REVITALIZING PUBLIC MANAGEMENT TRAINING IN THE AMERICAS

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Since the early 1980's there has been considerable ferment in public administration, public management, public policy, and political science. While intellectual traditions in each of these areas embrace different sets of interest, varying agendas, and distinct concepts as to which public issues warrant attention, by the end of the decade the acceleration of transitions to market economies and more open forms of governance on a world-wide basis had engendered increasing convergence among them. For, despite very different perceptions as to what constitutes relevant research and teaching, today these fields share in common concern with the performance of public sector institutions, the identification of the actors and stakeholders influencing policy outcomes, and the way in which public issues are articulated and processed. In such a setting where globalization of the economy and internationalization of public issues are on the increase, established demarcations between the public and private sectors are disappearing as well as those between domestic and international policy arenas. As a consequence, one finds growing interest in internationalizing professional education and in designing curriculum and course offerings which will enable the recipients of advanced training and education to respond more effectively to the demands of the market place and to demonstrate greater capacity in resolving the issues at hand.

Linking Public Policy, Bureaucratic Performance, and Training

In light of these circumstances, there are three sets of conditions which public management education must be able to confront during the 1990's: how to better enable public managers to conceptualize and process relevant data from their external policy environments (by focusing attention on how issues are processed and how alternative choices can be posed more clearly), how to manage more effectively the interpersonal and interorganizational dynamics within the policy domain under the jurisdiction of public managers (through enhancing the skills component

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of management training), and how to look ahead and plan more effectively in order to anticipate the uncertainty and turbulence characteristic of politics and markets (through the incorporation of strategic management considerations). Because this task is a complex one and there are no ready-made formulas and an established literature to draw on, let me outline what the issues are and suggest that, because the public sector is so complex and subject to such great variation from one country setting to another, each program must make its own decision and develop its own design for confronting these issues according to the resources, the personnel, and the needs at hand. Then, let me follow with an extended case study of one endeavor designed to change perceptions of public management in developing countries by involving faculty and public affairs schools graduates in a series of on-going technical assistance activities.

First, the public management literature is generally quite clear in specifying how public managers must have a broader perspective and set of concerns involving the external environment of public organizations. This is a setting that involves one in an array of different political, economic, and social issues. To date, the primary way in which these issues have been approached is centered in the collection of appropriate case material from real-life decision-making situations, the writing up of these material in didactic form, and the use of cases in the classroom in which the instructor together with class participants analyze the case and the particular course of action taken, either through review of how a particular set of decisions was reached or through the design of a feasible strategy that the participants arrive at as a consequence of interpersonal dynamics and the analytic process engendered through focused dialogue.

In the development management literature, this approach to public management is usually referred to as the political influence model in which political stakeholders are specified, the resources of each key group or individual are assessed, and attention is directed at the lobbying and bargaining which goes on until a particular outcome is produced, in which winners and losers are designated.[1] Within the Latin American context, the materials generally recognized as having the greatest relevance for public sector work along the line of training are those developed at the *Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas (**INCAE**),* through

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[1] For a comprehensive summary of this approach, see the discussion of the political influence model in development management in Louise G. White. *Creating Opportunities for Change: Approaches to Managing Development Programs* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1987), chapter 9.

their programs and training centers in Managua, Nicaragua, and Alajuela, Costa Rica. Over time, these materials have been refined and expanded, until today it is apparent that this model of instruction is far more sophisticated in its analysis of public decisionmakers' policy environments than was the case originally when so many of the materials were almost exclusively firm specific. The newer case material drawn from structural adjustment policymaking and implementation not only requires a juxtaposition of economic and political analysis, in specifying the conditions to be dealt with and in the handling of economic and political data, but also introduces key analytic concepts in the development of alternative strategies before case analysis begins.[2]

Second, while there is a long history of training programs around the world in which public administration has been identified with the teaching of routine administrative skills (such as office management, filing, position classification, program budgeting, and basic accounting), it is important that such programs work with middle-level and lower level personnel be separated from the preparation to senior level personnel with managerial perspectives. At the latter level, what is required is the introduction of policy perspectives and the focusing of attention on the intersection of issues derived from the external environment with those coming from within a single public organization or related group of public organizations with overlapping activities in the same policy arena. Here what has been taking place is a redefinition of the concerns of public affairs in the direction of expanding the domain of issues considered relevant to public sector management.

