

## Editorial

### Capacity Building for Development in Brazil

Dear Reader,

This special issue of the *Public Service Journal (RSP)* brings together papers on building policy capacity for development within the Brazilian context. Starting from a broad and integrated understanding of development, which is not restricted to the context of the economic sphere, this compilation presents analyses that discuss issues relevant to the current national agenda. The accumulated imbalance of 'capacities' in various policy areas, the challenges of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, the peculiarities of capacity mobilization in the local context, and the intersection between capacities and governance are some of the topics debated in this publication.

It is worth mentioning that this publication is a result of the debate promoted during the International Workshop on Building Capable States for Development in Latin America, held in São Paulo in December 2018 - an event promoted in a partnership between the National University of Singapore (NUS), the Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV/EAESP), and the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA). Thus, the papers presented in this special issue have been examined and discussed previously among Brazilian and international academics dedicated to the study of state capacities. The aim of publishing these papers in English is to continue to promote this sort of dialogue in international debates on the field of public policy.

The first article of this special issue *Building Policy Capacity within Contextual and Political Boundaries: An Analysis of Policies in Fiscal and Social Areas in Brazil (1988/2016)* by Loureiro, Lima-Silva, Aranha, and Calabrez contributes to the debate on theoretical and methodological problems related to the state capacity concept. It discusses the distinctions and connections between state capacity and policy capacity, capacity and resources, and capacity and results. Looking at policies that gained priority in various recent federal governments, Loureiro et al. offer important reflections on the effects of historical and political contexts to state capacity accumulation and mobilization.

The second article, *Policy Capacity and Governance Conditions for Implementing Sustainable Development Goals in Brazil*, by Koga, Filgueiras, Nascimento, Borali, and Lima, promotes a dialogue over the challenges involved in the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda in Brazil. Based on results from a survey answered by federal civil servants and in-depth interviews with key supporters of the SDG, the article looks at the capacities necessary to pursue this complex and intricated development agenda. In the same line with Loureiro et al.'s work, this second article highlights that, despite the relevance of building state capacity, it is not enough or is disassociated from other governance

conditions. Institutional arrangements of collaboration and leadership are shown to be as essential to building capacity and to moving the state towards the level of policy integration demanded by the SDG.

In the third article, *Building Relational Capacities from Institutional Arrangements: Lessons Based on the Construction of Salvador's Subway System*, Lima and Vaz examine an interesting case of shifts of institutional arrangements throughout the implementation of urban infrastructure policy, in which state-owned companies played different roles. Employing this, the study manages to show the effects of institutional arrangements in building and mobilizing various dimensions of policy capacity, such as administrative, analytical, and relational capacities. The analysis of the interaction between the large array of actors involved in the implementation process also contributed to shed light on a still little explored aspect of empirical studies, which is the mutual interference of various dimensions of capacity, notably various types of relational capacities.

The fourth article, *Beyond Local (In)Capacity: Analyzing the Implementation of a Federally Induced Urban Policy in Brazil*, Lima-Silva and Loureiro bring the Brazilian inter-federative attribute of most of Brazilian policymaking as a central contextual aspect to be considered in the process of building capacity. The authors look at an unprecedented case of the federal government inducing municipalities to implement policies of slum upgrading interventions through the allocation of a large amount of investment. The study contrasts common sense with the municipalities' incapacity to explain the implementation failure or underperformance of inter-federative policies. By applying the nested-policy capacity model proposed by Wu, Ramesh and Howlett (2015), the paper shows that not only individual and organizational local capacities, but also the systemic level of capacity in its analytical, organizational, and political dimensions were part of the explanation. Moreover, other aspects such as the municipalities' heterogeneity, problems in the design of the policy or its instruments, and the problematic interaction between some of the stakeholders, were also pointed out as causes of unsatisfactory results, in addition to the large federal investments.

Finally, as invited special editors, we would like to express our special thanks to the editors and team of the *Public Service Journal (Revista do Serviço Público - RSP)* for their partnership and support in this publication. We understand that the collection of these papers meets the goals of the *RSP*, since it offers analytical and conceptual subsidies to the possibilities of expanding the capacity of formulation and implementation of public policies, governance, and management in the federal and local spheres of Brazilian public administration. Furthermore, it brings together analyses which originate from an examination of practical experiences within the national context that stimulate reflection on the part of academics and practitioners, the main readers of the journal.

We hope this publication proves provocative and helpful to those who are interested in the subject of building and mobilizing state capacity for development.

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