

Presentation to SSPA October Kai & Kōrero

**A fair chance for all:
Breaking the cycle of persistent disadvantage**

<https://www.productivity.govt.nz/inquiries/a-fair-chance-for-all/>

17 October 2023

NEW ZEALAND
PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION
Te Kōmihana Whai Hua o Aotearoa



Productivity Commission



Outline

- Inquiry kaupapa
- What we did
- What we found
- A pathway forward
- Discussion



Our kaupapa

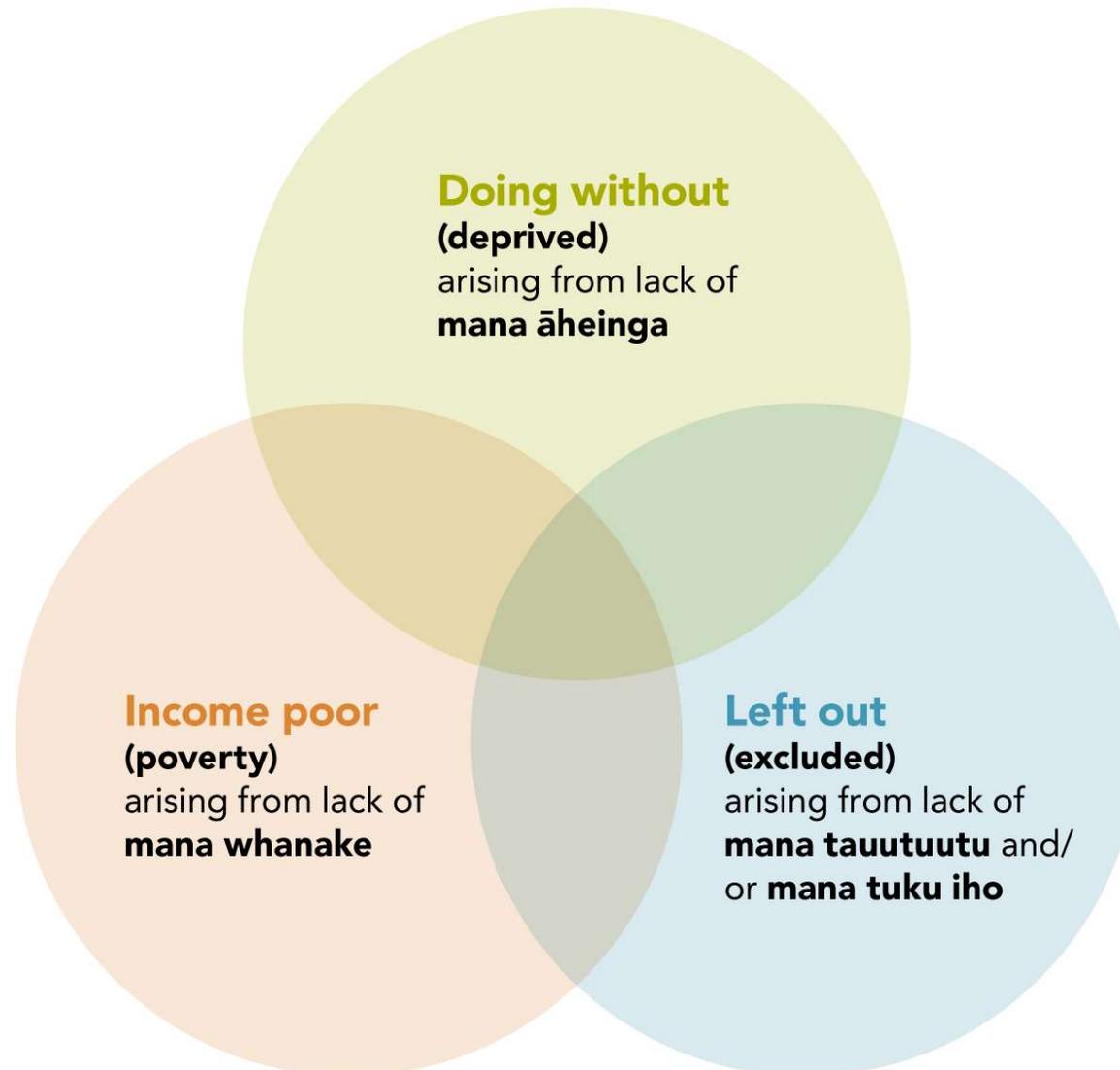
- An inquiry into economic inclusion and social mobility, focusing on the drivers and underlying dynamics of persistent disadvantage
- Six referring Ministers
- We did not examine the tax or welfare systems
- Constitutional reform was also out of scope
- Focus on how the public management system (PMS) needs to change.



