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The Heart of an Agile Government - Future Public Value

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Executive summary

Agile government is an evolving concept that focuses on delivering future public value. Yet, the theoretical concepts of how this value must be delivered in the face of complexities are not clear. This paper conceptually argues that the successful process of an agile transformation of a public sector depends on (1) the ability to determine future value (2) the ability to align perceptions of value among multiple stakeholders and (3) building a robust process based on trust. The paper highlights examples from the UAE, Japan, Singapore, Estonia, and the USA of the challenges and successes in creating an agile government. The broader steering role of a government that wants to catalyze this transformation must focus on leadership and values, the Institutional structure, and finally global citizenship.

Keywords: Agile Government, public value, governance, stewardship, steering, agile transformation

1.0 Agile Government

Dunleavy, Yared, and Bastow (2003) define agile government processes as those processes that focus on achieving speed with flexibility and responsiveness, and in that process, making government decision making competitive with best practice in the business sector. In recent years, the agile government is associated with agile governance. The World Economic Forum (WEF) put together the Global Future Council on Agile Governance in 2018. WEF (2018) defines agile governance as "as adaptive, human-centred, inclusive and sustainable policymaking, which acknowledges that policy development is no longer limited to governments but rather is an increasingly multi-stakeholder effort. It is the continual readiness to rapidly navigate change, proactively or reactively embrace change and learn from change, while contributing to actual or perceived end-user value." NASPAA highlighted this topic in its 2019 annual meeting.

The historical evolution of the agile government is one that is an outcome of the context we live in (see Exhibit 1). Despite the evolution of government processes, government breakdowns continue to happen. Light (2015) conducted research on 48 USA government breakdowns and concluded that in order of priority, the most significant causes for failure were:

1. policy (poor design, a high degree of implementation difficulty, and delegation to a damaged or vulnerable agency).
2. resources (underfunding shortages; understaffing, weak administrative systems)
3. organizational culture (misaligned missions, ethics, and misconduct, lack of effective implementation monitoring)
4. structure (organizational thickening, overdependence on contracting, duplication and overlap)
5. Leadership (weak leadership, poor decisions, vacancies and delays in filling essential positions)

Solutions proposed have been topics like trimming government size, re-invention of governments, agile movement, agile governance, or strategic agility. Often, the subject of agile government is confused with technology. For example, the WEF's focus on agile governance itself is rooted in the Fourth Industrial Revolutions (4IR), and the challenges governments face. Though technology and its adaptation in the public sector are fraught with challenges, it is an enabler and a result (Tassabehji, Hackney, and Popovic, 2016). While the topic of agile government is the early stage of development, there are still some grey areas. A great starting point is that the purpose of an agile government, for that matter, any government, which is to deliver public value.

Exhibit 1: Historical Evolution of Agile Government

AGILE GOVERNMENT
Growing accountability at home and out (growing since 2000) – Stewardship, Global Governance PPP and need for co-creation Growing influence of media interventions. Unpredictability of the "Future"erat volutpat.

2019 ONWARDS:

REINVENTION OF GOVERNMENTG
lobalization & technology push need for refocus Citizen demands to be involved. Transparency & Governance – "Institutionalization" New Public Management began in 1980s

1990 ONWARDS:

THE WELFARE STATE
Protectionism of public servantsPublic goods and welfare of the citizen from 'credit to grave' See Riggs' model of prismatic sala model (1962)

1945 ONWARDS

DEVELOPMENTAL AGENDAS
Development Aid – Rise of the Central Planning for economic growth (post Great Depression in 1930 Public Administration for a "good" society, New IGOs…proxy wars via "diplomacy" – example the Marshall PlanPublic Administration in 1960s

LATE 1930

THE DEMOCRATIC STATE
Government competes with market for talent,Concept of citizenship and governance (accountability, transparency, responsiveness and due process)Strengthens with Cold War and dissolution of USSR

EARLY 1900

THE BUREAUCRATIC STATE [POST IMPERIALISM]
Vision of public service, State as a model employer, Max Wehber conceptualized it in 1968Refocus service on public interest

LATE 18TH CENTURY ONWARDS

Source: Authors (adapted from Agryriades, 2007; Jain, 2007; Osborne and Gaebler 1993)

2.0 Public Value

Moore (1995) defines the government role for the creation of public value as the bundle of assets and capabilities entrusted to the public servants' stewardship to create positive value. Public value must demonstrate efficiency (optimal allocation and usage of resources), accountability (goal setting and oversight), and equity (developing individual capacity so that rights and responsibilities are realized) (Stoker, 2009). What is the required change in mindset we would expect in an agile government? Exhibit 2 depicts the changes in attitudes to public value that the agile government must embrace.

