Policy Within and Across Developing Nations

Stuarts. Nagel
Policy Within and Across Developing Nations
Dedicated to the George Washingtons of the developing regions of the world
Kwame Nkrumah and Nelson Mandela of Africa,
Sun Yat-Sen and Mahatma Gandhi of Asia,
Mikhail Gorbachev and Lech Walesea of East Europe,
Simon Bolivar and Emiliano Zapata of Latin America
Policy Within and Across Developing Nations

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Introduction

*Developing nations* in this context refer to any nation that is seeking to improve its quality of life, which includes all nations. The emphasis, however, is on those nations that seem to be most in need of improvement, not necessarily those nations that are most rapidly developing. Nations in sub-Saharan Africa, for example, have recently decreased their per capita income, but they are still developing nations and especially so given their relative poverty. We will not refer to developed nations as if there are some fully developed nations that have little room for improvement. Instead we will talk about developing nations and relative *industrialized nations*.

The concept of *policy studies* refers to the collection of institutions that are designed to study the causes and especially the effects of alternative public policies. *Public policies* refer to governmental decisions that seek to improve the quality of life or at least lessen the severity of various social problems. Policy studies institutions include ways of handling relevant training, research, publishing, funding and associations. Public policies can be classified as economic, social, technological, political or legal, depending on what societal institutions or scholarly disciplines are especially involved. *Policy analysis* refers to the methodologies for determining relevant causal relations, generally for the purpose of evaluating alternative public policies in order to decide the best policies, combinations, allocations, or super-optimum solutions whereby all sides come out ahead of their best initial expectations.

As the title implies, this book is divided into ‘Policy within Developing Nations and Policy across Developing Nations’. The ‘within’ material is concerned with improving economic, technology, social, and political policy. Those policy fields are directed toward providing widespread prosperity, useful innovation, merit treatment and democracy, respectively.

Political policy can be divided into three parts. The first is concerned with government structures, especially the relations between branches and levels of government. The second is concerned with choosing political leaders, which often involves a discussion of political parties, interest groups, public opinion and elections. The third part is concerned with administering gov-
ernment policy, especially problems of personnel and financial administration.

Developing nations are at a disadvantage in developing their economic, technology, political, and social systems because of a present lack of financial resources. Some are so lacking in resources, such as the Sahel countries, along the Sahara Desert, that they are classified as emergency nations in terms of lack of food, shelter, health care, transportation and education. Some have the additional disadvantage of being recently at war such as Bosnia, Rwanda and Afghanistan.

These developing countries represent a severe challenge to policy studies. That especially includes win-win policy analysis, whereby all major groups come out ahead of their best initial expectations. Developing nations may not have large expectations, but they have high needs. They cannot afford wasted resources, like rich industrial countries can.

The second part of the book deals with policy across or between countries. That especially includes the need for peace and for inter- and intra-national dispute resolution. The disputes between sovereign nations have lessened, as have the disputes between controlling countries and colonies or quasi-colonies. Certain disputes, however, have recently increased regarding (1) central governments and secessionist provinces, (2) conflicting nations within a country, (3) conflicting economic classes with international implications and (4) pro-democracy movements.

There are close positive relations between peace, democracy, and prosperity. Partly for that reason, the United States has recently been promoting world-wide democracy. Doing so leads to peace and prosperity. That in turn leads to better customers, suppliers and investment outlets for the US and all countries.

International prosperity can be especially promoted by (1) the free flow of goods without tariffs, (2) the free flow of people without xenophobic restrictions and (3) the free flow of ideas including technology transfer. That kind of global exchange is being promoted by individual countries, bilateral and multilateral relations and by international organizations like UN agencies.

The third part of the book is concerned with training administrators and policymakers in traditional administration and in win-win capabilities. This training is being facilitated by such entities as the World Bank, USAID, the Ford Foundation, USIA, the European Community, the UN, international practitioner organizations, international scholarly organizations, and other non-governmental organizations.

The fourth part contains two extensive bibliographies. One is on developmental policy studies in general. The other emphasizes human rights. Such rights provides for free speech, merit treatment, and due process. Without
such rights, even a country rich in resources cannot flourish or progress for long. As people become more educated in developing countries, they demand such rights. Doing so in the intermediate and long runs is likely to mean better policy and quality of life for all major groups.

Improving these long-run results is the main purpose of this book. This is a high but worthy goal. One might say ‘How can we be oriented toward such difficult challenges and goals?’ Still others might say, ‘How can we not be’.
PART I
POLICY WITHIN
DEVELOPING NATIONS
1 Improving Developmental Policy

The following 16 points represent public policy suggestions for improving aid to developing countries, mainly on the part of the United States, but also on the part of other developed countries. The suggestions were stimulated as a result of touring Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, Brazil, Panama, Okinawa and other places from 1985 to 1995. Especially helpful were conversations with leaders of the legal profession in various developing countries (such as the Malawi and Zambia Law Associations) and also leading public administrators (partly by way of the International Association for Schools and Institutes of Administration). Relevant places also include underdeveloped regions of developed countries such as the Delta region of the Mississippi, the Negev Desert in Israel and rural areas of western European countries.

