



Leadership Matters

Topical Briefs for Leaders

The WBI Leadership Development Program and
The Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC)

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The World Bank Institute (WBI) Leadership Development Program
and The Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC)

World Bank
Washington, DC

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**The International Bank for Reconstruction
and Development /The World Bank**

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Washington, D.C. 20433, U.S.A.

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ALTERNATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

Since the early 1990s, political and public service leaders have increasingly pursued improved service to citizens by adopting alternative service delivery (ASD) arrangements. ASD can also produce such benefits as greater client satisfaction and cost savings.

What is Alternative Service Delivery?

ASD is a creative and dynamic process that involves changes in the form of existing public sector organizations or the design of new forms of organization and is sometimes referred to as “restructuring” and “organizational innovation.” An example of the former approach is the transformation of an existing government department into a government corporation. An example of the “new forms” approach is the creation of a “single-window” service-delivery organization. In many ASD arrangements, public sector organizations share their governance functions with business firms, community groups and/or other public organizations.

The pursuit of ASD arrangements has been closely tied to the New Public Management (NPM) movement, with its emphasis on innovative approaches to service delivery. NPM stresses the importance of governments doing the “steering,” while leaving much of the “rowing” (the delivery of services) to non-governmental entities or to collaborative arrangements between governmental and non-governmental entities. Taken together, ASD arrangements involve a wide range of public and private sector actors that are subject to varying degrees of independence from government control. Countries as dissimilar as Canada, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Peru and Tanzania have undertaken ASD initiatives.

Types of Alternative Service Delivery

ASD is commonly viewed as entailing alternatives to the traditional departmental or ministry structure of government. Some of these alternatives, such as public corporations, mixed enterprises, contracting out, and privatization, have long been used by governments and are well known to the general public. Other alternatives, such as service agencies, partnerships, employee takeovers, and single-window delivery mechanisms, have been used relatively infrequently in the past. A brief note on each of these latter alternatives will illustrate the variety of possible ASD arrangements.

In several countries, there has been innovative use of service agencies that enjoy various degrees of autonomy from government control. Especially notable here are the many executive agencies now operating in the United Kingdom and employing a very large percentage of the central government’s public servants. Canada has created both service agencies (e.g. the Canada Revenue Agency), which have considerable autonomy from departmental control, and special operating agencies (e.g. the Passport Office), which receive greater autonomy to manage their resources but which remain as part of a government department.

Partnerships are a very popular type of ASD. They can take a remarkable variety of innovative forms and can involve a wide range of participants, including public organizations at different levels of government, business firms, charitable organizations, voluntary organizations and labor unions. Partnerships between governments and non-governmental actors can help achieve such objectives as improved service delivery, reduced costs and economic productivity.

An increasingly popular type of ASD is the *single-window* approach to service delivery. This approach brings together government services so that citizens can access them more rapidly and efficiently. The purpose is to provide seamless service across government departments or even across governments. Moreover, the services can be delivered through one or more of the main delivery channels – the telephone, the Internet or walk-in centers.

Contracting out has traditionally involved a contractual agreement with a private sector organization to deliver a government service for a specified period of time, with the government keeping responsibility for effective service. Employee takeovers are a newer form of contracting out that involves contracting with a former government employee, or employees, to deliver a service previously delivered directly by the government.

Cautionary Considerations

Before adapting or adopting ASD arrangements from other countries or implementing innovative arrangements of their own design, governments must undertake a careful analysis of the likely strengths and weaknesses of each service-delivery alternative. In the late 1990s, Tanzania undertook a painstaking assessment of several alternatives before deciding on the creation of executive agencies. During the same period, as part of a large restructuring operation involving several ministries, Latvia rigorously applied ASD-like criteria to identify and choose among a range of service-delivery options. Canada, which has been at the forefront in the use of ASD mechanisms, has used a “public interest” test developed in the mid-1990s that could provide a benchmark for other countries. The test involves asking several questions about whether current services (or programs) are good candidates for ASD. The questions are as follows:

- *Public Interest Test.* Does the program or service continue to serve a public interest?
- *Role of Government Test.* Is there a legitimate and necessary role for government in this program or service?
- *Jurisdictional Alignment Test.* Is the lead responsibility for this program or service assigned to the right government jurisdiction?
- *External Partnership Test.* Could, or should, this program or service be provided in whole or in part by the private or voluntary sector?
- *Business Principles Test.* If the program or service continues within the existing government context, how could its efficiency and effectiveness be improved?
- *Affordability Test.* Is the program or service affordable within fiscal realities?

It is also worth noting that the increasingly closer relationships between public officials and business people that result from such government reforms as contracting out, public-private partnerships and privatization have expanded the opportunities for public officials to become involved in conflicts of interest.

While government organizations can often benefit significantly from adopting ASD arrangements, on many occasions improved *management* of the current organization can be a better option than restructuring it.

