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Item 3 (a) Promoting policy and institutional coherence among the SDGs to be reviewed in-depth by the high-level political forum and the other SDGs

Conference room paper on appraising institutional capacity for policy integration

This conference room paper aims to support the Committee of Experts on Public Administration in its deliberations on promoting policy and institutional coherence and is provided for its consideration, as appropriate. The paper begins with an analysis of some key attributes of institutional capacity for policy integration and is followed, in Annex 1, by a draft model survey intended to assist in appraising such capacity in terms of its operational, analytical and political dimensions. The survey is supported, in Annex 2, by a draft survey administration guide.

Credit is due to Professor Michael Howlett, Department of Political Science at Simon Fraser University in Canada and Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore. Michael Howlett is the principal author of the text and model survey which were commissioned by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Appraising institutional capacity for policy integration

Introduction

The concern for policy integration that is embedded in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has encouraged policymakers, practitioners and academics to rethink many underlying principles about this relatively old but poorly understood concept in public policy. In practice, integrative strategies, such as mainstreaming and coordination efforts have long been thought to be capable of overcoming the limitations of domain-specific expertise in addressing wicked (Rittel and Webber 1973) or boundary-spanning problems (May, Jochim, and Pump 2010). Some initiatives to promote 'joined up government' and 'whole-of-government' were introduced in the 1990s and 2000s to further such efforts, particularly in developed countries. Yet, while many governments have aspired to an integrated policymaking process, there has been little consensus on how to achieve it (Trein et al. 2017, Tosun and Lang 2017).

Since the SDGs serve as a normative framework or 'policy glue' (May et al. 2005, May, Sapotichne, and Workman 2006) that organizes ideas around a common aim, the networked nature of the goals and targets establishes an *a priori* interrelationship among them (Le Blanc 2015). The actors in various policy sectors can cohere around this common organizing idea given the interlinkages that must be pursued, and the international community has given significant attention to mapping out the interconnections (Griggs et al. 2017, Le Blanc 2015). The 2030 Agenda calls for strategies to promote both vertical and horizontal integration. Vertical integration is necessary as many countries seek to respond to international agreements and include subnational governments in implementation. Horizontal integration is needed to address the interlinkages among SDG targets and bring together disparate policy sectors in the achievement of common objectives.

Achieving a certain level of integration requires a modicum of capacity to bring together different actors to reconcile competing interests. Many governments, however, are confronted with an 'administrative gap' while trying to coordinate multi-sectoral and multi-level policymaking, i.e. to bring together multiple actors with often competing interests without having the analytical, organizational or political capacity to do so. A systematic understanding of what kinds of capacity are needed to promote integrated policymaking is therefore required.

This paper attempts to establish a framework for assessing institutional capacity for integrated policymaking built on an understanding of how policy processes work in practice. The aim is to provide a tool to assist governments in reconciling incoherent policy goals and inconsistent policy instruments and pointing them towards more congruent ends. Using this framework, the kinds of strategies that governments could consider adopting to arrive at a more coherent policy can be seen to depend on the degree of consistency of the policy goals and instruments. A survey methodology is proposed to capture the level of consistency of objectives and instruments that exist in any particular case and aid the further development of requisite administrative capacities.

Policy integration strategies and questions of institutional capacity

Current thinking about policy integration reflects how different scholars, organizations and governments have used the term to highlight different aspects of effective policymaking. Terms available in many policy documents such as policy coherence, coordination, joined up government, whole-of-government overlap in capturing the essence of policy integration. These documents and academic literature have not been clear on three fundamental questions about integration: what is being integrated, what are the forms of integration and how can it take place? What is being sought to be integrated remains an open question because policy integration is treated often both as a means and an end (Lafferty and Hovden 2003). Efforts to classify the forms of integration have also generally been limited to a horizontal-vertical integration dichotomy. And, drawing lessons from policy

integration initiatives has been difficult since there is no clear evidence about how these processes trigger meaningful reform (Jacob and Volkery 2004, Jordan and Lenschow 2008).

What is being integrated?

Broadly speaking, policy integration involves cross-sectoral policymaking that transcends the institutional responsibilities of individual departments (horizontal integration) or which covers different policies within the same unit or different levels of the government e.g. supranational, national, local (vertical integration) (Meijers and Stead 2004). It involves the systematic evaluation and recognition of consequences of one policy on another to address the contemporary concern with a general shift towards cross-cutting policy problems requiring solutions that go beyond existing policy sectors and administrative silos. Policy integration would often involve bringing together actors from other fields not previously involved in policymaking.

This broad definition captures what policy integration intends to achieve but what aspects of policymaking need to be integrated or how policies can achieve enhanced levels of integration should be further elaborated. In this paper, a process-based definition is suggested over the earlier outcome-based definition as this is deemed more relevant in the context of the SDGs. Policy integration is understood in this regard as the process of extending parts of existing policy mixes or replacing an old mix with a new one that better combines objectives and means that otherwise have been addressed separately (Howlett, Mukherjee, and Woo 2015).[1]

Each existing policy has its own specific policy objective (that is meant to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs) and a means to achieve it. Integration would entail that these separate policies be woven together as a single policy issue. When this is happening, the consistency between the policy means (or policy instruments)[2] and objectives become the principal concern. Instruments are thought to be consistent when can they work together without any significant trade-offs while objectives are consistent when these goals are achievable simultaneously (Kern and Howlett 2009).

Such processes will naturally involve changes in institutional arrangements that are more conducive to integrated policymaking, such as enhanced avenues for public participation or stakeholder consultation. Integration should also entail a change in the perception about policy objectives, causal chains and appropriateness of solutions to problems (Nilsson 2005). For instance, environmental policy integration happens when economic or social policies embed sustainability factors in the way policy actors analyse problems, objectives and solutions (Nilsson and Persson 2003). The major concern here is to understand whether the resulting 'policy mixes' can lead to more coherent policy options that more effectively address complex objectives.

Inconsistencies can arise if the objectives and instruments that are meant to be integrated are not seen as compatible with each other. Compatibility refers to the absence of negative spill-overs when one specific objective (and instrument) or an integrated objective (and instrument) is pursued over the other. On the other hand, interdependence points to the value of mutual reliance in achieving a specific goal. Many of the SDGs are closely interdependent. For instance, Griggs et al. (2017) argued SDG 3 on health of the people to be 'fundamentally interdependent' with the health of the planet. In the context of a specific policy issue, guaranteeing proper management of water resources should entail the sharing of expertise, information and resources that different actors may exclusively have access. Water utilities have information on utilization, which is an information that federal governments may not be able to independently collect or collection of which would be costly. Thus, compatibility and interdependence are crucial preconditions to horizontal consistency.

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[1] Following the policy design perspective and adopting a processual definition of policy integration has been suggested earlier in the report of the expert group meeting "Policy integration in government in pursuit of the sustainable development goals". Available here: http://workspace.unpan.org/sites/Internet/Documents/UNPAN94443.pdf

[2] Policy means and policy instruments will be used interchangeably. They are taken to mean as the way by which the policy objectives are achieved. For instance, subsidies and grants are common policy instruments to achieve the objective of providing welfare to the poor.

From a policy design perspective, ascertaining whether these (in)consistencies exist and how these inconsistencies affect the level of policy integration requires to be undertaken makes it crucial to understand the notion of 'design space' (Howlett 2014a). Design space generally pertains to the room that allows governments to introduce new policy mixes. Governments need capacity to widen this design space to be able to introduce new integrative strategies and to ensure integration objectives are met. Given how the process of replacing or layering policy mixes over the another have to contend with policy legacies and path dependent feature of policymaking, there is a need to manipulate the design space towards creating positive feedback for the path that produces the most optimal solutions and that moves the integration project towards higher levels of integration (Jordan and Matt 2014).

How can integration take place?

The demand for greater policy integration has been increasing owing primarily to increasingly complex problems that confront governments. Such wicked and boundary spanning problems can be conceived as a cross-cutting policy issue that must be integrated. At present, there could already be existing mechanisms to integrating a policy issue, which facilitates the identification of strategies for integration – as in the case for gender and climate change. However, there can be policy issues mandated by the SDGs to be integrated that have not been previously considered in many countries. For instance, local governments may not have the prior experience with integrated and participatory planning (SDG 11.3) owing to lack of decentralization or the political system.