Exhibit 2: Attitude Towards Public Value

Factor	Previous Mindset	Agile Mindset
Institutional Diffusion	Downwards	Vertical and Horizonal, across all levels
Attitude	Maintenance of Institutional Perspectives - focus on individual ambition and narrow focus on problem	Renegotiate policy mandates - focus on public value and opportunity
Accountability	Narrowly defined job roles and responsibilities	Beyond job roles to create positive value
Role	Technician: Operational efficiency, effectiveness (linear improvements)	Strategist: Innovation & advocacy to changes roles or increases long-term value (Disruptive)
Stewardship	Policy Maker (limited to government)	Policy Facilitator (inclusive of other key stakeholders)
Owners & Beneficiary	Within domain and chain of command - customer/client	Multi-stakeholder, boundary-spanning - all constituents
Mission	Expression of goals	Delivering Public Value, Public purpose
Strategy	Survive and meet policy mandate	Strategic Triangle - (1) strategy to be substantively valuable (2)legitimate & politically sustainable (3) operationally & administratively feasible
Coordination	Centralized, individuals	Decentralized, team
Decision Making	Procedural justice	Transparent, ethical, framing
Uncertainty	Reduce risk	Exploit opportunity
Budget	Within allocated resources	Find innovative ways to enhance resources

Source: Adapted from Moore 1995, Moore, 2014; Bason & Broekaert (2019); Heyman (1987)

To create future public value, there are three challenges. First, governments need to create future value by predicting the needs of their diverse constituents and wants (Alford and Hughes, 2008). This ability requires a government with imagination or foresight. Second, public value is created on the consumption of the products and services at the collective level. Because of individual preference, the general public may not perceive the value of the services being provided. (Moore, 1995; Alford, 2002; Alford and Hughes, 2008). This ability requires a government that is skilled at communicating. Third, governments need to ensure the process of delivery of value is based on trust for constituents to continue to support the government initiatives and actions (Chanley, Rudolph, & Rahn, 2000). This ability requires a government to embrace transparency, fairness, and use integrity as a critical pillar in the delivery process. These two concepts - agile and governance seem at two conflicting ends of the spectrum.

3.0 Agile Government and Process of Value Delivery

We highlight the three solutions to the agile government process to deliver public value:

3.1. Determining Future Value

Governments invest in long-term developmental plans and strategies to create future value. While they often do work on a fire-fighting mode, a lot of work like education, infrastructure development, health policies, economic reforms are long-term, and the constituents may not have the patience for the time the policies need to take impact. Policy at this level must have the vision, the power of execution, and foresight to monitor unintended effects.

A current emphasis for governments and WEF has been 4IR. Many of the papers produced by WEF on agile government are focused on 4IR and learning from the private sector. Documents like the Agile Manifesto (used for technology adoption) are often cited. However, with technology, the key challenge is predicting when an innovation that is safe saving today can be used for the wrong reasons. This judgment is, of course, subjective. The debates and conflicts are plenty - facial recognition and voice recognition software in concierge assistants (Alexa, Siri, Google) and privacy, defense weaponization, and terrorism. Hechman (2019), a researcher, highlights the dilemma in the ethics of AI. Software and hardware developed are often not designed with malicious intent but can be easily modified to do great harm. What is the governments' role in the creation of future value in all of this? Light (2015) documents plausible causes for breakdowns (Exhibit 3)

While we politically agree that we need a human-centered and sustainable approach to policymaking, these principles are often lost in the politics of policymaking. Government leadership often is more concerned with political survival that a long-term solution. This focus is problematic as governments are still preferred employers in many countries. Hence a healthy organization is needed with a heart for public service.