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CITIZEN-CENTERED SERVICE

Citizen-centered service is an important aspect of effective government action, and recent research shows a positive relationship between improved citizen satisfaction with service delivery and citizens' trust and confidence in government.

What is Citizen-Centered Service?

Service that is citizen centered takes account of citizens' needs and concerns at every stage of the design and delivery of government services. South Africa's Batho Pele (Citizens First) principles provide an excellent policy framework and implementation strategy for citizen-centered delivery. These principles are:

- *Consultation*: Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services they are offered.
- *Service standards*: Citizens should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they know what to expect.
- *Access*: All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled.
- *Courtesy*: Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration.
- *Information*: Citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive.
- *Openness and transparency*: Citizens should be told how national and provincial departments are run, how much they cost, and who is in charge.
- *Redress*: If the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy; and, when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic positive response.
- *Value for money*. Public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money.

Citizens and Customers

The current focus on citizen-centered service has been influenced by the New Public Management (NPM) movement, according to which public organizations should follow the example of business firms by seeking high-quality service to "customers." While many governments use the term "customers" to highlight their dedication to good service, it is important to remember that the role of customer is only one of the several roles that "citizens" play. Citizens can also be clients, claimants, compliers, and captives. Government leaders need to keep in mind that these various roles must be reconciled in the public interest. For example, while customers of government may want lower admission fees to public parks, other citizens may want better social services or lower taxes.

Pursuing Citizen-Centered Service

The implementation of two important concepts helps to promote citizen-centred service. The *no-wrong-door* concept means that no matter what point of service citizens contact (e.g. a government website, a government telephone number), they should be able to get the assistance they need. The idea here is that citizens should not have to think about which department or even which government provides the service they are seeking. The necessary coordination and integration should be provided by the government(s) involved.

A second and related concept is that of a *single window* (or integrated service delivery). This involves bringing government services together so that citizens can access them in a single seamless process where the focus is on citizens' needs and wants. Many governments are improving service by providing citizens with information through each of the main service-delivery channels – the Internet, the telephone and in-person service. A smaller number of governments have moved toward the integration and rationalization of these channels to foster efficient and effective service.

Providing successful integrated service delivery across government boundaries and between governments and private sector service providers requires the creation and implementation of collaborative arrangements, especially formal partnerships.

Measuring Citizen Satisfaction

A number of countries use diagnostic tools to determine citizens' satisfaction with service-delivery performance. The benefits of citizen satisfaction surveys can be substantial. A survey in South Africa, for example, identified the gap between citizens' expectations for the delivery of particular services and their perception of the quality of the actual delivery of those services. And a survey in Canada found that citizens perceive the quality of service delivery for many government services as higher than that for many private sector services. Canada established a non-profit organization called the Institute for Citizen-Centered Service to promote citizen-centered service across delivery channels and throughout the public sector, to undertake research on citizen satisfaction, and to provide a benchmarking service for public organizations.

Drivers of Citizen Satisfaction

An especially notable benefit of research on citizen satisfaction with service delivery is the identification of the major forces driving that satisfaction. Research in Canada identified the primary drivers, in order of importance, as timeliness, competence, 'going the extra mile,' fairness, and outcome. Research in the United Kingdom identified similar driving forces, namely (in order of priority),

- delivery of promised outcomes and the effective handling of problems;
- timeliness of service provision;
- accurate and comprehensive information, and the provision of progress reports;
- professionalism and competence of staff and the fair treatment of customers, and

- staff attitudes – friendly, polite and sympathetic to customers’ needs.

Government leaders should note that improvement in a government’s performance on virtually all of these drivers is within the control of public managers.

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CODES OF ETHICS

The role model provided by ethical political and public service leaders is an important influence on the ethical standards and behavior of public servants. However, *codes of ethics* can be an effective supplement to ethical leadership and a valuable means by which leaders can foster ethical conduct. It is essential to begin with some basic distinctions.

Definitions

A code of ethics can be succinctly defined as a written statement of principles or standards of right conduct. Codes of ethics can also contain values, rules and guidelines.

Although a distinction is often made between law and ethics, with ethics providing guidance in “the grey area” not covered by law, many codes contain, or make reference to, specific legal provisions governing right conduct. Indeed, some ethics codes are enshrined in statute. Note also that there are many ethics “rules” that can be found outside ethics codes in such instruments as statutes, regulations and guidelines.

The term code of ethics is often used interchangeably with the terms *code of conduct* and *statement of values*. However, codes of conduct tend to prescribe, sometimes in great detail, what constitutes good behavior and may include rules on such non-ethical matters as proper dress in the workplace. In contrast, codes of ethics tend to be less prescriptive and to provide guiding principles and standards for right conduct. In that respect, ethics codes are similar to *statements of values* that highlight such broad concepts as integrity, honesty, fairness and accountability as the foundation for more specific principles and standards on such ethical issues as conflict of interest.