Seen from this perspective, it becomes important to define our field of endeavor as the study of policies, programs, and projects which governments formulate and implement. Rather than turn attention inward to routine, day-to-day operations, the introduction of a policy perspective focuses attention on what goes on inside governments more generally, what governments as particular sets of public organizations and public servants do, and how governments interact with the economy, the polity and society. Such a perspective makes no prior assumption about the role of the state, but rather seeks to understand and shape the debate over the role of the state in society and the economy. As such, it embraces several distinct components of political science frequently excluded in more narrowly focused administrative curricula: Those governmental institutions which shape and define public policies in individual countries, the actors or agents who set policy agendas and determine policy outcome,

[2] Marc Lindenberg and Noel Ramírez, *Managing Adjustment in Developing Countries: Economic and Political Perspectives* (San Francisco: ICS Press, 1989).

and the policy processes through which public choices are defined, redefined, and implemented in the form of concrete programs, projects, and activities.[3]

If all this is taken into account, then it should not be necessary to belabor the point that the appropriate context within which to introduce such concerns is the university through the creation of new professional schools or the broadening of the mandates of already established schools to include a wider set of concerns linked to the consolidation of more open governance and more viable productive market structures.

Third, thinking strategically and looking ahead in the development of short-term, medium-term, and long-term plans entails identifying the constraints and opportunities in the design of institution-building strategies and programs geared to the improvement of managerial effectiveness. Broadening the issue agenda in public management education entails giving active consideration to three crucial variables contributing to constraints on improved managerial performance in individual countries: The existing power structure, the politics of donor organizations and host country institutions, and the roles played by key actors and stakeholders —that is to say— by those with vital interests in policy outcomes. Matching these constraints are three countervailing sets of variables identified with opportunities for improving organizational performance: timing (*i.e.*, the conjunctural factors creating a propitious environment within which to act), resources (that is, the human, financial, and institutional resources essential for project success), and coalition building (that is, giving specific attention to the development of strategies for bringing together the resources, the institutions, and the actors necessary for concerted action).

One way of approaching design questions of this type is to look at project experience in the donor community where concerted efforts have been made to link up technical assistance in public management with the university community. Selected for consideration here, as an illustration of how thinking strategically can leverage important changes not only in course content but also in professional publications and in development-oriented institutions is one instance of extensive cooperation between government and a group of nongovernmental academic organizations in the search for greater success in public sector reform. This particular

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[3] A book which is key in the shift in management training away from technical skills to a broader conceptualization of the administrative process in terms of policy analysis is: Merilee S. Grindle and John W. Thomas, *Public Choices and Policy Change: The Political Economy of Reform in Developing Countries* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1991).

program was instrumental in leveraging change in the development management field. It represents one particular response to how public policy concerns combined with interest in improved bureaucratic performance could be achieved by tapping into the resources of more specialized nongovernmental organizations and by promoting cooperative work that cut across government, donor agencies, and host country organizations in such a way that new sets of linkages could be built.

The Case History of a Cooperative Agreement in Development

The ten-year cooperative agreement between the *National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration* (*NASPAA*) and the *U.S. Agency for International Development* (*AID*) has become a microcosm of the shifts that have been occurring in the utilization of human resources in development management. Project assessment to date suggests that changing international conditions have required rethinking the way in which human resources are trained and used in staffing development-oriented programs. If personnel management is conceptualized as a field encompassing all activities related to people in organizations, how projects are designed becomes of crucial importance in assessing public management training needs. Initiated in an era of cutback management and contracting out *NASPAA*'s work centered initially on developing a centralized roster and using it to get people to the field. Beginning with a large number of formal interventions of one to two-weeks duration, over time the focus shifted to longer-term interventions designed to assess a country's training needs and to develop a critical mass of in-country human resources. As interest in sustainable programs grew attention was centered on developing more comprehensive strategies involving regional experts and host-country nationals in program implementation, as well as work with organizations seen as networks of decision-makers central to policy goals of immediate priority.

In the administration of U.S. technical assistance, one of the major personnel changes during the 1980's has been extensive reliance on organizations outside government to conduct technical assistance activities. In an era of cutback management and the contracting out of government services, this has become increasingly common in light of the severe limitations placed on the staffing of central bureaus and field missions under direct-hire arrangements. As a consequence, there are today a multiplicity of nongovernmental organizations concentrated in the Washington area under a variety of contractual relationships with government that supply a major part, if not the majority, of our technical services

abroad. The cooperative agreement between *NASPAA* (the *National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration*) and the *Bureau for Science and Technology* (*S&T*) in the *U.S. Agency for International Development* (*AID*) constitutes one of the many arrangements arrived at over the past decade for the delivery of technical services tied to the development of human resources in the developing world.

In this particular case, *NASPAA* first agreed in 1979 to tap into the management expertise of faculty at its schools and that of its graduates working as consultants in the development management field. Bringing them together in a single, centralized roster and utilizing a small professional staff in Washington with easy access to AID made it possible to pace management experts in the field on relatively short notice, when missions wished to avail themselves of these resources. While contracting work of this sort is not out of the ordinary in today's Washington, what is different about these activities is the way in which a mechanism was developed for mobilizing academics, rather than full-time consultants, with relevant knowledge and experience in a way that few individual universities can respond to on short notice.

