

## **Absorbing and Implementing a Best Practice: Issues of Local Capacity and Sustainability**

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### *Biographical Sketch*

Donald Klingner is a Professor in the Graduate School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs. He is co-author of Public Personnel Management (5<sup>th</sup> edition 2003, with John Nalbandian), also published in Spanish and Chinese. He is an international public management consultant to the UN, World Bank and IADB; a visiting professor at UNAM (the National Autonomous University of Mexico); and a Fulbright Senior Scholar in Central America (1994). He is the International Coordinator of the American Society for Public Administration (2004 – present), and past Chair of ASPA’s Section on Personnel and Labor Relations (1983 - 1984) and Section on International and Comparative Administration (2001 - 2003). He co-edits Comparative Technology Transfer and Society, published by the Johns Hopkins University Press through the Colorado Institute for Technology Transfer and Implementation under contract with the University of Colorado. He has been on the faculties of Indiana University (1974-1980) and Florida International University (1980-2000). Prior to receiving his PhD in Public Administration from the University of Southern California (1974), he worked for the U.S. government’s central personnel agency (1968-1973).

### *Abstract*

Innovation requires processes of adaptation, anticipation and openness to change. Change provides the opportunity to achieve new and different approaches. In order to replicate a best practice one of the pre-conditions is that the government who is implementing the best practice has the necessary capacity to do so. This implies, among other things, the right policy environment; support from leadership, involvement of stakeholders, adequate funding and an appropriate transfer plan. It also implies the capacity of the organization to constantly adapt to changing circumstances both internal and external, i.e. to operate as a learning organization. This article will:

1. Establish the importance of innovation to governance in general and development administration and implementation in particular;
2. Explore the relationships among organizational learning, knowledge management, and innovation diffusion and adoption;
3. Explore the utility of the concept of “best practices” in development administration;
4. Review the criteria for successful program implementation in a development context;
5. Present and discuss workable program implementation techniques; and
6. Discuss their applicability to specific sectors of development administration.

# **Absorbing and Implementing a Best Practice:**

## **Issues of Local Capacity and Sustainability**

### **Introduction**

Innovation requires processes of adaptation, anticipation and openness to change. Change provides the opportunity to achieve new and different approaches to governance and development. Replicating “best practice” public administration requires government capacity to overcome barriers to innovation diffusion and adoption. Among other things, capacity implies a favorable policy environment, leadership support, stakeholder involvement, adequate funding and an appropriate transfer plan. It also implies the capacity of the organization to constantly adapt to changing circumstances both internal and external, i.e. to operate as a learning organization.

Successful innovation is often “incremental and small scale because the factors conditioning the success of innovative practices vary according to the organization’s internal capacity, external environment and goals or mission. Each organization is different and faces varied situations at particular points in time. The techniques required to promote organizational innovation must therefore be situationally determined. Furthermore, the stability of the organization’s environment changes over time, requiring various degrees of innovation. Finally, the internal social structure and capacity of an organization to support and carry out changed standard operating procedures will also vary” (Cohen and Eimicke, 1996: 2). In other words, one size does not fit all.

This article will:

1. Establish the importance of innovation to governance in general and development administration and implementation in particular;
2. Explore the relationships among organizational learning, knowledge management, and innovation diffusion and adoption;
3. Explore and critique the utility of “best practices” in development administration;
4. Review the criteria for successful program implementation in a development context;
5. Present and discuss workable program implementation techniques; and
6. Discuss their applicability to specific sectors of development administration.

### **1. Innovation in Governance and Development Administration**

After World War II, the success of the Marshall Plan at rebuilding Europe and a global interest in economic development for least developed countries (LDCs) led to the creation of a new field of study and practice (Seely, 2003). Development administration

emerged as an amalgam of development economics and public administration aimed at improving economic conditions and governance systems in LDCs by replicating Western concepts and techniques. It generally presumed that the laws, policies, structures and procedures in developed Western countries were superior to those indigenous to developing countries because of their greater rationality, efficiency and relationship to democratic ideals (Rostow, 1971; Fredland, 2000). Their diffusion and adoption was considered both automatic (given the “evolutionary superiority” of reforms introduced by Western consultants) and purposive, in that Western lenders often mandated administrative reforms as a condition of continued credit (Adamolekun, 1999).

