



**Assessing Institutional  
Readiness for  
Policy Coherence**

Module 2

# Agenda of the Module

14:00-14:15	Intro	Introduction, existing understandings, objectives
14:15-14:45	Presentation	Key concepts: Building blocks for policy coherence and indicators
14:45-15:00	Activity	Brainstorming: Strengths and Weaknesses
15:00-15:30	Activity	Ready for Policy Coherence? Fill Building Blocks 1, 3, 4
15:30-15:40	Break	
15:40-16:10	Activity	Continue
16:10-16:30	Round table	What did you find?
16:30-17:00	Presentation	Good Case Finland and The political nature of policy coherence
17:00-17:30	Wrap-Up	Key lessons for the Action Plan

# Round table to check participants' existing understandings

## *Examples for lead questions*

- In your experience: What are the institutional strengths and weaknesses of your working environment for the creation of policy coherence?
- Can you describe the institutional arrangements for SDG implementation in your country?

# What is module 2 about?

Assessment of the institutional readiness of a governance system for policy coherence

Integrated indicator framework for indicator 17.4.1

Political commitment as a starting point to assess readiness for policy coherence

Overview of options for institutional design for policy coherence and implementation arrangements

# Key objectives of the module

Why?

Concepts

What

Strategy

- Appreciate the conduct and benefits of an institutional readiness assessment for policy coherence with a view to define priorities for capacity development.
- Understand how the insights from the assessment can be translated into concrete actions by developing individual and organizational action plans to make progress in daily work.
- Identify policy areas and policies with cross-sectoral dimensions that require coherent and integrated policymaking.

