

**FuturesIreland Project**

# **Ireland at Another Turning Point**

Reviving Development, Reforming Institutions  
And Liberating Capabilities

Rory O'Donnell

[rory.odonnell@nesc.ie](mailto:rory.odonnell@nesc.ie)

[www.nesdo.ie](http://www.nesdo.ie)

# Futures and Foresight Studies

- Existing Irish studies
- Trends/drivers generate scenarios
- Features of FuturesIreland study:
  1. how people respond to change, uncertainty and ambiguity
  2. interaction of wealth creation, society and public governance
  3. base on people's experience

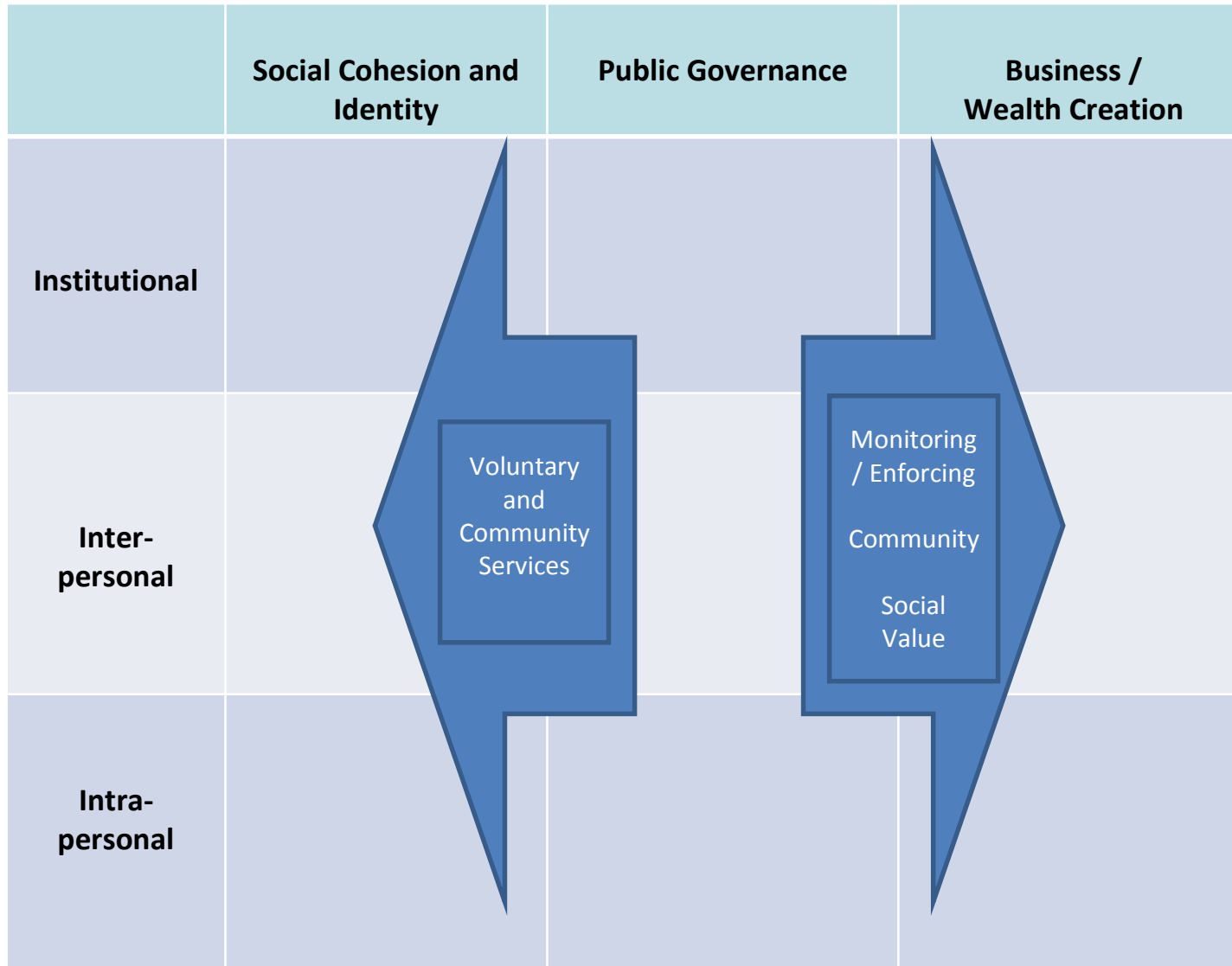
*Intuition on public governance problems*

