

# Public Administrative Reform and Management Innovation for Developing Countries

by  
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## *Introduction*

All too frequently, conventional wisdom confuses the application of management fashion or fad, usually as promoted in the rich countries, with 'management innovation'. This is a conceptual error that can, and frequently does, lead to serious practical mistakes, particularly in developing countries. It is an error because innovation simply connotes novelty and change. The clear concomitant of this being that what may be regarded as old in one setting may be seen as new in another, and *vice versa*. The error can be especially serious for developing countries because the gap between what happens to be in vogue in, say, America or England or Japan, and management elsewhere, is at its widest when comparisons are made between management practice in these (rich) countries and the poor countries of the developing world. In many developing countries the underlying fundamentals of good organisation and service delivery, which are presupposed by management fashion or fad, do not work as they should, or may be missing altogether. Moreover, the combination of severe resource scarcity and (often) extreme poverty clearly means that when such mistakes are made the costs to developing countries can be considerable.

Much the same argument can be put in relation to 'public administrative reform'. The conventional interpretation of both management innovation and public administrative reform usually requires that they entail what at the time is considered to be 'international best practice' in countries like those already mentioned, irrespective of local circumstances. The emulation of 'international best practice' is seductive because it suggests that the chasms of government performance and service delivery that so often exist between rich countries and many poor countries can be bridged by the application of what appears to be a simple formula. It is seductive also because of the widespread tendency to assume that it is the management technique of the moment *alone* that explains the success of the services with which it happens to be associated. Such oversimplification is a bad mistake and a significant factor in the failure of much development assistance.

This paper departs from conventional wisdom by interpreting management innovation and public administrative reform in much more contextualised and relative terms. The rationality of this approach is illustrated with four recent examples of capacity building in developing countries that involve both ideas. It is argued that when civil service organisations perform well, such performance is dependent on, and must be supported by, fundamentals that run deep and wide throughout the system of governance. There is much more to such performance than meets the eye. Good performance cannot be bought cheaply or acquired easily. It cannot be tacked on here and there to a system that lacks the essential – basic - ingredients to support it. The converse also applies. That is to say, the causes of chronic poor performance in the public service are rarely confined to the locales in which such poor performance occurs, or to the presenting symptoms.

## ***Conceptual Relativism versus Ideological and Cultural Hegemony in Public Administrative Reform***

Management innovation and administrative reform both involve novelty – doing the same things differently, or doing new things, in relation to the management of the behaviour of people and organisations. To reiterate, they are both relative phenomena because what constitutes novelty or the well-known in one cultural and organisational setting may not do so in another. What is mundane or outmoded to some can clearly be revolutionary and appropriate to others. What works here may not work there.

This is quite different, of course, from the view that holds that if an innovation or reform works in Birmingham England or Birmingham Alabama, for that reason alone it should work pretty much anywhere else. In this view, the technique becomes a universal imperative purely by virtue of its supposedly superior, or more advanced, national or cultural origins. This can be a form of cultural hegemony.

It is different also from the view that holds that certain management techniques or political systems lead to better performance in all settings. For example, for some time it has been popular to promote decentralisation as a desirable end in itself, almost as a panacea, irrespective of circumstances. Again, such conventional views tend to be informed more by ideology than by pragmatic considerations connected with context in its broadest sense. This too is a form of hegemony – ideological hegemony, which is closely bound up with cultural hegemony.

This paper therefore has little to say about ideology or the latest management or reform preoccupations of the civil services in Australia or New Zealand, or in any other rich countries. This is not to say that knowing what developments in these fields are taking place in different countries around the world is not helpful, but simply that this should not be the starting point for civil service reform in developing countries, or anywhere else for that matter. If one is interested in public service improvement in developing countries, this is not where the emphasis should lie.

Rather, it is argued here that the emphasis should be placed on the peculiarities of public service problems and their settings, and that solutions should be tailored to these circumstances rather than force-fed into predetermined off-the-shelf solutions that attempt to reproduce in developing countries prevailing notions of so-called ‘best practice’ in the rich countries. This approach is not new, but its acceptance among consultants (who ought to know better) and among donors and recipients is still too often rhetorical and too seldom applied. However, as with the ideologically driven approaches here criticised, advocacy of the alternative – contingency - approach has tended to be light on practical examples and heavy on theoretical argument. Here, this imbalance between theory and practice is corrected.