How

Organization

# What will be achieved through module 2?



Understand a holistic perspective on the institutional system



Reflect on the building blocks of an institutional system for policy coherence

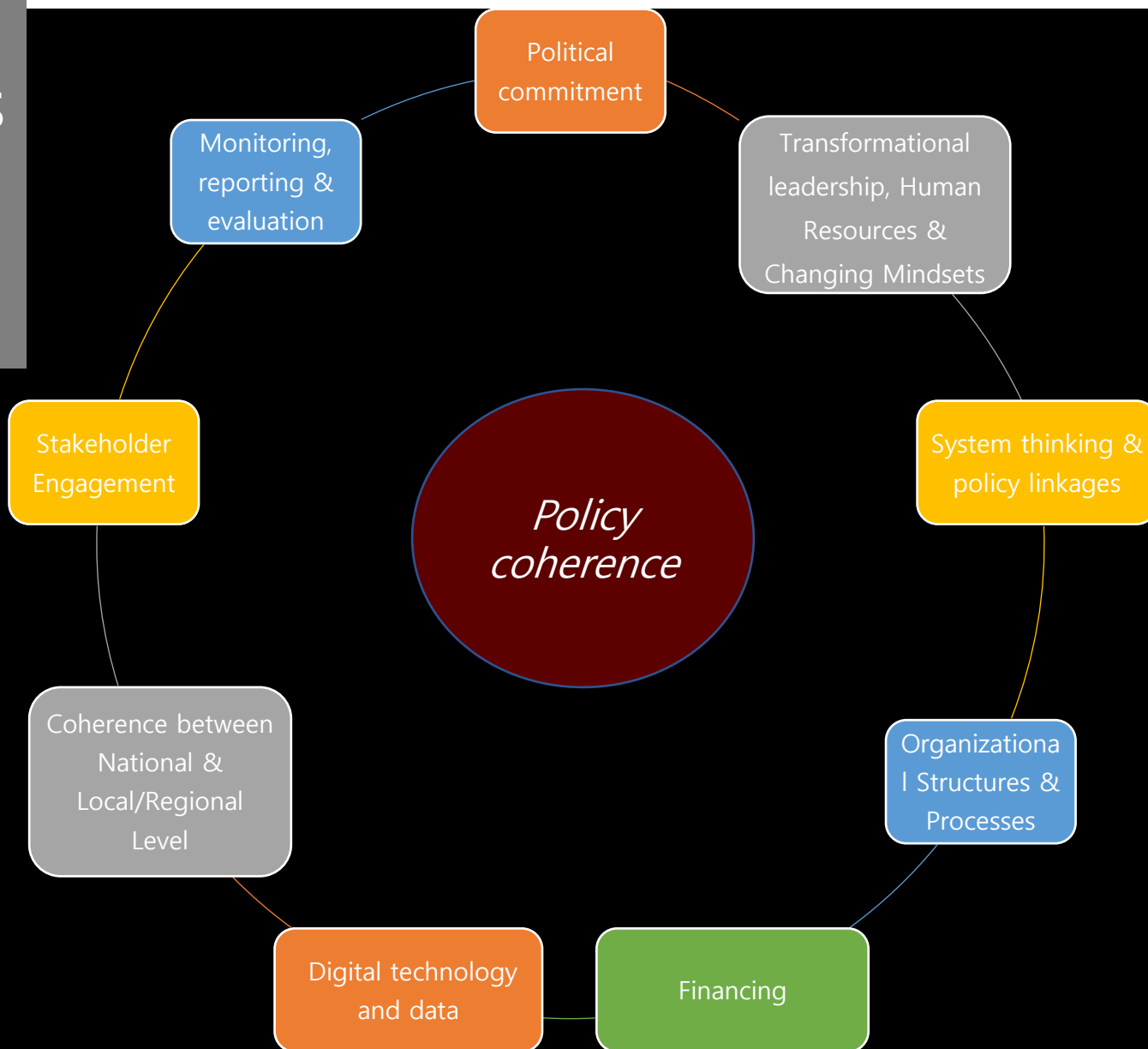


Assess institutional readiness



Transfer assessment findings into institutional change

# Key Concepts: Building Blocks for Policy Coherence



# Starting Point: Indicator 17.4.1

- Goal 17: Partnership for the Goals
- Target 17.4: Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development
- Indicator 17.4.1: Mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development
  - UNEP as the Custodian Agency for Indicator 17.4.1 developed an integrated indicator framework
    - Tier-II-methodology by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs)
      - **Tier 2:** Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, but data are not regularly produced by countries

Goal 17 infographic, source: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2020.pdf>

MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE  
THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT





# Integrated Indicator Framework 17.4.1

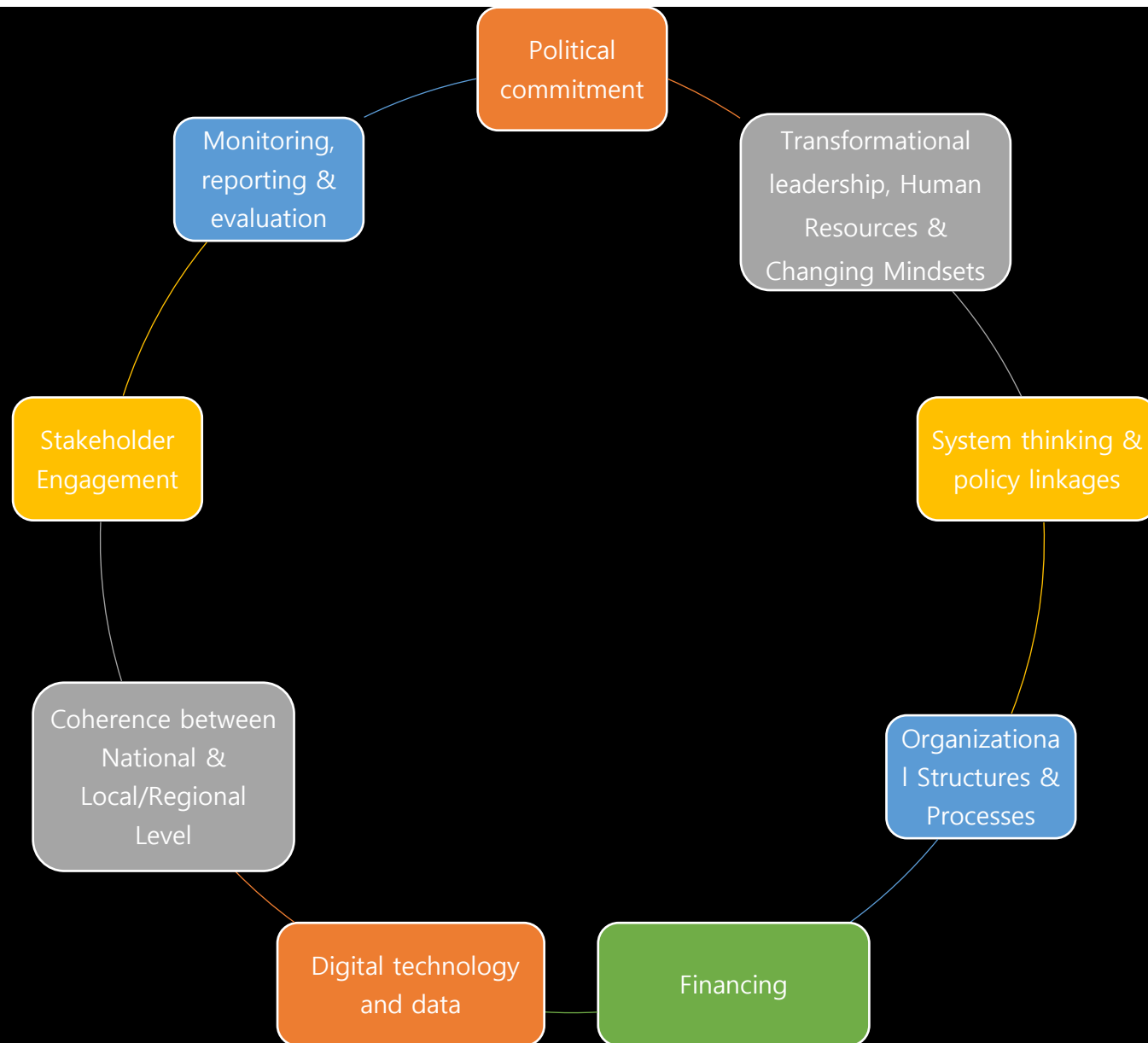
- Developed by UNEP
- Eight dimensions
- Values: 0-10
- 0 = no mechanism is in place, 10= strongest version of the mechanism is in placed, adds to a total between 0 and 80 for each reporting country, translated into a percent value
- Countries can
- Measure progress over time
- Assess strengths and weaknesses as they move towards policy coherence