Analytical Framework for Mapping Narrative and Cross Fertilisation

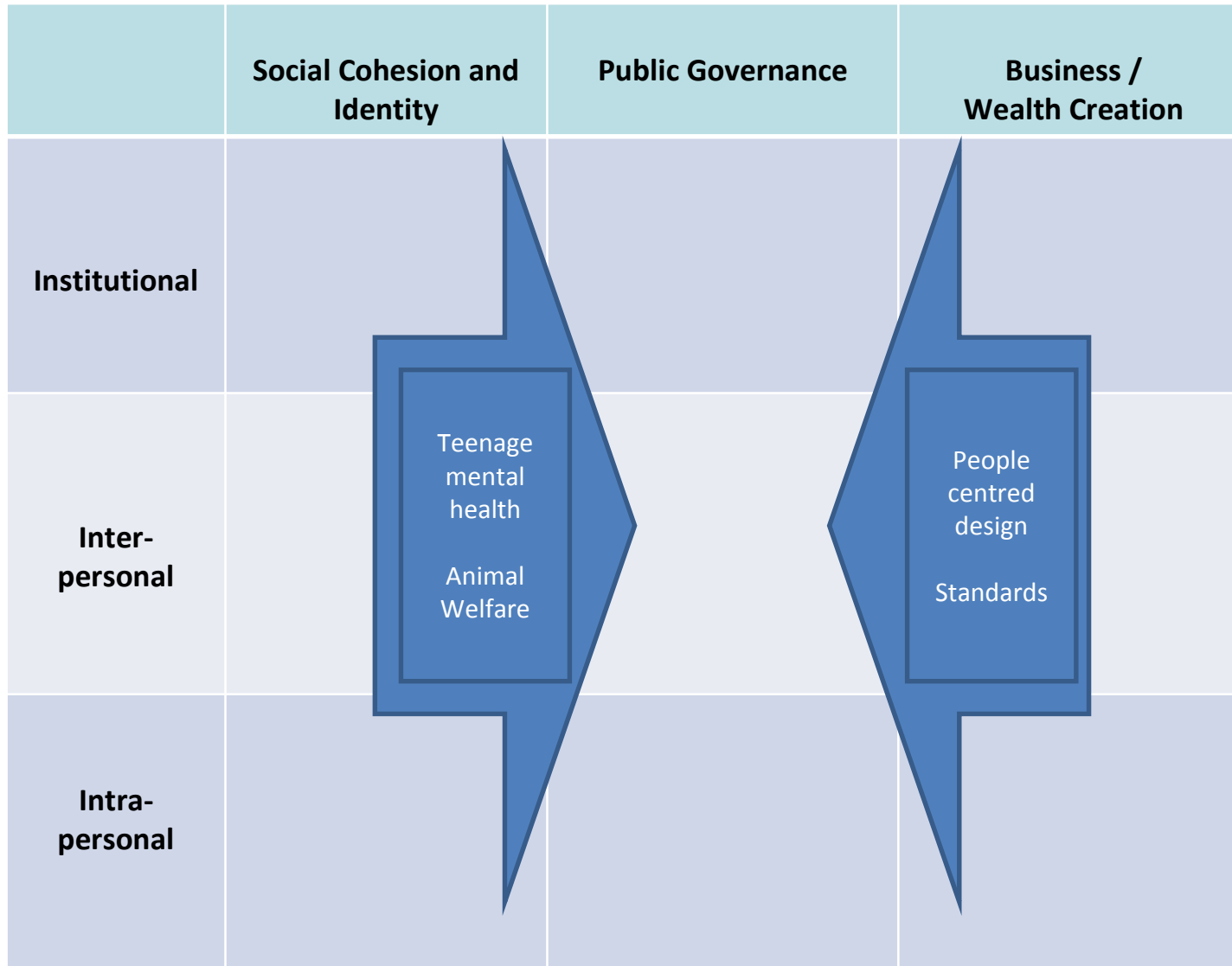
	Society	Public Governance	Wealth Creation
Institutional			
Inter-personal			
Intra-personal			

## Cross-fertilisation (2):

### Public Governance More Embedded in Society and Business



# Cross-fertilisation: Social and Business: Impact on Public Governance



# Compliance v. Diagnostic Monitoring

## *Compliance*

- Process understood
- Action will produce desired goal
- Desired goal service ultimate purpose
- Check compliance with instructions
- Use incentives

## *Diagnostic*

- Uncertain about how to achieve outcome
- Uncertain about possible & desired outcomes
- Continuous monitoring
- Root cause analysis
- Simultaneous engineering etc

# Findings from the FuturesIreland Project

## **FINDING 1**

New forms of cross-fertilisation between the economy, society and public governance are increasingly evident, enhancing the ability to learn and innovate;

## **FINDING 2**

Innovation and learning are systematic, almost always combining initiative, disciplined review and a willingness to confront challenges at three levels— institutional, inter-personal and personal;

## **FINDING 3**

Systematic review provides the basis for both innovation and accountability, which is particularly relevant in a period when we seek more stability and accountability and yet face radical change;

## **FINDING 4**

The kind of innovation and learning we have found cannot flourish, and cannot yield their full harvest, without profound change to our organisational systems, particularly our systems of control and accountability.

