

Projects as policy tools in implementing metropolitan policy

– a case from Sweden

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Abstract

Implementing public policy is a complicated task. Aside from almost self- applying public policy, for instance new duties on gasoline, spirits and tobacco which resound through society via price signals, policy implementation needs institutions on different levels to transform general policy intent into action. The ‘complexity of joint action’ is persuasively described by Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) and other researchers afterward. Public Administration theories of implementing policies stress that implementation are the result of the interaction of different strategies by various actors who struggle with the problem definition, possible solutions and choice moments. Mutual dependencies are also one of the core assumptions within organizational theory and implementation often involves complex intra-organizational interaction. Mutual dependencies and negotiation emerge because actors do not themselves possess enough resources for achievement of interesting goals. Thus they have to interact with other organizations in order to exchange resources. These complexities need to be seen as contained within different governance structures or political systems on international, national, regional and local level which influence the games played and the legitimacies claimed. One way to handle this complexity is to secure the realization of the intentions from interference with the surrounding stakeholders by organize the activities in a projects management manner. Pressman and Wildavsky also demonstrated that failures are not only caused by bad implementation but also by bad policy instruments.

The implementation of public policy occurs in highly varied setting, but it is clear that, quite often, multi-project organization is called for achieve successful results. In this paper I highlight project as a policy tool in implementing metropolitan policy and my claim is the importance of organizational processes; that it is important that there is a fit between the temporary policy organization and the governance structure in which it is implemented.

Keywords: Policy, implementation, project, collaboration, governance structure

The Metropolitan policy in Sweden

The segregation in and around big cities is regarded as one of the most serious social problems and challenges in the Swedish society. The so called Metropolitan initiative is one way to try to solve or at least reduce the problem. The Metropolitan Initiative is part of the national metropolitan policy adopted by the Swedish Parliament in 1998. The aim of the Initiative is to improve the conditions for people living in deprived city areas in and around the three metropolitan regions in Sweden; Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmo. Compared with the average the population with a non-Swedish background in the Metropolitan Initiative areas is higher. Many recently arrived refugees have settled in these areas but here there are also a large number of labor immigrants who arrived earlier. Increased segregation has caused a variety of social problems. The unemployment rate in these areas is very high, 30-50 % lives on supplementary benefit - in some part of the population it is almost 100%. Public health is lower than average. The education level as well as knowledge in the Swedish language is low. Participation in the election is also below average in the disadvantaged areas. The metropolitan policy is thus a coherent policy that previously has been handled within many different policy domains, such as an integration, housing, employment. However, the big challenge is not to invent a new policy, but to put the policy into action and practice (Rein, 1983), to implement it and thereby reduce the different stated social predicament. How can this be done? In this paper I investigate project as a policy tool in implementing metropolitan policy in a major city in Sweden.

In the following sections I will discuss implementation and project as policy tools. The subsequent section presents my case study on projects in the metropolitan initiative. Finally, I will analyze some part the initiative and draw a few conclusions from my findings.

Implementation and policy tools

Public policy is about getting people to do things they otherwise would not have done, or it facilitates them to do things they might not have done otherwise. But before people do what the policy prescribes, you have to implement the policy. Implementing public policy is a complicated task (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1979; 1980). Aside from almost self- applying public policy, for instance new duties on gasoline, spirits and tobacco which resound through society via price signals, policy implementation needs institutions on different levels to transform general policy intent into action. The 'complexity of joint action' is persuasively described by

Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) and other researchers afterward. Public Administration theories of implementing policies stress that implementation is the result of the interaction of different strategies by various actors who struggle with the problem definition, possible solutions and choice moments, and I stress in the paper that it is relevant to see both policy decision making and implementation in its organizational context. Mutual dependencies are also one of the core assumptions within organizational theory and implementation often involves complex intra-organizational interaction. Mutual dependencies and negotiation emerge because actors do not themselves possess enough resources for achievement of interesting goals. Thus they have to interact with other organizations in order to exchange resources. These complexities need to be seen as contained within different governance structures or political systems on international, national, regional and local level which influence the games played and the legitimacies claimed. Pressman and Wildavsky also demonstrated that failures are not only caused by bad implementation but also by bad policy instruments. One way to handle this complexity is to secure the realization of the intentions from interference with the surrounding stakeholders by organize the activities in a projects.

