Policy Advocacy Training

MS-TCDC, Arusha

IDENTIFYING POLICY ISSUES

Process

- Public policy is an attempt to bridge a gap between a situation and a norm – norms differ, perceptions of situations differ, actors differ – hence the whole problem of regulating public policies.

- The implementation process of public policies follows, in principle, a series of official procedures but, quite often, crisis situations alter profoundly the order of the stages in public policy making – when they don't cancel these outright.

Process

- Resources or instruments in the hands of decision-makers are numerous – norms, positions, authorities, links & linkages, material means, personnel, information.

- Public policy is an essential form of exercise or expression of power, i.e. the control over decisions impacting on stakes.

Flows

Public policies result from three flows –

1. problems (concept of definition),

2. solutions (concept of tool or instrument) and

3. political choices (trends and networks).

- Power relations between stakeholders define the nature of the interactions between the flows and determine the success or the failure of a public policy. Any group of two flows together does not suffice to generate a public policy.

- Indeed, there can be problems for which there are solutions but the policy of the day is not conducive.

How public policies emerge

- A public policy emerges when a question is put on the government's agenda.

- To go beyond this stage, there must be, right from the beginning, potential solutions and, more importantly, a political will to choose one.

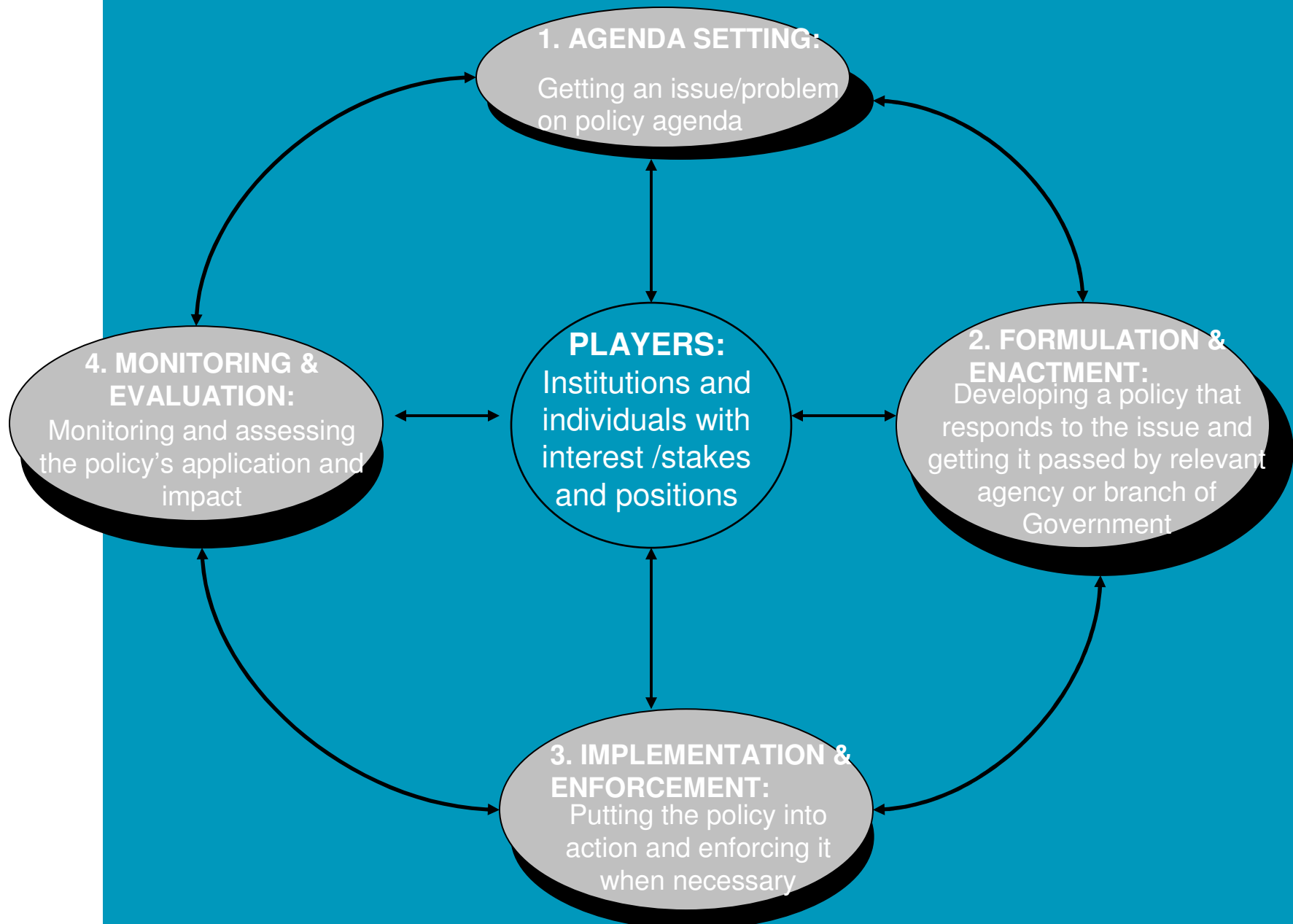- There must be stakeholders interested in pursuing the debate. .

