

# **Organising the Public Bureaucracy to Ensure Effective Implementation and Compliance with ASEAN Commitments**

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# **Outline of Presentation for Part 1**

- 1. Objectives of Implementation Module**
- 2. Definition of Policy Implementation**
- 3. Obstacles to Policy Implementation**
- 4. Van Meter & Van Horn's Model of Implementation**
- 5. The Policy Contexts in the ASEAN Countries**
- 6. Policy Recommendations**
- 7. Conclusion**

# 1. OBJECTIVES OF IMPLEMENTATION MODULE

- ❖ To enhance the participants' understanding of policy implementation in the ASEAN countries by applying Chase's checklist of obstacles and Van Meter and Van Horn's model of policy implementation. (Part 1)
- ❖ To identify the best practices for organising the ASEAN public bureaucracies to ensure compliance with their ASEAN commitments by comparing the implementation of two policies. (Part 2)

## 2. DEFINITION OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Van Meter and Van Horn define policy implementation as:

**“those actions by public and private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions.”**

**“The Policy Implementation Process: A Conceptual Framework,”**  
*Administration and Society*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (February 1975): 447.

- ❖ **Focus on both public and private individuals and groups.**
- ❖ **Identification of policy context as an important variable influencing policy outputs.**

## The Parable of the Owl and the Centipede

A centipede with foot problems asked the Wise Old Owl:

*“What can I do about my aching feet?”*

The Wise Old Owl told him:

*“Go back to your home and turn into a fish.”*

As the centipede couldn't turn into a fish after trying, he asked the Wise Old Owl how to turn into a fish.

The Wise Old Owl was annoyed and replied:

*“You don't understand my situation. I don't know how to do anything like that; **I just make policy.**”*

(Source: Steve Sachs, Attorney General of Maryland, USA)

**“About 30 per cent of the job is getting the right policy decision, about 70 per cent of it is implementation, most importantly [is] that you have an implementation plan.”**

**Tom Donilon  
U.S. National Security Adviser  
(2010-2013)**

### 3. OBSTACLES TO POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

In his 1979 seminal article, Gordon Chase has analysed the implementation of these three programmes in New York City:

- ❑ The lead poison control programme allocated US\$2.5 million for testing 120,000 pre-school children at risk of contracting lead poisoning in their apartments.
- ❑ The Methadone maintenance programme provided 15,000 heroin addicts (12% of 125,000 addicts) with Methadone at a cost of US\$22 million annually.
- ❑ The prison health programme involved the allocation of US\$5 million to improve the provision of health care for 100,000 prisoners.

## Table 1: Comparison of the Three Programmes

Programme	No. of clients	Cost	No. of obstacles
Prison health programme	100,000 prisoners	US\$5 million	17 hard obstacles
Methadone maintenance programme	15,000 heroin addicts (12% of total of 125,000 heroin addicts)	US\$22 million	8 hard obstacles
Lead poison control programme	120,000 pre-school children	US\$2.5 million	5 moderately hard obstacles

Source: Gordon Chase, "Implementing a Human Services Program: How Hard Will It Be?" *Public Policy*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (Fall 1979): 389-391, 422-423, Table 1.

Chase identifies **44 obstacles** to policy implementation and contends that these obstacles arise from these 15 factors:

## Operational Demands on the Organisation

- 1. People to be served:** no., profile, access, response.
- 2. Nature of services to be delivered:** no. of functions, degree of complexity, and need for coordination.
- 3. Distortions and irregularities:** screening of clients and selection of service providers cause problems if both functions are not done properly.
- 4. Controllability of programme:** Can efficiency and effectiveness of programme be measured? Are any elements of programme uncontrollable?

# Nature and Availability of Resources

- 1. Money:** Is amount allocated for programme adequate? Are there limitations on the use of allocated funds? Can programme manager get more funds if needed?
- 2. Personnel:** Does existing personnel have capacity and inclination to do the job? Can incompetent personnel be removed? What is the number, profile and quality of personnel needed to perform the function?
- 3. Space:** Are existing facilities adequate or are new facilities needed? Not in my backyard (NIMBY) problem as many citizens object to locating methadone clinics or mental health facilities in their communities.
- 4. Supplies and technical equipment:** Are these usable and available? Can technology be used to enhance the implementation of the programme?

## Need to Share Authority

1. **Overhead agencies:** budget & personnel departments
2. **Other line agencies:** is there cooperation or conflict?
3. **Elected politicians:** do they help or hurt the programme?
4. **Higher levels of government:** for approval & clearance
5. **Private sector providers:** capacity to do the job?
6. **Special interest groups:** support or attack programme?
7. **Role of Press:** supportive or disruptive of programme?

Gordon Chase, "Implementing a Human Services Program: How Hard will it be?" *Public Policy*, 27 (4) (Fall 1979): 392-420.

Findings: Prison health programme faced 17 hard obstacles;  
Methadone maintenance programme faced 8 hard obstacles;  
Lead poison programme faced 5 moderately hard obstacles.

