

Public Policy Management: W6. **Policy Planning Process**

Geetha Rani Prakasam,
ICCR Chair Professor,
DBS, UNITECH, Lae, PNG.

Week	Main Topics	Key words
1	Introduction to Public Policy	Public policy, goals, decisions
2	Fundamental theories in public policy	Theories, Concepts, framework, model
3	The Policymaking Process	policy process, policy cycle
4	Policy Formulation	brainstorming, lobbying
5	Paradoxes, Dilemmas, and Path-Dependence	coalition, advocacy
6	Policy Planning Process	design, structure
7	Institutional Foundations of Public policy	systems required, systems in place

Recap

- W1 - Introduction to Public Policy Management
- W2 - Theoretical Foundations of Public Policy
- W3 - Policy Making Process
- W4 - Policy Formulation
- W5 - Paradoxes, Dilemmas, and Path-Dependence
- **Outline of the W6 - Policy Planning Process**
- What is Policy Planning?
- Policy definition and scope
- Policy making – some recapture

Outline of the W6: Policy Making Process

- Conceptual framework for policy analysis
- A. Analysis of the existing situation
- B. The process of generating policy options
- C. Evaluation of Policy Options
- D. Making the policy decision
- E. Planning policy implementation
- F. Policy impact assessment
- G. Subsequent policy cycles
- Policy cycle continues.....

Model of Decision Making

- It offers an integrated model of educational decision making that emphasizes the role of the formal policy-making process (and its analytical rationality) within the context of the key policy actors (from the administrative and political context).
- To capture the details of the decision-making process itself, an analytical framework is presented that goes beyond the initial decision point to examine both the preceding actions: -
- (contextual assessment, technical analysis, and the generation, valuation, and selection of policy options)

Model of Decision Making

- And the subsequent activities like planning and conducting implementation,
- impact assessment, and,
- where appropriate, remediation and redesign.
- Thus, the framework covers the full policy-planning process but with a focus on the facilitating and constraining effects that policy decisions (and how they were derived) can have on the choices available to educational planners.

What is Policy Planning?

- Policy planning is actually a series of untidy and overlapping episodes in which a variety of people and organizations with diversified perspectives are actively involved - technically and politically.
- It entails the processes through which issues are analyzed and policies are generated, implemented, assessed and redesigned.
- Accordingly, an analysis of the education sector implies an understanding of the education policy process itself – the 'how' and 'when' of educational development.
- The purpose of this lecture is to suggest a scheme or series of steps through which sound and workable policies can be formulated, and then, through effective planning, put into effect, evaluated and redesigned.

Policy definition and scope

- Policy is defined functionally to mean: *An explicit or implicit single decision or group of decisions which may set out directives for guiding future decisions, initiate or retard action, or guide implementation of previous decisions.*
- Policy making is the first step in any planning cycle and planners must appreciate the dynamics of policy formulation before they can design implementation and evaluation procedures effectively.
- Policies, however, differ in terms of their scope, complexity, decision environment, range of choices, and decision criteria.

Policy definition and scope

- This range is schematically depicted in Figure 1.
- Issue-specific policies are short-term decisions involving day-to-day management or, as the term implies, a particular issue. A program policy is concerned with the design of a program in a particular area, while a multi-program policy decision deals with competing program areas.
- Finally, strategic decisions deal with large-scale policies and broad resource allocations.

Figure 1. Policy scope

Issue specific	Program	Multi-program	Strategic
Low	Complexity		High
Precise	Decision Environment		Imprecise
Low	No. of Alternatives		High
Narrow	Decision Criteria		Broad

Examples:

- *Strategic*: How can we provide basic education at a reasonable cost to meet equity and efficiency objectives?
- *Multi-program*: Should resources be allocated to primary education or to rural training centres?
- *Program*: How should training centres be designed and provided across the country?
- *Issue-specific*: Should graduates of rural centres be allowed to go into intermediate schools?

Another example

- *Strategic*: Should we or do we need to introduce diversified education?
- *Multi-program*: How should we allocate resources between general education, vocational education, and diversified education?
- *Program*: How and where should we provide diversified education?
- *Issue-specific*: How should practical subjects be taught in diversified schools?

Policy definition and scope

- Obviously, the broader the scope of a policy is, the more problematic it becomes.
- Methodological and political issues become more pronounced such as, definition of the problem in conflictive societies;
- use of analytical techniques and optimization;
- questions of proper theoretical base, measurement, valuation and aggregation;
- hard objective data vs. soft subjective data;
- and technical analysis vs. public participation.

Policy making

- The term 'policy making' like 'policy' implies competing conceptions and assumptions.
- A study of the theoretical and empirical work of social scientists reveals the two essential dimensions of policy making: who does it (the actors) and how (the process).
- Historically, the actor in policy making has been considered unitary and rational; more recently policy analysts have introduced the organizational (public interest) model and the personalistic (self-interest) model.
- The process element has fluctuated between a synoptic (comprehensive) approach and an incremental approach.
- C. Lindblom and D.K. Cohen (1979) laid out the differences between the synoptic and incremental methods of policy making.

Policy making

- According to him, the synoptic method entails, in its extreme form, one single central planning authority for the whole of society, combining economic, political, and social control into one integrated planning process that makes interaction unnecessary.
- It assumes: (a) that the problem at hand does not go beyond man's cognitive capacities and
- (b) there exist agreed criteria (rather than social conflict on values) by which solutions can be judged and
- (c) that the problem- solvers have adequate incentives to stay with synoptic analysis until it is completed (rather than 'regress' to using incremental planning.)

