

# The Principle of Subsidiarity

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# Materials available

As part of DESA/DPIDG [Curriculum on Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals](#):

- [Toolkit on Effective National to Local Public Governance for SDG Implementation](#)
- [Local E-Government Toolkit](#)

These toolkits focus on strengthening national to local government coordination and institutional effectiveness for the SDGs and covers local implementation.

# Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development

## Effectiveness

- » Competence
- » Sound policymaking
- » Collaboration

## Accountability

- » Integrity
- » Transparency
- » Independent oversight

## Inclusiveness

- » Leaving no one behind
- » Non-discrimination
- » Participation
- » Subsidiarity
- » Intergenerational equity



## Principles of effective governance for sustainable development

### What are they for?

- » Building strong institutions at all levels
- » Serving as a reference point that brings together relevant standards and technical guidelines
- » Informing public sector reform initiatives for the SDGs

### Where do they come from?

- » Developed by CEPA specifically for SDG implementation
- » Endorsed by the UN Economic and Social Council
- » Based on United Nations agreements

### How can countries benefit from them?

- » As an analytical framework in policy formulation
- » As a guide in assessing institutional capacities, processes and culture
- » As a foundation of SDG awareness raising and training initiatives

### CEPA >>> Committee of Experts on Public Administration

CEPA is an expert body of the United Nations that studies and makes recommendations to improve governance and public administration structures and processes for development.

## EFFECTIVENESS

### COMPETENCE

- Promotion of a professional public sector workforce
- Strategic human resources management
- Leadership development, training of civil servants
- Performance management
- Results-based management
- Financial management and control
- Efficient and fair revenue administration
- Investment in e-government

### SOUND POLICY-MAKING

- Strategic planning and foresight
- Regulatory impact analysis
- Promotion of coherent policymaking
- Strengthening national statistical systems
- Monitoring & evaluation systems
- Science-policy interface
- Risk management frameworks
- Data sharing

### COLLABORATION

- Centre of government coordination under Head of State / Government
- Collaboration, coordination, integration, dialogue across levels of government, functional areas
- Raising awareness on SDGs
- Network-based governance
- Multi-stakeholder partnerships

## ACCOUNTABILITY

### ACCOUNTABILITY

- Promotion of anti-corruption policies, practices and bodies
- Codes of conduct for public officials
- Competitive public procurement
- Elimination of bribery, influence trading
- Conflict of interest policies
- Whistle-blower protection
- Provision of adequate remuneration and equitable pay scales for public servants

### TRANSPARENCY

- Proactive disclosure of information
- Budget transparency
- Open government data
- Registries of beneficial ownership
- Lobby registries

### INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT

- Promotion of the independence of regulatory agencies
- Arrangements for review of administrative decisions by courts or other bodies
- Independent audit
- Respect for legality

## INCLUSIVENESS

### LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

- Promotion of equitable fiscal and monetary policy
- Promotion of social equity
- Data disaggregation
- Systematic follow-up and review

### NON-DISCRIMINATION

- Promotion of public sector workforce diversity
- Prohibition of discrimination in public service delivery
- Multilingual service delivery
- Accessibility standards
- Cultural audit of institutions
- Universal birth registration
- Gender-responsive budgeting

### PARTICIPATION

- Free and fair elections
- Regulatory process of public consultation
- Multi-stakeholder forums
- Participatory budgeting
- Community-driven development

### SUBSIDIARITY

- Fiscal federalism
- Strengthening urban governance
- Strengthening municipal finance and local finance systems
- Enhancement of local capacity for prevention, adaptation and mitigation of external shocks

### INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY

- Multilevel governance
- Sustainable development impact assessment
- Long-term public debt management
- Long-term territorial planning and spatial development
- Ecosystem management





# The Principle of Subsidiarity

One of the 11 principles of effective governance for sustainable development is subsidiarity: to promote government that is responsive to the needs and aspirations of all people, central authorities should perform only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more intermediate or local level.



# Subsidiarity guidance notes

The principle of subsidiarity has 5 strategy guidance notes which have been prepared by DESA-DPIDG. These are:

- Fiscal federalism and decentralization
- Strengthening municipal finance and local finance systems
- Strengthening urban governance
- Enhancement of local capacity for prevention, adaptation and mitigation of external shocks
- Multilevel governance

All the papers can be accessed on:

<https://publicadministration.desa.un.org/intergovernmental-support/cepa/strategy-guidance-notes>



# Content of the Notes

The notes give an overview of what is needed to operationalize the principle of subsidiarity. They focus on:

- the economic approaches and benefits of decentralizing appropriate public sector functions and finances to subnational levels of government;
- strategies to operationalize and strengthen the components of local and municipal finance systems;
- ways in which government (local, regional, and national) and stakeholders decide how to plan, finance, and manage urban areas;
- how each level of government is responsible for a set of policies, which it can exercise with a certain degree of autonomy while needing to cooperate with other jurisdictional levels;
- local capacity to prevent, adapt and mitigate external shocks reduces the incidence of larger scale hazards, and helps enhance local multi-hazard early warning mechanisms (focus of next talk).

# Conclusion

- The notes, read together, provide a comprehensive understanding of what countries can do to increase local implementation of the SDGs;
- They provide strategies for Governments with examples and good practices;
- DESA/DPIDG could provide capacity building programmes on request to assist in implementation: [jagwanth@un.org](mailto:jagwanth@un.org)