



2021 PEP annual conference

Workshop:

Best practices for policy engagement

Session 1: Understanding policy processes

May 18

Marjorie Alain

PEP Director of Communications and M&E

Session 1 - Contents

- ❖ **Your PEP project:** objectives and requirements
- ❖ **Policy processes** – definitions, cycle, constraints
- ❖ **Channeling scientific evidence** into policymaking
- ❖ **Policy stakeholders**
- ❖ **Hands-on:** Initiating your policy context analysis



Why are we here?

Evidence-informed policymaking

- The concept implies that “**one should prioritise scientific or research-based evidence as input**” into policy design and decision processes
- Sounds obvious? Think again...
 - The emphasis on applying scientific standards of proof to policymaking is a **RECENT AND STILL DISPUTED PHENOMENON.**
 - In most countries, governments have yet to develop:
 - **Clear requirements and procedures**
 - **Internal capacities to link scientific evidence with policymaking**



Why are we here?

Evidence-informed policymaking – the objective of your PEP project

- **PEP research aims to inform policy**

PEP commitment to
GAC in CCWG initiative

- Providing evidence that is both:

- **Reliable** (scientifically-sound)

Scientific training +
mentorship

- **Contextualised :**

- From a local perspective

This training + **policy
outreach mentorship**

- Addressing COUNTRY-SPECIFIC POLICY NEEDS / QUESTIONS



Why are we here?

Purpose of this workshop:

- **Make sure your PEP research answers actual policy questions**

PEP requirements from grantees:

- **Identify and consult with stakeholders**
 - PEP requires stakeholder analysis and periodic reports
- **Develop a (parallel) policy paper analysis**
 - Starting with a policy context analysis, to clarify the key policy questions to address



Why are we here?

Structure of this workshop:

- **Session 1: Understanding policy processes**
- **Session 2:** Designing research to address actual policy needs
- **Session 3:** Designing an effective policy engagement strategy



Policy processes

Definitions - policy

➤ POLICY:

- A relatively stable, purposive **course of action** (or inaction) followed by an actor (or set of actors) in dealing with a problem or matter of concern.

➤ PUBLIC POLICY:

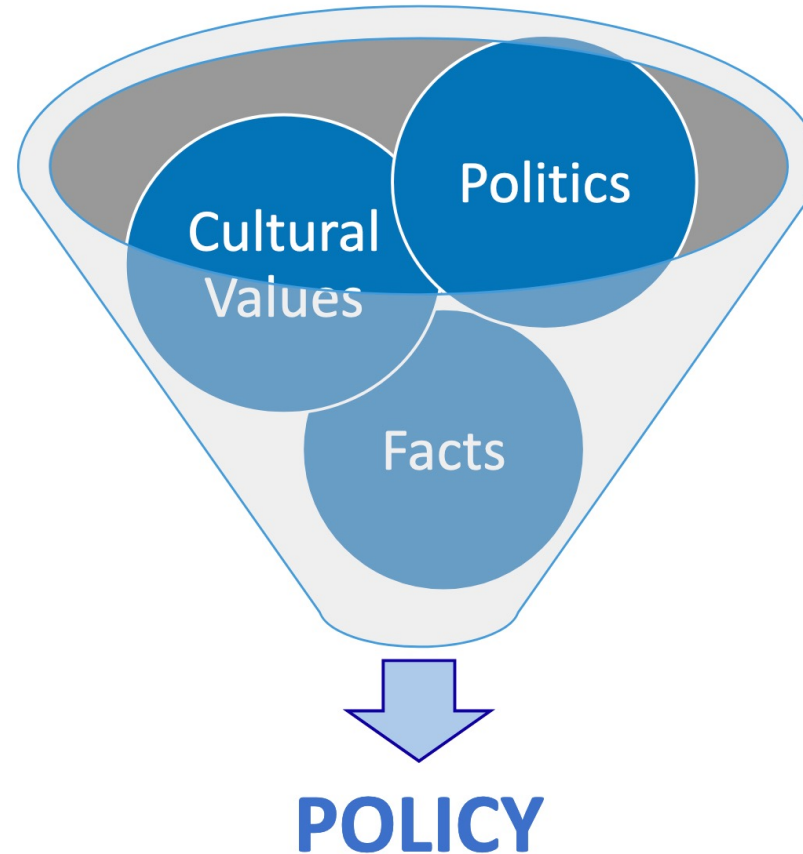
- Policy developed by governmental bodies and officials.
 - Process by which governments translate their **political vision** into plans and actions to achieve the **changes they desire** to make in the real world
 - Includes **not only the decision** to adopt a law or make a rule on some topic, but also the subsequent **actions aimed at implementing and enforcing** the law or rule



Policy processes

Development

- An effective policy must be based on **facts**, but it is also influenced by **cultural values** and **politics**.



