The market of policy evaluation in the brazilian federal government public policy, policy evaluation, and government responses

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Introduction

The text focuses on the dilemmas related to the institutionalization of evaluation practices and their insertion in Brazilian policy making processes. Despite recent improvements in the government monitoring and coordination capacities, policy evaluation remains an unstructured area with respect to the policy-making processes.

Brazilian public policy community has developed fast in the last two decades, after the re-democratization process. The policy evaluation market has expanded pushed by the Brazilian government, higher education institutions, international organizations (especially the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank), NGOs and private consultants. The networks of experts in different policy areas are distributed through a myriad of institutions under a variety of arrangements.

Policy evaluation usually focuses on ex-post analysis of policy processes and even in these cases there aren't mechanisms destined to enforce the incorporation of outcomes in policy diagnosis, formulation, decision-making, and implementation stages of policy processes. Political parties are absent players of this debate and incumbent governments have also had difficulties in dealing with empirical based policy studies when they don't fit in their political rhetoric.

Policy evaluation has taken place more frequently in the economic and social sectors. It has been underdeveloped in the infrastructure sector. All sectors face however a shortage of experts in the field, characterized by a thin critical mass and lack of academic scholarly. There are few academic centers engaged in the process of forming and training researchers, analysts and practitioners in the field. Experts are usually formed in their original sectors (health, education, energy, macro-economics) and there are few programs oriented specifically to form people in the field.

The text maps and describes the dynamics of the field in Brazil and highlights possible developments in terms of how the federal government can benefit from taking evaluation more seriously in the policy making processes. The text focuses on four empirical cases in order to discuss the challenge of institutionalizing evaluation in Brazilian public sector. Each case discusses one institutional experiment. The four cases are: the governmental think tank located at the Ministry of Planning, Budgeting and Management - the Institute of Economics Applied Research (*Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada, IPEA*), the national audit body – The Federal Court of Accounts (Tribunal de Contas da União, TCU), the Secretary of Plans and Investments (Secretaria de Planos e Investimentos - SPI) of the Ministry of Planning, Budgeting and Management, and the Sub-Secretary of Articulation and Monitoring (Sub-Secretaria de Articulação e Monitoramento – SAM) of the Chief of Staff Ministry at the Presidency.

The cases took place in different time intervals. First, IPEA is a forty years old institution. The text focuses on its historical role but focuses in the last seventeen years in more detail. Second, TCU is also a very old institution. It dates from the thirties. The text focuses only in the period after the 1988

Constitution also. Third, SPI gained importance after the revival of planning that took place after Brazil in Action, a package of investment projects launched by Cardoso in his first mandate and the multi annual plan[1] – Go Brazil (Avança Brasil) plan that marked his second mandate. The text focuses on lessons from Brazil in Action and Go Brazil related to the debate about evaluation. Fourth, SAM was created recently, in 2003. The text focuses on its first year of existence.

The text is organized in eight parts, including this introduction. The second part explores the analytical categories used to analyze the cases. The third, fourth, fifth, and sixth parts deal with each one of the institutions in quest. The seventh part compares the four cases. The last part provides a conclusion regarding the analysis of the fourth cases.

2. The challenge of institutionalizing policy evaluation in the federal government.

In order to identify similarities and differences between the four cases six categories of analysis were incorporated in the analysis: four organizational and two environmental. The four organizational factors listed to be considered include: administrative design, personnel policy, technological processes, and policy learning dynamics. The environmental factors include the endogenous drive and the external environment of the institutions in quest.

The type of organization may influence or may not influence the function of an institution. Organizational design is supposed to influence institutional performance. Some of institutions in quest belong to the direct administration. Others are part of the indirect administration. The personnel regime is usually civil service in the former and private in the latter. The accounting system is public in the first type and of organizations and private in the latter. To what extent form follows function is a matter of discussion as it will be discussed later.

The personnel policy is considered as a separate matter because the evaluative potential is intensive in highly specialized human capital. Recruitment procedures, qualification processes, and incentives structures affect evaluation capacities. Each one of the cases provided different personnel solutions over time. Institutionalization of evaluation practices requires workable personnel policies.

The more information and communication technologies (ICT) have changed the more they have been incorporated in evaluation practices. However, different institutions developed distinct technological solutions. ICT provides a wide range of possibilities regarding evaluation practices, as two of the cases – SPI and SAM – will demonstrate.

Cumulative policy learning is another feature to be analyzed. The possibility of systematic improvement of evaluative practices is not a trivial capacity. It presumes institutionalization of a locus capable of enabling policy learning over time. Each one of the cases presents a different type of learning angle.