In 2017, Japan unveiled its Society 5.0 strategy, a science and technology blueprint, to align societal challenges with digitalization. The intent is to blur the cyberspace and the physical space and focus on five key themes: (1) next-generation mobility/smart city, (2) smart public services, (3) next-generation infrastructure, (4) FinTech (financial technology)/cashless society, and (5) next-generation healthcare. To ensure success, a council of ministers, company CEOs, and academicians, called the Growth Strategy Council – Investing for the Future, was created that would create various Industry–Government Committees made up of business representatives and divisional directors from ministries to focus on each area. The recommendations would identify challenges concerning human resources, regulatory reform, open data, and cybersecurity. The intent is to problems that are uniquely Japanese, those of population and worker degrowth, an aging population, and a static economy (UNESCO, 2019).

Exhibit 3: Possible government breakdown causes

TABLE 2 Plausible Suspects in Breakdowns

POLICY	Design	Was the policy likely to address the issue at hand?
	Degree of Difficulty	Was the policy particularly difficult to deliver?
	Assignment	Was the policy assigned to a "high-risk" agency?
RESOURCES	Budget	Was the implementing agency given sufficient funding to deliver the policy?
	Human Capital	Was the implementing agency given sufficient staffing to deliver the policy?
	Support Systems	Did the implementing agency have the appropriate administrative systems to deliver the policy?
STRUCTURE	Hierarchy	Was there a clear chain of command for ensuring the clear direction and accountability to deliver the policy?
	Contracting	Were contracts adequately structured and outsourcing appropriately designed and monitored to deliver the policy?
	Overlap	Did duplication and overlap with other departments and agencies reduce effective delivery?
LEADERSHIP	Expertise	Did the senior leadership have the skills necessary to deliver the policy?
	Decision Making	Did the senior leadership make effective decisions before, during, and after the failure?
	Vacancies	Was the senior leadership in office in time to deliver the policy?
CULTURE	Alignment	Was the agency aligned in full support of the policy?
	Misconduct	Was the policy undermined by corruption or ethical misconduct?
	Monitoring	Was the policy appropriately monitored during implementation and ongoing delivery?

Source: Light (2015)

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology created a panel of representatives from industrial and academic circles that released an interim report in April 2019 (Sawa, 2019). One of the ideas is to change education and remove the barriers between subjects and disciplines and the concept of grade progressions to allow focus on skills. The PMO has envisioned this with several videos, TED talks, and reports to get buy-in and help its constituents "see" the human-centered tech-enabled future.

Determining future value requires imagination or vision. The government leadership needs to be able to dream the impossible and create a new future that inspires its constituents. This ability to foresee a plausible future requires the government to change the rules of the global competitiveness game. This strategy may be high risk, but having rewritten the game, the opportunity to win becomes higher. At a lower acceptable level, it may mimic or adapt what other countries or even other organizations (government and private sector) have done through global scanning. This path is perhaps the least risky method. At the reactive level, the government may be forced to change when faced with catastrophe and disaster. Having said this, this is not a bad thing; opportunities often present themselves during a crisis. The various strategies are depicted in Exhibit 4.

Exhibit 4: Government Imagination: Future Value

Scanning and Mimic/Adapt what is already
existing "Lets Do it Better"
Challenge: May not work for the given context

Crisis induced change –
use the opportunity to drive
momentum "Re-imagine a
Better Future" Challenge:
Requires stakeholder buy-in

New disruptive
Change the Rules of the Game
"Be the First"
Challenge: Failure is a
possibility and may become
about being first not really
public value

Source: Authors

For proactive imagination, in terms of government adaptability and innovation - the UAE is a great example. The tiny desert country of UAE has been working on transforming itself into a knowledge economy. In a country with 85% of the population as expatriates, this is no easy feat. What the government has done has created unique portfolios using the concept of less Ministries and More Ministers. They are the first country to have a Minister of State for Youth Affairs; at the time she took over her role in 2016, HE Shamma bint Suhail Faris Al Mazrui was only 22 years of age. They were the first country in 2017 to have a Minister of State for AI. This approach has allowed greater agility and responsiveness to decision making. They are also the first country to realize the importance of Tolerance and assign a Minister of State to that role.

The UAE is the only Arab country that has a federal system with independent local governments. This means that at the federal level, the concept of agile government is a process that requires a lot of coordination and negotiation between emirates to ensure that the country's progress is not hindered. That the higher public value at the federal level is adopted over the individual emirate level needs is not always easy to do if the different emirate resources are not shared at the federal level. By the constitution, the resources mined or extracted belong to each emirate. So, for example, the emirate with the highest oil reserves is Abu Dhabi. The most businesses are based in the emirate of Dubai, it is a global re-export center and is a tourist hub.