The paper concludes by drawing out from the examples given some of the influences of governance and cultural settings on public service performance, and the constraints that they impose on management innovation as a means to civil service reform.

## ***Consumer Protection in Lebanon***

The first example of the approach in action is taken from Lebanon.<sup>2</sup> In this case, the government was eager to reform a consumer protection function that was based on legislation that was out of step with national and international market developments,

and government intentions. As it was, the aim of consumer protection in Lebanon was primarily to control prices and profits, and to prevent fraud concerning food and other consumer goods. To the extent allowed by a rapidly dwindling, and aging, workforce, and a lack of other critical resources (such as transport and testing facilities), the consumer protection approach adopted by government was random ('saturation')<sup>3</sup> inspections of the market, combined with a small number of targeted inspections of goods at customs entry points.

The net positive effect of this activity on consumer protection over and above the very limited protection already afforded by a distorted market was negligible. In some cases, government consumer protection activity actually ran counter to consumer interests – for example, government consumer protection inspectors were routinely called upon to enforce legislation that protected the interests of 'exclusive agents'.

The ineffectiveness of pre-reform consumer protection activity had relatively little to do with the quality of operational staff, nearly all of whom were educated and experienced. Neither was performance affected significantly by questions of management style or organisational structure. The poor performance of the consumer protection function was largely a consequence of the market setting in Lebanon, which was insufficiently competitive, thereby restricting consumer choice, coupled with prevailing views of what constituted consumer protection, and therefore the roles performed by government in relation to it. Deeper-seated problems were associated with the legal and judicial systems, and the character of the civil service in general.

In summary, the ineffectiveness of consumer protection had largely to do with the fact that the wrong things were being done, rather than *how* existing activities were being carried out, or by whom, together with factors that were peculiar to the general nature of the market in Lebanon and to the character of core governing institutions.

The solution to this problem had two dimensions. The first was to encourage greater competition in the market, and thereby a greater degree of self-regulation. The second was to redesign the role of the consumer protection function – primarily towards one of consumer and supplier education and carefully targeted inspections, and away from saturation market inspections and control. The rationale for the latter being that consumers' needs to be well informed in order to protect their own interests are greater where governing institutions are weak or unreliable. In particular, competition and information enhance the consumer's options for 'exit' (choice) and 'voice' (making grievances and breaches known).

This logic formed the basis of the redesigned consumer protection role and functions suggested to government. Note that while much of the above may seem to have all of the hallmarks of the conventional wisdom of the market approach to consumer protection, the application of this approach, and expectations concerning its performance, were tailored very much to market and governance circumstances in Lebanon. It was not an off-the-shelf solution.

The consumer educational role proposed for government, which would appear mundane in the rich countries, was highly innovative in the circumstances. It was based on an assumption whose application was revolutionary in Lebanon, namely, that self-interest made it probable that the well-informed consumer would do a better consumer protection job than a government inspector. That is, that a market that relied much more

on self-regulation might be possible in Lebanon, and preferable to one characterised by centralised government control.

Activities recommended for the public education function included the preparation and distribution of concise and straightforward statements that addressed, or provided information on, the following:

- ❑ Government's consumer protection role, functions, aims and strategies - what it did and did not do.
- ❑ The rights and obligations of consumers and suppliers under the law.
- ❑ The roles of other government and non-government agencies involved in consumer protection.
- ❑ The workings of the national and international market, and the WTO, and implications for consumers and suppliers.
- ❑ Buyer guides - how to buy goods and services of particular significance to consumers in Lebanon such as: motor vehicles and transport, housing, health care, utilities, insurance, banking and credit, credit card protection, clothing and textiles, cell telephones, groceries, medicines, gold and silver, electronic commerce and safety online, and so on. These would be designed to help the consumer to obtain the best value for money, and to protect them against fraud.
- ❑ Common frauds and swindles – what to watch out for.
- ❑ The nature of misleading advertising and labelling, and what the law requires of suppliers.
- ❑ New taxes or legislation affecting consumers and suppliers – for example, VAT, and legislation concerning competition and 'exclusive agencies'.
- ❑ What to do in the event of a dispute with a supplier.
- ❑ How to register a complaint.
- ❑ Means of dispute settlement.
- ❑ The development of consumer protection curricula for the education system.

