



The politics of service delivery and public goods provision

New ways of structuring evidence and analysis

**Leni Wild, ODI and Claire Mcloughlin,
University of Birmingham**

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Why do problems persist? Nasolo River, Malawi



Source: Cammack/APPP (2012)



Growing recognition of these political and governance bottlenecks, but:

- Tendency to generalise and use fuzzy concepts
- Increasing number of studies but few structured reviews
- On-going challenges to *operationalise* findings

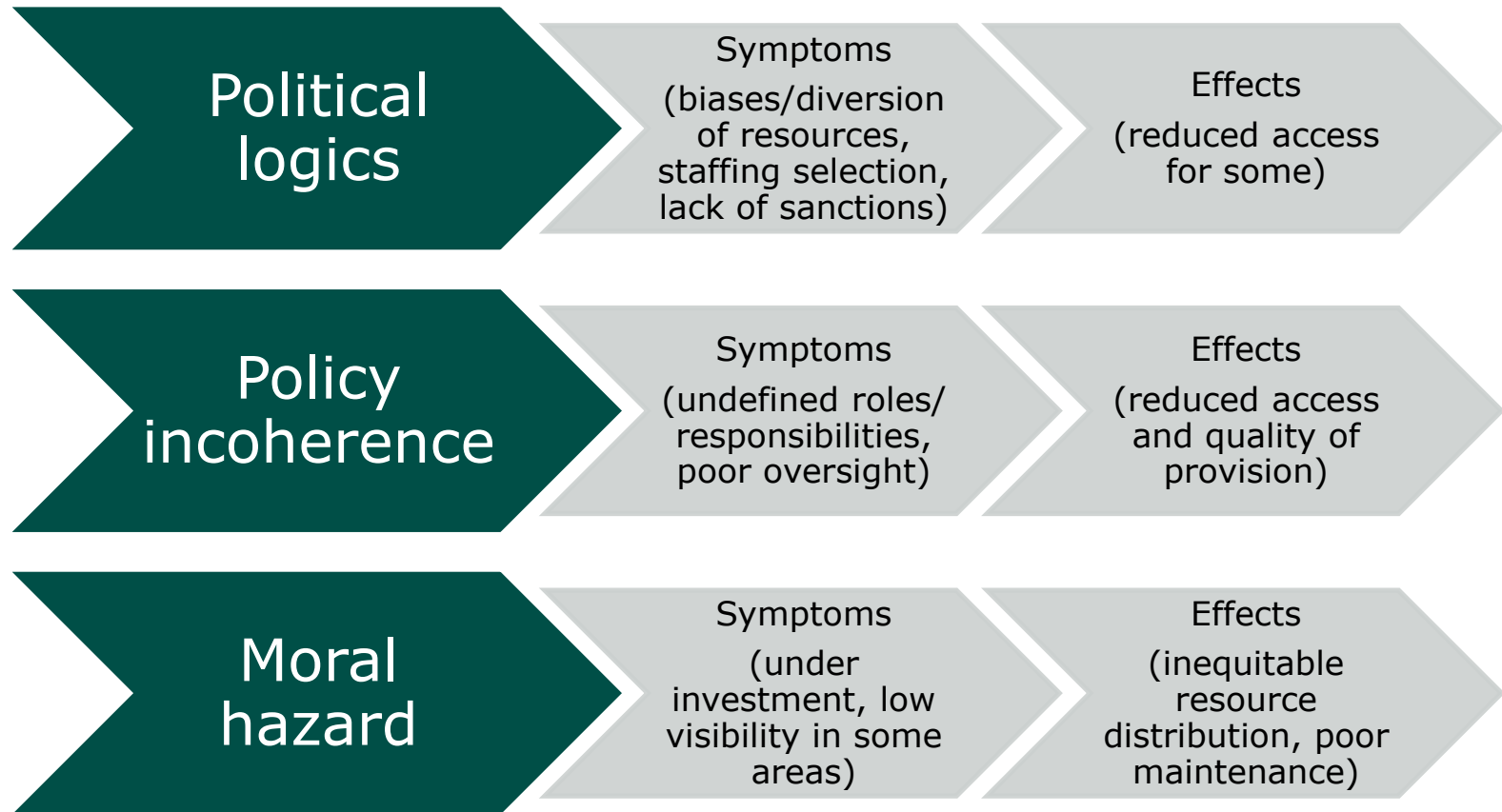
New ODI programme: applied analysis of underlying governance dynamics and sector specific characteristics



Underlying governance dynamics

Five common governance dynamics that shape service delivery processes and outcomes:

1. Political logics
2. Policy coherence/ incoherence
3. Performance monitoring and accountability
4. Capacity for collective action
5. Presence of moral hazard





Underlying features of Malawi context:

- Political logics
- Policy incoherence & poor performance accountability

Impacts on service delivery and public goods:

- Water and sanitation; Health; Agriculture; *Etc.*

BUT different services, and functions within them, can also attract different forms of politics

Sector characteristics: More than technical concerns?

| Nature of the good | Market failure characteristics | Task-related characteristics | Demand characteristics |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| <p>Rivalry</p> <p>Excludability</p> | <p>Monopoly tendency</p> <p>Positive or negative externalities</p> <p>Information asymmetry</p> <p>Merit</p> | <p>Measurability</p> <p>Visibility</p> <p>Discretion</p> <p>Transaction-intensity</p> <p>Variability</p> <p>Professionalisation</p> | <p>Frequency & predictability of use</p> <p>Territoriality</p> <p>Political salience</p> |

Examples of political effects on accountability relationships

- Political accountability: Visibility + attributibility affect calculations of political returns + incentivise construction over quality.
- Organisational accountability: Measurability, discretion and professionalization affect balance of power at point of delivery.
- Direct user accountability: Territoriality, frequency + predictability of use affect scope for direct user accountability.



Implications?

- Can we better diagnose the nature of service delivery bottlenecks and strategies for solutions?
 - Systematic assessments of sector and context characteristics (Example: Malawi)
 - Better calibration of accountability support to characteristics of sectors and nature of constraints
 - Tracking uptake and impact
 - Bridging sector and governance divides