This method of governing in the UAE has allowed for live experiments across each of the emirates. The sharing of their successes and failures at the federal level allows modified

replication for the cumulative benefit of all. For example, Dubai was the first emirate to introduce free trade zones in 1985 and then freehold properties in 2002. Today in the UAE, there are 45 free trade zones, the largest number in one country. These together account for 20% of UAE's total exports (Belle, 2019).

The standard top-down approach most governments use cannot be applied easily in this context, as negotiation, coopetition, and tolerance are crucial to implementation. Taking another example, in terms of infrastructure, roads are the primary way to connect the seven emirates (and in some cases sea). A railway project was envisioned in 2009 by Federal Decree. The project was called Union Railway Company before 2011 and then became Etihad rail with capitalization AED 1 billion, ownership split 70% Abu Dhabi Government, and 30% UAE Federal Government. Stage 1 was operational by 2016 as a commercial project (it was to have been completed initially by 2012). Still, the more complicated project of connecting all the Emirates took till 2019 for all funding commitments, agreements signed with ports and industrial complexes, and Design and Build contracts awarded for the packages from Ghuweifat to Fujairah (Etihad Rail, 2019). Initially, it was thought that by 2018, at least the two largest emirates would be connected. Though the project had substantial economic benefits, resistance came in many forms, the mindset of public transportation was missing, and there was a reluctance of banks to fund the project that would take patient capital for payback. It was only in 2018 that The UAE Ministry of Finance and the Abu Dhabi Department of Finance signed an agreement for the financing of Stage Two of the Etihad Rail national rail network (Logistics ME, 2018). As this example highlights, it is not enough to imagine future public value; you need to proactively work towards making it happen, often behind the scenes.

For a crisis-induced change, consider the example of New York after the 9-11 2001 terrorist attack. Bloomberg, four months later, in 2002, took the challenge to rebuild the city using a 2012 Olympics bid deadline. The process of re-energizing and refocusing various stakeholders and re-imagination of spaces brought to front previous and new bolder plans resulting in redevelopment of five boroughs (like the waterfront, Hudson Yards), improved infrastructure (Subways and ferry lines), urban acupuncture (High Lane), and overall 140 separate boroughs re-zoning during the Bloomberg administration (40 percent of the city was rezoned) to create more available sites for housing. Bloomberg faced a US$8 billion deficit for the second fiscal year, and the law mandated the city to balance its budget. The method was to increase taxes - property tax by 18.5 percent and also raised the city's income taxes for high-earner.
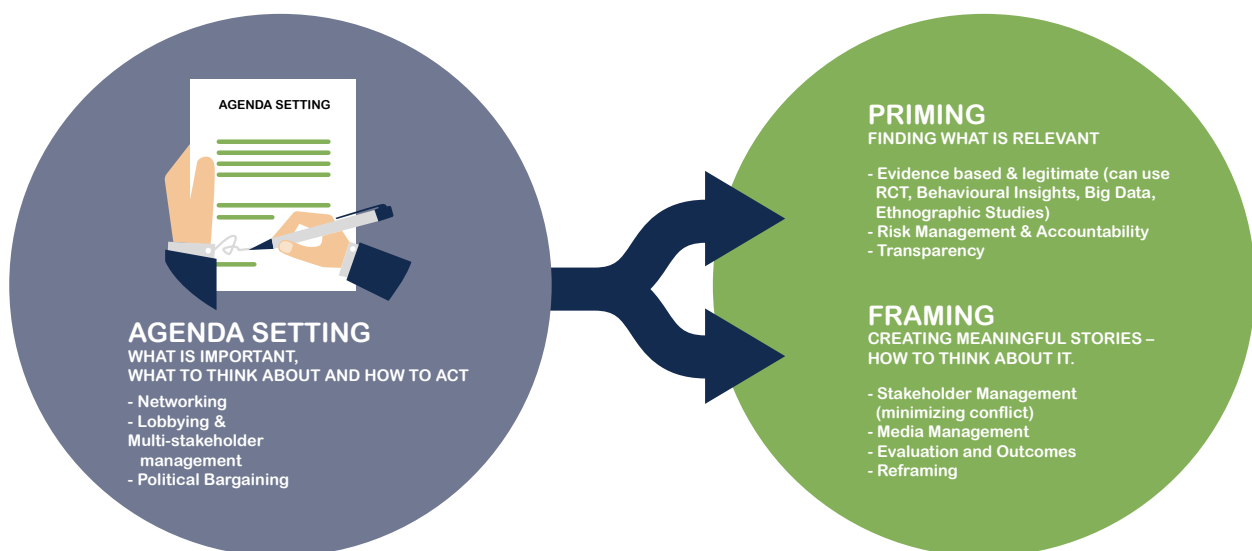
The net result - over the 12 years of the Bloomberg Administration, jobs were created (approximately half a million, with job growth twice the national average). Dan Doctoroff, former deputy mayor of economic development, says, "You create growth by having smart government policies to encourage the private sector to invest in ways that make sense for that city. When more people come, the marginal benefit of those people in terms of tax revenue is significant. You can reinvest that money back into improving the quality of life, which attracts more people. That is the virtuous cycle of growth, and