Incremental policy making

- Incremental policy making relies on interaction rather than on a complete analysis of the situation to develop a blueprint for solving problems.
- The incremental approach to policy making is built on the following assumptions:
- (a) Policy options are based on highly uncertain and fluid knowledge, and are in response to a dynamic situation (everchanging problems, and evolving contexts);
- (b) No 'correct' solution can therefore be found, or technically derived from a diagnosis of the situation. Thus, no sweeping or drastic reforms should be attempted;

Incremental policy making

- (c) Only incremental and limited policy adjustments can be made; and
- (d) Policy adjustments are expected to remedy an experienced dissatisfaction with past policies, improving the existing situation or relieving an urgent problem.
- Consequently, these adjustments should be tentative - and in some cases temporary - and must be revised as the dynamics of the situation evolve.

Two alternative models

- Allison (1971) developed two alternative models to the commonly assumed model of the unitary rational policy-maker: (a) the Organizational process model, and (b) the governmental politics model.
- The first model assumes a complex government consisting of a conglomerate of semi-feudal, loosely allied organizations, each with a substantial life of its own.
- Decisions are based on the output of the several entities, functioning independently according to standard patterns of behaviour but partially coordinated by government leaders.

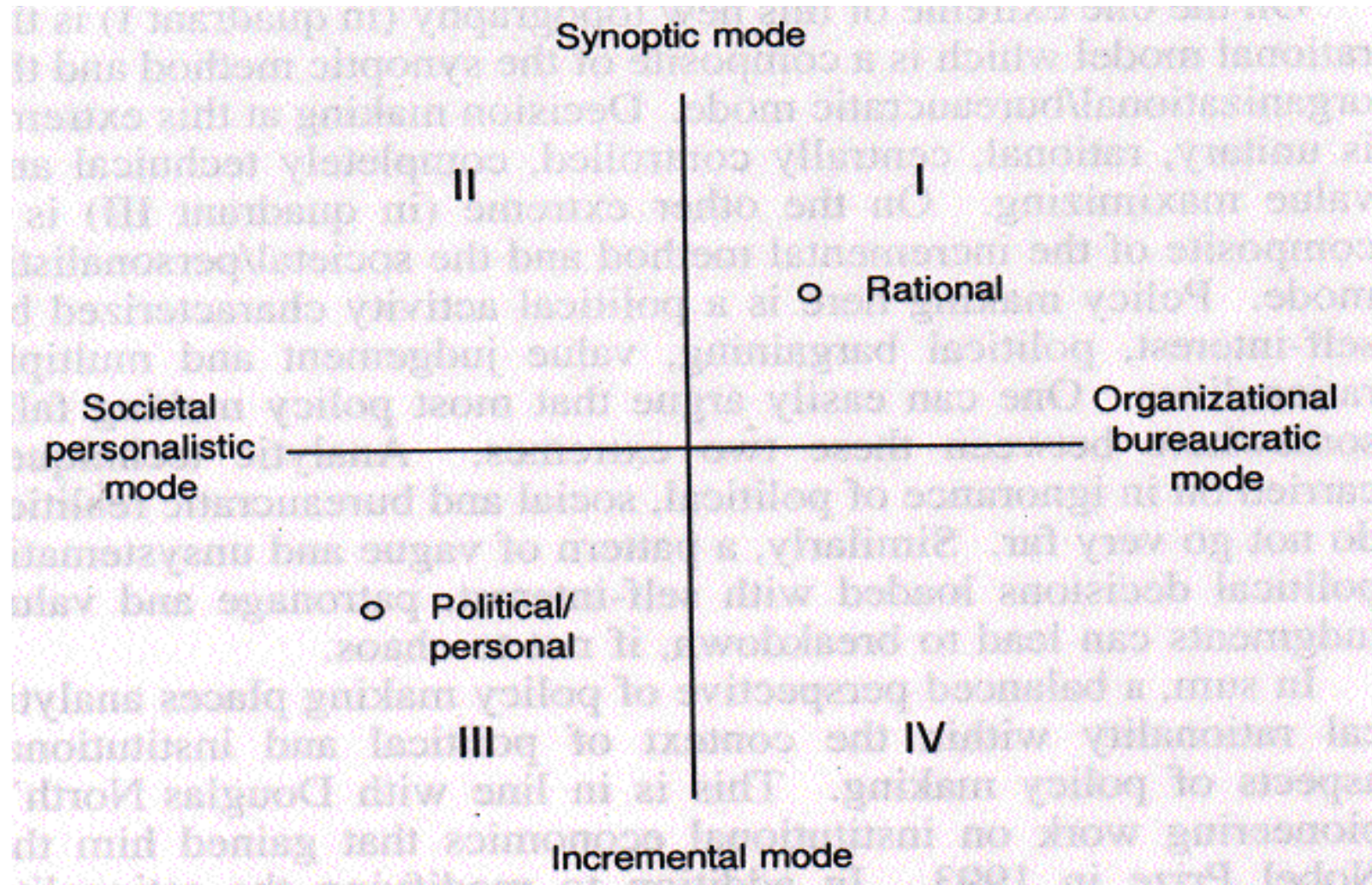
Two alternative models

- The second model carries this concept further. While it also assumes an organizational approach to decision making, the Governmental Politics model plays up the part of individuals in the process.
- Government decisions are not made by a monolithic state based on rational choice, but rather are negotiated by various leaders who sit on top of the organizations involved in that particular decision-making process.
- Each leader is compelled by his own conception of the problem as well as by the imperatives of his organization and his own personal goals.

Two alternative models

- A consolidated model for policy making.
- Neither of the two dimensions alone (process and actors) fully captures the dynamics of policy making.
- They need to be combined and restructured into a different configuration, as the topography in Figure 2 illustrates.

Figure 2. Dimensions of policy making



Source: Haddad and Demsky (1995)

Dimensions of policy making

- The actor in policy making is placed on the horizontal-axis - at one end of the spectrum is the societal/personalistic mode, wherein decisions are reached by negotiation among a variety of interest groups (including government ministries, teachers' unions, etc.), driven by their own conception of the problem and individual values.
- On the other end is the organizational/bureaucratic mode wherein decisions are made within the organizational entity (i.e. the military, the international community, etc.).
- The process of policy making - from the incremental to the synoptic approach - is placed on the vertical-axis. These two dimensions generate a new topography.