The six factors are not exhaustive. Other elements also play a role in the process of institutionalization of policy evaluation mechanisms. The evaluation drive, the effectiveness of the programs, presidential

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[1] Brazilian Constitution requires the elaboration of a multi annual plan by the government in its first year in power. It is a four years plan. It is supposed to be formulated in the first year of the government. It is valid until the first year of the next government. Since the re-democratization process until Cardoso's election the constitutional provisions were taken as a formality.

attention, fiscal concerns and others are examples of factors to be taken into account but they were grouped within the environmental factor. The six factors facilitate comparability over time.

3 IPEA: the Federal Government fabric of ideas in search of a new role

Roberto Campos created the Economic Applied Research Office (Escritório – mais tarde Instituto - de Pesquisa Econômica e Aplicada – EPEA later IPEA) in 1965 to support governmental efforts towards planning and developing Brazil. IPEA aimed to be a policy oriented think tank out of the ministerial routine of the Ministry of Planning (Velloso, 2004: 85). IPEA recruited the best talents available and adopted an aggressive capacity program in order to enable its researchers to study abroad.

IPEA golden period occurred in the 1970s, during authoritarian regime. IPEA provided ideas and proposal to several governmental policies and it was considered an island of excellence in the federal administration. Thanks to an intelligent recruitment policy IPEA grouped some of the best cadres of the country. IPEA researchers designed the First and Second National Development Plans as well as the institutional arrangements that shaped Brazilian development in three decades. IPEA's journal – Research in Political Economy (Pesquisa & Política Econômica - PPE) was the most important publication in economics in Brazil.

During the re-democratization process in the mid eighties IPEA provided most of the ministries that supported the Sarney transitional's Presidency. A new journal was launced - - Planning and Public Policy (*Planejamento e Políticas Públicas*) was launched and the institution was at the center of the policy making process of the federal administration. But that period also marked the beginning of IPEA's decline. The 1988 Constitution transformed IPEA in institution of the direct administration, subordinated to unique regime juridical of personnel, to administrative law, and to public accountancy rules. IPEA lost its flexibility and all its researchers were transformed in civil servants.

In fifteen years IPEA did only two public selections to recruit new researchers. There were no incentives to generate revenues. IPEA's budget was formed mainly by international loans from the Inter-American Development Bank. The decline of planning led to the eclipse of the Ministry of Planning. Moreover, IPEA gradually detached itself from the Ministry needs and from the governments' agendas.

The more remote IPEA links with the government became the more autonomous the institution became. Some of IPEA own researchers directed the institution from 1993 until 1998. Since 1999 until 2004, outsiders – academics that didn't belong to the institution, have occupied the post of President of IPEA. Both were reputed professionals but they weren't close to the Ministers of Planning of the period.

IPEA kept its think tank profile during the 1990s but without a consistent connection with the government priorities. Some of the working papers and publications of the institution were evaluative reports. But they didn't feed formulation or reformulation efforts in the line ministries. The Brazilian government does not have any institutional feedback mechanism oriented towards the incorporation of evaluation outcomes in the respective policy areas. The governmental think tank does not pursue a structured research agenda. The issues to be investigated are usually defined by the researchers or by the organizations that commission the analysis. The government doesn't control the investigative agenda of the researchers.

Meanwhile IPEA did only two public selections between 1988 and 2004. Most of the senior researchers are retiring. The young cadres didn't have tutorial assistance in order to ensure a smooth organizational transition. Moreover, the new researchers joined the institution as civil servants. They didn't know the golden period of the institution, marked by flexibility mechanisms and a central role in the governmental policy-making processes.

The Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) provided two important donations to IPEA in order to strength the evaluation function in Latin America and to create policy networks by themes. The outcomes of the former were three publications and an international event in which the institutionalization of policy evaluation processes were discussed in several countries. The latter has fulfilled the role of a research budget of IPEA instead of enabling the institutionalization of new policy networks although some initiatives had been carried out in this area.

IADB intended to provide means for the establishment of an evaluation culture in Latin America governments. The initiatives were valid but they faced the problem of ownership. Brazilian government, for instance, didn't use the projects to institutionalize policy evaluation mechanism. The projects – especially the one related to evaluation – contributed to the development of a critical mass related to evaluation themes. But they didn't generate institutional processes capable of transforming evaluation practices in a routine.

IPEA's record of publications remains impressive and some of its researchers have achieved national and international projection. But the institution's agenda is neither defined by the government of the day nor by institutional mechanisms of establishing priorities. New evaluation areas have emerged[2] but they were commanded by the researchers' priorities, detached from the public policies adopted by the government.

