



Week 3

From Policy-Making to Practice: Humanitarian & Developmental Aid

Week 3 outlines issues of **policy-making (1)** & **practice (2)** in humanitarianism & developmental aid. ‘Policy-making’ is the formulation of ideas or decisions by political actors, whether national governments, multilateral organisations and institutions, or non-governmental players. Policy-making is supposed to support effective delivery of humanitarian and developmental aid. ‘Practice’ refers to the concept of action rather than thought, and generally describes what happens as opposed to what is thought in a specific situation. Humanitarian and developmental aid indeed implies a number of targeted activities to be realised. The objective is to allow students to understand **how policy-making translates into practice (3)** in the domains of humanitarianism & development.

1. HUMANITARIAN & DEVELOPMENTAL AID: POLICY-MAKING



- ‘**Policy-making**’ corresponds to the very making of policies and it consists of processes and/or cycles that emphasise an initiative to solve problems.
- It may take the form of programmes, projects, and budget allocations.
- Scholars have identified various interfaces to map stages of the so-called ‘policy cycle’, thereby helping to structure its analysis.
- In this context, public policy is seen as a sequence of operating endeavours and exhibits the interfaces

that follow:

- ~ Problem identification, that is identifying problems, publicising them and expressing demands for government action.
- ~ Agenda setting, namely deciding problems and their alternatives to be addressed by humanitarian and developmental action.
- ~ Policy formulation, which means developing policy proposals to resolve/ameliorate problems.
- ~ Policy legitimization, namely selecting a proposal, developing political support for it, and ultimately passing it into legislation.
- ~ Policy implementation, which consists in carrying one given policy into effect.

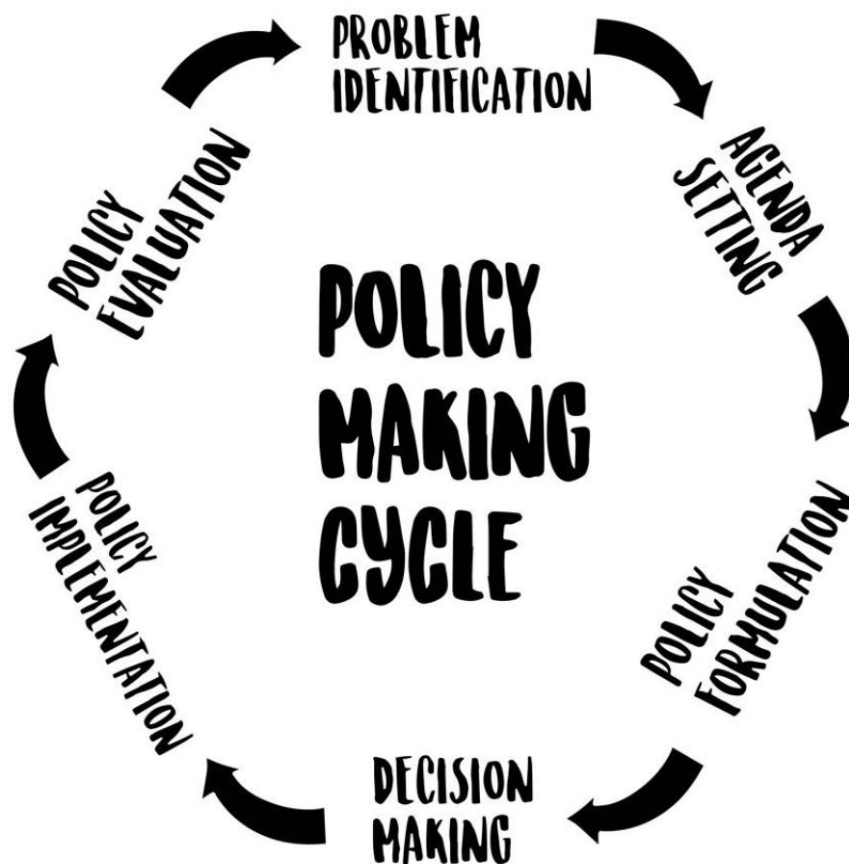
~ Policy evaluation, meaning reporting outputs of government programs, evaluating repercussions of policies on target groups, and recommending changes and reforms.

- In fact, policy-making often does chronologically follows this sequence of actions and helps to catch the flow of activities that make the policy process.

- However, in order to simplify the discussion, the policy-making process is classified into three broad stages that are *policy formulation*, *policy implementation*, and *policy evaluation*.