Dimensions of policy making

- On the one extreme of this new topography (in quadrant I) is the rational model which is a composite of the synoptic method and the organizational/ bureaucratic mode.
- Decision making at this extreme is unitary, rational, centrally controlled, completely technical and value maximizing.
- On the other extreme (in quadrant III) is a composite of the incremental method and the societal/personalistic mode.
- Policy making here is a political activity characterized by self-interest, political bargaining, value judgement and multiple rationalities.
- One can easily argue that most policy making falls somewhere between these two extremes.

Dimensions of policy making

- Analytic techniques carried on in ignorance of political, social and bureaucratic realities do not go very far.
- Similarly, a pattern of vague and unsystematic political decisions loaded with self-interest, patronage and value judgements can lead to breakdown, if not to chaos.
- In sum, a balanced perspective of policy making places analytical rationality within the context of political and institutional aspects of policy making.
- This is in line with Douglas North's pioneering work on institutional economics that gained him the Nobel Prize in 1993.

Dimensions of policy making

- In addition to modifying the rationality postulate, he extended the economic theory by incorporating ideas and ideologies into the analysis and allotted a fundamental role to institutions for societal change: they are "the underlying determinant of the long-run performance of economies". (North 1990).
- This balanced view of policy making is most appropriate for education.
- Studies of educational policy making all point to the complexity and multifaceted character of this process due to the nature of both the educational system and the educational change.

Dimensions of policy making

- One of the more important characteristics of the education system lies in its salient linkages with the socio-economic structure.
- Any policy changes, therefore, are not purely technical but have socio-political - economic dimensions.
- For instance, any attempt to modify the system, which is perceived by one group or another as lowering the chances of their children to progress socially or economically, will meet with strong opposition.

Dimensions of policy making

- Therefore, the whole notion of reform for democratization is essentially a political issue.
- Another complex set of linkages exists between the education system and the economy, whereby the school is seen as the solution to a wide range of economic problems.
- This belief is the source of much of the impetus for policy changes.

Dimensions of policy making

- Internally, the educational system is an intricate network of institutions interlocking horizontally and vertically.
- A policy decision in any one component can have strong repercussions throughout the system.
- Externally, education seems to be everyone's business and nearly everyone feels qualified to have an opinion about it.
- Policy making, therefore, involves balancing a number of contradictory demands, and soliciting support, or at least tolerance, from the many different segments of society which have an interest in education.

Conceptual framework for policy analysis

- Although decision making is a crucial event in the policy process, clearly it is preceded by analytical and/or political activities (analysis, generation of options, bargaining, etc.) and followed by equally important planning activities (implementation, assessment, and possible redesign).
- This lecture covers a framework for education policy analysis that covers the pre-policy decision activities, the decision process itself, and the post-decision planning activities.

Conceptual framework for policy analysis

- This framework is not a description of actual activities, but rather a conceptual model to extract and specify those elements that can be detected and analyzed.
- It therefore should be broad enough to capture and integrate the intricate process of any policy making model (Figure 2), yet at the same time it should disaggregate the process into components to determine how they work and interact.

Conceptual framework for policy analysis

- The resultant framework, summarized schematically in Figure 3 and discussed in detail below, consists of seven policy-planning processes, the first four of which deal with policy making, the fifth with planning and sixth and seventh with policy adjustment:
 - (i) Analysis of the existing situation.
 - (ii) The generation of policy options.
 - (iii) Evaluation of policy options.
 - (iv) Making the policy decision.
 - (v) Planning of policy implementation.
 - (vi) Policy impact assessment.
 - (vii) Subsequent policy cycles.

A. Analysis of the existing situation

- This framework looks complicated because, inevitably, it is multifaceted and covers a wide range of processes.
- However, any attempt to restrict policy analysis to certain elements or to disregard one element results in an incomplete approach to policy analysis, and leads to the historical controversy of the rational vs. the political, or the bureaucratic vs. the organizational approaches in the literature and in public debate.

A. Analysis of the existing situation

- A policy change is normally a response to a problem or set of problems in the sector, and must, therefore, start with an appreciation of the educational sector and its context.
- In addition to the analysis of the sector itself, policy analysis should consider a number of aspects of the social context, including political, economic, demographic, cultural, and social issues which are likely to affect the decision making and even implementation processes of the education sector.

Country background

- The general character of a country (location, geography, population, culture, and social stratification patterns) has obvious implications for education policy analysis.
- This makes the process of educational policy making more difficult and in a number of ways.
- Typically different groups have different values about the role of education.
- Insofar as education represents access to economic and political power, then different access or interest in education also means differential access to power.
- Resulting conflicts and struggles are particularly acute in countries where the distribution of access to goods and services has become increasingly unequal.

Political Context

- The preceding observation emphasizes that an analysis of the political environment is necessary for an understanding of the national decision-making process, the comparative value of education, and the role that education must play in the socio-political process.
- It is worth distinguishing between the priorities of the national political elite relative to development and those of the educational elite relative to education.

