

Capacities and Policy Work in the Brazilian Civil Service

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State capacities and policies

- Definition: institutional capability to carry out various policies that deliver benefits and services to households and firms (Besley and Person, 2011).
- State capacities are institutional inputs to produce outcomes in policies and services to society.
- State capacities are a predictor to policy efficiency and effectiveness.



Capacities allow policy delivery

- Capacities can be individual, organizational, technological or political, without the literature having a consensus as to what capacities are and how they should be distributed.
- The analysis of these capacities presupposes structural institutional conditions, considering that administrative and political capacities are explanatory factors for policy performance.



Do organizations have clear goals?

- The concept of state capacities disregards the dimension of action and behavior within bureaucracies;
- Bureaucracies are collective actors whose behavior is reflected on state capacities *vis-a-vis* the organizations of which they are part;
- Theoretical challenges:
 - How much information and incentive is enough for individuals to collaborate?
 - How to best allocate individuals, according to their competences, within organizations?
 - How to identify the multiple balances for management mechanisms between the organization and individuals, according to contract and organizational culture?



Policy capacities are related to individuals

- The concept of policy capacity seeks to observe the resources needed to implement policies, in the dimension of individuals (Hsu, 2015) and organizations (Pattyn and Brans, 2015);
- Policy capacities must be understood in a more dynamic flow and process than as a stock that works as a predictor of good public policy.
- More than the objectives of organizations and the stock of bureaucratic capacities, it is necessary to understand the dynamics of agents in institutional contexts.



Building capabilities and policy work

- Policy work approach starts from the observation of the field and not from prescriptive models;
- It addresses policy styles and the set of attitudes and tasks performed by bureaucratic agents, so that the production of results in public policies depends on a more complex bureaucracy;
- Policy work is the set of activities disbursed by bureaucrats who bring together attitudes, tasks and abstract world conceptions that specify the dynamics of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation



Analytical framework

Capacities	Dimensions	Outcome	Description	Functions
Administrative	Analytical	Efficiency and Eficacy	Conditions guaranteeing technical and administrative performance	Data collection and analysis
				Specific technical knowledge
	Managerial			Knowledge of norms and regulations
				Administrative skills
				Human resource management
				Allocation of financial resources
				Technology resources
Relational	Internal coordination	Agency	Conditions that ensure the operation and internal coherence	Coordinated decision-making process
				Inter and intraorganizational formal and informal structures
				Monitoring and control
	Politics	Legitimacy	Conditions that promote the necessary interaction with the external environment	Social participation and accountability
				Spaces of participation
				Levels of negotiation and interlocution between the executive, legislative and judicial branches
				Relationship with international organizations

Premises

- The framework presented above brings together a complex set of activities aimed at understanding the dynamic capabilities of bureaucracy in the form of policy work;
- Capacities do not represent a rational organization of governments but a collection of individuals who perform functions and activities in a context of bounded rationality and undefined goals;
- The degree to which these skills and competences are mobilized or not can impact policies in a varied way;
- Policy workers may be oriented toward formal strategies to implementation, such as a managerial strategy. However, they adapt and adjust the implementation of policies, adjusting the processes in the field of practice.



Brazilian Civil Service

- Public civil servants that are under a merit-based system which provides some level of standard regulations and procedures regarding servants' selection, appointment and discretionarity;
- To sum up, for the purpose of this research, civil service is concerned with the civil servants that work in the Federal Executive Branch, are under a merit-based system, resulting in more permanent and directly involved body in the public policy production;



Methodology

- A total of 101,283 civil servants from the Federal Executive Branch compose the focus of this research;
- 25 agencies (ministries and regulatory agencies);
- Survey research;
- The survey was hosted by an online platform and it was sent by email directly to the professionals;
- Data collection took place from October to December 2017;
- The sample is composed of 2,000 responses;



What do Policy Workers do in Brazil?

- In relation to the time of performance in public policy, they are experienced: 34.5% have been working for more than 10 years in the same policy;
- The primary functions informed by respondents were related to operationalization of policy instruments (17,6%), delivery of frontline services (14,4%) and project management (11,2%);
- Analytical and formulation functions, which were discussed in the former sections, appeared only in 8,3% and 8,8%, respectively.
- Moreover, relational functions such as interactions within the state apparatus and with external actors are the least performed activities.



