

Policy Options (Development, Prioritizing, Choosing)

The Role of Research in the Development of Effective
Policy in the Field of Drug Abuse Prevention

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Overview

- Establishing the need for intervention
- Identifying policy options
- Prioritizing options

Policy Process

1. Agenda Setting

- Awareness of and priority given to an issue or problem

2. Policy Formulation

- The ways options and strategies are constructed

3. Implementing Policy

- The forms and nature of policy administration

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

From Pollard and Court, 2005.

Influencers of Policy Making in Government



From: Davies (2004)

Limits of using Evidence-Based Approach

- Speed: to be seen as acting, policy makers are forced to process information quickly
- Superficiality: Policymakers have to cover many thematic fields and cannot have in-depth knowledge about every issue
- Spin: Perception is important. Perception guides political decisions
- Secrecy: Media raises the question of how to relate to evidence that is secret
- Scientific ignorance: There is growing suspicion towards science and scientist among the public, which will effect on policies

From: Vincent Cable speaking on 'Evidence and UK Politics', at Does Evidence Matter? ODI meeting series (2004)

Establishing the need for Intervention

- Explore the Issue
- Identifying the Drivers and Decision Makers
- Clarifying the Context and Justifying the Intervention

Exploring the Issue

- Identify the issue
 - Clearly outline the issue
- Why is it a problem? What are the underlying causes of the problem?
 - Ensure the problem is real
 - Potential solutions can be identified and action are focused where they have most impact
- What groups does the issue impact upon?
 - All persons likely to be affected by a policy should have the opportunity to engage in the development of policy

Identifying the Drivers of Change

- Identifying all stakeholders
- Who has decision making authority on the issue?
- What is/are the driver(s) for intervention?
- Who has the authority to intervene?
- How does the issue relate to strategic priorities and goals?
- Is there a case for intervention?



Is there a Case for Intervention?

- Alignment with strategic priorities and goals?
- How will the issue be addressed?
 - Legislative
 - Education
 - Encouragement of voluntary change
- Is there a case for intervention?

Focusing Policy Options

Summarize

- Define the issue
- Identify the key stakeholders
- Identify what is driving the project and key decision maker
- Determine the current policy position
- Identify issues relating to wider priorities and objectives
- Is there a case for intervention

Gather Evidence

- Sources of evidence- local, international, expert
 - Address the following:
 - What is the relevant information/research available
 - How has the issue been addressed elsewhere
 - Key trends and future development impacting the issue
- Analyze the evidence
 - Assess
 - Current position
 - Relative position
 - How the issue will likely develop in the future
 - If something is done
 - If nothing is done

Focusing options:

What does success look like?

- To focus potential options we need to know what success will look like
- Goals: Identify the goals you want. This is the rationale for the policy
- Objectives: list indicators SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time bound)
- Outcomes: list the long term impacts/What will result from the intervention

Identifying Policy Options

- Engage stakeholders
- Develop a team to identify potential interventions
- Multi-disciplinary – mix of skills, experience and representation
 - Skills wanted – expertise in area, economic, statistical,
- Orient everyone to the criteria
 - Things the policy must do
 - Things the policy must not do
 - Things the policy could do
- Brainstorm

Identifying Policy Options (cont.)

- Initiate discussions about ideas and recommendations
 - All ideas and recommendations should be compiled from each team member
 - Each member is asked to briefly state one item and present it
 - Each member ranks all options using criteria for evaluation
- Assess risks associated with each idea

Assessing Risks

- Identify:
 - The risks are associated with the option
 - The sectors the risk impacts
 - Impact on sustainable development – social and economic
 - Consequences (negative and positive)
 - Chance of risk occurring
- Ask:
 - Can the policy be amended to minimize the risk/consequences from occurring ?

Example: St. Lucia

Goal

To decrease drug demand by providing educational information to secondary school students, their families and community members by collaborating with key interest groups to prevent the initiation of drug use and to teach skills training as it relates to drug abuse.