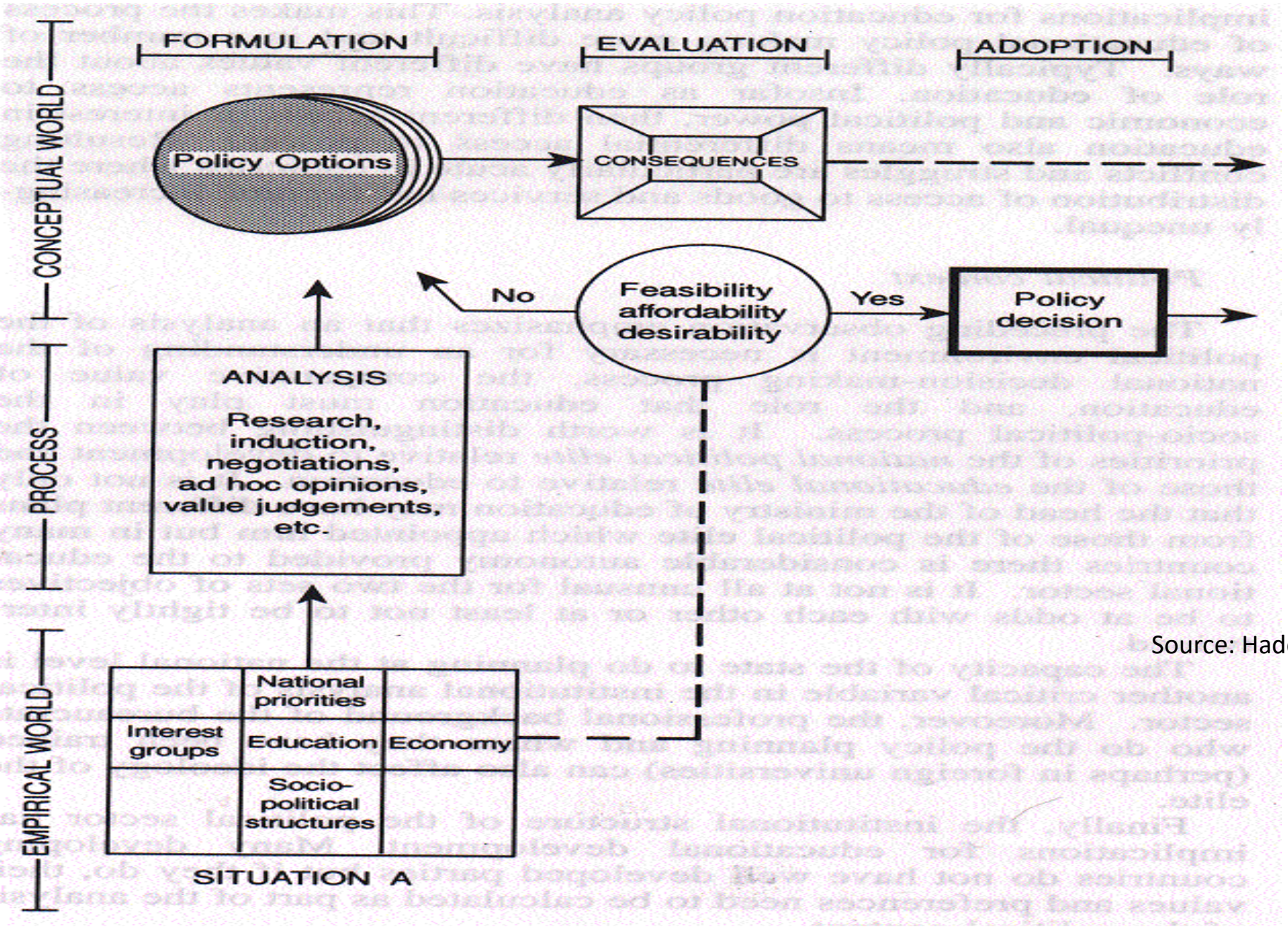
Political Context

- It is not only that the head of the ministry of education may have different plans from those of the political elite which appointed him but in many countries there is considerable autonomy provided to the educational sector.
- It is not at all unusual for the two sets of objectives to be at odds with each other or at least not to be tightly intertwined.
- The capacity of the state to do planning at the national level is another critical variable in the institutional analysis of the political sector.

Political Context

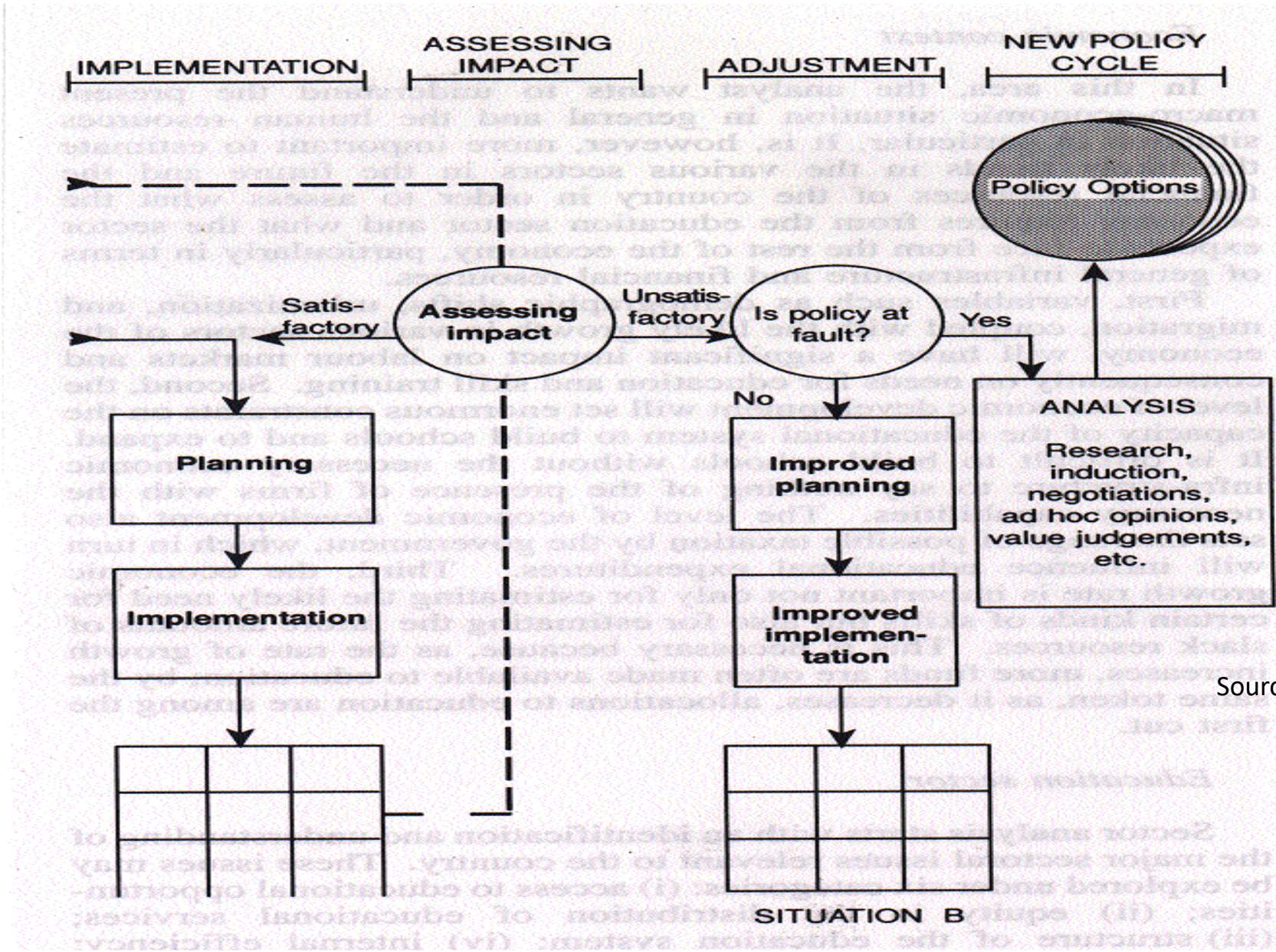
- Moreover, the professional background of the bureaucrats who do the policy planning and where they have been trained (perhaps in foreign universities) can also affect the ideology of the elite.
- Finally, the institutional structure of the political sector has implications for educational development.
- Many developing countries do not have well developed parties but if they do, their values and preferences need to be calculated as part of the analysis of the political context.