There is nothing faddish about any of the above. These activities are the meat and drink of consumer protection in the rich countries – no management gimmicks or fashion statements here, just practical down-to-earth advice about known techniques that made sense and were feasible in the circumstances. Yet in the market and governance circumstances of Lebanon at the time, these seemingly straightforward suggestions were innovative, indeed revolutionary. They are now in the process of being implemented. To the extent permitted by limitations of time and budget, the recommendations were also clearly integrated with broader questions concerning the market and governance in general in Lebanon.

### ***Policing in India***

The second example involves an attempt at capacity building in the Indian police force.<sup>4</sup> A team comprising an international consultant, a serving senior Indian police officer and the retired former head of one of India's national police agencies, was asked to redesign a project whose original aim – as stated in the terms of reference for the project design consultancy - was:

‘To assist the government in capacity building for an effective and efficient law enforcement system through new management initiatives and processes sensitised to be community responsive and community friendly particularly in the context of economic liberalisation’.

Note that the aim of the project predisposes it in a particular direction, or presumes a solution – one that involves so-called ‘management initiatives and processes’, management innovation if you like. It is not phrased in a way that encourages a search for what might be the most important and pressing capacity development needs. The original project design responded to this directive and was therefore in the conventional mould. It recommended the introduction of textbook-like off-the-shelf changes to management styles, performance assessment, organisational structures, personnel procedures, information systems, and so on – similar no doubt to what was then happening, or thought to be happening, in Birmingham England or Birmingham Alabama. The trouble of course was that these suggestions seemed utterly divorced from the most important and pressing demands of the context in which they were to be applied, a fact which, to their immense credit, was recognised by the Indian government who requested that the project be redesigned.

In revising the design of the project, a number of basic questions were asked. What views did the public hold about police performance? Where, in the public’s view, did the most serious problems - and therefore capacity building needs - lie? Were there more fundamental issues of policing than those associated with management that would prevent management changes from making any difference to performance? That is, were there pre-conditions? For example, what were the living and working conditions of policemen and women? What were they paid? How were they equipped? What were the attitudes of the community towards the police and the police towards the community, and so on? To answer these questions, the team visited many different police stations in different parts of India, spoke to all ranks, and held open meetings (*darbars*) with community representatives.

The findings, among other things, were that:

- ❑ Policemen and women were very poorly paid and poorly housed, which had an understandably detrimental effect on morale and commitment, particularly among the lower ranks.
- ❑ In many police lines there was inadequate sanitation and no potable drinking water.
- ❑ Station infrastructure tended to be inadequate and badly run-down.
- ❑ There were severe shortages of equipment and many basic supplies.
- ❑ Transport was of generally low quality, poorly maintained, and of insufficient capacity.
- ❑ At the state level, there were problems of political interference and political will.
- ❑ The force was extremely authoritarian – indeed militaristic – in superior-subordinate interactions within the force, and in police interactions with the public. This partly explained public fear and mistrust of the force. One police officer noted that fear of the police was a good thing and was necessary for the maintenance of law and order.
- ❑ There was understandable resentment in the police force of such public perceptions, but (strangely perhaps) there was also an admission that such perceptions were warranted. One officer said he would not want to go to a police station as an ordinary member of the public (as distinct from an important official) for fear of the bad treatment he would be sure to receive there.
- ❑ Police lock-ups and the conditions in which prisoners were kept were Dickensian.

- ❑ Systemic corruption was an acknowledged feature of the system, which was seen by the team as a symptom of the conditions faced by policemen and women and of broader governance issues.
- ❑ The quality of human resources at all levels was very high, reflecting the high selection ratios that obtained for entry to all levels of the police force. However, this high quality was not carried through to performance for the reasons mentioned above.