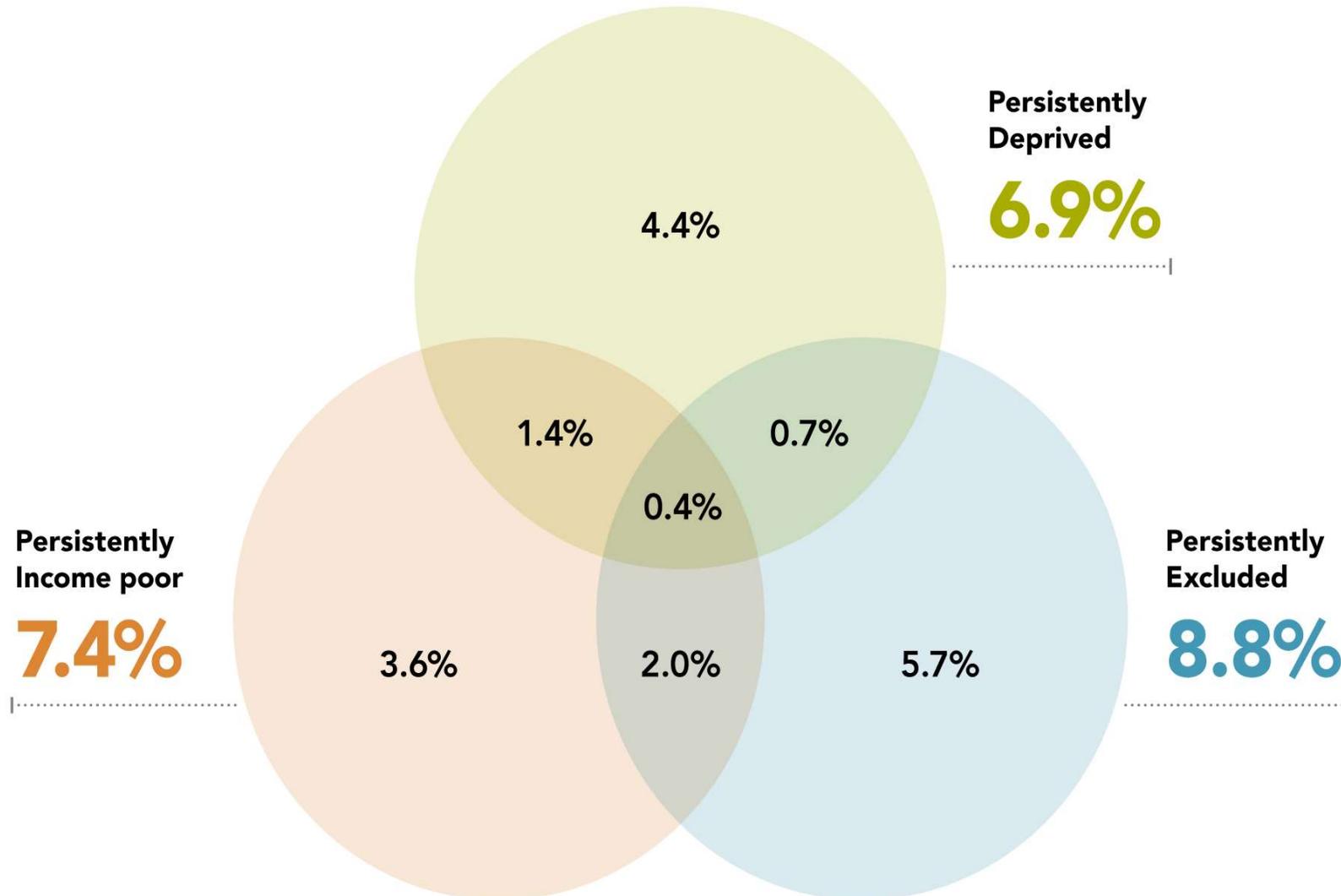
Our approach focused on 'Mauri ora'