Figure 3. Conceptual framework for policy analysis



Source: Haddad and Demsky (1995)

Figure 3. Conceptual framework for policy analysis



Source: Haddad and Demsky (1995)

Economic Context

- In this area, the analyst wants to understand the present macro-economic situation in general and the human resources situation in particular.
- It is, however, more important to estimate the likely trends in the various sectors in the future and the financial resources of the country in order to assess what the economy requires from the education sector and what the sector expects to face from the rest of the economy, particularly in terms of general infrastructure and financial resources.

Economic Context

- First, variables such as demographic shifts, urbanization, and migration, coupled with the likely growth in various sectors of the economy, will have a significant impact on labour markets and consequently on needs for education and skill training.
- Second, the level of economic development will set enormous constraints on the capacity of the educational system to build schools and to expand.
- It is difficult to build schools without the necessary economic infra-structure to say nothing of the presence of firms with the necessary capabilities.

Economic Context

- The level of economic development also sets the range of possible taxation by the government, which in turn will influence educational expenditures.
- Third, the economic growth rate is important not only for estimating the likely need for certain kinds of skills but also for estimating the future amounts of slack resources.
- This is necessary because, as the rate of growth increases, more funds are often made available to education; by the same token, as it decreases, allocations to education are among the first cut.

Education Sector

- Sector analysis starts with an identification and understanding of the major sectoral issues relevant to the country.
- These issues may be explored under six categories:
 - (i) access to educational opportunities;
 - (ii) equity in the distribution of educational services;
 - (iii) structure of the education system;
 - (iv) internal efficiency;
 - (v) external efficiency; and
 - (vi) institutional arrangements for the management of the sector.

Education Sector

- An analysis of the above issues should take into consideration their evolutionary nature: how have issues in the development of the educational system changed over time?
- The meeting of one educational need or solution of one problem frequently creates another.
- For example, the expansion of the system and the provision of new facilities naturally lead to issues about the quality of the education provided and the capacity of the educational administration to handle a larger educational system.

Education Sector

- In addition, the analysis of education across time can sensitize one to the tendency for the system to oscillate between objectives which are somewhat incompatible.
- A historical and evolutionary perspective on the dynamics of policies across time allows the analyst a better sense of why a particular policy is being advocated at the moment.
- By studying the past, one also learns the likely speed with which educational policies can be implemented.

Dynamics of Change

- An assessment of the present situation cannot be complete without evaluating the forces for or against change in the event that policy changes need to be made.
- Such an assessment has implications for the chances of success of different types of policies and for strategies that must be employed to promote and implement such policies.
- Nobel laureate North (1994) confesses that "there is no greater challenge facing today's social scientists than the development of a dynamic theory of social change".
- Meanwhile, he asserts that "individuals and organizations with bargaining power as a result of the institutional framework have a crucial stake in perpetuating the system".
- One key socio-political factor to analyze, therefore, is the presence and relative strength of interest groups.

Dynamics of Change

- In developing countries it is impossible to specify what might be all the relevant interest groups but at minimum one can start with the providers of education, most notably, teachers, and the consumers, most notably, parents, students and employers.
- If the former are well organized - they often are - they can be a powerful force in supporting or opposing any educational change.
- Their interests are likely to be threatened if the educational change results in some challenge to their status or prerogatives.
- The consumers can also be powerful, but are generally fragmented.

Dynamics of Change

- They may be divided into different cultural or occupational, or socio-economic groups.
- Frequently, these will have quite different interests in both the quantity and quality of education.
- Consumer groups most closely connected with either political policy-makers or decisionmakers within the education system will be able to exert disproportionate influence.
- In addition, consumers who can organize themselves into forceful street demonstrations, as have some university students, can effect policy changes very favourable to themselves.

Dynamics of Change

- Therefore, policy planners need to identify interest groups and assess their openness to reform.
- For those interest groups identified as anti-reform, planners need to determine how well organized they are, how much power they have in society, and how willing they are to exercise their power.
- A separate interest group comprises the officials who administer an education system.
- Studies suggest that bureaucrats find it in their self-interest to maintain a moderate expansion of the educational system.