Form and Content of Codes of Ethics

The variety of *forms* that ethics codes can take can be depicted along a continuum, running from a very broad statement of values or principles (The Ten Commandments Approach) to the provision of very specific rules that provide for every possible contingency (the Justinian Code Approach).

Another way of explaining the forms that ethics codes can take is to think of a continuum running from an *integrity-based*, or *values-based*, approach to a *compliance-based* one. The former (e.g. Canada, New Zealand) emphasizes overall aspirational values and focuses on encouraging good behavior rather than policing errors and punishing bad behavior. The latter approach (e.g. United States, Mexico) focuses more on wrongdoing by requiring strict adherence to administrative procedures and rules, often contained in legislation that prescribes what public servants should or should not do. An increasingly popular option is to combine both approaches by setting out core public service values as a foundation for providing ethics rules based on those values.

While there is considerable variety in the *content* of codes of ethics, most of them cover such matters as

- variations of conflict of interest (e.g. receiving gifts or benefits, using government property for personal purposes);
- violations of confidentiality or privacy;
- involvement in partisan politics;
- public criticism of government policies or personalities, and
- discrimination or harassment.

Benefits and Deficiencies of Ethics Codes

Among their benefits, codes of ethics can:

- provide, for both the public and public servants, a written statement of the ethical values, principles, standards and/or guidelines to which public servants are expected to adhere;
- bring together in one place ethics provisions that are scattered throughout various official government statutes, regulations, etc.;
- reduce the area of disagreement over what activities are ethically permissible or prohibited;
- provide a mechanism for resolving disagreements as to those activities that are ethical and those that are not;
- foster increased public trust and confidence in the integrity of public servants, and
- set out sanctions for violations of the code.

Among their deficiencies, codes of ethics may:

- not be comprehensive enough to cover every possible situation;
- contain provisions (e.g., disclosure of assets) that discourage unethical conduct by a few but that may impose onerous requirements on all public servants;
- impose restrictions on public servants' activities (e.g., on certain investments) that may discourage good people from entering government service;
- influence some public servants to act as if any activity that is not prohibited by the code is permissible, and
- be difficult to enforce.

Implementing Codes

Effective implementation of codes requires that their principles and standards be integrated into the day-to-day management and operations of the public service. Codes are only part, but an important part, of the overall ethical infrastructure (or “national integrity system”) of a country that includes such measures as ethical leadership, ethics education and training, sound human resource practices, and special ethics offices.

Many codes of ethics make no provision for their enforcement. Codes that do contain enforcement measures must enable distinctions to be made between illegal and unethical conduct; provide a range of appropriate sanctions for ethical offences; and specify the body or bodies responsible for enforcement.

Finally, it is essential to tailor codes to the culture and conditions of each country. The nature and scope of ethical issues can vary substantially from one country to another and, in a broad sense, between developed and developing countries.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Political and public service leaders continue to be challenged by the issue of conflict of interest. This widespread ethical offence has serious implications for the public's perception of good governance. Involvement in conflict of interest is especially damaging to the electoral fortunes of elected officials. Beyond perceptions and political fortunes, conflicts of interest result in poor quality of service delivery and misuse of state funds. These inefficiencies have tangible effects in poor quality roads and school buildings and up to absence of infrastructure. Conflicts of interest also affect the private sector in constraining proper development of competitive industries and discouraging investment.

What is Conflict of Interest?

A *conflict of interest* is a situation in which someone in a position of public trust has competing professional or personal interests or incentives for action in a particular situation. The OECD defines conflict of interest as “a conflict between the public duty and private interests of public officials, in which public officials have private-capacity interests which could improperly influence the performance of their official duties and responsibilities.” Conflict of interest is often considered to be a form of the broader notion of *corruption*.

Current Causes of Concern

While conflict of interest is a perennial concern, conflict-of-interest scandals have drawn increased attention of late. Historically, relations between government and business have been an abundant and enduring source of conflict-of-interest offences. Recently, this problem-area has been exacerbated by the increasingly closer relationships between public officials and business people that result from such government reforms as contracting out, public-private partnerships and privatization. There has also been increased movement of employees between the public and private sectors. In addition, public servants have sometimes been encouraged to interact more closely and frequently with citizens, including business people, so as to provide better service. These reforms, and others, have expanded the opportunities for public officials to become involved in conflicts of interest.

Real, Apparent, and Potential Conflicts

Real conflicts of interest, as defined above, must be distinguished from *apparent* and *potential* conflicts. Officials can be in a conflict-of-interest “situation” without necessarily being involved in wrongdoing. An *apparent* conflict of interest refers to a situation wherein well-informed people could reasonably believe that a real conflict exists. For example, a public official who gives contracts to a business that employs one of that official's relatives may only appear to be involved in a real conflict. Apparent conflicts can be as damaging to the public's perception of government integrity as a real conflict. A *potential* conflict of interest refers to a situation that might develop into a real conflict. For example, an official with shares in oil companies who exercises regulatory authority over the energy industry is in a potential conflict. Public officials must take

action to avoid or remove themselves from circumstances that have the strong appearance of, or the potential to develop into, real conflicts.