## 4. VAN METER AND VAN HORN'S MODEL OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

**Table 2: Policy Dimensions Affecting Implementation**

Major change	<p><u>Difficult to implement</u> Most policies are in this cell as programmes needing major changes usually lead to conflict</p>	<p>Rare as it is unusual to achieve goal consensus for major changes</p>
Minor change	<p>This occurs when controversial programmes are re-authorized with only minor modifications</p>	<p><u>Easy to implement</u> Most policies are also found in this cell as goal consensus is usually highest when change is incremental</p>
	Low goal consensus	High goal consensus

**Table 3: Six Variables Influencing Policy Implementation**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Preconditions for success</b>
<b>1. Policy standards and objectives</b>	<b>Must be clearly stated for evaluating success</b>
<b>2. Policy resources</b>	<b>Adequate money, personnel, space, supplies and technical equipment must be provided</b>
<b>3. Inter-organisational communication and enforcement activities</b>	<b>Policy standards and goals are communicated accurately and consistently to implementers</b>
<b>4. Implementing agencies</b>	<b>Adequate competent personnel supported by political leaders and other public agencies</b>
<b>5. Disposition of implementers</b>	<b>Must be competent and supportive of policy being implemented</b>
<b>6. Economic, social and political conditions (policy context)</b>	<b>These conditions must be conducive for effective policy implementation</b>

**Source: Donald S. Van Meter and Carl E. Van Horn, “The Policy Implementation Process: A Conceptual Framework,” *Administration and Society*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (February 1975): 462-478.**

## 5. POLICY CONTEXTS IN ASEAN Countries

**Table 4: Contextual Differences in ASEAN Countries**

Dimension	Favourable	Unfavourable
Land area	Singapore 719 sq. km	Indonesia 1,904,443 sq. km
Population (2016)	Brunei Darussalam 423,000	Indonesia 261,115,460
GDP per capita (2016)	Singapore US\$52,960	Cambodia US\$1,269
Corruption Perceptions Index (2017)	Singapore 6 <sup>th</sup> (84)	Cambodia 161 <sup>st</sup> (21)
Government effective- ness (2016)	Singapore 100.0	Myanmar 16.3
Rule of law (2016)	Singapore 96.2	Cambodia 12.5
Governance (2016) Total percentile rank	Singapore 529.7	Myanmar 130.1

## 6. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

**Table 5: Policy Dimensions Affecting Its Implementation**

Dimension	Less problematic	More problematic
Degree of complexity	Simple technical features	Complex technical features
Scope of change	Incremental change	Comprehensive change
No. of actors involved	One-actor target	Multi-actor targets
No. of goals	One-goal objective	Multi-goal objectives
Clarity of goals	Clearly stated goals	Ambiguous goals
Duration of implementation	Short duration	Long duration

**Source: Peter S. Cleaves, “Implementation amidst Scarcity and Apathy: Political Power and Policy Design,” in Merilee S. Grindle (ed.), *Politics and Policy Implementation in the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 287.**

**Table 6: Factors Affecting Policy Implementation**

<b>Policy actor</b>	<b>More problematic policy</b>	<b>Less problematic policy</b>
<b>More resources</b>	<b>A Difficult</b>	<b>B Wastage</b>
<b>Fewer resources</b>	<b>C Failure</b>	<b>D Easy</b>

**Source: Cleaves (1980), p. 290.**

**Table 6 shows that more resources are needed for the effective implementation of more problematic policies.**

## 6.1 Critical Importance of Political Will

**Political will** is needed for effective policy implementation for two reasons:

- ❖ Policy implementation is **expensive** because the public bureaucracy needs sufficient qualified personnel, budget and equipment to implement policies effectively.
- ❖ To convince target groups of benefits of proposed policy and to overcome **resistance** of individuals and groups with vested interests to oppose the reform.

## 6.2 Enhancing the Public Bureaucracy's Effectiveness

- ❖ Recruitment and selection of qualified and competent personnel on the basis of **merit** and not patronage. They should be motivated to remain and perform by the provision of training, bonuses and incentives.
- ❖ Rely on **E-government** to reduce red tape and improve delivery of essential services and reduce opportunities for corruption by poorly paid junior civil servants.
- ❖ As corruption undermines the effectiveness of policy implementation, the government must support the anti-corruption agency's **impartial enforcement of the anti-corruption laws** without political interference.

**Table 7: Red Tape and Corruption in ASEAN Countries, 2017-2018**

Country	Ease of doing business rank 2018	Dealing with <u>construction permits</u>		CPI Rank and Score 2017
		No. of procedures	No. of days	
Singapore	2 <sup>nd</sup>	10	54	6 <sup>th</sup> (84)
Malaysia	24 <sup>th</sup>	14	78	62 <sup>nd</sup> (47)
Thailand	26 <sup>th</sup>	18	104	96 <sup>th</sup> (37)
Brunei D.	56 <sup>th</sup>	20	83	32 <sup>nd</sup> (62)
Vietnam	68 <sup>th</sup>	10	166	107 <sup>th</sup> (35)
Indonesia	72 <sup>nd</sup>	17	200.2	96 <sup>th</sup> (37)
Philippines	113 <sup>th</sup>	23	122	111 <sup>th</sup> (34)
Cambodia	135 <sup>th</sup>	20	652	161 <sup>st</sup> (21)
Lao PDR	141 <sup>st</sup>	11	83	135 <sup>th</sup> (29)
Myanmar	171 <sup>st</sup>	15	95	130 <sup>th</sup> (30)

Sources: World Bank, *Doing Business 2018* and Transparency International, *Corruption Perceptions Index 2017*.