Flows

- Policy making systems help establish the rules that govern states and societies and are made up of institutions and people with different understandings of their society's problems and different stakes in the policies that address them.

- Changing and dynamic, these systems vary from country to country. Each operates in a particular political and cultural context with differing characteristics and players.

Flows

Public policy process involves a combination of stages that include:

- agenda setting;

- formulation and enactment;

- implementation and enforcement, and

- monitoring and evaluation

Phases and Players in Public Policy-Making Process

1. AGENDA SETTING:
Getting an issue/problem on policy agenda

PLAYERS:
Institutions and individuals with interest /stakes and positions

4. MONITORING & EVALUATION:
Monitoring and assessing the policy's application and impact

2. FORMULATION & ENACTMENT:
Developing a policy that responds to the issue and getting it passed by relevant agency or branch of Government

3. IMPLEMENTATION & ENFORCEMENT:
Putting the policy into action and enforcing it when necessary

The linear logical policy model...

Identify the problem

⤷ Commission research

⤷ Analyse the results
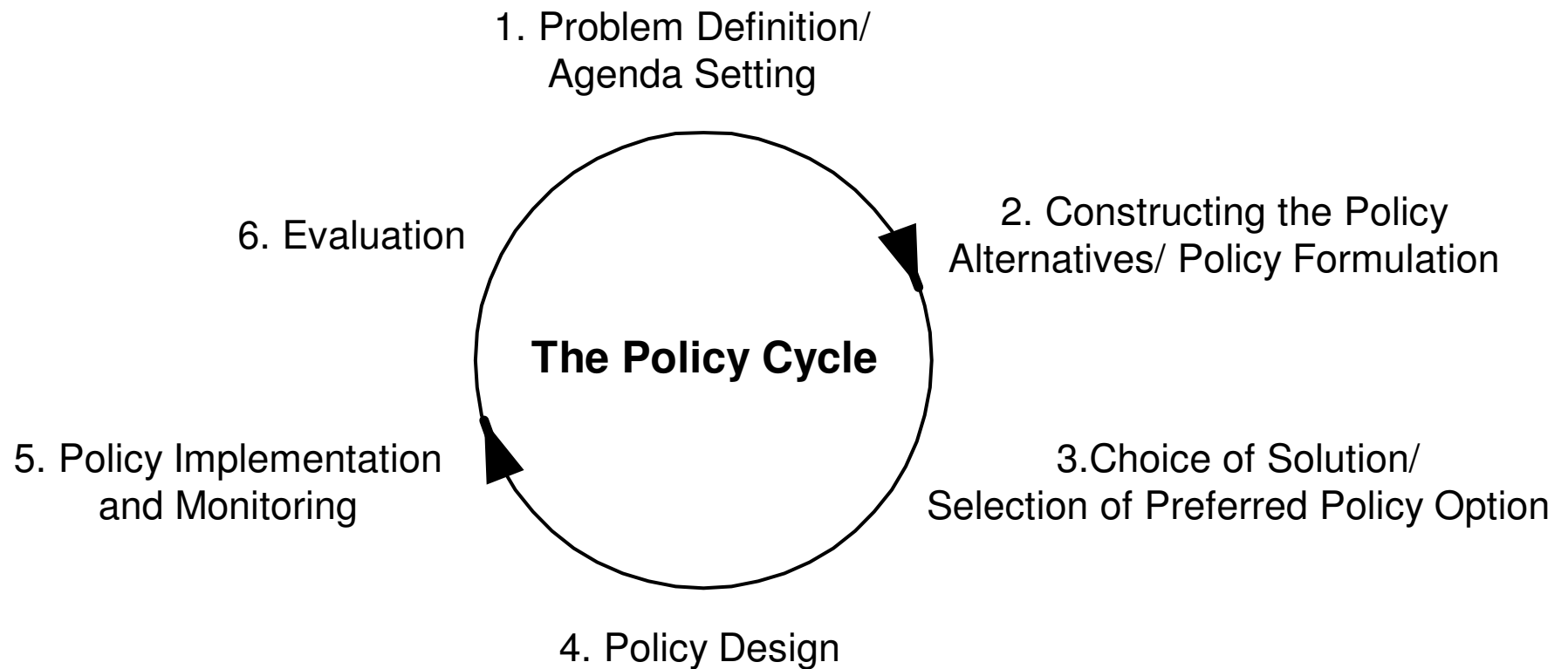
⤷ Choose the best option