Varieties of Conflict of Interest

Among the many forms of conflict of interest are these:

- *Self-dealing*: Public officials benefit by using their official capacity to deal with themselves in a private capacity – for example, by giving a contract to a firm that they own.
- *Accepting benefits*: Public officials accept a benefit from a person with whom they conduct official business – for example, a gift from a contractor.
- *Influence peddling*: Public officials solicit a benefit in return for granting preferential treatment to a person with whom they conduct official business.
- *Using government property*: Public officials use government facilities or equipment for private purposes.
- *Using confidential information*: Public officials profit by using government information that is not available to the general public
- *Outside employment* (or “moonlighting”): Public officials work for additional remuneration at jobs outside government. Conflicts arise when, for example, officials do not devote appropriate time and energy to their government job because of the demands of their outside employment.
- *Post-employment*: Public officials use information or contacts acquired while in government to benefit themselves, or others, after they leave government.

While conflicts of interest are prevalent in both developed and developing countries, certain types of conflict such as accepting benefits and influence peddling are especially common in developing countries.

Post-employment conflicts of interest are especially notable because they have recently grown in importance for several of the reasons noted above. Moreover, they are distinct from other types of conflict because they occur primarily after public officials have left the government, making these conflicts more difficult to control. Post-employment offences can, however, begin while officials are still in government. Officials can, for example, give preferential treatment to a business firm in the hope, or with a promise, that the firm will hire that official when he or she leaves the government.

Preventing and Punishing Conflicts of Interest

Each country needs to give careful consideration to the effectiveness of its conflict-of-interest regime or infrastructure – that is, to the measures and mechanisms that it has to prevent and manage conflict-of-interest issues.

The means by which conflicts of interest can be discouraged and penalized are similar to those for other ethical offences. They include ethics rules and codes, ethics training and education, and ethical leadership. In many countries, restrictions, prohibitions and penalties for conflict of interest are set out in legislation. Furthermore, in many

countries, distinct ethics offices have been created to deal solely or primarily with conflict-of-interest problems.

Various measures have been devised specifically to prevent conflict-of-interest problems. These measures include the requirements that officials disclose all of their assets so that it will be clear to others if the officials are in a conflict situation, that officials divest themselves of problematic assets, or that they place these assets in some kind of trust.

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SINGLE WINDOWS AND INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY

In several countries, political and public service leaders have significantly improved the delivery of government services by using an integrated service delivery (ISD) approach or, as it is often known, *single window* (SW) service delivery. The SW approach brings together government services, including information, so that citizens can access the services quickly and efficiently. Ideally, citizens should be able to access services from any of the main delivery channels – the Internet, telephone call centers, or walk-in centers that provide over-the-counter service.

Types of SW Delivery

The benefits of SW delivery can be seen in its three main types:

- *Information Gateways* improve access to government information and referral services through the main channels.
- *One-Stop Department Stores* improve convenience and accessibility to a wide range of government services, again through each channel.
- *Seamless Service Boutiques* provide SW access to a related cluster of services, including the provision of services across departmental and governmental boundaries and across channels. Citizens should not have to think about what department or even about what level of government is providing the service.

Types of SW Structures

SW service can be delivered through a variety of structural arrangements:

- the *owner-delivered* approach simply involves SW delivery by a department or a government.
- the *owner-delivered in a co-located environment* approach refers to SW delivery by departments or governments that share space at a particular location.
- the *shared delivery through integration* approach involves SW delivery by a partnership that integrates the services of more than one department or government.
- the *service utility* approach involves an organization that delivers services *on behalf of* government organizations but delivers no services, or very few services, of its own.
- the *ISD department* approach takes the form of a department or agency focused on improving service delivery, with a division concerned with promoting SW service – or what is increasingly described as integrated service delivery (ISD).

Integrated Service Delivery

The concept of ISD is the bringing together – and fitting together – of related government services through one interface that is accessible to the citizens in a single seamless process where the focus is on citizens' needs and wants. There is an enormous range in

the scope of ISD initiatives. At one extreme, some of them involve one department partnering with another department for the delivery of a single service. At the other extreme are ISD initiatives that include several government departments in partnership with departments in other governments and with business and non-profit organizations. Some ISD initiatives, such as Australia's *Centrelink* and *Service New Brunswick* (Canada), provide services for several government departments. *Service Canada* is a government-wide initiative that not only provides services on behalf of 14 federal departments and agencies through several delivery channels but that also has service delivery partnerships with other levels of government, business firms and voluntary organizations.