In relation to all of this, the team took the view that it is to be expected that policemen and women who are paid less than a living wage, who live in unsanitary conditions, who are not provided with sufficient resources to acquire and maintain the basic tools of their trade, and who in other ways are exploited or mistreated by the system will treat others in the same ways, and resort to whatever means they have at their disposal to provide the basic necessities of life. Eventually this becomes habitual and systemic. The team felt that the root causes of this, and the other problems and symptoms mentioned, did not lie in poorly designed internal organisational structures, inadequate training, or in a lack of information systems or well-developed personnel procedures. The team made clear that ‘these clichés of organisational reform, which in other settings frequently do constitute the core issues, were neither urgent nor very important in the circumstances surrounding the operation of the Indian police’.

Instead, the team recommended three lines of assistance - to be directed initially at some of the poorest states (Assam, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu) and therefore at those that had the most pronounced needs. The first line of assistance supported a survey designed to establish the minimal conditions necessary to sustain – particularly for lower ranks - a healthy living environment and a healthy and effective working environment, along with a gap analysis between what were considered to constitute such minimal conditions and actual conditions in the selected pilot police stations. The team of course recognised that such minimal conditions would need to be set in relation to norms that prevailed in India, and not those that applied in, say, England or America. If resources allowed, the intention was then to establish some demonstration police stations for the implementation of recommendations arising from the gap analyses. Related to the above was the collection of baseline data on general health and the incidence and aetiology of different types of diseases among the lower ranks of the police force. These data would clearly allow progress to be measured.

The second line of assistance involved the provision of basic equipment, transport and infrastructure to selected pilot police stations in the three states. Again, this was to be based on an assessment of the existing situation, that is, an assessment of minimal requirements for basic levels of operational effectiveness and efficiency, and differences between what the stations had in these respects and what they needed.

The team recognised that addressing these first two elements alone would not solve the systemic problems mentioned earlier. But the team believed that attaining and sustaining minimal standards in these areas might help to establish basic levels of human dignity and self-respect in the front-line of the force, and that this in turn might help to erode the bases of systemic corruption, and aggression towards the public.

It followed from this that the third line of assistance should address the nature of day-to-day interactions between the force and the community. Once again, the team recommended an assessment of existing practice, gap analyses, programmes of retraining

and reward, community feedback, and the establishment of demonstration projects in the pilot police stations.

The team's strategy was to design a project that all of those affected – policemen and women of all ranks, members of the community at all levels, government officials, and project sponsors – recognised as having its feet firmly planted in the reality of their everyday lives and one from which they all stood to benefit. The team recognised from the outset that for the project to work there had to be something in it for everyone.

Throughout the four-year life of the project, this philosophy lived on and was reflected in many unusual and noteworthy ways. An important, and unexpected, catalyst for the diffusion of project achievements was a programme of retraining for serving police personnel in the selected pilot police stations, conducted by the Rajasthan Police Academy. It was part of the team's strategy for improving community relations and entailed the policemen and women involved presenting themselves at local police stations (where they were not known because they were from pilot police stations in other states) as if they were members of the public – reporting a crime, seeking other forms of assistance, or (courageously) making a complaint about police behaviour. Their experiences provided them with stark and memorable corroboration of public perceptions of police behaviour. All were treated rudely or in an off-hand manner, made to wait for long periods, or simply told to go away. A few were detained, one over night, and others were 'pushed and shoved'. This type of training had never been done before. The news of these incidents spread very quickly throughout the Indian police force.

Another noteworthy feature of the project was the way in which community police interactions in the pilot sites were transformed from mutual hostility and suspicion towards mutual cooperation and support. In some cases, communities contributed materially to the improvement of police station infrastructure and to accommodation for police personnel. In all cases, community attitudes and behaviour towards the local police improved during the course of the project.

Partly for these reasons the project became mildly famous in India. Fame built on stories concerning the project's more novel aspects – such as the one just recounted - that appeared in the national media, and fame based on informal reports transmitted over the government grape vine.