Dynamics of Change

- They tend also to value whatever configuration of education is current and to resist policies that would alter it.
- Therefore, one important element in policy analysis is to understand what the self-interests of the educational bureaucrats are and to recognize that these are not necessarily identical with those of the teachers, other educational professionals or consumers.
- Finally, the pressure to see change happen can come from individuals or groups outside the education sector (as in the case of Peru) or from external actors, both individual experts and development agencies (as is the case of Burkina Faso).

B. The process of generating policy options

- New policies are usually generated when the present situation of the sector and its context is perturbed by a problem, a political decision or a reorganization scheme (overall national planning).
- Policy options can be generated in several different ways to accommodate the disequilibrium.
- For analytical purposes one can group these processes under the following four modes: systemic, incremental, ad hoc and importation.
- In concrete situations, though, several of these modes may be combined.

The systemic mode

- The title may suggest that this is the preferred or best method for generating policy options.
- This is not necessarily the case because under certain conditions this mode may prove to be defective or impractical. The systemic mode is characterized by three operations:
- generation of data, formulation and prioritization of options, and refining options.
- Data are usually derived from two sources: sector analysis, and the existing body of professional knowledge (conventional wisdom, research synthesis, comparative indicators, etc.).

The systemic mode

- Formation of options under this mode is a fairly complicated process of induction.
- If based on data alone, a large number of options can be generated to fit the different 'givens' of the sector and its context.
- At its extreme, intellectual induction seeks to anticipate all possible policy outcomes by thinking through all possible contingencies.
- It then proceeds to identify optimal or at least efficient options.
- However, a variety of intellectual, political, social and professional constraints limit the range of policy options.

The systemic mode

- Moreover, options may be given different weights and priorities depending on the perceived importance of the sectoral issues, the relative strength of the interest groups, and the possible combination of different options.
- Some of the policy options may be subjected to a microcycle of problem identification: policy formulation - verification - modification or retention.
- This is a blend of induction and sequential interaction.
- The experimentation or pilot studies approach adds an input into the data base and to the 'weighting' of the policy options.

The incremental mode

- Once a problem within the educational system is recognized, then a solution is frequently forced upon the system.
- This is especially likely to occur when there is a public debate about a problem.
- Given widespread interest and discussion, the educational system is forced to do something to maintain its legitimacy.
- The sense of urgency necessitates a quick response. Since the problem is likely to be located in one particular segment of the system, then the issue is how to formulate a policy to adapt the system to the response.
- This is sometimes called the 'acting out' approach whereby the policymaker seeks to adjust present difficulties rather than to anticipate future ones, thereby promoting incremental improvements.

The ad hoc mode

- Sometimes the problem is outside the educational system.
- It may not even be a problem but instead the emergence of a new elite or a major political event which requires that the educational system make some adjustments or changes.
- Here the policy may have no rational basis within the education sector.

The importation mode

- There are many innovations and fashions in educational systems around the world.
- These can be the source of the policy options considered.
- Foreign specialists, operating as consultants for international agencies, can provide the stimulus for this mode.
- However, a certain policy adopted elsewhere can be imported successfully only if it meets the needs of particular groups in the society, i.e. if there is an importer.

C. Evaluation of Policy Options

- Policy options can be evaluated only if alternative scenarios are developed to allow estimations of the likely implications of the options considered.
- The 'imaginary' situation that would be created if a policy option were implemented is compared with the present situation, and the scenario of transition from the existing to the imaginary case is evaluated in terms of:
 - desirability,
 - affordability, and
 - feasibility.

Desirability

- This involves three dimensions:
- (1) The impact of the option on the various interest groups or stakeholders:
 - who would benefit?
 - who might feel threatened?
 - how might the potential losers be compensated?
 - what would make the option desirable to all stakeholders?
- (2) compatibility with the dominant ideology and targets of economic growth articulated in national development plans; and
- (3) in some cases, the impact of a policy option on political development and the stability.

Affordability

- The fiscal costs of the change as well as the social and political costs need to be evaluated.
- The difficulty of making these estimations lies in the ability to predict future trends, including economic growth.
- This is especially important because educational expenditures are more vulnerable to changes in economic situations and political objectives than some other kinds of public expenditure.
- Therefore, alternative economic scenarios need to be considered.

Affordability

- Further, private costs (will a reform require consumers to share the costs, and if so what happens to the poorer groups?),
- opportunity costs (are there other measures which might benefit the education system, but would have to be foregone to pay for the current proposal?) and
- political costs (if an option favours one group over another, is the government willing to pay the political cost?) should also be weighed..

Feasibility

- Another and very different kind of implication is the availability of human resources for implementing the change.
- Fiscal resources are easy to compute.
- More difficult is the estimate of what level of training is required of teachers (the more sophisticated the program and/or technology involved, the more highly trained the personnel need to be) and whether there are enough personnel to implement the policy option.

Feasibility

- In many developing countries, highly trained personnel may be in short supply.
- This then raises the question of whether they can be imported or trained and at what cost.
- Equally important is the presence of the institutional culture (norms, procedures, environment) necessary to attract, retain, and effectively utilize trained personnel in transforming policies into plans and implemented programs.
- Another element in the calculus of feasibility is time.
- Most studies of education projects indicate that there are frequent time overruns in implementation.

Feasibility

- More realistic estimates of time need to be made and can only be done by the careful assessment of the implementation capabilities and experiences.
- The issue of sustainability should fare prominently when the above criteria are applied. Education initiatives have to be sustained politically and financially over a lengthy period of time to reach fruition.
- To ensure that, the long-term implications of policy options should be weighed within an overall sectoral policy, itself embedded in a prudent macro framework, and consistent with long-term national aspirations.