4 TCU: an unexpected control revolution

During the re-democratization process TCU embarked in a policy learning process that included contacts with the United States and Canada national audit bodies: the General Accounting Office (GAO) and (Canadian General Audit). TCU initiated a trajectory of professionalization after the 1988 Constitution. Since that year there were periodical public selections and intense training programs with national and international experts. The emphasis on the period 1988-1994 was on operational auditing. TCU developed initiatives that included its headquarter and its local branches in federal institutions that included ministries, state owned companies, autarchies and foundations.

Two important policy changes took place in Cardoso's first mandate and influenced the trajectory of TCU: the attempt to reform the state apparatus[3] and the launching of Brazil in Action[4]. TCU reacted to both. It immediately engaged in an innovative policy dialogue with both initiatives but with an interesting twist. TCU incorporated international actors in both processes in order to acquire the expertise required to keep itself updated with the government novelties. In order to deal with the reform of the state apparatus the United Kingdom was the country taken into account. In order to deal with the revival of a PPBS style of planning the United States was the country selected to used as a reference.

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[2] The poverty studies led by the Rio de Janeiro section contributed with important innovations in terms of impact analysis.
[3] The initiative was embodied in a White Paper: Director Plan of the Reform of the State Apparatus.
[4] Barzelay (2005) provided an interesting narrative of Brazil in Action first steps.

The federal government implemented a new managerial information system in the Ministry of Planning – Sistema de Informações Gerenciais (SIG) – in 1995. The multi annual plan 1996-1999 was based on the new system. Moreover, the budgetary law established a new compulsory procedure: the need to make explicit the concrete results proposed per year. The initiatives resulted in Brazil in Action in 1997 and evolved to the creation of a new managerial system oriented towards planning. Go Brazil – launched in 1999 – already incorporated a more consistent contractualization of results framework. But the first steps were taken during 1995 and 1996.

TCU's response was consistent with the new government concerns. In order to adequate itself to the new practices of the federal government TCU launched an ambitious training program oriented to program policy evaluation[5]. The program was designed by a partnership that included the Getúlio Vargas Foundation, the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and the National Academy of Public Administration. GAO and OMB officers participated in the program as well as officials of several departments, agencies, and NGOs. The initiative trained twenty-five TCU analysts in Washington for three weeks, a significant number of professionals in proportional terms. The main outcomes of the initiative were the incorporation of performance auditing techniques used by the GAO in TCU procedures (Bastos, 2002 12).

The reform of the state apparatus disseminated new public management[6] ideas in Brazil. TCU was aware of the international ongoing debate regarding performance auditing. TCU participated in the negotiations between the federal government and the Department of Foreign International Development (DFID) that resulted in a cooperation program between a British team of consultants led by Kate Jenkins and the Ministry of Administration and State Reform. TCU and DFID signed an agreement in the beginning of 1998 that resulted in a three years cooperation plan. The project aimed to develop capacities related to three main areas in TCU: performance auditing, program evaluation, and recommendations' enforcement.

KPMG won an international bid in order to promote technologic transference to TCU. The program included technical visits of TCU analysts in UK, elaboration of training materials, training programs with the participation of KPMG professionals, dissemination of best practice techniques[7] certified by the British experience, pilot auditing exercises, experiments on political communication of auditing processes, and workshops.

TCU and KPMG developed pilot projects in three areas: education, health and environment. In all three cases the institutions involved participated on the projects on voluntary basis. The outcomes were impressive because they were perceived as a result of a collective effort. Good practices were internalized. Policy learning took place in TCU and in the institutions audited. All partners involved recognized the success of the cooperation process and decided to expand the project in May 2001. The project continued until December 2001 and incorporated two other sectors: agriculture and social development.

The main policy spillover of the cooperation between TCU and DFID was the creation of the Secretary of Oversight and Evaluation of Governmental Programs (Secretaria de Fiscalização e Avaliação de Programas de Governo – SEPROG) in the end of 2000. The institutionalization of an evaluation locus

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[5] See Bastos (2002) for a more detailed account of the initiative.

[6] Hood (1991), Aucoin (1990) and Pollitt (1990) produced the pioneering texts about new public management.

[7] The techniques introduced in the context of the cooperation program included: SWOT analysis, risk analysis, benchmarking, performance management, logical framework, stakeholder analysis, and processes mapping (Bastos, 2002: 15).

coincided the initiation of Go Brazil – the multi year plan 2000-2003. Go Brazil was based on programs, not projects (as in Brazil in Action).

