

Introduction:

Public Administration and Innovation by the Poor

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Good Governance as the Nurturing of Innovations by the Poor

Public administration and development experts have long viewed innovation as a key to economic development and poverty reduction. Over the past half century, as our perception of innovation has broadened to include both “hard” technologies (such as products and machines) and “soft” technologies (such as processes, procedures and values), we have come to understand the ways in which recipient culture and other demand-side variables influence innovation. But whether we view development in terms of Cold War era macro-economic development projects, or the more complex mix of private sector, NGO and government assistance models that have characterized the field during the past 15 years, we still tend to view innovation primarily as something initiated by external developers rather than the poor themselves.. Therefore, the first blind spot in our understanding of innovation is our tendency to see the poor as recipients of innovation, or at best as modifiers or adapters of exogenous innovations, rather than as innovators themselves.

In addition to viewing the poor primarily as recipients of innovation, our view of their role in innovation diffusion and adoption, a second flawed assumption generally distorts our view of their role as innovators. Western scholars and development specialists generally assume that standardized Western management models are the basis for human interaction, decision-making and production. So they tend to pay little attention to the possibility that alternative administrative, financial and social power relationships could characterize development innovation by poor people who typically exist outside Western development

¹ The editors contributed equally to the issue.

systems and structures. So we know little, therefore, about how poor people develop and diffuse their own poverty reduction innovations. Such a person, typically a poor villager or even an urban fringe-sitter, is embedded in institutions and organizations with their own mores, norms, rules and laws. These result in power and authority relationships that profoundly affect the administrative and financial conditions under which poor people develop and adopt indigenous innovations that are deeply shaped by power. From a distance, such a poor person often might appear to be independent. However, power relations often exert pressures stronger than administrative or financial to shape decisions and actions.

These two misperceptions, working together throughout a half century of development administration, have profoundly affected our view of innovation and the poor by restricting our ability to view the poor themselves as innovators, or to view through their own eyes the social and cultural factors that control indigenous innovation diffusion and adoption. Thus, while we generally accept that sustainable development requires innovation by the poor and understanding of diverse systems of social organization and control, we still have not advanced very far toward clear understanding of these two issues. The dominant developmental paradigm focuses on doling out assistance, or alms, to poor persons. As passive recipients, the poor are inert. They lack the skill, knowledge, resources and drive to stand up on their own as economic actors. This dominant developmental paradigm may enable the poor to survive, but it does not address or alter the socio-cultural systems and power relationships that enmesh and bind the poor. The result has been the imposition of Western financial and administrative relationships, including democratic electoral processes and organizational structures, on top of the existing traditional economic, social and political structures with which poor persons must negotiate on a daily basis. Innovation, if it occurs at

all, must start with the accumulated power of traditional systems, administrative mechanisms, and local authorities. Initiatives that presume the universal applicability of the ‘New Public Management’ model appear to have addressed this issue only peripherally, or in negative terms as a hindrance to development.

What are the characteristics of an administrative development model focused on innovation by the poor? First, with respect to outcome measures, a contextually sensitive development model would include more flexible and non-financial objectives than are contained in a traditional economic development model. Second, it would thus allow considerably greater operational autonomy to aid workers on the ground. The ultimate objective of developmental administration would be to mentor, nurture and support indigenous innovations by the poor themselves. Third, its objective would be to offer products and services that putatively would benefit the poor, particularly by altering the underlying systems, structures and power relationships that underlie global poverty. Current successful examples are the use of micro-loans to encourage innovation by altering the traditional distribution of start-up capital for small businesses, and the use of cell phones and other ICT innovations to change the traditional flow of economic and social information.