This happened to such an extent that the Union Home Secretary issued an order to all states in the country to convert 10% of their police stations to the form and philosophy of the project's pilot police stations – and importantly to fund the equipment and infrastructure improvements. Like some other features of this project (such as the establishment of community liaison groups and the provision of crime prevention and safety advice to the public), this diffusion of the project's principal components to other parts of the country took place in advance of any formal attempts to do this by the project *per se*. Indeed, the pace at which the outcomes of the project were voluntarily embraced by other states, and the alacrity with which this was done, became a project risk - because the sheer speed of diffusion threatened to jeopardise the integrity of the project's principal features.

One of the most significant features of this project was the fact that it was a genuinely Indian endeavour. That is to say, apart from a relatively small number of strategic inputs by the international consultant at the beginning of the project, and at critical points

thereafter, the project was managed and driven entirely by members of the Indian police force. There was a strong sense of national ownership, which increased greatly the likelihood that what was learned and implemented from the project would be sustained. The success of the project and the publicity it received generated considerable pride among those involved and, as with many good things, this created a bandwagon effect.

As with so many other projects, however, maintaining the momentum of the project and sustaining its gains more than anything else will depend on how openly and authentically the basic issues of performance in the Indian Police Force continue to be treated. That is, the project managers must not allow themselves to be seduced back into believing the conventional rhetoric concerning the likelihood that significant change will result from training alone or any other management technique – in an environment in which so much police behaviour is determined by such factors as inadequate pay and a tradition of ‘user pays’ and by the constraints of the wider political and governance settings. Unless these issues continue to be addressed openly there is the risk of simply creating another elaborate facade. One within which people will continue to do whatever they think it is that the project sponsors want so long as the benefits derived from the project add to significantly, or outweigh, the benefits that might otherwise be received from behaving in more traditional ways.

Nevertheless, this project illustrates that in many development contexts successful innovation and reform entails ‘back to basics’ rather than the *avant-garde*. The project’s success had much to do with its down-to-earth utilitarian recognition of the realities of policing in India, both from the perspective of policemen and women and members of the public. It had very little, or nothing, to do with what was in vogue in Britain or America. Of course, project recipients and other interested parties recognise immediately the difference between a project that has got to grips with what the problems really are and is genuinely trying to make a difference and one that completely misses the point, or is simply off-the-shelf, or going through the motions, or just fashion conscious. They tend to respond accordingly.

### ***Capacity Building in East Timor***

The third example comes from the newly independent state of East Timor.<sup>5</sup>

East Timor is a small, post-crisis country with a population of about 800,000 and a land area of 14,874 square kilometres. It has profound needs across the full spectrum of development, as conveyed by:

- ❑ Levels of human development (income, health, and education) that place East Timor among the 10 poorest countries on earth.
- ❑ Physical infrastructure that is still in a serious state of disrepair, much of it totally destroyed.
- ❑ A primarily subsistence, agricultural economy that will remain heavily dependent on external assistance until about 2005-6.
- ❑ A civil service in which most staff lack the technical expertise and experience to perform their jobs satisfactorily.
- ❑ A new form of (democratic) governance that has no historical or cultural roots in East Timor, and whose institutions are in the process of being developed and are fragile.



In such contexts, civil service reform and management innovation should clearly consist of the fundamentals, not the leading edge. These fundamentals are very often the taken-for-granted elements of more established systems. The experience of the UN Administration of East Timor and, in all likelihood, UN administrations of other post-crisis countries, confirms the vital importance at all times of attending to the transfer of the most basic administrative skills from foreign administrators to their indigenous counterparts, thereby reducing the risk of post-handover government failure. This experience shows that the strategy of UN administrations may need to give much more emphasis to this aspect of their work. Such a strategy will require that the people employed to staff such administrations should be able and willing to convey very basic skills and knowledge to their local counterparts before they depart – and that this requirement should be written-in to their terms of reference.

Likewise, in these settings, foreign consultants must be prepared to rediscover and apply the fundamentals of their trade, the very elements that frequently do not sell well in the consultants' home countries because they are old news. Consultants who are simply accustomed to purveying the latest management fashion are more like salesmen than problem solvers - accustomed to operating in settings in which most things do work reasonably well and where, frequently, all that is asked for is some fine-tuning, or some soothing words, or some placatory gimmickry. They are therefore not always able to make the judgements and adjustments demanded by settings in which many things do not work well, and 'nuts and bolts' solutions are required.

