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## External Force and Public Sector Reforms



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### Synonyms

Diagnostic strategy; Public sector reforms; Solomon Islands

### Definitions

**External forces** These are the external agents behind the public sector reforms.

**Public sector reforms** These refer to the changes in the public sector structures and services to improve public service delivery.

### Introduction

Public sector reforms are not a new phenomenon in the developed and developing countries.

The reform trajectories, particularly in small island developing countries, have been significantly influenced by the New Public Management (NPM) model (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff 2015). The public sector reforms in the developed and transition economies are driven mainly by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and likewise, public sector reforms in the developing countries are mainly driven by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff 2015). The wave of reforms initiated by the NPM model focuses on the neoliberal ideologies of aligning the public sector with the operations of the private sector (Van de Walle and Hammerschmid 2011). The intricacies of the management debate on the success and failure of public sector reforms have been closely scrutinized by academics, practitioners, and policy makers (Van de Walle and Hammerschmid 2011).

Moreover, there is a rich body of literature that tries to explore the effectiveness of reforms in both the developed and developing countries. The plight of the main drivers of public sector reforms, types of public sector reforms, and the positive and negative impacts of these reforms has been ignored by academics and policy makers in the Pacific Island countries. With the failure of reform efforts in many small island developing countries and the development of patronage state, it is crucial that light needs to be shed on the reasons of the failure of reforms in the small island developing countries (Rahman et al. 2013).

This research problem follows from the problem analysis mentioned above. It is imperative for the academic community to have knowledge and understanding on the reasons for failure of reforms in the small island developing countries. The main goal of this entry is to examine two key research questions. These two research questions are as follows: (1) “What are the major reforms in the public service of the Solomon Islands in the last 10 years?” (2) “Has the RAMSI machinery influential in the reforms that took place over the last 10 years?”

This entry is divided as follows. Section “[Overview of the Public Sector Reforms in the Solomon Islands](#)” presents the overview of the public sector reforms in the Solomon Islands. Section “[Theoretical Perspectives Related to the Literature on Public Sector Reforms](#)” reviews the existing literature. Section “[Literature Review on Public Sector Reforms](#)” presents the research methodology used to collect data for this entry. Section “[Research Findings and Discussions](#)” presents the research findings and discussions. Section “[Theoretical Contributions of This Entry](#)” presents the theoretical contributions of this entry. Section “[Policy Implications of This Entry](#)” presents the policy implications, and section “[Conclusion](#)” presents the conclusion and limitations for future research.

## Overview of the Public Sector Reforms in the Solomon Islands

The public sector reforms in the Solomon Islands can be traced back to the ethnic tensions of the early 2000s, when immediate help was needed by the Solomon Islands government to restore peace and harmony in the nation (AusAID 2013). The government of the Solomon Islands has followed the developed and developing countries while implementing public sector reforms in order to create an economically conducive private sector business environment that will increase foreign direct investment and foster economic growth (AusAID 2013).

*History of the Solomon Islands:* The Solomon Islands history is related to colonization and

independence. During January 1942, Japanese forces had occupied the country and used Solomon Islands as a battlefield during World War II. Most of the fighting related to World War II occurred in the Solomon Islands for 3 years (LiPuma and Meltzoff 1990; Dureau 1998). With the establishment of the network of local councils of the British colonial administration, stability was reinstated in the colonial government’s public service delivery. The political evolution of the Solomon Islands can be divided into two categories. The first period was from 1893 to 1960 which was the “stagnation period.” During this period, the Solomon Islanders did not participate in the governance system. The second period was from 1960s onward, and during this period the Solomon Islanders could participate in the decision-making process (Nanau 2016). The traditional model of public administration was implemented by the British colonial administration during the 1960s via the legislative and executive councils. The official local councils during this period incentivized the locals to contribute and participate in the activities of the central government. The traditional model of public administration was further changed when the elections took place in the Solomon Islands in the year 1967 and immediately after which the constitution of the Solomon Islands was formed (Anckar 2002). With the implementation of the new constitution, new training opportunities were available for the public administrators and officials who were involved in the management of the public service in the Solomon Islands. In the 1970s, a new constitution was implemented that empowered chiefs with the ministerial and cabinet responsibilities (Fry 2000).