The implementation of public policy occurs in highly varied setting, but it is clear that, quite often, multi-project organization is called for achieve successful results. In this paper I highlight project as a policy tool in implementing metropolitan policy and my claim is the importance of organizational processes; that it is important that there is a fit between the temporary policy organization and the governance structure in which it is implemented.

The field of implementation research has been analyzed from many different perspectives, representing different research strategies, concepts, focal subject and methodologies (O'Toole, 2000). Two common perspectives are top-down and bottom-up. Top-down analysts often express themselves in support of a representative regime and the consistent execution of choices made by political leaders. Top-downers typically assume a control perspective on implementation, where research try to give good advice on how to structure implementation processes from above in order to achieve the purpose of the government. It is a matter of assembling action in support of the intentions and orders of political leaders, where the primary focus is on issues of compliance and monitoring. Different kinds of criticism have been put forward against this rationalistic perspective. Moe (1989) stress that the top-down perspective is unrealistic, mainly because it overemphasized the ability of policy proponent to structure

implementation, thus, ignoring the ability of policy opponent to interfere in this structuring process. Another strand of criticism came from the bottom-up researchers who took special interest in what actually happens during implementation and turned their attention to the action of lower-level actors, sometimes called “street-level bureaucrats” (Lipsky, 1980), in order to gain a better understanding of the implementation process. Bottom-uppers thus pay attention to the emergence of the policy contributions of actors far from oversight of political principals. It is here an interest in how energies from different stakeholders are activated in order to make wise decisions in congealing problem solving around difficult, context-specific matters. Lipsky focus for example on the discretionary decisions that each field worker makes in relation to individual citizens when they are delivering policies to them. Lipsky suggest that it in some circumstances it is at this level that policy is actually made - especially policies in highly professional human service organizations. Attempts have also been made to combine the both perspective. Sabatier (1986) argue that the top-down perspective is appropriate for studying implementation in policy areas that are dominated by one specific piece of legislation or where the situation is structured at least reasonably well. Bottom-up perspective, on the other hand, would be more suitable in situations where several diverse policies are directed towards a particular problem, and where one is mainly interested in the dynamics of different local situations.

I have not yet said anything about policy. In this article I stress that public policy can be seen as an essentially complex and multi-layered one. There are many definition of policy. One that I adhere to is Jenkins that sees policy as “as a set of interrelated decisions...concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specific situation” (Jenkin, 1978:15). The policy process is a complex interest-driven political process in which there are many actors involved, for example politicians, civil servants, pressure groups, publicly employed professional, media, and sometimes also those who see themselves as passive beneficiaries of policy. But we miss a great deal if we only try to understand policy-making solely in terms of power, influence, and bargaining. The instruments embodied in policy are as important as the exercise of power and influence that produces policies.

Project as a policy tool

Tools or instruments through which politics seek to influence government and citizen behavior and achieve policy purposes have increased over the years. These

include commonly-used techniques as standards, direct expenditures, regulation and sanctions, contracts, grants, influence and negotiation, education, and so on.

Within political science the study of policy instruments are extensive. Bardach (1979) proposed four techniques to cover the different policy tools; *prescription*, *enabling*, *positive incentive*, and *deterrence*. Elmore (1987) argued that four other categories would characterize the toolbox; *mandates*, which provide rules constraining actions of agencies or target populations; *inducement*, that provide money to encourage certain activities; *capacity*, which provides money to enable agencies to take actions; and *system-changing tools* that alter the arrangements of agencies in the implementation system.