## Figure 2.3 First Three Findings from the FuturesIreland Project

### FINDING 1

New forms of cross-fertilisation between the economy, society and public governance are increasingly evident, enhancing the ability to learn and innovate;



### FINDING 2

Innovation and learning are systematic, almost always combining initiative, disciplined review and a willingness to confront challenges at three levels—  
institutional, inter-personal and personal;



### FINDING 3

Systematic review provides the basis for both:



Innovation



Accountability

**Figure 4.1** Innovation and Learning: A Flourishing System

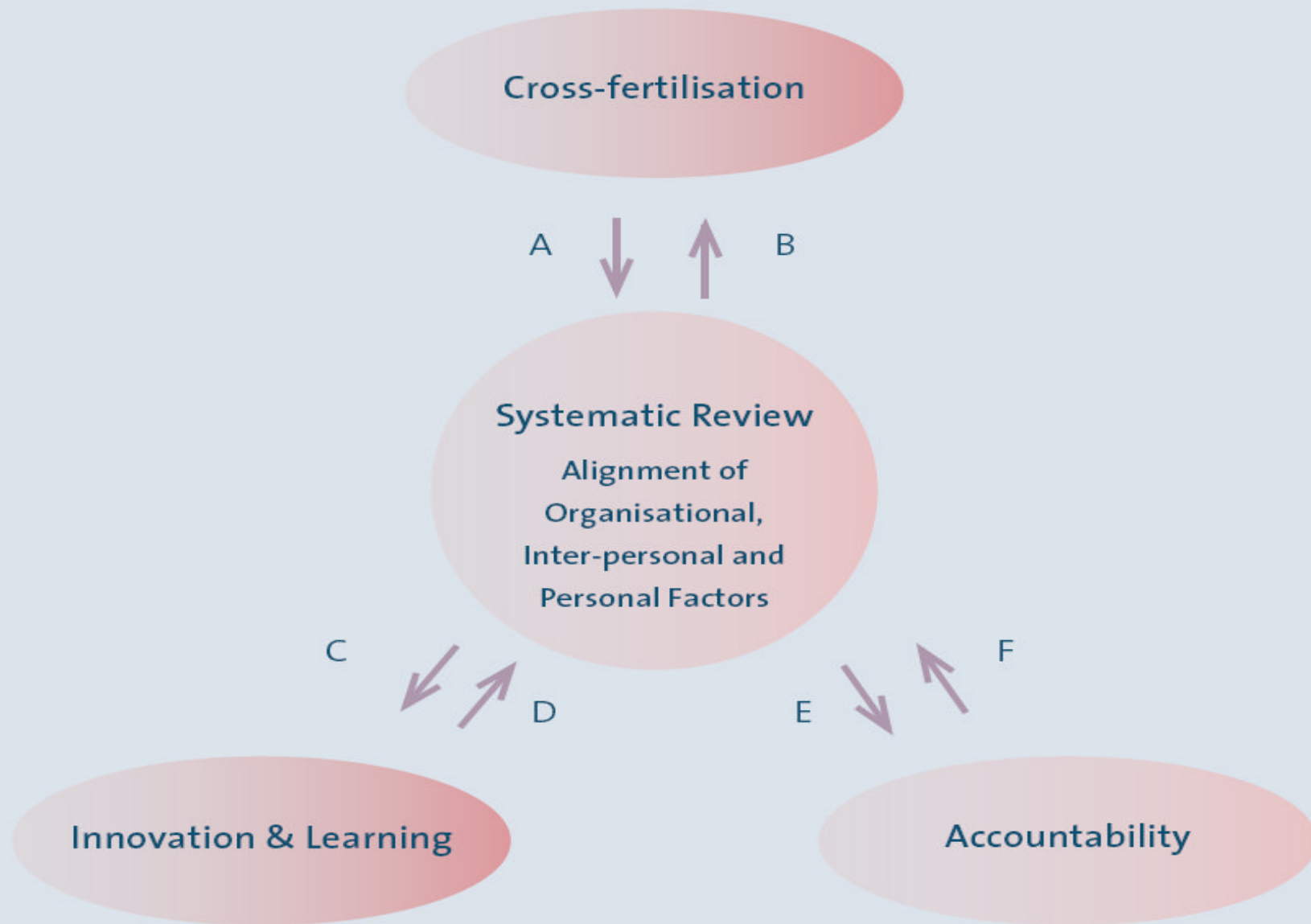
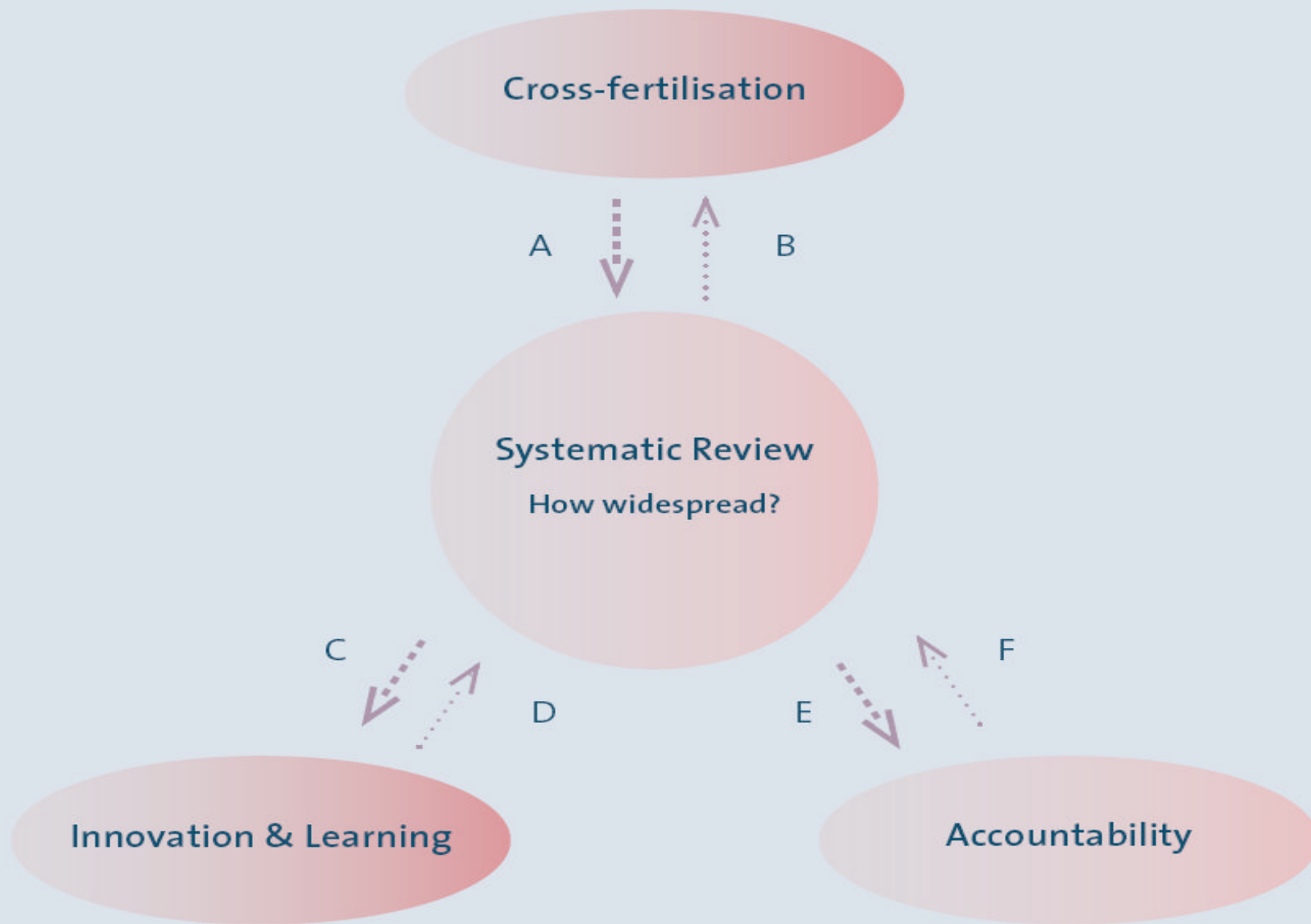


Figure 4.2 Innovation and Learning: A Partial System



# Ireland at a Turning Point

## Economy:

Basis of prosperity gone with rivals for FDI

## Society:

Recent success based on social capital that was not replaced

## Public Policy:

Positive combination of strategic policy & partnership – now gone

# Ireland at a Turning Point

## Economy:

Technology as an enabler of opportunities (Perez and Benckler)

## Society:

Capabilities not being put to use. Values not in short supply, but institutional contexts

## Public Policy:

From innovation to experimentation. From book-keeping to accountability. A harvest of improvement waiting to be garnered

# Ireland at **Another** Turning Point

In both the 1950s and 1980s, hard fiscal realities combined with:

- A focus on development
- Reform of existing institutions & creation of new ones
- Concentration of authority, in order to liberate talent rather than increase control



# Local Search

