

## STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

# From Statutory Mandate to Strategic Capability in Public Institutions: Repositioning the Kenya School of Government within a Changing Public-Sector Environment

## *A Conceptual Review Based on Desktop Analysis*

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### Abstract

This paper investigates how statutory public institutions can convert mandate-based institutional advantages into strategic capabilities that maintain relevance and performance amid evolving operating environments, using the Kenya School of Government (KSG) as a case study. Employing Strategic Fit Theory, the Resource-Based View, and dynamic capabilities frameworks, the study conducts a conceptual desktop review of institutional documents, national policy frameworks, and strategic management literature, supplemented by environmental, SWOT, and TOWS analyses. The findings indicate that KSG has substantial institutional resources, including statutory legitimacy, specialized public-sector expertise, national reach, institutional knowledge, and established government relationships. Nevertheless, fiscal constraints, technological advancements, the emergence of alternative service providers, and shifting stakeholder expectations increasingly challenge the institution's ability to convert these resources into sustained strategic value. Four interconnected capability domains are identified as critical for institutional repositioning: digital capability, financial resilience, research and knowledge differentiation, and strategic partnerships and institutional reach. The paper contends that statutory mandate, while fundamental for institutional legitimacy and positioning, does not ensure sustained strategic relevance. Rather than replacing existing institutional strengths, effective strategic repositioning requires intentional integration, adaptation, and renewal in response to environmental change. This study offers a capability-oriented perspective on public-sector strategic management by distinguishing mandate-based institutional advantage from capability-driven strategic positioning, with implications for Schools of Government and similar public institutions.

**Keywords:** statutory mandate; strategic capabilities; strategic repositioning; public institutions; resource-based view; Kenya School of Government

## 1 Introduction

Public-sector organizations face challenges like budget limits, rapid technology changes, shifting citizen expectations, reforms, growing citizens' expectation for better services and clear public value. These pressures show that having a statutory mandate or established position is not enough to stay relevant or perform well (Moore, 2013). Public institutions need both legitimacy and strategic capabilities to adapt, innovate and keep meeting new stakeholder needs. Strategic management is especially important because public organizations must not only meet legal requirements but also adjust their capabilities as conditions change (Chorn, 1991; Venkatraman & Prescott, 1990).

Strategic analysis helps organizations match their capabilities to environmental demands by assessing strengths, understanding change and planning effective responses (Grant, 2021). Using formal analysis gives decisions a solid, evidence-based foundation instead of relying only on intuition or small adjustments (Mueller et al., 2007). Still, environmental analysis is only useful if it leads to decisions about capabilities, positioning and future plans. The main challenge is not just to spot strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, but also to figure out how to use, update and combine resources to stay relevant and perform well.

This issue is especially important for public-sector capacity development institutions, which have a special role because of their legal mandates, government ties and public-sector expertise. However, they now face more competition for clients, expertise, partnerships and funding (Vining, 2011). More universities, professional institutes, consulting firms, international organizations and online learning providers mean public-sector clients have more choices (Kaje et al., 2026). New technologies like artificial intelligence, digital government, automation and blended learning have also changed capacity development, while budget pressures have increased the need for efficiency and clear results (Parycek et al., 2023). So, while statutory legitimacy is still valuable, it is not enough on its own to ensure long-term strategic advantage.

The Kenya School of Government (KSG) is a good example for studying this strategic issue. Created by the Kenya School of Government Act, 2012, KSG is Kenya's main public-sector capacity development institution, responsible for training, research, consulting and advisory services. Through its campuses and partnerships with ministries, agencies, county governments and other public organizations, KSG plays a key role in Kenya's public-sector transformation (KSG, 2023). Its strategy aligns with national goals like Kenya Vision 2030, the Fourth Medium-Term Plan and ongoing reforms. These plans focus more on professionalism, productivity, digital change, citizen-focused services and evidence-based policymaking.

KSG works in a fast-changing environment. Budget tightening may limit public spending on training and development, while new technologies are changing how knowledge and advisory services are delivered. More universities, professional institutes, consulting firms, regional schools and online providers now offer alternatives for capacity development and professional learning. At the same time, public-sector clients want more tailored services, clear results, high quality and real impact (Onyango & Mbatha, 2019). These challenges mean KSG cannot rely only on its legal mandate or past reputation. To stay relevant, KSG must turn its assets such as expertise, knowledge, national reach, reputation and combined training, research, consulting and advisory services into capabilities that create unique public value (Mayodi & Kamau, 2023).

### **1.1 Problem and conceptual gap**

The main strategic challenge for established public institutions is not a shortage of resources or legitimacy, but the ability to keep adapting these assets as the environment changes. For statutory organizations, having a legal mandate brings legitimacy, access and stability, but it can also lead to the false belief that their position alone ensures long-term advantage. In fast-changing environments, real advantage comes from using and combining resources well, not just having them (Ensign, 2001).

This issue is part of a broader question in strategic management about how institutional position, resources and adaptation to change connect. Strategic Fit Theory argues that organizations are effective when their internal strengths match external conditions (Chorn, 1991; Venkatraman & Prescott, 1990; Santa et al., 2025). The Resource-Based View (RBV) focuses on the value of unique,

hard-to-copy resources and how organizations use them to create advantage (Mahoney & Pandian, 1992). Both views suggest that resources become valuable when they fit the environment and are used through organizational capabilities.

For a statutory institution like KSG, it is important to distinguish between having resources and building the skills needed to use them well. KSG's legal mandate, public-sector focus, national reach, knowledge and relationships are valuable resources. But budget limits, digital changes, new competitors and changing expectations affect how useful these resources are. To stay relevant, KSG must adapt in areas like digital skills, financial health, knowledge creation, partnerships, service quality and agility (Browder et al., 2024).

While strategic-management frameworks are well developed for competitive organizations, using them in public institutions means considering legal mandates, accountability, public value and unique constraints. Public organizations must balance legal duties with responsiveness, innovation and changing stakeholder needs (Hansen & Jacobsen, 2016). Research also shows that tools for analyzing competition and the environment can be adapted for public agencies that compete for resources, expertise, clients, partnerships and legitimacy (Vining, 2011).

However, research has not focused much on how public-sector capacity development institutions can turn their mandate-based advantages into capabilities that sustain their value as conditions change. The gap is not just about using strategic-management tools in public institutions, but also about how these tools can help explain the shift from relying on a mandate to building real capabilities. Studying this shift helps connect environmental change, resources and strategic adaptation in the specific context of public-sector capacity development.