Under a cooperative agreement, country missions may contract directly with a single cooperant to provide a technical service with less paperwork and fewer delays when compared with the normal contracting process. Again, while a number of organizations have utilized the cooperative agreement mechanism, what is distinctive about this arrangement is the extent to which it is tapped into a pool of managerial expertise dispersed throughout the United States and provided access to a multiplicity of individuals and institutions rather than the resources of a single organization. In this instance, an academic association, in cooperation with the bureau in *AID/Washington* most closely identified with research and development, took on the responsibility of attempting to bridge the gap between theory (in this case research and academic-based instruction) and practice (*i.e.* consultancy services designed to improve performance in development management activities in a field setting).

Such arrangements have provided a mechanism that has proven to be quite flexible in responding to a wide variety of field needs. In this case, by tying *NASPAA* with a central bureau organized by function rather than region, it was possible to arrive at a set of mutual benefits for both parties. With the assistance of the central bureau to which the cooperative agreement has been tied, the nongovernmental organization specified in this agreement was able to provide services directly, without going through the formal contracting process and with the cooperating central bureau facilitating execution of the work through handling interagency

communication, transmitting the necessary documentation, and serving as facilitator in the execution of the activities agreed to.

In a context where public contracts have come to constitute a time consuming and complex process—since they must be formally announced, solicitation from all interested parties accepted on the basis of bids, and awards assigned to the most appropriate bidder in terms of cost and services— the cooperative agreement format has offered many missions a convenient alternative. While such arrangements provide relatively quick turnaround in getting technical work accomplished, there is a trade-off in that missions must accept more direct central agency involvement in field activities. The advantage is insurance of greater accountability on the part of nongovernmental organization involved in the provision of a technical service; the disadvantage is the potential for excessive micromanagement from Washington of project activities provided by the nongovernmental organization.

At a time when monitoring contractor performance without impinging on the organization's capacity to perform its services has been heightened by problems in the defense industry, this particular arrangement warrants reexamination. For, it minimizes problems of accountability, while insuring constant feedback between the governmental office and the non-governmental organization supplying the service, since such activities must be co-managed. In the case of the *NASPAA* project, there was an *AID* guidance (to ensure that *AID* priorities and practices were respected) and a *NASPAA* project manager responsible for the execution of the technical services and activities agreed to. Though offering recommendations and expressing opinions on the work provided by the nongovernmental organization, such work, if creatively managed, can bring together into a single package central bureau concerns with policy and program development, field mission focus on the country context and host-country counterparts, and nongovernmental technical expertise oriented toward tasks that is relatively free of the political preferences of donor and recipient institutions. Such a view does not deny that serious problems can develop in implementing such schemes, but these are no different from the usual tenuous relationships, uncertainties, and ambiguities that accompany development work in general, since there are always present a multiplicity of interests and competing perspectives as to what the priorities should be and what work is to be done.

In this instance, the cooperative agreement mechanism has been tied to a second vehicle developed in this era of contracting out to increase flexibility: an indefinite quantity contract (*IQC*). In a context where the need frequently arises for missions to exercise more direct control over

technical services, through fixing specific scopes of work and detailing how the money is to be spent, the IQC arrangement has had the potential of creating a framework whereby field-directed instructions for the execution of work orders can be enhanced and specific amounts of money allocated by missions.

The *IQC* arrangement thus has made an additional mechanism available whereby mission-specific work and budgets for the activities stipulated can be channeled directly to a nongovernmental organization, again without having to go through the formal contracting process for each activity. Numerous consulting organizations today have *IQC* arrangements with various *AID* offices and this has become a mechanism utilized frequently by consulting organizations with long-term ties with government. The *NASPAA/S&T IQC* was different in that it was essentially an addendum to a cooperative agreement which defined a very specific set of parameters, as opposed to the open-ended character of most other IQCs which stand alone and which frequently, in contractor jargon, are referred to as *fishing licenses*. In this particular case, while honoring mission-directed scopes of work and budgets, the *IQC* involved work only when these activities could also be oriented toward institutional learning by one or more of the participants in the activity or could offer new insights into the executions of such activities.

The Specifics of the *NASPAA* Project

Since 1979 NASPAA has had two cooperative agreements with AID, the first extending form 1979 to 1983 and the second, 1985 to 1989. In the interim, between agreements, the prior agreement was extended through the contracting of follow-on technical services which required extension of the original date to permit execution of the services agreed to. In each case, the vehicle through which these activities were organized and executed was a project paper drawn up by the *AID* office responsible for the agreement in cooperation with the cooperant(s). The **first** was known as the *Project Effectiveness Project* and the **second**, the *Performance Management Project*.