D. Making the policy decision

- Rarely would a policy decision be the considered consequence of the evaluation and previous stages of the decision process - the culmination of a process during which all information relevant to the decision was gathered and carefully analyzed so that a totally optimal policy might be designed and selected.
- The variety of conflicting interests and rationalities requires that the policy which is selected engineers 'trade-offs ' among these interests.
- The resulting policy may not be optimal for any single interest group, but such a bargained result is necessary to have the broad base of political support which will be needed to take the policy from the drawing board to implementation.

D. Making the policy decision

- In addition, political pressures, oversights in evaluation, or the simple pressure of time may short-circuit the process.
- A minister with a 'pet idea', for instance, may decide to move directly from his view of the current situation to policy decision, short-cutting the three stages of the process described above.
- Thus, to assess the soundness of the decision process up to this stage, it is useful to ask questions such as the following:

D. Making the policy decision

- (1) How was the decision made - did it go through all the stages of policy analysis?
- (2) How radical a departure is the decision from current policy?
- (3) How consistent is this decision with policies of other sectors?
- (4) Is the policy diffusely articulated or is it stated in a manner which is easily measurable?
- (5) Does the policy seem operational or is its implementation implausible?

E. Planning policy implementation

- Once a policy has been chosen, planning for policy implementation should begin immediately.
- Although much of the work that must be carried out during this stage can be based on evaluations performed to make the policy decision, planning for implementation involves a concreteness absent in earlier stages of the policy process.
- What was abstract during the evaluation stage begins to become concrete during planning.

E. Planning policy implementation

- A schedule for moving people, physical objects and funds must be drawn up with a clarity and attention to detail that leaves no doubt as to:
- who will do what, when and how; physical resources, once the content of hypothetical lists, must be located and their availability assured; financial resources, once ear-marked for possible use, must be appropriated so that implementation delays are minimal;
- the personnel needed to put plans into action must be freed from other commitments and made ready to go to work;
- the technical knowledge needed to guide the policy implementation must be mastered by those who will employ it; and the administrative systems within which the policy will be directed must be clearly structured and firmly in place.

E. Planning policy implementation

- Ambitious as these tasks are, there is one planning task that is more difficult (and it is the most often over-looked).
- This is the task of mobilizing political support.
- The mobilization of political support resonates most clearly when one thinks of the need to ensure that the providers and consumers of a new educational initiative embrace it with enthusiasm.
- Plans must be developed so that students and their families are aware of the objectives of a new initiative, that communities learn of benefits for the collectivity; programs for teachers, educational administrators and their representatives must similarly be developed.

E. Planning policy implementation

- Since new initiatives usually mean some form of job re-definition, it is important that educators see this as beneficial and that those who object to the changes be isolated.
- Political mobilization may also be necessary to ensure that materials for school construction are available when needed, that needed institutional administrative adjustments are carried out, and, especially, that funding proposals are approved.
- One important strategy for mobilizing political support is that of involving groups affected by the new initiative in the planning process.
- This will pay dividends not only in the form of enhanced support, but, more likely, in terms of an improved policy design.
- A significant amount of planning and even de facto policy formulation take place during actual implementation.

E. Planning policy implementation

- This is the case because, during implementation, the following is the rule rather than the exception:
- (a) circumstances related to implementation constraints cause policy modifications to take place;
- (b) feedback obtained during implementation causes reassessment of aspects of the policy decision and subsequent modifications by policymakers; and
- (c) the mere translation of abstract policy intentions into concrete implementation causes re-assessment and re-design.
- These changes occur with great frequency because, unfortunately, implementation problems are often greatly under-estimated during the stage of policy planning.
- Misjudging ease of implementation is, perhaps, the most frequent error in policy planning.
- No matter how deeply the various groups affected by a new initiative have been involved in reviewing and shaping plans, the concreteness of the first day of a new programme, often casts it in a new light.

E. Planning policy implementation

- Implementation is the time when one discovers that schedules are unrealistic and that programmes are over-ambitious;
- it is the time when the ravages of inflation cause the teachers' union to demand a pay increase prior to using the new texts;
- it is the time when parents conclude that the certification offered by the new programme may not guarantee their children the jobs they hoped for; and
- it is the time when local politicians decide that they should block the initiative since it will be so successful that it will prove that the politicians in the capital are better providers than they.
- Such problems are often replays of issues raised during the stages of evaluating policy options or of planning, and need to be solved by taking a flexible approach to the stage of policy implementation.

E. Planning policy implementation

- No matter how well anticipated, policy implementation always brings some surprises.
- These shape the policy output, sometimes in crucial ways.
- One way to use such surprises to improve policy outcomes is to design the implementation in stages.
- If unanticipated problems arise at a given stage, then a re-evaluation of the plans for implementation, and possibly of the policy decision itself, is in order.
- Another way is to conduct well designed pilot studies, before full implementation of any projects.
- Problems of going to scale and the dangers of the 'greenhouse' projects that cannot survive implantation in the real world are well treated in Kemmerer (1990).

F. Policy impact assessment

- Once the policy has been in place long enough to produce results, a policy assessment check can take place.
- To carry this out, it is necessary to have some sense of how long it should take for the policy, once implemented, to take hold.
- While policy output measurement can be carried out on a continual basis, premature attempts at assessment can mis-state the effectiveness of the policy.
- Furthermore, it is preferable to delay final assessment until a number of teaching cycles have transpired to separate the effect of the content of the policy change from the excitement which often accompanies implementing a new initiative for the first time.
- On the other hand, the sooner accurate assessment takes place, the sooner policy-makers can know if their initiatives are working as anticipated or if adjustments in policy design or policy implementation are required.

F. Policy impact assessment

- If assessment reveals that the policy outcome is lacking, it is necessary to determine whether the policy itself is inadequate, or whether poor implementation is at fault.
- Human capital inadequacies, under-funding, or inadequate economic stimulus during the implementation stage are among the many possible causes of failure of a well designed policy.
- On the other hand, if assessment reveals deficiencies in outcomes and if implementation can be shown to have been well done, then it is necessary to re-examine the policy decision and to determine what adjustments or what new policies should be substituted for the original choice.
- Once this is accomplished, then one moves again to the planning and implementation stages.
- Given the rapid pace of contemporary change and the intimate links between the educational system and the rest of society, even successfully conceived and implemented initiatives require adjustments over time.