The stage two of the DFID-TCU program began in 2002. It aimed to adopt methodologies oriented program evaluation especially with respect to poverty reduction, inequality reduction, and regulatory policies. Quality control mechanisms were introduced through the installation of audit challenges, another technique transferred from the United Kingdom. The asymmetry between TCU and the internal control of the federal executive became evident. The former developed anticipatory capacities regarding the federal executive the latter became subordinated to a reactive anti-corruption vision at the Executive Federal Controller (Controladoria Geral da União – CGU[8])

SEPROG became the main reference of TCU with respect to Go Brazil because in both cases the main analytical units were programs. Since 2002 TCU implemented a systematic monitoring program oriented to oversight the adoption of its recommendations. Thanks also to the interaction with the National Audit Body TCU introduced a new communication policy. It included publishing summaries of the reports in an accessible language in order to disseminate the main findings of the audits.

The existence of a training center – Instituto Serzedello Correa – facilitated the socialization of the new contents brought by the contact with foreign institutions. The development of a learning culture was oriented towards continuous improvement. Indoctrination programs were introduced and pos graduation programs were created in order to motivate TCU workforce. Specialization was encouraged and three main areas emerged as priorities: policy and programs evaluation, regulatory policy, and performance auditing. In ten years TCU became one of the most reputed pockets of excellence of the federal bureaucracy. Despite TCU constitutional limitations[9] it began to exercise direct influence over policy formulation and policy implementation processes[10].

5 The revival of planning – a moribund governmental tradition

One important novelty of the first year of Cardoso's government was the initiative to implement a managerial information system in the Ministry of Planning. Planning was a moribund governmental tradition at that time. It was a taboo that didn't appeal either to the public opinion or to politicians because it reminded the authoritarian period. The system –*Sistema de Informações Gerenciais* (SIG) – became the starting point of a surprising enterprise that led to the revival of planning in the Brazilian public sector. The experiment took place during Cardoso years in power – 1995-2002. But it evolved from one mandate – when Brazil in Action was launched - to the other – when Go Brazil became the face of the government.

During the second year of Cardoso's mandate the idea of grouping presidential main projects in a package gradually emerged in the context of the interaction between the Chief of Staff Minister – in charge of monitoring the main governmental actions – and the Minister of Planning – concerned with a tighter control of the federal administration programs. Brazil in Action was formed by a group of projects elicited from the Pluri-Annual Plan 1996-1999. The initiative aimed to recall the Plan of Goals of Juscelino Kubitchek (1956-1961) and to provide Cardoso with a developmental agenda, dominated

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[8] See Gaetani, F. (2005) Corrupção se combate com profissionalismo, in Desafios 13, August
[9] TCU is constrained by its role as a legislative advisory body and its limited enforcement powers.
[10] One important example of the new policy evaluation approach of TCU was the reformulation of performance agreements of regulatory agencies.

by structural adjustment issues at that time[11].

At the same time that Brazil in Action was launched the Ministry of Planning commissioned a report about the national axes of integration and development (Consórcio Brasiliana, 2000). The so-called Axes Report recovered a strategic approach based on geopolitics that was initially formulated by a legendary figure of the infra-structure – Eliezer Baptista – who had been the chairman of Vale do Rio Doce (one of the biggest mining companies in the world). The Axes Report identified key bottlenecks in Brazilian Infrastructure and provided the basis for legitimizing Brazil in Action and for paving the way for Go Brazil few years later.

Brazil in Action brought some important innovations with respect to traditional planning practices. It introduced a project approach to public investments. It institutionalized mechanisms of individual accountability because it defined a manager for each project. It incorporated elements of project management and total quality management – borrowed from the private sector professional communities - in the process of governmental planning. It emphasized the processual dimension of public management. It enabled a focused approach to governmental priorities.

During the transition between Cardoso's first and second mandates the high officials in charge of the Secretaries of Planning and Budgeting introduced important innovations in the traditional budgetary process thanks to the support of the Chief of Staff Minister and of the Minister of Planning. The idea was the transformation of the forty-two projects of Brazil in Action in a generalized Multi Annual Plan – Go Brazil - formed by three hundred and forty five programs.

The move from a project management perspective to a revamped planning, programming, budgeting system (PPBS) framework was enriched by the adoption of performance management techniques. Contratualization of results was a fundamental dimension of a new system – System of Managerial Information for Planning (SIGPLAN). SIGPLAN was an evolution of SIG but incorporated novelties like performance indicators and a programmatic view of all governmental initiatives that were part of Go Brazil.

Brazil in Action was not effectively evaluated but it was considered a success by the main political actors at that time. A propaganda report was produced at the end of the period 1996-1999 in order to provide the basic data of the package. The Multi Annual Plan 1996-1999 and Brazil in Action were deliberately confused although they meant different things. Go Brazil was presented as the superior stage of the previous initiative. But on the contrary of its antecessor it counted on substantive policy support from other actors that were involved in the new Multi Annual 2000-2003 Plan formulation effort.