Schneider and Ingham (1990) go even further and describe five behavioral assumptions behind the policy tools and proposed another set of distinctions. *Authority tools* which are declarations backed up by the legitimate authority that grant permission, prohibit, or require action. According to Schneider and Ingham these are mainly used within the hierarchical system and assume that agents and target are enough responsive to the organizational structure and that the lower levels do as they are told. *Incentive tools* that are based on tangible payoffs and assumes that organizations or individuals are utility maximizers and will not be positively motivated to take policy relevant action unless they are influenced, encouraged or coerced by manipulation of money, autonomy or other tangible payoffs. *Capacity tools* provide information, training, education, and resources to enable individuals, groups or agencies to make decisions or carry out activities that they might not otherwise do. These tools operate on the assumption that agencies will welcome the assistance, for example, agencies may not have adequate resources to participate in new approaches, or to undertake the start-ups costs. *Symbolic and hortatory tools* is based on persuasive communication that seek to change perceptions about policy-preferred behaviors through appeals to intangible values, such as justice, fairness, equality, right and wrong, or through the use of images, symbols and labels. Every politician and civil servant understands that arguments are needed not only to clarify his/her position with respect to an issue, but to bring other people around to this position. Therefore the language with which evidence is reported is important. The social construction of reality involves discourses and the presentation of 'text' in which these issues about language usage are at the core. Finally, *learning tools* assumes that agencies can learn about behavior; a problem in society may be recognized, but not understood or there is no agreement about what should be done. Thus, agents are encouraged to draw lessons from experience for example through formal evaluation and hearings.

Tools are not only different distinction they also have an organizational side, or at least they have an impact upon how we organize implementation. One common way nowadays is to organize policy implementation in different projects. It is not unlikely that that implementation is organized in a multi-project manner. Like a Swiss army knife, the conception of a project fulfills several of the above referred functions.

Projects are often used as tools in national reforms to manage the reform and achieve change in local agencies – at least in Sweden (Jensen, 2004; 2006, Jensen, Johansson and Löfström, 2007, Jensen and Kousmanen, 2008). There is a strong belief in project as a new way of implementing policies. This has surely to a great extent its roots in the Project Management (PM) literature where projects are viewed as independent tools for achieving change. A project is founded (by the principal) as an instrument in order to achieve a specified purpose. The project is treated as a functional system of resources which will be used as effective as possible in order to be efficient – conscious calculating with explicit objectives. The project must be planned, supervised, and controlled, and research tries to develop and evaluate tools for this cause. There is a strong focus on explicit and concrete attributes, i.e. formal structure, objectives and agreements.

However, project is not only considered as a tool, but also a specific organizational form. Lundin and Söderholm (1995) have proposed an alternative understanding of a project, another than the prevalent project management mode. They have outlined a theory of projects by using the concept ‘temporary organization’ based very much on the notion of bounded rationality. Project, from this perspective, is seen as organizing rather than a distinctive tools. Projects are social communities that are kept together by joint conception of purpose, task, role and way of working together. Action is emphasized as central. People act in accordance with how they understand their reality. Consideration can precede action, but equally important is to reflect on action afterwards. To manage and organize a project is more a matter of achieve processes of learning than supervise and control, and where mutual conceptions are developing. Within this framework there is instead a strong focus on the subjective reality, how different group perceive and understand their reality. Hence, to see project as a temporary organization provides a chance to focus on expectation, action and learning; the ways in which the actors make sense and construct the temporary form and how this influences the conditions for further action – rather than on plans, control, design and implementation.

However, ”No project is an island”, as Engwall (2001) quick-witted named an article. Projects are dependent upon actors in the environment, no matter how well

they have been sharply marked off from their surroundings. The environment is therefore a source of uncertainty for the project. Project in public organization are always embedded in the technical and institutional environment (Jensen, Johansson and Löfström, 2007). When the environment is drifting (turbulent) it is hard to foresee what will happen and that fact even increase the uncertainty further. Kreiner (1995) made a distinction between operational and contextual uncertainty. If we interpret the environment as turbulent or if we understand the project task as development oriented, then the contextual uncertainty increase. The embeddedness of projects concerns first and foremost the relationship between the project and the permanent organization(s). This relationship influences the project's performance, restricts action, evaluates the outcome, and, last but not least, the possibilities for cross-fertilization of knowledge and practice between project-based policy settings and non-project-based regular settings.