that's the timeless formula for generating the long-term success of the city" (Florida, 2017). The budget under Bloomberg's tenure grew from $42 billion in 2003 to $70 billion in 2014, with significant reinvestment in education, social services, affordable housing, transportation, and other services

3.2. Aligning Perceptions of Future Value

Unfortunately, unlike businesses, governments need to align value to a diverse range of constituents. This alignment makes the process of buy-in challenging. Take, for example, the recent Measles outbreaks in the USA in 2018 that happened due to a significant number of anti-vaxxers and contact with international travelers. Measles outbreaks were recorded across 30 of the 50 states though WHO declared Measles eliminated in 2000 in the USA. It led to a state of emergency in Washington and New York, highlighting the importance of communication and education. Finding the key influencers in diverse stakeholder groups and aligning them with the future value the government wants to provide is challenging, especially as newly introduced policies may not be popular and require buy-in to be effective. This process of alignment is not easy requiring campaigning or advocacy, negotiation and innovation to get buy-in at all levels from government, to the grassroots level. Communication strategies can be used to create alignment. For political communication, three strategies are used in combination - agenda setting, priming, and framing (Scheufele, 2000). These strategies are highlighted in Exhibit 5.

Exhibit 5: Process of Aligning Perception of Future Value

AGENDA SETTING

AGENDA SETTING
WHAT IS IMPORTANT,
WHAT TO THINK ABOUT AND HOW TO ACT
- Networking
- Lobbying &
Multi-stakeholder
   management
- Political Bargaining

PRIMING
FINDING WHAT IS RELEVANT
- Evidence based & legitimate (can use
  RCT, Behavioural Insights, Big Data,
  Ethnographic Studies)
- Risk Management & Accountability
- Transparency

FRAMING
CREATING MEANINGFUL STORIES –
HOW TO THINK ABOUT IT.
- Stakeholder Management
  (minimizing conflict)
- Media Management
- Evaluation and Outcomes
- Reframing

Source: Authors

Agenda setting focuses on what is important, what to think about, and how to act (Wolfe, Jones & Baumgartner, 2013). So Greta Thunberg was able to draw attention to the climate

agenda buy getting youth to strike. The role of the media also needs to be remembered. Greta says, "They talk about our age, our looks and so on. The emissions are still rising, and that is all that matters. Nothing has happened, that is crucial to remember" (Vaughan, 2019).

So what is different between a non-violence movement for freedom (India) or for ending apartheid (South Africa) and Greta's strikes? Is it just staying power? The most straightforward answer is that it needs to spread to all or at least a majority of constituents. Sadly, in climate change, the adults sat and continue to sit this movement out. Agenda setting is back-breaking work and involves political bargaining and negotiations. It needs multiple champions that may work behind the scene. India's nonviolent movement was not only an effort by the political parties but the masses - rich and poor, male and female, Hindu, Muslims, and other religions, educated and uneducated, urban and rural, poets, statesmen, military and royalty…it was across a majority of constituents.

While the case of India winning freedom is not about an agile government, the issue of climate change and the necessity of getting it on the global political radar highlight some of the challenges with agenda-setting. These are what are considered wicked problems. They are complex issues where the root problem is not apparent, nor are there easy solutions (Head, 2008). If we cut industrial emissions, the less developed countries are disadvantaged, if we cut consumption and trade, economies are impacted, and that may not be acceptable for citizens who enjoy the prospect of consumerism and may destabilize governments, creating more uncertainty. If we don't do anything, the world will reach a critical tipping point.