### ***Governance Constraints on Public Administrative Reform in South Asia***

As suggested at the beginning of this paper, public service performance and management improvement are hostage to overriding forces associated with the character of governance and the nature of society in general. A project involving decentralisation in South Asia – which is the fourth and final example - provides empirical confirmation of the validity of this observation, and shows how government's rhetorical interest in civil service reform is sometimes contradicted by its actions.<sup>6</sup>

The governance background to this project on decentralisation in the country concerned included the expansion to 44 central ministries of a government considered by many already to have more than it really needed in its existing 31 ministries. These developments did not materially affect the conclusions of the project concerning the condition of decentralisation, or the recommendations made for the role of the responsible ministry - except that bigger government at the centre had clear ramifications for the use of scarce resources and, to this extent, limited the development options for the ministry responsible for decentralisation and for decentralised governance in general. More pointedly, in so far as the reality of decentralisation was concerned, bigger government at the centre constituted strong corroboration of the centralist preferences of the State and of the dominant ethnic group. This was at odds with government rhetoric. But most of all, bigger government at the centre was confirmation of an ethos of political expediency and political reciprocity.

Under these circumstances, the absence of any clear or persuasive development logic underlying the creation of the new ministries at the centre was to be expected. Neither efficiency nor effectiveness nor decentralisation nor equitable human development was

likely to be well served by this expansion of central government. Indeed, it was probable that an already complex and unwieldy system of governance would be made more so. Expedient short-term political gains were likely to be made at the expense of improved systems of governance that might yield benefits for people at large.

Therein lay the central dilemma of the project, and others like it. In such circumstances, capacity or institution building recommendations based on a development logic that seeks to establish 'good' governance (effective, efficient, transparent, equitable, accountable, and so on) in the interests of sustainable human development must compete unequally with a governance logic founded on political expediency. The result is always likely to be a victory of form over substance.

The realisation of the recommendations made by the project for the strengthening of the decentralisation ministry was put at jeopardy for precisely these reasons. Unless there was improved understanding and greater support for the substance of decentralisation throughout government, but particularly at its apex, the recommendations were likely to fall victim to the unequal competition between contrasting logics referred to above. Indeed, the substance of the recommendations was made more precarious by the fact that central to them was the suggestion that part of the role of the responsible ministry should be to articulate the deficiencies and contradictions that characterised the existing system of decentralised governance in the country, and to analyse the causes.

As suggested above, the *sine qua non* to making decentralisation (or any other civil service reform) work is political will – in the case of decentralisation, political will for the genuine devolution of power, done judiciously. Genuine devolution begins at the centre but must find equally willing expression at all levels if it is to cascade down to local government. This requires political judgements to be made by the centre about where political impediments can arise, or about the existence of sufficient political will, both among central and regional government agencies and at different levels. It presupposes that government is genuinely interested in the redistribution of power.

As the 1999 South Asian Human Development Report observes, political democracy does not necessarily solve problems of political will:

“Democracy in South Asia is not about people, it is about access to state power. Entrance to the political arena is driven by a desire for personal gain, not by a genuine commitment to serving the people. State resources are the most valued prizes for both politicians and their constituencies. A client-patron relationship has evolved out of this impulse, between the holders of state power and those seeking public services. Ultimate authority over resources lies in the hands of individuals not formal institutions bound to follow set procedures. Where power is highly personalised and weakly institutionalised, the political process is replaced by arbitrary and informal transactions”.<sup>7</sup>

It is difficult to say why these sorts of grossly inequitable conditions have persisted for so long in South Asia, and in other places. But cultural norms and values must play a part.

### ***Cultural Issues***

There is little point in repeating here what this author and others have said in many places before, except to confirm that culture does matter. Attitudes and values concerning authority, uncertainty, the roles of the sexes, and the relative importance of

the individual and the group differ widely between societies. And these attitudes and values are crucial to the ways in which people prefer to interact with one another, how they organise formally, how they manage, and how they like to be managed, what they will tolerate, or put up with, and for how long. It should therefore come as no surprise that management innovations, all of which carry assumptions about some or all of these things, may or may not work in different places – even within societies.