Mission

- The mission of the Drug Reduction, Uniting Groups in St. Lucia (DRUGS) is to decrease drug demand through education, skills training, rehabilitation and empowerment in an effort to create a drug free St. Lucia

Example: St. Lucia

Objectives

- To combine two vertically independent educational programmes, D.A.R.E St. Lucia and Health and Family Life Education into one school-based educational programme so as to maximize resources and to provide drug education to all secondary school students in St. Lucia
- To provide drug education to adolescents between ten and nineteen years old who are not currently in the secondary school system through community based youth programmes
- To provide counseling services to high-risk students in all secondary schools in St. Lucia along with joint counseling services to both the high risk students and their parents
- To foster a drug free school environment
- To provide drug education to parents of high-risk students through home visits
- To provide parents with counseling and out-patient rehabilitation services if required
- To provide families of high-risk students the opportunity for employment and empowerment
- To facilitate community drug educational groups
- To provide a nation-wide drug educational programme

Example: St. Lucia

- Strategic Process
- School-based programme:
 - Combine D.A.R.E with HFLE
- Family-based programme:
 - social workers will be assigned to students identified as at-risk
- Community-based programme:
 - Use youth groups in peer to peer education

Example: St. Lucia

- Output
- Equip adolescent, their parents and the community with the knowledge on the consequences of using illicit drugs
- Change in behavior is expected among the youths both in schools and in the community
- Improve child-parent relationship

Example: Grenada

- **Mission/Goals**
- To reduce alcohol and drug use among secondary students through a comprehensive coordinated approach
- To improve drug education and teaching effectiveness through training
- To involve youth in their own education

Example: Grenada

Objectives

- To decrease prevalence of alcohol consumption by 5% by 2018
- To decrease prevalence of marijuana use by 8% by 2018
- To decrease the prevalence of cigarette smoking by 2.5% by 2018.
- To provide drug education training to at least 35% of secondary school teachers
- To implement teen leaders in 50% of secondary schools

Example: Grenada

- Strategic Process
- 1. Provide adequate training to educators and youth to confront cultural views on drugs and alcohol and empower students to resist pressures
- 2. Build a successful community coalition through the involvement of NGOs and community groups which advocate for healthy and drug-free lifestyles
- 3. Promote coordination of existing services and resources, and integration of new curriculum components for preventing drug use
- 4. Advocate for changes in programs and policies related to drug use and prevention in schools

Example: Grenada

- Output
- Improve school based education
- Outcomes
 - - A reduction in the use of alcohol, marijuana and cigarettes
 - - An increase in parental monitoring of youth, concerning alcohol and drug use
 - - A decrease in school-related incidents of alcohol or drug-induced misconduct?
 - - A decrease in the incidence of alcohol and drug use

Prioritizing Options: Criteria

- Impact
 - What is the magnitude, reach and distribution of benefit and burden
 - What population will benefit
 - What population will be negatively affected
 - Are there gaps in the evidence base
- Feasibility
 - How likely will the policy be implemented?
 - Consider perception of community – social, educational and cultural perspectives
 - What are the resource, capacity and technical needs
 - How much time is needed?
 - Cost
- Risks
 - What are the risks
 - Can they be minimized

Adapted from: CDC's Policy Analytical Framework

Prioritization Table 1

Policy Option	Impact	Feasibility	Risk
Standard	Low/Med/High	Low/Med/High	Low/Med/High
Policy 1			
Policy 2			
Policy 3			

Prioritization Table: Weighted Score

Option	Mag	Serious	Risks	Stakeholder	Resources	Total
Option A						
Option B						
Option C						

Criteria for Prioritization

Variable	2 points	1 point	0 points
magnitude of reach	High	Medium	Low
Seriousness	Very serious/critical	Fairly serious	Not critical/low importance
Risks	Easy to resolve	Difficult to resolve	Very difficult to resolve
Stakeholder attitude	Solution wanted	Solution accepted	Solution not accepted
Availability of resources	Available internally	Available in other areas	Need to mobilize external resources

Other considerations: Mandate, international agreement, leadership, who is working on topic

Prioritization Table: Weighted Score

Option	Mag	Serious	Risks	Stakeholder	Resources	Total
Option A						
Option B						
Option C						

Conclusion

Situational Analysis



Develop Options



Prioritize Policy Options



Direction/ACT!!!!

Questions?

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