There are tradeoffs in agenda-setting. That is the price that needs to be negotiated until the tipping point of public emotional response becomes sufficient to generate enough of a momentum. Paradoxically, political bargaining often must happen in privacy without the media limelight, and in some cases, there is a simultaneous negotiation with media (Spörer-Wagner and Marcinkowski, 2010). Political bargaining is not just for resources, or credit, but also about who gets the blame as it is a game of outcomes (Groseclose and McCarty, 2001). Political bargaining requires an inclusive approach for multi-stakeholder engagement that involves networking, collaboration, and joint actions (Svendsen and Laberge, 2005). Primarily as agile governments work in the context of 'messes,' which are considered as highly complex, interacting systems of problems that can affect multiple parts of a social or ecological system (Ackoff, 1999). An agile government employee must be trained in these skills, especially for political bargaining, to be able to negotiate an agenda for change.

Priming is a process whereby the standards or weightages that people use to make (often political) evaluations are changed (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987, p. 63). It leads to an activation of memory associations and hence, associated response/evaluations. As an example, gun → safety → good; versus gun → violence →child deaths → bad). For an agile government, innovations need to be presented in a way that its risks are acceptable, and the claims have legitimacy.

In the short-term, to incentivize the population or even identify relevant trigger points, tools like behavioral insights or RCT trials could be used. But as was seen with Finland's experiment with Universal Basic Income, this requires time, huge investments, and political backing to predict value and tradeoffs. The focus on experimentation and innovation has led to a host of government policy labs, regulatory sandboxes, incubators, and RCT experiments. The problem is that these interventions are still at a small scale, confined to small government departments or initiatives, and not impacting the broader government employee context.

Rightly Christian Bason & Kris Broekaert (2019) warns. "You cannot "experiment" with people or put them in a "lab environment" without the appropriate narrative and framing. People don't want to be experimented with, but they do want to be involved meaningfully to inform policy decisions." Estonia had a bid transformation post its separation from the Soviet Union in 1991. It was a country with poor infrastructure, a diverse but small population, whose primary income came from agriculture. The embraced a digital transformation and reframed their tiny remote country into e-Estonia with many firsts - the first country to adopt online voting, the first e-government on blockchain, the first country to introduce e-residency, the European country with the most significant number of unicorns per capita. While many of these were firsts, and hence a steep learning curve, the Estonian government has kept transparency and data privacy as two key pillars of its government. The individual owns all his personal data, and the system is so transparent - you have a right to see who has accessed your data and can challenge that in the court. With their proactive government agenda for invisible services using AI, they are working on seamless coordination of services for life events. By 2017, 15% of the Estonian economy was derived from manufacturing; and 26% from the exports of machinery and mechanical appliances.

Framing focuses not on which topics or issues are selected for coverage by the news media, but instead on the particular ways those issues are presented or how to interpret conflict of various frames - individual or macro-level (Price and Tewksbury, 1997 p. 184; Gamson 1985; Wolfe, Jones & Baumgartner, 2013) - the how to think about it. In the above example of the gun, media can present a child's death as an issue about a disturbed child (so about the child) versus the fact that he had easy access to a gun (about gun controls).

Moonshots rose to prominence with Kennedy's 1961 May speech, a mere six weeks after USSR put Yuri Gargarin on an orbital flight around the earth. The speech set the frame. The President spoke of "extraordinary times" and highlighted that were facing an extraordinary challenge. He spoke about the fight for freedom "aggression is concealed". He asked for help of the Congress and the nation in several issues including that of space. He said, "Finally, if we are to win the battle that is now going on around the world between freedom and tyranny, the dramatic achievements in space which occurred in recent weeks should have made clear to us all, as did the Sputnik in 1957, the impact of this adventure on the minds of men everywhere, who are attempting to make a determination of which road they should take" (Kennedy, 1961). The frame of reference for USA's man

to the moon mission was the Cold War and an invisible race to show American ideology and progress.

Kennedy (1961) was clear that the objective was to "First, I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth. No single space project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more important for the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish." And more importantly he stressed, "But in a very real sense, it will not be one man going to the moon--if we make this judgment affirmatively, it will be an entire nation. For all of us must work to put him there."