The **first** agreement centered around generating a large volume of individual project activities and was designed to ensure greater effectiveness through the enhancement of management skills among host-country nationals, either by offering training seminars in the field or conducting evaluations of training programs and other activities related to human resources development. The second was designed to focus on more comprehensive, longer-term programmatic activities in an

institutional context and was directed toward achieving greater impact than the more isolated interventions characteristic of the first agreement. Also, since these activities were tied to a central bureau whose mission was more closely linked to applied research and the dissemination of knowledge in technical assistance than has been the case with the other bureaus, the emphasis in the second agreement fell on specifying the lessons learned and sponsoring publications intended to be of greater interest and use to the practitioner.

By the end of the first agreement, *NASPAA* had accomplished several objectives. **First**, a full-fledged roster was in place and in operation. Beginning with a limited number of entries, by 1983 that roster had been revised in form as well as content, updated, and entered in a computerized system whereby consultants could be identified by a number of different criteria, according to the nature of the assignment and the skills needs. Backing up this roster was an updated file with the curriculum vitae of the individuals entered into the system.

Second, *NASPAA* had demonstrated a capacity to respond to mission requests and to provide quality technical services. This is demonstrated by the large number of activities carried out and the money brought into the project through mission buy-ins (*i.e.*, contractual agreements whereby missions commit specific funds for activities executed by *NASPAA* for the execution of tasks stipulated in the service orders negotiated). This information is summarized in **Table 1**.

Third, while the roster was organized around individuals available for short-term field assignment, it could be demonstrated by 1984 that the *Project* had begun to have more substantive impact on *NASPAA* schools and programs. Not only was the core list of individuals available drawn from *NASPAA*-affiliated institutions, but also a number of longer term relationships involving people active in development management and with close ties with missions in the field had evolved. By the mid-1980s these were two fold: the contracting of two long-term senior staff members (one in *NASPAA*'s Washington office as a *Senior Management Specialist* and the other in the field as its *Asia Regional Specialist*) and the development of program capability to organize development management seminars on a regular basis through one *NASPAA* institution in particular (the *Graduate School of Public and International Affairs*, at the University of Pittsburgh).

Rather than the clear-cut demarcation between agreements suggested by a reading of the two project papers, the first agreement really was indistinguishable from the second when examined in terms of services and activities. The first simply flowed into the second. The justification for the coordination of the relationship between the two organizations was not so

much the projects arrived at, but the convenience offered by the cooperative agreement mechanism in the context of a particular administration, as a vehicle through which missions could continue to contract for needed services in development management on a continuing basis. Accordingly, an extension was negotiated in 1983 that permitted field activities to continue on an interim base until the inter- and intra-agency climate was appropriate for a new formal agreement. Once the timing was right, a new cooperative agreement was quickly put together and, given the need for immediate response, much of the language of the first agreement was incorporated into the second. Only later, once the mechanism was in place and approved for five years, was a project paper prepared articulating the conceptual framework under which activities were to be organized during the second phase.

The pragmatic quality of this relationship in which a program was built out of an extended series of individual activities has obscured the accomplishments to date. Furthermore, since the first need was to demonstrate to government the capacity of academic-based consultants to respond to *hands-on* practical problems in development management in lesser developed countries, there was little time as these services were being developed to ponder the lessons learned or how to disseminate the results to a wider body of practitioners and academics interested in development management generally.

During these years the most important accomplishment was the identification of new management expertise concentrated in the NASPAA schools but not confined to them; people with the ability to respond to field conditions with all the delays and indeterminancies entailed in such work. This point warrants particular emphasis. This work took place in an organizational context where earlier work in public administration had been so thoroughly discredited during the late 1960's and early 1970's as to imbue a whole generation of government project managers with skepticism if not disdain for public sector work geared to the administration of development programs. Today, in contrast, the public affairs and managerial emphasis given to the public-private interface in the developing world has gone a long way toward reestablishing legitimacy for this field in overseas programs among practitioners on the basis of the ability to produce results.

No less important but less well known has been the establishment of an independent resource base from which it has become possible to conduct more focused, in-depth work with a wider variety of organizations. As a small, relatively new academic association created in 1971 to provide a more effective framework within which standards could be set and

accreditation provided for public affairs and administration programs, *NASPAA* initially had neither the staff nor the resources to mobilize effectively specialized human resources in the United States for work abroad on its own. Combining the income, the staff, and the network generated by technical service work and other financial and human resources accumulated through associational activities standard to small professional organizations, by 1988 *NASPAA* had generated a resource base of its own. Through it donor-funded programmatic activities could be responded to more effectively and greater selectivity exercised in identifying more sustainable activities where its resources, those of donor organizations, and host country organizations could be matched more effectively.