Policy integration can be achieved through a menu of strategies that seek to minimize the inconsistency of instruments and objectives of policies being put together. Such strategies can be put together as an integration project and the baseline conditions determine the difficulty of introducing and implementing integration projects to fulfil the mandate of SDGs.

The highest level of integration that can be achieved is when both objectives and instruments are completely consistent while the lowest level of integration is the opposite. If the actors involved in integration projects face the lowest level of integration of a policy issue, achieving the SDG targets would be more challenging. This is particularly the case when the integration project envisioned under the SDGs would involve multiple levels and actors with long standing management traditions. Thus, it becomes crucial to identify the strategies available to governments in their attempts to integrate various policy issues. If contradictions between policies to be integrated are evident, the integration process will require lending greater consistency to the instruments and goals. This change must be deliberate, involving adopting integrative strategies that will bring multiple actors together to negotiate, deliberate and agree on actions to be undertaken. Ultimately, the strategies adopted will be contingent on the degree of consistency of the instruments and goals of the domains concerned.

Table 1. Degree of integrated policymaking based on consistency of instruments and objectives

	Consistent objectives across organizations	Inconsistent objectives across organizations
Consistent instruments	Strongly integrated policy domain	Moderately integrated policy domain
Inconsistent instruments	Moderately integrated policy domain	Weakly integrated policy domain

Source: Michael Howlett

The lowest level of integration at baseline is when the policies being integrated have an inherent inconsistency in its objectives and instruments. It involves reconciling competing instruments (Drezner 2005) and negotiation of the relative status of objectives. This situation is marked with high levels of uncertainty because the preferences over the policy mix is not known. Thus, several of the earliest identified strategies are standard setting where conditions are established primarily at the procedural level for all actors to meet and standardization of policy principles at a common level of

understanding (Scharpf 1994). Adoption of policies found in other context has also been identified as a good way to deal with the uncertainty brought about by differing preferences and values over the policy mix (Heinmiller 2003). Standardization and policy emulation require a more coercive approach considering the tendency of the current set of actors to revert to traditional domain-based policy preferences. Mandates specify the form of inter-organisational relationship required by a policy, typically governed by a lead agency (O'Toole 1988, Laumann, Galaskiewicz, and Marsden 1978), who has a central position within the government, sufficient resources and legitimacy to marshal the numerous actors into working together (Provan and Kenis 2008). This approach is particularly appropriate in objectives where a certain sector has a stronger mandate over the policy issue. Governance arrangements with lead organizations are inevitably centralized involving higher levels of political brokerage with other members of the network because of the high levels of competing interests and values (Rodríguez et al. 2007).

There can also be instances where objectives are inconsistent while instruments are consistent, at baseline. Objectives are perceived to be in conflict as in the case of gender equity and efficiency in public services (True 2003). Gender is thought to be integrated when gender concerns are 'mainstreamed' through greater recognition of the problem without significantly altering the mix of policy instruments. Strategies for integration are thus geared towards influencing the ideas surrounding the synergies between the conflicting objectives. The so-called 'integrationist' approach in gender mainstreaming, for example, have largely been the strategy of choice among international development agencies where gender issues are layered into existing development programmes without significantly altering policy instruments. Inter-organizational planning frameworks, regulations and procedures can also be modified to embed the overlooked issues. Resources such as funding, staffing and expertise can also be transferred to the specific integration problem and creation of new projects. What these strategies do is diffuse the shared responsibility of integration into the members of the policy sectors that is compatible to individual intentions. The convergence of intentions will essentially be incremental and top-down, and would sometimes involve a creation of a specialized unit responsible to driving the diffusion of responsibilities (Beveridge, Nott, and Stephen 2000). Given the incoherent nature of objectives among the actors involved in the integration effort, communication and sharing of information to influence the policy agenda and frame the issue become an important political skill (Pollack and Hafner-Burton 2000, Jahan and Mumtaz 1996).

When objectives are clear and consistent across concerned sectors, but the instruments of the policy are inconsistent, this can be considered a situation where the policy is already moderately integrated. The kind of integration this situation requires should emphasize comprehensiveness, aggregation and consistency between the objectives and strategies to be employed (Peters 1998). This is particularly the case since the government and stakeholders do not share the same model of matching solutions with problems, which has been evident in energy policy (Lema and Ruby 2007). Institutional arrangements should seek to avoid and reduce the effects of negative consequences on other domains by discrete sector-specific decisions (Lindblom 1965, Scharpf 2000) and to jointly deliver services (Peters 2005). Coordination does not necessarily involve actors congealing to become institutions solely responsible for specific cross-cutting issues but information exchange and feedback is crucial (Metcalfe 1994). Peters (2013) advocated for the use of policy coordination either through bargaining or reconciling conflicting ideas as alternatives to hierarchical arrangements in solving collective problem. Rather, it is a process of "transforming actor's policy positions into collective action outcomes" by deliberating and bargaining on a common set of instruments (Thomson, Stokman, and Torenvlied 2003).

Baseline conditions that are most conducive to integration are in evidence when both goals and instruments are consistent. Achieving consistency may involve creation of an entirely new policy subsystem or linking several subsystems to one cross-cutting issue, which is considered to be the highest form of integration (Massey and Huitema 2013). While there is an ongoing debate about whether creating new institutions would eventually result in further specialization, creation of

permanent roles or institutions to deal with cross-cutting issues[3] allows specialized, independent decision-making by to be overcome by establishing clear lines of authority and channelling resources towards organizations concerned with policies touching upon cross-sectoral issues (Karlsson□ Vinkhuyzen 2012). For example, National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSDs) have been created in countries around the world to drive the policy discourse on the broader issue of sustainable development with broader participation of non-State actors (Connor and Dovers 2004). Schmidt, Gostin, and Emanuel (2015) also suggested to introduce departments of public health to move beyond the focus on universal health coverage to policy responses that concerns all relevant sectors as advocated by the SDGs. But these 'institutions' need not just be organizations dedicated to specific issues. Instead, they can also pertain to a set of informal and formal mechanisms facilitative of coherent policymaking (United Nations 2016) .[4] A relatively stable set of policy actors and engaged constituency supportive of the policy issue makes an otherwise ad hoc integrative policymaking self-reinforcing and capable of coming up with comprehensive solutions (May, Jochim, and Pump 2010). Since the domains are not fundamentally incoherent, arriving at a common set of strategies would typically require a voluntary process of cooperation through a shared governance scheme (Metcalfe 1994).

The role of governance capacity in implementing these strategies

The ability of countries to meet the challenges of the SDGs is contingent upon their ability to introduce and implement integration strategies based on the level of consistency of the policy mix. However, it takes huge amounts of capacity to reconcile the inconsistencies and anyone undertaking integration runs the risk of generating a policy mix that is sub-optimal than the original. It is useful to conceive this capacity as governance capacity or the organizational and systemic resources necessary to establish a more coherent policymaking process (Ramesh et al. 2016).

This broader governance-oriented definition is preferred here over conceptions of capacity[5] as the SDGs go beyond enforcement of rules, implementation authority or marshalling resources. The SDGs implicitly promote governance as a means of establishing, promoting, supporting and institutionalizing a relationship between governmental and non-governmental actors in the integration process. Moreover, since the SDGs advocate for a redesign of traditional policy mixes, governments are confronted by legacies of the pre-existing policy context, administrative traditions, and practices, which are probably seen as generally successful by the existing set of relevant stakeholders. These organizational resources need to be retrofitted to overcome certain path dependent features of old policy mixes but access to these resources is nonetheless essential because of its link to organizational effectiveness. In fact, improvement in governance capacity is expected to ease the implementation and amplify the effects of the SDGs.

This notion of governance capacity has three dimensions – analytical, operational and political – that interact together (Wu, Ramesh, and Howlett 2015). These dimensions are similar to the dimensions identified by Jordan and Lenschow (2008) as factors critical for effective environmental protection integration, which are cognitive, institutional (administrative), political. The three dimensions reflect an important categorization of the functions that the government and relevant non-state actors must perform for policy integration to happen.