Policy processes

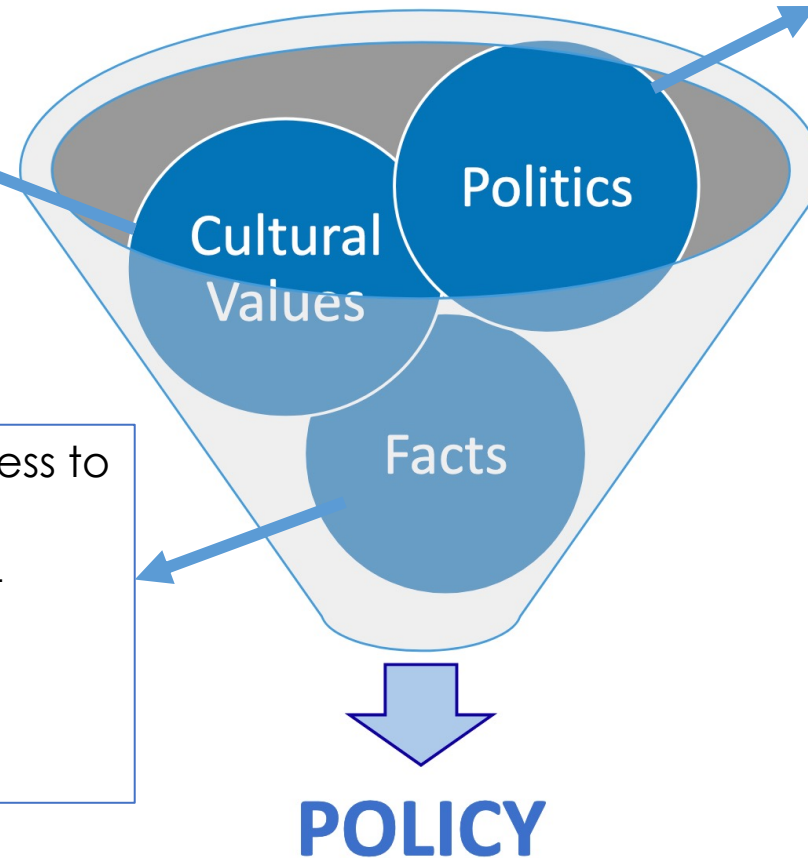
Development

➤ Example: **Access to water in Tunisia**

- Water is a free good given by god
- Water resources are limitless

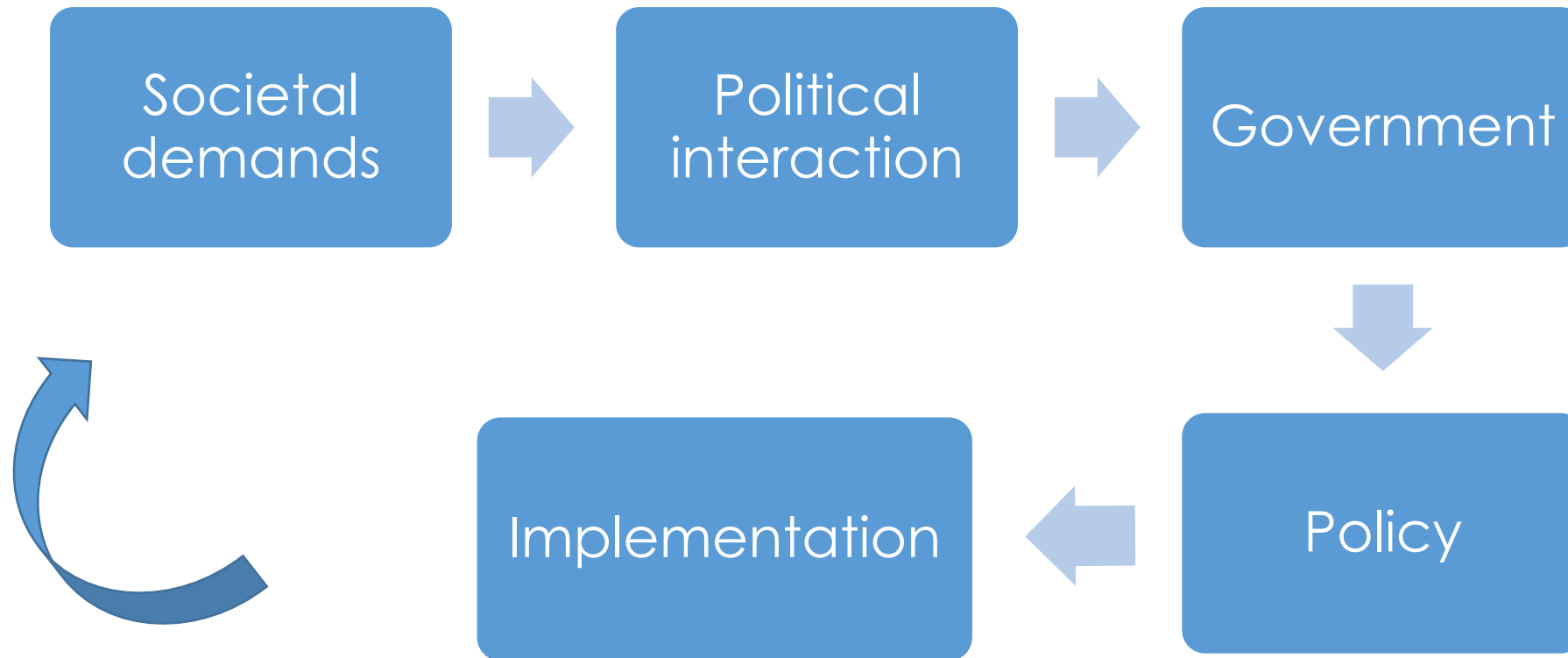
- 20% of rural people do not have access to drinking water
- 70% of dams experience a significant decrease in their storage capacity
- 50% of the water distribution network requires rehabilitation

- Politicians seek popular consensus, so they prioritize access to water for large urban centers



Policy processes

Governance



Policy processes

Governance – performance is “measured” by:

Responsiveness:

Extent to which delivered services are consistent with citizen preferences

Effectiveness:

Extent to which adopted actions are achieving desired goals

Efficiency:

Ratio between the quality of services provided (i.e. effectiveness) and the cost to provide them



Policy processes

Political economy factors that prevent decision-makers from supporting their decisions on scientific knowledge:

- Culture, ideology - acceptability
- Commitments, budget constraints – feasibility
- Crises – e.g. COVID – diverting attention and resources

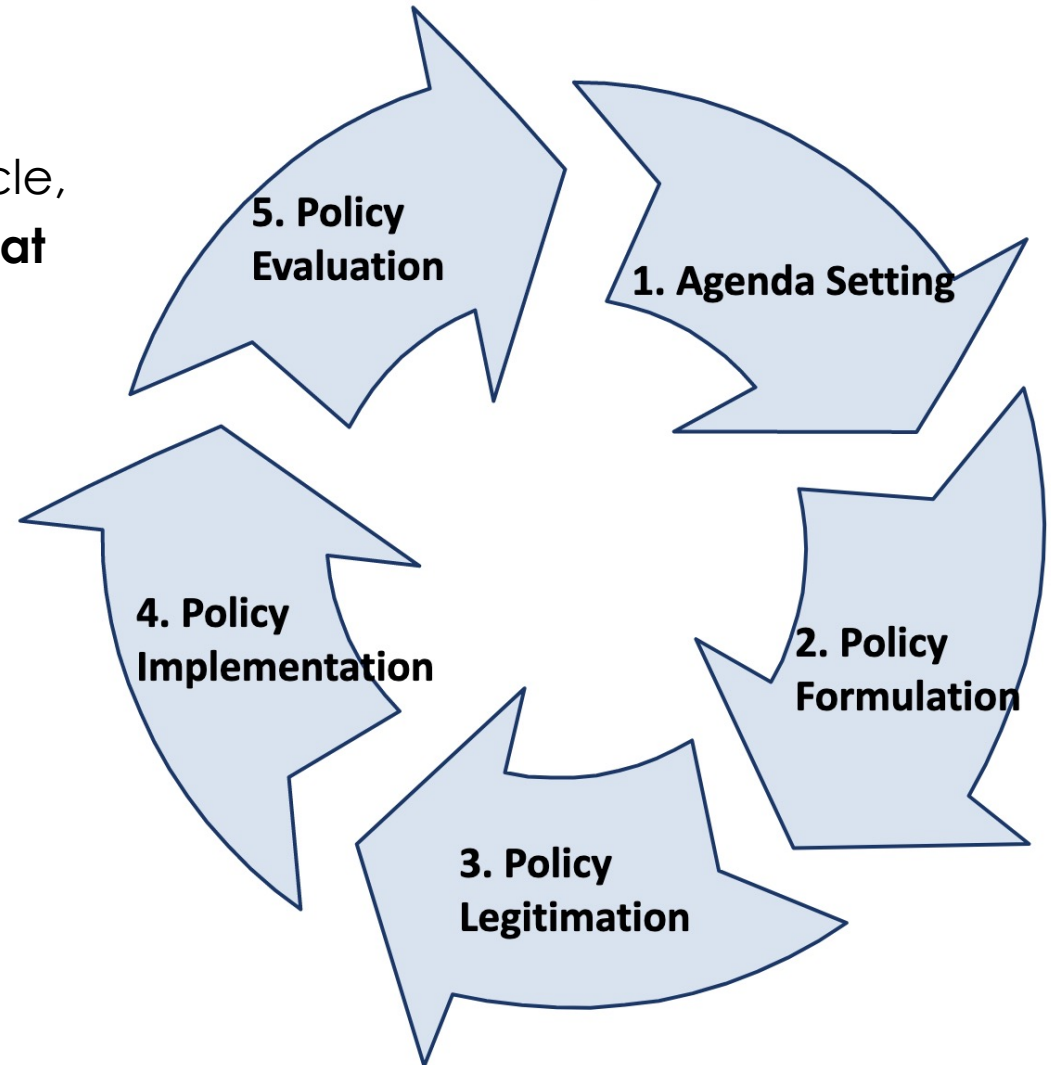
Understanding policy needs means **ADAPTING RESEARCH** or its communication **TO SPECIFIC CONTEXTS** and **priorities**