Barriers to ISD

Creating and sustaining SW initiatives, especially those involving service integration across departments and governments, can be a difficult challenge. The barriers to effective ISD include

- *political* barriers, such as lack of support from political leaders;
- *structural* barriers, such as undue emphasis on the vertical dimension of government to the detriment of horizontal initiatives like ISD projects;
- *operational* barriers, such as incompatible technologies between organizations forming ISD partnerships;
- *managerial* barriers, such as different financial and human resource policies and practices among the partners, and
- *cultural* barriers, such as resistance to information sharing.

Overcoming the Barriers

Among the means for reducing or eliminating obstacles to ISD are:

- selecting the most appropriate mechanism for service integration (e.g., a service utility);
- setting out the governance arrangements carefully in the initial partnership agreement;
- ensuring adequate funding;
- ensuring political support, and
- marketing the benefits of ISD arrangements to the public.

Integrated Channel Delivery

Integrated channel delivery (ICD) involves joining together the major service delivery channels (e.g., the Internet, the telephone) to provide seamless service to citizens. Many SW services are available only over the Internet, and the Internet often serves as the "backbone" for the other channels by providing quick access to information. However, citizens expect to have a choice of service delivery channels. Some citizens will not or

cannot use the Internet channel. Thus, the other channels retain their importance. In Sao Paulo, Brazil, 68 federal, state and municipal agencies have partnered with community groups and private sector organizations to establish one-stop walk-in citizen service centers and Internet sites to deliver such services as drivers' licenses and passports. Similarly, in Andhra Pradesh, India, state and local government agencies have joined together to provide multi-channel access to several services. In North America, several cities have adopted a "311" telephone call centre system to enable citizens to access government services at any time.

In developed countries like Australia and Canada, governments are moving beyond multi-channel service to seek efficiency and improved service by rationalizing the use of the various channels. Citizens are encouraged to "migrate" from the walk-in and telephone channels to the much less expensive Internet channel.

The barriers to ICD are similar to those for ISD. For example, politicians like to ensure that citizens have equitable access to *all* delivery channels, and there is reluctance to shift financial resources from the older channels to the Internet channel. Most of the various means for overcoming obstacles to ISD can also be used to remove or reduce obstacles to ICD.

While many countries have applied SWs, the results are often mixed. SWs can nevertheless be important tools in improving service delivery. SWs should however not be a substitute for further streamlining regulatory requirements, as there is the danger that SWs add yet another stop to citizens and businesses.

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WHISTLE-BLOWING

Whistle-blowing is the reporting by a current or former employee of a public institution/organization of alleged wrongdoing or misconduct that may threaten the operations or governance of that public institution/organization.

Whistle-blowing can be *internal*, when the allegation of wrongdoing is made within the organization itself. Or it can be *external*, when the allegation is made in entities outside the organization, including legislators, the news media, or a government office dedicated to investigating allegations of wrongdoing. Some governments require or encourage employees to exhaust all available internal remedies before taking their allegations outside the organization.

Since the term whistle-blowing has invidious connotations of “squealing” or “snitching” on one’s colleagues, some governments have begun to use the term “disclosure of wrongdoing” as an alternative to “whistle-blowing.” The whistle-blower then becomes the “discloser.” The hope is that disclosure will increasingly be viewed as the normal and responsible course of action for public employees who know about, or suspect, wrongdoing.

Whistle-blowers serve an important role in maintaining the integrity of public institutions and can face negative consequences for their disclosures. Therefore the protection of whistle-blowers is now widely viewed as a useful mechanism for preventing and discouraging unethical or corrupt conduct. Still, whistle-blowing and the statues which surround it, are often more complicated than is commonly understood. Public leadership in particular should recognize that while whistle-blowing is a key element in controlling wrongdoing, it requires a measured approach.

How Widespread is Whistle-Blower Protection?

The protection of public employees who disclose wrongdoing is much more common in developed countries than in developing ones. Countries like Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States provide statutory protection for public employees who reveal wrongdoing. The purpose of this legislation is to provide a formal and effective system whereby government wrongdoing can be reported and remedied, while the rights of those persons making the allegations and those against whom the allegations are made are protected.

International organizations have begun to encourage countries around the world to provide disclosure protection for public employees. For example, the 1997 Inter-American Convention against Corruption requires members of the Organization of American States to consider adopting measures “to create, maintain and strengthen ... [s]ystems for protecting public servants and private citizens who, in good faith, report acts of corruption, including protection of their identities, in accordance with their Constitutions and the basic principles of their legal systems.” The 2005 United Nations Convention against Corruption contains a similar provision. Note that the European Council’s Criminal Law and Civil Law conventions *require* signatories to protect employees who, in good faith, report suspected corruption.

What Kinds of Wrongdoing Justify Disclosure?

The categories of wrongdoing that should be disclosed are similar from one country to another. Most countries list the following concerns:

- violation of a law, rule or regulation;
- misuse of public funds;
- abuse of authority;
- gross mismanagement;
- endangering the health or safety of an individual, and
- damaging the environment.