## **1.2 Analytical objectives**

### **1.2.1 General objective**

To examine how the Kenya School of Government can transform mandate-based institutional advantage into strategic capabilities that sustain institutional relevance and performance in a changing public-sector environment.

### **1.2.2 Specific objectives**

1. Identify and analyze the key environmental forces that are reshaping the strategic position and operating context of the Kenya School of Government.
2. Assess the institutional resources, strengths and capability gaps of the Kenya School of Government that influence its capacity to respond to environmental change.
3. Analyze the strategic alternatives that arise from aligning the Kenya School of Government's internal strengths and weaknesses with external opportunities and threats.
4. Determine the strategic capability domains that can enable the Kenya School of Government to enhance institutional relevance, resilience and public value creation.

## **1.3 Research questions**

1. What are the key environmental forces reshaping the strategic position and operating context of the Kenya School of Government?
2. What institutional resources, strengths and capability gaps influence the Kenya School of Government's capacity to respond to environmental change?

3. What strategic alternatives result from aligning the Kenya School of Government's internal strengths and weaknesses with external opportunities and threats?
4. Which strategic capability domains can enable the Kenya School of Government to enhance institutional relevance, resilience and public value creation?

#### **1.4 Significance of the study**

This study makes three interrelated contributions. First, it advances public-sector strategic management discourse by distinguishing between mandate-based institutional advantage and capability-driven strategic positioning. This distinction is particularly relevant for statutory institutions whose legitimacy and institutional access are legally established, but whose ongoing effectiveness depends on their capacity to respond to technological, fiscal, competitive and stakeholder changes.

Second, the study integrates Strategic Fit Theory and the Resource-Based View with environmental and TOWS analysis to establish an analytical pathway that links institutional resources to strategic adaptation. Instead of using environmental analysis tools solely to catalogue organizational conditions, the study employs them to identify how internal resources can be aligned, strengthened and deployed in response to environmental pressures.

Third, the capability domains identified through this study will present potential mechanisms for public sector capacity development institutions to enhance their strategic positioning. The domains also offer a framework for examining how established public institutions can convert statutory legitimacy, institutional knowledge and accumulated expertise into adaptive organizational capabilities.

The significance of this study extends beyond the Kenya School of Government. Public-sector capacity development institutions and Management Development Institutes operate in increasingly dynamic environments where statutory position and historical reputation may no longer guarantee continued relevance. Understanding how these institutions can align established resources with emerging environmental requirements provides valuable insights for strategic management, institutional resilience and public value creation across the broader public sector.

## **2 Literature review**

### **2.1 Strategic management in public institutions**

Strategic management involves aligning organizational purpose, resources and capabilities with external environmental conditions to achieve sustained performance (Bryson, 2018; Johnson et al., 2020). While foundational literature primarily addresses private-sector organizations, strategic management has gained significance for public institutions facing technological transformation, fiscal constraints, evolving stakeholder expectations and increased demands for improved performance (Bryson & George, 2020). Public organizations must allocate resources, develop institutional capabilities, manage service delivery and partnerships and establish strategic positioning, all while fulfilling statutory responsibilities and maintaining public accountability (Bryson, 2018; Moore, 1995).

The strategic context of public organizations differs significantly from that of private firms. While private-sector strategy typically emphasizes competitive positioning and financial performance, public institutions pursue multiple and often conflicting, objectives such as public value, accountability, service quality, policy implementation and institutional legitimacy (Moore, 1995; Bryson & George, 2020). Political oversight, institutional regulations, complex stakeholder relationships and

limited managerial autonomy further influence strategic decisions in the public sector (Ring & Perry, 1985; Boye et al., 2024). As a result, strategic management in public institutions requires balancing statutory continuity with adaptability to evolving environmental conditions.

Hansen and Jacobsen (2016) demonstrate that public-sector reforms affect organizational priorities and strategic management processes. Likewise, Haug et al. (2024) emphasize the necessity for public organizations to adapt to evolving policy, technological and institutional environments. These perspectives challenge the notion that statutory institutions can maintain relevance solely by adhering to established mandates. Instead, organizational performance increasingly depends on aligning institutional resources and operating models with emerging public-sector requirements (Poister et al., 2010).

This distinction is particularly significant for public-sector capacity development institutions, where statutory responsibilities often remain constant despite changes in client competencies, technologies and service delivery methods. Strategic repositioning thus entails maintaining statutory purpose while strengthening institutional capabilities to ensure continued effective implementation.

## **2.2 Environmental forces shaping public-sector institutional positioning**

Public institutions operate in environments marked by technological, economic, institutional and competitive change. Environmental analysis is essential for identifying external conditions that create opportunities, reveal institutional vulnerabilities and affect strategic performance (Zhang & Welch, 2023). While statutory mandates provide continuity, they do not shield public organizations from shifts in funding structures, policy priorities, stakeholder expectations, or alternative service delivery models.

Technological transformation constitutes a significant environmental force. Digital platforms, artificial intelligence, automation and new digital-government systems are changing the competencies required in public administration and how capacity development services are delivered (Parycek et al., 2023). These technologies diminish geographical barriers, broaden delivery channels and elevate expectations for flexible, customized and measurable learning interventions (Manny et al., 2021). As a result, established institutions must continuously evaluate whether their technological infrastructure, professional competencies and service models align with evolving requirements.

Fiscal pressures further influence institutional positioning. Resource constraints may limit public expenditure, restrict institutional investment and intensify competition for available funding (Gordon & Wilson, 2001). Public organizations reliant on traditional financing arrangements often possess reduced flexibility to address emerging priorities (Murphy et al., 2026). These circumstances heighten the strategic importance of operational efficiency, resource mobilization, partnerships and financially sustainable service models (Onyango et al., 2022).

Institutional reforms and evolving stakeholder expectations continue to reshape the operating environment. Public organizations are now expected to demonstrate measurable results, service responsiveness, innovation and value for public resources (Bryson & George, 2020; Haug et al., 2024). These expectations shape institutional priorities and require a reassessment of service delivery and performance management.

Competitive pressures are substantial; however, competition among public institutions extends beyond traditional market rivalry. Vining (2011) shows that competitive analysis matters for public agencies because of pressures from clients, suppliers, substitutes and alternative providers. Public

institutions may compete for funding, professional expertise, development partnerships, institutional influence and service users (Walker, 2013). Within public-sector capacity development, universities, professional institutes, consultancy firms, international organizations, and digitally enabled providers increasingly offer overlapping training, research, consultancy and advisory services (Laubek & Bourgeois, 2024).