Heterogeneous portrait of policy work

- Managerial and administrative tasks are the ones performed more frequently;
- 62% said that they “always” or “frequently” produce material to support decision-making
- 47% said that they operate database and informational systems with the same frequency;
- 35% of respondents said that they always or frequently work to meet accountability agencies recommendations;
- Relational tasks seem to be performed by a more restrict group of individuals.
- Finally, tasks that seem to demand specific expertise such as to create legislation and to prospect funds are never or rarely performed by most of the respondents.



Factorial Analysis on Policy Work in Brazil

Specification	Componente			
	Relational	Analytical/ Oversee	Managerial	Administrative
Negotiate and coordinate actions with other federal agencies	,8010			
Represent the agency in external events, meetings and activities	,7977			
Participate in working groups or joint projects within the agency	,7259			
Consult and meet interest groups on policy-related issues	,6965			
Organize events	,6171			
Make agreements and manage actions between state and municipal entities	,5726			
Prepare normative texts (e.g. bills, decrees, ordinances, etc.)	,5316			
Manage a team	,4913			
Monitor compliance with rules and regulation		,6661		
Operate databases and informational systems that support policy implementation		,6281		
Produce reports, opinions, technical notes and other information to support decision-making		,6109		
Meet accountability agencies recommendation		,6024		
Design, negotiate, manage and supervise partnership agreements			,7858	
Prepare, negotiate, manage and supervise contracts			,7753	
Prospect funds to enable actions, projects, and programs			,5484	
Carry out administrative activities				,8952