► For more information, please consult the ProQuest eBook and additional readings.



2. HUMANITARIAN & DEVELOPMENTAL AID: PRACTICE



- Relations between 'policy' and '**practice**' are a fundamental dilemma.

- Policies intend to resolve problems, yet the key problem solvers are sometimes those who have the problem!

- Governments devise instruments to encourage implementation, but policies can uniquely assist if they are used well by those having a problem, in other words whose capability is often weak.

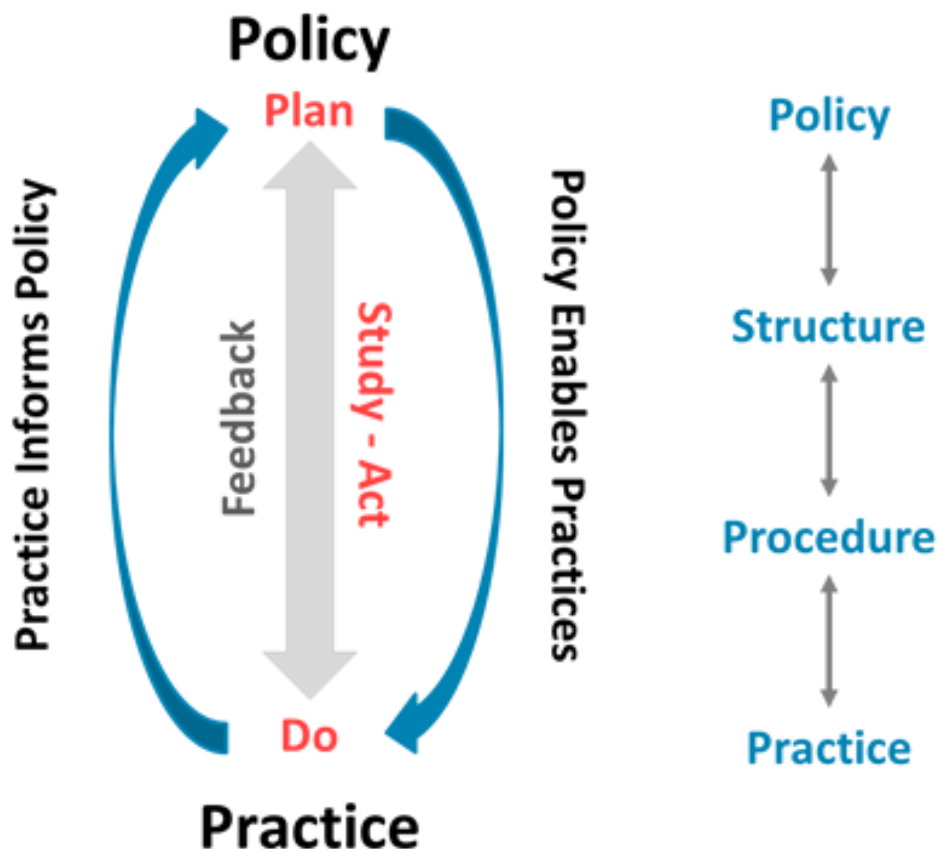
- The accomplishment of policy in practice thus

depends on the adequation between capabilities supporting implementation and aims.

- The more aims surpass capabilities, the less likely will be effective implementation.
- When capabilities remain modest, humanitarian and developmental instruments are limited, and neither humanitarian and developmental actors and aid recipients know much about how to improve a certain situation.
- Humanitarian and developmental programmes become viable, on the contrary, when their aims are defined in ways that make them achievable by providing capabilities and possibilities.

► *For more information, please consult the ProQuest eBook and additional readings.*

3. FROM POLICY-MAKING TO PRACTICE AND VICE VERSA



BIBLIOGRAPHY

The below-reading materials can be found on ProQuest through your VLE platform (Online Library).

ProQuest eBook

- Kevin M. Cahill, *History and Hope: The International Humanitarian Reader* (Fordham University Press, 2013), pp. 155-168.

Additional readings

- David A. Bradt, Evidence-Based Decision-Making in Humanitarian Assistance (HPN Network Paper n°67, 2009).
- Making Development Aid More Effective (Brookings Blum Roundtable Policy Briefs, 2010).
- Tina M. J. Newby, Unintended Effects of Development Aid – A Brief Overview (DIIS Working Paper n°6, 2010).