

Impact Evaluation of a PBO

Why it matters.

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World Bank
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Chaire de recherche
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Session objectives...addressing key questions

- How are PBOs perceived among MPs?
- Do MPs perceive a PBOs outputs to be integral to their work?
- Why be concerned about the perception of MPs?
- What are countries doing to evaluate MPs' perceptions of their PBO?
- Can this evaluation be built-in to a PBO's regular operation?



PBOs, parliaments and MPs

- The most basic responsibility of legislators is to hold the government to account through its scrutiny function (Magna Carta 1215).

So what?

- Weak fiscal scrutiny = weakened parliamentary democracy.
- Re-focusing on parliaments, e.g. growth in independent fiscal institutions around the world.
- *PBOs can support parliamentarians in executing their fiscal scrutiny function.*

Assessing the perceptions of legislators in Canada

- The Jean-Luc Pepin research chair is currently undertaking research to assess whether:
 - Parliamentarians know their role and obligations (in particular fiscal scrutiny)
 - Parliamentarians have the resources required to fulfill their mandate

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- FinParl will be a global repository of data, analysis and research on parliaments and their scrutiny function.
- With the fiscal scrutiny as a common basis for analysis, the processes, tools, reporting mechanisms and outcomes of parliaments on fiscal matters can be identified and measured.
- The FinParl portal will promote research, collaboration and institution building in developed and developing countries.
- By reducing barriers to access and normalizing comparability between countries, FinParl will be the go-to source for data and analysis at the nexus of public finance and democratic affairs.



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- FinParl is a portal on public finance and accountability:
 - Content (data)
 - Online Journal
- The research-focused content arm of FinParl will have databases, working papers and discussion blogs for researchers.
 - Data on ASEAN countries, World Bank Parliamentary Budget Offices, and OECD independent fiscal institutions and their legislatures have been collected.
- The online journal will be peer-reviewed and published quarterly, with a board of international public finance and parliamentary experts.
 - University of York professors to serve as founding editors.



Why be concerned about the perceptions of parliamentarians?

- PBOs have stakeholders. Who are they?
- Implementing and establishing a PBO is not always easy.
- Stakeholders (especially parliamentarians) are crucial to its legitimacy and sustainability because they are primary clients.
- Therefore, when establishing a PBO or evaluating an existing PBO, stakeholders are crucial for success.