The first dimension, analytical capacity, is crucial in generating intelligence to ensure that decisions are technically sound and that the policies mixes are logically related (Howlett 2014b), which may or may not currently exist in various sectors and countries. The possession of necessary analytical capacity allows organizations to generate knowledge about the extent of consistency within domains that are to be integrated, failure of which can cause integration efforts to collapse. For example, a

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[3] In academic literature, this is sometimes referred to as polity hardware (Steurer 2007).
[4] UNDESA has reviewed various national institutions adopted for implementing the sustainable development agenda. Available here: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1372Study2_final.pdf
[5] Some academic scholars use state capacity (Fukuyama 2013, 352), public sector capacity (Polidano 2000) or the narrower conception of policy capacity (Painter and Pierre 2005).

suggested analytical precursor to establishing cross-sectoral arrangements is examining the broader legal and regulatory context of health to include policies related to food, housing, education, environment and tax (Schmidt, Gostin, and Emanuel 2015). On the other hand, system-level analytical capacity pertains to the scope and quality of system-wide data collection, the availability, speed and ease of access of data and information crucial to the integration process.

Operational capacity is about the ability of the government or sets of agencies to get things done[6]. Getting things done requires the being attuned to administrative limitations of the organization[7]. Having a high level of operational capacity means knowing when what strategy to adopt when objectives and tools are not exactly clear. The development process needs to be flexible but systematic planning must be in place.

Political capacity is concerned with the ability to mobilize involvement of key stakeholders in the integration process and to resolve conflicts arising from their subsequent interaction. The potential conflict in objectives necessitates high political capacity, particularly in setting the agenda for policy integration. Too often, studies on the effectiveness of integration strategies have identified lack of interest shown by politicians (Tils 2007, Steurer and Martinuzzi 2005) or absence of support (or political will) to these integration strategies as an important determinant of failure and success (Lafferty and Meadowcroft 2000, Steurer 2008).

Conflict in objectives can be addressed at the level of framing and agenda setting, which requires high levels of political capacity. But when there is less evident conflict in the instruments, less emphasis can be given to analytical capacity required because the changes sought are at the abstract level of policy objectives rather than technical details of instruments. This does not mean that analysis is not important, in fact, gender mainstreaming has historically argued for the analysis of gender-disaggregated data to determine the impact of policies on women (True 2003). However, any government intending to drive policy harmonization needs to bolster operational capacity to bring together various actors to discuss how responsibilities can be diffused more properly to avoid contradictions brought by the goal conflict. As mentioned earlier, mainstreaming demands greater communicative capacity to change the policy agenda (Pollack and Hafner-Burton 2000, Jahan and Mumtaz 1996).

Relative to other situations, instrument conflict does not require high levels of political capacity because resolving it "does not absolutely need a whole-government perspective" (Braun 2008, 230). While the integration process remains highly political, only a limited set of actors are to be involved in the integration process and discussions are centred around much more technical details. Analytical capacity is particularly high because of the need to come up with more consistent set of instruments by reducing their contradiction by reviewing various options, and determining priorities (Boston 1992). Operational capacity is required to be at moderate levels because of the need for effective network governance. Coordinating agencies are crucial in the facilitation of agreements, and establishing new networks to coordinate integration processes (Painter 1981).

When policies are already quite integrated at baseline conditions, governments need to maintain a modicum of governance capacity to ensure that the institutions are self-reinforcing. Policies that are already integrated at this level does not require high analytical values because negative spill-overs are no longer salient. A certain level of operational capacity allows the integration project to sustain momentum but not at the same level as other forms of integration. Political capacity is no longer highly needed because of a mandate or the convergence of the integration values with the public (Suchman 1995, Dowling and Pfeffer 1975).

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[6] This can be seen as conceptually equivalent to administrative or implementation capacity (Polidano 2000)
[7] Steurer (2007) refers to this as 'strategizing ability'.

Towards a model survey to appraise policy integration capacity

A draft survey of policy integration capacity has been prepared in conjunction with this paper and is shown in Annex 1. The survey is intended to measure baseline conditions of integration of relevant policy issues for the SDGs and is comprised of six modules to allow for a 'modular approach' to assessing the ability of many governments to pursue policy integration.

The modular approach is used so that different individuals with varying knowledge of the SDGs can be tapped to become respondents for the survey. Given that integration involves multiple actors, the modular approach promotes inclusiveness of the appraisal and moves closer to a more complete picture of the level of integration of the policy issue.

The first module seeks to appraise the policy issue and is comprised of four sections. The first three sections seek to better describe the extent to which the policy issue is: (a) interlinked with other SDGs; (b) affected by the work of other stakeholders, and; (c) affected by other sectors. The fourth section is intended to map out existing integration approaches. The second module can be used to assess the depth of policy design space. Assessing design space is important ascertain the available room to manoeuvre of the government to implement integration strategies. The third module is meant to assess the baseline conditions of the level of integration of the policy issue. This module measures the degree of consistency of objectives and instruments of the policy issue concerned. Modules 4, 5 and 6 are the part of the survey where capacity is assessed using perception-based measures. The last module is proposed as an optional module that could be used to survey actors outside the government.

A more detailed explanation of the purpose and content of each module is given in the survey administration in Annex 2. The administration guide also includes reflections on who should administer the survey, how the survey is organized, the target respondents and pre-test requirements, limitations of the instrument, as well as a data analysis and interpretation plan that could be used a starting point for discussion among the relevant actors about possible future capacity-building activities in respect of the policy issue at hand.

Deriving implications for policy capacity

The survey is designed to be intuitive given the specific elements identified for each of the capacity dimensions. Thus, the implications can be derived for assessing the ease of introducing integration projects and prioritizing capacity-building activities as well as extending the survey to be used for effectiveness analysis of integration projects.

The primary application of the survey findings is the identification of capacity-building activities that can improve the governance capacity of countries with a view to moving towards more coherence in policymaking. If a particular sector is found to have high levels of inconsistency in objectives, the survey results can identify capacity should be buttressed but also on the pace and ease of introducing measures for policy integration.

The breadth of design space indicates how easy it would be to introduce integration strategies. This is important because there are certain targets that would already have received significant amount of attention for integration to have occurred pre-SDG such as SDG Indicator 6.5.1 on integrated water resource management (IWRM). Those sectors with a small design space would have to allocate capacity for widening the room for integration, thus delaying the introduction of measures to achieve the SDG.

While the survey offers aggregate measures of governance capacity, the disaggregated rating can also give insight on the speed of adoption of integration strategies. If the measure is dragged down by low levels of systemic capacity, SDG implementation can be significantly delayed given the higher capacity requirements to change or influence policy and political systems. While if there is high

political capacity but low organizational capacity, the reforms could in principle be accelerated with the support of a mandate from the top.

The dimensions of governance capacity offer a mechanism to prioritize capacity-building interventions. The normative framework earlier discussed can serve as a guide for determining mismatch between what form of integration is demanded with the type and level of capacity possessed by organizations in the policy domain. This systematizes needs assessment of interventions and can guide United Nations offices and governments in drawing out capacity-building plans in relation to SDG implementation. Moreover, a policy coherence scorecard can be created for each country or sector to summarize the survey findings and provide a quick overview of the survey results. Such a survey could, in principle, also be used at a later date for cross-country comparisons or sectoral comparisons at the national or local levels.

Analysis of capacity-building initiatives

Many studies already exist that can be used to supplement this proposed capacity survey. For instance, a survey of the United Nations Environment Programme on the status of IWRM in different countries (SDG indicator 6.5.1) can be used to provide insights on the effectiveness of capacity-building initiatives by linking the changes over time of the status of IWRM implementation, vis-à-vis changes in governance capacity. In other words, studies that establish baseline and progress of the targets when used along with the results of the governance capacity survey can provide insight on the role of capacity-building activities. Such an analysis may only be descriptive but can still generate meaningful insights into the strengths and gaps in institutional capacity that could have an important bearing on integration initiatives.

Concluding remarks

This paper sought to discuss policy integration as a concept ripe for widespread implementation as mandated by the SDGs. The conceptual heterogeneity surrounding policy integration suggests it is something everyone desires to have more of. The definition offered in this paper hopes to provide a clearer direction of how to appraise it and identify strategies towards its achievement. More importantly, it establishes a more direct linkage with policy capacity by treating integration as a process of reconciling various policy mixes. Through a model questionnaire, it is hoped that the interlinkages of the different SDG targets by focusing on the critical capacity for each of the four forms of policy integration identified. With this in mind, knowledge on how governance capacity can be built for policy coherence can be established and expanded over time.

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Annex 1 – Model survey of institutional capacity for policy integration

Introduction

The [survey administrator] is assessing capacity for integrated policymaking for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in [country/ministry/office/locality]. In this survey, you will be asked to appraise the capacity of the organizations, including your own, to integrate a particular policy issue in relation to the SDGs. Your responses may be used to design and introduce capacity development activities to enhance integrated policymaking.