New applied research in development management different from that produced under other auspices is probably the least visible aspect of this project and the most likely to be disregarded, given the increasing not the lessening divergence between the worlds of government and academia at the point where politics, administration, and policy intersect. In large part, as an academic association, emphasis was placed on publications identified with the individuals conducting the work, rather than with the organization. Aside from field reports issued in the context of mission-based activities, these publications fall in three categories: People-centered development programs and participatory management endeavors, state-of-the-art surveys of the development management field, and new initiatives in the development management field in response to the revival of interest in management topics internationally. The later embraces themes as diverse as the new institutionalism in the context of the emphasis placed on the sustainability of development programs, policy reform and structural adjustment as shaped largely by African experience, and the application of strategic management concepts to developmental issues and concerns.[4]

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[4] Examples of the **first category** are: David C. Korten and Rudi Klauss, *People-Centered Development* (West Hartford, CN: Kumarian Press, 1984); David C. Korten and Felipe B. Alfonso. eds., *Bureaucracy and the Poor: Closing the Gap* (West Hartford, CN: Kumarian Press, 1983). Belonging to the **second category** are: Jerald Hage and Kurt Finsterbusch, *Organizational Change as a Development Strategy* (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1987); John E. Kerrigan and Jeff S. Luke, *Management Training Strategies for Developing Countries* (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1987); Dennis A. Rondinelli, *Development Administration and U.S. Foreign Aid Policy* (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1987); and Louise G. White, *Creating Opportunities for Change: Approaches to Managing Development Programs* (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1987). While the **third set** of materials consists of work largely in progress, it is sufficiently well enough advanced to list: Moses Kiggundu, *Managing Organizations in Developing Countries: An Operational and Strategic Approach* (West Hartford, CN: Kumarian Press, 1989); and Louise G. White, "Implementing

The Impact of Changing Contextual Conditions

In looking at this particular project as a set of evolving relationships over the past decade, the pattern that emerges is movement from a large volume of discrete activities of short-term duration, involving numerous U.S. consultants, to fewer longer-term activities centered in an organizational context, consisting of a larger number of host-country and regional experts.

One way to track this evolution is to summarize the number of buy-ins for field activities, to state the total amounts involved, and to compare them with central bureau funding. This information is summarized in **Table 1**.

While these figures supply information regarding overall trends in this project, totals such as these obscure internal nuances. Warranting specific mention here are instances of forward funding both by the central bureau and by missions in those cases where activities extend over more than a single fiscal year or, in one instance, when an old balance was transferred forward in moving from the first to the second agreement. Skewed results as a consequence of these factors are the greatest in *S&T* funding for 1985, when both forward funding and the transfer of the balance left from the first agreement took place. Another pattern reflected in these totals but no readily visible is central bureau funding from sources other than the *Performance Management Project*, as *NASPAA* moved to the end of the second cooperative agreement. The relevance of this point is that it supports the contention that the primary utility of these arrangements over the years was the mechanism, not the content. Whereas in 1988 there was a notable drop in funding for the *Performance Management Project* and hence a decline in moneys which could be used to support employees on annual salaries, other opportunities arose in the form of central office buy-ins for contractual work under *NASPAA*'s auspices. What all this has meant in final analysis is that as the project approached conclusion, these arrangements provided *AID/Washington* as much as *AID* missions in the field with a flexible way to contract out services quickly, effectively, and efficiently —when compared with intra-agency procedures and requirements prescribed for other types of technical work— be it under contract or direct-hire arrangements.

Economic Policy Reforms: Problems and Opportunities for Donors," *NASPAA Working Paper*, No. 16 (Washington, DC: NASPAA, 1988).

TABLE 1

FIELD ACTIVITIES AND BUY-INS UNDER THE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

Buy-ins	Year	Mission Funded	Central Bureau Funded
3	1980	$ 14,057	$ 60,077
5	1981	$ 158,427	$ 202,142
20	1982	$ 380,960	$ 350,000
19	1983	$ 333,348	$ 153,999
20	1984	$ 790,229	$ 449,600
29	1985	$ 880,802	$ 1,060,820
26	1986	$ 1,027,585	$ 538,000
25	1987	$ 1,522,401	$ 535,000
16	1988	$ 903,988	$ 668,000

Source: *Financial Records*, "NASPAA Funding-Performance Management Project."