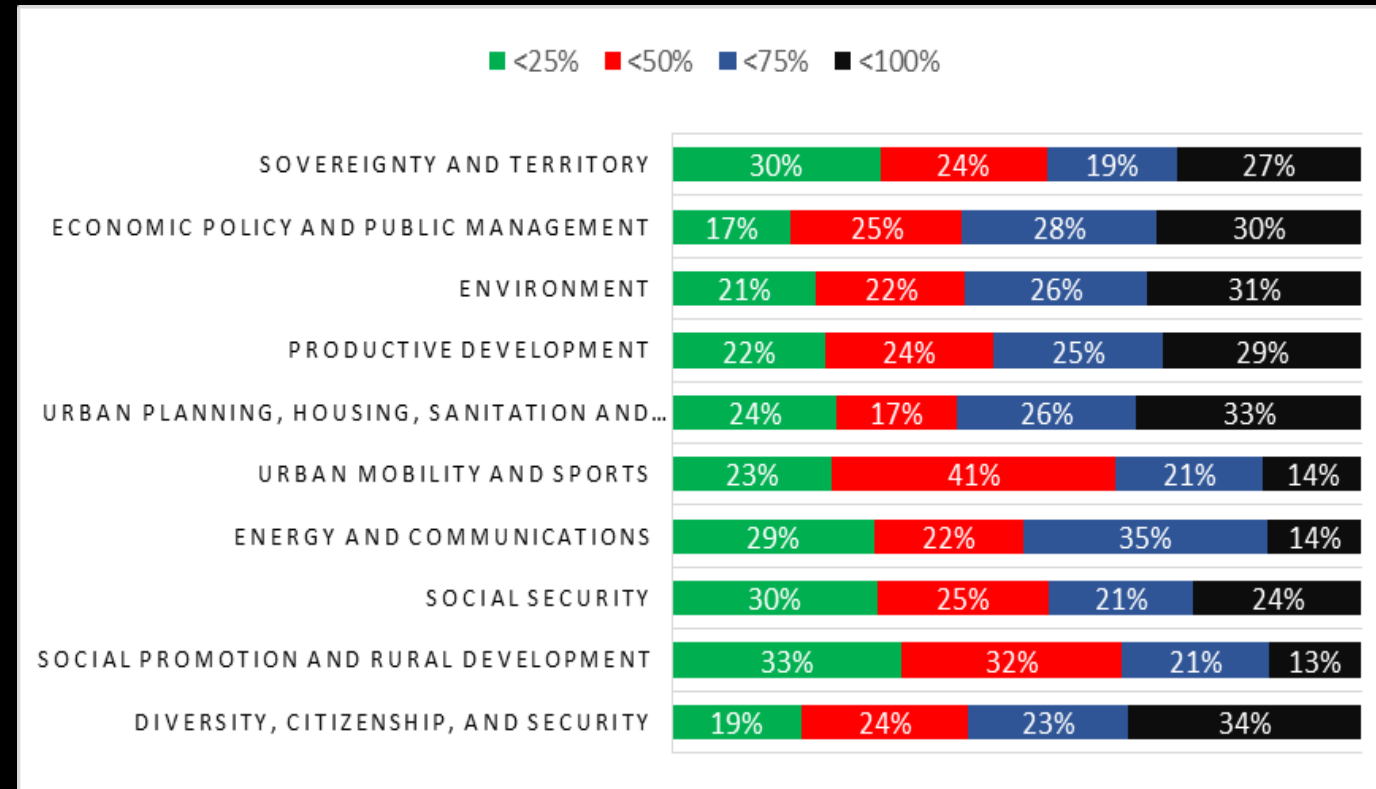
Findings

- Analytical capacity of the Brazilian civil service is mostly aimed at attending accountability demands, not prioritizing policy production or policy development;
- Internal coordination and political relational capacities are held by the same group of individuals;
- There is in fact a group dedicated to managerial tasks which is distinct from the group responsible for more operational activities;
- The policy functions performed by the Brazilian Civil Service vary according to each of the components and each of the policy areas.



