



United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs



Overview of the Toolkit on Governance Capacities and Institutional Arrangements for Policy Coherence

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26 January 2021



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Key concepts: Policy coherence

- *“systematically reduces conflicts and promotes synergies between and within different policy areas to achieve the outcomes associated with jointly agreed policy objectives”*

(Nilsson et al., 2012, p. 396)

- Aims
 - To identify trade-offs between policies
 - To reduce negative impacts between policies
 - To foster synergies between policies
 - To make policies that mutually reinforce each other

Key concepts: SDGs and policy coherence

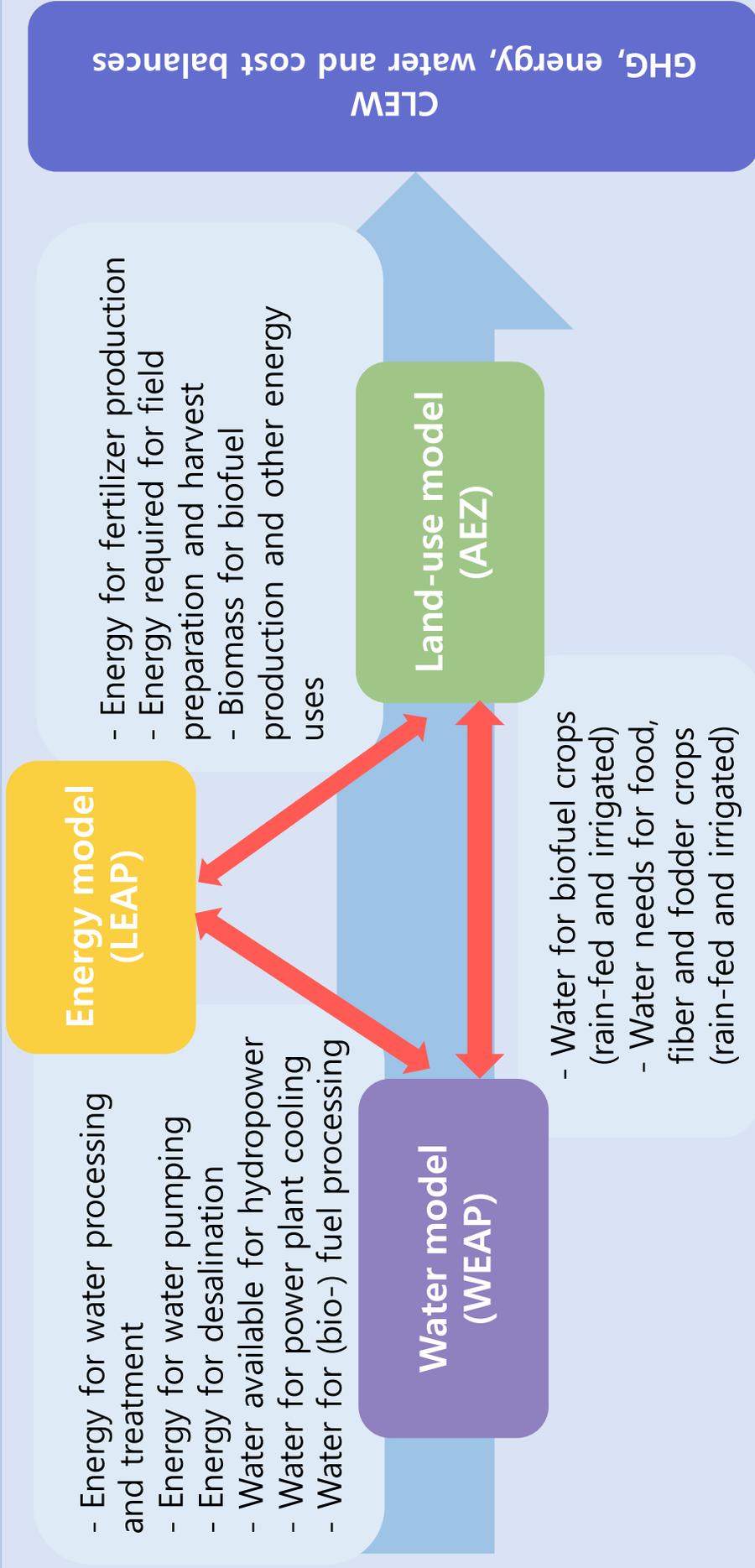
Box 1.2. Five reasons why the adoption of Agenda 2030 may be a game-changer for integration