You are purposely chosen because of your existing work in the areas concerning the domains to be integrated. You are expected to have the sufficient knowledge to provide your perception about specific dimensions of capacity for policy integration. It is crucial that only respondents who are given access to the questionnaire respond.

About the survey

This survey aims to measure organizational and systemic capacity for coherent policy making.

The questionnaire is comprised of six sections:

1. **Appraisal of policy issue** – This section asks you to comment on the interlinkages of the policy issue to the SDGs as well as the influence of other actors and sectors on your work.

2. **Depth of design space** – This section asks you to assess how conducive the policy environment is to the introduction or deepening of policy mixes that foster integration.

3. **Consistency of goals and instruments** – This section asks you to assess the consistency of relevant goals and instruments in terms of their "compatibility" and "interdependence".

4. **Analytical capacity –** This section asks you to appraise organizational and systemic capacities that enable relevant organizations to generate intelligence about the policy integration process.

5. **Operational capacity** – This section asks you to appraise organizational and systemic capacities necessary for getting things done and marshalling and mobilizing resources for the integration objective.

6. **Political capacity –** This section asks you to appraise organizational and systemic capacities for bringing actors together to achieve the integration objective.

The questions are mostly close-ended and involve choosing a number on a scale that best captures the status of each of the dimensions identified. Qualitative descriptions are provided to guide you in choosing the most appropriate response.

Glossary

This section defines the key terms that you will encounter during the survey.

- **Policy issue –** Policy issue is taken to mean as the area of public policy that is envisioned to be integrated as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. For instance, water resource management is envisioned to be integrated by involving different stakeholders into the planning, management and use of relevant water resources.

- **Policy integration –** Policy integration involves the collective management of a cross-cutting problem or policy issue. This may entail creation of new policies, transformation of a combination of old policies, establishment of coordination arrangements, among others.

- **Design space –** Design space generally pertains to the room that allows governments to introduce new policy mixes that promotes the adoption of integrative strategies

- **Policy objectives –** These are the intermediate and sectoral outcomes that policies are set out to achieve. These objectives can be higher level values of public administration such as efficiency, equity and economy but also more sector-specific goals such as poverty reduction, gender equality, enforcement of financial regulations, among others

- **Policy instruments –** Instruments are specific tools and mechanisms employed by the government and other actors to achieve the intended policy objectives. These can refer to typical tools for command and control such as structured relationships through contracts and agreements as well as specific measures to nudge behaviour such as subsidies and grants.

- **Analytical capacity –** Analytical capacity pertains to generating intelligence to ensure that decisions related to the integration of policy issue are technically sound and that the policies mixes are logically related.

- **Operational capacity –** Operational capacity is about the ability of the government or sets of agencies to get things done.

- **Political capacity –** Political capacity is concerned with the ability to mobilize involvement of key stakeholders in the integration process and to resolve conflicts arising from their subsequent interaction.

- **Organization capacity –** This level of capacity refers to organizational procedures and resources that are available and can be used towards policy integration initiatives.

- **Systemic capacity –** This level of capacity pertains to the skills and resources endowed by the external environment of the organization.

Module 1. Appraisal of policy issue

This section lets you review the policy issue you are currently working on. A policy issue is taken to mean an area of public policy that is envisioned to be integrated in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals. For instance, water resource management is envisioned to be integrated by involving different stakeholders in the planning, management and use of water resources.

There are four questions in this section examining the:

1. Relationship of your work to the SDGs.
2. Stakeholder influence on your work.
3. Sectoral influence on your work.
4. Current approaches to policy integration in your area of work.

Section 1.1 Relationship of your work to the SDGs

This question assesses the relationship of your work to the SDGs. Within the context of the policy issue you are specifically involved with, you are asked to rate the extent to which your work on a particular policy issue contributes to the achievement of the 17 Goals and related targets.

Q1	Rate the extent to which your work contributes to implementation of each of the 17 SDGs.	Very limited	Limited	Moderate	Significant	Very significant
a	Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere	1	2	3	4	5
b	Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	1	2	3	4	5
c	Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	1	2	3	4	5
d	Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	1	2	3	4	5
e	Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	1	2	3	4	5
f	Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	1	2	3	4	5
g	Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	1	2	3	4	5
h	Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	1	2	3	4	5
i	Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	1	2	3	4	5
j	Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries	1	2	3	4	5
k	Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	1	2	3	4	5
l	Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	1	2	3	4	5
m	Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	1	2	3	4	5
n	Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	1	2	3	4	5
o	Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests,	1	2	3	4	5

Q1	Rate the extent to which your work contributes to implementation of each of the 17 SDGs.	Very limited	Limited	Moderate	Significant	Very significant
	combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss					
p	Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	1	2	3	4	5
q	Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	1	2	3	4	5

Section 1.2 Stakeholder influence on your work

This question gives you a list of stakeholders who may influence the policy issue you are working on and how your work is performed. Influence can be viewed broadly as having either a facilitating or constraining effect, or both.

Q2	Rate the level of influence of the following actors on your work.	Very limited	Limited	Moderate	Significant	Very significant
a	Legislative body	1	2	3	4	5
b	Judiciary	1	2	3	4	5
c	Other ministries within your government	1	2	3	4	5
d	Other units within your organization	1	2	3	4	5
e	Local governments	1	2	3	4	5
f	Other national governments	1	2	3	4	5
g	Private sector	1	2	3	4	5
h	Industry, professional and consumer groups	1	2	3	4	5
i	Non-governmental organizations	1	2	3	4	5
j	Individual citizens	1	2	3	4	5
k	International organizations	1	2	3	4	5
l	Academia	1	2	3	4	5
m	Research institutes and think tanks	1	2	3	4	5
n	Other (please specify)	1	2	3	4	5

Section 1.3 Sectoral influence on your work

This question asks you to rate the extent to which the work of other sector-based government authorities influence your work. Influence can be viewed broadly as having either a facilitating or constraining effect, or both.

Q3	Rate the level of influence of the following sectors on your work.	Very limited	Limited	Moderate	Significant	Very significant
a	Health	1	2	3	4	5
b	Education	1	2	3	4	5
c	Social welfare	1	2	3	4	5
d	Labour and employment	1	2	3	4	5
e	Environment and natural resources	1	2	3	4	5
f	Energy	1	2	3	4	5
g	Transportation	1	2	3	4	5
h	Communication	1	2	3	4	5
i	Trade and industry	1	2	3	4	5
j	Foreign affairs	1	2	3	4	5
k	Defence	1	2	3	4	5
l	Public order	1	2	3	4	5
m	Local government affairs	1	2	3	4	5
n	Finance	1	2	3	4	5
o	Justice	1	2	3	4	5

Section 1.4 Current approaches to policy integration

This question is about the current approaches adopted by the relevant organizations to integrate the policy issue you are working on. Policy integration approaches can vary from organizational level approaches, such as changes in the organizational structure, to inter-agency coordination through planning and creation of cross-sectoral authorities.

Q4	Rate the degree of implementation of the following integration approaches in your policy area.	Very limited	Limited	Moderate	Significant	Very significant	n/a
a	Standardization of procedures among organizations involved	1	2	3	4	5	0
b	Adoption of common policy principles in integration	1	2	3	4	5	0
c	Modification of organizational planning to incorporate other sectors' concerns	1	2	3	4	5	0
d	Restructuring of the organization to create authority and responsibility for integration	1	2	3	4	5	0
e	Transfer of resources and personnel to specific integration projects	1	2	3	4	5	0
f	Discussion forums on norms and rules affecting the policy issue	1	2	3	4	5	0

Q4	Rate the degree of implementation of the following integration approaches in your policy area.	Very limited	Limited	Moderate	Significant	Very significant	n/a
g	Creation of an external, independent organization to deal with cross-sectoral issues	1	2	3	4	5	0
h	Incorporation of the policy issue in the national planning	1	2	3	4	5	0
i	Adoption of a cross-sectoral plan for the policy issue	1	2	3	4	5	0
j	List all other relevant approaches to integrating the policy issue						

Module 2. Design space

This section appraises the depth of design space available for policy integration. Design space pertains to the flexibility that enables governments to introduce new policy mixes that promote the adoption of integrative strategies.

There are six dimensions of design space:

1. **Alignment** of laws and regulations is defined as having no contradictory provisions that alter the incentives of different policy domains to integrate.

2. **Incorporation** pertains to inclusion in the sectoral or national plans of integrated targets, strategies and outcomes.