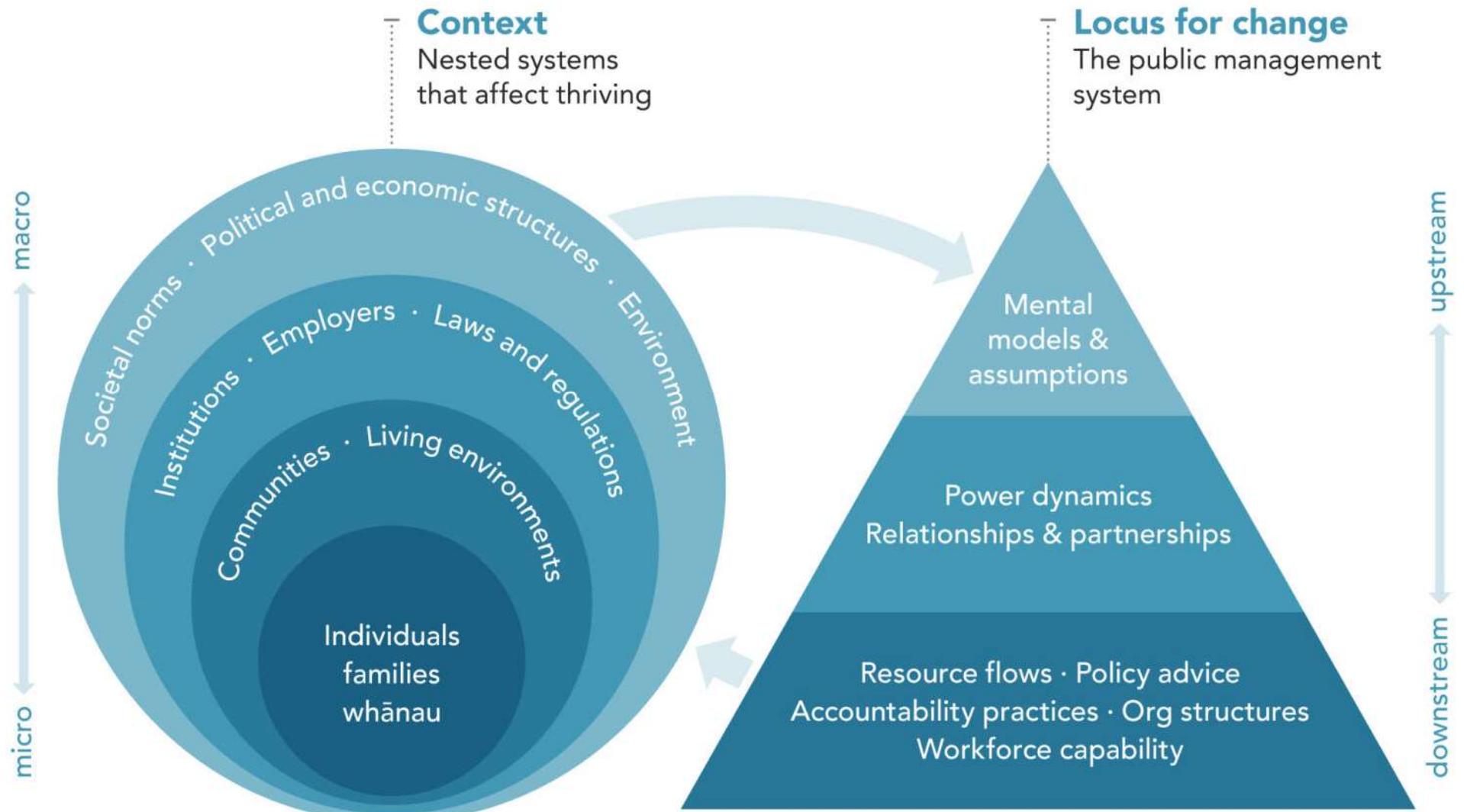
Disadvantage is not simply being income poor



Too many New Zealanders experience persistent disadvantage



Taking a systems thinking approach



Key findings

- The drivers of disadvantage are systemic.
- Power imbalances create advantage for some and compound disadvantage for others.
- Discrimination and ongoing impacts of colonisation compound disadvantage.
- Being in disadvantage is associated with distrust.
- The settings underpinning NZ's public management system, while evolving, are part of the problem.



