

Problem structuredness, cooperation and operational governance: cases from IWM in Colombia

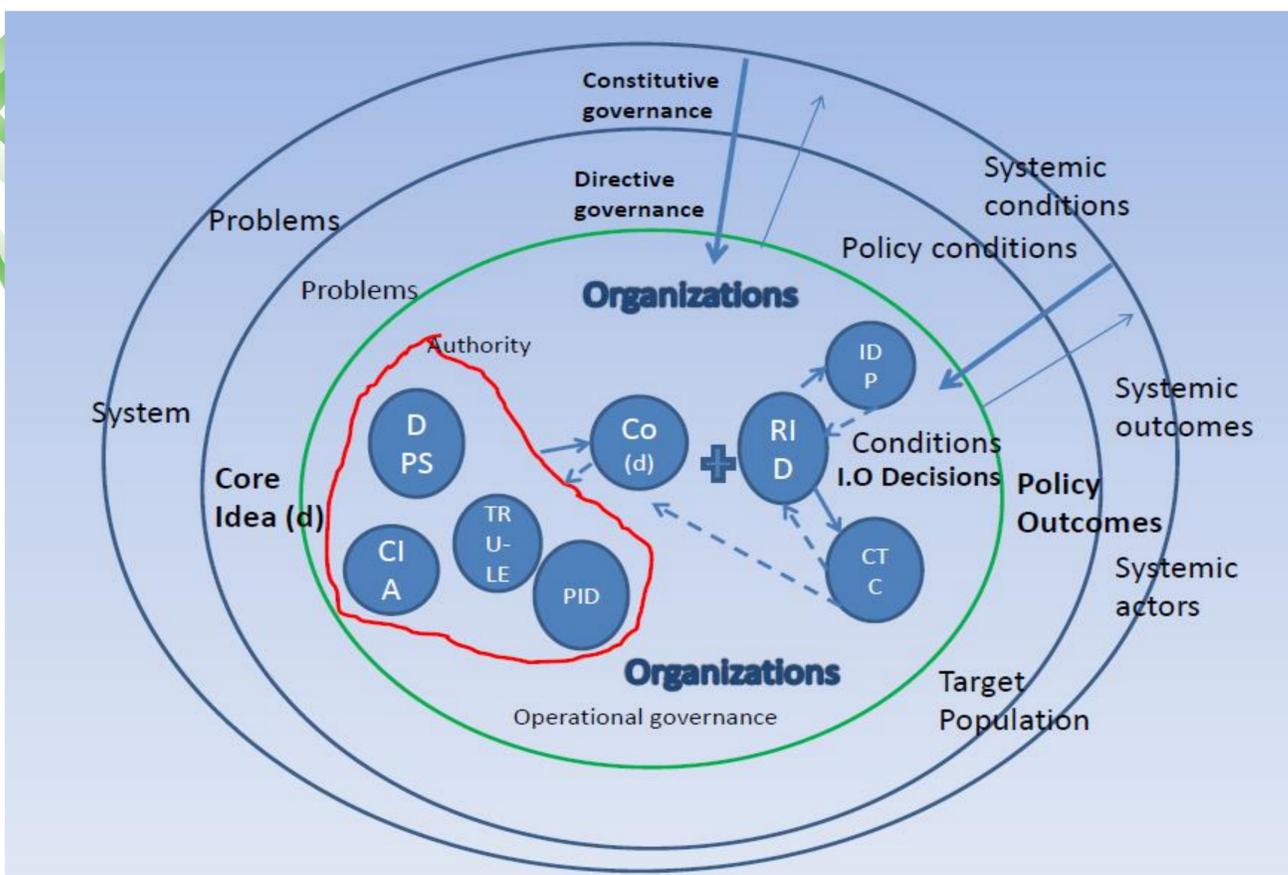
The problem: explaining variations in implementation outputs

After three years of information collection and workshops with stakeholders, a new Integrated Water Management (IWM) policy was launched in Colombia in March, 2010. A pilot implementation project with six multi-actor subprojects started in December 2010 expected to last 2 years. Four years after, it was closed with delays between 68% and 133% in the four subprojects that were completed. Another one had not finished and the most important was dismantled. There were large changes in the scope of some of them. Why the overall result? Why the variation between subprojects? How did Governance work here?.

A possible answer:

Problem structuredness (degree of consensus on goals and means between a given set of actors, building on Hoppe 2010) acts in a configuration with the ambiguity of a mandate-core idea (higher-level decision) levels of leadership, levels of authority and perceived interdependence to produce (or not) cooperation which materializes in decisions, giving Operational Governance (policy implementation) (Hill & Hupe 2014) higher pace with less within-intervention variation, or not. This is relevant for "designed" networks aiming at working on public Governance problems, depending on their required interdependence (O'Toole & Montjoy 1984) .

Effects of problem structuredness upon cooperation, within a broader context



Acknowledging that:

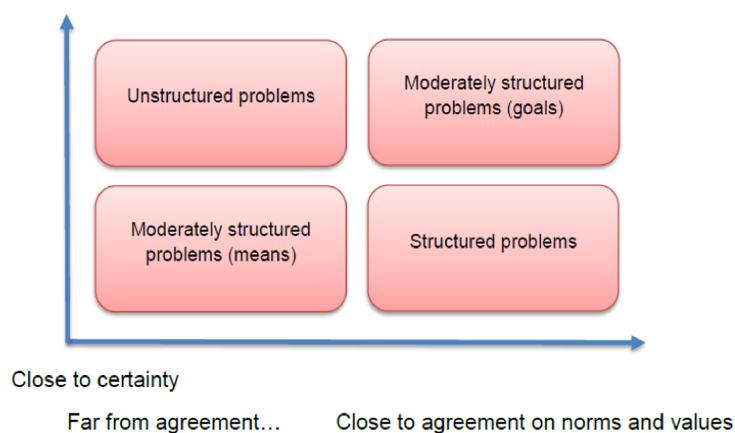
- Implementation is a sequence of decisions at different levels of aggregation
- Problem structuredness is not a property of problems, but a situation of the actors
- Problem structuredness is not a function of the number of actors
- The effects of cooperation problems become more relevant when studying interventions with clear time constraints
- Means consensus does not only depend on information, but also on frames
- Actors will only try to improve p. structuredness or reduce negative effects if they perceive high real interdependence between them

Source: author, building on Faerman et al. (2001), Hill & Hupe (2014), May (2014) and Winter (2012)

Why different levels of problem structuredness

Hoppe's typology of problem structuredness (2010)

Far from certainty on required and available knowledge



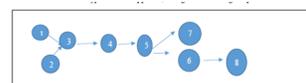
Source: Hoppe, 2010

Research design:

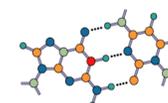
Phase 1: Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) of the six cases to confirm association of the hypothesized configurations of conditions with the outcomes regarding pace and within-project variation (Ragin 2008)

COND	GNPCAP	URBAN	ALFAB.	INDUST	SOBREV
AUSPRA	1	0	1	1	C
PIN	0	0	1	0	C
REL GER	1	1	1	1	C
-	0	1	1	1	
-	0	0	0	0	
-	1	0	1	0	

Phase 2: For a selected case (likely to be the "extreme") case study using process tracing (George & Bennett 2005) to identify causal mechanism and critical decision points. CIT's criteria to evaluate supportiveness of the governance system (Bressers & deBoer 2013)



Phase 3: Analyze the same case as "evolution of a policy game in a network" (Koppenjan & Klijn 2004) to understand why detected problems were not corrected if common interest is assumed.



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