

From Practice to System:

How Innavera and Uruk Built the National Project System

A unified architecture for governing, delivering and sustaining national transformation

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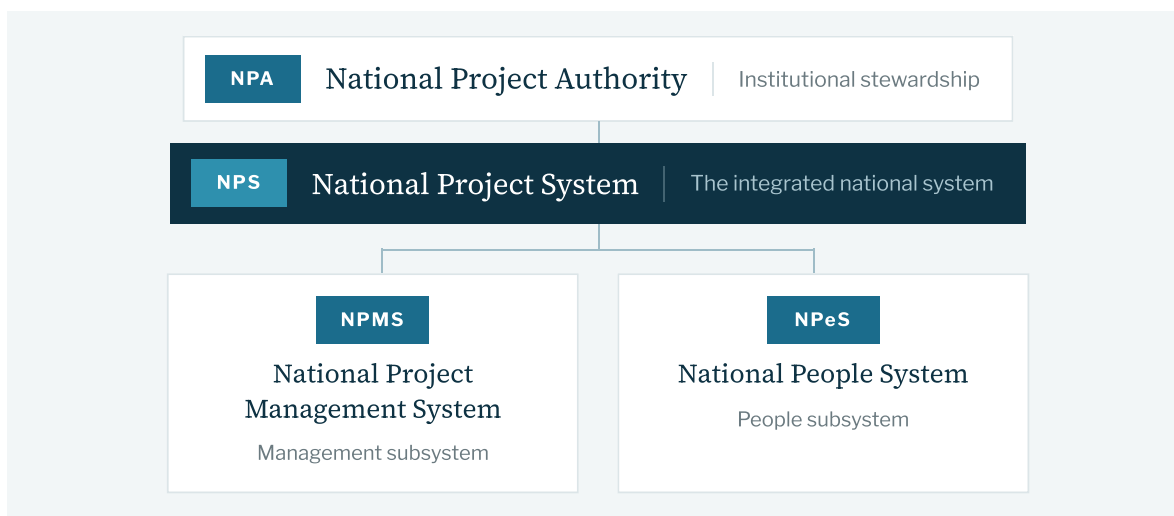
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Executive Summary

Large-scale government delivery rarely fails for lack of ambition. It fails when strategy, governance, project delivery, institutional capability, and information systems operate as separate mechanisms rather than as one coherent system.

The National Project System (NPS) emerged from a collaboration between Innavera and Uruk Project Management. Innavera brought practical experience from government transformation, cross-ministry initiatives, digital government, and execution-focused consulting. Uruk contributed a project management framework developed through decades of project, program, advisory, and thought-leadership work, centered on governance, value delivery, organizational capability, and project success.

The resulting NPS adapts the Uruk Framework to the realities of national government. It distinguishes the institution that stewards national project delivery from the system itself, and it separates the NPS into two connected subsystems: the National Project Management System (NPMS) and the National People System (NPeS).



This paper explains how the collaboration developed, why existing PMO-centric approaches are insufficient at national scale, how the Uruk Framework informed the model, and how the NPS architecture can provide governments with a more coherent way to translate national ambition into measurable outcomes.

Two Perspectives on the Same Problem

Innavera's work with governments has consistently operated at the intersection of strategy and execution. Across national transformation programs, digital government initiatives, and cross-ministry reforms, a recurring pattern has been evident. Governments struggle not because they lack capable people or sound policies, but because delivery mechanisms are fragmented. Strategy units define ambition. Ministries execute in silos. Oversight bodies monitor outcomes after the fact, and in some cases limit their assessment to outputs rather than outcomes. Each function performs its role, yet the system as a whole underperforms.

Uruk, through decades of work in project management thought leadership, advisory, and execution across sectors and geographies, has articulated a complementary insight. Project success is not a function of tools or compliance, but of how value, governance, performance, and assurance are integrated into decision-making. The Uruk Framework is built on this principle. It positions project management as a strategic discipline and a core organizational function, tightly connected to organizational objectives, governance structures, and value realization rather than treated as a back-office activity.

When these two perspectives met, it became clear that Innavera and Uruk were observing the same problem from different vantage points. Innavera saw fragmentation manifesting at national scale. Uruk had structured a framework capable of integrating governance, value, and delivery. The opportunity was not to invent a new methodology in abstraction, but to adapt proven thinking to the realities of government.

Why Existing Models Were Not Enough

Both organizations had independently reached similar conclusions. Traditional PMO models struggle to operate across ministries, even when the PMO is rebranded as a Vision Realization Office, Value Management Office, or another central delivery structure. Enterprise frameworks rarely account for sovereign decision-making, political cycles, distributed authority, or public accountability. Digital platforms promise visibility but often reinforce inconsistency when governance is unclear.

From Innavera's side, governments were asking practical questions. How can national visions be translated into executable portfolios? How can ministries be aligned without stripping them of autonomy? How can delivery become predictable rather than crisis-driven?