These environmental forces do not inherently diminish the legitimacy of statutory institutions (Onyango, 2024). Rather, they alter the circumstances under which institutional resources and capabilities create value. For the Kenya School of Government (KSG), environmental analysis provides a basis for assessing how technological change, fiscal pressures, institutional reforms, stakeholder expectations and alternative service providers affect its strategic position within the public-sector capacity development context.

### **2.3 Institutional resources and capability gaps**

A statutory mandate constitutes a significant source of institutional legitimacy, formal authority, and organizational positioning within government (Gordon et al., 2009). Legislation defines institutional responsibilities, establishes relationships and provides a recognized foundation for organizational operations (Roberts & Milman, 2024). This positioning confers advantages such as access to government networks, policy processes, institutional knowledge and established relationships that non-statutory providers cannot easily replicate (Janowski et al., 2012).

The Resource-Based View (RBV) provides a theoretical framework for analyzing institutional advantages. According to the RBV, differences in organizational resources and capabilities lead to differences in strategic positioning and performance (Mahoney & Pandian, 1992; Barney et al., 2001). Strategically valuable resources include physical and financial assets, specialized knowledge, professional expertise, reputation, institutional relationships, organizational routines, and accumulated experience (Pee & Kankanhalli, 2016; Szymaniec-Mlicka, 2014).

In public-sector capacity development institutions, specialized knowledge of government systems, policy processes and administrative reforms represents a distinctive institutional resource (Szymaniec-Mlicka, 2014). Integration of this expertise in KSG, with training, research, consultancy and advisory services enables institutional differentiation (Melián-González et al., 2010). The strategic value of these resources increases when organizational activities are coordinated and mutually reinforcing rather than operating independently (Ensign, 2001).

However, merely possessing resources does not guarantee sustained institutional advantage. Peteraf (1993) highlights the strategic importance of organizational resources, while Ensign (2001) underscores the necessity of linkages among value-creating activities. The effectiveness of institutional resources depends on how they are organized, integrated, and deployed. An institution may have statutory legitimacy, qualified personnel, infrastructure and established networks, yet still face capability gaps in technology adoption, knowledge commercialization, organizational integration, or responsiveness to evolving stakeholder requirements (Pee & Kankanhalli, 2016).

For KSG, the statutory mandate, public-sector specialization, institutional experience, faculty expertise, national presence and government relationships constitute potential strategic resources. The integrated mandate, which encompasses training, research, consultancy and policy advisory services, offers opportunities for complementary value creation (Bryson et al., 2007). However, these resources' strategic contribution depends on their effective integration with digital delivery, research

and policy analysis, consultancy development, partnerships and organizational performance systems (Kosiol et al., 2023).

This analysis distinguishes institutional resources from organizational capabilities. Mandate-based advantage arises from formal authority, legitimacy and institutional positioning. In contrast, capability-based advantage depends on the organization's ability to mobilize and apply its resources in response to evolving public-sector needs. Therefore, evaluating institutional strengths should be accompanied by an assessment of capability gaps that may hinder adaptation.

## **2.4 Strategic alignment and institutional fit**

Strategic Fit Theory serves as a primary framework for analyzing how institutions align internal resources and capabilities with external environmental demands. This theory posits that organizational effectiveness relies on congruence among organizational characteristics, strategic choices and operating conditions. Chorn (1991) defines strategic alignment as the correspondence among strategy, capabilities and environmental requirements. Venkatraman and Prescott (1990) further highlight the importance of environment–strategy co-alignment for organizational performance.

A central implication of Strategic Fit Theory is that organizational strategies are not universally applicable in evolving environments. Strategies and capabilities that once supported institutional performance may become ineffective as technologies, stakeholder expectations, policy priorities, or competitive conditions change. Consequently, strategic effectiveness requires ongoing reassessment of the relationship between institutional resources and external requirements (Chorn, 1991; Lindquist, 2022).

For statutory public institutions, strategic alignment requires reconciling organizational mandates, institutional capabilities, stakeholder requirements and evolving policy environments. While legislation may restrict changes to an institution's core purpose, significant strategic flexibility often exists in the methods used to achieve that purpose. Institutions can adapt service-delivery models, enhance professional competencies, strengthen knowledge systems, form partnerships and reallocate resources while remaining within statutory responsibilities.

This perspective offers a conceptual rationale for integrating environmental and institutional analysis. Strategic alternatives should not be developed solely by identifying external opportunities or internal strengths in isolation. Instead, they should be grounded in the relationships between organizational capabilities and environmental conditions.

SWOT analysis offers a systematic method for identifying internal strengths and weaknesses alongside external opportunities and threats. TOWS analysis extends this approach by examining the interactions among these factors to generate strategic alternatives (Ravanavar & Charantimath, 2012; Gürel & Tat, 2017). Resulting strategic responses may include leveraging strengths to exploit opportunities, using strengths to mitigate threats, addressing weaknesses through available opportunities, or minimizing vulnerabilities arising from the interaction of weaknesses and threats (Pablo et al., 2007).

Strategic Fit Theory serves as the explanatory foundation for the TOWS process. The value of a strategic alternative depends not only on its inclusion in a strategy matrix but also on its capacity to enhance alignment between institutional resources and emerging environmental requirements. In the context of KSG, this approach facilitates the identification of strategic responses that leverage mandate-derived strengths while addressing capability gaps and external pressures.

## 2.5 Developing strategic capabilities for institutional relevance and public value

Capability-driven strategic positioning emphasizes an institution's capacity to integrate, deploy and renew its resources to generate sustained value. While the Resource-Based View explains the strategic importance of institution-specific resources, the dynamic capability perspective highlights the necessity for adaptation and reconfiguration in response to environmental change.

Findsrud (2020) emphasizes the importance of agile resource integration in service innovation, arguing that organizational value derives not only from resource possession but also from their adaptive combination. The dynamic capability perspective similarly extends resource-based reasoning by stressing the renewal and reconfiguration of organizational resources in response to changing conditions (Miller, 2025). For public institutions, such adaptation may include strengthening professional competencies, redesigning services, integrating technology, developing partnerships and transforming accumulated institutional knowledge into new forms of public value (Piening, 2013).

Within public-sector capacity development, four interrelated capability domains are especially relevant.