But this traditional notion of economic development has by and large been abandoned because it did not achieve the desired results (Heady, 1998). It did not decrease the gap between rich and poor nations, nor reduce global poverty (United Nations Development Program, 1998). One scholar clearly summarizes this failure as reported by the UN:

The United Nations’ *Human Development Report, 1999*, notes that between 1980 and 1996 gross national product (GNP) per capita declined in no less than fifty-nine countries. It reports that the income gap between the fifth of the world’s population living in the richest countries, and the fifth in the poorest widened from 30 to 1 in 1960 to 74 to 1 in 1997” (Hoogvelt, 2001: xiii).

Three analytically separate yet interdependent approaches have emerged in response to the now discredited traditional approach to development administration: comparative administration, development management, and international public management. Comparative administration began as a social science discipline intent on correcting the two fundamental intellectual flaws of traditional development administration: ethnocentrism and ignorance (Riggs, 1968; Klingner and Washington, 2000). Its adherents are primarily scholars and researchers who believe that traditional development administration failed because development administrators tended to automatically and erroneously assume that Western techniques and structures were superior to their indigenous counterparts (Fredland, 2000); and because they were unaware of the unique historical factors that had led to the success of Western management techniques (Riggs, 1968). In contrast, comparative administration is the more value-neutral study of public administrative systems across countries and cultures (Riggs, 1980 and 1991; Rutgers, 1998). It examines alternative governance models as outcomes of cultural contexts (historical, economic, political and social), and evaluates the relative capacity of administrative systems based on underlying trends and conditions (Peters, 1988; Van Wart and Cayer, 1990; Heady, 1996). Its intellectual antecedents are political science and sociology. Its primary purpose is to compare alternative systems in order to understand how they have evolved and why they function as they do, rather than to evaluate them, describe their shortcomings, or prescribe recommendations to improve them.

The sub-field of development management, which encompasses the management of particular development efforts as well as the indigenous process of development, broadened in the 1990s. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, the underlying

structural mechanism for international economic development changed fundamentally from politically motivated state-to-state aid, to market-oriented economic transactions by transnational corporations (Fredland, 2000). But while capitalism has clearly triumphed globally as a system of production, some of its more negative consequences (e.g., inequitable distribution of wealth and a focus on economic rather than social, political or environmental objectives) led detractors to question the underlying assumptions of globalism and to suggest structural alternatives, appropriate technologies, sustainable development and non-economic criteria for assessing development (Korten, 1995; Schumacher, 1973). Thus, development managers adopted many of the insights learned from comparative administration. First, they recognized that macroeconomic growth is not the sole or even the primary goal of development. Other valued outcomes are balanced economic development, the growth of civil society as measured by such factors as citizen participation, the development of nongovernmental organizations as a supplement to the public and private sectors, and strengthening public administrative capacity so as to increase public confidence in government policies and administrative capacity. Second, they explicitly recognized that strengthening the capacity of government agencies and NGOs was not only a desirable antidote to the dominance of market-based structural responses to globalization (Farazmand, 2002), but also a prerequisite to development (Werlin, 1990). Third, these development managers formed new alliances with international donor organizations and became, in effect, a global industry with different clients, sponsors and objectives than in the Cold War era (Brinkerhoff, 1996; Brinkerhoff and Coston, 1999).

Throughout the world, demands for development and democratization have pressured governments to make good policy decisions and use scarce resources effectively (Dilulio, Garvey and Kettl, 1993). Government capacity – or the lack thereof – is perhaps the most obvious factor affecting perceptions of governance (Klingner, Nalbandian and Romzek, 2002). In developed countries, governance usually means *maintaining* government's ability to coordinate policy, gather information, deliver services through multiple (often non-governmental partners), and replace hierarchical bureaucracies with more flexible mechanisms for managing indirect government (Brudney, O'Toole and Rainey, 2000; Kettl, 2002). In developing countries, it probably means *establishing* government's ability to deliver vital public services (through core administrative functions like budgeting, human resource management and program evaluation) while simultaneously focusing on more fundamental changes (e.g., citizen participation, decentralization, innovation and entrepreneurial leadership (Kettl 1997) necessary for effective political systems. In developing countries lacking a strong culture of either autonomous government or indigenous markets (Klingner and Pallavicini Campos, 2002), global markets tend to dominate – or even undercut, per Friedman's (2000) "golden straightjacket" analogy – national economic and political systems.