Yet even these successful examples do not answer the crucial question – can poor people be entrepreneurs in new forms of enterprise that can sustain inclusive growth and development, as measured by a range of social, political and economic indicators? To be effective, “best practice” innovations must successfully confront the issues identified previously as barriers to systemic reform:

- They must provide collective solutions like networks, cooperatives or self-help groups that empower entrepreneurs politically in the face of existing systems, structures and authority relationships.
- They must support such indigenous collective solutions by recognizing the legitimacy of networks as meta-organizational social structures and incubators for innovation and social change, rather than merely as conduits for the distribution of alms to passive recipients.
- They must recognize the importance of entrepreneurial networks by re-evaluating the role of NGOs and self-help groups in the development process. While a traditional non-profit perspective is necessary and appropriate for NGOs that distribute aid to the poor, a for-profit perspective is essential for entrepreneurial networks that facilitate economic development.
- They must accept the need to distribute the profits from entrepreneurial networks to encourage new innovative enterprises by the poor. This means not only a change in accounting rules that traditionally govern non-profit NGOs, but a translation of those rules in ways that reflect the need to generate social as well as economic capital. They would define entrepreneurial profit as not simply windfall economic gains for poor individuals, but as social capital to be nurtured and sustained in ways that support the collective as an alternative economic, social and political structure.
- They would recognize that the most important goal of public administration is improved governance. This differs from the traditional focus on hierarchical government organizations by relying on cooperative networks across economic, political and social systems. Fundamentally, the effectiveness of economic developments intended to reduce

poverty must be measured by their sustainable impact on political, social and economic systems and structures.

- This model implies the radical belief that development is ultimately small-scale and bottom-up rather than large-scale and top down. The twentieth century economic development model emphasized centralized planning through large, multinational government aid structures, NGOs and corporations focusing on macroeconomic objectives. The twenty first century path might well be marked instead by the emergence of a large number of tiny and novel forms of enterprises achieving social, economic and political objectives.
- Lastly, the appropriate role of public administration in this context is to facilitate, nurture and protect entrepreneurial innovations. Its objective is to work toward good governance, rather than the maintenance of order through traditional authority relationships and structures that distort or deform innovations by the poor.

The Contributing Authors to this Symposium.

This symposium comprises three types of contributions to the study and practice of this alternative model of development through entrepreneurial innovations by the poor. First, six scholarly articles frame the general context of entrepreneurial innovation by the poor through a general discussion of economic, social and political change. These articles are research-based, generalizable, and thus lead to the development of research and theory around alternative development models.

- Ram Kumar Kakani and Biswatosh Saha, professors at the S.P. Jain Institute of Business Management in Singapore and the Indian Institute of Management in Calcutta,

respectively, use their shared experiences with a development NGO in India to discuss the conflicting and cooperative relationship between development elites and indigenous systems and structures.

- C. Sambu Prasad of the Xavier Institute of Management in Bhubaneswar focuses on imported versus homegrown innovation and development, using an indigenous system of rice intensification in India as the innovation example.
- Md. Nurul Momen, a Professor at the University of Rajshahi, focuses on privatization as a common economic development technique. He uses privatization in Bangladesh to illustrate its advantages and disadvantages, particularly with respect to their interactions with indigenous agencies and institutions.
- Sandeep Srivastava and K.K. Goswami, Additional Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), New Delhi, and Director, IICT, respectively, focus on the potential of homemade carpets as an economic development industry.
- Eleanor D. Glor, Editor in Chief of *The Innovation Journal*, explores the general relationship between innovation and improved governance.
- Pradip Kumar Biswas, a Professor in the College of Vocational Studies at Delhi University, discusses the development of indigenous systems of organization and their relationship to the development of small and intermediate enterprises in India.
- Dr. Tamal Sarkar and Sukanya Banerjee, both of The MSME Foundation in New Delhi, discuss the development of artisan clusters as a development policy innovation.

Second, two case studies explore the effectiveness of specialized innovative entrepreneurial networks at fostering economic development:

- Babu P. George, a Professor at Pondicherry University, uses the Alleppey Tourism Development Cooperative to exemplify the comparative advantages of networks to increase economic and social capital among the poor.
- Manoj Joshi, of the Sahara Arts & Management Academy in Lucknow, uses networked trauma care to exemplify the advantages of decentralized, entrepreneurial health care models for the poor in a development context.