Source: UNEP (2020, no pages)

1. Institutionalization of Political Commitment	3. Inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral coordination	5. Policy linkages	7. Monitoring and reporting for policy coherence
The country has institutionalized its commitment towards policy coherence for sustainable development at the highest political level.	The country has an institutional mechanism in place that periodically brings together relevant ministries and governmental entities to enhance coherence across sustainable development related policies including sectoral policies.	The country has mechanisms in place to integrate the dimensions of sustainable development and systematically assess the policy effects, transboundary effects and cross-sectoral linkages throughout the policy and planning processes.	The country has mechanisms in place to systematically monitor and evaluate the effects of policies on the various dimensions of sustainable development as well as cross-sectoral impacts, and to report and inform adaptive action.
2. Long-term considerations in decision-making	4. Participatory processes	6. Alignment across government levels	8. Financing for policy coherence
The country has mechanisms in place to ensure that long-term considerations are integrated into decision-making, policy development and planning.	The country has mechanisms in place to ensure that laws, policies, plans, programmes, and major development projects at different levels of government and including at the overarching/general, sectoral and local level are developed through participatory processes that involve relevant stakeholders.	The country has mechanisms in place for aligning priorities, policies and plans adopted at various levels of government.	The country has mechanisms in place to promote the alignment of private and public finance to policy coherence objectives and to track related expenditures