In sum, international economic development has evolved over the past fifty years from relatively simplistic and patronizing efforts to develop LDCs by transplanting Western technology (including administrative systems and processes) to a more complex and interactive global network (Keohane and Nye, 2000; Kahler and Lake, 2003).

## **2. Organizational Learning, Knowledge Management, and Innovation Diffusion and Adoption**

The term “innovation diffusion and adoption” [IDA] describes the spread of new products, values, policies or processes beyond the locus of their original success. If viewed purposively, this spread can be described as both organizational learning [OL] and knowledge management [KM] (Sabet and Klingner, 1993). If viewed descriptively, it includes the intended and unintended consequences of complex and symbiotic relationship between producers and consumers that occurs across organizations (Schrage, 2004), countries (Beatty, 2003) and regions (Mavhunga, 2003).

Technology may be defined as either hardware or software (Hugill, 2003). Hardware may in turn be divided into material and cultural production. *Material production* results in tangible goods through the application of machine energy to work. *Cultural production* (e.g., movies or musical performances) and software technologies (i.e., knowledge and processes) deal with intangibles.

Technology transfer is the processes and consequences of moving technology across boundaries (e.g., national, geographic, cultural, social and organizational) (Seely, 2003). TT has both descriptive and normative implications for implementing development programs. Descriptively, it is important to provide insights into the factors underlying technology transfer, the mechanisms or processes by which it occurs, and its consequences for both donors and recipients. Normatively, it is important to develop theory and provide examples to aid technology transfer practitioners from a range of disciplines. Both require that we look at the world, and our own role in it, in a new way (Cleveland, 2002).

Insert Figure 1 here

Development administration and implementation involves IDA, OL and KM. Building government capacity is a key to sustainable development (United Nations, 2003). The capacity to manage knowledge is an increasingly important component of this process. Information and communications technology [ICT] improves opportunities for facilitating knowledge management. Conceptually, ICT is the technical platform that enables a knowledge management system to function by enabling people to organizing and compile information. And if organizing people in shared spaces for knowledge creation helps in mass production of knowledge on the technical side, ICT can enable virtual creation of such spaces – a solution that is not tested sufficiently, but in theory, one that can revolutionize the process of knowledge creation. In the business world, the technological innovations with which businessmen rush to the global market embody new knowledge. Databases build government capacity by providing easy access to necessary information and knowledge. To build capacity, a database must include not

only relevant information but also a mechanism for making connections between disparate concepts and documents. Success in a knowledge-based society requires sophisticated approaches to gathering information, while at the same time enabling users to disseminate it on a real-time basis. Passive databases represent an early stage of ICT knowledge management applications. Interactive, participative, and networked forms of ICT can be demand-driven and customer-centered, offering more opportunity for service enhancement through e-government. To summarize the previous discussion: ICT is the driver, OL and KM are examples, and IDA is the process by which TT takes place.

Innovation diffusion and adoption, organizational learning and knowledge management can also be viewed as aspects of public policy and administration, in that they relate conceptually to policy-makers' ability or willingness to learn from exogenous experience, and adapt it as "best practice" public policy or administration in new settings (Rich, 1997). From within the framework of public policy, Knott and Wildavsky (1980) scale the use of university research in government agencies using six stages: "reception, cognition, discussion, reference, effort, and influence." They point out that their scale is cumulative in nature, each stage building on the previous one. This scale is described in Figure 2.

Insert Figure 2 here

Lester and Stewart (1996) classify different types of factors that researchers suggest impact knowledge utilization by public officials. The first category is technical factors – primarily the availability of information and the appropriate rational/technical organizational resources to use it (Julnes and Holzer, 2001: 695). Julnes and Holzer (2001) find that internal requirements, resources, goal orientation, and information increase the likelihood that agencies will adopt performance measures based on policy research. Interestingly, the adoption of performance measures does not necessarily mean that the policy research results will necessarily be implemented (Julnes and Holzer, 2001: 701-702). Landry, Lamari and Amara (2001 and 2003) corroborate this, finding that knowledge utilization varies depending on the policy domain.

Second, context influences the appropriate use of information. This includes politics (Julnes and Holzer 2001) and organizational culture (Julnes and Holzer, 2001; Landry, Lamari and Amara, 2001; Landry, Lamari and Amara, 2003). Julnes and Holzer (2001) find that internal and external interest groups affect adoption and implementation of policy recommendations. Organizational responses toward risk-taking, innovation and policy change mediate the impact of context on KM (Julnes and Holzer, 2001: 697). Context is objective, and also perceived subjectively by policy-makers. Landry, Lamari and Amara (2003: 201) suggest that subjective factors (e.g., the perceived relevance of research to their agency and the policy issue in question, its direct applicability to agency policy, and the agency's policy-making power) directly affect policy-makers' use of information (and hence, the organization's KM policies).