Furthermore, the British colonization period in the Solomon Islands ended on 7 July 1970. The civil strife started in the Solomon Islands from early 1999 to July 2003 (Liloqula 2000; Bennett 2002). In order to end the ethnic tension, the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) started providing international peace-keeping forces to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI 2016). Australia provided the largest number of security officers, and this was complemented by New Zealand, Fiji, and Papua New Guinea.

These security officers were responsible for restoring security in the country (RAMSI 2016). There were small reforms implemented in the Solomon Islands by the British administration, but major reforms came when the RAMSI reform machinery was implemented in the public service (RAMSI 2016). The RAMSI reform program was aimed at improving the productivity, efficiency, accountability, and transparency of the public service delivery by providing myriad support to the government agencies in the Solomon Islands (RAMSI 2016). Later, this program was refocused on improving the accountability and transparency of the public service delivery, developing e-government, and enhancing women's participation in the government's decision-making process (RAMSI 2016).

### **Theoretical Perspectives Related to the Literature on Public Sector Reforms**

The New Public Management (NPM) model dominated the discourse of academic literature since the publication of the article titled "A Public Management for All Seasons?" by Christopher Hood in the year 1991, the concept of NPM is based on seven important doctrines. The first doctrine of NPM emphasizes on "hands on professional management" principle of public service delivery. This principle states that discretionary control is needed from top management so that public service officers feel a sense of responsibility while making decisions that have a direct impact on the public service delivery. Second is setting clear standards and definition of performance measures in the public sector so that the accountability and efficiency of public service delivery can be improved and each dollar of tax paid by citizens is effectively utilized in the provision of public goods and services. The third doctrine of NPM model is termed as the anti-Weberian philosophy, which states that public managers have to focus on the quality of public service delivery rather than on the bureaucracy at the workplace so that economic growth can be achieved. The fourth doctrine of NPM model emphasizes on dividing the public sector into

manageable units and linking the goals and objectives of each unit to the overall objectives of the public sector. This doctrine of NPM model is designed to improve the efficiency and accountability of the public service delivery. The fifth and sixth doctrines of NPM model emphasize on the marketization of public sector activities and using contracts and tender process to improve the cost-effectiveness of the public sector. These two doctrines of the NPM model are directly related to the seventh doctrine which focuses on economizing the resource use, which implies getting more work done with less resource inputs.

There are four important criticisms of the NPM model (Kuhlmann 2010; Van de Walle and Hammerschmid 2011; Lodge and Gill 2011; Mayne 2017). First, the NPM model is seen as a universal model that may work in any geographical region. However, this may not be true as some factors unique to certain geographical regions may have an erratic effect on the overall objective that the NPM model is trying to accomplish. Implementing the doctrines of the NPM model may require skilled workforce and financial resources that many developing countries around that world lack and unable to afford while trying to achieve the objectives of the model. Second, Hood (1991) claims that NPM is apolitical model; however, this proposition of NPM model is subject to debate as the doctrines of NPM model are supporting the right-wing philosophical ideologies rather than left-wing philosophical ideologies of the government. Third, some critics have emphasized that there is no substance to the model as it is neither theoretically backed nor empirically tested. Fourth, there are some authors who have criticized that the NPM model is ineffective as it increases the cost of public service delivery. This is contrary to the objective that the NPM model is trying to achieve. The move from public administration to NPM model requires new forms of bureaucracy related to general operations of the public service. This has not been acknowledged by the NPM model.

There are conflicting views on whether NPM still applies or not. Pollitt (2003) emphasized that NPM is not yet over. Dunleavy et al. (2006) emphasized that the NPM model is dead.

According to Orozco (2009), the end of neoliberalism during the global financial crisis and the resurgence of the role of government contributed to the demise of the NPM model. Osborne et al. (2013) argued that there is a need for a new model of public administration that addresses the flaws in the NPM model. Osborne and his colleagues proposed the need for a public service-dominant approach that draws upon public service theories. Perry et al. (2010), Kuipers et al. (2014), and Bryson (2018) argued that change management is crucial to improve the efficiency of the public sector. Figure 1 illustrates the development of the NPM model, its demise, and the rise of the new theories of the public sector reform, namely, neo-Weberian state, public value pragmatism, and public service motivation.