# Institutional Readiness Assessment by UN-DESA

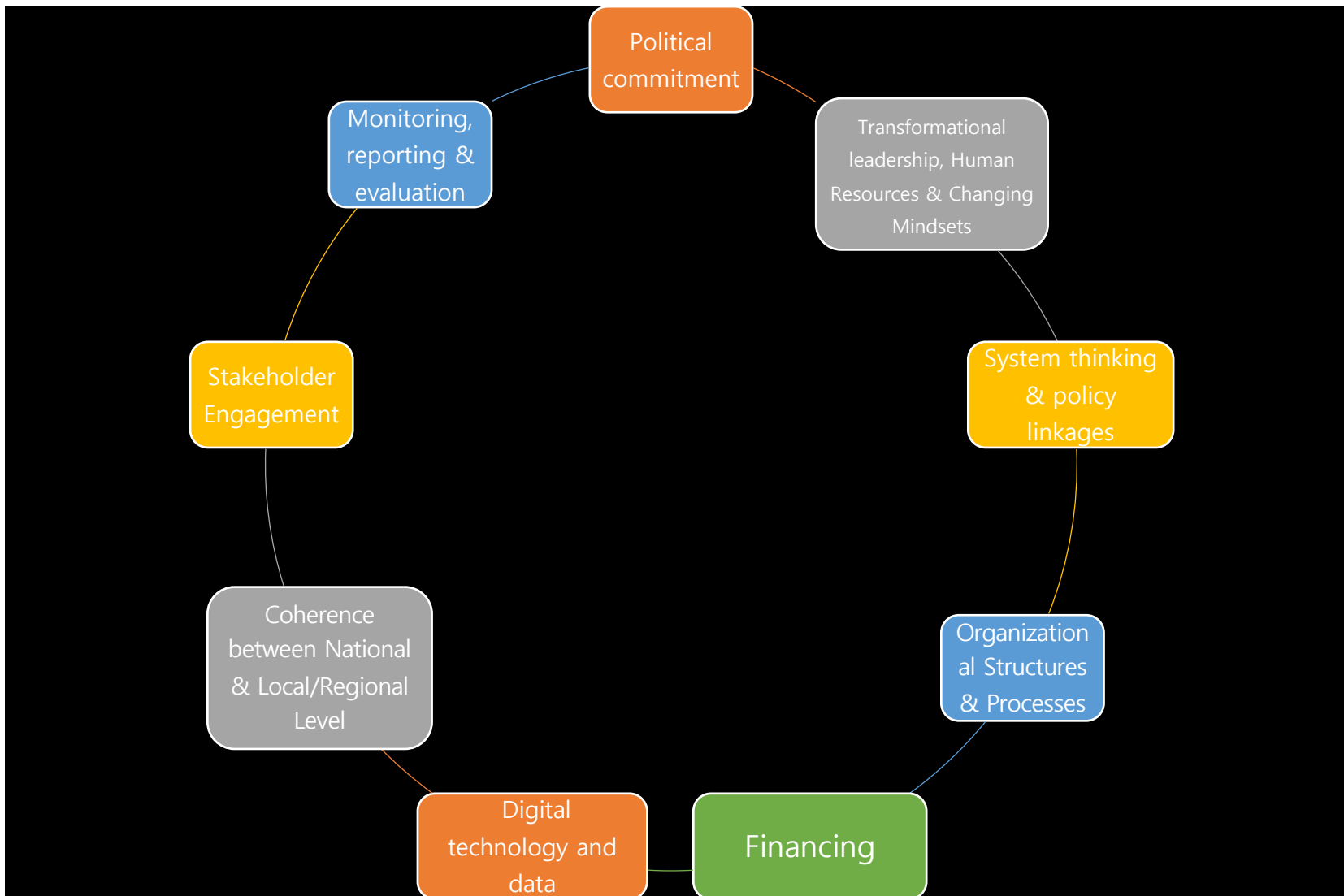
- ✓ Based on the indicator framework by UNEP
- ✓ Helps identify
  - ✓ Capacity gaps
  - ✓ Institutional strength and weaknesses
  - ✓ Need for action



# How the Institutional Readiness Assessment links with the Toolkit

Modules	Building Blocks	Political Commitment	Transformational Leadership, Human Resources & Changing Mindsets	System Thinking & Policy Linkages	Organizational Structures and Processes	Financing	Digital Technology & Data	Coherence between national & local/regional level	Stakeholders Engagement	Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation	Reference material
1	Institutional Capacities for Policy Coherence			x							
2	Assessing Institutional Readiness for Policy Coherence	x			x						
3	Planning for SDG Implementation: Organizational structures for inter-ministerial collaboration			x	x						
4	Aligned Budgeting and digital technology for coherent implementation of the SDGs				x	x					
5	Performance management & Changing the Political and Administrative Culture for Policy Coherence		x								
6	Stakeholder Participation in the SDG Policy Cycle								x		
7	Policy Coherence on Track? Monitoring and Evaluation									x	<a href="#">CEPA strategy guidance note "Monitoring and evaluation systems"</a> <a href="#">CEPA strategy guidance note "Strengthening of national statistical systems"</a>
8	Data for Evidence-informed Policymaking						x				<a href="#">UN/DESA Policy Brief #89: Strengthening Data Governance for Effective Use of Open Data and Big Data Analytics for Combating COVID-19</a>
9	Policy Coherence and Multi-level Governance: From Local to National to International Cooperation							x			