From Uruk's side, the framework had demonstrated its strength in integrating value delivery, governance, performance, and assurance. Applying it at national scale, however, required deliberate adaptation. Government delivery is not simply a larger version of corporate delivery. Authority is distributed, accountability is shared, and outcomes extend well beyond financial value.

The resulting model therefore had to address both the system and the institution responsible for stewarding it. Depending on a country's existing governance structure, this stewardship could sit within a dedicated National Project Authority (NPA), or within an existing authority or institution whose mandate is expanded and adapted for national project delivery. The architecture should fit the national context rather than impose a single organizational form.

The Uruk Framework as a Foundation

The Uruk Framework provided the intellectual backbone for the National Project System. Its Six Core Principles, which also underpin Uruk's Strategy to Results series, reflect the convictions and mindset required for sustained success:

01

Project management is a core organizational function, requiring leadership, ownership, and investment, not a support activity to be delegated.

02

Governance is the backbone of decision-making, not an administrative burden.

03

Methodology must be adaptive and tailored, responsive to change and designed for context rather than dogmatic.

04

Value delivery requires integration across strategy, operations, and delivery, not fragmentation. Projects are investments and exist to deliver outcomes, not only outputs.

05

Organizational success must be predetermined, cultivated, and assessed, not accidental.

06

Capability requires the integration of People, Processes, and Technology. No single dimension is sufficient.

At national scale, these principles remain intact, but their application expands. Organizational capability becomes national capability. Governance must operate across ministries and authorities. Value must be understood in economic, social, institutional, and strategic terms. Adaptive methodology must accommodate different sectors while preserving a common national logic.

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From Framework to National Project System

The collaboration between Innavera and Uruk focused on translating these principles into a national project architecture. A system defines how components interact, not merely how they function individually. In national delivery, this means defining how strategies become portfolios, how decisions are made and escalated, how readiness is assessed, how performance is interpreted, how risk informs decisions, and how capability is sustained.

This thinking resulted in the National Project System (NPS). The NPS should not be confused with the institution that stewards it. In the proposed architecture, the national project management function can be represented through a dedicated National Project Authority or an adapted existing institution. That entity owns and stewards the NPS, while ministries, authorities, programs, and projects operate within the national system.

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The National Project System Architecture

The architecture separates institutional stewardship from the system itself. The NPA represents the authority responsible for developing, owning, governing, and sustaining the NPS. The NPS is the integrated national system. It comprises two core subsystems: the National Project Management System (NPMS), which governs how projects are selected, led, monitored, and assessed, and the National People System (NPeS), which develops and sustains the people and professional capability required to make the system effective.



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What Is the National Project System?

The National Project System is a unified, government-wide system that enables a country to translate strategy into projects and govern, execute, monitor, and continuously strengthen national project delivery with consistency and discipline.

It is not simply a PMO, a software platform, or a short-term reform. It is the institutional logic and management architecture through which national project delivery operates across the public sector.

Building on the Uruk Framework and Innavera's government delivery experience, the NPS can be understood as two connected subsystems: the National Project Management System (NPMS) and the National People System (NPeS). Together they integrate the management architecture required to deliver projects with the people architecture required to sustain national capability.

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The National Project Management System: Seven Integrated Elements

The original seven-element NPS model is best positioned within the NPMS. This preserves the strength of the operating model while separating the people system into its own national subsystem.

THE SEVEN NPMS ELEMENTS

1

National Strategy and Portfolio Alignment

Ensures that national visions and policy goals are translated into executable portfolios and outcomes. It introduces disciplined prioritization, sequencing, and value definition so that projects serve strategy rather than dilute it.

2 **National Governance Architecture**

Adapts Uruk's governance principles to a multi-tier national environment. It defines governance from national to ministry, portfolio, program, and project levels, clarifying decision rights, escalation pathways, ownership, and governance cadence.

3 **Value Delivery Lifecycle**

Builds directly on the Uruk Value Delivery Lifecycle by establishing adaptive, sector-specific lifecycles with clear stage gates, readiness criteria, assurance points, and operational handover requirements. It creates consistency without forcing infrastructure, digital, social, and PPP initiatives into an identical delivery method.

4 **National Performance Management System**

Translates Uruk's performance philosophy to national scale. It establishes common performance definitions, KPIs, reporting standards, corrective-action mechanisms, and early warning indicators so leaders can compare portfolios and act on reliable information.

5 **Risk-Enabled Decision Making**

Positions risk as an input to leadership and delivery decisions rather than a separate compliance exercise. National risk taxonomies, assurance mechanisms, decision thresholds, and escalation protocols help surface uncertainty early and ensure that material risks reach the appropriate level of authority.

6 **Success and Capability Assessment**

Extends the system beyond traditional measures of time, cost, and scope. This component draws on Uruk's Four Dimensions of Success and PCA Model to support a broader assessment of project and organizational success and to connect delivery performance with the capability required to improve future outcomes.

7 **Data, Systems, and Digital Backbone**

Provides the enabling infrastructure for the NPMS. A national project information architecture, data governance standards, interoperability, and a trusted source of portfolio information connect governance and decision-making with consistent data.