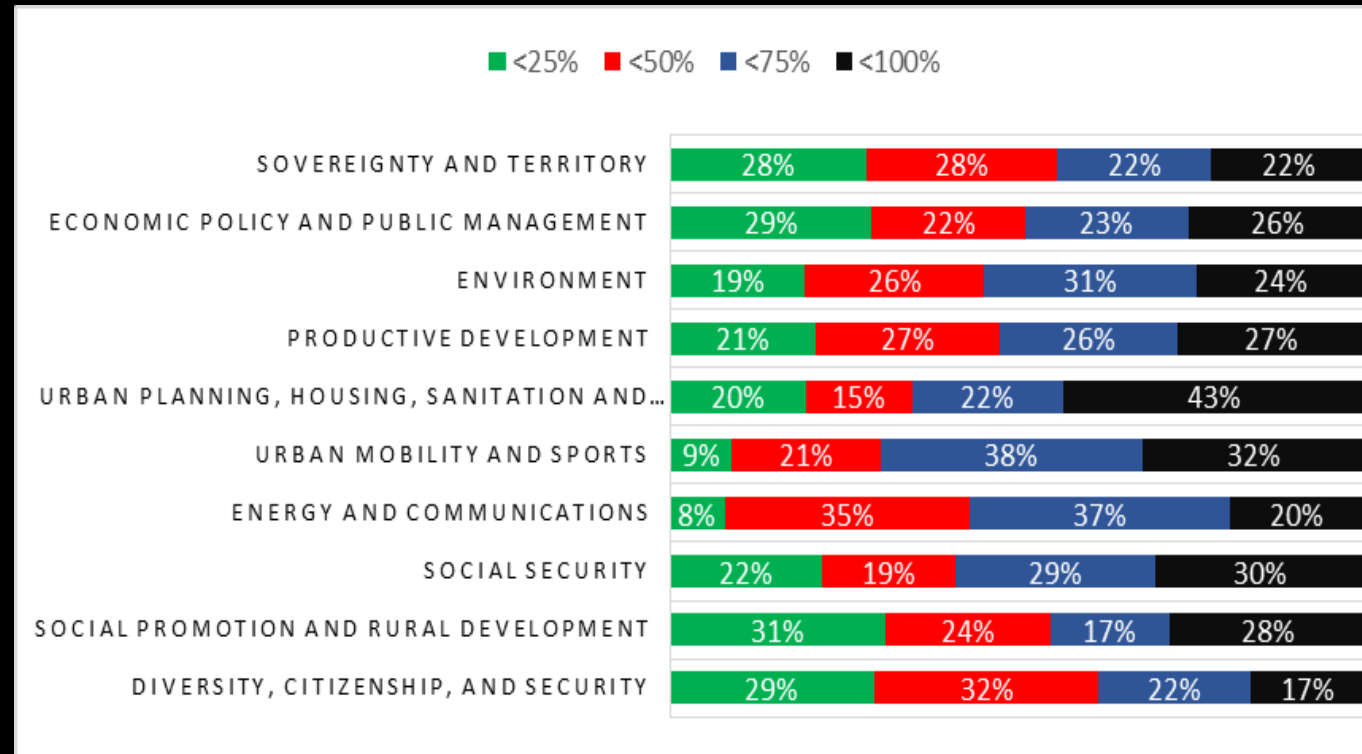
Relational Function and Policy Areas

- The relational type function is less common in the area of urban mobility and energy and in the area of energy and communications.
- The areas linked to social policy and citizenship and economic policy demand more relational activities, be it in the structure of Brazilian Federal Executive Branch , or in other branches or in local governments;



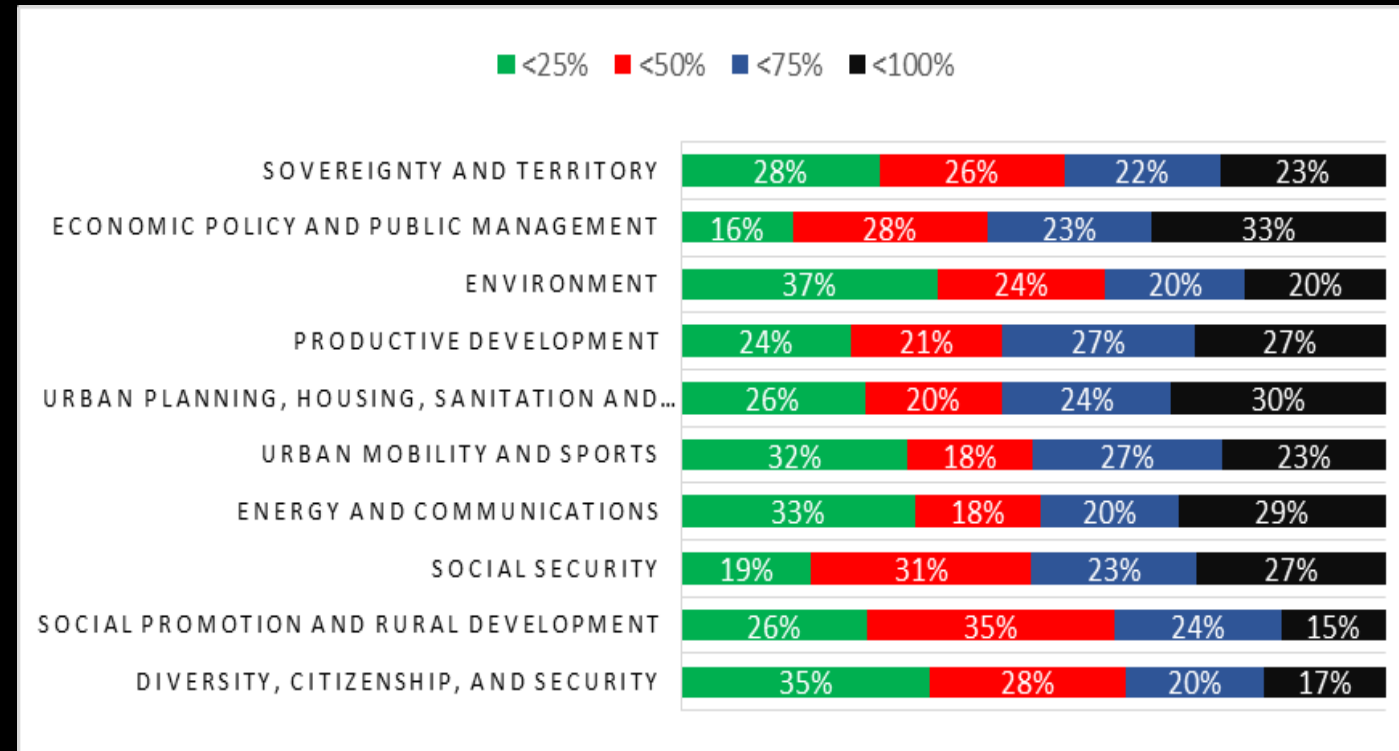
Analytical Function and Policy Areas

- The areas of urban planning, housing, sanitation and land use respond strongly and very frequently to questions about performance from accountability institutions.
- Within the area of infrastructure, this result demonstrates that it demands that public managers work with analytical resources to respond to audits and accountability systems.
- The social area also mobilizes its analytical capabilities to perform tasks related to responding to accountability institutions.