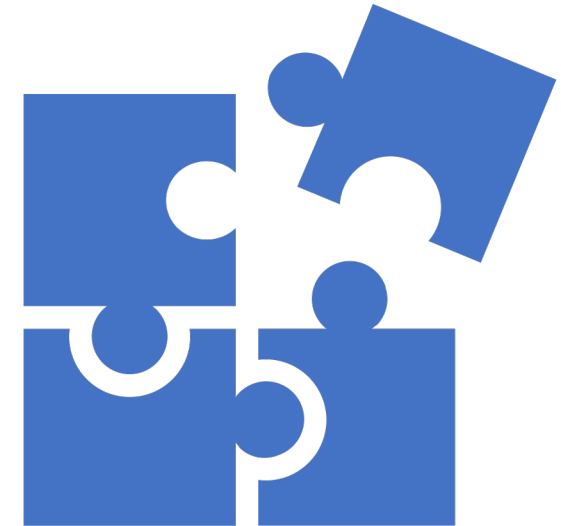
# Institutional Readiness Assessment for Policy Coherence



- Holistic view on institutions
- Interdependence of the building blocks
- All contribute to moving towards coherence if adapted accordingly

# Towards an administrative transformation

- Implementing the building blocks
  - A holistic view on the pre-conditions to achieve policy coherence
  - To move towards policy coherence governments need to turn their attention to these building blocks
    - Depending on a country's institutional system, political structures and needs, it can prioritize single building blocks to move forward
  - The readiness assessment helps identify strengths and weaknesses and demands
  - Prioritization of building blocks is a political decision



# Readiness Assessment on Governance Capacities & Institutional Arrangements for Policy Coherence: Indicators I

## Political commitment

- a vision, legal and normative frameworks that institutionalizes commitment towards policy coherence for sustainable development

## Leadership, HR & changing mindsets

- Mechanisms to promote transformational leadership, human resources and changing mindsets for policy coherence

## System thinking & policy linkages

- mechanisms to allow relevant public institutions to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development and systematically assess the policy effects and cross-sectoral linkages

# Readiness Assessment on Governance Capacities & Institutional Arrangements for Policy Coherence: Indicators II

## Organizational Structures & Processes

- an institutional mechanism to bring together relevant ministries and government entities to enhance coherence across sustainable development related policies
- .

## Financing

- mechanisms to promote the alignment of private and public finance to policy coherence objectives and to track related expenditures

## Digital technology and Data

- frameworks to support the use of digital tools and data in government

# Readiness Assessment on Governance Capacities & Institutional Arrangements for Policy Coherence: Indicators III

Coherence between National and Local/Regional Level

- mechanisms for aligning priorities, policies and plans between various levels of government

Stakeholders Engagement

- mechanisms to ensure that laws, policies, plans programs and major development are developed through participatory processes

Monitoring, reporting & evaluation

- mechanisms in place to systematically monitor and evaluate the effects of policies on sustainable development and cross-sectoral impacts



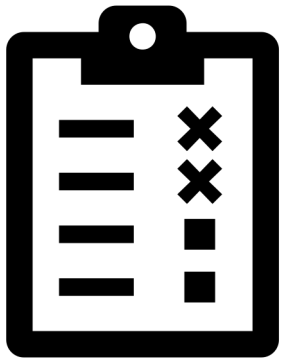
# Activity: Brainstorming

- Think of your country and working environment!
- Spontaneously think about what you consider the strengths and weaknesses of this context for moving towards policy coherence!
- Write on post-its
  - Strengths
  - Weaknesses



# Individual Activity

Please fill out three building blocks of the of the UN-DESA Readiness Assessment on Governance Capacities and Institutional Arrangements for Policy Coherence on an individual basis!