NASA that was formed in 1958 and though it had the moon in its agenda, it needed resources to achieve a moon landing. This feat had already been calculated as possible in less than a decade. At that time, it had less than 8000 people and an annual budget of $100 million (NASA). This endeavor required an additional US$549 million supplemental budget for NASA and a win for the Air Force, which had one time tried to take over the space program (Levine, 1972). This Kennedy was able to negotiate with Congress, and he specified other wins, "scientific investigations, worldwide operational satellite communications, and weather prediction systems, and the concurrent development of liquid-fuel boosters (by NASA) and solid-fuel boosters (by the Air Force)" (Levine, 1972).

As NASA grew in visibility, it came under greater scrutiny by the U.S. General Accounting Office by the mid-1960s (NASA, 2012). As a quasi-governmental agency that also devoted significant proportion of its budget to basic research and defense, NASA found the tentacles of bureaucracy encroach and put pressures for cost reduction, increases processes and approvals as "experts" decided NASA would benefit from private sector thinking present in Skunk Works model from Lockheed's or TQM models from Japan. The successive years of "faster, better, cheaper" (FBC) led to increasing failures - Mars Polar Lander and Mars Climate Orbiter projects and Space Shuttle Challenger and Columbia disasters. The root cause was break-down in culture and communications failures. Dr. Johnson (2008), author of The United States Air Force and the Culture of Innovation, 1945–1965 and The Secret of Apollo: Systems Management in American and European Space Program, says "Although the statistics have not been studied fully, my sense, from experience in the field and discussions with other experienced engineers, is that 80 to 95 percent of failures are ultimately due to human error or miscommunication. Frequently, we find that the failure effects and the proximate causes are technical, but the root causes and contributing factors are social or psychological". Hence successful framing requires successful communication strategies.

Media plays a significant role, as highlighted by "fake news." These frames are often presented as stories. For agile governments, the ability to spread the stories of their "success" is key for getting future buy-in. The challenge always lies in the process - when the story is for the sake of the story and there in not sufficient research on the

innovations or interventions in the long-term, keeping in mind changes may take up to 15 years for impact. This is a complex issue as budgets are always limited, and to find extra money for showcasing results may be difficult. Further, there is a tendency only to showcase what works rather than the process and failures, which is an integral part of experimentation and hence an agile government. Recently, the use of social media (for example, Facebook and Twitter) has also shown how media can be used as a tool of diversion from core issues. Framing requires a strong narrative to get buy-in.

In some cases, governments may choose to go the non-media route but focus on internal communication through memos, internal training, and other interventions.   Another interesting example was the political organizing and social movement of the 2008 Obama campaign that used grassroots volunteers (Ganz, 2009). This political organizing may be possible for agile government movements too.

3.3 Process of Trust

Governments thrive on trust. Unfortunately, government survival also happens with fear and repression, but eventually, as history has taught us, it is met with downfall. Hence the process by which a government should govern needs to one where trust is maintained or enhanced through transparency, accountability, and best practices. The challenges facing agile governments are that rapid responses, experimentation, and innovation (and the associated risks of failures) may not seem like the best use of public funding. This difficulty is one the government will have to balance in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world.

Singapore faced a tough challenge when it was forced to leave Malaysia in 1962. The focus on meritocracy and integrity changed the course of their history. It was not easy to enforce. Meritocracy is defined as a system that values the principles of competition, open selection, careful evaluation of qualities, and of having a set of qualification standards and established recruitment process; rather than arbitrary appointment of individuals to civil service positions (UNDP, 2015: 6). In addition, in Singapore, the public sector is paid on par with the private sector for top talent. Senior leadership is paid a performance bonus based on the performance of the country. Perhaps this method has helped Singapore develop dynamic governance as Neo and Chen (2007: 27) explain - the ability for policymakers "to think ahead to perceive changes in the environment, think again to reflect on what they are currently doing, and think across to learn from others and continually incorporate the new perceptions, reflections and knowledge into their beliefs, rules, policies, and structures to enable them to adapt to environmental change." A succession plan is put in place, keeping in mind tenures are limited, to allow new talent to grow and the highest performance. Behind all of this were an ethos of meritocracy and good governance of the civil service, armed forces, government-linked companies, and education. The focus was to serve the Singaporean people. The Singapore Public Service employs close to 145,000 public officers across 16 Ministries, 50+ Statutory Boards, and 9 Organs of State. Over the years they have implemented many policies to

endure quick responsiveness for example, in 2004 - they introduced the concept of the "No Wrong Door," which was modified in 2012 to include the First Responder Protocol that ensured that the agency receiving the feedback coordinated the response so that the citizen had only one Public Service touchpoint.