A project have similarities with other forms of investment, the results are normally expected to be implemented in a permanent organization (Jensen, 2007). But it is difficult to transfer knowledge and experience from one setting to another (Blomqvist and Packendorff, 1998; Bresnan, 2006). Knowledge does definitely not spread like a virus. Within the traditional planning perspective change is not perceived as a problem, basic knowledge, concerning for example what and how the Metropolitan policy should be implemented, is complete, but within the theory of temporary organizations (Lundin and Söderholms, 1995) basic knowledge is more incomplete and fragmented. One does not know in advance what to do, because one is under the rule of retrospective rationality, or as Karl Weick has stated somewhere (maybe 1995). "Your beliefs are cause maps that you impose on the world, after which you 'see' what you have already imposed". Goals with the project are developed through the project even though it is stipulated in advance (but as we know plans also fulfills other purposes). Knowledge is created, especially during realization of the project, and not only during planning. Result of the project is of course provided outcome, but also knowledge about the goal and the process of realizing them. The rational within the proposed perspective is therefore appropriate learning for the project, rather than effective accomplishment, even though that it is also something to strive for. To bridge knowledge between different settings (project and permanent organization) imply both individual learning and ways of negotiate this learning. The organization must learn and unlearn (Hedberg, 1981), and that is not an easy task to accomplish. Well, let us take a look at the metropolitan initiative and see in what way it respond to introduced line of argument.

The Metropolitan Initiatives

Like most other European countries, Sweden has some districts in urban areas that are struggling with difficulties. Due to a serious housing shortage in the 1950s and the early 1960s the Government decided to build housing for one million families in the “million homes programme.” Some suburban areas developed in this period have struggled with a severe lack of opportunities almost since they were built. In the 1980s and early 1990s several government inquiries concluded that government had to adopt a completely new approach if these areas were ever to be able to provide opportunities for their inhabitants equal to those in the rest of Sweden. In 1998 the Swedish Parliament, the Riksdag, adopted a national metropolitan policy intended to improve both living conditions for residents and the neighbourhood itself in the most vulnerable parts of metropolitan areas.

The basis for the Metropolitan Initiative was the Government Bill 1997/98:165, Development and Equity – a Policy for Metropolitan Regions in the 21st Century. The Swedish Parliament adopted two overall objectives for the metropolitan policy:

- To provide the metropolitan regions with suitable conditions for long-term, sustainable growth, enabling them to contribute to the creation of new employment opportunities in the metropolitan regions and in other parts of the country
- To break down social, ethnic and discriminatory segregation in metropolitan regions and to work to bring about equal conditions for people living in the cities.

As part of the metropolitan policy the government has signed local development agreements (LDA), with seven municipalities: Gothenburg, Malmö, Stockholm, Botkyrka, Haninge, Huddinge and Södertälje. As a temporary additional contribution the Parliament provided 2,1 billion SEK (235 million EUR) in finance for the state part of the local development agreements in return for commitment of matching finance by participating municipalities. In total, 24 residential areas in these municipalities are affected. The local development agreement is primarily a tool to end segregation (the second national objective), and for this purpose this national objective has been broken down into seven operational objectives:

- To reduce benefit dependency/increase the level of employment
- To strengthen the status of the Swedish language
- To raise the level of education among the adult population
- To raise secondary school performance

- To make environments/areas safer and more attractive
- To improve public health
- To increase democratic participation

The LDA:s was promoted as a new administrative tool to end segregation. It is a cross-sectoral instrument spanning over a range of policy areas. The LDA is based on 4 key methods applied throughout the agreement: management by objectives, long-term perspectives, bottom up-approach and co-operation between different authorities. The prerequisites for work are thus the involvement of the people living in the area and collaboration between various bodies and enterprises on local level. The agreement is also permeated by a strong belief in social engineering; that one can formulate a clear goal that guides the following activities. Even though the word projects was banned because of a widespread notion among involved actors in the concerned organizations of being tired of project, the concrete activities were still organized as projects, with clear goals, timeframe and budget. In order to control and obtain an overall picture of whether the measures taken have produced results in the different projects the agreement is monitored and evaluated. Thus, in the Metropolitan initiative program, LDA was understood as glue between the national and local level, between comprehensive policy planning and concrete project activities within the concerned neighborhoods. The LDA is revised annually. The revision process starts at neighbourhood level, moves up to municipal level and then on to national level. There has been a continuing dialogue between all levels during the initiative.

