



# **DEVELOPMENT & GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS**

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INDEVELOPMENT**

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## **1 THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Intervene

Governments have different possibilities to intervene in society. It can forbid certain things, it can provide financial incentives (tax and subsidies), it can use physical obstructions, it can provide information but also it can build infrastructure. But why do they do so and why does the population allow, want them to do so?

General Purpose

Governments have a very special function in society. It is the servant of all. It serves the *general purpose*. All other organisations serve specific clients. Companies serve the buyers of their products. Trade unions serve their members. Governments serve all actors in society. Very often these actors have conflicting interests. *General purpose* implies two aspects:

1. Everybody's interest
2. In consideration of every individual interest

Level of interventions

Governments have different perceptions about their required level of intervention. In centrally planned economies, like in the former USSR, governments take care of almost everything in society. In pure capitalist states, governments would hardly intervene. Currently the overall perception of governments is that they should only intervene to reach their objectives, when it is likely that without their interventions, these objectives will not be met.

Common rudiments

These objectives could relate to the economic, social and environmental situation in the country. They are usually based on rudiments, which are formulated in the constitution of the country, like: freedom, equality, equity, justice, democracy, solidarity, and tolerance. Equity means that everybody should receive services, have the same rights and have the same obligations.

More specific, governments tend to aim for:

- Economic growth
- Reducing under and unemployment
- Stabilising prices
- Equal income distribution
- Reducing negative environmental impact of human behaviour
- Improving of health hygiene
- Provision of knowledge and skills
- Equilibrium of the balance of payments and trade
- Etc.

## **2 GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES**

Large and multi level organisations

Most governments have developed into large and multilevel organisations. Organisations are basically a group of people who collaborate together to achieve certain objectives. Government organisations have certain powers over society, authority. Usually the authorities of the different government bodies are formalised in the law.

Authority means that the body can make orders, which have to be obeyed by the society.

It is possible to describe the different bodies of the government on basis of two criteria:

1. Its position in Hierarchy
2. The status of the members of the organisation (governors, civil servant, or representative of the people).

Location of government

It is very difficult, if not impossible to govern a country from one central point. After all a country does not only need policies which affect the whole country but also policies which affect only a small part of the country, like airports, harbours or game reserves.

Therefore most governments are composed of different layers, which govern a certain geographical area. Municipalities can develop policies for and govern a particular urban area. Districts can do the same for a certain rural area. Provinces develop policies, which affect the whole province, including its districts and urban settlements. National governments have to govern the whole country. Thus the policies developed by the national government affect the policies and interventions of the provinces, districts and municipalities. The provincial policies on their turn affect districts and municipalities.

Autonomy of local governments

The provinces, districts and municipalities could cooperate in the implementation of policies of higher government organs, respectively the national government and provinces, but also independently develop, implement and evaluate their own policies.

Although the lower government units may be allowed to develop and implement their own interventions autonomously, these interventions should be developed, designed and implemented in compliance with the policies, acts and directives of the higher government organs.

Governors

The governors are in the end responsible for the development and implementation of the government policies. While implementing the policies, they can take decisions, which are binding to individuals and organisations. In democratic societies, the governors have to justify their actions to the people's representatives. Thus the people's representatives supervise the performance of the governors. Examples of governors are ministers, mayors, and aldermen (members of the district or provincial council).

Peoples representatives

In a democracy the burgess usually elects the people's representatives. Other societies have of course different arrangements. An example of