Encouraging Disclosure while Protecting the Accused

Although it is desirable for public employees to disclose wrongdoing in government, it is essential to ensure that none of those accused of wrongdoing suffers as a result of being falsely accused. Thus, the protection-of-disclosure statutes in some countries provide penalties for public employees who make frivolous or vexatious allegations.

Protecting Anonymity while Protecting the Accused

Public employees are highly unlikely to disclose wrongdoing if they are not confident that their anonymity will be adequately protected. Governments cannot, however, provide an ironclad guarantee of anonymity. If a disclosure case reaches the courts, for example, the accused person may, under the principles of natural justice, have the right to know the identity of his or her accuser.

Encouraging Disclosure while Discouraging Reprisal

The main obstacle to public employees' disclosure of wrongdoing is fear of reprisal. If the organization's senior management or the employee against whom the allegation is made learns the identity of the person who has made the allegation, that person may suffer reprisal. Disclosers are often subjected to ostracism, discrimination and even dismissal. Most disclosure regimes provide penalties against officials who take retaliatory action against disclosers.

A Strong Disclosure Regime

Canada's 2006 Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act is one of the strongest disclosure statutes in the world. A Public Sector Integrity Officer investigates allegations from both public servants and members of the public and recommends remedial action where appropriate. The act covers virtually all public sector employees. There are strict rules on maintaining the confidentiality of those persons making allegations. Public servants can appeal against reprisals, and disciplinary penalties are provided for those who take reprisals. The integrity officer can refuse to deal with allegations that are not made in good faith.

Experience to date in countries with statutory disclosure protection regimes is that only a small number of disclosures are made and that most of these allegations are concerned with relatively minor matters rather than with instances of serious wrongdoing. Yet, serious wrongdoing continues to be revealed by other means, notably by the news media. Thus, the adoption of a disclosure statute cannot ensure that cases of significant illegal or unethical conduct will be reported. It is clear, however, that a weak disclosure regime will not be effective. A persuasive case can be made for a regime that is strong enough to ensure that public employees will feel comfortable reporting wrongdoing.

International Conventions

- Council of Europe Criminal Law Convention on Corruption
- Council of Europe Civil Law Convention on Corruption
- Organization of American States, Inter-American Convention against Corruption
- United Nations Convention against Corruption

These conventions can be found at <http://www.u4.no/themes/conventions/intro.cfm>.

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PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Performance measurement can bring substantial benefits to governments in the form of greater efficiency, effectiveness and accountability, but there are substantial obstacles to its successful implementation.

What is Performance Measurement?

Performance measurement is an ongoing process of ascertaining how well, or how poorly, a government program is being provided. It involves the continuous collection of data on progress made towards achieving the program's pre-established objectives. Performance indicators, or measures, are developed as standards for assessing the extent to which these objectives are achieved.

It is essential to distinguish performance measurement from several related concepts. The terms performance measurement and *performance management* are often used interchangeably. However, performance management is a broader term that includes not only performance measurement but also the determination of the appropriate level of performance, the reporting of performance information, and the use of that information to assess the actual level of performance against the desired level.

Performance measurement is often confused with *program evaluation*, which is an in-depth study conducted on a periodic, rather than an ongoing, basis to determine, in the light of current conditions, whether the objectives of a program are still appropriate, whether it is properly designed, and whether it is achieving adequate results. Performance measures are a valuable input into a program evaluation.

Finally, performance measurement is sometimes mistaken for *performance evaluation* (or performance appraisal), which is a concept associated with human resource management that refers to the systematic collection and analysis of data on the performance of an employee over time.

Why Measure Performance?

The current focus on performance measurement in the public sector has been significantly influenced by the New Public Management (NPM) movement, which, following private sector practice, places heavy emphasis on managing for results. NPM in general and, since the late 1980s, performance measurement, in particular, have been offered as approaches to help governments reduce their annual budgetary deficits, lower their accumulated debt and improve service delivery.

Ideally, performance measures support a wide range of financial and human resource practices that are designed to improve the development, implementation and evaluation of government programs. Robert Behn notes that public managers, as part of their general management strategy, can use performance measurement to evaluate, control, budget, motivate, promote, celebrate, learn and improve. International organizations and individual states that provide economic assistance to developing countries have encouraged or required these countries to generate performance data.

Types of Performance Information

Performance measurement systems can provide several types of information, including information about inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts. These are illustrated here with reference to a government employees' training program, with sample indicators shown in brackets.

- *Inputs* are the human, financial and material resources that are used to implement a program (e.g. the money spent).
- *Activities* involve the use of the inputs to implement a program's objectives (e.g. developing training courses).
- *Outputs* are the short-term achievements that result from the activities undertaken to implement the program (e.g. the number of public servants trained).
- *Outcomes* are the medium-term changes that result from achieving the outputs (e.g. the improved skills of employees).
- *Impacts* are the long-term changes that result over time from achieving the program's outputs and outcomes (e.g. improved program delivery).