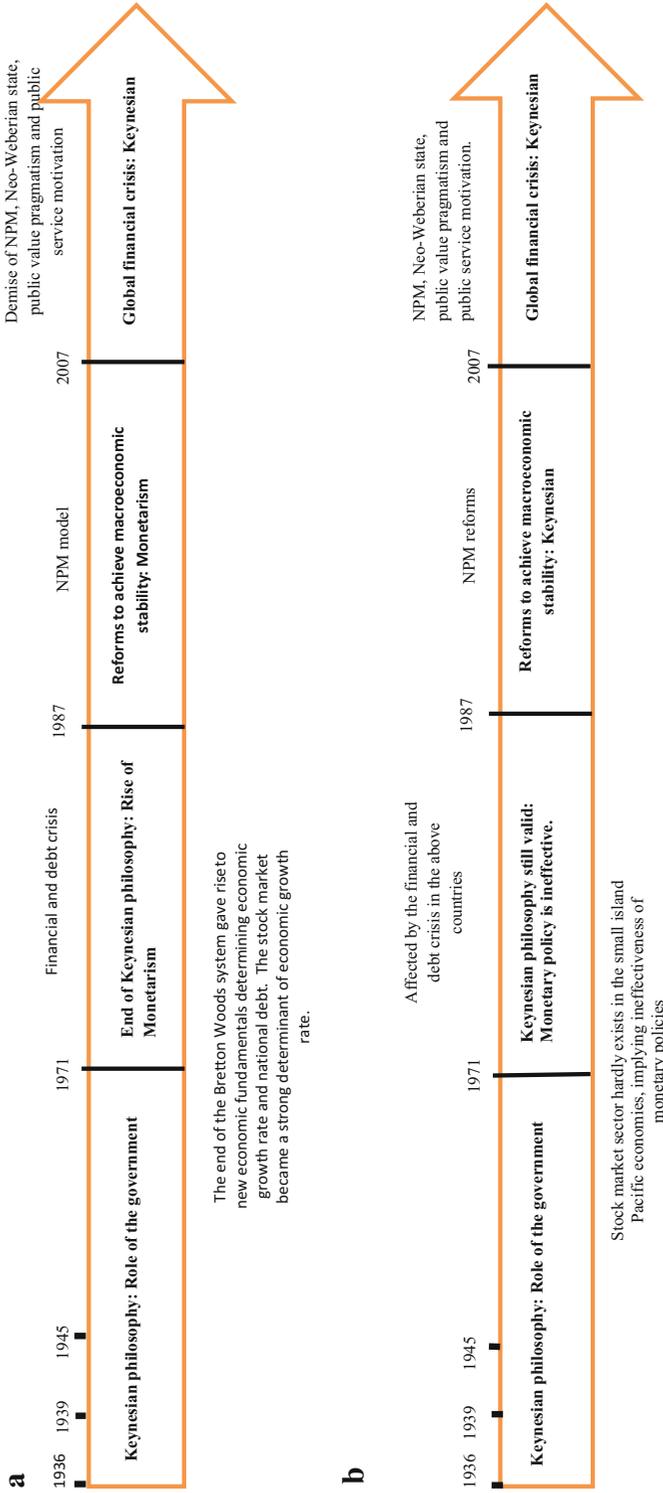
*Neo-Weberian state, public service motivation, and public value pragmatism:* According to Drechsler (2005), the reaffirmation of the role of the state after the global financial crisis, coupled with the resurgence of the Keynesian philosophy on the role of the government, has replaced the NPM model with good governance and public value pragmatism reforms. With the rise of the neo-Weberian theories of the state, the role of the government, as the protector of public welfare, has once again taken dominance over the role of the private sector in improving economic welfare (Snyder 2013; Hartley et al. 2013; Donina et al. 2015). The neo-Weberian state theories are based on strong government influence, stability, and regulations, which is in direct contrast to the doctrines of the NPM model, which focuses on minimal government intervention, flexibility, deregulation, and marketization of activities (Drechsler 2014; Cepiku and Mititelu 2010).