1. **Digital capability and service transformation.** Digital platforms, artificial intelligence, analytics and blended learning create opportunities to expand institutional reach, improve accessibility and enhance service responsiveness (Baadel et al., 2026). However, acquiring technology alone does not guarantee digital capability. Effective transformation requires complementary investments in professional competencies, governance structures, organizational processes and institutional learning (Pablo et al., 2007). Digital capability is defined as the capacity to integrate technology into the design, delivery and continuous improvement of institutional services.
2. **Financial resilience and resource sustainability.** Fiscal constraints heighten the importance of institutional capacity to mobilize, diversify and efficiently deploy financial resources (Gordon & Wilson, 2001). Financial resilience can be strengthened through strategic partnerships, consultancy services, specialized programs, resource mobilization and operational efficiency. In public institutions, financial resilience should not be equated with revenue maximization. Its strategic significance lies in enabling institutions to sustain statutory functions, invest in emerging capabilities and maintain service continuity amid changing resource conditions (Nyamita & Wanamboe, 2015).
3. **Research, knowledge and advisory differentiation.** Public-sector capacity development institutions accumulate substantial knowledge through interactions with government agencies, public servants and policy processes. The strategic value of this knowledge depends on its systematic generation, codification and translation into research outputs, consultancy services, policy advice and improved capacity development interventions (Guleid et al., 2026). Integrating research, consultancy and advisory services with training enhances institutional differentiation and reinforces complementarities among organizational activities (Seabrooke & Sending, 2022; Ensign, 2001).
4. **Strategic partnerships and institutional reach.** Collaboration with government agencies, universities, development organizations, regional management development institutes and international partners enables knowledge exchange, institutional learning, resource mobilization and joint program development. These collaborative arrangements give public institutions access to complementary expertise, strengthen organizational capabilities and extend institutional reach

beyond existing operational boundaries (OECD, 2021). Therefore, strategic partnerships are a primary mechanism for KSG to leverage external resources and expertise, enhancing its adaptive capacity, institutional relevance and strategic positioning.

These four domains provide a framework for analyzing how KSG can transform its statutory mandate and institutional resources into capabilities that sustain relevance, resilience and public value creation. Their significance lies in evaluating their strategic suitability in relation to environmental pressures, institutional strengths, capability gaps and strategic alternatives identified through analysis, rather than treating them as predetermined solutions.

## **2.6 The Mandate–Fit–Capability Pathway: An integrated analytical framework**

Existing literature indicates that effective strategic repositioning in statutory public institutions requires more than formal authority or accumulated resources. It demands comprehensive awareness of environmental changes, rigorous assessment of internal capabilities, identification of strategic alignment or misalignment and the development of institutional capabilities that sustain public value.

This study integrates Strategic Fit Theory and the Resource-Based View, with dynamic capabilities providing an adaptive perspective. Strategic Fit Theory emphasizes aligning institutional resources and strategic choices with environmental requirements (Chorn, 1991; Venkatraman & Prescott, 1990). The Resource-Based View explains how institution-specific resources underpin strategic advantage (Mahoney & Pandian, 1992). Dynamic capability reasoning details the processes by which these resources are integrated, renewed and reconfigured in response to evolving operating conditions (Findsrud, 2020; Pablo et al., 2007).

The Mandate–Fit–Capability Pathway conceptualizes institutional strategic repositioning through the following analytical progression:

Statutory mandate and institutional resources → Environmental pressures and opportunities → Strategic fit or misalignment → Strategic alternatives and resource reconfiguration → Strategic capability development → Institutional relevance, resilience, and public value creation.

The pathway is implemented through four interconnected analytical stages. First, environmental analysis identifies the technological, economic, institutional, and competitive forces shaping KSG's strategic position. Second, internal analysis assesses the School's institutional resources, strengths and capability gaps. Third, SWOT and TOWS analyses link internal and external factors and generate strategic alternatives (Ravanavar & Charantimath, 2012; Gürel & Tat, 2017). Fourth, these alternatives are interpreted to identify capability domains requiring enhancement. This framework advances traditional SWOT/TOWS analysis by focusing on transforming mandate-derived institutional advantages into adaptive organizational capabilities. It prioritizes digital capability, financial resilience, research and knowledge differentiation and strategic partnerships and institutional reach as the primary capability domains for analysis, rather than relying on assumptions about past institutional performance.

For KSG, this framework provides a structured approach to analyzing how statutory legitimacy and accumulated institutional resources translate into strategic capabilities that address a changing public-sector environment. More broadly, it offers an analytical perspective on the relationship between institutional mandate, strategic alignment, and capability development within public-sector capacity development institutions.

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## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Study design

This study employs a conceptual desktop-review design, utilizing KSG as an illustrative institutional case. Rather than testing causal relationships or estimating population parameters, the objective is to synthesize documentary and theoretical evidence to elucidate how statutory institutional advantage may translate into adaptive strategic capability. KSG is an analytically relevant case because its statutory mandate integrates training, research, consultancy and policy advisory services, while it faces technological, fiscal, competitive and stakeholder pressures that reshape its operating environment.

### 3.2 Documentary corpus and evidence base

The analysis drew upon documentary evidence related to KSG's mandate, strategic direction and operating environment. The principal institutional source was the Kenya School of Government Strategic Plan 2023–2027 (KSG, 2023), which was supplemented by statutory and national policy frameworks cited in the strategic analyses, including the Kenya School of Government Act, Kenya Vision 2030, the Fourth Medium-Term Plan and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda.

These institutional sources were assessed alongside scholarly literature on strategic management, environmental change, public-sector competition, strategic fit and organizational resources. Documentary evidence was selected based on its relevance to three analytical dimensions: KSG's institutional mandate and resources, changes in its external operating environment and strategic responses associated with institutional capability development.

The documentary approach enabled analysis of formal institutional priorities and environmental conditions without including primary empirical evidence beyond the source material. As a result, the findings constitute a strategic interpretation of documentary evidence, rather than insights derived from interviews, surveys, or direct organizational observation.

### 3.3 Analytical pathway: From environmental signals to capability propositions

The analysis followed three interrelated stages. First, the external environment was selectively examined using PESTEL and competitive-analysis frameworks. Rather than applying every PESTEL or Five Forces category uniformly, the analysis focused on environmental factors with direct strategic implications for KSG. These factors included public-sector reform and policy change, fiscal constraints, technological transformation, evolving stakeholder expectations, alternative providers, digital substitutes and increasing client demands. Competitive pressures were interpreted within a public-sector context, recognizing that public organizations may compete for clients, resources, expertise, partnerships and institutional relevance, rather than solely for commercial market share (Vining, 2011).