It is often easier to generate performance data on inputs and outputs than on outcomes and impacts.

Obstacles to Successful Performance Measurement

The barriers to effective performance measurement fall into several categories.

- *Methodological barriers.* The relationship between inputs and outputs is relatively easy to measure, but measuring the relationship between inputs and outcomes is much more challenging. It is difficult to isolate the influence of the inputs from the many other factors that can affect the outcomes. For example, the improved skill-level of employees can result not only from training but also from other forms of learning.
- *Financial barriers.* The operation of an effective performance measurement system is costly in terms of employees' time and the technology required. Government leaders have to decide whether the payoff from expenditures on performance measurement is worth the investment.
- *Government barriers.* Measuring performance in government is, in general, more difficult than it is in the private sector. Many government programs are very complex and have multiple and changing objectives, thereby making the development and application of performance indicators more challenging.
- *Political and public service barriers.* Politicians will not support performance measurement if they anticipate negative results that could provide embarrassing ammunition for their opponents. Similarly, public servants are tempted to protect their own interests by implementing programs in a way that will make the programs look good in light of the established performance indicators. It is commonly argued that what gets measured gets done. The result is that sometimes what gets done is not what should be done.

Given the barriers to successful performance measurement, it is not surprising that there is much disagreement about its utility and that in practice much of the measurement focuses on inputs and outputs rather than on outcomes or impacts. While performance measurement can be an effective means of promoting accountability for efficient and effective program delivery, both elected officials and public managers should consider carefully the concerns discussed above and in the readings shown below.

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PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Over the past two decades, political and public service leadership around the world has included the forging of innovative arrangements described as public-private partnerships (P3s). Although the term P3s is often applied only to collaborative arrangements between public organizations and business firms, it is also interpreted more broadly to cover public sector partnerships with a wide range of organizations outside of the public sector, including such entities as community, voluntary and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Since the term is sometimes used loosely to refer to virtually all types of interaction between the public and private sectors, a brief definition is required.

What Constitutes a P3?

A partnership can be defined as the pooling of resources like labor and money by organizations that share decision-making power, risks, and benefits in the pursuit of compatible objectives. It is this sharing that distinguishes a P3 from other relationships between the public and private sectors, including the traditional contractual arrangement whereby a public organization pays for the delivery of products or services. However, many P3s are formalized by a contract. Scholars have classified P3s in various ways, but partnerships involving power-sharing are often termed “real,” or “collaborative,” partnerships, whereas those involving a sharing of only work or resources are described as “operational” partnerships. P3s vary greatly in their purposes and participants.

Purposes

P3s can be used to pursue a remarkable range of objectives, including promoting economic productivity, developing physical infrastructure, improving service, reducing costs, and assisting poor and disadvantaged persons. In Tirupur, India, a P3 was established to improve water and sewage services to residents, while at the same time assuring local industry of a reliable source of water. P3s in the form of “electronic partnerships” have become important for governments that require private sector investment for effective exploitation of information and communication technologies. In Singapore, the government’s regulatory agencies have partnered with the childcare industry and parents in a nation-wide electronic government initiative to provide better childcare facilities and services.

Participants

Another major benefit of P3s is that they can involve a wide range of participants, including all types of public organizations at all levels of government, business firms, non-profit organizations, NGOs, pressure groups, and labor unions. An award-winning partnership in India brought together public servants, politicians, NGOs and philanthropists to meet the challenges of gang wars and terrorism in Tiruchy City. There are also “international” P3s that include such partners as individual states, international financial institutions, private sector organizations, and NGOs. The Canadian Wildlife Service of Environment Canada and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service have partnered to administer the North American Waterfowl Management Plan through joint

ventures with provincial, territorial and state agencies, as well as with private conservation organizations, business organizations, and individuals. Bangladesh is notable for partnering with NGOs to promote development in rural areas. There are also many partnerships between international donors, such as the World Bank, and non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs). The World Bank Institute has worked with several partners, including NGDOs, to deliver management training to women entrepreneurs.

The Road to Successful P3s

Effective political and public service leadership is central to creating and sustaining successful P3s. Partnering can be a difficult and complicated enterprise requiring rigorous planning, development, implementation, evaluation, and even provision for termination. Public organizations should not enter into P3s without a thorough examination of the likely costs and benefits. Any checklist of advice for successful P3s will include such factors as the need for:

- sufficient benefits for all of the partners;
- close attention to the terms and conditions of the initial agreement;
- careful consideration of financial, human resource and legal implications;
- thorough risk assessment, and
- continuous communication among the partners.

