nadella, and Adam Grant)"* Adam Grant's # 1 pick of his top 20 books of 2020* One of 6 Groundbreaking Books of Spring 2020 (according to Malcolm Gladwell, Susan Cain, Dan Pink, and Adam Grant).

A former rocket scientist reveals the habits, ideas, and strategies that will empower you to turn the seemingly impossible into the possible.

Rocket science is often celebrated as the ultimate triumph of technology. But it's not. Rather, it's the apex of a certain thought process -- a way to imagine the unimaginable and solve the unsolvable. It's the same thought process that enabled Neil Armstrong to take his giant leap for mankind, that allows spacecraft to travel millions of miles through outer space and land on a precise spot, and that brings us closer to colonising other planets.

Fortunately, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to think like one.

In this accessible and practical book, Ozan Varol reveals nine simple strategies from rocket science that you can use to make your own giant leaps in work and life -- whether it's landing your dream job, accelerating your business, learning a new skill, or creating the next breakthrough product. Today, thinking like a rocket scientist is a necessity. We all encounter complex and unfamiliar problems in our lives. Those who can tackle these problems -- without clear guidelines and with the clock ticking -- enjoy an extraordinary advantage.

Think Like a Rocket Scientist will inspire you to take your own moonshot and enable you to achieve liftoff.

ISBN-10: 1541762592
ISBN-13: 9781541762596
Author: Ozan Varol
Publisher: PublicAffairs (April 14, 2020)

MAP THE FUTURE

As a stakeholder and strategic policymaker, you can contribute by voicing out your opinion to help us map out the desired collective future for Malaysia.

This is an invitation by **my**Foresight® to every member of the public. If you think we could have done better or perhaps you would like us to cover a specific topic in the study of Foresight or better yet, you would like to contribute an article, we would love to hear from you.

Send your feedback and get in touch with us at foresight@might.org.my

Website: www.myforesight.my

We look forward to hearing from you.

myForesight® team.