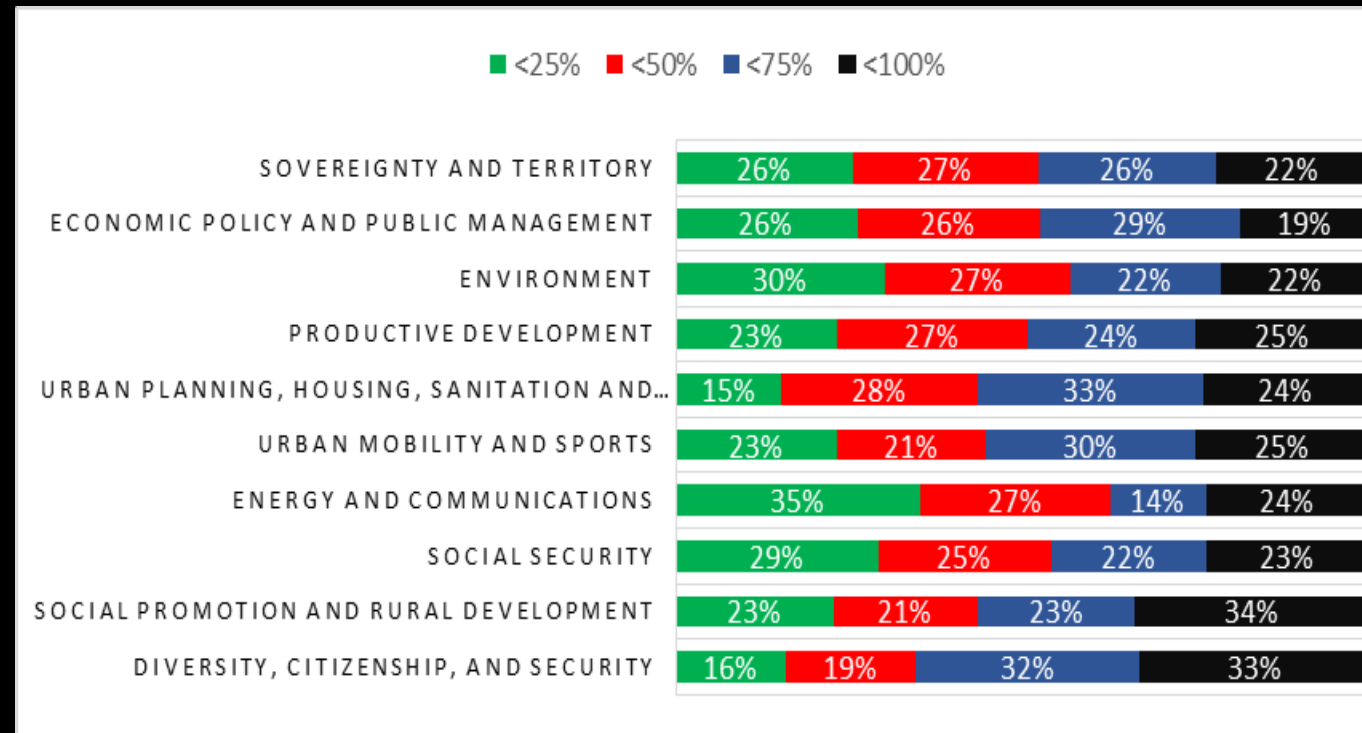
Managerial Functions and Policy Areas

- With respect to managerial skills related to process, partnership and contract management, as well as financial resource related skills are more common in the area of economic policy, urban planning, housing, sanitation and land use.
- This result is expected, considering the amount of economic resources with which these areas operate, demanding more activities for the management of contracts and negotiation.