Being in disadvantage is associated with distrust



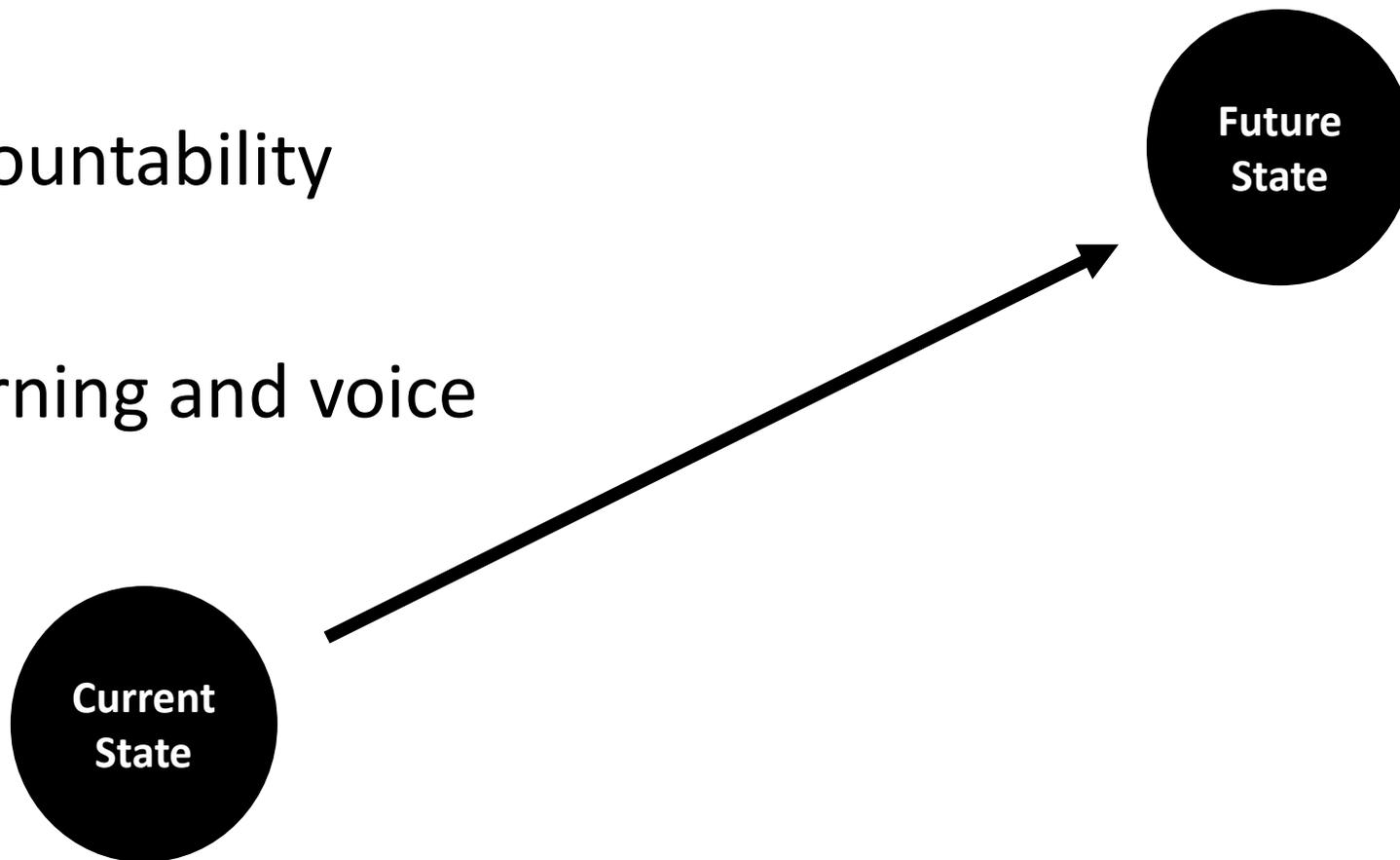
Challenges with current policy and public management settings



- Often a narrow focus on economic and material prosperity.
- Some values are emphasised over others.
- The system struggles to recognise or account for the full range of impacts on wellbeing when making decisions.
- Overly focused on short term outcomes and struggles to consider the future.
- The system often fails to respond to people experiencing multiple challenges at the same time.

Focus areas

- Purpose and direction
- Accountability
- Learning and voice



What we found

Purpose and direction

- NZ was early adopter of wellbeing measurement & budgeting - a good start!
- But key assumptions underlying PMS are hampering the implementation of a fully integrated wellbeing approach
- We need a clearer system purpose and direction for wellbeing.

What we found

Accountability

A step-change in public accountability settings is required, rather than incremental improvements

- Weak direct accountabilities in addressing persistent disadvantage and needs of future generations.
- The neglect of te Tiriti o Waitangi in accountability settings.
- Settings constrain ongoing learning and locally led and whānau-centred ways of working.