Moreover, the NPM model did provide strong tools to correct the deficiencies in the traditional model of public administration. However, with the advancement of information computer technology, global trade, volatility of stock markets, and randomness of the global financial crisis, the governments are required to establish networks, foster private public partnerships, and establish collaborative networks with other nations around the world (Alonso et al. 2015a, b; Ongaro 2015). These public sector management techniques go

beyond the output-focused doctrines of NPM and help to achieve public service motivation and public value pragmatism (Prebble 2015; Greve 2015).

*Keynesian and monetarism philosophies of the public sector reforms:* Under the Keynesian philosophy, the role of the government is crucial in correcting market failures and achieving economic stability (Mishra 2014). The public sector has three major objectives, and these objectives are (1) maintaining national welfare (Eikemo et al. 2008), (2) correcting market failures (Oates 2005), and (3) implementing policies on growth and national development (Ribot et al. 2006). This high level of importance given to the role of the government implies that the government spending, therefore, the size of the public sector, would be much bigger (Afonso and Furceri 2010; Cwik and Wieland 2011). Figure 1 shows that in the context of the developed and transitional economies, the role of the government was important until 1971, after which the role of the government became less important until the global financial crisis (GFC). The monetarism philosophies emphasize on greater importance on the role of the private sector, whereby the private sector acted as a stimulator of economic growth and development in the transitional and developed economies (Onaran 2011; Sawyer 2015). During the period 1971–2007, numerous reforms were implemented in order to reduce the size of the government (Atun et al. 2015; Featherstone 2015). The NPM-initiated reforms dominated the global agenda in both the developed and transitional economies. Interestingly, the role of the government became more important after the GFC when poor governance systems and economic policies, coupled with unsuccessful reform efforts, triggered a global recession (Claessens and Van Horen 2015).

Interestingly, the whole phenomenon of reforms has been different in the context of the developing countries. The role of the government was always important in the developing countries, while the reform efforts since 1987 were aimed to reduce the size of the government (Nepal and Jamasb 2015; Hansen and İmrohoroğlu 2016). Due to the heavy reliance on international



**External Force and Public Sector Reforms, Fig. 1** (a) Transition Period for the NPM Model for the UK, USA, EU and Large Developed Asian Economies. (b) Transition Period for the NPM Model for the Pacific Island Economies. (Source: Developed by the Authors of this entry (2017) by using information from literature review and their own economic intuition)

development assistance, the governments in the developing countries had to follow NPM model-dominated reforms, thus giving rise to patronage governments (Kenny 2015; Wenner 2015). This is one of the reasons why many NPM-dominated reforms failed in the developing countries. The following sections will explain this in greater detail.

The next section will review the existing literature.

## Literature Review on Public Sector Reforms

One of the key attributes of a successful public sector reform program is to have a thorough understanding of the drivers of public sector reforms and different types of reforms that have been implemented in different geographical regions and an understanding of both positive and negative aspects of the public sector reforms. A thorough examination of these factors influences the design and implementation of any successful reform program. There have been numerous studies conducted on public sector reforms in the developed and developing countries; however, the success of reform efforts in the small island developing countries has been constantly ignored, although this should not have been done by practitioners and policy makers. The intricacies of the argument on the reasons why the reform efforts in the public sector of the small island developing countries have been ignored lie on the small island country argument pioneered by Pilbeam (2013). Applying this argument to the public sector, one can argue that small island countries are not powerful enough to affect the global economy; therefore, analyzing reform efforts in these countries should be on the least important policy agenda, while examining the effectiveness of public reform efforts in the large transitional, developed and developing countries should be on the priority agenda.

*Influence of donor agencies in driving public sector reforms:* During the 1990s, the NPM model was seen as the universal solution to all public sector problems. Since the inception of the NPM

model in the public sector of both the developed and developing economies, the impact that the NPM model had on reinventing the government agencies has led to mixed results (Samaratunge et al. 2008; Hout 2012; Andrews 2015; Thom 2017). There are a few cases whereby the government agencies have benefitted from the neoliberal agenda of the NPM model, while in other cases, failures have been noted (Booth 2012; Paul and Renmans 2018). In cases where the NPM model has contributed to the failure of the government agencies, the NPM model has bewildered a number of policy makers. The reinvention of the public service by using the private sector management styles was pressured on the industrialized nations by the OECD, while the World Bank and IMF played an essential role in driving reforms in the developing countries around the world (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff 2015; Jackson and Jones 2018). Hall et al. (2005) highlighted that the developing countries should deregulate the water, energy, and infrastructure sector by encouraging the private sector involvement in these sectors. However, by opening up the provision of the public goods to the private sector, a number of problems have aroused, including a lack of return on investment and a strong political opposition.