Civil servants	<p>people's representatives is the members of parliament. Their tasks are to define together with the governors the policies and to supervise the governors. In addition, the people's representatives usually elect or appoint the governors.</p> <p>The civil servants support the governors with their tasks to develop, implement and evaluate government interventions. Officially the governors are to instruct these civil servants, but in reality civil servants may take initiatives to develop policies and government interventions. Governors usually delegate (a part of) the authority to the civil servants to implement the policies. For example, civil servants usually take the decisions about visas and permits.</p> <p>Ideally civil servants are appointed and selected on basis of their professional and educational backgrounds. However in some societies the top civil servants or even all civil servants are members of the ruling political party, and are replaced when the ruling party becomes the opposition.</p>
Ministries	<p><b>2.1 <u>THE MINISTRIES AND OTHER GOVERNMENT BODIES</u></b></p> <p>One minister usually manages a Ministry, containing several departments. These bodies assist the minister in developing and implementing national policies. The minister is formally the manager of the Ministry. But usually most ministers do not have sufficient time to effectively manage the Ministry and therefore most Ministries have a permanent secretary. The Permanent Secretary is usually appointed and does not have an official political function. The Permanent Secretary is responsible for the daily management of the Ministry. Some Ministries have only offices in the capital; others have offices all over the country, <i>Divisions</i>. The location of the offices and the choice between central or decentralised operation depends often on the tasks of the Ministry. Ministries that only develop policies and who are not implementing the policies (thus the Local Government implement the policies) are usually only based at the capital. Those ministries that also implement the policies have usually offices all over the country. Examples of such ministries are the Public Works, Justice, and Defence.</p>
District Water Boards	<p>District water boards have a special function. They manage and administer all affairs related to the water situation in a certain geographical area. They have to control the quality of the drinking water, surface water and ground water. They are often responsible for the distribution of water and the collection and purification of sewerage.</p>
Decentralisation	<p>Nowadays more and more countries have decided to give more responsibilities and tasks to local governments. When local governments are allowed to develop their own policies, interventions and plans, additional coordination roles are required. Otherwise the districts and municipalities may not develop a connecting road network or may build schools without teachers.</p>

### **3 POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

Policy development consist of two processes:

1. The intellectual, analytical process
2. The “fighting”, lobbying, negotiating process

#### **3.1 PREPARATION OF POLICIES**

Preparation of policies is defined as the gathering and analysing of data and the formulation of recommendations with regard to the interventions of the government. It contains both **aspects, thinking and Fighting.**

Thinking

The design of policies is associated with issues like the prediction of negative developments and processes in society, the formulation of goals and recommending interventions to change the negative developments.

This includes systematically planning with the aid of scientific knowledge and insights.

Fighting

The other processes are the negotiations and discussions between different actors. The goals and power relations of these actors determine the outcome of these negotiations.

Actors differ widely about the contents of the policies. There are discussions about the formulation of the problem, what processes are influencing this problem, what goals do we want to achieve and what interventions should be used. Besides these issues the (political) actors will discuss the costs of the interventions and which budget should be used for the interventions. When should the interventions take place? Should they take place at all?

In other words every aspect during the design of the policies will be questioned.

Every actor will question if the interventions are contributing to their goals and interests and if the concept policies conform to their information. They will also ask themselves if they have enough power to influence or even change the concept policies.

Civil servants fight too

Although civil servants have officially no power to select problems and policies, they do have more information than the politicians. Usually they manipulate the information to direct the official decision takers.

Legitimate?

In brief the interventions are judged if they are legitimate. Do the affected population, politicians; civil servants and others consider the selected policies correct?

#### **3.2 SELECTION OF INTERVENTIONS**

Validity of interventions

The selection of interventions is important because the interventions determine if the goals will be achieved or not. The validity of the interventions depends on the impact of these interventions. An

intervention is more valid when it results in the desired impacts and contributes to certain goals. The expected impacts depend not only on the characteristics of the interventions but also on the characteristics of the problem and the processes contributing to that problem.

Probability of impacts

The probability that the impacts will take place is another important variable, when selecting the intervention. The actors involved in the selection process will implicitly assess the probability of the interventions. The intervention is considered effective when it is very likely that the intervention will contribute to achieve certain goals or to reduce certain problems. Furthermore the actors will evaluate the cost of the interventions. The efficiency can be calculated by dividing the net impacts through the required financial resources. This is the rational part of the selection process. This document does not include information about the “fighting” process.

## 4 PLANNING

Focus for planning

Planning differs from ad-hoc policies. It has a long-term or at least middle long-term focus, it is more rational than short-term policies or ad hoc policies. This also means that planning relies more on science than ad-hoc policies. Planning is strategic. Usually it contains end-goals, mid-term goals or even yearly goals. Planning also includes coordination of policies and interventions.

Planning activities

There are different opinions what planning activities are. Some argue that planning only includes the formal political process of discussing goals and objectives and the designing of the interventions. These processes result in a prioritised wish list of interventions. Others feel that planning also includes programming of the interventions, implementation and evaluation. Programs of interventions describe which and when interventions will be implemented.

Technocrats versus democrats

Technocratic processes are not necessarily conflicting with the democracy rudiments. The civil servants have often more knowledge and insights about the subjects at stake. They usual have less personal interest than the politicians. After all politicians want to satisfy their future voters. It is not uncommon that politicians are only opting for interventions and policies, which contribute to their interests (voters). The civil servants tend to behave in a more neutral manner and often have a more scientific and strategic approaches towards problems. Their solutions are in the first place technical correct and political correctness is of lesser concern to them.