- Building Block 1: Institutionalization of political commitment towards policy coherence
- Building Block 3 requires answers based on facts related to organizational structures and processes for inter-ministerial coordination/ integration
- Building Block 4 requires answers based on facts attesting the system thinking and policy linkages: integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and systematic assessment of policy effects.

# Plenary Round Table

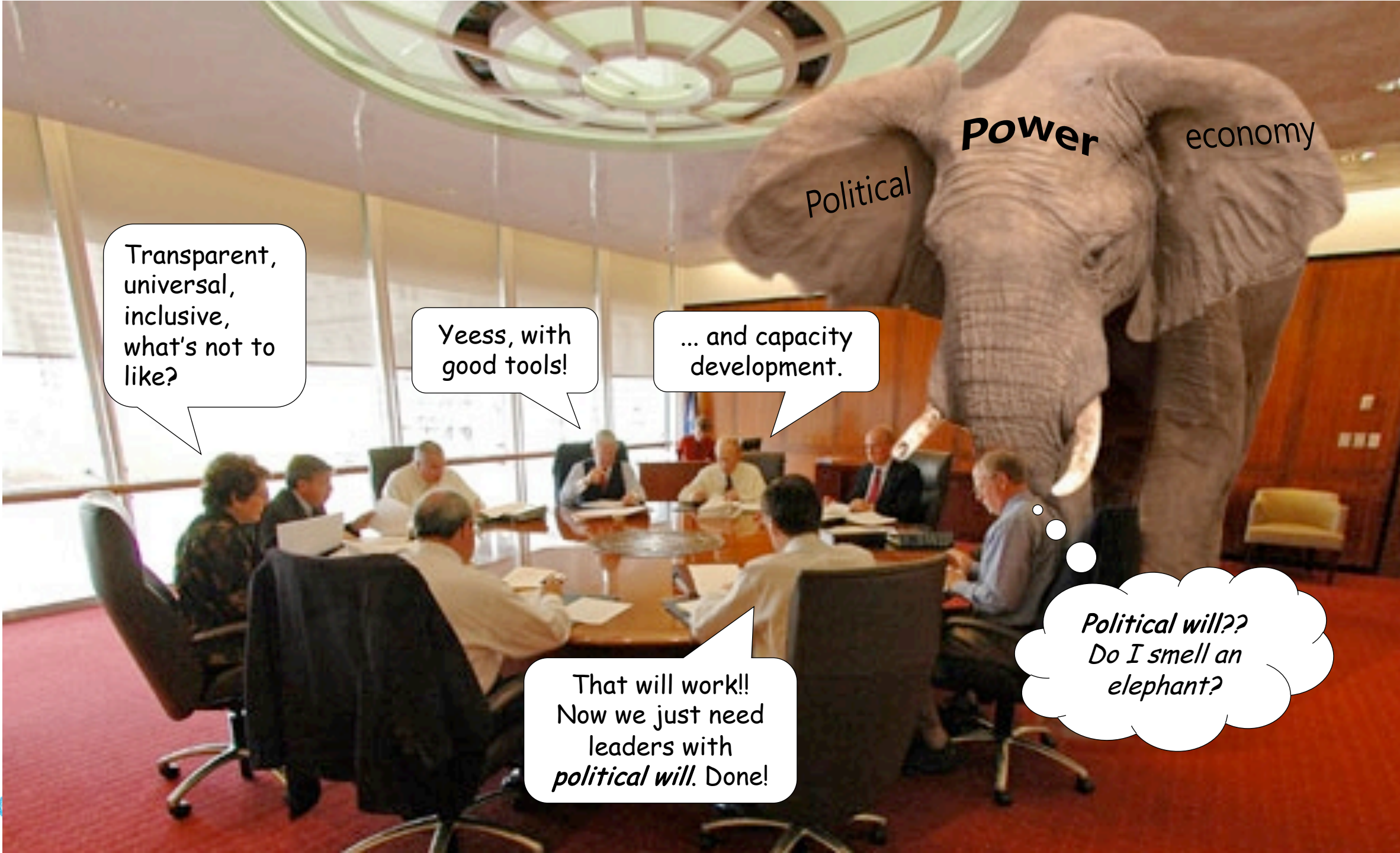


Plenary round table

- Discuss the findings from Building Block 1!