3. **Institutional arrangement** refers to schemes to bring together relevant actors with clear roles and responsibilities for the integration project.

4. **Shared belief** of integration as a means for the SDGs pertains to the extent to which relevant actors are in agreement that there should a more coherent policymaking.

5. **Political support** involves the interest and will bestowed by the political leaders into the integration project.

6. **Public support** refers to the sentiment of citizens for integration the concerned policy domains.

Q5	Using the numeric scale with 1 as the lowest and 4 as the highest, choose the number that best describes the status of each of the dimensions identified below.				
a	Laws and regulations that concern the policy issue are aligned with each other to make policy integration possible	1	2	3	4
		Laws and regulations are completely misaligned with each other	There is partial alignment in the different laws and regulations	There is alignment in the different laws and regulations.	Laws and regulations are completely aligned with each other
b	The policy issue is incorporated in national planning of other policy areas	1	2	3	4
		No sectoral plan exists that incorporates the policy issue concerned	The policy issue is incorporated in some concerned sectoral plans	The policy issue is incorporated in a majority of the concerned sectoral plans	There is a national plan that integrated these domains
c	All relevant stakeholders are included in discussions and policy-making on the issue	1	2	3	4
		No relevant stakeholders can participate in policy integration	Some relevant stakeholders can participate in policy integration	Many relevant stakeholders can participate in policy integration	All relevant stakeholders can participate in policy integration
d	Institutional arrangements between relevant government agencies allow for them to collaborate	1	2	3	4
		No existing institutional arrangement to foster collaboration on the integration project	There is an existing institutional arrangement but it is not working	There is an existing institutional arrangement but only limited collaboration is happening.	There is an existing institutional arrangement responsible that allows relevant actors to freely collaborate.

e	Shared belief among all relevant actors that policy integration should be a means to achieve the SDGs	1	2	3	4
		There is no shared belief that policy integration is the appropriate solution	There is limited shared belief that policy integration is the appropriate solution	There is a shared belief among the majority of relevant actors that integration is the appropriate solution	There is a widespread shared belief that policy integration is the appropriate solution
f	There is political support for the policy issue to be integrated	1	2	3	4
		The integration of the policy issue does not enjoy any political support	There is limited political support for the integration of the policy issue	There is political support for the integration of the policy issue but there is still significant opposition	Integration of the policy issue fully enjoys political support
g	There is public support for the policy issue to be integrated	1	2	3	4
		The policy integration project does not enjoy any public support	There is limited public support for the policy integration project	There is public support for the integration of the policy but there is still significant opposition	Integration of the policy issue fully enjoys public support
h	There is alignment of resources and implementation efforts between all levels of the government (e.g. national, subnational)	1	2	3	4
		There is no alignment of resources and implementation efforts between all levels of the government (e.g. national, subnational)	There is no limited alignment of resources and implementation efforts between all levels of the government (e.g. national, subnational)	There is some alignment of resources and implementation efforts between all levels of the government (e.g. national, subnational) to make the integration initiatives work.	There is full alignment of resources and implementation efforts between all levels of the government (e.g. national, subnational)
i	There is alignment between international standards on the policy issue and the integration objectives	1	2	3	4
		There is no alignment between international standards on the policy issue and the integration objectives	There is no limited alignment between international standards on the policy issue and the integration objectives	There is some alignment between international standards on the policy issue and the integration objectives	There is full alignment between international standards on the policy issue and the integration objectives

Module 3. Degrees of objective and instrument consistency

This section appraises the degrees of consistency of both the objectives of the policies to be integrated and the instruments by which integration can be achieved. Policy integration entails weaving together the objectives and instruments of different administrative units in support of a single policy issue.

The following terms are used:

1. **Compatibility** refers the absence of conflict and negative spill-overs when one goal or policy is pursued simultaneously with another.

2. **Interdependence** refers to the degree of mutual reliance on expertise, resources, and information to achieve the objectives of policy integration.

Q6	Using the numeric scales with 1 as the lowest and 4 as the highest, choose the number that best describes the status of each of the dimensions identified below.				
a	The existing objectives of the policies are compatible with each other	1	2	3	4
		Existing sectoral goals and policy integration goals are completely incompatible	Existing sectoral goals and policy integration goals are moderately incompatible	Existing sectoral goals and policy integration goals are moderately compatible	Existing sectoral goals and policy integration goals are completely incompatible
b	The existing objectives of the policies are to be integrated are interdependent with the each other	1	2	3	4
		There is no interdependence between the policy objectives	There is some interdependence between the policy objectives	There is enough interdependence between the policy objectives to make integration work	There is full interdependence between the policy objectives
c	The current set of instruments and measures adopted to achieve their separate policy objectives are compatible when integrated	1	2	3	4
		Existing sectoral policy instruments and measures are completely incompatible	Existing sectoral policy instruments and measures are moderately incompatible	Existing sectoral policy instruments are moderately compatible	Existing sectoral policy measures and proposed measures under the policy integration project are completely compatible
d	The current set of instruments and measures adopted to achieve their separate policy objectives are interdependent with each other	1	2	3	4
		There is no interdependence between the current sectoral policy instruments and measures to be integrated	There is some interdependence between the current sectoral policy instruments and measures to be integrated	There is enough interdependence between the current sectoral policy instruments and measures to be integrated to make it work	There is full interdependence between the current sectoral policy instruments and measures to be integrated

Module 4. Analytical capacity

This section assesses analytical capacity for policy integration. Analytical capacity pertains to generating intelligence to ensure that decisions related to the integration of policy issue are technically sound and that the policies mixes are logically related.

The following terms are used:

- **Policy analysts** refer to personnel dedicated to tasks related to employing analytical techniques such as cost-benefit analysis, scenario planning as well as other data collection and analysis.

- **Policy-relevant information** can include secondary data or research outputs of think tanks and research institutes.

- **Policy advisory system** refers to a set of actors that can provide policy advice including think tanks, research institutes, international organizations, and policy units within the public service.

Q7	Using the numeric scale with 1 as the lowest and 4 as the highest, choose the number that best describes the status of each of the dimensions identified below.				
a	Supply of capable internal policy analysts	1	2	3	4
		There is no supply of capable internal policy analyst	There is a limited supply of capable internal policy analyst	There is sufficient supply of capable internal policy analyst	There is an adequate supply of internal policy analyst
b	Supply of capable external policy analysts or consultants	1	2	3	4
		There is no supply of capable external policy analyst	There is a limited supply of capable external policy analyst	There is sufficient supply of capable external policy analyst	There is an adequate supply of external policy analyst
c	Collecting policy-relevant information	1	2	3	4
		There is no reliable system for collecting policy-relevant information	There is a system for collecting policy-relevant information, but it is unreliable	There is a partially reliable system for collecting policy-relevant information	There is a fully reliable system for collecting policy-relevant information
d	Top management commitment for evidence-based policymaking	1	2	3	4
		Top management are not committed to using evidence for policy-making	Top management are committed to using evidence for policy-making	Top management are sufficiently committed to using evidence for policy-making	Top management are fully committed to using evidence for policy-making
e	National statistical system	1	2	3	4
		The national statistical system does not provide any statistics relevant to the policy integration project	The national statistical system provides a limited set of statistics relevant to the integration of policy issue	The national statistical system provides majority of the statistics relevant to the integration of policy issue	The national statistical system provides all the statistics relevant to integration project
f	Policy advisory system	1	2	3	4

		Advice is not available for policy integration activities.	There is a limited source of policy advice for policy integration activities.	There is ready source of policy advice for policy integration activities.	There is a widespread availability of policy advice for policy integration activities.
g	Political support for evidence-based decision making	1	2	3	4
		Politicians do not support the use of evidence in decision-making.	Politicians provide limited support the use of evidence in decision-making.	Politicians provide sufficient support the use of evidence in decision-making.	Politicians actively support the use of evidence in decision-making.
h	Public access to information	1	2	3	4
		The public has no access to necessary information about the sector's services to assess its overall performance.	The public has limited access to necessary information about the sector's services to assess its overall performance.	The public has access to necessary information about the sector's services to assess its overall performance.	The public has access to all information about the sector's services to assess its overall performance.

Module 5. Operational capacity

This section assesses operational capacity for policy integration. Operational capacity pertains to the ability of the set of actors concerned to get things done.

