

*Government,
E-Government,
E-Governance:*

Policy lessons from 6 failure stories

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ICEGOV at Macao, 2007.

Tutorial 5: Policy

“The secret of safety lies in danger.”

Aaron Wildavsky. (1988) *Searching for safety*, p. 205

“The secret of success lies in failure.”

Ik Jae Chung. ICEGOV at Macao, 2007

Perspectives for ICT Policy

- *Economic*
- *Organizational*
- *Political*
- *Technological*

The first story (1):

Department of Mental Retardation & Handicapped (DMRH)

How they worked:

- multi-services to single client
- regional office-based service
- centralized management

What happened:

- increase in # of clients & services
- difficult access to regional offices
- work overload on the central office

The first story (2):

Department of Mental Retardation & Handicapped (DMRH)

What they want:

- re-arrange management process
- apply ICT to coordinate local activities
- consult from a research institution

What they did:

- Two testbeds were successfully made
- A system prototype was developed
- DMRH was satisfied with the prototype

The Project was cancelled in the next FY year

The first story (3):

Department of Mental Retardation & Handicapped (DMRH)

Why it was cancelled:

1. ICT unit's lower policy initiative in DMRH
 - conflict in allocating resource among units
 - partners' backlash against sharing information
2. Lack of leadership & expertise
 - CEO couldn't manage conflicts within the Department
 - CIO couldn't provide the vision & necessity of the Project
3. Public-private partnership discontinued
 - IT company joined in testbeds withdrew from the Project.

The second story (1):

Department of Workers Support & Compensation (DWSC)

How they worked:

- paper-based procedure
- paper-intensive process
- delayed service

What they did:

- organized System Innovation Team
- received proposals from 3 ICT companies
- made a very competitive review process
 - technician-user committee
 - selection committee
 - cost committee

The second story (2):

Department of Workers Support & Compensation (DWSC)

What happened:

- unanimous final decision for U company
- State legislative against the final decision
 - U company was an out-state company
 - The ruling party was against U company
- State Tax Service's inspection to U company

- U company withdrew from the Project
- The Project was postponed

The second story (3):

Department of Workers Support & Compensation (DWSC)

Why it failed:

1. Conflict between managerial rationality & political acceptability
 - The team leader underestimated political issues
 - *“The project is nothing to do with IT application, but a process of political negotiation.”*
2. Role of mass media in policy-making process
 - issue clarification vs. issue amplification
 - power of noise and drama
 - no mechanism for filtering or coordinating diverse opinion

The third story (1):

One-stop Reporting Service for the Aging

How they worked:

- Old clients visited many service-providing agencies
- Each client report similar information in different formats
- Time delay between application and decision

What they did:

- integrated diverse DB format in different agencies
- designed a “moving kiosk” for service receivers
- intended to provide a “one-stop” service for the aging

- The Service is not working.

The third story (2):

One-stop Reporting Service for the Aging

Why it failed:

1. Differences in DB structure & organizational process
 - Over 200 personal information should be reported
2. Over-confidence in technology & partners' collaboration
 - 'one-size fits all' mindset
 - Participating agencies are passive in providing services
3. Lack of expertise in managing the project
 - miscommunication between manager, users, and designers

The fourth story (1):

State-Wired Program, or Electric Barn Raising

What they wanted:

- Networked, or interneted elementary school and libraries

What they did:

- made an event for connecting them simultaneously
- played a lottery, State-Wired Instant Cash game
- prized for the best user of the network

- The Program ended in an event.

The fourth story (2):

State-Wired Program, or Electric Barn Raising

Why it didn't continue:

1. Combined educational purpose and political symbol
 - Political leader's interest in increase his political visibility
2. Lack of organizational leadership and resources
 - no flagship after the event, and no fund source
3. Fail to develop educational contents and curriculums
 - DOE was not the main actor in designing the Program
4. Unclear program goal and evaluation framework

The fifth story (1):

Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Job Opportunities & Basic Skills Training (AFDC-JOBS)

How they worked:

- multi-agencies to single client
- independent DB in each agency
- no centralized management of DB

What they did:

- share information from participating agencies
- A case worker was the critical actor in using diverse DB
- Case workers couldn't access to DB on interview sites

The fifth story (2):

Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Job Opportunities & Basic Skills Training (AFDC-JOBS)

Why it didn't work:

1. Local rationality with tunnel vision
 - Each agency couldn't have a holistic view on the Program
2. Information sharing: mechanical vs. functional
 - clients should stop in each agency to report their information
3. Case workers' limitation in using information available
 - 6% of information was utilized in making the final decision

Summary of Policy Stories

Projects	Policy-making		Policy implementation		Policy evaluation
	Pre-decision	Decision made	Partial Implement.	Full Implement.	
Perspectives	Mental Retardation	Workers	One-stop For Aging	State-Wired	AFDC-JOBS
Economic			● Different budget cycle	● Budget waste	● Different budget cycle
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● initiative ● expertise ● Partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● timing ● Managerial rationality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● D standard ● Expertise ● diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contents ● Unclear goal ● Actors ● curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● info. sharing ● Local rationality
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leadership ● Conflict ● Lay-offs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Political acceptability ● conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Indifference ● Politics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Political symbol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● indifference
Technological			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● IT expertise ● Database structure ● Over-confi. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● System compatibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● System compatibility