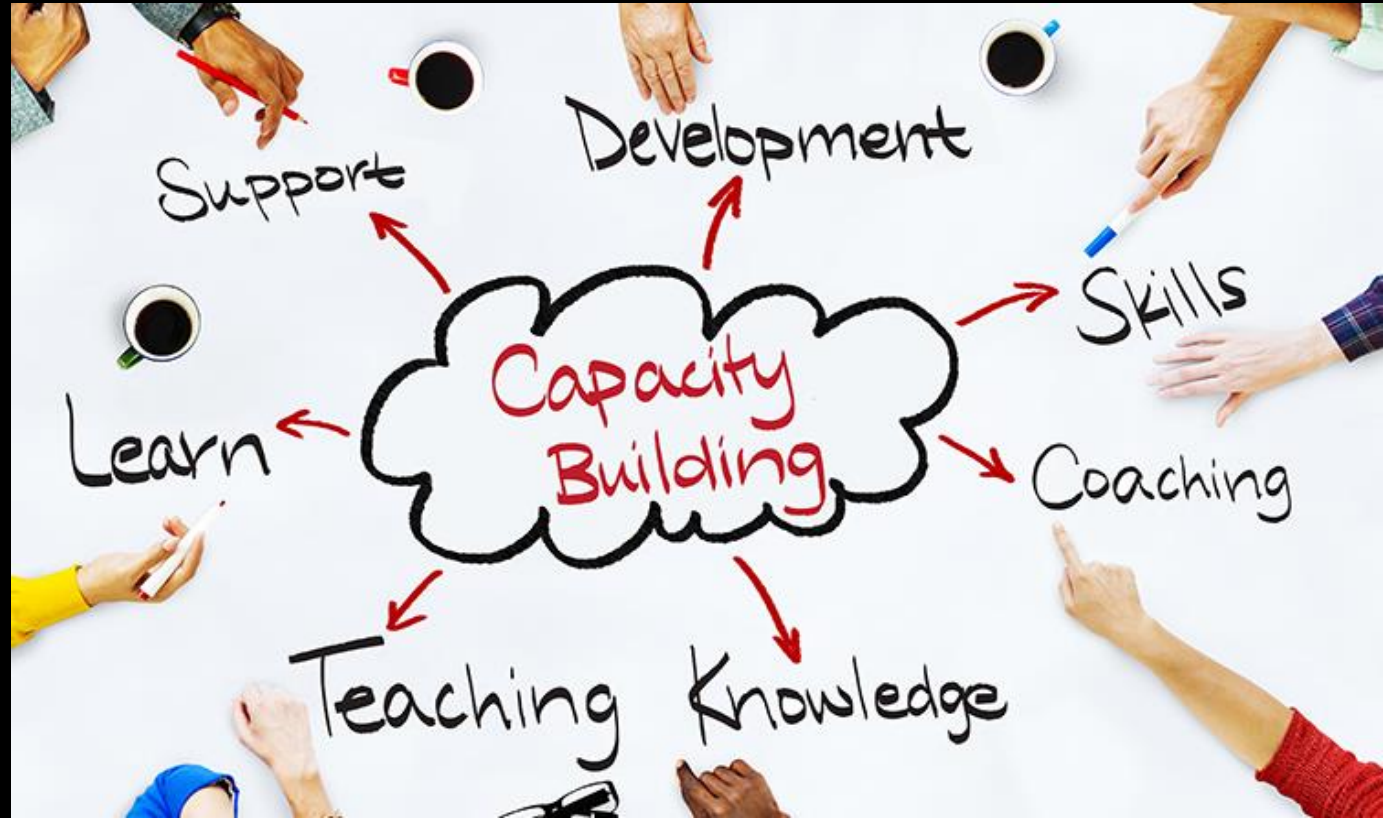
Administrative Functions and Policy Areas

- More administrative activities are carried out, especially, in the areas of social and rural development, citizenship, diversity and security.
- These administrative activities require public managers to work with human resources, finance and organizations.
- It is interesting to note that the area of economic policy is the one that least mobilizes administrative capacities.



Capacity Building and Policy Work

Capacity building in the public service can not be understood only as a set of organizations that fulfill delegated goals for the realization of public policies.



Capacity Building and Policy Work

Policies depend on a set of actions performed by individuals who carry with them different individual capacities, which are brought together in a complex set of organizations, which demand commitment and motivation to achieve their ends



Capacity Building and Policy Work

- Public policy functions fulfill the role of complex activities that comprise a complex and highly differentiated map that cannot be interpreted only within the scope of organizational objectives.