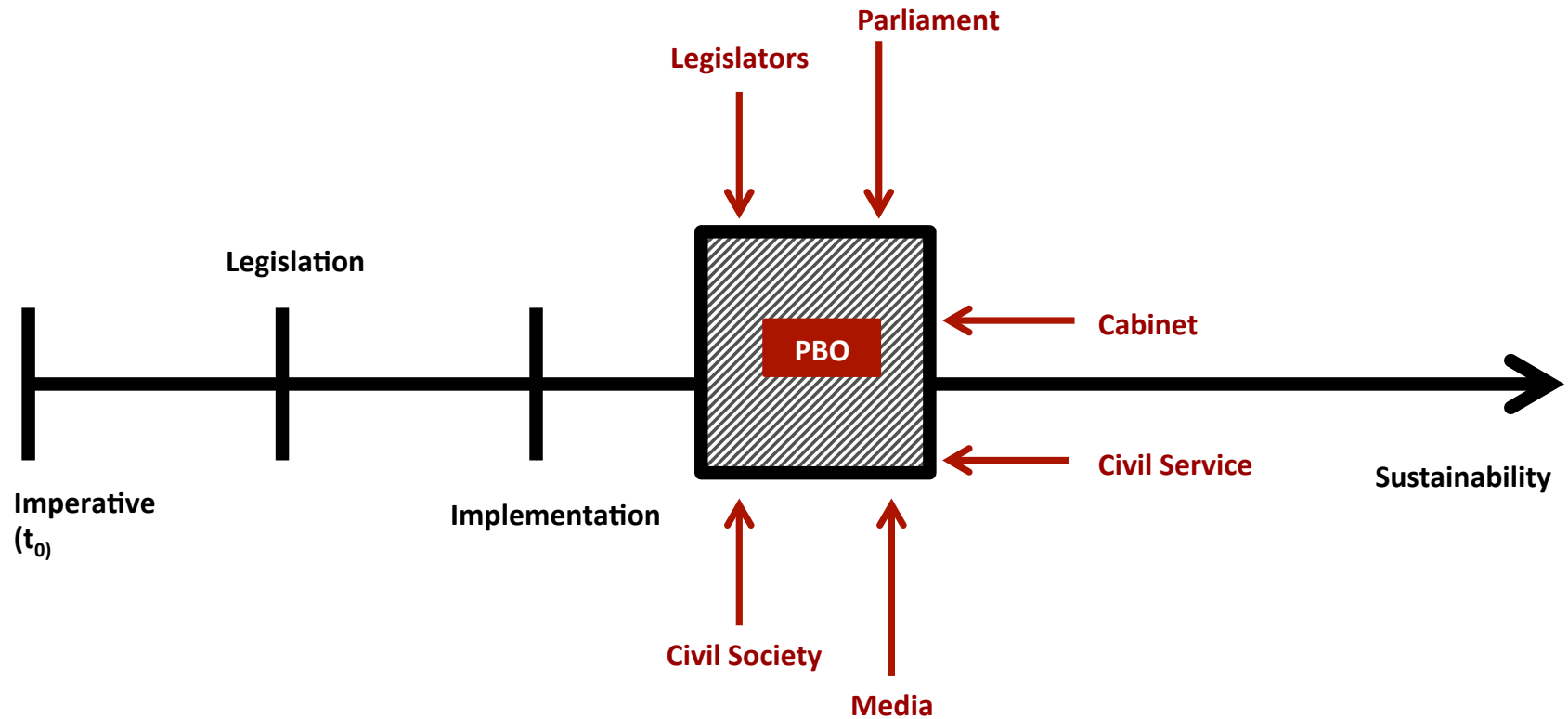


Broadening the stakeholder universe

- MPs are the key client for a PBO
- However, they are not the only clients
- MPs may see the value of a PBO through the lens of other stakeholders
- PBO's operate in a complex universe of stakeholders



Points of departure



Can perceptions be managed?

- Various forces act on a PBO in sometimes contradictory ways. You must:
 - Make your environment receptive to you
 - Condition stakeholders to use your office
- Use your outputs (i.e. what you produce) to manage these forces. You must ensure your outputs are:
 - Relevant
 - Authoritative
 - Timely



Assessing your impact through outcomes

- Carving out your place in an inhospitable environment is not a passive exercise—you must persist
- Appeal to your stakeholders to ensure *sustainability*. A PBO can exist on paper but if it cannot communicate with stakeholders, it may become irrelevant
 - Who are a PBO's key stakeholders?
 - What are some ways of actively communicating with them?



OECD evaluation framework for PBOs

Common Performance Framework			
Context	Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legislation ▪ Sources of accountability ▪ Definition of stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Budget ▪ Human resources ▪ Access to data ▪ Independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peer review of reports (scientific and methodological soundness) ▪ Transparency gains ▪ Assessment against counterfactuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stakeholder surveys ▪ Media analysis ▪ Expert interviews

Case study - the 2014 UK OBR review

- First review of the UK OBR
- Input, output, outcome frame
- Defined performance – better decision support and enhanced transparency, rather than being “right”
- Provided advice to support organizational sustainability
- Helped to build legitimacy or the fledgling institution

External review of the Office
for Budget Responsibility

Kevin Page

September 2014



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Case study – Ontario Financial Accountability Office

- Challenges of establishing a new office
- Political complexities
- Building evaluation into the performance framework
- Lessons learned



Conclusion

- Cement dries quickly – you must act to set precedents of practices
- Legitimacy is earned through practice and through ensuring relevance to stakeholders
- Evaluations enable a PBO to test the value of its work with key stakeholder, especially parliament

Thank you

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