Misconceptions

There are also some misunderstandings about planning of government. First of all planning does not imply total control. Governments cannot control all processes in society. Often it can only influence processes.

Need for coordination

The second misunderstanding is related to the issue of coordination. Planning may become rigid when the planners try to deal with all problems and processes at the same time. Furthermore central government may plan all facets of the interventions and therefore reduce the role of the lower governments. In these situations the lower governments are solely the operational arms of the central government.

Updating plans

The third misunderstanding is often that plans do not change. Plans need regular updating. Most interventions of the government result in projects. The results of the projects may not only change the original design of the foreseen intervention, but also may influence the intervention programs and the design of other interventions.

### 4.1 GOVERNMENT PLANNING AND DEMOCRACY

Legal protection against government

Usually governments have developed a set of rules in which they have formulated their planning processes. (Or such rules are under development). One aspect of these rules is the legal protection of the

civilians against actions of the government. This legal protection can be preventive as well as corrective. Preventive legal protection is often called participation or public inquiry procedures, a process in which civilians are consulted about problems, needs, and design of interventions. Corrective measures could be formalised in rights to appeal and related procedures.

Incentives for public inquiry processes

This section deals with participation or public inquiry procedures. Public inquiry procedures can be relevant when policy makers addresses questions like:

- Should we initiate a project to solve this problem?
- How do we formulate the terms of reference for the project team?
- What elements should be included in the schedule of requirements?
- Does the preliminary design satisfy our needs and solve the problem?
- Does the detailed design satisfy our needs and respect the needs of the individuals involved?

The public inquiry procedures should provide information to the policy makers about:

1. Who will participate in the design process?
2. How will these actors participate?

Civilians perspective

There are three visions to answer these questions: Civilians have two reasons to participate in government policy development:

1. Expressing their interests
2. Emancipation through reduction of existing power differences

Government's interest

For the government, participation could lead to more support for their interventions, policies and plans. It improves legitimacy of these interventions, policies and plans.

Participation also helps the government to identify the needs and demand of the society it tries to serve. Participation helps to value and judge interests in society. It stabilises the political system.

Participation ladder

The participation ladder means that there are different levels of how civilians and organisations participate. Basically there are six levels:

1. One sided information distribution from the government
2. Two way information distribution from and to government (hearings)
3. Consultation
4. Advise commissions
5. Co-management
6. In full control

These six steps are usually aggregated into three items:

1. Communication
2. Discussion
3. Management

Management styles of government

The civilians will not be able to influence the government policies when their participation is limited to receiving information of the government. Although it may be democratically elected, the government acts like a dictator.

Examples of communication are; press releases, press conferences, and adds in newspapers, magazines, radio and television, communication meetings, etc.

Democratic management

When the government discusses its plans with the civil society, it acts like a democratic leader. It allows to be influenced by the civil society, but it is still in control over the decisions. The government collect information about the social feasibility of their plans, through for example studies, discussion meetings, consultation sessions on the internet, etc,

Laissez-faire management

Management or co-management approaches allow the civil society to participate in the decision taking processes. Civilians and organisations could be included in steering committees. Another example is referendums. Thus the government adopted a laissez-faire approach in its management style.

#### **4.2 LEGAL PROTECTION:**

Civilians and organisations usually have a formal opportunity to lodge an appeal against government plans to intervene. Civil servants do not only have the responsibility to pursue government plans and policies but also to inform the civilians and organisation about their rights to lodge an appeal.

These constituents need to be informed about where they can lodge appeals, within which time frame, and how the appeal should take place.

#### **4.3 COORDINATION**

Huge and complex organisation

To fulfil all its tasks in the complex society, the government developed itself into a huge organisation. Like any big organisation it has departments, divisions and sections, which all have to take care of their particular and specific tasks. These departments and sections tend to operate autonomously and independently.

Links between tasks

Due to the expanding role of the government in society, all its independent tasks seem to be interlinked and to influence each other. An intervention of one department or section has consequences for another. For example if one agency decides to build the school, another agency may have to provide the teachers to that school. Coordination is required to avoid that the school building would remain unused.