The Metropolitan initiative was divided into three areas; 1) Work, employment and adult education, 2) School and Swedish language, and 3) Local development, democracy/participation, safety neighborhood and public health. Each area has got approximately the same amount of money. My focus have been on Gothenburg, and I have been interested in how this initiative and multi-project organization was organized in order to reach the above mentioned objectives, as well as in what different ways one have taken care of experiences from the different projects. Let's therefore take a closer look at the implementation of the policy, as well as this new way of steering, in one of the concerning municipalities, Gothenburg.

Gothenburg's local agreement was signed for the first time on February 2, 2001, and it was preceded by a yearlong discussion between politicians on national and local level concerning the juridical consequences of the agreement; should the LDA be considered as management in detail and hence interfere in the local autonomy,

or as a joint and mutual agreement concerning both parties handle severe problems in society. One agreed on no strict juridical interpretation if one should not achieve the goals, and the LDA was from then on more perceived as a letter of intentions. Thereafter, it has been revised each year and the most recent agreement will remain in force until 2008. State support in Gothenburg for the Initiative totaled SEK 345 million (€ 37.1 million) for the period 2000-2005. According to the agreement the state funding should be matched by at least the same level of municipal funding. In fact, Gothenburg's funding was exceeding the state figure considerably. Part of the investment has been financed within the normal budget, although the majority of the joint funding is in the form of the municipal housing companies' expanded work in the areas. In total, the City of Gothenburg co-funding is estimated at around SEK 1.2 billion (€ 129 million) during the period 2000-2005.

In the LDA the Government and the municipalities agree on objectives, finance and evaluation. The City Council of Gothenburg has overall, co-ordinated responsibility for the Metropolitan Initiative. A Metropolitan Initiative group appointed by the City Council is responsible for monitor the work during the period. The Metropolitan Initiative group also includes politicians from the district committees concerned. According to the LDA the municipality is also responsible for disseminating experience on an ongoing basis and informing about the work being done within the Metropolitan Initiative. Among other things, a number of joint municipal conferences and seminars have been arranged. Follow up and evaluation of the achievement of objectives have also been the responsibility of the municipal authority on a central level.

In addition to the agreement itself, there are annexes for detailed matters. The district committees' local action plans (LPA) are the most important ones, where the district committees state how and with whom street level bureaucrats are cooperating with in to order to achieve the formulated objectives. The district committees have thus been responsible for establishing local objectives, running various projects and carrying out local follow-ups. Hence, it is in the districts that the SEK 1.5 million has been transformed and organized into *projects*, an activity that was based, besides overall objectives, on local conditions in the areas concerned. In Gothenburg, around 180 Metropolitan Initiative projects have been in progress over varying periods of time.

Within the framework of these both agreements (LDA & LPA), project work is being done to increase the level of employment, reduce social welfare dependency and raise the level of education. The residents' involvement, influence and participation are, as mentioned, central elements in the metropolitan work;

increased democratic involvement is both an objective and a means of realizing the city policy. Based on the agreement the collaboration on local level between different bodies has been organized. Project work has therefore taken place through broad-based, and in many cases very complicated, collaboration with a range of different bodies, mainly local associations and housing companies but also the employment offices, the police force, the primary care sector, the social insurance offices and local business and industry. The employment offices, the police and the social insurance offices are local parts of national boards whilst primary care is part of the regional health care organization. Thus, realizing the Metropolitan policy on street level is dependent on an intricate policy network.

Evaluation has been an integral part of the Initiative from the very outset, and includes working methods, processes as well as results. But it is only the project that is object for evaluation not the regular structures, which also indicates an asymmetric relation between temporary and permanent organization. The follow-up and evaluation is the basis for control of objectives, all the way from national down to the local level. Gothenburg University and Chalmers University of Technology have been charged with the task of externally evaluating the local development work in Gothenburg. The district committees are responsible for that a yearly following up takes place for each project internally through self-evaluation. According to the agreement and as a part of a creating a continual relation between involving actors status reports for each housing area and a joint status report for the Metropolitan Initiative in Gothenburg are produced and sent to the Government on a yearly basis. In that way one expects that the overall aim to promote long-term sustainable growth is achieved.