Policy processes

Policymaking cycle

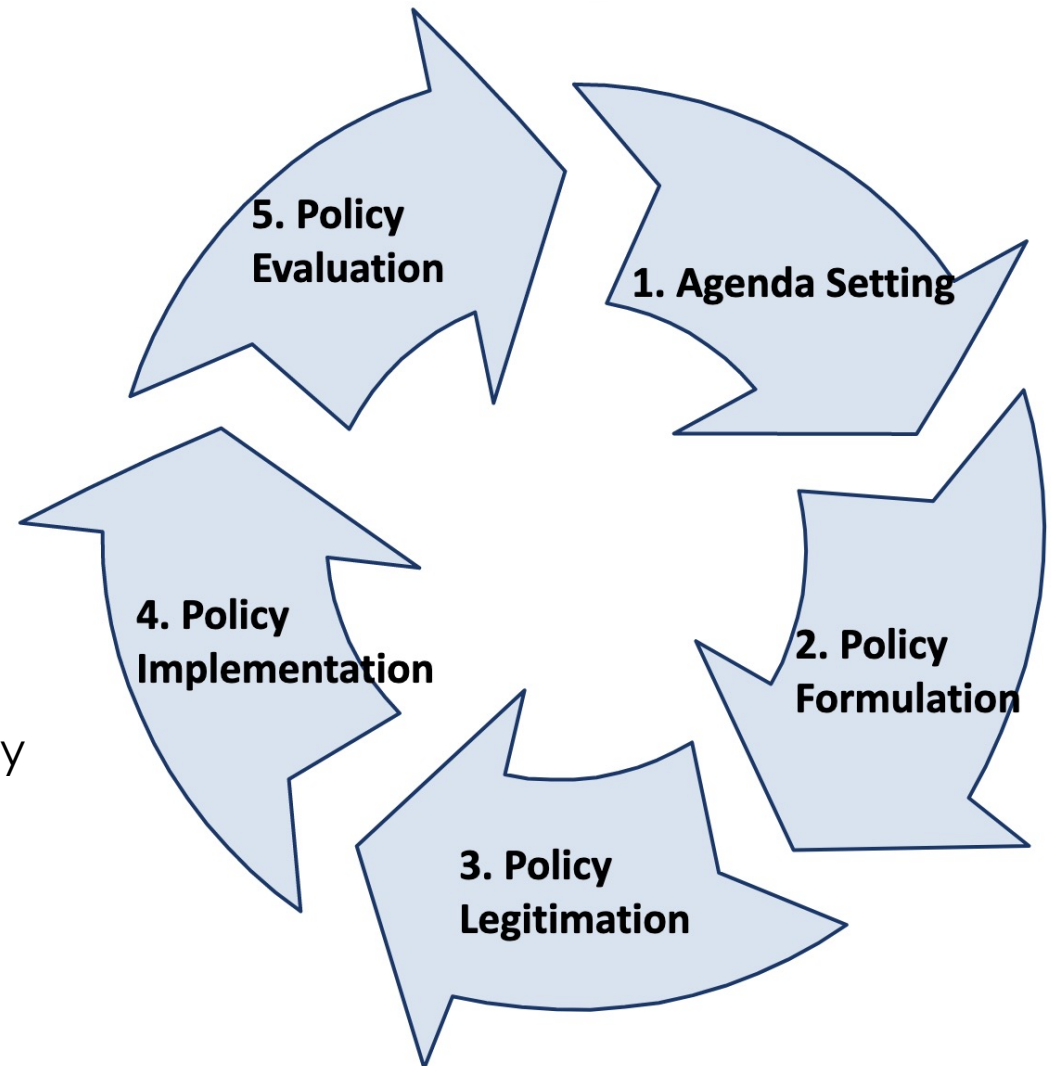
Though it appears to follow an orderly and closed cycle, the process **can begin and be abandoned or altered at any point of the cycle.**



Policymaking cycle

Research-based **evidence can (and should) be used at EVERY STAGE** of the cycle to:

- **IDENTIFY** problems
- **MEASURE** their magnitude and seriousness
- **REVIEW** alternative policy interventions
- **ASSESS** the likely consequences of particular policy actions (intended and unintended)
- **EVALUATE** what, in fact, results from policy (effectiveness, efficiency, unexpected outcomes)



Policy processes

Policymaking cycle

Each stage has its own **challenges for EIPM**:

Agenda setting

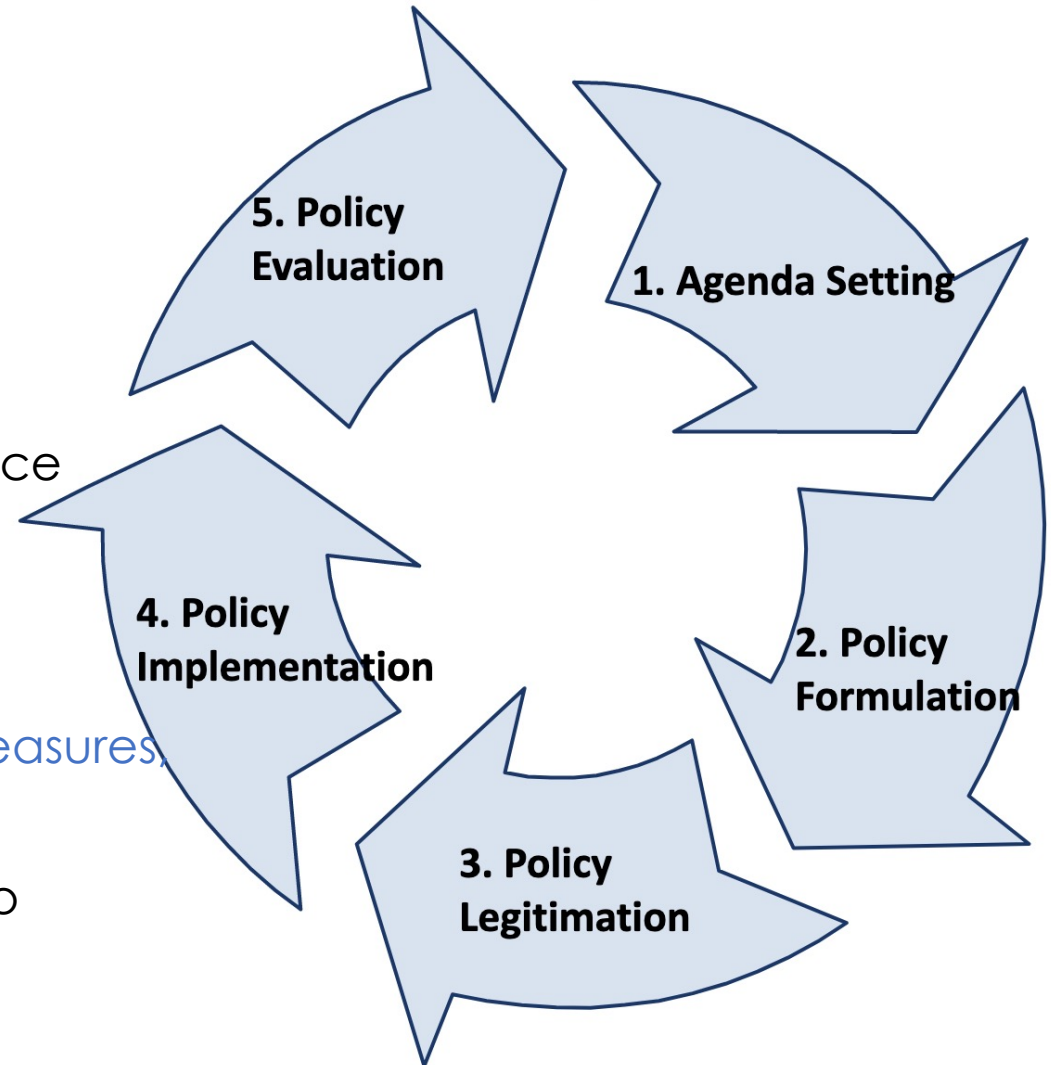
Government decides to address a specific problem

- **Challenge:** Convincing policy makers of importance and urgency of an issue

Policy formulation

Set objectives, identify & compare (+/-) potential measures, define policy instruments to implement

- **Challenge:** Gathering knowledge and expertise to identify and assess best potential measures



Policy processes

Policymaking cycle

Each stage has its own **challenges for EIPM**:

Policy legitimation

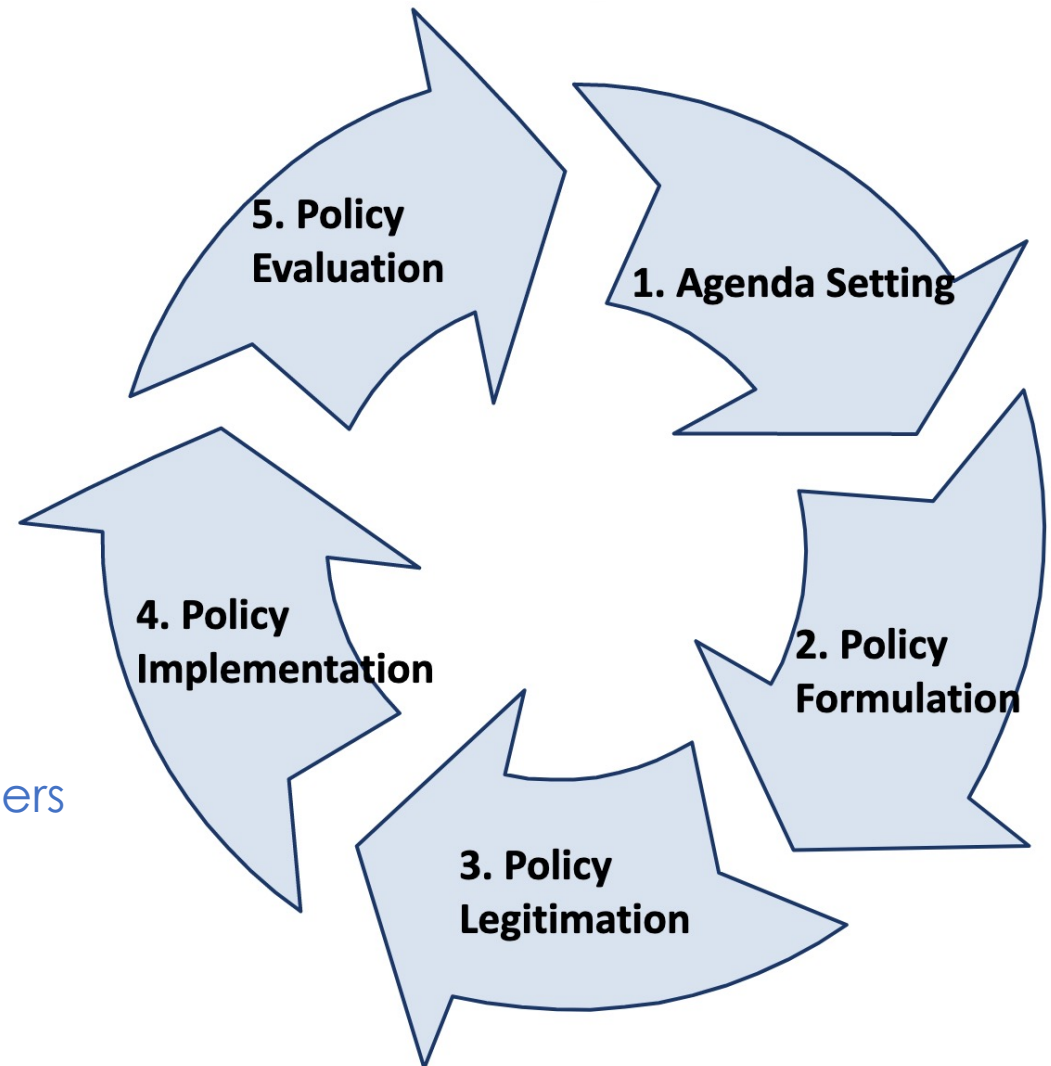
Assess and secure popular and political support for selected measure

- **Challenge:** Understanding how different stakeholders will react to the proposed measures.