There is a second pattern in the evolution of the project warranting further discussion that is not apparent by using quantitative indices: changing patterns in the use of skilled human resources in development management, both in terms of project management and technical services provided in the field. This project began with *NASPAA* having to demonstrate to skeptical missions that its people had the capacity to carry out work in development management effectively, in a context where many career employees in technical assistance programs doubted the capacity of academic-based personnel to perform the services missions require. In an era of privatization and preference for market-oriented strategies, there continued to be numerous U.S. personnel abroad who, when they thought of management needs, saw the work as more appropriate when managed by organizations or individuals socialized into private-sector perspectives, regardless of higher costs in overhead, on the grounds that by definition these consultants would be more attuned to the pragmatic needs of the field and mission direction.

The early years of this project thus reflect a slow start up as a roster was developed at a time in which central office project staff consisted of no more than a project director and a secretary. To this base were added the first few technical service activities in the field, in a context where the constant turnover of mission personnel presented a continual problem in arranging for follow-on activities: Successful performance under a short-

term assignment did not automatically generate follow-on activities or raise the organization's visibility for others as a provider of services in development management.

In the history of the project, the first breakthrough came with the employment in July 1981 of a *Regional Area Specialist* residing full-time in Jakarta, Indonesia, and supported by mission and regional bureau buy-ins to the project. This was for work on people-centered development projects and participatory management activities in several countries (principally the Philippines, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Pakistan). In january 1982 a second breakthrough came with the employment of a full-time *Senior Management Specialist* in Washington with a personal reputation already established for effective mission work. His role proved to be crucial both in marketing the project through arranging for buy-ins on the basis of his own expertise and in advertising to others NASPAA's broader organizational capacity to field specialists drawn from the roster who could execute assignments with a fair degree of certainty that their performance in the field would produce the results desired. In both cases, the involvement of these individuals in the project became long-term arrangements, with the latter moving into full-time contract work when retirement occurred December 31, 1987, and the former moving on to full-time work with private volunteer organizations when his AID-support work came to an end March 31, 1988. In both cases, the thrust of the work was individual initiatives generating a larger volume of field service activity.

The second development was the involvement of one *NASPAA* institution in particular in the project and the channeling of resources to that program because of the entrepreneurship of its director in developing a capability to organize management seminars in the field in French-speaking areas of Africa. While these activities began with the cooperative agreement providing the mechanism through which star-up work could be initiated, very soon the individual concerned, through aggressive marketing and constant cultivation of mission contacts in the field, developed his own clientele independently of the project. The high point in this relationship, as measured by number of activities, was reached in 1985.

Since the project was intended to enhance the development of new professional and institutional capabilities in the United States in development management, when mid-term *AID*-sponsored evaluation occurred in late fiscal year 1987, one of the conclusions was that such activities now that they had become self-sustaining should be spun off as individual contract work directly between the missions and the university.

It was argued that this would reduce the large volume of paperwork generated in *S&T* in servicing these activities and the need for increased staff on the *NASPAA* side paid for by *S&T* to simply process the cables, the financial arrangements, and the scheduling of these activities. Prior to that evaluation, informal assessment of the project and its performance had already led to the conclusion that the volume of activities generated would best be handled now that the start-up phase was past by having the university concerned assume more and more of the logistical and staffing responsibilities that went with such work and by allocating less central bureau funds for this work. In a time of resource constraint, maintaining a salaried staff of junior professionals at *NASPAA* in support of work conducted by one particular university ceased to be attractive.

Accordingly, the number of interventions, as represented in field service activities, began to drop off in late 1986, with the reduction in volume having its greatest impact in fiscal year 1988. This is reflected in the drop in field-service buy-ins that year in the amount of $297,000. However, some of this decline is also due to the ending of employment on March 31, 1988, of the *Asian Regional Specialist* and of payment for his field services directly by various Asian missions.

Shifting the Locus of Responsibility

Concurrent with these changes in the volume of individual activities and funding levels went a change in who the people were and where the activities were located. Whereas the project began essentially as one involving U.S. nationals recruiting other U.S. nationals for assignments abroad, either on a short-term or a long-term basis, by 1986 other concepts had begun to enter in. First, there was less and less interest in using core project funding to support the training of isolated individuals or groups of individuals in various countries. The concern became institution building and the enhancement of local human resources. Also, whereas mission money available for human resource development had been centered largely in programs aimed at the Asian countries in the early 1980's —with an increased volume of Latin American activity in the mid-1980's— as the project neared conclusion, it became more and more African centered. It was there that more resources were available and where more innovative thinking was underway in the donor community as various kinds of cooperative schemes began to be experimented with. A major stimulus was awareness that in so much of sub-Sahara Africa the enormity of the tasks of development and the basic human needs were so great as to far exceed the capacity of any one single donor.