Meanwhile the Metropolitan initiative is running in numerous of projects, operation within the regular structures and organizations is continuing in the concerning areas, sometimes also towards the same target groups; business as usual in other words. Referred permanent organizations have as well an official mission to increase employment and decrease supplementary benefit (such as employment office, social welfare services), to increase the knowledge in the Swedish language (such as preschool and school), support empowerment in the area (such as political parties, sustainable development divisions within the city districts), etc. Since the metropolitan initiative does not have any significant negative impact on the ordinary budget process within the permanent organizations the initiative is considered as an extra contribution, and is treated accordingly; as a lubricant without any further obligations. When it comes to capture learning from projects and perhaps even change ones operation, the permanent organizations always has

the preferential right of interpretation in relation to what experience and what learning that is possible to continue with. The Metropolitan case can be summarized in the following manner.

Policy	Metropolitan initiative
Problem	Segregation causing a variety of social problem
Goal	Break down social, ethnic and discriminatory segregation, among other things through creating new employment opportunities
Mean	Temporary additional contribution organized in projects
Control	Agreement, monitoring, evaluation
Condition for political system:	Multi-faceted program conditioned with partnership financing
Condition for intermediary institutions:	Multi project organization where cross-sectoral collaboration is emphasized
Condition for street -level:	Restricted projects (time, \$ and Q) and the burden of proof concerning further validity, lesson learned and practicable
Action in the immediate surroundings	Business as usual

The Metropolitan Initiative is an attempt to change the living conditions in deprived housing areas. The policy is more or less managed from above where local governments were offered (convinced) to take part. But even though the Local Development Agreement put a general frame for the initiative the realization was open ended and the concerning municipalities and housing areas were entitled to fill the initiative with a context specific content in different projects separated from the regular activities. Decisions taken at the policy level, which structure the design

of the context within which choices are made, are separated from choices on the organizational level, at which key decisions about the management of the policy and lesson learned from the project are taken, as well as choices taken on project level, which explain the world of action.

Discussion

Even though the above described of the metropolitan initiative in Sweden and Gothenburg seems straight forward, the actual process of implementing it is characterized as uncertain, complex, politically-sensitive and involving a large number of partners. Prior to the project, the goal of the project are often rhetorically formulated - signals high expectation - and often hard to break down in manageable objectives. During the project it is hard to demarcate, measure and value what should be done and what is actually being done. After the project the project often become blurred with other activities and it is hard to establish what effects the project really cause. Hence, the everyday life as a project manager are characterized more of complexity than order, more emergent than controlled.

My approach to the implementation of the metropolitan initiative recognizes that ambiguities, subcultures, conflict and power between temporary and permanent organizations, and where appropriate but various organizational, professional and project cultures coexist and operate within the initiative. There are many relevant activities that are very hard to observe. This brings us back to the issue of power. The fact that many power processes are covert – indeed, their vary success may depend upon them being so.

The metropolitan initiative concerned so called “wicked problems”, which touch upon several arenas and considerations simultaneously, require governmental responses that involve multiple institutional actors for effective resolution. Implementing metropolitan policy is thus a complicated cross-sectoral arrangement involving actors related both vertically and horizontally to each other. You have actors on national, regional and local levels (with different rationals); you have public, non-profit and sometimes also private actors (with different motives for participating); you have politicians, civil servants and professionals (representing different subcultures) participating in different kind of collaborations, often organized in projects with a specified task, time frame and budget. A broadened coalition of participants is required in order to fulfill the metropolitan policy. That is the spirit of the metropolitan policy. Hereby one expects to increase the chances to achieve something significant during the initiative and project execution. But

interorganizational ties can also increase the chance that complexity and conflict will overwhelm efforts to make things happen (Huxham and Vengen, 2005). The trick is to promote the building of support while avoiding the tendencies toward confusion and excessive complexity. Project as a policy tool is expected to be this trick. However a project is not only an independent tool for achieving change, but also, as I stress in the beginning of the paper, a temporarily organizational form and therefore includes relationships with other permanent organizations.