Q8	Using the numeric scale with 1 as the lowest and 4 as the highest, choose the number that best describes the status of each of the dimensions identified below.			
a	Budget and other financial resources	1	2	3	4
		Budget is not adequate for the integration of policy issue	There is an existing budget the integration of policy issue but is not adequate and requires additional appropriations	Budget is adequate for current integration efforts but requires additional appropriations for future efforts	Budget is adequate or can easily be made available for current and future integration efforts
b	Human resources	1	2	3	4
		Human resources are not available for the integration of policy issue	There is limited availability of human resources for the integration of policy issue	There is sufficient availability of human resources for the integration of policy issue	Human resources are widely available for integration efforts
c	Internal collaboration with other units	1	2	3	4
		Relevant internal units do not collaborate for the integration of policy issue	There is limited collaboration between a few internal units	There is sufficient collaboration between a few internal units	All relevant internal units collaborate for the integration of policy issue
d	Performance management system	1	2	3	4
		Systems are not in place to monitor performance of relevant actors involved in policy integration	Systems are in place to monitor input performance of relevant actors involved in policy integration	Systems are in place to monitor output performance of relevant actors involved in policy integration	Systems are in place to monitor outcome performance of relevant actors involved in policy integration
e	Inter-agency cooperation in other areas	1	2	3	4
		Organizations involved in the integration project currently do not work together to achieve common goals	There is limited cooperation between organizations involved in integration	There is sufficient cooperation between organizations involved in integration	There is effective cooperation between organizations involved in integration
f	Resource sharing	1	2	3	4
		There is no sharing of resources and information among the organizations involved in integration	There is limited sharing of resources and information among the organizations involved in integration	There is sufficient sharing of resources and information among the organizations involved in integration	The organizations involved in integration are highly resource interdependent
g	Autonomy over resources	1	2	3	4

		Organizations involved in the integration project currently do not work together to achieve common goals	There is limited cooperation between organizations involved in integration	There is sufficient cooperation between organizations involved in integration	There is effective cooperation between organizations involved in integration
h	Checks for impartiality	1	2	3	4
		Checks on government impartiality do not work	Checks on government impartiality work on a limited capacity	Checks on government impartiality work sufficiently	Checks on government impartiality work effectively

Module 6. Political capacity

This section assesses political capacity for policy integration. Political capacity is concerned with the ability to mobilize involvement of key stakeholders in the integration process and to resolve conflicts arising from their subsequent interaction.

Q9	**Using the numeric scale with 1 as the lowest and 4 as the highest, choose the number that best describes the status of each of the dimensions identified below.**			
a	Public participation	1	2	3	4
		The public cannot participate in the entire integration process	The public can participate in some of the activities of the integration of policy issue	The public can participate in a majority some of the activities of the integration of policy issue	The public can participate in all of the activities of the integration of policy issue
b	Communication with stakeholders	1	2	3	4
		No information is disseminated to the public about the integration project	Limited information about the integration of the policy issue is disseminated to relevant stakeholders	Sufficient information about the integration of the policy issue is disseminated to relevant stakeholders	Widespread information about the policy integration project is disseminated to relevant stakeholders
c	Access to key policymakers	1	2	3	4
		Organizations involved in the integration do not have access to key policymakers	Organizations involved in the integration have limited access to key policymakers	Organizations involved in the integration have sufficient access to key policymakers	Organizations involved in the integration do not have open access to key policymakers
d	Management of conflicts and complaints	1	2	3	4
		There is no system of managing conflicts and complaints from the public and other external stakeholders	A system of managing conflicts and complaints from the public and other external stakeholders exists but with a limited working capacity	There is a system that sufficiently manages conflicts and complaints from the public and other external stakeholders	There is an effective system of managing conflicts and complaints from the public and other external stakeholders
e	Civil society influence in the decision-making	1	2	3	4
		Civil society cannot influence cross-sectoral decision-making	Civil society influence on cross-sectoral decision-making is limited	Civil society influence on cross-sectoral decision-making is sufficient	Civil society influence on cross-sectoral decision-making is widespread
f	Public trust	1	2	3	4
		The public does not trust policy integration activities	The public have limited trust on policy integration activities	The public have sufficient trust on policy integration activities	The public have widespread trust on policy integration activities
g	Political support for integration activities	1	2	3	4
		Politicians provide no support for integration activities	Politicians provide limited support for integration activities	Politicians provide sufficient support for integration activities	Politicians actively provide support for integration activities

h	Public discourse on policy integration	1	2	3	4
		There is no public discussion of cross-sectoral policies	There is limited public discussion of cross-sectoral policies	There is sufficient public discussion of cross-sectoral policies	There is widespread public discussion of cross-sectoral policies

Annex 2 – Survey administration guide

What is the survey of institutional capacity for policy integration intended to capture?

The survey of institutional capacity for policy integration seeks to measure baseline conditions of integration of relevant policy issues for the SDGs.

Who should administer the survey?

The survey is intended to be self-administered by interested governments, ministries and offices. The intended users of the model questionnaire are government officials at national and/or local levels who are responsible for developing capacity-building interventions for policy integration, as well as United Nations agencies and other organizations supporting efforts in this area.

How is the survey organized?

The survey is comprised of six modules to allow for a 'modular approach' to assessing the ability of many governments to pursue policy integration. The modular approach is used so that different individuals with varying knowledge of the SDGs can be tapped to become respondents for the survey. Given that integration involves multiple actors, the modular approach ensures inclusiveness of the appraisal and moves closer to a more complete picture of the level of integration of the policy issue.

Module 1: Appraisal of policy issue

It is important to first understand the nature of the policy issue to the depth of policy design space necessary for the integration process. The more connected is the policy issue, the more actors it would require to be involved, the more design space it would require – especially if the objectives and instruments are highly inconsistent. Module 1 is comprised of four sections. Section 1.1 tries to establish the extent to which survey respondents perceive their work's contribution spans across different SDGs. Section 1.2 lets the respondents consider how their work is affected by other relevant stakeholders. Section 1.3 will let the respondents map out the intersectoral nature of their work by identifying other sectoral government authorities' influence. Section 1.4 asks the respondents to list down strategies they believe contributes to the policy integration of the issue they work on.

Module 2: Appraisal of existing level of integration

The SDGs created a mandate for policy integration in certain sectors that have already enjoyed significant integration activities such as water resource management, urban planning and land-use planning. Thus, it is critical for the current level of design space to be appraised as a first analytical step. Module Q2 provides a quick appraisal of the depth of the design space available for integration based on seven dimensions. The survey operationalizes the design space as a function the alignment of laws and regulations between policy domains being integrated, incorporation of the sector concerned into national planning, institutional arrangements, shared belief of integration as a solution or means for SDG progress, and political and public support for integration.

The first dimension (Q2a) concerns the alignment of existing laws and regulations that governs the sectors or issues to be integrated. Alignment here is defined as having no contradictory provisions that alter the incentives of different policy subsystems to integrate. The second dimension (Q2b) refers to the degree of incorporation of the integration agenda into different sectoral plans and national plans. The highest level of incorporation is having a national integrated plan while the lowest level of incorporation is having no sectoral plan that even concerns with integration of the subsystem. The third dimension (Q3c) pertains to the extent to which relevant stakeholders participate in the

discussions related to policymaking. As more stakeholders are included at baseline, the wider the design space since values, interests and preferences are already know. The fourth dimension (Q3d) discusses institutional arrangements conducive to policy integration. This dimension captures the extent to which there is an institution responsible for coherent policymaking, which varies in permanence from being an informal coordinating body to a permanent cross-sectoral institution. The fifth dimension (Q3e) refers to the belief between and among relevant stakeholders that integration is the solution to the cross-cutting problem. A common understanding among concerned actors should be widely shared and determines the willingness of independent, sector-oriented actors to work together. The sixth dimension (Q3f) is on the extent of support given by political leaders for policy integration, thought to be one of the most important factors in integration projects. The last dimension (Q3g) refers to the existence of policy publics operationalized as public support for policy integration.

Module 3: Appraisal of consistency of goals and instruments

As discussed in the earlier sections, the degree of inconsistencies of the policy objectives and instruments should be evaluated to determine what form of integration should be pursued. In this section, inconsistency is operationalized as two interrelated concepts. First, the objectives and instruments can be evaluated following the concept of compatibility. Compatibility refers to the absence of conflict and negative spill-overs when one goal or policy is pursued simultaneously with another. For instance, the objectives of attaining gender equity have been noted to be incompatible with the efficiency goals in public service. These conflicts should however not be seen as fundamentally irreconcilable but can be addressed through conscious design of integration strategies. Survey items Q3a and Q3b examines the compatibility of objectives and instruments of the policies being integrated into a policy issue. The second dimension is interdependence. Interdependence is the extent to which these discrete policy sectors rely on each other for resources, information and expertise for the achievement of the objectives (Q3c) and implementation of instruments (Q3d). For example, a highly interdependent goal indicates high level of integration as the sectors have coalesced around providing an integrated service or good.