Differences in the professional cultures of academics and bureaucrats are also an important part of the larger social context. Landry, Lamari and Amara (2003: 195) surmise “that a difference between the culture of professionals and managers in government agencies and the culture of university researchers leads to a lack of communication between them and, consequently, to low levels of knowledge utilization.” These findings are supported by evidence of similar differences in the perspectives of producers and consumers of policy research (Lomas, 1997; Oh and Rich, 1996). Based on measurements of such linkage mechanisms as informal communication, conferences, e-mail, and agency's reference library, Landry, Lamari and Amara (2003: 201) conclude that these two groups don't interact well at building a social context conducive to sharing and communicating knowledge.

Third, human factors are important. Several researchers have found that such individual attributes as professionalism (Sabet and Klingner, 1993), education (Landry, Lamari and Amara, 2003) type of position education (Landry, Lamari and Amara, 2003), and decision-making style (Webber, 1987; Webber, 1992) influence organizational policy adoption decisions. These findings are summarized in Figure 3:

Insert Figure 3 here

### **3. “Best Practice” Development Administration and Sustainability**

The term “best practice” connotes that sets of solutions may be applied from one context to another, whether the context is public to public, private to public sector, or between nations or categories of nations, e.g., developing nations. Scholars have found numerous examples of cross-national policy problems where problems in one setting have effects on other nations (Geva-May, 2002). For example, instability in Afghanistan increases the threat risk in Pakistan; unrest in Pakistan affects India, etc. And to some extent, it is correct to assert that global New Public Management (NPM) reforms represent similar governmental responses to common factors such as financial stress and the international transfer of NPM concepts among rich and poor nations alike (Kettl, 1997; Klingner, 2000; Pollitt and Bouchaert, 2000).

However, while comparison between nations permits scholars and practitioners to assess the relative applicability of different governance and development practices in different settings, analyses of public management reform by Borins (1998) and others (Jones and Kettl, 2003) argue that although problems seem similar across nations, types of solutions that are effective in one context may not succeed in another. Recent research also points out cases where other factors better explain why reform has ascended in the political agendas of a number of nations (Klingner and Pallavicini, 2001; Barzelay, 2001; Barzelay, 2003).



Thus, while much of the public management and development literature focuses on defining and identifying “best practices,” caution must be used when policy-makers attempt to generalize assumptions and solutions from one context to another. More fundamentally, researchers and consultants should question the viability of direct technology transfer as a methodological approach to improving public management or development program implementation. The term “smart practice” (Bardach, 2000: 72) is better suited to the context of adapting and sustaining endogenous innovations. “Smart practice” analysis attempts to identify the

...causal mechanisms and processes that allow particular processes to counteract the tendency of political, technical, and organizational systems in the public sector to perform unsatisfactorily with respect to evolutionary adaptation” (Barzelay and Campbell, 2003: 14).

Our preference for the concept of “smart practice” is based on the assumption that while we learn much from comparative study – in fact it is essential, applying lessons from what we learn must take into account a number of variables specific to the context to which lessons are to be applied. Thus, what we argue here as “smart practice” for developing nations is based not just on assessment of what has succeeded or failed in other contexts, but on how we apply these lessons to complex tasks. In development administration, adaptation to contingency is essential – without it little or no progress will obtain and the policy context will be appropriately characterized as fraught with “wicked problems” that by definition defy resolution (Roberts, 2000). “Smart practice,” as we choose to define and use it, emphasizes reducing the mechanisms and factors that inhibit adaptation to contingency, and thus by implication, also inhibit organizational learning.

#### **4. Successful Program Implementation in a Development Context**

Developed countries generally have more money than developing ones, but this is not always the critical difference. A country rich in oil or other natural resources may have a high average income, but still suffer from political, economic or social conditions that lead to its being classified as “developing.” Thus, macro-economic data may mask deficiencies in political culture, laws, government agencies or procedure necessary for economic (and hence political and social) development. Following Huddleston’s (1999) dictum that we “learn anatomy before practicing surgery,” we need to examine the prerequisites for successful program implementation in a development context requires.