If we look at the political-administrative structure as a whole, it is possible to reduce them into three major systems or levels; policy level, project level and transitional organizations (Hill and Hupe, 2002). On policy level one has to handle macro-environmental factors, policy characteristics and policy formation. For example even though the initiative was organized in local development agreements, management by objectives and strong projectification was emphasized, the policy formation process of the metropolitan initiative was not in reality guided in a clear and controlled way. The policy formation practice is better described as supplying a framework in which various actors in separate roles were supposed to deliver specified issues. The policy formation was rather open-ended and it was supposed to continue during the implementation, and even afterwards. On the project level, where the contact between individuals takes place, it is important to pay attention to front line staff behavior and the responses from those affected by the policy. Since the metropolitan initiative brought new money into the system neither project member nor did concerned users/clients make any major objections regard the initiative. The project was mostly successful but unfortunately that was all it was. It was very difficult to transfer knowledge, new ways of thinking and doing into other settings. One major reason for this concerns the transitional organizations; those permanent organizations in-between policy level and project level in which the initiative and the projects was an investment. As permanent organizations they handle the important vertical layers as well as horizontal inter-organizational relationships, both relationships decisive for the continuation of the captured knowledge within the projects. Let me evolve the last idea a little bit.

Since the idea behind a project more or less promise a focus on objective, time and budget it is easy to understand why projects as a policy tool are chosen. It has certainly facilitated the start-up of the implementation. By selecting project it is easy to separate permanent organizational operation from extra ordinary activities. Since the implementation of the metropolitan is financed with “new” money, it has not really been any difficulties in creating and starting up projects. It is not difficult to detach project (people, task and activities) from the permanent organization. But

this selection at one point in time creates setting which serves as barriers to change at a later point. It is much harder to re-attach the project or captured knowledge to permanent organizations. It is very difficult to spread new understanding, knowledge and experiences from a project context into a permanent context. It seems that permanent organization always has the preferential right of interpretation and that upholder of projects have the burden of proof. Often it is even not enough to prove that the project way of doing things is better than the ordinary way, especially if one has to finance it internally and thus consequently make prioritizations within ordinary operation.

If the project is a collaboration project between two or more independent organizations, which is often the fact, one often has a very complicated process of negotiation ahead. If well-integrated interorganizational action is essential for policy-oriented problem solving, crafting interunit links framed around reciprocal interdependences is important, but difficult. Especially where there is not a tradition of frequent collaboration (which often is just the reason why one calls for and stimulates collaboration), there can be severe difficulties in taking care of achieved progress and improvement after the project is completed or terminated. Besides difficulties in financing a continuation, it is not unusual that actors, due to the lack of a collaborative infrastructure, frequently differ in their opinions of the benefit in continuing the project, often with the argument that someone is in favor and someone else is a net contributor. Of course more could be said about this...

Conclusion

Both advocates of multi-project implementation structure and separate project managers can never assume support but must work to build it. They typically cannot rely on hierarchical institutional arrangements to congeal agreement, beyond their own formal unit. Coordinators working with implementation in multi-project settings and project managers in single project settings often have to develop the infrastructure of communication – channels, language, signals and so forth – to help achieve the objective of policy-oriented cooperation both within the mainly sectoral welfare state, but particularly vis-à-vis the permanent organization.

Public administrators responsible for implementation on different levels and of course single project managers operating in such institutionally complex settings find themselves maneuvering in a world where there are multiple points of managerial influence and very different managerial roles across departments and other units of the policy world. Few moves can be made unilaterally. The task is

less one of directing and controlling the implementation of a specific project, and more that of assessing context of interdependence and seeking to influence these, often in subtle ways, to increase prospect for successful implementation of different projects, capture knowledge from them and spread or transfer this knowledge into new settings and permanent organizations.

The story I have told about the metropolitan initiative in Sweden is neither complete nor a critique of projects as a policy tool. It is simply an argument that how we organize implementation is very important and that we ought to shift focus from what we do to *how* we do it.

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