What we found

Accountability

Public accountability and funding settings to empower communities

- Based on trust and supporting devolved ways of providing public services.
- Commissioning that builds relationships, as committed to in the Social Sector Commissioning Action Plan.
- Better resourcing existing approaches to meet the level of need and aspirations within communities.

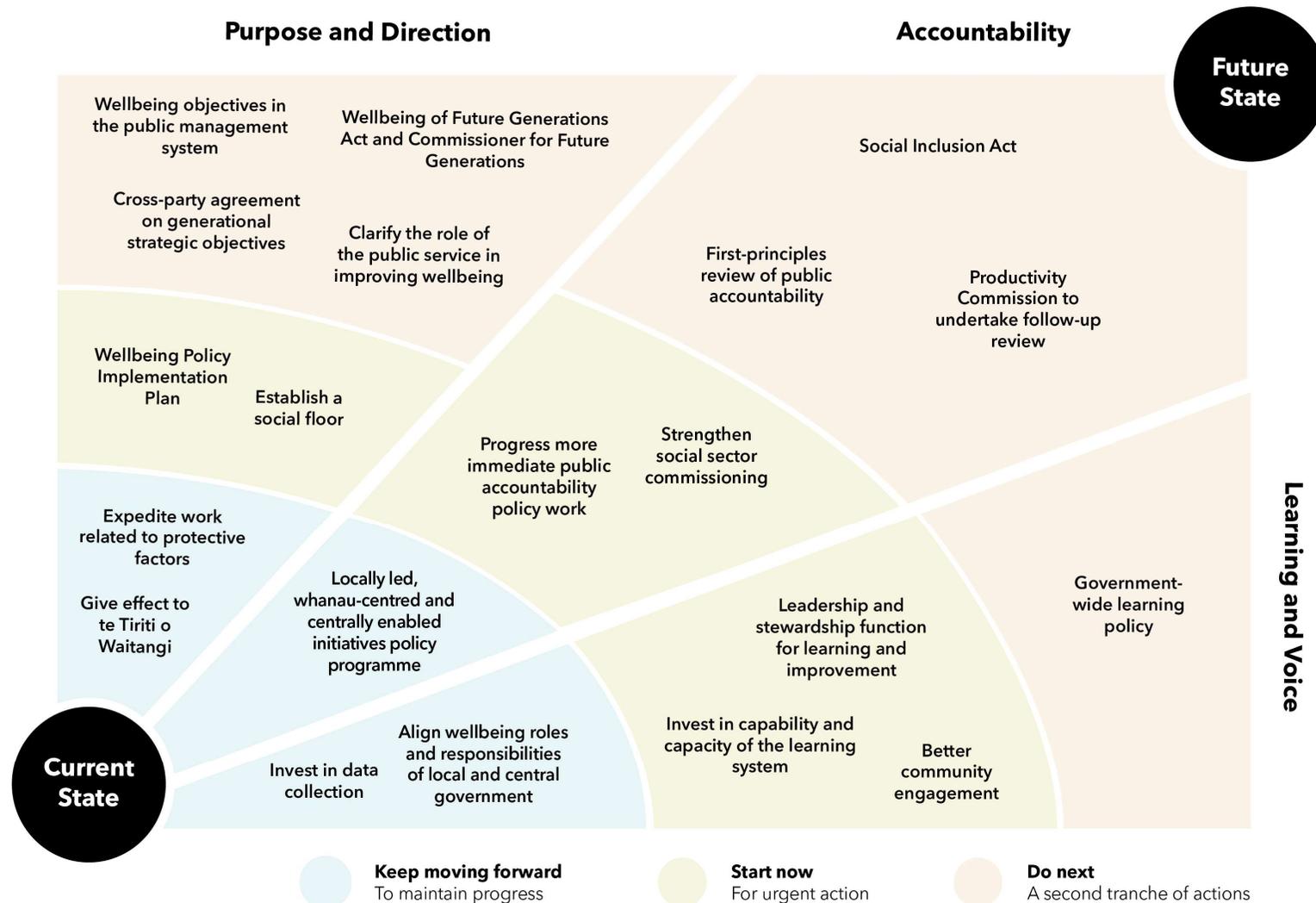
What we found

Learning and voice

The public management system needs to listen and learn

- Understanding the lived realities of individuals and whānau experiencing persistent disadvantage and what matters to them.
- Enabling ongoing learning-by-doing to find out what works to reduce persistent disadvantage.
- Supporting the system to learn, decide and act together at different levels.
- Including a strong leadership and stewardship function.

A pathway forward



Questions?