The sense of ownership in the Ministry of Planning was more effective in Go Brazil. Several analyses were carried out about Go Brazil in the period. The Ministry of Planning launched an evaluation manual[12] to support the dissemination of an evaluation culture within the ministries. Brazilian analysts produced important elaborations about the new Multi-Annual Plan (Coutinho, 2001, Gusso, 2000 and 2001; Gartenkraut, 2002, Silva e Costa, 2002).

The attempt to internalize an evaluative function in the Multi-Annual Plan 2000-2003 produced

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[11] For a detailed account of the origin of Brazil in Action see Barzelay (2005).
[12] Brasil (2000)

important conclusions regarding the implementation of Go Brazil[13]. Most of the efforts were incorporated in the information systems located at the Ministry of Planning, Budgeting and Management. Nodality was a key tool of the ministry in order to implement the new implementation framework of governmental programs (Hood, 197?).

Go Brazil however was not exempt of problems as a World Bank (2002) report about Go Brazil revealed. The implementation of Go Brazil faced several problems. The institutionalization of evaluation practices was one of them. Go Brazil was intense in technology, not in human resources. Go Brazil counted on a limited supply of civil servants recruited for a few carriers in the Ministry of Planning, Budgeting and Management – the analysts of planning and budgeting and the governmental managers. These cadres enabled the formulation process of Go Brazil but they didn't ensure its implementation in the line ministries. Moreover, they were not evaluation experts. Therefore they were capable of providing operational support for the Multi Year Plan but they could not ensure the dissemination of an evaluative culture in the federal government.

The transition to Lula's government was marked by a certain degree of discontinuity. The new government promoted a consultation process during the process of the elaboration of a new Multi Year Plan (2004-2007). But it didn't improve the Go Brazil established methodology. The learning process that began in 1995 stagnated. It wasn't dismantled thanks to the maintenance of some key bureaucrats that were in the Secretary of Plans and Investments since 1997. But the initiative lost momentum in the new government. The institutionalization of evaluation mechanisms became a secondary concern in the new context. Only after SAM's creation the Multi Year Plan 2004-2007 was brought to Presidential attention again.

In short, Brazil in Action and Go Brazil provided opportunities for evaluation initiatives within the context of both and outside the Ministry of Planning, Budgeting and Management framework. But the internalization of evaluation practices within the context of the Multi-Annual Plan didn't stick. The information systems at the core of both initiatives incorporated new public management ideas like performance management and individual accountability. There was also an emphasis on the evaluation and – especially – monitoring capacities of the projects and programs. The institutionalization of monitoring took place within the information technology systems – notably SIGPLAN. But evaluative practices weren't institutionalized. They didn't become embedded in governmental mechanisms and organizational practices despite the occurrence of evaluative initiatives by some external actors, usually commissioned by the government.

6 SAM: Monitoring and Evaluation on real time - the Presidency challenge

The Chief of Staff Ministry was the main locus of political and policy coordination in the first year of Lula's government. The minister had overwhelming powers that were compared to a virtual prime minister despite Brazilian presidential regime. There were four Sub-Secretaries located under the minister supervision: Federalist Affairs, Congress Matters, Juridical Affairs, and Governmental Action. The minister was supposed to exercise the functions of primus inter pares within the cabinet. Moreover, the minister coordinated several inter-ministerial councils and task forces in order to tackle problems

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[13] The six main problems pointed out by the evaluative process were: discontinuity in the transference of resources, low integration within governmental ministries, lack of qualified professionals, inadequate infra-structure, problems in intergovernmental transferences to provinces and municipalities (in debt), and red tape in procurement transactions (Silva e Costa, 2002: 51-2).

that involved multiple ministries.

President Lula promoted a cabinet reshuffle in the beginning of 2004 and split the Chief of Staff Ministry in order to create a new ministry: Political Coordination and Federalist Affairs. Two sub-secretaries – Federalist Affairs and Congress Matters – were transferred to the new ministry and the two others remained within the Chief of Staff Ministry jurisdiction. The novelty was the creation of a new Sub-Secretary: SAM. The emphasis was on monitoring in order to inform the minister decision-making process. SAM implicit role went beyond monitoring however. The new Sub-Secretary was responsible for evaluation in process of the presidential priorities.

SAM counted on the support of powerful tool: an information system – *Sistema de Informações Governamentais* (SIGOV) designed to support to political executives decisions. SIGOV had been donated to the Presidency by UNDP. The module of the President Office had been successfully implemented. The new chief of SAM had participated in previous process. She was aware of a module oriented to monitor a selected group of presidential priorities. She used SIGOV as an initial building block for the institutionalization of SAM.