While administrative systems in developing countries tend to evolve toward increased rationality and transparency, this process is not uniform: in some cases, it stops, skips steps, or changes their order (Kiggundu, 1989). Administrative systems are generally robust in developed countries, but their viability in developing countries is more problematic (Heady, 1996). These countries may lack not only administrative capacity, but also the conditions in civil society and government that engender it. Figure 4 shows these conditions and measurement criteria.

Insert Figure 4 here

Privatization and other market-based public service delivery mechanisms are frequently regarded – particularly by macroeconomists – as critical tools for decreasing government spending and increasing its effectiveness. Yet everything we have learned from 30 years’ experience with these mechanisms in developed countries indicates that privatization outcomes are more likely to be positive if there are competitive bidders, a public policy process that relates government effectiveness to larger societal issues, and a cadre of professionally and technically qualified public administrators to develop adequate contract specifications and monitor private sector performance. Absent these conditions, privatization has high risks of crony capitalism, military diversification into the civil economy, or administrative formalism (Welch, 1998; Hodge, 2000).

Less developed countries may be characterized by factors – mostly beyond their control – that make it difficult to establish conditions developing countries take for granted: a national identity, the rule of law, and a self-sufficient economy. Even the development of stable patronage systems may be hampered by societal conditions such as non-functional justice systems, inability to meet even minimum standards of education and health care, political leadership based on “cults of personality” rather than pluralist political parties, and overly centralized and authoritarian political systems (Klingner, 2000). These conditions generally impede the evolution of rational administrative structures and systems (Ruffing-Hilliard, 1991). For example, organizations in many less developed countries share common structural and managerial attributes that differ from those typically found in North America, Europe, and Japan: *low* levels of role specialization, formalism, and morale; *high* levels of centralization, paternalism, authoritarian leadership, rigid stratification, and dysfunctional conflict (Kettl, 1997).

## **5. Program Implementation Guidelines and Techniques**

Within this general history and context, we may present several key guidelines that apply to successful development program implementation efforts, i.e., to endogenous adoption of exogenous innovations. These guidelines relate to (a) time orientation, (b) sovereignty and capacity, (c) empowerment and accountability, (d) adaptability, flexibility and incrementalism, and (e) sustainability.

- a. *Time Orientation.*** The length of time required to adopt exogenous innovations depends upon the nature of the objective and the circumstances. The nature of the objective is discussed below. Circumstances relate to those environmental factors discussed in the previous section. Within these contexts, it is important to remember that successful innovation diffusion and adoption, even under favorable circumstances, usually takes year, and often decades. Thus, organizational

commitment to policy objectives almost always extends beyond the involvement of any one program director or elected official.

- b. *Sovereignty and Capacity.*** In many cases, diffusion and adoption of “best practice” innovations takes place in fragile states where either sovereignty or capacity may be problematic. Creating new national sovereignty is different from, and harder than, building government capacity (Pollitt and Bouchaert, 2000; Kettl, 2002). For example, evidence compiled by the Congressional Research Service (Pei, 2003) the type of intervention currently being attempted by the U.S. in Iraq is perhaps the most difficult, costly and potentially frustrating of the available alternatives, since it requires regime change, deployment of large numbers of U.S. ground troops to provide security so that basic public services can be restored, and active participation by U.S. military to obtain civilian personal security to support a post-conflict administration. The ideal form of political transition involves the drafting of a constitution and establishment of elected government prior to transfer of power to legitimately elected leaders. Consequently, we argue for example the requirement of creating a satisfactory enough political critical mass of participants composed of all necessary and appropriate stakeholders to draft a constitution and to construct rule of law. However, even after an occupation of several hundred years, with political consolidation and the establishment of a common legal framework, national sovereignty may be negatively affected by cultural and religious factors, as was the division of India into two separate countries – India and Pakistan – with its independence from Britain in 1947. The lesson: emphasize diplomatic efforts to secure accommodation of various stakeholders sufficient to permit compromise leading to formation of an independent government. Building government capacity, though a much simpler objective than nation building, typically requires years rather than months of patient assistance and financing. The objective here is to maintain a near-term focus on establishing and enhancing governance capacity so as to achieve social stability and stable economic growth.
- c. *Empowerment and Accountability.*** Successful organizational change relates to empowerment and accountability (Blair, 2000; World Bank, 2002). Empowerment is the increased ability of the poor to make political, social, or economic choices, and to act on those choices (Kabeer, 1999; Narayan, 1999). This ties with accountability because it relates to results-oriented and customer-focused applications of New Public Management to managing development programs (Hirschman, 1999). The key to both is to develop a multi-lateral development assistance plan and a multi-national, multi-institutional framework for financing development over a long period of time (Brinkerhoff and Coston, 1999), all supported by a participative and client-centered development management process (Dale, 2003; Goldspink and Kay, 2003).
- d. *Adaptability, Flexibility, and Incrementalism.*** Innovation diffusion and adoption occur within the context of complex systems that are increasingly difficult to model with any accuracy. The more a policy decision is imbued with values, the less applicable the rational method, where inputs cannot be quantified as accurately. Another duality to ponder is that of theory vs. practice. While theoreticians look for