Second, the internal analysis concentrated on institutional resources and capability constraints. Particular attention was given to KSG's statutory mandate, public-sector specialization, national presence, institutional knowledge, faculty expertise and integrated functions in training, research, consultancy and policy advisory services. The study also analyzed constraints related to digital transformation, financial dependence, organizational agility, research commercialization and resource mobilization. This stage followed the Resource-Based View, which emphasizes the strategic significance of organizational resources and their configuration (Mahoney & Pandian, 1992).

Third, the study synthesized internal and external factors using SWOT and TOWS analyses. SWOT provided a structured framework for consolidating strategically significant strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Coman & Ronen, 2009). TOWS subsequently matched these factors through Strengths–Opportunities (SO), Weaknesses–Opportunities (WO), Strengths–Threats (ST) and Weaknesses–Threats (WT) combinations to generate strategic alternatives (Ravanavar & Charantimath, 2012; Gürel & Tat, 2017).

The resulting strategic alternatives were organized by underlying strategic purpose rather than as discrete recommendations. This synthesis identified four recurring capability domains: digital capability, financial resilience, research and knowledge differentiation and strategic partnerships and institutional reach. Strategic Fit Theory was employed to interpret these capabilities in terms of alignment between KSG and its evolving environment (Chorn, 1991; Venkatraman & Prescott, 1990), while the Resource-Based View informed the analysis of how existing institutional resources could be configured to support differentiated strategic value.

### **3.4 Interpretive boundaries and limitations**

Several limitations are inherent in this methodology. As a single-case documentary study, the analysis does not establish causal relationships between specific capabilities and institutional performance, nor does it directly capture stakeholder perceptions. Furthermore, SWOT and TOWS analyses require interpretive judgment in selecting and matching strategic factors. Accordingly, the findings should be considered analytically derived strategic propositions rather than statistically generalizable conclusions.

Nevertheless, integrating documentary evidence with explicit environmental, resource and TOWS analytical procedures provides a transparent foundation for examining KSG's strategic position. This case further offers analytical insights that may be relevant to comparable public-sector capacity development institutions facing similar pressures, while recognizing that institutional mandates and operating environments differ across contexts.

## **4 Findings and discussion**

### **4.1 The changing strategic landscape: Environmental pressures and opportunities**

The environmental analysis shows that the Kenya School of Government (KSG) operates in a dynamic public-sector environment where statutory legitimacy remains necessary but insufficient for sustained strategic relevance. Established under the Kenya School of Government Act, 2012, KSG is mandated to provide training, research, consultancy and policy advisory services to enhance public-sector competence and institutional effectiveness. Its presence in Nairobi, Baringo, Embu, Matuga and Mombasa offers a comprehensive platform for serving ministries, departments, agencies, county governments and other public-sector institutions.

KSG's strategic position is reinforced by its alignment with Kenya's national development and governance priorities, including Kenya Vision 2030, the Fourth Medium-Term Plan (MTP IV), the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) and ongoing public-sector reforms. These frameworks create opportunities for capacity development in leadership, governance, productivity, digital transformation, institutional performance and evidence-informed policymaking. Consistent with the United Nations Development Program's multidimensional approach to capacity develop-

ment, KSG's mandate supports contributions that extend beyond individual competency to encompass organizational and institutional transformation (UNDP, 2015).

The analysis identifies four interrelated environmental forces reshaping KSG's strategic position: public-sector reforms, fiscal pressures, technological transformation and evolving stakeholder expectations. These factors are further intensified by increasing competition and the availability of substitute services within the capacity-development sector.

Public-sector reforms consistently generate demand for new professional competencies and expose institutions to evolving policy priorities and administrative structures. KSG's close relationship with government enables it to align its programs, research and advisory services with emerging reform requirements. However, shifting government priorities may affect institutional resource allocation and the relevance of existing programs (Joshi & Carter, 2015). Strategic responsiveness therefore requires KSG to translate evolving public-sector priorities into targeted capacity-development interventions, rather than relying solely on established program portfolios.

Fiscal pressures present a related challenge. Constraints on public expenditure may reduce resources for training and institutional development while increasing demand for productivity, efficiency and improved resource management (Imbunya, 2026). This situation creates a dual strategic imperative: KSG must address emerging capacity-development needs and strengthen its own financial sustainability. Potential responses include partnerships, consultancy, specialized programs and resource mobilization, although their effectiveness depends on institutional implementation capacity (Wamalwa et al., 2022).

Technological transformation represents a significant environmental force. Advances in artificial intelligence, automation, analytics, digital government and blended learning are reshaping both the competencies required in public administration and the modalities of professional learning delivery (Parycek et al., 2023). Consequently, KSG must develop public servants' digital government competencies and transform its learning, knowledge management and service delivery systems. Furthermore, digital platforms allow alternative providers to serve public-sector clients without substantial physical infrastructure, reducing the traditional advantage of geographical presence.

Evolving stakeholder expectations continue to influence institutional positioning. Public-sector clients increasingly require customized programs, flexible delivery, demonstrable quality and clear evidence of organizational impact. At the same time, public-service modernization emphasizes responsiveness, innovation, and citizen-centered outcomes (Charité et al., 2025). These expectations shift institutional value from program provision to the measurable contribution of capacity-development interventions to organizational performance (Seneyia et al., 2026).

Competitive and sectoral dynamics further intensify these pressures. Although KSG is a statutory institution rather than a traditional commercial enterprise, it operates alongside universities, professional institutes, consultancy firms, international organizations and digitally enabled providers offering overlapping services. As a result, competition extends beyond pricing to include expertise, innovation, service quality, reputation, partnerships and institutional relevance (Vining, 2011; Hart & Rodgers, 2023). The proliferation of virtual learning and professional certification programs increases the range of available substitutes and reduces geographical barriers to participation (Yap, 2012).

Collectively, these findings indicate that KSG's operating environment is changing the conditions under which its statutory mandate and institutional resources generate strategic value (Mayodi &

Kamau, 2025). Public-sector reform, technological transformation and evolving client requirements offer opportunities for institutional renewal, while fiscal constraints and alternative providers increase the need for differentiation and adaptability. The strategic implication is that mandate-based institutional positioning must be supported by capabilities that are responsive to emerging public-sector requirements.