Suggestions from Africa

1 More advice to developing countries is needed on how to make better use of mass labor. This is the main resource which most developing countries have. Perhaps studies could be made of the way China has used mass labor to build roads, schools and other projects with relatively little mechanical equipment and relying heavily on local raw materials. The projects created have much more value than the cost of workers' pay, although the workers receive a living wage. The surplus value can then be used as a form of savings for capital investment.

2 More use should be made of soybeans in developing countries to provide needed protein at relatively low cost in comparison to alternative sources. Soybeans can also be converted to a variety of desired synthetic food products such as hamburgers, although the conversion costs still need to be reduced.

3 Better use of American corn-growing techniques should be made with regard to hybrid seed corn, herbicides, pesticides and inexpensive fertilizers.
This includes plowing under the stalks after the harvest to provide good natural fertilizer, rather than burning the stalks or letting them decompose into the air.

4 The use of more cooperative farming would mean that equipment could be shared efficiently by way of machine tractor stations. The Soviet Union has been a pioneer in that regard, but the machine tractor stations could be used in developing countries by farmers who own or at least sell their crops, rather than by collectivized farmers. The stations, like American county agents, could dispense knowledge as well as equipment.

5 Low-cost, high leverage medical care would save the lives of children. High leverage means that a relatively few dollars can generate a lot of saved lives. This includes preventive medicine and measures for polio, infant dehydration, malaria, leprosy, yellow fever and nutritional diseases. Saving children greatly wins friends in foreign policy. Saving children, however, needs to be accompanied by birth control to have fewer children to save, and also by job opportunities for when the children become adults.

6 Better planning is necessary for the movement from rural areas to urban areas. Such movement is inevitable as rural areas need fewer farmers because of more efficient farming. Such movement could learn from the experience of relevant bodies in other countries, such as the US Rural Rehabilitation Service.

7 There is need for more electrification, including at least one electrical outlet per village. Perhaps ideas could be gained from the US Rural Electrification Administration.

8 Greater use of collectively used satellite dishes would increase access for television programs that originate in other countries. Some television can be highly educational, especially when books and other educational outlets are lacking.

9 More use should be made of synthetic agricultural products such as gasohol, ethanol and oil substitutes. Developing countries can learn from the experience of Brazil and of American corn farmers during the oil crisis of the 1970s. Synthetic fuels may cost most to make than oil on the world market, but developing countries need the foreign exchange for other things, and they have the raw agricultural materials for oil substitutes.

10 More help should be provided on techniques for crash programs to raise literacy, including literacy in English or other international languages. The successful experiences of other countries, including Cuba and Israel, in that regard can be helpful. Literacy and other education programs are high leverage in building human capital.

11 There should be greater use of systematic public policy analysis in choosing among alternative public policies. Here the developing countries can learn from methods taught at public policy schools like Harvard,
Princeton, Berkeley, Michigan, Minnesota, Texas and Pittsburgh. They can also benefit from the more practical textbooks used in such courses.

12 More emphasis should be placed on increasing national income in order to reduce poverty, and less on redistribution of existing income. If a country is 90 per cent poor and 10 per cent rich, spreading the wealth of the 10 per cent may result in the country being 100 per cent poor because spreading that wealth makes so little difference and decreases investment incentives. A developed country that is 10 per cent poor and 90 per cent rich can wipe out poverty by spreading some of the wealth to the poor, but even a developed country would be better off seeking to increase its national income so as to raise living standards for virtually everybody.

13 More emphasis on increasing the national income through a program of active governmental incentives, including subsidies and tax breaks, would be beneficial. This has worked well in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore. It combines the ideas of supply-side economics and industrial policy.

14 In seeking to win friends and influence, there should be more concentration on professors of political science and law in the universities of developing countries, since they train the future leaders of those countries, and also on reaching public administrators and lawyers, since they are among the present leaders in developing countries.

15 The United States and developed countries should be identified more closely with freedom of speech, fair procedure in criminal proceedings and equal treatment under the law. This should include active encouragement of these basic human rights, since they generate respect for the law and increased national productivity in developing countries.

16 There is a need for more international coordination by the United States and other developed countries in providing more systematic aid. This means coordination by way of such international associations as the United Nations, they specialized international organizations, the European Economic Community and various regional associations. The coordination should also involve more input from developing countries as to how the scarce resources of the developed countries might be put to better use.

These suggestions cut across all fields of human activity, but they have in common the role of political science, public policy, public administration and public law. This is in contrast to the more usual emphasis on economics and engineering. For further details, see such books as Edward Stockwell and Karen Laidlaw, Third World Development: Problems and Prospects (Nelson-Hall, 1981); John Lewis and Valeriana Kallab (eds), Development Strategies Reconsidered (Transaction Books, 1986); William and Arline McCord, Paths to Progress: Bread and Freedom in Developing Societies
Supplementary Ideas Based on China in June 1989

The 16 points mentioned above were generated from trips to Africa, Latin America and Asia prior to visiting China in May and June of 1989. The following points in particular were stimulated by that visit.