According to Mwenda and Tangri (2005), the donor-driven reforms in the African nations have constrained the ability of the African leaders to hold political power as donor-sponsored reforms emphasize on reducing the size of the public sector and opening up the public goods market to the private sector. Ciborra and Navarra (2005) found that poor governance is one of the main sources of state failure in the developing countries. The donor agencies are using the e-government initiatives as an apparatus to reform initiatives in the developing countries. Nelson and Agrawal (2008) confirmed that donors have the ability to drive reforms by using tangible and non-tangible means; however, they have serious difficulties in improving the reform outcomes. This is one of the reasons why many reform efforts driven by the donors have failed in the developing countries. According to Crook (2010), the delivery of the public services in many developing countries has undergone reform efforts, but the public services

in the developing countries are still in the problem. Some of the reasons why the reform efforts by the donor agencies have not been fruitful are lack of political support, overstaffing, and neopatrimonialism. Brinkerhoff and Wetterberg (2013) found that there are a number of reasons why the health reforms have failed in the developing countries. Some of these factors are the disparities between the proper governance and local health practices, the differences between the formal and informal health governance system, and the lack of attention paid by the donor agencies to the sociopolitical powers in the health sector. Knack (2013) found that aid on public sector reforms may strengthen the recipient countries' governance systems when the aid use is monitored by the donor country. However, this governance system may not develop if the aid is monitored solely by the donor agencies. According to Gulrajani (2015), Dietrich (2016), and Cordery and Sim (2018), due to lack of transparency and accountability in the use of aid funds in the developing countries, the donor countries outsource the monitoring and use of the reform aid to the nongovernment development actors.

This study contributes to the existing literature in two ways. First, this entry examines the reforms that have taken place in the public sector of the Solomon Islands and the role of the donor agencies, particularly the RAMSI, in driving these reform efforts. This is the first study that examines RAMSI's influence on reforms in the Solomon Islands. Second, it expands the existing gap in the literature by exploring the reasons for the failure of reforms in the small island developing countries.

## Research Methodology

The primary data for this entry were collected in the year 2014 by interviewing the government officials from the Solomon Islands. A semi-structured interview schedule was developed to collect data on two important research questions. One of the primary reasons for using the self-administered questionnaire to collect data from the respondents was to gather in-depth

information on each of the research questions. It also allowed the researchers to probe on critical points that were raised during the interviews.

Before conducting the interviews, a sample of the number of ministries in the Solomon Islands was extracted from the following website: <http://www.commerce.gov.sb/Gov/ps&mins.html>. As per the information provided on this website, there were 24 government ministries, out of which 19 government officials allowed us to conduct interviews with the government officials from the respective ministries. Out of the 19 government officials interviewed from the Solomon Islands, 15 (78.95%) were males and 4 (21.05%) were females. There were two reasons for selecting the Solomon Islands as the country of study for this entry. First, the Solomon Island was facing severe ethnic tension in the early 2000s, which resulted in the donor agencies to invest heavily in the public sector reform efforts. Second, it was easier to collect data from the Solomon Islands government as they were open to providing resourceful information on the public sector reforms. There are a number of advantages of collecting qualitative data by using questionnaires in a small sample size research like this. First, data collected on small sample size, in this case on 19 ministries, will lack robustness and will be subject to biasness if empirical analysis is used for making conclusions. Second, qualitative analysis will provide better ways of making conclusions by using the data collected from the small sample size. One research assistant was hired to help the primary researchers collect data. Before the interviews were conducted, the interviewees were informed that their identities will be kept confidential.

Furthermore, thematic analysis was used to analyze data that was collected from this study. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is an underacknowledged research technique that is used in a number of disciplines, such as psychology, management, accounting, and economics. A two-step procedure was used to analyze data collected from this study by using the thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006). First, each question asked during the interviews was summarized, and common themes were

determined from the responses of the informants. Second, these themes were reviewed and used directly as the subtopics in the discussion section. Axial coding was used to collate data for analysis and reporting purposes (Charmaz 2006).