Policy implementation

Allocate resources, mandate & supervise implementers

- **Challenge:** Resistance from bureaucracy, limited capacity of implementing organization, limited capacity for state oversight



Policy processes

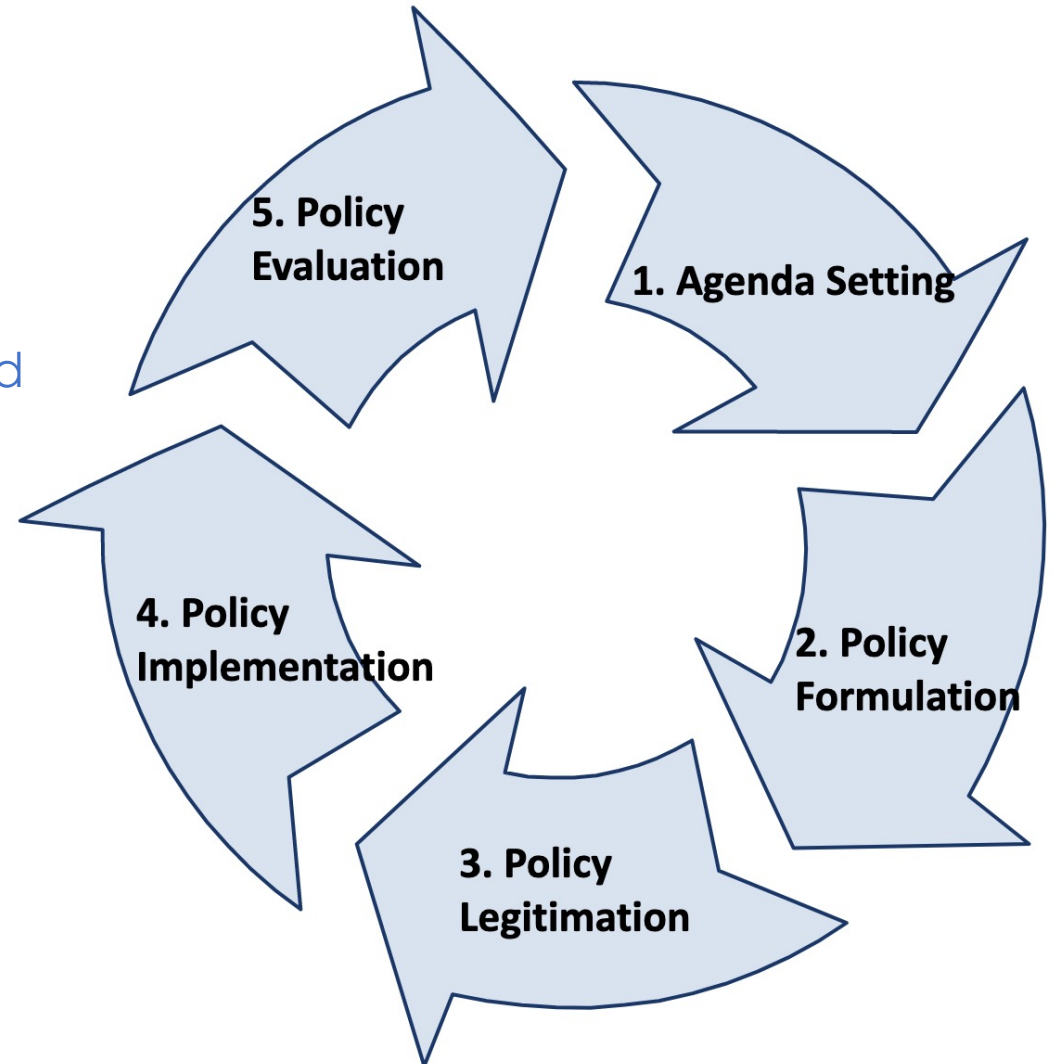
Policymaking cycle

Each stage has its own **challenges for EIPM**:

Policy evaluation

- Assess effectiveness, efficiency (cost vs results) and other consequences of implemented measure.
- Evaluate new challenges that came up through the policy process.

➤ **Challenge:** Getting the data needed to evaluate



Policy processes

Policymaking cycle

Overall challenges for EIPM

- 1) The formulation and implementation of policies are **inherently political**:
 - involve conflict and struggle among individuals and groups, officials and state bodies who have **conflicting ideas, interests, values, and information**.

- 2) These political, stakeholder and value **considerations**:
 - are **outside the scope of science**,
 - **must be incorporated** by the multiple actors involved in the policy advisory process.

- 3) Few government institutions have a clear definition of what should be considered as **sufficient/reliable evidence**



Channeling scientific evidence into policymaking

What is evidence for policy?

Different sources and types of evidence used to inform the policy advisory process:

- **Raw data** Do not speak by themselves - **must be analyzed and interpreted**, i.e. requires a scientific methodology

All relevant, **but...**



Channeling scientific evidence into policymaking

What is evidence for policy?

Different sources and types of evidence used to inform the policy advisory process:

- **Raw data**
- **Grey literature** No official « review/validation » process – **standards of quality can vary** considerably. Potential biases from organization's objectives.

All relevant, **but...**



Channeling scientific evidence into policymaking

What is evidence for policy?

Different sources and types of evidence used to inform the policy advisory process:

- **Raw data**
- **Grey literature**
- **“People”** - experience, expertise Potential biases (context, subjectivity, interests)

All relevant, but...



Channeling scientific evidence into policymaking

What is evidence for policy?

Different sources and types of evidence used to inform the policy advisory process:

- **Raw data**
- **Grey literature**
- **“People”** - experience, expertise
- **Scientific literature**
 - Often based on research led in different context.
 - No account of « subjective values/considerations » and practical constraints – difficult to apply.

All relevant, but...



Channeling scientific evidence into policymaking

What is evidence for policy?

Different sources and types of evidence used to inform the policy advisory process:

- Raw data
- Grey literature
- “People”
- Scientific literature

Evidence-informed policymaking (EIPM):

- Requires to use scientific (research-based) evidence “among inputs”
- But the purpose is not to reduce the policy process to a scientific problem-solving exercise...

All sources/types are relevant and necessary

- **Policymakers often prefer sources they are « familiar with »** -
Can help to cite known sources when relevant