Of course, this is old news in the management literature. Yet its implications continue to be routinely ignored in civil service reform and development practice. It is argued here and elsewhere<sup>8</sup> that this arises from the fact that too much civil service reform and management innovation is driven by usually western-inspired ideology and/or cultural hegemony, and not enough by the practicalities of the situation - practicalities that should include questions of culture.

### ***Implications for Public Administrative Reform and Development Assistance***

In conclusion:

- ❑ There are few quick fixes or ready-made solutions to complex development problems.
- ❑ Innovation and reform should not be confused with fashion or fad.
- ❑ Reform should not be driven by notions of ideological or cultural supremacy but by the practical nature of problems and circumstance.
- ❑ Chronic, localised poor performance in the civil service is frequently symptomatic of deeper and wider problems in the governance system as a whole.
- ❑ Questions of political will and societal culture set the ground rules, and limits, for civil service reform and management innovation.
- ❑ Development strategy and tactics are therefore crucial in project design. That is to say, in their design projects must be self-conscious and realistic about questions of political will, customary practice, and the utilitarian demands of the settings in which they are to operate. What realistically can be expected, in terms of demonstration effects up-stream, of a down-stream project? How can policy makers best be motivated to pay attention and to make changes in the interests of sustainable development? Is it safe to assume that the governance system will respond solely, or even partly, to the performance merits of recommendations? What are the implications of the answer to this question?
- ❑ Civil service reform and management innovation should be as basic or as advanced as development problems and circumstances demand.
- ❑ First and foremost, development consultants need to be good at helping others to analyse difficult and complicated problems and finding solutions that make sense locally. Management fashion and international best practice count for nothing unless this condition is met.
- ❑ Sponsors and recipients of development assistance should be more critical and demanding of projects in the above respects, particularly at the design phase.

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<sup>2</sup>Blunt, P. (April 2002b). *Organisational Redesign of the Consumer Protection Function of the Ministry of Economy and Trade, Government of Lebanon*. Beirut: UNDP, pp. 43.

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<sup>3</sup> That is, large numbers of inspections (thousands per month) that are not targeted. Most investigations carried out by modern consumer protection agencies in relatively open markets are targeted by consumer complaints, enquiries, or concerns.

<sup>4</sup> Blunt, P. (June, 2000b). *Improving the Organisation and Management of the Law Enforcement System in India: Project Extension Concept Proposal*. Macksville, NSW: UNDP, pp. 8; Blunt, P. (May, 2000a). *Improving the Organisation and Management of the Law Enforcement System in India: Monitoring Report*. New Delhi: UNDP, pp. 7; Blunt, P. (March, 1999). *Improving the Organisation and Management of the Law Enforcement System in India: Monitoring Report*. New Delhi: UNDP, pp. 11; & Blunt, P. (June/July, 1997b). *Improving the Organisation and Management of the Law Enforcement System in India: Proposals for Project Re-Design*. New Delhi: UNDP, pp. 14.

<sup>5</sup> See Blunt, P. (January 2002a). *Post Independence Human Resource Needs of the Government of East Timor – Progress Report 3*. Dili: UNDP, pp. 6; & Blunt, P. (November 2001). *Priority Human Resource Needs for the East Timorese Government at Independence* (2 Volumes - Volume 2, Appendices, with others). Dili: UNDP, pp. 35 & pp. 150.

<sup>6</sup> See Blunt, P. (with others)(December, 2000c). *Institutional Strengthening of the Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government: Draft Final Report*. Colombo: Asian Development Bank, pp.137.

<sup>7</sup> UNDP (1999). *The South Asia Human Development Report*. New York: UNDP.

<sup>8</sup> See Blunt, P. (with M. Jones) (1997a). Exploring the Limits of Western Leadership Theory in East Asia and Africa. *Personnel Review*, 26(1/2), pp. 6-23; & Blunt, P. (1995). Cultural Relativism, 'Good' Governance and Sustainable Human Development. *Public Administration and Development*, 15(1), pp. 1-9.