## Research Findings and Discussions

The responses from the government officials were categorized according to the important themes that emerged during the thematic analysis. Microsoft Excel was used for the coding purposes. For the first research question, some of the important themes on the reforms that took place in the Solomon Islands in the last 10 years were human resource management reforms, legislation reforms, and decentralization of the public service authority. These three important themes were inductively rather than deductively conducted.

### Reforms in the Last 10 Years in the Solomon Islands

*Human Resource Management Reforms:* The proper development of the public sector system in the Solomon Islands was disrupted by the civil strife of the early 2000s. It was only after the year 2003 that reform was implemented with the help of the RAMSI to help improve the public services of the Solomon Islands. Some of the common areas of human resource management reforms were performance management policy, absenteeism management, human resource governance reform, and remuneration reforms. According to the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration, reforms have been implemented in the Solomon Islands so that the transparency and accountability of the public service delivery could be improved. There are a number of areas where the Solomon Islands still needs to improve so that the overall public service delivery could be enhanced. According to one of the civil servants

from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration (Interviewee 8):

Major reforms in the Solomon Islands public service are in the areas of performance management policy, absenteeism management, human resource governance reform policy and remuneration reforms. . .

According to another public service officer, human resources are the driving force of public sector management; therefore, public policies should be such that it enhances the motivation of employees. Without proper human resource management policies in place, it would be extremely difficult to position the right employees, at the right time with the right set of public policies. As a result of this, the public sector reforms in the Solomon Islands were aimed at improving the terms and condition of employment in the public service. According to one of the civil servants from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development, the human resource management reform focused on (Interviewee 2):

Terms and employment conditions, processes and policy revisions on recruitment and human resource management . . .

A similar comment was made by one of the civil servants from the Ministry of Lands (Interviewee 2):

One of the obvious reforms was the change of the title of the Chief Administration Officer to human resource manager. This resulted in the upgrading of the CAO level of L10 to L12. . .

*Strategic Management Reforms:* Another key area of reforms in the Solomon Islands in the recent decade is the aligning of the policies and practices with the goals and objectives of the public sector. According to Snyder (2013), Hartley et al. (2013), and Donina et al. (2015), the recent rise in the neo-Weberian theories of state and the role of the government has become important in improving the welfare of the citizens. The RAMSI reforms have been aligned to

improving the welfare of the citizens by improving the efficiency with which the public sector delivers its services. To successfully achieve the goals and objectives of the public sector, it is important that the internal policies and practices are consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the public sector. With the introduction of the strategic management reforms by the RAMSI, a mix of principles from the NPM and the neo-Weberian state has been adopted by the public sector of the Solomon Islands. The NPM model requires the adoption of the private sector management styles in the public sector; hence, with the RAMSI reforms in the Solomon Islands, the human resource management functions on training and recruitment have been delegated to the line ministries by the Ministry of Public Service. According to one of the civil servants from the Ministry of Marine Resources (Interviewee 3):

Delegation of human resource management functions on recruitment and training from the Ministry of Public Service to Permanent Secretaries of Line Ministries...development of strategic human resource manual...amendment of general orders...

### Public Service Act Reforms

The Public Service Act of the Solomon Islands outlines the policies and procedures that help the public service to manage its human resources, code of ethics of the public servants, and equality and fairness in the public service decision-making. If the policies and procedures that affect the behavior of the public servants are not effectively spelled out in the Public Service Act, then reform of the Public Service Act is inevitable. The public sector reforms in the Solomon Islands have been inevitably directed toward developing proper manuals for the public service managers. These manuals act as a guiding tool for the implementation of ethics and professionalism in the public service. According to one of the civil servants from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism,

some of the areas of Public Service Act reform include (Interviewee 9):

The development of the human resource management strategy for the Solomon Islands Public Service, recruitment and selection guidelines, code of conduct for public servants, Public Service Act and in-service training policy etc. . .

Similarly, another civil servant from the Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination stated that:

major reforms that have taken place in the public service include: (1) review of the general orders, (2) the recruitment and selection process to be effective and efficient, (3) establishment of first ever human resource strategic plan, (4) establishment of the code of conduct (5) review of the Public Service Act (a way forward for improvement), and (6) performance based process and making way for performance recognition. . .