an all-encompassing model, a practitioner might find other processes to be more efficacious. Borins (1998) and others (Jones and Kettl, 2003) argue that although problems seem similar across nations, types of solutions that are effective in one public sector context may not succeed in another political, economic or social setting. Lindblom (1959/1979) assesses rational models of the decisional processes of government; rejects the notion that most decisions are made by rational, total-information processes; posits that the policy making process is defined by a series of incremental decisions as a response to short term political goals; and argues that decision-making is much more dependent on events and circumstances than the will of policymakers. More to the point, however is the composition of the critical mass of stakeholders is specific to the context and may not be generalized for application elsewhere beyond a few observations. In this respect, Bardach (2000) and Barzelay and Campbell (2003) argue that “smart practice” development program administration is not so much a “tool kit” of ideal practices, but as an operational guideline that emphasizes reducing mechanisms and factors that inhibit adaptation to contingency. Particularly in high security risk environments, adaptation to contingency is essential – without it little or no progress will obtain and the policy context will be appropriately characterized as fraught with “wicked problems” that by definition defy resolution (Roberts, 2000).

- e. Sustainability.* Widespread recognition in development circles that macro-economic growth was not the primary or most relevant indicator of successful development (Korten, 1995; Stiglitz, 2001) led to the development of more broadly based (i.e., political, social, cultural and environmental) variables, and of performance indicators for them, under the general heading of sustainability (Simons, 2001; World Bank, 2003). According to Hart (1999, as cited in Simons, 2001) sustainability is based on community capital and carrying capacity. Community capital is the combination of natural, social and built capital. Natural capital includes natural resources, ecosystems and the beauty of nature. Human and social capital is composed of persons’ individual competencies and the social connections among them. Built capital is human-made materials or assets. Placing a value on built capital is rather straightforward. It is more difficult to determine the dollar value of a healthy, happy child, the ability to read, clean air to breathe, or an effective system of government. Thus, determining appropriate indicators, ones that quantify gains and losses in natural or social capital, presents a challenge. Carrying capacity is the size of a population that can be supported indefinitely by the resources and services provided by the supporting ecosystem. The limits of the ecosystem are dependent upon the level of community capital, and therefore subject to available natural resources, social capital, and the consumption rate of that population. Effective indicators, as described by Hart, have been used in the public and private marketplace for systems evaluation and management for years (Rosen, 1993). However, sustainable community indicators must also meet additional criteria. According to Hart, they must address community carrying capacity; highlight interdependencies between community economy, society, and nature; be usable by the general populace; have a long-term perspective; and evaluate local sustainability in the context of global sustainability (Casey, 2003; Klingner and Jones, 2004). Operationally, sustainability

means continued emphasis on social stability and stable economic growth under self-governance to prevent economic exploitation.

## 6. Sectoral Applications

The following are examples of “smart practice” innovation diffusion and adoption in development management program implementation, organized by sector and geographic area.