F. Policy impact assessment

- Policy impact assessment is carried out using the same criteria employed during the policy evaluation stage.
- The assessment process revolves around the following questions:
- What have been the actual impacts of the policies in question? Are these impacts desirable given the changes that were hoped for?
- Are the changes affordable? Did costs prevent their full implementation?
- Did cost over-runs make it unthinkable to implement them over a longer term or on a wider basis? Can the policy be lived with politically and socially?
- Are the impacts feasible? Were full impacts accomplished?
- Would exceptional efforts be required to replicate these impacts in other circumstances?

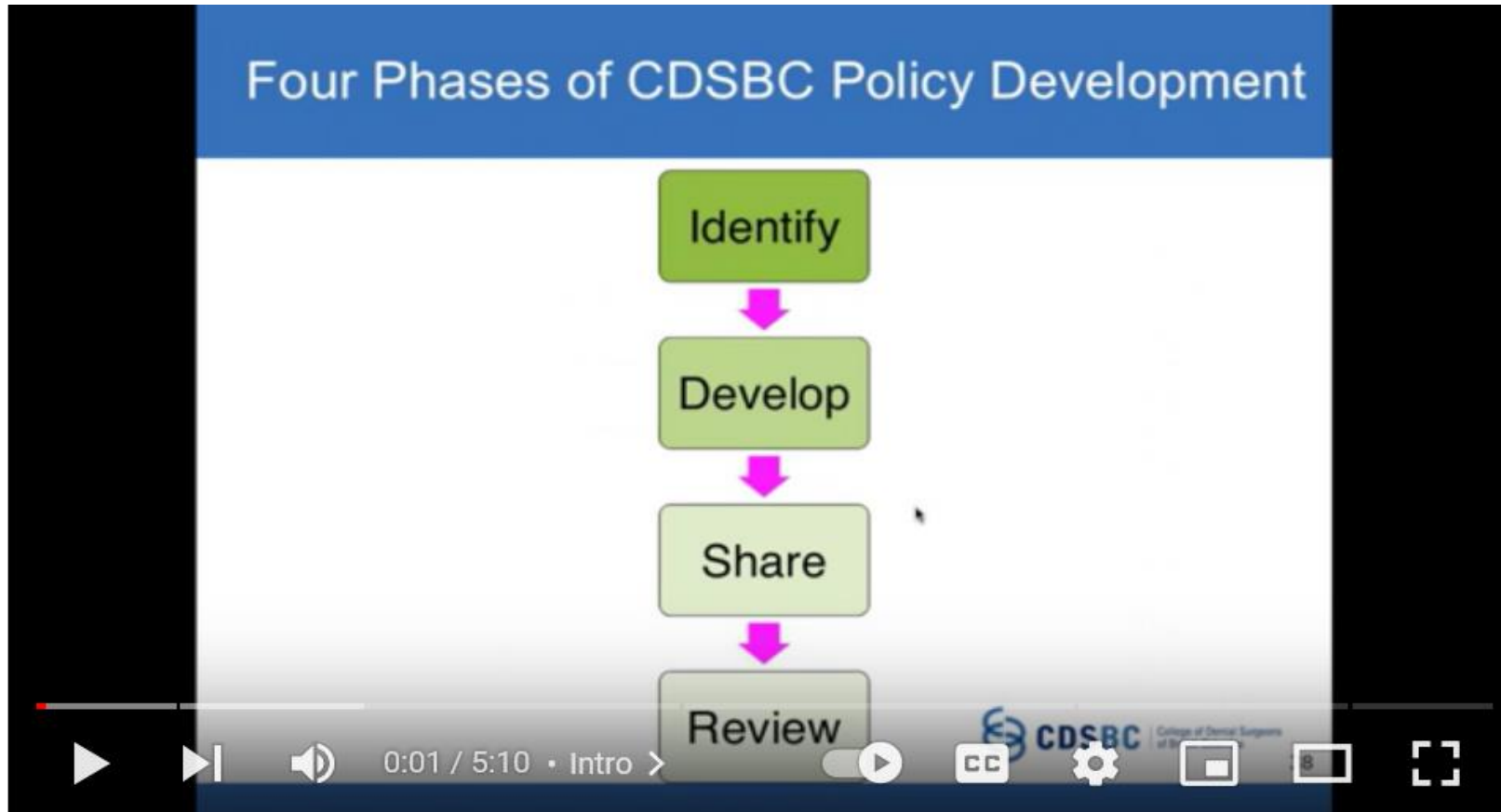
G. Subsequent policy cycles

- If a policy initiative is carried out systematically, the process of policy design, planning, implementation, impact assessment, and re-design will become iterative, and, in theory, infinitely so, as Figure 3 suggests.
- Unfortunately, long-term policy analysis and planning is not often carried out in such a fashion. Often the results of verification are not ploughed back into policy.
- Instead, verification is often seen as a stock-taking exercise, needed in order to close the books on a policy initiative.
- Later in the country's history, when policy change is once again needed in the educational area under discussion, a policy process often begins de novo and may duplicate much of the analysis, derivation of alternative options, evaluation, and planning carried out earlier.
- The conclusion, then, of policy analysis is never to conclude. Ideally, once implementation has been completed and policy outcomes are forthcoming, a policy impact assessment stage ensues, leading potentially to a new policy cycle.

Reference

- Wadi D. Haddad and Terri Demsky, (1995), . **Framework for education policy analysis, Chapter I, in** Education policy-planning process: an applied framework; *Framework for education policy analysis Series*, Paris 1995, UNESCO: International Institute for Educational Planning.

A Short video on policy planning process



source: <https://youtu.be/tjVAyh9O0uk>

What next?

- Institutional Foundations of Public policy