⤷ Establish the policy

⤷ Implement the policy

⤷ Evaluate the results

Generic Policy Processes

1. Problem Definition/
Agenda Setting

6. Evaluation

The Policy Cycle

2. Constructing the Policy
Alternatives/ Policy Formulation

5. Policy Implementation
and Monitoring

3.Choice of Solution/
Selection of Preferred Policy Option
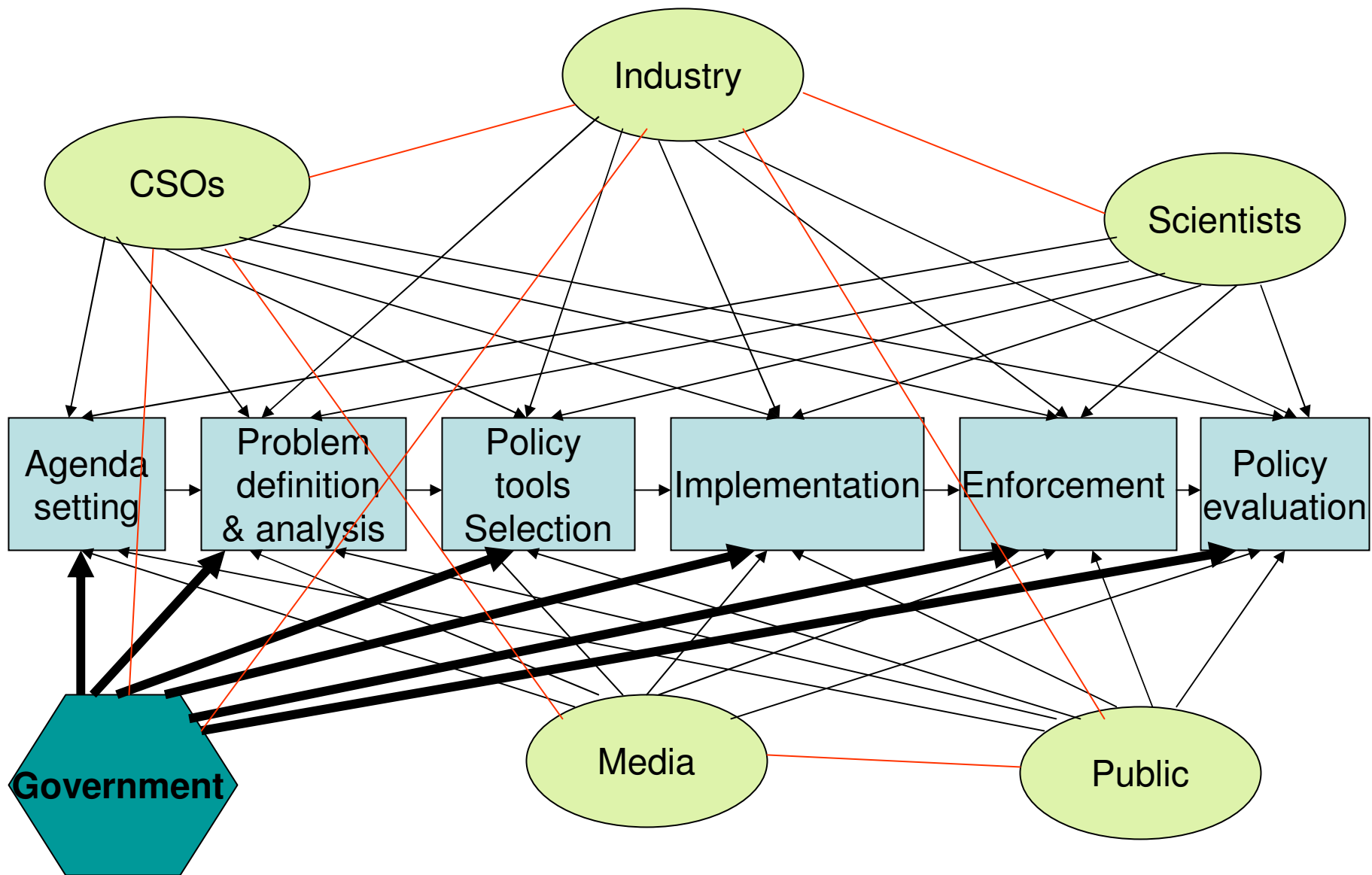
4. Policy Design