Barriers to Successful P3s

The number and nature of obstacles to successful P3s depend largely on the P3s' purposes and participants. A P3 that aims to promote economic development by partnering with several actors who have varying degrees of expertise and resources will be much more difficult to establish and maintain than a P3 that has a narrow purpose and a few participants. Common challenges for most P3s include ensuring that:

- participants remain accountable to their own organizations;
- the government is open and transparent about its partnership agreements;
- the government is fair and equitable in selecting the organizations with which it partners, and
- private sector organizations do not exploit partnerships to the disadvantage of taxpayers.

The challenge to political and public service leaders is to advance their organization's objectives by overcoming such barriers to the creation and implementation of P3s.

Guidelines for Successful P3s

Advice on surmounting barriers to successful P3s can be found in the following references.

European Commission. *Guidelines for Successful Public-Private Partnerships*. Brussels: Directorate-General Regional Policy, European Commission, 2003. Available at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/guides/ppp_en.pdf.

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ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT

Political and public service leaders know that enormous benefits can flow from electronic government (e-government). However, there can be a considerable gap between these potential benefits and what is actually achieved. The development of e-government (often described as “digital” government) is a much more complicated and costly endeavor than is commonly realized. There have been many remarkable successes in the application of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to government. There have also been many large and expensive failures, especially with large technology-based projects.

What is E-Government?

E-government can be broadly defined as the application of ICTs to the entire range of government activities. More specifically, it involves the use of ICTs, especially the Internet, to provide government services, promote citizen engagement, improve government management, and support government operations. The World Bank has noted that ICTs “can serve a variety of different ends: better delivery of government services to citizens, improved interactions with business and industry, citizen empowerment through access to information, or more efficient government management.” The suggested benefits include “less corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth, and/or cost reductions.”

E-government is often distinguished from e-democracy, which focuses on the use of ICTs to strengthen the democratic system by such means as facilitating citizens’ participation in the political process and in government decision-making. E-government can also be distinguished from e-governance, which is usually viewed as a broad concept comprising both e-government and e-democracy and including relationships between public officials and the wider society, notably private sector and non-governmental organizations.

The Evolution of E-Government

Discussion of the evolution of e-government is often set within a framework of stages of development. Most countries have completed the first stage – building the initial infrastructure for future development, including the creation of a website containing basic government information.

Many countries have made substantial progress on the second stage – putting government services online in the form of extensive information and the enabling of elementary transactions like obtaining passport applications (as in such countries as India and Canada).

A few governments have moved to the third stage of beginning to transform their structures and processes through automation, restructuring and re-engineering. Progress is made in integrating policy and operations in the “back office” to support service in the “front office” and in improving service to citizens through the Internet channel. There is also substantial integration of service delivery across departments and governments and between governments and the private sector.

In the fourth stage – moving toward next-generation government – the third-stage developments will be greatly extended, and integrated service delivery will be supplemented by integration and rationalization of the main service-delivery channels of the Internet, the telephone and in-person service.

Barriers to E-Government

There are several types of barriers to e-government. Political barriers include the resistance of some elected officials to innovative use of ICTs. Structural barriers can take such forms as the traditional emphasis on the vertical, hierarchical dimension of public organizations when successful electronic government requires heavy emphasis on the horizontal dimension. There are also managerial barriers, like the lack of funding for the use of new ICTs, and operational barriers, like the lack of inter-operable computer systems between departments and governments. And there are cultural barriers arising, for example, from officials in one department who are unwilling to share data with those in other departments. Two pervasive barriers, namely privacy and security issues and the digital divide, deserve special attention.

Privacy and Security

E-government can involve the linking and sharing, as well as the collection and processing of large amounts of information on individual citizens. Many citizens are concerned that the confidentiality of their personal information contained in various government databanks may not be adequately protected. They are also concerned that the transmission of their personal communications with government, especially over the Internet, may not be secure from interception by third parties. As a result, there is substantial resistance to e-government initiatives that may enhance such values as efficiency and effectiveness but that may threaten privacy or security.

The Digital Divide

The term digital divide refers to the gap between ICT “haves” and “have-nots,” that is, between those who have access to ICTs and those who do not. The reasons for the gap include such demographic variables as income, education, age, gender, ethnicity and geographical location. For example, high-income people are more likely than low-income people to have computers and Internet access. Each country has to decide how much to invest in overcoming the digital divide.

E-Government in Developing Countries

International organizations are focused on overcoming the “global” digital divide – the ICT gap between developed and developing countries. The president of the World Bank has warned that “the digital divide is one of the greatest impediments to development, and it is growing exponentially.” The scope of the challenge varies greatly from one country to another. Countries like Brazil, Estonia and Malaysia have made significant progress in the acquisition and use of ICTs by both government and individual citizens. However, many of the poorest countries in the developing world simply do not have the

resources to invest in ICTs. Available evidence suggests that the gap between information-rich countries and many information-poor ones is widening.

For both developing and developed countries, there is considerable debate between “cyber-optimists” and “cyber-pessimists” about the likely long-term benefits of e-government.

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