*Decentralization of the Public Service Authority:* In the recent decade, decentralization of the public service authority has been one of the key tools used to improve the motivation of the public service. Unlike before, the decentralization of authority to the permanent secretary of each of the ministries will improve the workload and empowerment of the senior public service officials in the ministries. According to one of the civil servants from the Ministry of Agriculture, Health and Medical Services (Interviewee 13):

Delegation of authority, for example, permission to leave the country, approval to enter the public service rental scheme has been decentralized to permanent secretary for each ministry from the Permanent secretary of public service. . .

Similarly, another civil servant from the Ministry of Defense and National Security stated that (Interviewee 19):

...delegation of authority, including human resource functions, reviews of the general orders and review of the Public Service Act. . .

### **RAMSI's Influence on Reforms in the Solomon Islands**

The RAMSI has a strong influence on reforms in the Solomon Islands. One of the key areas where RAMSI has a strong influence on the public sector reforms is on capacity building and development. According to Grindle and Hilderbrand (1995), capacity building is an essential development initiative to improve the performance of the public sector. This is one of the reasons why the capacity building of the public servants in the Solomon Islands has been one of the key goals of RAMSI's reform initiatives. According to the public sector official from the Ministry of Lands, RAMSI has provided internship opportunities to the future public servants of the Solomon Islands. Another public sector official from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development stated that RAMSI has played a significant role in training and development and capacity building of the public service officers.

Moreover, RAMSI has also provided support by organizing workshops, trainings, and technical assistance programs. According to the public service official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the influence of RAMSI to the public sector reforms is as follows:

...There is somehow now compliance to the changes...supported capacity building such as funded workshops and provided equipment's... also provided technical assistance...

It is challenging for the small island developing countries, particularly the Solomon Islands, to invest financial budget for workshops and technical assistance programs. Unlike the developed economies, the governments of the small island developing countries lack financial resources to invest in these types of capacity building programs. Another public sector official from the Prime Minister's office stated that the influence of RAMSI to the public sector reforms is as follows:

Yes, the RAMSI machinery of the government is the lead agency which provides technical support...they have also helped to develop the human resource strategy...This document provides the road map for human resource management reforms...

In addition to the above reform efforts, the RAMSI machinery has also emphasized on reforming the rules and regulations governing the operations of the public services. The goal of the reform efforts by the RAMSI is to improve the transparency and accountability of the public service delivery. One of the ways how this transparency and accountability of the public service delivery can be improved is by improving the rules and regulations governing the operations of the public service delivery. According to the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, the influence of RAMSI on the public sector reforms is as follows:

Review of relevant Acts/regulations like the Public Service Act, capacity building, decentralization of most of the human resource functions from the Ministry of Public Service...

Moreover, RAMSI provides a number of training and development opportunities to the public service officials. These training and development opportunities relate both to internal and external training opportunities. According to the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs, the influence of RAMSI to the public sector reforms is as follows:

Under the capacity building efforts by the RAMSI, lawyers are provided with both local training and overseas training...

In addition to the reform efforts mentioned above, human resource management reforms are also essential in improving the motivation and performance of the civil servants in the respective ministries. The RAMSI machinery provided technical assistance in implementing human resource management reforms:

...RAMSI is instrumental in providing technical assistance and play partner in implementing these human resource management reforms...

One of the notable aspects of the RAMSI machinery is that the officials of the RAMSI work closely with the Solomon Islanders while implementing reforms. There are a number of advantages of having collaborative reforms over the non-collaborative reforms. First, collaborative reforms ensure that the reform efforts are accepted by a majority of the public servants. Second, it also ensures that the goals of the reforms are easily

achieved as collaboration gives rise to numerous ideas that can be easily implemented in the ministries. According to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the influence of RAMSI to the public sector reforms is as follows:

...Yes, they work with the Solomon Islanders to develop and revise the existing human resource management regulations or policies and also write new ones that are seen to be relevant for improving the performance of public servants in the Solomon Islands. . .