Finally, an essay by Howard Doughty reviews some current literature on the impact of the poor as entrepreneurial innovators in economic development and poverty reduction. This review also ties entrepreneurial innovations by the poor to the general topic of good governance as the ultimate objective of contemporary public administration. The books are: (a) Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*; (b) William Easterly, *White Man's Burden*; (c) Gareth Stedman Jones, *An End to Poverty*; and (d) Jeffrey Sachs, *The End of Poverty*.

In Memoriam: A Tribute to Joseph Galimberti.

The “call for papers” for this symposium was inspired by the life and professional contributions of Joseph Galimberti. Until his death in April 2006, Joe Galimberti embodied the principles of entrepreneurial innovation and a focus on poverty reduction and good governance as the keys to sustainable development. The following eulogy, contributed by Joe’s long-time friend and colleague Dr. Ken Kerneghan, Professor in the Department of Politics at Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario, and member of the Editorial Board of *The Innovation Journal*, attests to his personal and professional contributions.

Joseph (Joe) Galimberti was one of the most influential leaders of his generation in the improvement of public administration, not only in Canada but internationally as well. The extremely beneficial effects of his remarkable devotion to public

administration and to the public interest will be felt in many countries for many years to come. He passed away on April 9, 2006.

Joe came to the Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC) in 1968 after serving for three years as Research Director for the Civil Service Association of Ontario (now the Ontario Public Service Employees Union). In 1975, after seven years as IPAC's Executive Secretary, he began an extraordinarily successful thirty-year term as Executive Director.

Under Joe's leadership, IPAC became – and has remained – the most successful organization of its kind in the world. IPAC is a non-profit organization founded by federal and provincial officials in 1947, during the era of post-war reconstruction. It held its first conference the following year in Quebec City and it has convened practitioners and scholars ever since to discuss past, current and future issues in public administration and in the ensuing years it initiated a research program. The focus of IPAC's activities is two-fold: it sheds light on the needs of practitioners. At the same time, it has contributed significantly to encouraging the vital theoretical framework that is necessary for the study of public sector management. Typical of its ability to partner, a number of its projects involve participation by private sector bodies and non-governmental organizations.

Joe made distinguished contributions to the study and practice of public administration in the spheres of management, training and education, research and publication, innovation, and international development. Both before and during the time that Joe led IPAC's work on the international scene, he helped to improve the profession and discipline of public administration in Canada. Among his many ideas and initiatives were the transformation of IPAC into an entrepreneurial and thriving organization, an awards program for innovative management, the creation of study teams and the use of action research. He led the transformation of what was a low-key body largely dependent upon membership fees and government grants into an entrepreneurial organization. Over the years, IPAC has forged contribution and service agreements with most provinces and territories, as well as with a number of countries abroad.

Joe's creation in 1990 of the IPAC Award for Innovative Management was a very successful initiative. Under this program, public organizations across the country now compete annually by sending in submissions about their innovations. Both the United Nations and the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management have developed awards programs modeled on IPAC's program.

Joe's international development work is especially notable. He was instrumental in IPAC's decision in 1990 to launch an international program, under which IPAC developed consulting programs on government systems and institutions to assist countries around the world in meeting the challenges of public administration. Financed by the World Bank and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), IPAC's program has carried out projects in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and

Eastern Europe. Joe assisted with public service reforms in more than 20 countries, forged partnerships with international and regional public administration organizations, and mentored public service leaders. The African Association for Public Administration and Management dedicated the January 2007 issue of its learned journal to Joe. This tribute was to recognize “his contribution to promoting excellence in Public Administration in general and the special relationships and partnerships that he created and maintained between CIDA and IPAC on the one hand, and AAPAM and many African countries, on the other.”

Joe had a special liking for Africa as exemplified by the fact that many of IPAC’s International partners are in Africa. The AAPAM tribute noted that Joe “worked tirelessly to guide AAPAM, as a sister organization to IPAC, to achieve greater heights as a premier organization that promotes excellence in public administration and management in Africa. Through the funds provided by CIDA, Mr. Galimberti supported a variety of AAPAM’s programs, including the much-valued Annual Roundtable Conferences and the Research and Publication activities that result in the publication of the Journal and Newsletter. He placed his vast experience in institutional leadership and development at the disposal of AAPAM. The AAPAM Awards Programme that was launched at the Livingstone Roundtable Conference in December 2005 was due largely to his mentoring and guidance.”