The main emphasis of SAM was on monitoring the main president's programs. But SAM became the facto the minister arm to articulate intergovernmental actions and to play the role of broker in ministries disputes. SAM recruited a team to follow up presidential directions and instructions to all ministries responsible for projects listed as priorities. A small group of appointed positions was created in order to accommodate the new team. In few months SAM had conquered its place in the government. It became the institutional responsible for the pulse of the presidential projects.

Meanwhile SIGOV was adapted to attend SAM's requirements. New functionalities were developed and the system was expanded to absorb a bigger number of priorities. SAM became the eyes and the years of the Presidency in all "*esplanada*"[14] of ministries". SIGOV was a powerful software with a very special attribute. It[15] added public value (Moore, 1995) to the policy-making and especially to the decision making process of the Presidency. The management of the President's agenda became more purposeful. The productivity of the President's time became higher. The monitoring and articulation capacities of the Chief of Staff Ministry were expanded.

The more SAM consolidated its role, the more it became a robust organizational unit. The result was paradoxical: SAM absorbed several coordination functions on behalf of the Chief of Staff Minister. The ministry coordinated several councils and task forces. The Sub-Secretary of SAM increasingly represented the Chief of Staff Minister in his functions. The new role was not only representative. SAM was in charge of a de facto evaluation in process on behalf of the Chief of Staff Ministry. The new unit became a subtle broker of the decision making process in questions that involved controversial themes.

The more its role was publicly recognized the more overwhelming its responsibilities became. New demands were assigned to the Sub-Secretary. More qualified information was required. The number of priorities expanded. More details were demanded. Real time information became the benchmark. The more SIGOV became embedded in the presidency's routine, the more new demands emerged.

SAM accumulated two implicit roles: evaluation unit and decision maker. Both roles are questionable.

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[14] The term designates the site of the ministries (thirty-five) of the Federal Government.
[15] SIGOV was originally developed in Chile during the first government of the "Concertación". The system has been adopted by several Latin American Governments like Chile (the original site), Colombia, Equador, Paraguay and Brazil, fifteen years after its creation.

SAM didn't perform any formal evaluative role. By the same token decisions were not SAM's responsibility. But in both cases the influence of SAM grew in few months although SAM has always reiterated its limited monitoring role. Fifteen months after its creation SAM was considered the most powerful advisory board of the Presidency because its reports were sent to the Chief of Staff Minister and to the President as well.

SAM is currently searching for a better interface with SIGPLAN in order to get a more accurate picture of the flow of resources to the main governmental programs. Financial data were not a main concern of SIGOV. The incorporation of information related to budgetary and financial status of the presidential priorities will empower the system as well as SAM because it will integrate different sort of information in a single system.

7 Comparing different stories

The four cases took place in distinct time periods, in different institutional locations, and with a variety of institutional configurations. In order to contrast the four cases this section highlights this section discusses each one of the six comparative factors regarding the four experiences. The aim of the comparison is to enable the visualization of the evaluative configuration of each one of the four units and to explore features that may favor the performance of evaluative functions.

The organizational design in all four cases presents a surprise. They all took place in institutions regulated by the civil service personnel regime and by public law. Two cases took place in line ministries, one in an advisory body of the legislative power, and one - IPEA - belongs to the so-called indirect administration. The puzzle lies in the alleged low flexibility of this sort of organizations. Or they were capable of carrying out their efforts in the context of their organizational framework or they developed special arrangements in order to push evaluative efforts. IPEA works in a semi-academic environment and many researchers are also part time academics – a possibility contained in their work regime. TCU created an organizational unit – SEPROG - and allocated resources to invest in systematic evaluation. The Ministry of Planning counted on the support of institutions like BNDES in order to commission reports but it didn't develop evaluative capacities out of the information systems. SAM works at the political level. It is an organizational unit that promotes evaluation on real time. Organizational design is a feature usually associated to sustainability. SEPROG/TCU seems better entrenched to fulfill its role than the others. IPEA has also been an institutionalized locus for policy evaluation but it has a more erratic agenda given its collegial style of establishing priorities. The experiences of Brazil in Action & Go Brazil didn't survive the alternation in power. There wasn't a retreat. But the previous processes of organizational improvement stagnated. .