- Despite the prevalence of rhetorical support for empowerment, the effectiveness of efforts to encourage participation in India’s Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) depended heavily on idiosyncratic village social structure and power relationships (Williams *et al.*, 2003).
- International development specialists’ experience in Cambodia demonstrates from the 1970s and 1990s, demonstrate that, at least in failed states, effective humanitarian aid requires multi-national, long-term cooperation across governments and sectors (Chong, 2002).
- Experiments with rural land reform in Tanzania demonstrated that mixed ownership models (under which villagers own their own homes but cultivate land held in common) could be an effective community development model, particularly in settings without great disparities of wealth and power (Huizer, 1973).
- AID experiences in eight countries (Bangladesh, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam and Zambia) indicates that policy conditionality – setting policy requirements as a precondition for aid – is generally less effective than applying general policy criteria afterwards (Dijkstra, 2002; Singh, 2002).
- Assessment of 40 AID projects indicates that Impact assessments provide information on expected consequences of a potential project or program to serve three policy needs. They help determine whether a project should be implemented or not; they can guide the design of the project to make it more effective and better fit its natural and social environment; and they can lead to the development of mitigation measures that minimize negative impacts (Finsterbusch and Van Wicklin, 1988).
- Zimbabwe’s experiences with implementing quantitative assessment tools like the “advocacy index” indicates that despite the necessity to combine them with qualitative measures, they can be useful as tools for measuring managerial and policy effectiveness (Hirschman, 2002).
- South Africa’s experience with rural water development projects indicates that while outside non-governmental donor organizations in theory support community-based decentralization, in practice they are more likely to favor state-centric decentralization, or even centralization, because they favor communication and control over empowerment and participation (Galvin and Habib, 2003).
- Information is a key to development. Yet the most useful model for information management views it not as something that can be transferred and absorbed, but as something that requires self-generation and strong local roots (Samoff and Stromquist, 2001).

## Conclusion

Globalization describes a world that is smaller and more interconnected due to many intersecting trends and conditions—communication and transportation; economics; war, terrorism, violence, and ethnic conflict; environmental pollution, natural disasters, epidemics, and climate change; and global migrations (Keohane and Nye, 2000).

Governance, defined narrowly, is the authoritative responses by which governments meet demands and manage resources (Fountain, 2001; Peters, 2001; Cooper, 2003). More broadly (e.g., Nye and Donahue, 2000), it is collective interactions with significant public consequences. Although this broader definition encourages discussion of minimalist networks as a governance model, these networks do not necessarily possess the authoritative power of law or public institutions.

Control over outcomes affects perceptions of globalization. In developed countries with both effective markets and high government capacity, globalization usually equates with opportunities to travel, communicate, tap markets, or influence events. In others, it may mean more uncertainty and risk—economic, social, cultural, environmental and political (Klingner, 2003).

Government capacity affects perceptions of governance. In developed countries, governance usually means maintaining government's ability to coordinate policy, gather information, deliver services through multiple (often nongovernmental) partners, and replace hierarchical bureaucracies with more flexible mechanisms for managing indirect government (Brudney, O'Toole and Rainey, 2000). In developing countries, it probably means establishing government's ability to deliver vital public services (through core administrative functions like budgeting, human resource management and program evaluation) while also focusing on the more fundamental changes (e.g., citizen participation, decentralization, innovation, and entrepreneurial leadership [Kettl, 1997]) necessary for effective political systems (Klingner and Pallavicini Campos, 2002).

Program implementation is a tool of international development governance that depends upon clear conceptual understanding, an understanding of issues, and specific sector applications. Within the overall context of development administration and program implementation, endogenous adoption of exogenous innovations is best viewed as a complex process of technology transfer, organizational learning and knowledge management. Because these are heavily influenced by contextual variables, this is an indigenous process rather than one of transfer and absorption. It is best viewed as some "smart practice" guidelines rather than as a uniform toolkit. Diffusion and adoption of "smart practice" innovations in governance, public policy and public administration depend on a clear understanding of the mechanisms involved in technology transfer, and the contextual variables that affect its successful implementation.

These guidelines involve: (a) allowing a sufficiently long-range time orientation to accommodate changes in organizational culture and learning, (b) recognizing and

responding to the need to build either (or both) national sovereignty or government capacity, depending on the context (c) focusing on empowerment and accountability as key indicators of endogenous “buy-in,” (d) maintaining an adaptable, flexible and incremental approach to innovation diffusion and adoption – including use of “smart practice” rather than “best practice” public policy and administration, and (e) ensuring sustainability through a “balanced scorecard” approach that assesses the impact of proposed innovations along a range of economic, political, social, cultural, environmental and administrative criteria.