## 6.3 Enhancing the Capacity of Implementing Agencies

- ❖ Implementing agencies should be provided with **adequate** financial, human and physical **resources** to implement more problematic policies.
- ❖ The **personnel** of implementing agencies must be **competent** and **not opposed** to the policy.
- ❖ Policy **objectives** and standards must be **clearly stated** with the identification of key performance indicators for evaluating policy impact.
- ❖ Provision of channels for stakeholders and NGOs to provide **feedback** on policy impact.
- ❖ **Minimise number of agencies** for single sector policies and rely on inter-ministerial committees for multi-sector policies to ensure coordination and cooperation.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

**“Implementation is the Achilles’ heel of administrative reform”**

**Professor Gerald E. Caiden (1976)  
Emeritus Professor of Public Administration  
University of Southern California**

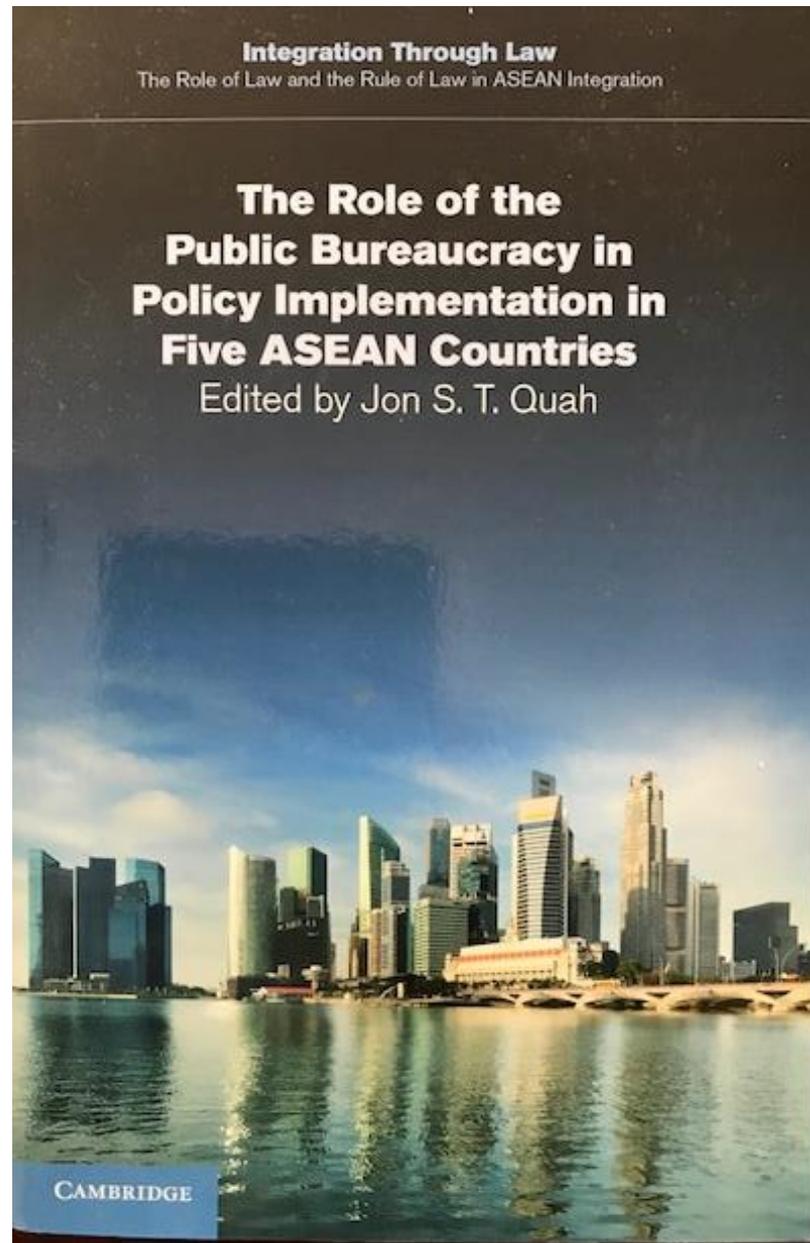
# **THREE INGREDIENTS FOR EFFECTIVE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

## **1. A STRONG DOSE OF POLITICAL WILL**

# **2. AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC BUREAUCRACY**

# **3. MINIMISING CORRUPTION**

**FOR  
FURTHER  
READING**



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
KIND ATTENTION**

**ANY QUESTIONS  
OR COMMENTS?**

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