Personnel policy presented limited variation in the cases in quest. The labor force regime in all four cases is statutory – the one applicable to civil servants. The difference lies in the stability of the workforce. TCU is characterized by a solid bureaucratic ethos since the 1988 Constitution. Public selections have been promoted on periodical basis. Careers have adequate incentives' structures. IPEA is split in two generations of researchers: the old guard that joined the institution in the 1970s and 1980s and the young cadres that were approved in recent public selections. IPEA has kept its excellence because most of the young and old researchers have complementary jobs in academia. The contiguity of the research and teaching environments provided synergy and reciprocal effects related to both activities. The Ministry of Planning combines the presence of some strategic careers - analysts of planning and budgeting and governmental managers - but it relies mainly in the former. There are several positions to be fulfilled by political nominations. Outsiders as the Secretaries of SPI between 1995 and 2002 were reputed professionals with large experience in the public sector. Apparently the

option for working in understaffed basis limited the possibilities of SPI/MPOG consolidating its human capital. The main consequence was the poor development of formulation and evaluation capacities at the Ministry of Planning and also in other line ministries. SAM is a typical presidential organizational unit: structured on ad hoc basis with political appointees. The basic criteria to join the team is political loyalty. Rotation is the norm. It is hard to talk about institutionalization of anything in this context but personnel is not the only way to achieve it. In two cases, TCU and IPEA, the presence of outsiders as political appointees is marginal. Only the ministers of TCU and the board of IPEA aren't necessarily employees of the correspondent organizations. SPI/MPOG and SAM tended to develop themselves in less people-intensive basis because of technological and political reasons respectively.

Information and communication technologies played an important role in SAM and SPI but they were not particularly relevant for the evaluation practices at TCU and IPEA. SAM structured itself on the basis of SIGOV. The activities of SAM go beyond the possibilities and limitations of SIGOV. But system was the starting point of the institutionalization of SAM. SIGOV integrated the activities of SAM in Presidential Agenda, another module of the software. President Lula is informed by SAM's reports that provided fresh information about the projects that were his priorities. SIG, and later SIGPLAN, were at the core of the novelties introduced by SPI during Brazil in Action and Go Brazil. The system embodied performance management and budgeting for results principles. The main feature, however, was the nodality of the system that integrated projects & programs, budget, financial transferences, performance indicators, and accountability mechanisms. IPEA and TCU didn't incorporate information and communication technologies in their core activities. Both institutions operate through networks and well-developed websites. But information technology didn't change the nature of their activities.

Organizational and policy learning occurred under different forms in all four cases. By far the most impressive case of cumulative policy learning took place at TCU. Since the 1988 Constitution and more significantly after the mid 1990s TCU engaged in international cooperation programs, especially with NAO (UK) and GAO (USA). Thanks to its personnel policy TCU was capable of forming generations of cadres that were exposed to different sort of auditing practices. The main result was the internalization of a strategic reasoning by TCU. A cascade of transformations took place and TCU became one of the most impressive cases of policy change in the federal administration. SPI was an important locus of public management policy innovations between 1995 and 2003. Brazil in Action (Barzelay, 2005), Go Brazil (World Bank, 2002) and Brazil for All (Brazil, 2003 and Gaetani, 2004) involved importance innovative cycles although Brazil in Action and Go Brazil were more dense in policy learning processes than Brazil for All. IPEA had been stagnated in organizational terms until 2002. Only in the last years a consistent effort has been carried out in order to revitalized the institution – especially through new public selections and an attempt to reposition the organization in strategic terms[16]. SAM is only one year old but it acquired an impressive importance in few months. It is an ad hoc unit located at the core of the government. It has political nodality also. It is aware of everything that is happening in the line ministries. It is a volatile organizational unit but there are no doubts that they were deeply engaged in policy learning processes at least until the change of the Chief of Staff Minister in June 2005.

The endogenous drive varied over time in all four cases. Usually it comes from the top of the organization. But in TCU the drive came from the bottom and, therefore, it was stable and consistent over the last ten years. IPEA had a high profile leadership only after 2002 because of the proximity of its President to the inner circle of the President. SAM was led by a formulator in 1995 and1996 and by

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[16] Two main initiatives signaled the repositioning strategy: the launching of monthly magazine oriented to promote the national debate about public policies and the publication of Brazilian Portrait in yearly basis.

an entrepreneurial champion between 1996 and 2002. Only in 2005 a policy operator occupied the Secretary again. Incidentally, the current director was a member of the team that promoted changes during Cardoso governments. Only one person occupied the post of SAM's Sub-Secretary: an ex special advisor of President Lula. She had successfully conduced the unification of cash conditioned transference programs that led to the creation of Family Grant. She and her team have supported the President Office and the Chief of Staff Ministry simultaneously.