The National People System

A national project system cannot be sustained through policies, methods, governance, and technology alone. The second subsystem, the National People System (NPeS), addresses the human and professional infrastructure required to make the NPMS work in practice.

The NPeS provides a national approach to defining project roles and competencies, developing professionals and leaders, creating career and certification pathways, strengthening communities of practice, and building institutional capability across ministries and authorities. Depending on national needs, this can include a National PM Academy, competency frameworks, structured professional development, centers of excellence, and mechanisms for knowledge transfer and succession.

1 Competence Development

Builds the skills, knowledge, and capabilities people need to work effectively within the organization's governance and methodology, through structured competence frameworks and certifications.

2 Knowledge Management

Captures, organizes, and makes accessible the organization's own internal know-how, ensuring lessons and expertise are retained and shared rather than lost.

3 Career Management

Supports people's growth and progression within their organization's delivery practice, including career ladders and pathways tied to project management roles.

4 Localization

In some countries or regions, there is a need to build the competence of locals (nationals). This practice includes certain goals within a fixed time frame. Although the other elements cover some of this need, we propose a Localization Program as the best mechanism for achieving these goals.

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How the NPS Adopts and Extends the Uruk Framework

The NPS does not replace the Uruk Framework. It applies its principles at a different level of scale. Governance becomes national governance. Organizational value alignment becomes national strategy and portfolio alignment. The Value Delivery Lifecycle becomes an adaptable national lifecycle architecture. Performance and assurance are integrated into cross-government decision-making. The principle of People, Processes, and Technology becomes explicit through the relationship between the NPMS and NPeS.

Innavera's contribution to this adaptation has been the practical government context: cross-ministry dependencies, distributed decision rights, the difficulty of moving from policy to execution, and the need to build systems that can function across institutional boundaries. Uruk's contribution has been the structured project management philosophy, governance logic, value orientation, lifecycle thinking, and success and capability concepts required to turn those observations into a coherent architecture.

The result is neither a government-specific overlay on a corporate framework nor a collection of public-sector practices. It is an integrated national system built from the convergence of both.

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What the Collaboration Changed

For Innavera, the collaboration transformed accumulated government delivery experience into a coherent and repeatable national architecture. Lessons from individual engagements could be connected to a structured model rather than remain isolated solutions.

For Uruk, the collaboration extends the application of its framework from organizational project management to the national level. The Six Core Principles remain the foundation, while the NPS demonstrates how those principles can be translated into national governance, delivery, people, and institutional systems.

For governments, the outcome is practical. The NPS provides a way to see the whole delivery environment rather than address PMOs, methodologies, people development, tools, assurance, and portfolio governance as separate initiatives. It also provides flexibility in institutional design. A country may establish a dedicated National Project Authority, adapt an existing national institution, or use another structure appropriate to its governance context, while preserving the underlying system logic.

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A Shared Philosophy

At the heart of the collaboration is a shared belief. Delivery improves when systems are designed deliberately, not when controls are added reactively. Capability lasts when it is institutionalized, not when it is delegated to temporary programs. Projects create value when they are connected to strategy and outcomes, not when success is reduced to producing outputs.

The National Project System reflects this philosophy. It is the product of practice meeting structure, and experience meeting framework. It brings together the management system that governs national projects and the people system that sustains national capability, under an institutional model suited to each country.

As governments pursue increasingly complex transformation agendas, the need for this level of integration will continue to grow. The collaboration between Innavera and Uruk demonstrates that meaningful progress does not come from isolated expertise or another layer of oversight. It comes from connecting proven project management thinking with the realities of government delivery and turning both into a coherent national system.

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN

innavera

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Hasan Makansi is a business leader and venture builder working at the intersection of strategy, technology, and venture creation. As founder and CEO of Innavera, a consulting and venture studio operating across the Middle East and North America, he partners with governments, international organizations, corporations, and founders to turn ideas into scalable businesses and economic development initiatives. His consulting work ranges from national AI and digital government strategy for the Government of the UAE to public-sector healthcare and institutional digital transformation in Canada, including engagements with two Ontario government ministries and the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto. Through Innavera's venture studio he co-builds and operates companies across AI market intelligence, data annotation, crop protection, and consumer technology.



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With over 35 years of global experience, Mounir Ajam is a highly accomplished executive consultant, project management expert, and thought leader. He has led and advised on large-scale capital and infrastructure projects worth billions of US dollars, including megaprojects in petrochemicals, real estate, and government sectors. His experience spans the US, UK, Southeast Asia, West Asia, and the GCC, covering industrial, capital, and strategic initiatives. Mounir combines deep technical expertise with hands-on leadership and a commitment to innovation in project management systems and methods. Author of numerous books including the Vision Realized and the upcoming Strategy to Results series, which support the ideas presented in this paper. He has worked with global leaders such as Exxon, BASF, Shell, and Saudi Aramco, and delivered services to companies including SABIC, Ericsson, Etihad Airways, Emirates Global Aluminum, and numerous ministries and government agencies across West Asia and beyond.