Channeling scientific evidence into policymaking

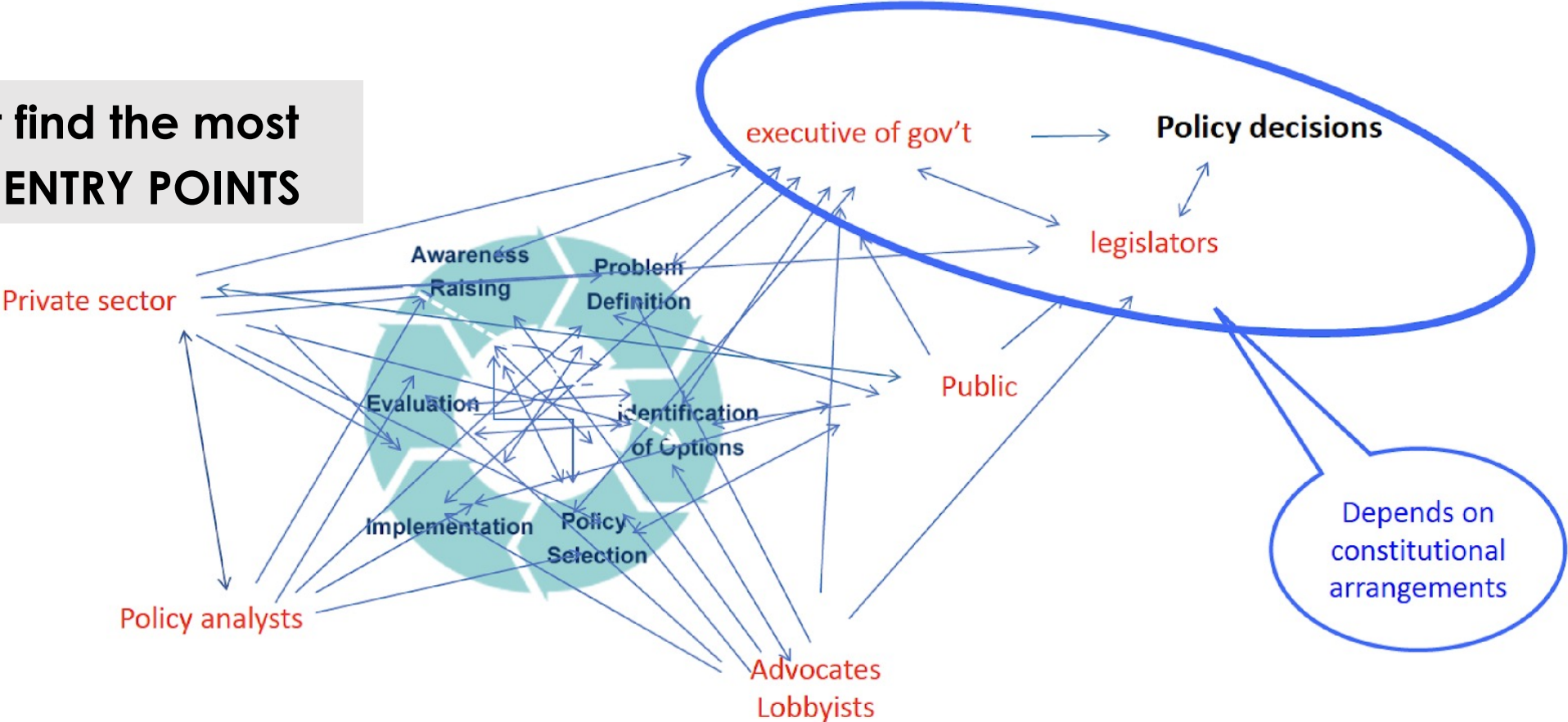
The **relative influence of scientific evidence** versus other factors/inputs can be illustrated as follows:



Channeling scientific evidence into policymaking

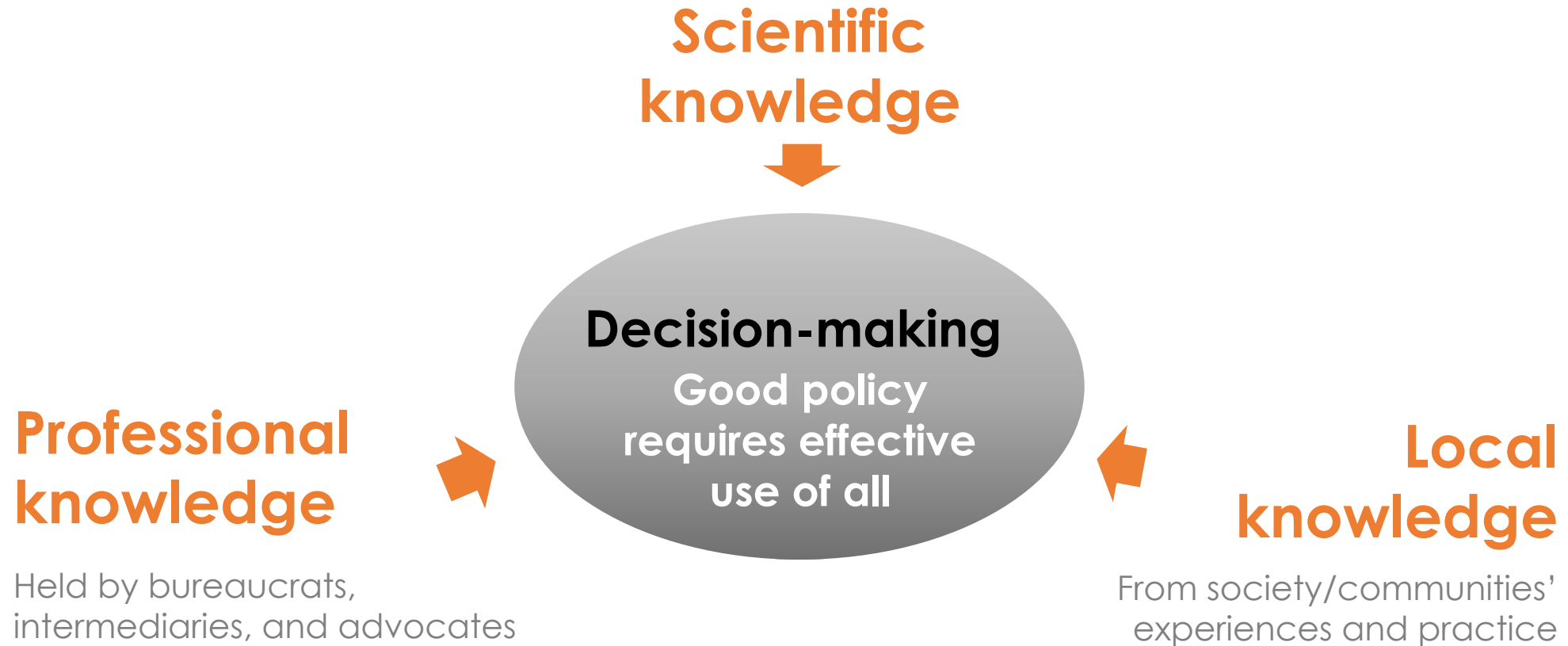
But a more realistic illustration of the **many sources of influences, competing** over the policy decision process would rather look like this:

You must find the most strategic ENTRY POINTS



Channeling scientific evidence into policymaking

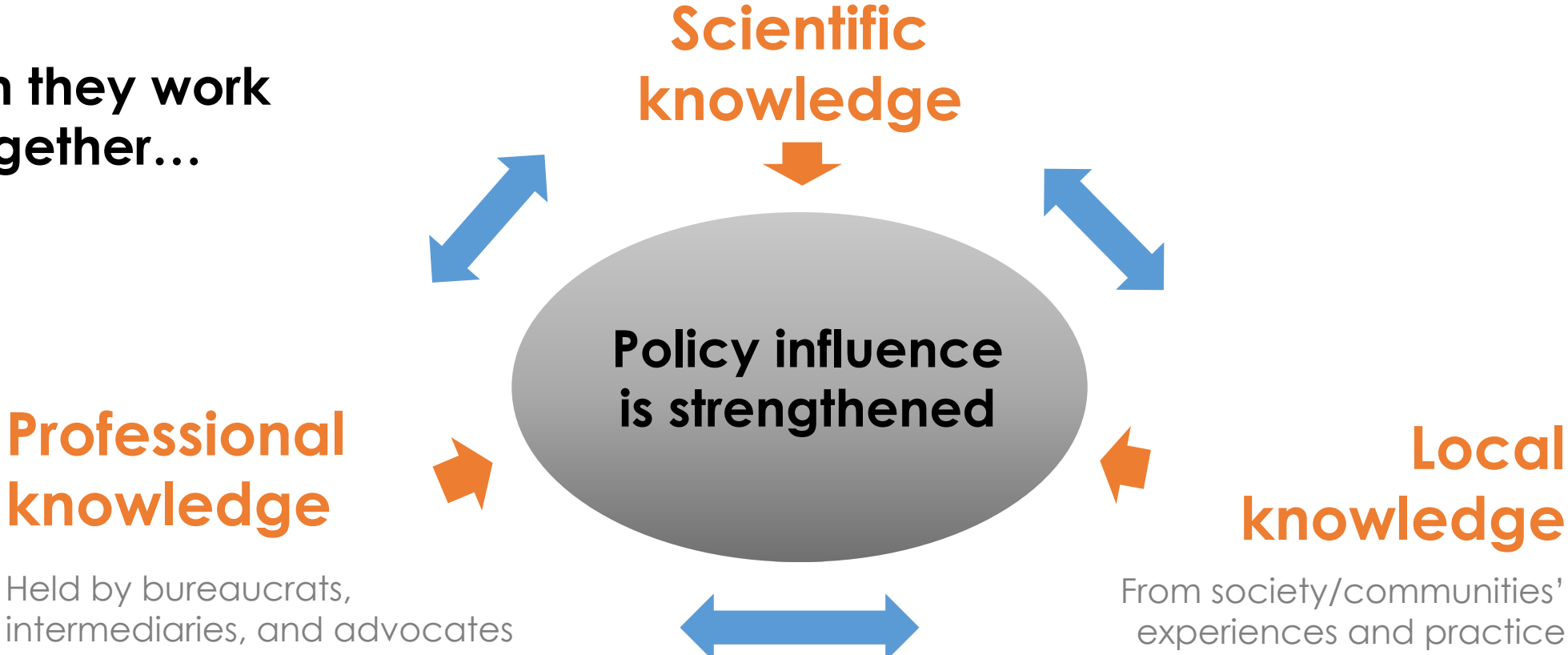
Nugroho & al., 2018



Channeling scientific evidence into policymaking

Nugroho & al., 2018

When they work together...



Channeling scientific evidence into policymaking

To understand policy needs/priorities,

Scientific knowledge



Must ENGAGE and CONSULT WITH..

Professional knowledge

Held by bureaucrats, intermediaries, and advocates

Local knowledge

From society/communities' experiences and practice



Policy stakeholders

Actors (individuals or organizations) **with a vested interest** in the **concerned policy**

- An **interest** can be based on:
 - A current or future gain, or
 - Damages that the actor may suffer in relation to the policy



Policy stakeholders

What are the **main types** of stakeholders?



State

Political
Parties

Think tanks

Civil society

IOs &
NGOs

Research
Community

Business
Community

The People

Media



Policy stakeholders

For your PEP project, we recommend to focus on:



State

**Political
Parties**

Think tanks

**Civil
society**

**IOs &
NGOs**

Research
Community

**Business
Community**

The People

Media



Policy stakeholders

STATE

Specialized bodies working in coordination.

- Those **producing policies** are legislators, executives, administrators, judges.
- Supposed to be the impartial arbitrator between major interests.

BUT:

- State bodies often **compete** with each other, and **do not coordinate** their actions, particularly when their **respective responsibilities** are not clearly defined
- Also, degree of expertise, or "**technical knowledge**", can vary.

Communication tip: Focus on mandate/responsibilities



Policy stakeholders

POLITICAL PARTIES/POLITICIANS

Help **aggregate interests** - converting the particular demands of interest groups into general policy alternatives.

BUT:

Mostly interested in “**controlling power**” through government

Policies are often instrumental to gaining power, rather than the other way around

Communication tip: Focus on their « political capital »



Policy stakeholders

CIVIL SOCIETY

Public space where people associate freely for the **pursuit of common goals**.

- Incl. **mechanisms through which individuals/groups demand** transparency, accountability, responsiveness, and efficiency (from policy).

BUT:

Not a unitary actor - NOT cohesive/coherent, equal, organized, or coordinated

Communication tip: Focus on their « advocacy agenda/objectives »



Policy stakeholders

BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Largely independent actors who pursue **wealth** and **power** through the delivery of goods and services.

BUT:

- Objectives pursued are always “self-serving”, **profit-oriented**
- Serving the **interests of a few** to the expense of most

Communication tip: Focus on economic benefits



Policy stakeholders

MEDIA

Help determine what people think about, and shape their attitudes.

- Influence the capacity of government officials to convert their ideas into policy

BUT:

- Generally provides minimal coverage of policy issues
- Often owned or **controlled** by the state and economic interest groups who introduce a **bias** on which news are conveyed and how.

Communication tip: Focus on the interests of their « audience »



Policy stakeholders

IOs & NGOs/INGOs

NGOs / INGOs: independent of governments - two types:

- *Advocacy*: aim to influence governments with a specific goal,
- *Operational*: provide services.

IOs (i.e. intergovernmental – formed by treaties)

- Help set the international agenda, cooperation among states, mediate political bargaining, promote initiatives in favor of collective good

BUT:

- Focused on specific “topics” (development trends)

Communication tip: Focus on their agenda/thematic priorities



Policy stakeholders

Stakeholder analysis

Determine whose interest should be taken into account in relation to a specific policy/program.

Questions to ask:

- Who has **power/influence** in specific policy process (formulation, adoption, implement..)
- Who can **inform** viz specific needs/constraints related to policy?
- Who can **benefit from/support** the “policy”?
- Who can provide **entry point** into the decision process?



Expert quotes...



Baruch Fischhoff, 2011

Applying the science of communication to the communication of science

“Communications are adequate if they **reach people with the information that they need** in a form that they can use.”