The environment was influential in different ways according to the case. TCU was an extreme case. The institution is insulated from the political context. Only ministries change from time to time when one of them retires. But even in TCU focusing events played a major role. A corruption scandal related to the Judiciary Power in São Paulo in the middle 1990s was anticipated by TCU but nothing happened. Since that event TCU engaged in a pro-active trajectory because it threat an external threat: its useless. IPEA modus operandi depended heavily on its leadership. Since 1995 IPEA's President has changed following the presidential mandate. IADB indeed played a role with respect to evaluation initiatives. But the implementation of the project fell short of its initial goals. The endogenous dynamics of the institution has been more relevant for the configuration of the organization although the current president has tried to provide some guidance to the organization. SPI was affected by political turnover at the top of the Ministry of Planning … but at a point. José Silveira – survived four ministries of planning between 1996 and 2002. Moreover, the financial crisis that exploded after Cardoso's re-election – a key focusing event - provided a window of opportunity for SPI pushing the policy changes required to provide feasibility to Go Brazil. SAM was created in the context of the re-engineering of the Chief of Staff Ministry. UNDP pro-active role supported the self-organization effort of SAM. More important, the new assignment of the Chief of Staff Ministry – concentrate on executive functions – provided an opportunity for a different sort of institutionalization effort – supported by the President himself.

Table 1 summarizes the main features of each attempt to institutionalize policy evaluation organizational units. The last column specify a distinctive attribute of each case that should be taken into account.

	TCU National Audit Body linked to the Congress	IPEA Think tank of the Ministry of Planning, Budgeting and Management	SPI Ministry of Planning, Budgeting and Management	SAM Chief of Staff Ministry
Organizational Design	Traditional public organization with clear borders and insulated from the rhythm of government	Transformed in public organization by the 1988 Constitution but uncomfortable with its identity Intergenerational problem	Small structure of positions fulfilled by professional cadres combined with politically appointed leaders	Small structure of positions but
Personnel Policy	Commitment with Weberian type of bureaucracy	Traditional public service but spasmodic	Traditional public service but insufficient	Appointed State
Information and communication technological ingredients	Neutral		Nodal position with respect to budgeting the performance management	Nodal position combined with access to the President

Policy learning and policy transfer	Successful policy dialogue with UK and UK Cascade of innovations in techniques, approaches and political communications	Connections with academic networks but without problematizing the institutional process	Combination of direct learning and vicarious learning with importation of techniques from the private sector	Combination of external input (UNDP) and endogenous process of self configuration
Endogenous drive	Bottom up move of young cadres	Self-organization with low sensitive to governmental priorities except recently		Top down, from the Sub-Secretary
Environmental factors	Reaction against charges of being "irrelevant"	Low degree of responsiveness to external factors except recently	Unfinished institutionalization	Too sensitive to political factors
Intriguing attribute	Virtuous cycle, calibration and adherence to SPI	Robustness, capacities and survival potential	Resilience and unstable equilibrium	Volatility and contestable effectiveness

The shared point regarding all four cases refers to SPI nodal role as central source of information. SPI has interfaces with all them. TCU chooses specific programs of the multi-annual plan to be audited. IPEA selects interesting initiatives to carry out a deeper policy analysis. SAM is increasingly expanding SIGOV in order to have more access to SIGPLAN data and information. SPI provides *vertebración* to all evaluation efforts in quest..

8 Conclusion

The four cases highlighted the existence of fragmented concerns regarding policy evaluation in the Brazilian Federal Administration. They are indeed related to each other but their absence of institutional interfaces points out the lack of articulation regarding policy evaluation exercises.

SAM and SPI operate in fact within the context of a time framework related to the present. They concentrate their activities in monitoring. On line evaluation takes place on implicit and frequently informal basis. Timing plays an even more important in SAM's case because it supports the Presidential decision-making final process in real time. TCU and IPE also use SPI as the main source of data and information but in different terms. TCU uses programs of the multi-annual plan as object of auditing exercises. IPEA adopts a more detailed policy approach that goes beyond programmatic angles.

The scenario suggests the existence of potential consistencies provided the government launches a coordinated effort oriented to such purpose. Meanwhile SAM and TCU probably will be increasingly important because of the access to the Presidency of the former and appeal to the media of the latter. IPEA depends heavily on its leadership pushing towards the attendance of the government agenda. SPI depends on the consolidation of the unfinished business of institutional building that began in 1995.

The underlying issues of the discussion of the four cases refer to two main points: the lack of

formulation and evaluation capacities in the line ministries. Some sectoral ministries have demonstrated capacity to commission evaluative reports of their activities – like in the education, environment, and health cases - but they have failed in internalizing their conclusions. In fact, they have failed in developing formulation capacities capable of benefiting of substantive evaluative inputs.

The four cases in quest reveal that policy evaluation is not a taboo in Brazilian Federal Administration but it is not institutionalized yet despite the advances in this direction in the last years. There is room for policy coordination in order to generate synergies that favor all institutions involved. The purpose of policy evaluation is not the same in the four cases. The same is true for the timing. The more the government empower SPI, however, the more SAM, TCU and IPEA will benefit from it – as well as SPI of course.

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