Three mission-founded projects in particular illustrate the shifts occurring:

(1)   the Paraguay mission's contract to start a business administration program,

(2)   the Swaziland mission's buy-in whereby *NASPAA* agreed to start up work in the development of interregional management training and human resource development at the management level in southern Africa, and

(3)   the Guinea mission's receptivity to redefining management development activities in terms of longer-term concerns with on-the-job performance and with integrating training programs into considerations of overall organizational performance in sectors seen as crucial to national development.

The **first** activity exemplifies the shift in locus of authority. When a similar activity was undertaken in 1982 in the Dominican Republic, it was primarily a U.S.-directed activity with the academic organizations and personnel utilized coming from within the United States. Initiated with a small grant whereby NASPAA did the preliminary study, the longer term activity was then assigned to a single U.S. academic institution under direct contract with the Dominican Republic mission. In contrast, the buy-in negotiated in 1986 to start up a business administration program at the Catholic University in Asunción was done in cooperation with a *NASPAA* associate-member institution in Central America, the *Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas* (*INCAE*), with its faculty providing the consultancy services. In this case, *NASPAA*'s *Senior Management Specialist* provided the backstopping and coordination of the project over an initial two years and negotiated an extension for a third year of activities. While *NASPAA*'s project staff administered financial and programmatic details, *INCAE* provided the actual services, organized the seminar sessions, and fielded the faculty who conducted programmatic activities.

The **second** activity entailed a very different kind of program. In that instance, training institutions in a number of countries were already in existence and the goal was to strengthen these institutions through promoting regional cooperation within a seven-country group, the *Southern African Development Coordinating Conference* (*SADCC*). To accomplish this, under contract with the Swaziland mission and with the support of the regional *AID* office in Harare, *NASPAA* took on responsibility for fielding a resident representative in the region (an African professional from Zimbabwe). Assigned to Mbabane, Swaziland, this individual worked directly under the head of the *Regional Training Office* for the *SADCC*

group, set up a small office (the *Management Resource Unit*) for coordinating activities with regional training institutions, and organized two substantive seminars; one on regional trade and finance and the other on regional rail and road transport. As multidonor project, additional support was brought into this project from the *Canadian International Development Agency*, the *Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation*, and the *German Technical Assistance Agency*. Carried for 15 months under *AID* financing, at the end of the start-up phase, the individual around whom this project had been built then moved on to *World Bank* employment where the second phase of activities in strengthening regional training institutions was to follow.

The **third** activity, work with the Guinea mission, represented yet another type of endeavor. Initiated in 1986 as an effort to refocus management training seminars so as to have greater on-the-job impact (with a small buy-in of $56,000), through a process of dialogue among the mission, *AID/Washington*, and *NASPAA* these endeavors were progressively refocused and redesigned. From this base a more ambitious strategy was developed in fiscal year 1988 in which in-depth work in a single key ministry (the *Ministry of Agriculture*) was combined with the elaboration of a cross-sectoral, multiorganizational, multiyear strategy for improving management performance in the administration of both human and financial resources —for a total package of some $650,000 extending over two years, in addition to work funded the previous year. In this instance, the specialists dispatched —both short-term and long-term— consisted of a Senegalese chief of party for diagnostic work in the *Ministry of Agriculture* and a Malian resident representative for implementing a strategy linking together financial and personnel management in substantive program areas in agriculture.

Thus, as the project neared conclusion, the locus of the work had become increasingly centered within the developing world proper, utilizing local and regional resources and mobilizing U.S. based supports more and more to provide backstopping and networking among a relatively small group of development management professionals internationally. In the process, by 1988, less and less of this work could be explained in project terms and more and more was taking on definition in programmatic terms on a cooperative multinational basis, combining Latin American, African, and U.S. professional expertise as host-country and regional counterparts assumed primary responsibility.

Relevancy

What is the relationship of this case study in development management project design to public sector reform and the problems presented by

extensive institutional development of the state and the need for more relevant and dynamic managerial training? This particular project brings into focus many of the underlying issues in development management. It also suggests how to grapple more effectively with civil service reform, public sector labor redundancy, and redeployment of the work force.

First, it suggests that the more appropriate way to leverage change in public bureaucracy (that is to say, in the host of public organizations under the direct authority of the central government and outside it) is through more careful design of middle-range strategies that assume a multiplicity of actors, ambiguity, and uncertainty. The problem which has to be confronted directly is how to develop the capacity to achieve impact over the short term, when the issues confronted by definition require long-term solutions. In the context of the United States and also that of many other countries as well as multinational donor organizations, the nature of the funding cycle requires the development of measurement criteria on an annualized basis. To respond to these needs, one must be able to define one particular component of the development maze and then develop a carefully sequenced workplan, breaking the program down into self-contained segments or *tranches* that follow a feasible time schedule. In project work, one must always retain a clearcut understanding of the timing factor: the start-up phase in which the particular set of resources required must be pulled together, the middle years of the project when the emphasis falls on the performance of a particular set of field services, and project conclusion whereby the delivery of concrete, measurable products must occur.