in reality…

- "*The whole life of policy is a chaos of purposes and accidents. It is not at all a matter of the rational implementation of the so-called decisions through selected strategies.*" [1]

- For example "*Most policy research on African agriculture is irrelevant to agricultural and overall economic policy in Africa.*" [2]

- "*CSOs often have very little to bring* to the policy table." [3]

- "CSOs, researchers and policymakers seem to live in parallel universes." [4]

[1] – Clay & Schaffer (1984)
[2] – Omamo (2003)
[3] – CSPP Consultations
[4] – ODI-AFREPREN Workshop

Source: Yael Parag

Public policy formulation in trying times: globalization

Impacts of globalization include:

1. information revolution, world economic culture, technological competition

2. competing value systems and questions regarding civilization differences

3. erosion of state power: sub-state level entities or emerging supra-nation powers – international agreements, multilateral obligations – erosion of national borders and boundaries, regionalism, strengthening of local governments

Public policy formulation in trying times: globalization

- transformation of social relations – winners and losers

- world competition at the level of individuals

- international markets for human capital; brain drain

- different modes of expression of influences over decision making processes – new partnerships (e.g. NGO power)

- uncertainty regarding norms

Ethics and Good Governance

- The political space for political leaders has narrowed. The image competes with reality. Transparency is the norm but the media are feared

- The public servants are often in a fishbowls

- From rules and procedures to results and efficiency – a long way to go

Ethics and Good Governance

The 8 « rules » of public policies :

- political commitment

- legal framework

- accountability mechanisms

- codes of behaviour

- professional socialisation

- favourable work conditions

- ethical oversight

- engaged civil society

Policy Making

- Public policies come in different shapes – e.g. a law, poverty reduction strategy, statement by a government official, budget, programme or strategy. They are for example used to:

provide primary education	control inflation	prescribe how public officials should behave	regulate safe building methods	guide and manage donor relations
give people access to clean water	categorise and regulate medicines	protect children from abuse	combat the spread of HIV and AIDS	set development priorities
regulate foreign lending and borrowing	attract foreign investment	keep account of public finances	control pollution levels	coordinate public spending
provide support to farmers	promote equality and equity	coordinate different policies	regulate who has access to credit	advance cooperation with other countries
give roles and responsibilities to government officials	regulate imports and exports	procure goods and services	protect endangered species	combat corruption