#### 4.2 The institutional resource base: Strengths, constraints and capability gaps

The internal analysis identifies substantial institutional resources that provide KSG with the potential for a distinctive strategic advantage. These resources comprise a statutory mandate, specialized public-sector knowledge, national presence, institutional reputation, faculty expertise and established relationships with government entities. The integrated mandate, which includes training, research, consultancy and policy advisory services, facilitates the creation of complementary value across organizational functions.

The Resource-Based View (RBV) framework treats these attributes as strategically significant resources embedded in the School's institutional history, mandate and relationships (Kosiol et al., 2023). The statutory position provides legitimacy and access, while accumulated public-sector knowledge and faculty expertise differentiate KSG from providers that focus primarily on generic training or consultancy services (Mahoney & Pandian, 1992).

The strategic value of these resources depends on their effective integration and deployment. For instance, research activities may inform curriculum development and policy advice; consultancy can identify emerging institutional challenges; training can reveal competency gaps; and engagement with government can establish research and advisory priorities. These complementarities support Ensign's (2001) argument that organizational advantage arises from linkages among value-creating activities rather than from isolated resources.

The analysis also identifies potential constraints on KSG's capacity to adapt to environmental changes. Uneven progress in digital transformation may limit responsiveness to technology-enabled learning and the development of new public-sector competencies (Cooper, 2025). Dependence on government-related expenditure increases vulnerability to fiscal pressures, while administrative processes inherent in public-sector systems may restrict organizational agility (Lu & Zhao, 2019). Additionally, challenges in research commercialization, knowledge-product development and resource mobilization may hinder the conversion of institutional expertise into further strategic value (Jjagwe et al., 2024).

These constraints should be treated as capability gaps requiring institutional assessment, rather than as independently quantified performance deficiencies. Although available desktop evidence confirms their strategic relevance, it does not establish their extent across KSG's campuses and functions. The strategic diagnosis is synthesized in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Synthesis of KSG's strategic diagnosis.

| Dimension              | Key strategic factors                                                                                         | SWOT interpretation |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Institutional position | Statutory mandate; public-sector specialization; national presence; reputation and government relationships   | Strengths           |
| Knowledge resources    | Faculty expertise; institutional knowledge; integrated training, research, consultancy and advisory functions | Strengths           |

| Dimension                 | Key strategic factors                                                                                                  | SWOT interpretation               |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Institutional constraints | Uneven digital transformation; organizational-process constraints; limited commercialization and resource mobilization | Weaknesses                        |
| Financial position        | Dependence on government-related expenditure and conventional revenue streams                                          | Weakness                          |
| Policy environment        | Public-sector reforms and continuing demand for leadership, productivity and institutional-development competencies    | Opportunity                       |
| Technology                | AI, digital government, analytics and blended learning                                                                 | Opportunity and adaptive pressure |
| Partnerships              | Potential collaboration with government, development partners, academic institutions and regional MDIs                 | Opportunity                       |
| Fiscal environment        | Constraints on public expenditure and training budgets                                                                 | Threat                            |
| Sectoral dynamics         | Alternative training, consultancy and digital-learning providers                                                       | Threat                            |
| Client expectations       | Greater demand for flexibility, customization, quality and measurable impact                                           | Opportunity and threat            |

Table 1 demonstrates that KSG's strategic position is defined by strong institutional foundations and evolving capability requirements. The principal challenge lies not in resource scarcity, but in configuring and deploying these resources to respond effectively to technological, fiscal, institutional, and competitive changes.

This distinction elucidates the relationship between mandate-based and capability-based advantages. A statutory mandate provides institutional legitimacy, recognized positioning, and access to government systems. However, the sustained strategic value of these advantages depends on organizational capabilities that enable the School to adapt to evolving public-sector needs. The findings therefore support viewing statutory legitimacy as a strategic resource rather than a substitute for strategy.

#### 4.3 Transitioning from strategic diagnosis to strategic choice: Evidence from TOWS analysis

Environmental and institutional analyses provide the basis for evaluating strategic alternatives using the TOWS framework. Whereas SWOT identifies key internal and external factors, TOWS examines their interaction to generate strategic responses. This methodology aligns with Strategic Fit Theory, which emphasizes matching organizational capabilities with environmental requirements (Chorn, 1991; Venkatraman & Prescott, 1990).

The analysis identifies four strategic orientations. Strength–Opportunity (SO) strategies seek to leverage KSG's mandate, public-sector expertise, institutional relationships and national presence to capitalize on emerging opportunities. Weakness–Opportunity (WO) strategies focus on utilizing technological advancements, partnerships and emerging competency requirements to address internal capability gaps. Strength–Threat (ST) strategies emphasize differentiation through specialized public-sector knowledge and integrated institutional services. Weakness–Threat (WT) strategies prioritize financial sustainability, operational efficiency and modernization to mitigate fiscal and competitive risks. The resulting TOWS synthesis is given in Table 2.

**Table 2.** TOWS synthesis and strategic capability implications.

| TOWS orientation                              | Strategic response                                                                                                                                                           | Capability implication                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SO: Use strengths to exploit opportunities    | Leverage mandate, reputation, public-sector expertise and networks to expand specialized capacity development, consultancy, advisory services and institutional partnerships | Research and knowledge differentiation; partnerships and institutional reach |
| WO: Use opportunities to address weaknesses   | Use digital technologies, partnerships and emerging competency requirements to accelerate digital transformation, strengthen quality and expand access to resources          | Digital capability; partnerships; financial resilience                       |
| ST: Use strengths to mitigate threats         | Differentiate KSG from alternative providers through specialized public-sector knowledge, research, consultancy, policy advice and integrated institutional solutions        | Research and knowledge differentiation                                       |
| WT: Reduce weaknesses and exposure to threats | Diversify revenue, improve operational efficiency, modernize service delivery and reduce vulnerability to fiscal and competitive pressures                                   | Financial resilience; digital capability                                     |

The TOWS synthesis reveals convergence among the four strategic orientations. Although individual responses stem from unique combinations of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, they consistently emphasize a core set of organizational capabilities. For example, digital modernization addresses internal delivery limitations and mitigates risks associated with technology-enabled substitutes. Integrating research and consultancy creates differentiation opportunities and strengthens financial sustainability. Likewise, partnerships expand reach, provide access to specialized expertise, and help mitigate resource constraints.

This convergence suggests that strategic repositioning should not be seen as implementing discrete initiatives derived from the TOWS matrix. Instead, the strategic alternatives can be consolidated into four mutually reinforcing capability domains: digital capability, financial resilience, research and knowledge differentiation, and strategic partnerships and institutional reach.