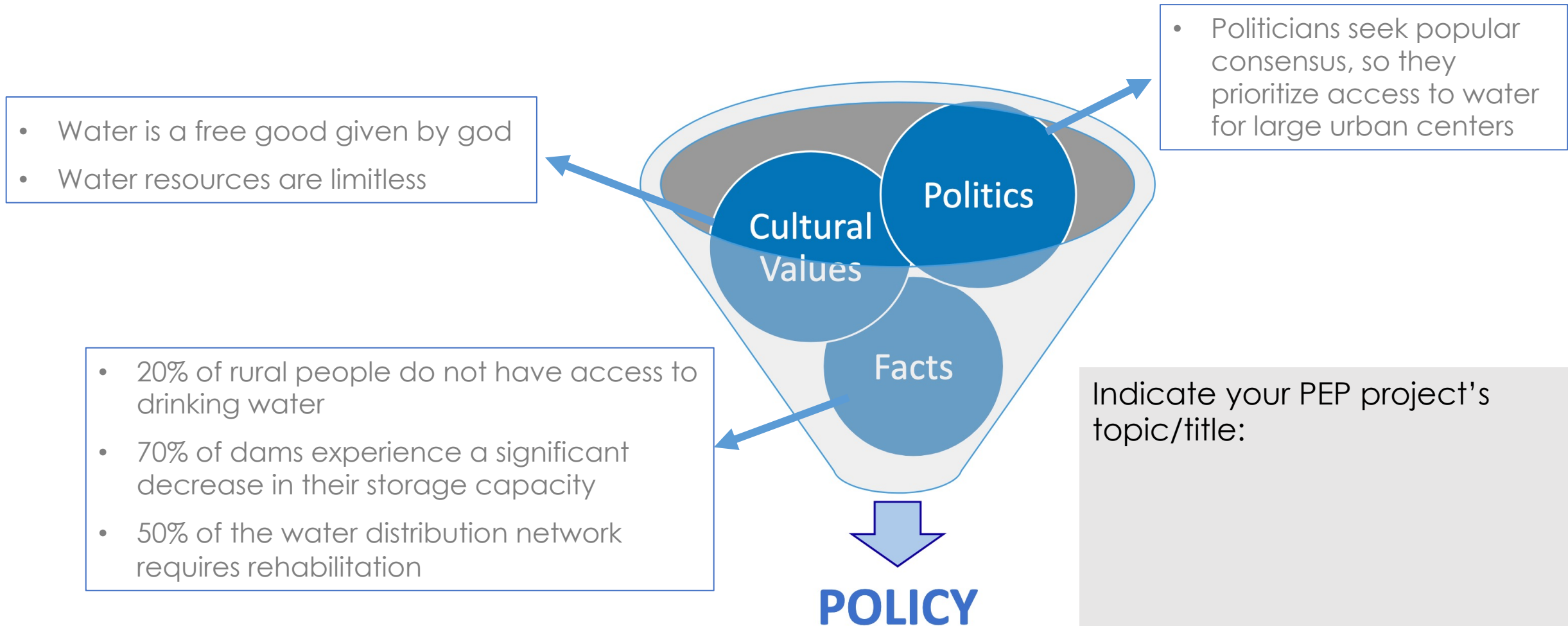
“Useful analysis *requires* effective **communication among diverse individuals**”



HANDS-ON

Go to your team's Google slides and...

Slide 1: **Reproduce this example** (fill the boxes) **for your project.**



HANDS-ON

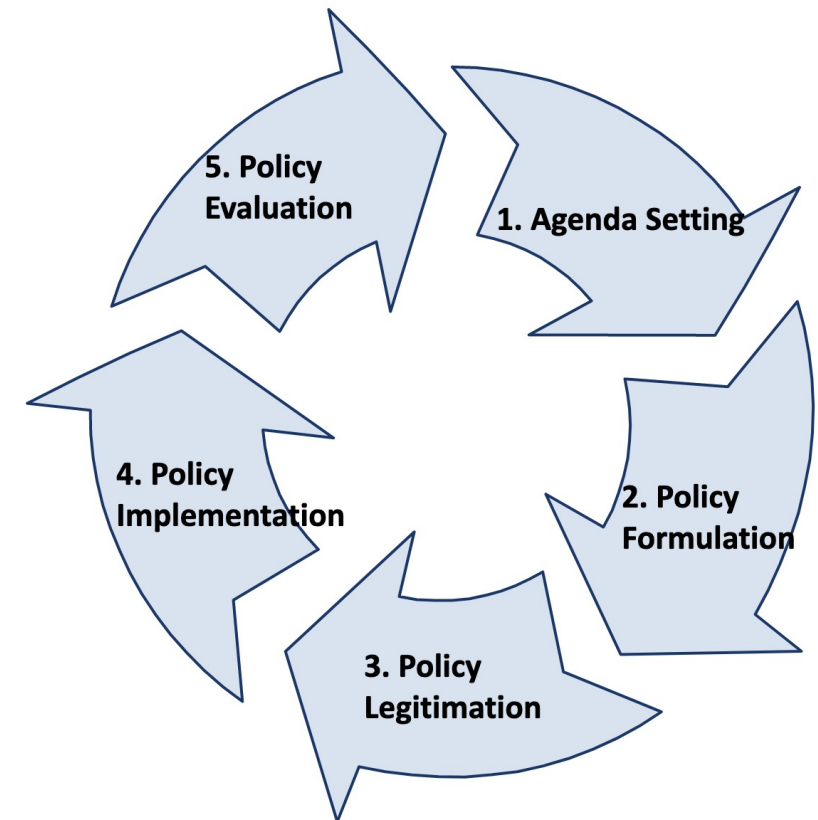
Go to your team's Google slides and...

Slides 2-3: Associate your PEP project with the relevant..

#1 – Objective/role

- **IDENTIFY** problems
- **MEASURE** their magnitude and seriousness
- **REVIEW** alternative policy interventions
- **ASSESS** the likely consequences of particular policy actions
- **EVALUATE** what, in fact, results from policy (effectiveness, efficiency, unexpected outcomes)

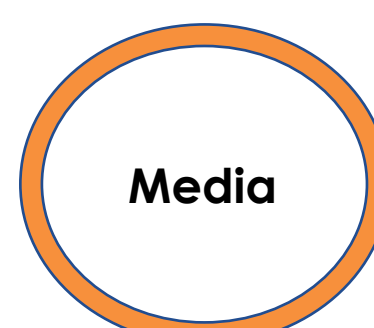
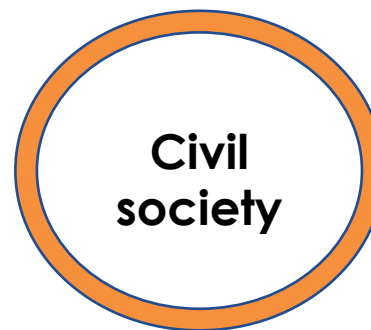
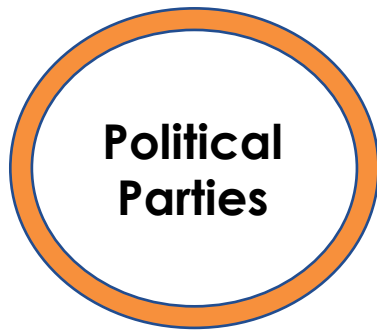
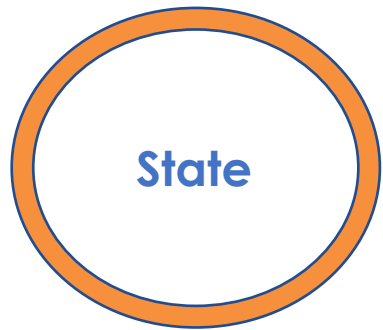
#2 – Stage of the policy cycle



HANDS-ON

Go to your team's Google slides and...

- Slide 4: # 1 - Identify 3 categories of relevant stakeholders for your project
2 – Name one example (institution, organization) for each category



Thank you !

Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP)

partnership for
economic
policy



pep

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