Module 4: Appraisal of analytical capacity

This module is comprised of eight questions. Q4a-Q4d lets the respondent appraise organizational-level analytical capacity. This section is composed of 12 survey items to measure the 3 different dimensions of governance capacity at the organizational level. Analytical capacity is a function of the supply of policy analytical processes and skills. The availability of personnel with analytical skills within (Q4a) or outside the organization (Q4b) forms a key component of organizational analytical capacity. All organizations need a pool of individuals who has specialized expertise on analysing the appropriateness of solutions to problems and whether the goals of policy integration can be achieved. Q4c is about the existence of an organizational system for collecting policy-relevant data and information. Policy analysts when provided with regularly-collected reliable information regularly creates a competitive and complex vetting of policy ideas. Such analysis, particularly when independently and credibly provided, allows organizations to establish the broader linkages between sector-specific policies. Q4d asks about the commitment of organizational managers for evidence-based policymaking, which is suggestive of the demand for policy analysis. The demand for policy analysis is equally critical since, as in the case of biodiversity integration, "often it is not a lack of data that is the main problem, but the tendency to isolate and hold on to data, and interpret it with a narrow organizational mandate and frame."

For analytical capacity at the systemic level, the MDG implementation improved the national statistical capacity of most countries, which have been pivotal in generating reliable and timely information (Q4e) that could be used to raise awareness and build public support for the MDGs. The existence of a policy advisory system (Q4f) or a set of actors that can provide policy advice outside the organization including think tanks, research institutes, international organizations, and policy units within the public service is also an indication of high analytical capacity, which includes independent audit and evaluation units or departments. While countries have continued to build their statistical

capacity for the SDGs, systemic-level analytical capacity for policy integration also includes political support for evidence-based policy analysis and evaluation (Q4g). Like organizational demand for policy analysis, political support for such work opens the opportunity to obtain higher levels of policy capacity. Policy-relevant information is only useful when the public has the freedom to access these analytical information (Q4.h) to exact public accountability. Public access to information, particularly when legally guaranteed, can also generate pressures for better quality of analytical information.

Module 5: Appraisal of operational capacity

The module is also comprised of eight questions to measure operational capacity. Operational capacity at the organizational level, which is the concern of Q5a-Q5d, is about the availability of financial resources and personnel as well as the existence of systems that align incentives of individuals towards achieving results. Access to financial resources (Q5a) is most critical particularly since integration efforts typically fall outside the sector-specific budgets, particularly during initiation phases. Organizations seeking to engage in policy integration also need highly valuable human resources or employees (Q5b). Human resources who have the relevant experience can be important in determining the administrative and technical feasibility of integration strategies. Systems for intra-agency (Q5c) bargaining, sharing of information, and collaborative arrangements should also be in place to achieve internal coherence. Although not all internal units need to collaborate, a modicum of collaboration between relevant units facilitates the efficient delivery of services. Lastly, a working performance management system permits integration as key performance indicators are identified towards properly implementing integration strategies (Q5d). Distilling strategic goals, operational objectives and indicators to measure attainment of such objectives from multiple mandates and complex environment can be particularly tasking but it stimulates organizational coherence and vertical integration.

Operational capacity at the systemic level is determined by the level of inter-government and inter-agency coordination towards bargaining and negotiation in the creation of policy instruments. It refers to existing traditions and practices such as prior agreements on collaboration and negotiations (Q5e), which is being measured for Q5e-Q5h. Resources, if deployed based on institutional complementarities, can be effective in achieving government effectiveness. When there is coherence and complementarity between these actors as evidenced by the sharing of resources and information (Q5f), formal spaces for political bargaining (e.g. parliament, elections) thrive, reducing the likelihood of protests against the integration strategies. The importance of autonomy can be counterintuitive because if the organizations would choose not to participate in integration activities, they can easily do so. However, organizational autonomy (Q5f) provides organization the discretion to channel resources and mandate towards the integration efforts. Discretion over resources of local governments is particularly important in the integration of strategies towards more sustainable transport policy. The legal-political environment must also enable public agencies not only the discretion to carry out their functions but also checks on their discretion to ensure impartial governance (Q5h). It is a fundamental principle of good governance that public-sector agencies are held accountable for their decisions and actions to the political executive and central agencies as well as their societal partners and clients. Moreover, without transparency, certain issues maybe prioritized over others that may create sub-optimal results instead of achieving more coherent policymaking.

Module 6: Appraisal of political capacity

Political resources that are crucial for integration are a sense of ownership of the integration process of the public through active participation and communication, access to relevant decision-makers, and a conflict resolution system. Q6a-Q6d measures the organizational-level of political capacity. Public participation (Q6a) is most important resource as the integration process can be a long process where there will be clear winners and losers, particularly when it involves replacement of existing policy mixes that may have strong constituencies. To succeed in policy integration, governments need to define an issue and draw the public into focusing on it and actively contributing to its resolution. Communication is also key particularly since integration involves changing the agenda (Q6b).

Communication with all stakeholders, including the general public is a critical component of organizational political capacity and essential for effective policy and governance because it clarifies the abstract notions of integration. Skilful communication by agencies can increase support for government's policy objectives and make the task of governance and policy-making easier and more effective. Implementers of the policy integration project must create widespread awareness to generate support. Access of the policy subsystem to key policymakers (Q6c) becomes a vital component because the relationship between key policy-makers and the public service of the domains to be integrated are central to agencies' ability to derive political will. Agencies sympathetic to the integration initiatives enjoying the trust of the Head of Government, for example, will be more effective in policy activities than those without. Crucial to the political capacity of organizations is a system that effectively gathers and resolves conflicts and complaints that may arise either from the 'losers' of integration process or between the agencies concerned (Q36d). The integration process can inadvertently create 'losers' despite intentions of inclusiveness and strategies to mitigate negative spill-overs.

Who are the target respondents?

The target respondents are policy professionals who currently are, or should be, involved in the integration activities of a policy issue under the SDGs. The choice of a modular questionnaire is driven by the idea of being able to use the different modules separately. The whole questionnaire is designed for an individual respondent who has significant knowledge about the policy issue. These respondents can include ministry officials. Experts from international organizations and scientific and research institutes can also be selected to respond to the whole questionnaire, if the experts have sufficient understanding of the policy issue.

Table 1. Target respondents by survey module

Module	Possible respondents
1. Appraisal of policy issue	All respondents
2. Design Space	Government authorities (national and local) International organizations Scientific and research institutes
3. Degree of objective and instrument consistency	Government authorities (national and local) International organizations Scientific and research institutes
4. Analytical capacity	Government authorities (national and local) International organizations Scientific and research institutes
5. Operational capacity	Government authorities (national and local) International organizations Scientific and research institutes
6. Political capacity	All respondents

Other respondents who may not have the sufficient knowledge to answer specific information about internal capacity of the government authorities can be asked to answer Module 1 and Module 6. Module 1 assess the current policy landscape, tangential understanding of which is necessary to provide a nuanced assessment of the policy issue and existing integration approaches. Module 6 pertains to political capacity or the ability of the organizations to engage with the external environment.

An example of a policy issue where integration can be pursued is integrated water resource management. Transboundary basin area management (pertaining in particular to SDG 6) may involve the following actors:

- Decision-makers;
- International organisations and external support agencies;
- Industrial water users;
- Scientific and research institutes;
- Water services providers, including private entrepreneurs, for drinking water supply and sanitation, irrigation and drainage, hydropower and other water uses;
- Government water and water-related departments;
- Municipalities and local authorities (elected and appointed officials);
- Users and user groups;
- Professional organisations;
- National and international NGOs.

Pre-test requirements

Prior to the roll-out of the questionnaire, it is important to determine whether the survey can generate robust results. The robustness of the results is not going to be determined by the ability to draw statistical conclusion from the survey, rather, the point of the survey is a) to draw out the existing constructs of policy integration and capacity and explicate their potential relationships through theory and b) establish a certain degree of generalizability by surveying a number of heterogeneous respondents. Thus, it is important to conduct a pre-test of the questionnaire to ascertain whether the constructs have been properly conveyed.