Capacity Building and Policy Work

- The functions that are performed by public managers compose a complex framework that can explain the performance of policies.



Capacity Building and Policy Work

- This demonstrates that the concept of capabilities should not only focus on a macro conception of organizations, but on a more nuanced concept of capacity, which is associated with the concept of policy work.



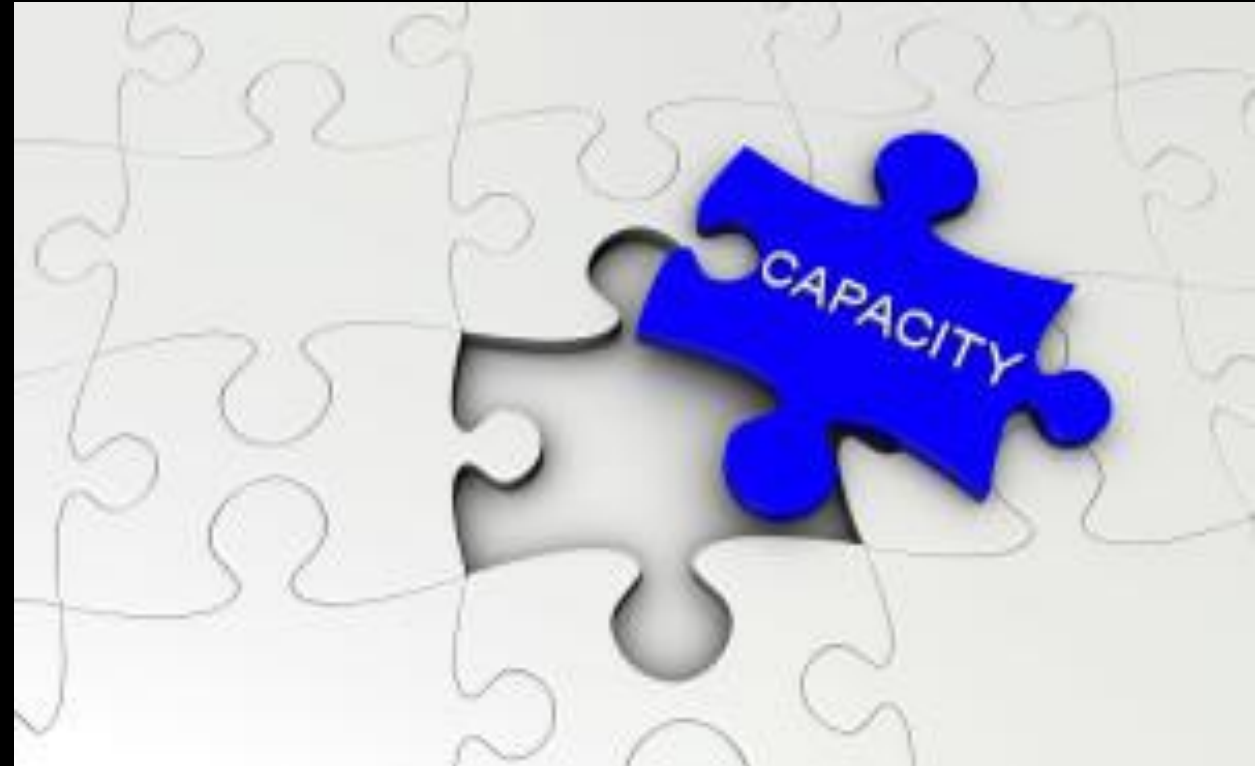
Capacity Building and Policy Work

- Understanding what public managers do and what gaps are related to relational, analytical and managerial capabilities can serve to outline a more effective public policy perspective.



Capacity Building and Policy Work

- This nuance can make reformers better understand the performance of functions and to cover the institutional and managerial incentives for the realization of policy work. Also, it can serve to understand eventual management failures in a more realistic way, including specifics policy domains.



Capacity Building and Policy Work

- Capacities are dynamic aggregates of policy work, with the goal of delivering public policies and services to society.
- Capacities can be predictors of results. But they need to be dealt with in a dynamic and contingent way, taking into consideration organizational and political demands.



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Thanks a lot!!!

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