This finding matters because it shifts the emphasis from strategic diagnosis to capability selection. Strategic Fit Theory underscores the necessity for KSG to align institutional resources with evolving environmental requirements (Venkatraman & Camillus, 1984). Conversely, the Resource-Based View (RBV) shows how existing assets can form the foundation for differentiated institutional value (Lee & Chen, 2021). The TOWS analysis integrates these perspectives by identifying strategic responses that enable KSG to mobilize internal resources to address external conditions.

#### 4.4 From mandate to capability: Strategic priorities for KSG repositioning

The TOWS synthesis identifies four interconnected capability domains through which KSG can enhance institutional relevance, resilience and public value creation. These domains are not isolated organizational projects but complementary capacities whose strategic contribution depends on their integration.

##### 4.4.1 Digital capability: From technology acquisition to institutional transformation

Digital capability emerges from the interaction among technological opportunities, evolving public-sector competency requirements and the imperative to modernize institutional service delivery. Artificial intelligence, digital government, analytics, and blended learning generate opportunities to

expand access and develop innovative forms of capacity development, while technology-enabled providers increase the availability of substitutes (Kimathi, 2026).

For KSG, digital capability extends beyond acquiring technological infrastructure. It requires integrating digital systems into program design, delivery, knowledge management, institutional processes and client engagement. Faculty digital competencies, technology-enabled learning programs, organizational learning and robust governance arrangements are therefore essential for effective transformation (Saoke et al., 2026).

The WO orientation highlights the opportunity to leverage technological developments to address existing delivery limitations, while the WT orientation positions digital modernization as a response to competitive and operational vulnerabilities. As a result, digital capability serves three interrelated purposes: improving operational efficiency, enhancing service responsiveness and ensuring the School remains relevant to evolving public administration competency requirements.

The strategic value of digital capability should ultimately be evaluated by improvements in accessibility, program relevance, delivery quality, and institutional effectiveness, rather than by technology acquisition alone.

#### **4.4.2 Financial resilience: Sustaining institutional adaptability**

Financial resilience results from the interplay of fiscal constraints, reliance on conventional funding arrangements and opportunities for consultancy, specialized programs, partnerships and resource mobilization. Restrictions on public expenditure may affect institutional revenue and limit resources available for investment in emerging capabilities (Rutto et al., 2024).

The TOWS analysis suggests that revenue diversification, operational efficiency, enhanced utilization of consultancy and advisory functions, and strategic partnerships are potential responses. These approaches should not be interpreted as shifting KSG's statutory purpose toward a primarily commercial orientation. Rather, financial resilience refers to the capacity to sustain mandate execution, maintain service continuity, and invest in strategic priorities despite fluctuating resource conditions.

Financial resilience is closely connected to the other capability domains. Research and consultancy can generate additional institutional value and support revenue diversification (Ouma et al., 2026). Partnerships can provide technical and financial support, while digital delivery may expand institutional reach and improve operational efficiency.

The strategic priority is to develop sufficient financial flexibility to support institutional adaptation while upholding public-service obligations.

#### **4.4.3 Research and knowledge differentiation: Strengthening KSG's public-sector value proposition**

Research and knowledge differentiation is especially prominent in the SO and ST strategic orientations. KSG's specialized knowledge of government systems, established institutional relationships and integrated mandate encompassing training, research, consultancy, and policy advisory services provide a foundation for differentiation from alternative capacity-development providers (KSG, 2023).

The strategic opportunity lies in strengthening the relationships among these functions. Research can generate evidence for curriculum development and policy advice; consultancy can identify emerging organizational challenges; training can reveal competency gaps; and engagement with government

can inform research priorities. These complementarities support Ensign's (2001) assertion that strategic advantage arises from linkages among organizational activities.

This capability domain therefore requires moving beyond individual training programs toward integrated, knowledge-based capacity development. Enhanced research outputs, policy analysis, consultancy services, and institutional knowledge products could enable KSG to translate accumulated public-sector expertise into distinctive and relevant services (KSG, 2023).

The strategic significance of knowledge differentiation extends beyond competition with alternative providers. It also encompasses KSG's potential contribution to evidence-informed policymaking, institutional learning, and public-sector transformation.

#### **4.4.4 Strategic partnerships and institutional reach: Extending capability beyond organizational boundaries**

Strategic partnerships and institutional reach stem from KSG's established government relationships, national presence, and opportunities for collaboration with external institutions. The SO orientation indicates that these strengths provide a platform to expand institutional influence, while the WO orientation suggests that partnerships can help address resource, technological and expertise constraints.

Collaboration with government agencies, universities, development partners, regional Management Development Institutes and international organizations can facilitate joint programming, research collaboration, faculty development, technology transfer and resource mobilization (Ondulo et al., 2026). Partnerships are more than external relationships; they serve as mechanisms for accessing and combining complementary organizational resources.

KSG's national campus network also serves as an established platform for extending capacity-development services. When integrated with digital delivery and collaborative institutional networks, this physical presence can support broader national and regional engagement. The strategic value of partnerships depends not only on the number of agreements established, but also on their contribution to knowledge exchange, program development, institutional learning, resource access and public value creation.

#### **4.5 The Mandate-Fit-Capability Pathway: Interpreting strategic transition**

The primary conceptual finding of this review is that strategic repositioning in statutory public institutions involves transforming mandate-derived institutional advantages into adaptive organizational capabilities, rather than replacing the statutory mandate with a market-oriented strategy.

KSG's statutory mandate provides legitimacy, institutional access and a recognized position within Kenya's public-sector framework. Its institutional history has generated specialized knowledge, professional expertise, infrastructure, and networks. However, environmental changes are altering the conditions under which these resources generate value (Narayan et al., 2023). The institution's strategic relevance therefore depends on its capacity to integrate, renew and deploy its resource base in response to evolving requirements (Wanja & Kibas, 2026).

This interpretation highlights the Resource-Based View's explanatory strength. Although strategically valuable and difficult-to-replicate resources can support institutional differentiation (Mahoney & Pandian, 1992), possession alone does not ensure sustained performance. KSG's mandate and accumulated public-sector knowledge represent potential strategic advantages, but their value depends on effective mobilization. Ensign's (2001) emphasis on complementarities among organizational

activities further suggests that integrating training, research, consultancy and policy advisory functions may generate greater institutional value than operating these functions separately.