1. Developing countries have an even greater need for systematic policy analysis and governmental decision making than developed countries do. The United States government could make many mistakes over the next generation and still be a prosperous country. Developing countries, however, operate too close to the borderline of chaos, as regards their available resources, to be able to afford serious mistakes.

2. There is a need for pragmatic experimentation. All developing countries should not follow exactly the same model. They need to experiment in different parts of the country and different segments of the economy. That experimentation especially includes alternative ways of relating the government to the economy in terms of the marketplace, subsidies, tax breaks, regulation and anti-government ownership.

3. There is an especially strong need for putting resources into educational development. The introduction of new technologies is not so meaningful if the population does not have a sufficient educational level to be able to make good use of those technologies.

4. There is a need to encourage innovative ideas relevant to more effective, efficient and equitable development. This means encouraging a pluralistic society in terms of a free marketplace in ideas, especially academic freedom, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and multiple interest groups, as well as more than one political party.

5. Competition can be a useful stimulus, regardless of whether it is competition between government-owned enterprises, private enterprises or both. Competition can also be a productive stimulus in encouraging useful ideas in the academic world and elsewhere.

6. There is a need for setting higher goals, rather than being content with merely surviving or doing better than last year, so long as the goals are not totally unrealistic. Partly achieving high goals may result in greater accomplishment than completely achieving low goals.

7. There is a need for thinking more in terms of public policy solutions where all sides can come out ahead, rather than thinking in terms of tradeoffs
and conflicts between classes, ethnic groups, age groups, the sexes, education levels and other social divisions.

8 There is a need for more use of positive incentives like subsidies and tax breaks, but with strings attached. Those incentives should be designed to generate socially desired behavior and, especially, to increase national productivity. This can be contrasted to providing support for inefficient economic activities or support for those with powerful connections.

9 There is a need for more professional training in political science, public administration and public policy analysis, as contrasted to governmental decision making that is based on ideological considerations and personal connections.

10 There is a need for more participation by developing countries in international associations and other forms of international interaction, so as to stimulate learning from each other.

11 The United States needs to play a stronger role in the use of its subsidies, tax breaks and incentives to encourage other countries to adopt systems that are more pluralistic and less authoritarian and that are more pragmatic and less ideological.

12 Members of the Policy Studies Organization and others who have knowledge about policy evaluation methods should seek to share their ideas with scholars and government members from developing countries in mutually beneficial interactions.

For further details on some of the above ideas, see S. Nagel, *Higher Goals for America: Doing Better than the Best* (University Press of America, 1989). This book could just as easily have been called 'Higher Goals for China' or, more broadly, 'Higher Goals for Public Policy'; the specific and cross-cutting policy problems that it deals with are virtually universal. For a more global interaction perspective, see Marvin Soroos, *Beyond Sovereignty: The Challenge of Global Policy* (University of South Carolina Press, 1986) and S. Nagel and Marvin Soroos (eds), *Global Policy Studies* (Macmillan, 1990). The PSO-related symposium was presented in journal form in the July 1990 issue of the *International Political Science Review*.

The Philippines in 1990

The interactions in Africa and Latin America resulted in an emphasis on the need for various aspects of technological development. The experiences of the author in China resulted in an emphasis on the need for more appropriate political institutions. While in China, and especially in the Philippines afterwards, the emphasis partly shifted to a need to think more in terms of...
arriving at super-optimum solutions to public policy problems. Such solutions enable liberals, conservatives and other major viewpoints all to come ahead of their best initial expectations simultaneously.

This kind of analysis was applied in particular to five different policy problems in the Philippines: the minimum wage problem, commuting to and from Manila, reform, trilingualism in Philippine education and the American military bases. The minimum wage problem can be used as an illustrative example. Let us say that conservatives in the Philippines want to preserve the minimum wage at about 90 pesos a day, while liberals want it raised to 100 pesos a day. The compromise would be 95 pesos a day. The super-optimum solution might be for workers to receive 101 pesos a day, but for employers to have to pay only 89 pesos a day – the government pays the 12 pesos difference on behalf of all employers who hire workers who otherwise would be unemployed. In return for that wage supplement, the employer must agree to provide on-the-job training to upgrade the workers’ skills so that they are worth more than 100 pesos a day. Each worker must also agree to take and pass the training program.

For further details on super-optimum policy analysis, see S. Nagel, ‘Super Optimum Analysis and Philippine Policy Problems’, Philippine Journal of Public Administration (1990), and S. Nagel, Developing Nations and Super-Optimum Policy Analysis (PSO–Nelson-Hall, 1991). That book is one of the first in a new Policy Studies Organization Series with Nelson-Hall, a publisher that is especially interested in policy analysis applied to developing nations, as are the acquisition editors for the PSO–Macmillan and the PSO–Greenwood Series.

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