Jointly responsible for overall performance

The first step of coordination is that the minister and the ministries are not only responsible for their specific task but also jointly responsible for the implementation of government tasks, and policies. This means for example that every Ministry has to assess the consequences of other Ministries policies, plans and interventions on its own policy, plans, interventions and behaviour. For example the Ministry of Public Works has to comply with the Labour Laws and Environmental Protection Acts when it implement its works.

Basically there are three ways to coordinate plans of the government;

1. Sector-Facet planning
2. Multi-Sector Planning
3. General Policy Planning

The Sector-Facet Planning contains three elements:  
Sector, facet and Integrated Planning

Sector planning

Sector planning is programming of interventions of a specific government responsibility. Usually this kind of planning takes place within one department, section or unit and does not require the cooperation of other departments, sections or units.

Facet planning

Facet planning is the planning of specific government policy that involves different government sectors, departments, sections or units. The different departments, sections and units are given the assignment to develop specific sector plans addressing the specific government policy. There is a strong hierarchy between the facet and the sector plans. The sector plan is inferior to the facet plan. The facet plan is the terms of reference and usually contains elements of the schedule of requirements of the sector plan. Integrated planning aims at a synthesis between the facet plan and the sector plans. It is based on a long-term and coordinated vision.

Multi-sector planning

Another option to organise planning of government interventions is the so-called multi-sector planning. This is programming of the interventions in a certain geographical area, regardless to which facets or sectors the interventions belong.

The multi-sector planning is in particular of interest to spatial planners, civil engineers and the like involved in spatial planning.

Planning often involves different layers of the government; national government, provinces, municipalities, districts, etc.

One layer may develop plans that have to be approved by another, or other layers have to be involved in the implementation of the plan, or other layers have to be informed about the plan. Different layers may have to plan together.

The higher governments often influence the plans of the inferior, lower governments. It does not matter if the lower government develop such

plan autonomously or it is jointly liable to develop and implement plans of the higher governments. In the first place the higher governments have to supervise the lower governments. Lower governments may need permission of higher governments to implement its plans or higher governments may intervene when it considers a certain plan incorrect (corrective supervision).

Financial contributions of higher governments

Secondly higher governments often have to contribute financially to plans of the lower governments and often the higher governments provide most of the lower government's budget. Therefore higher governments want to control the expenditures of the lower governments.

Decentralisation can be considered as a problem of the vertical allocation of functions, powers, information, authority and (financial) capacity. The central issue of decentralisation is the question where tasks, resources and authorities should be located? National government, Province, District or Municipality?

Arguments in favour of decentralisation are:

- Improving of democracy. Lower governments are in better contact with the population than the higher governments.
- Lower governments have less difficulties to develop integrated plans, like multi-sector plans

Motives for centralisation are:

- Political uniformity
- Guaranteed equality for the law, in policies and in governance
- Increase effectiveness and efficiency due to economics of scale

An often-applied rule to find the answers to these questions is that tasks and authorities should be located at the lowest possible level unless it is not considered plausible to do so.

Vertical coordination

Regardless the actual division of tasks, vertical coordination is always important. Vertical coordination is required to ensure that all tasks are carried out, that the government do not unnecessarily overlap, that their policies are supporting each other and that they are not conflicting.

In other words vertical coordination helps the different layers to collaborate to be one effective and efficient government.

Lower governments may develop and approve plans on their own or these plans may need approval from higher government. Higher governments usually provide the lower governments with a framework. The lower government develop more specific plans, which have to match with these frameworks.

#### **4.4 PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP**

Governments do not only have to coordinate internally but also externally. Consumers and producers both may deliver services, facilities and products that are contributing or competing with government policies. Households may have sanitation facilities, they may also burn or bury their solid waste. Obviously the sanitation facilities are contributing to the government's policy concerning health, but burning and burying solid waste is competing with the government's solid waste services.

Water vendors may sell water to consumers, private schools may provide expensive but high quality education. The water vendors that cater for the poorer segment of the society are seen as collaborators and the government may feel to be in competition with those water vendors catering the richer segment of the society. The same applies for the private schools that cater for the rich. The government may not have the resources to invest or the capacity to deliver the high quality standards demanded by the rich and therefore it misses out of the highly profitable segment of the market. After all the rich are willing to pay high amounts for education, health services, water and sanitation, etc with high standards. Net profit (after tax) is usually considerable. Governments often need these funds to subsidize the delivery of similar services to the poorer segment of the population. Unfortunately governments lack the attitude prevailing in the private sector and therefore there only way they can benefit of this willingness to pay of the rich is through taxation of the private sector that provides the services.