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**Figure 1: Eight Attitudes Indispensable to the Management of Complexity**

(Cleveland, 2002: 7-8)

- First, a lively intellectual curiosity, an interest in everything -- because everything really is related to everything else, and therefore to what you're trying to do, whatever it is.
- Second, a genuine interest in what other people think, and why they think that way—which means you have to be at peace with yourself for a start.
- Third, a feeling of special responsibility for envisioning a future that's different from a straight-line projection of the present. Trends are not destiny.
- Fourth, a hunch that most risks are there not to be avoided but to be taken.
- Fifth, a mindset that crises are normal, tensions can be promising, and complexity is fun.
- Sixth, a realization that paranoia and self-pity are reserved for people who *don't* want to be leaders.
- Seventh, a sense of *personal* responsibility for the *general* outcome of your efforts.
- Eighth, a quality I call “unwarranted optimism” – the conviction that there must be some more upbeat outcome than would result from adding up all the available expert advice.

**Figure 2: Stages of Knowledge Utilization**

(Adapted from Knott and Wildavsky, 1980; cited in Landry, Lamari and Amara, 2003: 194)

**Stage 1** Reception:

“I received the university research pertinent to my work.”

**Stage 2** Cognition:

“I read and understood the university research that I received.”

**Stage 3** Discussion:

“I participated in meetings for discussion and popularization of the aforementioned university research.”

**Stage 4** Reference:

“I cited university research studies as references in my own professional reports or documents.”

**Stage 5** Effort (adoption):

“I made efforts to favor the use of university research results.”

**Stage 6** Influence:

“University research results influenced decision in my administrative unit.”

### **Figure 3: Summary of Explanatory Variables for Innovation Diffusion and Adoption**

(Adapted from Landry, Lamari and Amara, 2003)

#### **Contextual Factors:**

##### *Political:*

Internal Interest Groups (Julnes and Holzer, 2001)  
External Interest Groups (Julnes and Holzer, 2001)  
Unions (Julnes and Holzer, 2001)

##### *Organizational:*

Risk Taking (Julnes and Holzer, 2001)  
Attitudes Towards Change (Julnes and Holzer, 2001)  
Focus on Users' Needs (Landry *et al.*, 2003)  
Users' Context (Landry *et al.*, 2003)  
Work Relevance (Landry *et al.*, 2003)  
Policy Relevance (Landry *et al.*, 2003)  
Federal/State Agency (Landry *et al.*, 2003)  
Number of Employees (Landry *et al.*, 2003)

##### *Social/Interaction:*

Adaptation of Products (Landry *et al.*, 2003)  
Acquisition Efforts (Landry *et al.*, 2003)  
Linkage Mechanisms (Landry *et al.*, 2003)

#### **Technical Factors:**

Goal Orientation (Julnes and Holzer, 2001)  
Information (Julnes and Holzer, 2001)  
Resources (Julnes and Holzer, 2001)  
Qualitative Products (Landry *et al.*, 2003)  
Quantitative Products (Landry *et al.*, 2003)  
Theoretical Products (Landry *et al.*, 2003)  
Focus on Advancement of Scholarly Knowledge (Landry *et al.*, 2003)

#### **Human Factors:**

Graduate Studies (Landry *et al.*, 2003)  
Function of Position (Landry *et al.*, 2003)  
Decision-Making Style (Webber, 1987)



**Figure 4:** Contextual Variables Affecting Endogenous Adoption of “Smart Practice” Innovations: Positive and Negative Outcome Indicators

(From Klingner, 1996; Klingner, 2000; Klingner and Pallavicini Campos, 2002; Klingner and Nalbandian, 2003).

**1. From Independence to Patronage**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Positive</i>
Political Freedom (Speech and Media)	Low	High
Economic Growth and Development	Export-based	Balanced
Racial and Ethnic Discrimination	High	High
Basis of Political Leadership	Charismatic	Issues & parties
Electoral Process	Inadequate	Functional

**2. From Patronage to Civil Service**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Positive</i>
Effective & Transparent Government	No	Yes
Administrative Formalism	High	Low
Patronage Influences	High	Low
A Civil Service Law has been passed	No	Yes
Central public personnel agency exists	No	Yes
Merit system procedures are in place	No	Yes
Unemployment or underemployment	High	Low
Public employee salaries and benefits	Inadequate	Adequate
Non-Merit Discrimination	High	Low
Role of the Military	Intrusive	Minimal
Source of Pressure for Reform	International	Domestic

**3. From Civil Service to Maturity**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Positive</i>
Balanced Uniformity - Flexibility	no	Yes
Balanced Centralization - Decentralization	no	Yes
Balanced Public - Private Employment	no	Yes
Balanced Employee - Management Rights	no	Yes