Training Toolkit on Effective National to Local Public Governance for SDG Implementation
Whole-of-Government Approach

Module 2.3
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Learning Outcomes

- Understand the whole of government, its need for SDG implementation
- Explores the barriers and enablers to whole of government work
- Identify the main strengths and challenges of different coordinating structures and common features in the organization of these structures.
- Understanding the rationale of whole of government to localizing and achieving the SDGs
I. Whole of Government Approach and its Objectives

‘Whole-of-government’ is as an **overarching term for a group of responses** to the problem of increased fragmentation of the public sector and public services and a wish to increase integration, coordination and capacity.

Ling, 2002

“……agencies working across portfolio boundaries to **jointly achieve integrated responses to the issues of policy development, program management and service delivery**”

Ojo et al., page 234, 2011

“……one where a government **actively uses formal and/or informal networks across the different agencies within that government** to coordinate the design and implementation of the range of interventions that the government’s agencies will be making in order to increase the effectiveness of those interventions in achieving the desired objectives”

OECD, 2006
I. Whole of Government Approach and its Objectives (Cont.)

- **Macro-political objectives**: A response to ‘wicked’ problems
- **A strategic enabler**: A means of managing crises
- **A response to external pressure**: A response to external pressure

II. Rationale of Adopting Whole of Government Approach

The rationale for whole of government work is to eliminate ‘silos’, or departments working in isolation from one another, and achieve seamless government.

These benefits are achieved through the ability to combine resources, to tackle problems early and through other practical benefits associated with whole of government working, such as timely information-sharing.

Factors driving a whole of government approach

Benefits of a whole of government approach


https://www.un.org económía y asuntos sociales/
Whole-of-Government- Example

Consider a typical view of government - different administrative levels and sectors/lines of business.

Networks can be formed at different levels [Hunt 2005]

- Intradepartmental
- Interdepartmental
- Intergovernmental
- Inter-sectoral

It results in a functional rather than organizational view of government.

https://www.w3.org/egov/IG/slides/2012-03-20/Ojo-slides-v4.pdf
III. Challenges for Whole of Government Approaches

- **Structural Challenges**
- **Cultural Challenges**
- **Practical Challenges**
- **Evaluation Challenges**

IV. Enablers of Whole of Government

**Structures**
- interdepartmental committees;
- taskforces;
- interdepartmental partnerships;
- cross-departmental partnerships;
- special purpose agencies

**Political and administrative leadership**
- the ability to shape policy implementation processes to be a better fit for community needs by reshaping mandates, systems, structures and programmes
- focus on building and sustaining relationships, managing complexity and interdependence, and managing multiple and conflicting accountabilities

**Work processes**
- accountability systems,
- budgets
- information management,
- management of critical gaps

**Culture and capacities**
- organizational culture can support or frustrate the achievement of joined-up organizational goals
- networking skills
- ability of public servants to analyze and shape their external environments and the main stakeholder interests
- Collaboration capacity

**Infrastructures**
- supports for capacity-building

IV. Enablers of Whole of Government (Cont.)

Implementation of whole of government policy

- Stakeholder consultation and buy-in
- Leadership
- Resources
- Implementation structures and teams
- Implementation planning
- Staff capacity
- Supportive culture
- Communication
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Learning from experience
V. Characteristics of the Coordinating Structures

Adapting the existing institutional framework or creating a new one

Leadership approach
- Leadership under the office of the prime minister/presidency
- Ministerial leadership approach
- Leadership under the office of the prime minister/presidency co-chaired with a ministry

Membership of the coordinating body
- Involvement of government and non-governmental representatives
- Involvement solely of government representatives
- Involvement of sub-national representatives

Organization and functions
- High-level Committee
- National Committee
- Technical Committee

Civil Society Organizations

Issues beyond the coordinating structure
- Coordination between the government institutions that lead the strategy for implementing the SDGs and the Ministry of Finance and budget offices
- Creation of incentives
VI. Integrating the whole of government approach: Country Experiences

Belize: A strategy for strengthening cross-sectoral coordination

The objective of the Horizon 2030 Framework is to clearly establish a set of long-term development goals, targets, and indicators that will guide concerted action by all stakeholders involved in the development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of both long-term and intermediate sector programs and Government’s long- and medium-term development strategies.
VI. Integrating the whole of government approach: country experiences

Georgia: An evolving institutional landscape to implement and review the 2030 Agenda

Architecture and Institutional Setting: Sustainable Development Goals Council of Georgia

Thematic Working Groups

- **Social Inclusion**: Poverty eradication, employment, food, water, equality
- **Economic Development**: Economic growth, macroeconomic policy, ODA, inequality
- **Democratic Governance**: Peace, human rights, gender equality, anti-corruption
- **Sustainable Energy & Environment Protection**: Land degradation, climate change, biodiversity, access to electricity

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VI. Integrating the whole of government approach: country experiences

Guatemala: A strategy for coordinating different levels of government
VI. Integrating the whole of government approach: country experiences

Mongolia: Aligning policies to the 2030 Agenda and strengthening policy coherence
Ensuring policy coherence in SDG implementation

- Governments need to reform institutional arrangements to work across sectors both vertically and horizontally.
- Political leadership is needed to promote and incentivize coordination and collaboration across institutions at all levels.
- Governments, UN agencies and donors need to prioritize investing in capacities of the government and other stakeholders to work collectively.

Involving sub-national stakeholders

- Governments should privilege local-level consultation mechanisms on SDG prioritization, planning and monitoring.
- Regional and local governments should use the opportunity of localizing the SDGs to pursue open government initiatives.
- Sub-national governments need to establish local SDG implementation plans linked to national SDG/development plans.
- Local government and statistics offices need to establish baselines and monitor locally, drawing on sources of data relevant to local priorities.

Cross-cutting role of digital technologies
- Establish communication networks
- Structures that align with purpose
- Networked governance

Cross-cutting role of cultural change
- Leadership
- Culture
- New work processes

New Ways of thinking
- Managing ‘gaps’
Group Discussion

What coordinative mechanisms (such as vertical and horizontal coordination) are in place to implement SDGs? Is it functional?

What are the main challenges in vertical and horizontal coordination and how your country is addressing these challenges?

Is the government aligning its national or sectoral strategies to the SDGs and setting whole-of-government plans for implementation at the domestic and international levels?
VIII. Key Takeaways

The rationale for whole of government work is to eliminate ‘silos’, or departments working in isolation from one another, and achieve seamless government.

The integrated character of the SDGs requires governments to work across policy domains, stakeholders and governance levels to address complex interlinkages between the SDGs as well as to assess cross-border and intergenerational policy effects and to create synergies for sustainability.

The creation of a coordinating structure to incorporate the SDGs into the actions of all areas of government and to bring various government institutions together to develop and implement integrated policies is one of the most formal mechanisms for adopting the whole of government approach.

Involving government actors in identifying and aligning national priorities with the 2030 Agenda as part of the review process can help government actors to better understand how, by participating in achieving the 2030 Agenda, they can advance their own sectoral and local agendas.

An integrated involvement of the whole of government in SDG implementation can help to create and/or improve national capacity for policy coherence.

Engaging actors across policy domains to promote cross-sectoral and vertical collaboration enables complex interlinkages to be considered systematically and cross-border and intergenerational impacts to be assessed.

Involving sub-national and local stakeholders can help to raise awareness at the sub-national level and motivate stakeholders at this level to become engaged in implementing the 2030 Agenda.
References


Thank you