Much has been written about the limitations of project work and the importance of thinking in programmatic terms.[5] These distinctions are important ones and should be incorporated when possible. But the project cycle is a difficult one to break in development work, because of the nature of the funding cycle to which most organizations have to respond. Multiyear programs are designed all the time, and then changed. In the case of the United States the crux of the matter is what Congress does or does not do with the annual budget in a context of limited resources in which the needs continually outstrip the available money, of competing interests that must be accommodated, and of earmarking to ensure action in particular areas at the expense of programmatic coherency.

Second, issues of context —that is, the particular situations in which

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[5] One especially cogent discussion of this difference between project and program is to be found in: Louise G. White, *Creating Opportunities for Change: Approaches to Managing Development Programs* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1987), pp. 6-11.

one must work—require cooperative action to achieve impact. One cannot go with it alone. The lessons of experience in confronting the enormity of development needs in sub-Sahara Africa have made the donor community as a whole especially sensitive to cooperative initiatives. But working with others consumes enormous amounts of time in building mutual confidence, in reconciling competing perspectives and differed agendas, and in establishing exactly where the mutuality of interests lies. Here often the conclusion is that at best if one is to have impact as an external agent it is at the margins of the state.

At the personnel level, once a project is agreed upon and the financing secured to start up the work, these issues of context become ones of securing the right mix of individuals in the teams that are to be built — within the host country organization(s)—within the donor organization in the central office as well as the field office staff, and within the organization providing the technical service. The conclusion reached here is derived from the project reported on above, as it has been compared with other ways of tackling similar developmental problems. It is that the work conducted must be iterative and oriented toward substance, rather than be consumed with issues of process and procedure. Conceived in these terms, iterative work becomes a computational procedure in which replication of a cycle of operations produces concrete results which approximate the desired result(s) more and more closely.

An illustration might help to clarify what is meant by the importance of focusing on iterative work and issues of substance as opposed to process and procedure. In working with human recourse development in the management field in developing countries, it becomes important to work within the context of carefully conceived steps, each of which can be assessed in terms of the specific product agreed upon and delivered. In the case of Guinea, this iterative work began with a management seminar focused on the improvement of management capabilities in the *Ministry of Agriculture* in February 1986. The next step was a request for long-term assistance submitted to the nongovernmental organization providing the service, through the *Ministry of Agriculture* in cooperation with the *USAID/ Conakry Mission*. Following a three-day visit to Conakry in July 1986, the Mission approved and funded a proposal for follow-on work. The second step consisted of a planning and needs assessment study conducted in December 1986 and two workshops in Conakry in February and April 1987. At the end of this work (designated as **Phase I**), the Mission approved and funded a second proposal for a **Phase II** of continued assistance to the *Ministry of Agriculture* for an additional twelve months, with emphasis on improving its program and policy implementation

capabilities. Before this work began, the *Mission* director changed. As a consequence of discussions between him and the nongovernmental organization providing the technical services, it was agreed that a second needs assessment would occur, in the form of an in-depth diagnostic report with particular attention to the *Ministry*'s needs for improving its financial management capabilities. Discussion of that report in Conakry and Washington led to a decision to take on a much more ambitious project in reorganization of the Ministry, whereby beginning July 1, 1988, the nongovernmental organization concerned would field a long-term resident technical advisor, with a mandate to develop a detailed workplan for initiating a series of activities in the *Ministry* for fiscal year 1989 (October 1, 1988, through September 30, 1989).[6]

In short, the elaboration of appropriate middle-range development management strategies requires bringing together the necessary financial and human resources, identifying a particular focus either organizational or thematic (such as the development and implementation of a country training plan), and leveraging with that activity in order to achieve a multiplier effect that can attend to a country's developmental needs.

Applied to management training, consideration of such issues as these argues for the logic of introducing into the curriculum policy research project seminars, extending over an academic year and involving students and teaching faculty in the analysis of concrete policy issues. Within my own teaching experience, instances of these pedagogical methodology would be policy-research-project (*PRP*) seminars taught on development program design and evaluation and on Brazilian public policy, in which emphasis fell on the training of policy analysts. In each case the complexity of the policy issues dealt with made necessary extended analysis and the drafting and redrafting of policy research reports, as students were trained in project design and as policy analysts with critical skills, independently of the client-centered model that underlies so much work that is contracted with public agencies and is illustrated by the aforementioned case study.

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[6] A detailed assessment of this activity is contained in the following report: Charlotte Leighton, "Country Assistance Report: Management Improvement and Organizational Development Assistance Project in Guinea" (Washington, DC: draft report prepared for the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, July, 1988).

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