Another instrumental change that has been implemented by the RAMSI is the setting up of the human resource management forums whereby everyone can discuss the areas where the human resource management reforms are needed. The main objective of the human resource management practices is to attract, retain, and develop skilled and qualified employees. One of the key ways how this objective can be achieved is by using forums whereby civil servants can get together to discuss the areas where the human resource management reforms are needed. According to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, the influence of RAMSI to the public sector reforms is as follows:

...RAMSI has helped to formulate the HRM strategy manual...and also provided funding. Their technical advisors assisted to help put the idea to help human resource processes and procedures throughout the public service. . .

There is also emphasis by the RAMSI reform machinery on modernizing some of the key areas of the public service delivery. These areas include correctional service, police, and public financial management. According to one of the public servants from the Ministry of Public Sector Policy, the influence of RAMSI to the public sector reforms is as follows:

...there is some incremental support in developing the capacity of the line managers, also modernizing various Acts of parliament, for example, correctional service, police and public financial management Acts. . .

Unlike the traditional way of managing employee's performance, the performance appraisal of employees should recognize the merit-based performance system.

The merit-based performance emphasizes on linking employee's productivity and output to rewards and incentives that are received by the employees. The RAMSI machinery has played an instrumental role in developing merit-based performance appraisal system. According to the Ministry of Energy, the influence of RAMSI to the public sector reforms is as follows:

Merit based recruitment and proper appraisals, bureaucratic procedures have lessened. . . . officers take part in performance management that is clear and transparent. . .

The next subsection will outline the theoretical contributions of this entry.

### **Theoretical Contributions of This Entry**

This entry confirms to the existing theoretical perspectives in a number of ways. First, this entry argues that external forces are driving public sector reforms in the small island developing countries with the idea of reducing the size of the public service. However, the government is still playing a pivotal role in driving the reform efforts, and there is a lack of evidence that the size of the government has reduced. Reforms were implemented to improve the transparency and accountability of the public service, but these reforms were not successful because the outcomes of the NPM model have not yet been achieved. One of the crucial achievements of RAMSI reforms is that the human resource management functions on training and recruitment have been delegated to the line ministries by the Ministry of Public Service.

Second, the reform ideologies of the RAMSI deviate from the propositions of the NPM model. The NPM model argues that neoliberalism would improve the transparency and accountability of the public service delivery. However, in the case of the Solomon Islands, the RAMSI has involved the public service officers directly in the reform process. This contradicts the ideologies of the NPM model and advances the philosophies of the neo-Weberian state and public value pragmatism. The NPM model focuses on minimal

government intervention, flexibility, deregulation, and marketization of activities (Drechsler 2014; Cepiku and Mititelu 2010). By involving public service officers directly in the reform process, it is noticeable that the move is away from NPM-driven reforms to neo-Weberian state and public value pragmatism.

## Policy Implications of This Entry

There are two policy implications of this entry. First, policy makers and the institutions that drive reforms need to recognize the importance of involving the national governments of the developing countries in the reform process. The public servants in the aid-receiving countries that are reformed have more knowledge and understanding of the problems of public service delivery in their own country as compared to the outsiders who are usually hired as consultants to drive the reform process. Involving the public servants will ensure that these problems are effectively tackled with less stress on the public service resources. Second, there are a number of key areas that need improvement in the Solomon Islands. These areas need to be prioritized before the RAMSI reform efforts are implemented in order to ensure that reforms are effective for the Solomon Islands public service.

## Conclusion

The main aim of this entry was to answer two important research questions. The first research question was to examine the types of reforms that have taken place in the Solomon Islands. This entry found that a number of different types of reforms have been implemented in the Solomon Islands. These reforms are mainly on human resource management reforms, Public Service Act reforms, strategic management reforms, and decentralization of public service authority. The second research question was to examine the main drivers of reforms in the Solomon Islands. This study found that the RAMSI is playing a pivotal role in driving reforms in the Solomon Islands.

They are focusing on a number of key areas of reforms; however, a reform diagnostic strategy should be adopted in order to ensure that reforms are successful.

One of the limitations of this study is that it is based on the Solomon Islands. Future researchers should conduct similar studies in other small island developing countries so that findings from this study can be compared with other small island developing countries.

## Cross-References

- ▶ [Accountability](#)
- ▶ [Reforms](#)
- ▶ [Transparency](#)

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