Through these various methods - a culture of meritocracy, reinforced by integrity and excellence through observation, immersion, and collaboration with other stakeholders in the ecosystem, the Singapore government has been able to create public value and increased global competitiveness.

4.0 Recommended Catalysts for an Agile Government Transformation

The authors would like to stress that the delivery of public value is every government's job but the challenges as highlighted for an agile government is one of speed and the ability to contextualize to the urgency of the circumstances. A government's job has moved to a steering role rather than one of mere policymaking as the job of policymaking is no longer the sole purview of governments. The increasing need for citizen engagement and multi-stakeholder co-creation also make the job of governments more complex. While an agile government is a concept that must be embraced vertically and horizontally in and across organizations, we recommend three key areas of change: leadership & values, Institutional structure, and global citizenship.

4.1 Leadership & Values

The agile government cannot scale unless there is leadership support, and the values of the government are aligned to the concept behind the agile government - experimentation, innovation, partnership and co-creation in the pursuit of public value. The government ethos, culture, structure, and processes must be aligned to facilitate agility. It is not enough to articulate the values; every representative of the government must believe and act out these values. Agile leadership, especially in situations where the context is "we figure out what do, then, we do it" (OECD, 2017a), can be considered as "the art of getting things done amidst a complex and dynamic context. Stewardship is a core ability for agents of change when many minds are involved in conceiving a course of action, and many hands in accomplishing it." (Boyer, Cook & Steinberg 2013: 7). It also reflects "the extent to which an individual willingly subjugates his or her personal interests to act in protection of others' long-term welfare" (Hernandez, 2008: 174). Leadership in an agile government is about empowering teams (Stephens et al., 2019).

Institution Human Capacity: People are the backbone of any government operation. The skills required for an agile government need to be developed across levels and accordingly rewarded (Stephens et al., 2019; OECD, 2017b). The difference of skills required per level has policy implications for recruitment, training, and performance appraisals. Most importantly, the culture of government entities needs to change to a more collaborative mindset. Ng (1990) identified seven people problems in the Singapore civil service, especially when management support was lacking. These problems were avoidance, resistance, indifference, fear of inability to cope, fear of failure, fear of commitment, fear of loss of power and authority coupled with the fear of exposure and weakness. These are areas of focus for HR managers.

4.2 Institutional Structure

The processes and systems set up need to be about enabling the agile government. Often processes embedded to increase innovation lead to a detrimental competition where the purpose (create public value) gets lost in the job of winning. Where systems and structures are weak, there is a possibility of governance issues creeping in. At the lowest level, this may translate as policy incoherencies (poor implementation, poor communication), but at a more serious level this may lead to integrity challenges (Huberts, Pijl, and Steen, 1999: 449-451). This structure calls for interactive governance, which is defined as "the whole of interactions taken to solve societal problems and to create societal opportunities, including the formulation and application of principles guiding those interactions and care for institutions that enable or control them" (Kooiman, 2010). Entities must have transparency with each other and discuss issues to ensure the integrity of operations and services.

4.3 Global Citizenship

In today's world governments need to co-create with the citizen, and in the journey of creating public value, the individual is a partner. This job of co-creation is becoming more challenging with technology and the reach of social media. On one hand, governments can take the approach of China which has a social credit score to ensure good citizenship behaviors, or it can take the role of the EU where it is a value that a citizen is reared in where data privacy is key. The real big takeaway in both contexts is that a national viewpoint may not be enough to save the world if we don't address the SDGs as crises are not easily contained, and humanity needs to take precedence over national interests.

Conclusion

While this paper is a brief introduction into the role of an agile government in creating future value, it clearly highlights that the government must be able to contextualize the learnings across entities, governments and other initiatives to serve its own purpose to deliver the value most relevant for its people. Key in this process is leadership and the institutional structures developed to enable an agile government. There are challenges - the value people of one nation may prefer may not be the value wanted by another nation. This limits the ability to translate learnings across borders or even organizations. On top of this, there is a need for the concept of public value to be broader than just focusing on national borders but to extend that to the concept of global public value. We believe that the starting point is a strong focus on cascading objectives in terms of public value so priorities can be made.

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