# The political nature of policy coherence

- Policy coherence requires decisions on trade-offs between different policy solutions
  - achieving coherence requires negotiation between different interests, represented by institutions or actors with unequal power or weight
- Policy solutions reflect how problems are defined and represent different ideological preferences
- Decisions on policies or preferred policy solutions are based on
  - Ideology, norms, values, diverging interests
- Policies reflect political power constellations
  - less powerful interests may be neglected
  - Who is involved in decision-making and what are the power relations between involved actors?
- Risks of policy coherence
  - sectoral expertise may be undervalued



Transparent,  
universal,  
inclusive,  
what's not to  
like?

Yeess, with  
good tools!

... and capacity  
development.

That will work!!  
Now we just need  
leaders with  
*political will*. Done!

*Political will??  
Do I smell an  
elephant?*

# Political and Administrative Interface – Complementarity and Conflict

- **Politics**

- exercise of power by political leadership
- reflecting programs, ideologies, vested interests

+

## **public administration**

- the machinery of government as technical competence

**= Government**

# Categories of Political Commitment

emphasis on policy coherence

emphasis on policy prioritization

Decisions for Coherence



Participation for Coherence



Evidence for Coherence

Decisions on Priorities



Participation?



Evidence?

# How to navigate the politics

- Provide advice to politicians based on expertise
  - Bureaucratic competence: “ability to do the work of government expertly, and to do it according to explicit, objective standards rather than to personal or party or other obligations and loyalties” (Kaufman 1956: 1060)
- Anticipate political considerations and implications when advising
  - Be aware of the political preferences of political masters, potential political conflicts, and implications



# Good Case: Finland

- The Finland We Want 2050
  - National sustainable development strategy with long-term objectives
- Government Implementation Plans
- *"The GOV Plan(s) include long term policy principles, which serve over Government terms: Decision-making and administrative action need to be long-term and transformative, increase policy coherence and aim at strengthening global partnerships, and underline ownership and inclusion. These are the key policy principles of sustainable development and also the key requirements for successful implementation, to which the Government pays special attention."* (Finland in UN-DESA Institutional Readiness Assessment, June 2020)





### Building Block 1: Political Commitment

Finland's political commitment towards policy coherence has been institutionalized at the highest level. The National Commission on Sustainable Development (NCSD) chaired by the Prime Minister, vice chaired by ministry of the environment, oversaw the development of the long-term sustainable development strategy "The Finland We Want By 2050".

The Commission includes 57 members and 57 deputy members from all spheres of the society: Government, state administration, Parliamentary Committees, business and industry, trade unions, regions and local authorities, civil society organizations, church, and academia. The main task of the newly appointed Commission is to accelerate the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda, as well as to monitor and assess the progress made.

National Agenda 2030 Architecture: Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is in charge of promoting coherent and integrated planning, policy making, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs. The national 2030 Agenda Coordination Secretariat is located within the PMO. The secretariat consists of three officials and supporting assistants. The Inter-Ministerial Coordination Network, led by the PMO and consisting of sustainable development Focal Points from all line Ministries, is the key supporting body for the PMO coordination secretariat.

Source: UN DESA – Case Study Institutional Readiness Finland

# Political commitment: Finland

# Wrap Up

What are the three key insights into policy coherence of Module 2 to retain for the Action Plan of the country?

Comments and Reflections



# Sources, Reading Material, References

- OECD (2019), Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development 2019, chapter 2. <https://www.oecd.org/governance/policy-coherence-for-sustainable-development-2019-a90f851f-en.htm>
- United Nations (2018), Working Together: Integration, institutions and the Sustainable Development Goals, World Public Sector Report 2018, Division for Public Administration and Development Management, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, (DPADM), New York, April, chapter 2: <https://publicadministration.un.org/Portals/1/Images/WorldPublicSector/wChapter%202.pdf>
- UNEP (2020), Methodology for SDG-indicator 17.14.1: Mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/meetings/webex-26feb2020/Tier%20reclassification%20requests.zip>
- Weitz, N., Strambo, C., Kemp-Benedict, E., Nilsson, M., 2017. Closing the governance gaps in the water-energy-food nexus. *Global Environment Change*. Part A 45, 165–173. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2017.06.006>.
- Institutional Readiness for Policy Coherence to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: The Case of Finland.