Strategic Fit Theory provides a complementary perspective. Organizational effectiveness depends on the continuous alignment between institutional capabilities and environmental demands (Chorn, 1991; Venkatraman & Prescott, 1990). For KSG, factors such as digital transformation, fiscal constraints, alternative service providers and evolving stakeholder expectations require reassessing resource deployment. The national campus network, for example, retains value but could strengthen its strategic contribution by integrating digital learning and collaborative delivery models.

Dynamic-capabilities scholarship further clarifies mechanisms for sustaining alignment. Teece et al. (1997) and Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) emphasize integrating and reconfiguring organizational resources in response to changing conditions, while Winter (2003) distinguishes between institutionalized organizational capabilities and episodic problem-solving. For KSG, this suggests embedding adaptation in organizational routines such as environmental scanning, strategic learning, program renewal, resource mobilization and partnership development, rather than relying on ad hoc responses to emerging challenges (Nyakombo & Rugami, 2025).

These findings support the proposed Mandate-Fit-Capability Pathway. It synthesizes the four analytical stages examined in this study. Environmental analysis identifies the forces reshaping KSG's operating context; institutional analysis assesses its resources and capability gaps; TOWS analysis establishes strategic alternatives through internal-external alignment; and capability synthesis determines the organizational capacities through which the School may strengthen its strategic position.

Another implication is that the four capability domains should operate as an integrated system. Digital capability can expand institutional reach and facilitate knowledge dissemination. Research and consultancy can enhance institutional differentiation and support financial resilience. Partnerships provide access to expertise, technology and resources, while financial resilience enables ongoing investment in digital and knowledge capabilities (Muriu, 2026). This interdependence aligns with resource-based and dynamic-capabilities frameworks, which emphasize complementarities and resource reconfiguration (Mahoney & Pandian, 1992; Ensign, 2001; Teece et al., 1997).

The primary criterion for strategic capability in a statutory public institution is not competitive advantage alone but the contribution to public value. Bryson et al. (2014) highlight public value, collaboration and responsiveness to multiple stakeholders as central considerations in contemporary public governance. For KSG, financial resilience is valuable when it sustains mandate execution; digital capability when it improves accessibility and effectiveness; knowledge differentiation when it strengthens evidence-informed public administration; and partnerships when they expand institutional capacity to address public-sector needs.

A broader conceptual implication is that statutory legitimacy and organizational adaptability function as complementary, rather than competing, foundations of institutional performance (Suchman, 1995). Mandate ensures continuity and public purpose; strategic fit establishes the need for responsiveness; institutional resources provide the basis for differentiation; and adaptive capabilities enable ongoing renewal.

For other Schools of Government and Management Development Institutes, the proposed pathway offers an analytical framework for evaluating how established institutional advantages can be

transformed into contemporary capabilities. However, its broader applicability remains a conceptual proposition that requires further comparative and empirical investigation (Oliver & Holzinger, 2008).

The KSG case demonstrates a fundamental distinction between mandate-based institutional advantage and capability-driven public value creation. Sustained strategic relevance depends not on abandoning statutory foundations, but on continuously transforming those foundations into organizational capabilities that align with evolving public-sector requirements.

## 5 Conclusion and recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusion

This study examined how the Kenya School of Government (KSG) can transform mandate-based institutional advantages into strategic capabilities that sustain relevance, resilience and public value in a dynamic public-sector environment. The analysis demonstrates that, while a statutory mandate confers legitimacy, institutional access and strategic positioning, these elements alone do not guarantee sustained institutional relevance.

The findings indicate that technological transformation, fiscal constraints, evolving stakeholder expectations and the rise of alternative service providers are reshaping the context in which KSG creates value. Although the School has distinctive resources, including public-sector expertise, national reach, institutional knowledge and established government relationships, their strategic value depends on effective integration, deployment, and continual renewal.

Environmental, resource and TOWS analyses identify four interdependent capabilities as critical to KSG's strategic repositioning: digital capability, financial resilience, research and knowledge differentiation and strategic partnerships that expand institutional reach. Together, these capabilities provide the foundation for shifting from mandate-dependent positioning to adaptive, knowledge-driven institutional performance.

The principal conceptual contribution of this study is the Mandate-Fit-Capability Pathway, which explains how statutory resources can be transformed into strategic capabilities through environmental alignment, strategic decision-making and resource reconfiguration. This framework positions institutional adaptation as a means of sustaining statutory relevance rather than deviating from statutory purpose.

In summary, statutory mandate confers institutional legitimacy, whereas strategic capability determines the institution's capacity to maintain relevance and generate public value. For KSG and comparable public institutions, the strategic imperative is not to redefine the mandate, but to continuously renew the capabilities that enable its fulfillment.

### 5.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that the Kenya School of Government implement an integrated capability-development agenda to enhance responsiveness to evolving public-sector demands. A central element of this transformation is the institutionalization of digital capability through technology-enabled learning, artificial intelligence, data analytics and faculty skill enhancement. Targeted financial diversification, including specialized programs, consultancy, advisory services and strategic resource mobilization, should support these initiatives and reinforce institutional resilience.

KSG should further position itself as a leading public-sector knowledge and policy advisory institution by strengthening integration among research, training, consultancy and policy advisory functions. This approach would help translate institutional expertise into actionable research, evidence-based policy solutions and responsive capacity-development interventions. Strategic partnerships with government agencies, universities, development partners and regional and international Management Development Institutes should underpin this positioning through joint programming, knowledge exchange, resource mobilization and expanded institutional reach.

To sustain these capabilities, KSG should embed strategic intelligence, organizational learning and adaptive performance management within its institutional systems. Continuous environmental scanning, capability assessments and evidence-based strategic reviews should inform resource allocation, institutional priorities and program renewal. Performance measurement should extend beyond activity implementation and output reporting to encompass assessments of institutional responsiveness, service effectiveness and public value creation. The primary recommendation is to shift from managing statutory functions as isolated activities to developing an integrated, adaptive institutional capability system that consistently translates mandate into measurable public value.

### 5.3 Limitations and future research

As a conceptual desktop review, this study relies on documentary evidence and interpretive strategic analysis. Consequently, its findings offer analytical propositions rather than empirically validated relationships between institutional capabilities and performance.

Future research should empirically evaluate the Mandate–Fit–Capability Pathway through stakeholder-based assessments, comparative analyses of mandate-based institutions and longitudinal studies that examine how capability development influences institutional relevance, resilience, and public value.

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