There is also a concern on the consistency of the measurement of the constructs since the survey, particularly the scale, was drawn up from scratch. This again emphasizes the importance of a survey pre-test to determine internal consistency or the degree to which different questions can be used to measure a higher-level construct.

The sampling of respondents should be made to ensure representativeness of respondents. Ideally, all actors who needs to be involved in the integration process should be surveyed through a representative. The chosen representative should have enough experience to make an assessment of current conditions and enough authority to understand the broader details of policymaking including the enabling environment. Thus, the proposed sampling method is purposive to enhance external validity of the survey.

Given the simple design of the questionnaire, it is expected to be implemented through a relatively simple procedure. The quickest way is to use an online survey platform to disseminate the questionnaire to the target respondents. Online surveys can easily be shared through email address or a dedicated survey link and facilitate descriptive analysis of survey findings.

Customization

While the survey was developed to allow comparability of results across sectors and settings, the survey can be customized to suit the preferences and context of each sector. The full and expansive guidance on how the survey can be customize is not possible considering the comprehensiveness of the SDGs but there are two modules that can be added into the this 'skeletal' questionnaire.

The first is to identify which sectors are required to be included in the integration process and assess the extent of their existing participation. This aspect of horizontal integration is treated as a given in the development of the questionnaire but can be further explicated using an assessment of the other sectors that need to be folded into the integration project. This is crucial because sectors might already have an existing collaboration in one area and other might not, which shapes the feasibility of the integration project. For example, some cities may have already embedded participatory structures into government processes through budgeting. This prior experience will facilitate the involvement of civil society into urban planning, which can be an area that did not benefit from public participation.

The second aspect is to recognize vertical integration. There is a need to examine how the integration process is affected by international policies. Given that the different targets may not have clearly defined international standards, this is an area of inquiry that can be added. Existence of international standards can facilitate the integration process as it clarifies the goals and to some extent, 'softly' prescribe policy instruments. The relationship with local levels must also be established. In federal systems or unitary states with highly decentralized services, one sector is a responsibility of a multi-level of actors which can make the integration process more complex. For example, IWRM could involve the participation of various subnational governments, particularly when they have been devolved with powers of natural resource management. In this aspect, integration into the national planning process may not be straightforward and will require higher levels of political capacity.

Limitations

The survey was developed with comparability and generalizability in mind. As a result, there are major limitations of the survey that potential users should bear in mind.

First, while the survey is theoretically grounded, some of the constructs, particularly in terms of the differentiation of organizational and systemic capacity, may not be completely clear. A pre-test of the survey questionnaire is highly recommended before it can be used for roll-out. The pre-test should not only include gathering responses to the questionnaire to assess internal consistency, but concerned users of the survey should be asked about the constructs and whether these are clear enough for potential respondents. The appropriateness of the scale should also be examined through discussion with pre-test participants.

Second, statistical conclusion validity of the survey is not expected to be high as the respondents are proposed to be identified purposively. The validity of the survey results is contingent on the quality of the responses of the chosen respondents. Careful consideration of the respondents is needed.

Data analysis and interpretation

The concern of the questionnaire was not to measure the effectiveness of integration initiatives but to examine the elements that determine the extent and form of integration required to comply with the SDGs. Thus, at the risk of oversimplification, the model questionnaire puts emphasis on a linear progression of the different dimensions of policy integration through 4-point and 5-point ordinal scale. Qualitative, adjectival scales are proposed to be used to reduce the subjectivities of the distance between two scales.

Since ordinal scales are adopted, only mode responses can be taken as an indication of the degree of interlinkages. Any SDG rated as 'high' in Q1 (or those with mode greater than 3) can be seen as interlinked. For instance, IWRM is expected to be linked with SDG 7 and 14.

To determine the depth of design space, the mode responses for Q5 can be derived. The mode response for each of the dimension is suggestive of how each dimension is perceived to be integrated. These responses can be added together to serve as an aggregate measure of the depth of design space. Governments with the highest capacity to expand the design space would have aggregate measure of 28 while the lowest level is 7.

Table 2. Adjectival rating and aggregate score of level of integration

Adjectival rating	Low		Moderate		High
Aggregate score	6	14	21		28

Understanding the degree of integration of the policy issue at baseline will depend on the respondents' appraisal of consistency of objectives and instruments. The mode responses of Q6.a and Q6.b can be added up to come up with a measure of consistency of objectives. Similarly, the mode responses of Q6.c and Q6.d can be added up to develop a measure of consistency of instruments. The objective or instrument can be roughly considered as consistent if the aggregate measure is more than 5 while it can be considered inconsistent if the measure is equal or less than 5.

In measuring governance capacity, the mode responses of each of the survey item that corresponds to the specific construct would have to be summed to generate the aggregate score. For example, mode responses Q7 would have to be added to create an aggregate rating of analytical capacity. And to derive the level of governance capacity, the scores for analytical, operational and political capacity would also have to be summed, with the lowest capacity score of 8 and highest capacity score of 56.

Table 3. Adjectival rating and overall aggregate score of governance capacity

Adjectival rating	Low		Moderate		High
Aggregate score	8	16	24		32

In summary, the survey items under the capacity modules (Q4-6) must be aggregated into the level of dimension (analytical, operational and political) and then aggregated to the level (organizational and systemic), for which serves the basis of the last aggregation to governance capacity.

Table 4. Data analysis and interpretation plan

Research questions	Survey constructs		Data analysis methods	Interpretation	
	Specific construct	*Survey items*		*Criteria*	*Implication*
Is the design space conducive for policy integration?	Alignment of laws and regulations	Q2a	• Mode responses • Distribution of responses by percentages • Aggregate rating (summation of mode responses)	Wide design space for policy integration (42)	Integration should be relatively easy
	Incorporation into national planning	Q2b		Moderate design space for policy integration (24)	Integration strategies still required to be SDG-ready
	Participation of relevant stakeholders	Q2c			
	Institutional arrangements for collaboration	Q2d			
	Shared belief of integration as a solution	Q2e		Small design space for policy integration (6)	Not SDG-ready with policy sectors highly fragmented
	Political support	Q2f			
	Public support	Q2g			
	Vertical alignment (national-local)	Q2h			
	Vertical alignment (international)	Q2i			
What is the degree of consistency of objectives and instruments?	Goal compatibility	Q6a	• Mode responses • Distribution of responses by percentages • Aggregate rating (summation of mode responses)	When consistency of objectives and instruments are more than 8	Highest level of integration possible
	Goal interdependence	Q6b		When consistency of objectives is more than 8 but consistency of	Analytical capacity is most needed

Research questions	Survey constructs		Data analysis methods	Interpretation	
	Specific construct	*Survey items*		*Criteria*	*Implication*
				instruments is less than 8	
	Instrument compatibility	Q6c		When consistency of goals objectives is less than 8 but consistency of instruments is more than 8	Political capacity is most needed
	Instrument interdependence	Q6d		When consistency of objectives and instruments are less than 8	All dimensions of capacity are needed
What is the current level of analytical capacity?	Organizational analytical capacity	Q7a Q7b Q7c Q7d	• Mode responses • Distribution of responses by percentages • Aggregate rating (summation of mode responses)	High capacity (28)	Implication depends on the level of consistency identified
	Systemic analytical capacity	Q7e Q7f Q7g Q7h		Moderate capacity (16)	
				Low capacity (8)	
What is the current level of operational capacity?	Organizational operational capacity	Q8a Q8b Q8c Q8d	• Mode responses • Distribution of responses by percentages • Aggregate rating (summation of mode responses)	High capacity (28)	Implication depends on the level of consistency identified
	Systemic operational capacity	Q8e Q8f Q8g Q8h		Moderate capacity (16)	
				Low capacity (8)	
What is the current level of political capacity?	Organizational political capacity	Q9a Q9b Q9c	• Mode responses • Distribution of responses by percentages • Aggregate rating (summation of mode responses)	High capacity (28)	Implication depends on the level of consistency identified
	Systemic political capacity	Q9e Q9g Q9h		Moderate capacity (16)	
				Low capacity (8)	
What is the overall level of governance capacity?	Aggregate scores of analytical, operational and political capacity	Q7 Q8 Q9	• Aggregate rating (summation of mode responses)	High capacity (56)	Implication depends on the level of consistency identified
				Moderate capacity (32)	
				Low capacity (8)	