In parallel with these activities, Joe played a leading role in founding the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management, and organized its first conference. CAPAM was established in 1994 to facilitate the exchange of information and knowledge regarding public administration between Commonwealth countries and other nations.

Through Joe, IPAC was regularly represented in events such as the UN Conferences on Re-inventing Government and on bodies such as the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration. To cite only a few examples, he was the Canadian expert invited to the UN symposium on the reform of the Chinese Administrative State held in Beijing in 1989, has been a speaker and Chair at conferences of the American Society for Public Administration, and led training activities under a World Bank program in Jamaica. In a paper on "Best Practices and Innovation in Government" that Joe presented to an UNDESA conference in Tunis in 2005, he emphasized that innovations are not easily transferable. He noted, "Best practices evolve over time, adjusting to changing situations and contexts. ... Without international benchmarking, it is difficult to determine which practice is best, or adaptable to different contexts."

A constant theme in Joe’s work at IPAC was building bridges between academics and practitioners and between theory and practice in public administration. He served as a one-person clearinghouse for information and documentation for both teachers and public servants. He served on the Advisory Boards of Ryerson University and the Dalhousie School of Public Administration. He was a Sessional Lecturer at the University of Toronto for eleven years, and he published on various aspects of public

management and administration. Members of Canada's academic public administration community are especially indebted to Joe for encouraging the formation and supporting the operation of the Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration (CAPPA).

By his steady presence, his careful management of a vital Canadian institution and his unwavering dedication to public service, Joe was a friend to all public servants and to scholars pursuing work in this important field of inquiry. He was a champion of ethical public service and ambitious performance goals.

When Mary Gusella, a former federal Deputy Minister and an IPAC past president learned of Joe's sudden and premature death, she said: "We have lost a precious friend and colleague. To know Joe was to witness his commitment to public service and his dedication to the sharing of public administration values, learning and achievement with all who were interested, whether in Canada or internationally." Mary Gusella also went on to suggest that IPAC commemorate Joe's enormous contribution. IPAC has done just that. The IPAC Endowment Fund Committee has established the Galimberti Memorial Lecture that was inaugurated at the IPAC Conference in Winnipeg in August 2007.

We, the co-editors of this symposium, join with *The Innovation Journal's* Editor-in-Chief Eleanor D. Glor in commemorating the life and work of Joseph Galimberti. We dedicate this symposium to him in recognition of a life well lived. We recognize and honor his support for the entrepreneurial spirit, the importance of the poor in development and innovation, and the key role of public administration in supporting poverty reduction and good governance, both in Canada and throughout the world.

About the Editors

Dr. Donald Klingner is an internationally recognized expert on public personnel management (HRM), public management, Latin American public HRM and public management, and international public management capacity building and technology transfer. He is President-Elect (2007-2008) of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) and an elected Fellow (2007) of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA). He is co-author of *Public Personnel Management* (6th edition pending), also published in Spanish and Chinese. He has been a Fulbright Senior Scholar (Central America 1994), a visiting professor at UNAM, Mexico (1999-2003), and a consultant to the UN (DESA/DPADM), the World Bank and the IADB on public

management capacity building. He co-edits *Comparative Technology Transfer and Society*, published by The Johns Hopkins University Press. Before joining in the School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado, he was a faculty member at IUPUI (1974-1980) and Florida International University (1980-2001). He worked for the US government's central personnel agency (1968-1973) prior to earning a PhD in Public Administration from the University of Southern California (1974).

Dr. Parthasarathi Banerjee is Acting Director, NISTADS (National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies), New Delhi, India. He has published eight books, several research papers in international journals, several research reports, and is in the editorial boards of five journals. His research interest spans areas including innovation studies, institutional and organizational aspects of innovation and technology management.