1. With the 2030 Agenda, sustainable development and its integrated perspective become the mainstream approach to development, increasing the political salience of integrated approaches, including in developed countries due to the universality of the SDGs.
2. The SDGs provide a common map of sustainable development, clearly showing the interdependence among goals and targets.
3. Scientific knowledge and evidence on interlinkages among SDG areas have progressed tremendously since 1992.
4. Institutions are an integral part of the SDGs on par with other goals, not an afterthought or a component of an “enabling environment”
5. Methodologies that support integrated approaches in public institutions are being developed, including analytical methods, tools and information systems.

Source: United Nations (2018, p. 4)



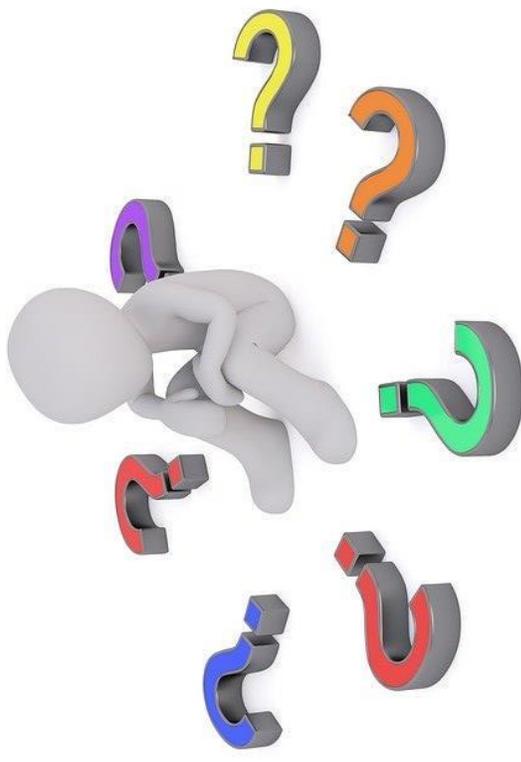
Interconnected Sectors



Round table to check participants' existing understandings

Examples for lead questions

- **Are you aware of an example from your own working background that represents a coherent policy?**
- **In your experience: What are core ingredients for well-working institutions?**



Key concepts: Institution

- “Institution” is widely used concept with many different definitions
- In the past, institutions were often synonyms for organizations
- More recently, institutions is a term broader than organizations including
 - Structures, rules, norms and value that guide social life
- Institutions are rather stable and deeply embedded in history and culture
- Example
 - Marriage is an institution, but no organization

Box 1.1. Institutions in the 2030 Agenda

“Institution” is a broad and multi-faceted term, which encompasses a range of structures, entities, frameworks and norms that organize human life and society. The 2030 Agenda does not prescribe institutional models for the national level, but outlines principles that institutions should strive to achieve, such as being “effective, accountable and transparent”, (as reflected in target 16.6), ensuring “responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels” (target 16.7) and “enhancing policy coherence for sustainable development” (target 17.14).

Source: United Nations (2018, p. 3)

Key concepts: Institutions

*How and why do
institutions matter for
policy
coherence?*

- Institutions...
 - Impact how policy-makers conceive problems and hence: *political commitment*
 - *Example: National Sustainable Development Strategies*
 - Shape the decision-making procedures and thus: *coordination*
 - *Example: rule-book on coordination prescribing how ministries interact*
 - Affect the resource allocation and capacity and hence: *budgets, digital and HR*
 - *Example: rules on budget allocation*
 - Shape styles of interaction with non-governmental actors and thus: *stakeholder engagement*
 - *Example: National Sustainable Development Councils*

Toolkit on Institutional Arrangements and Governance Capacities for Policy Coherence

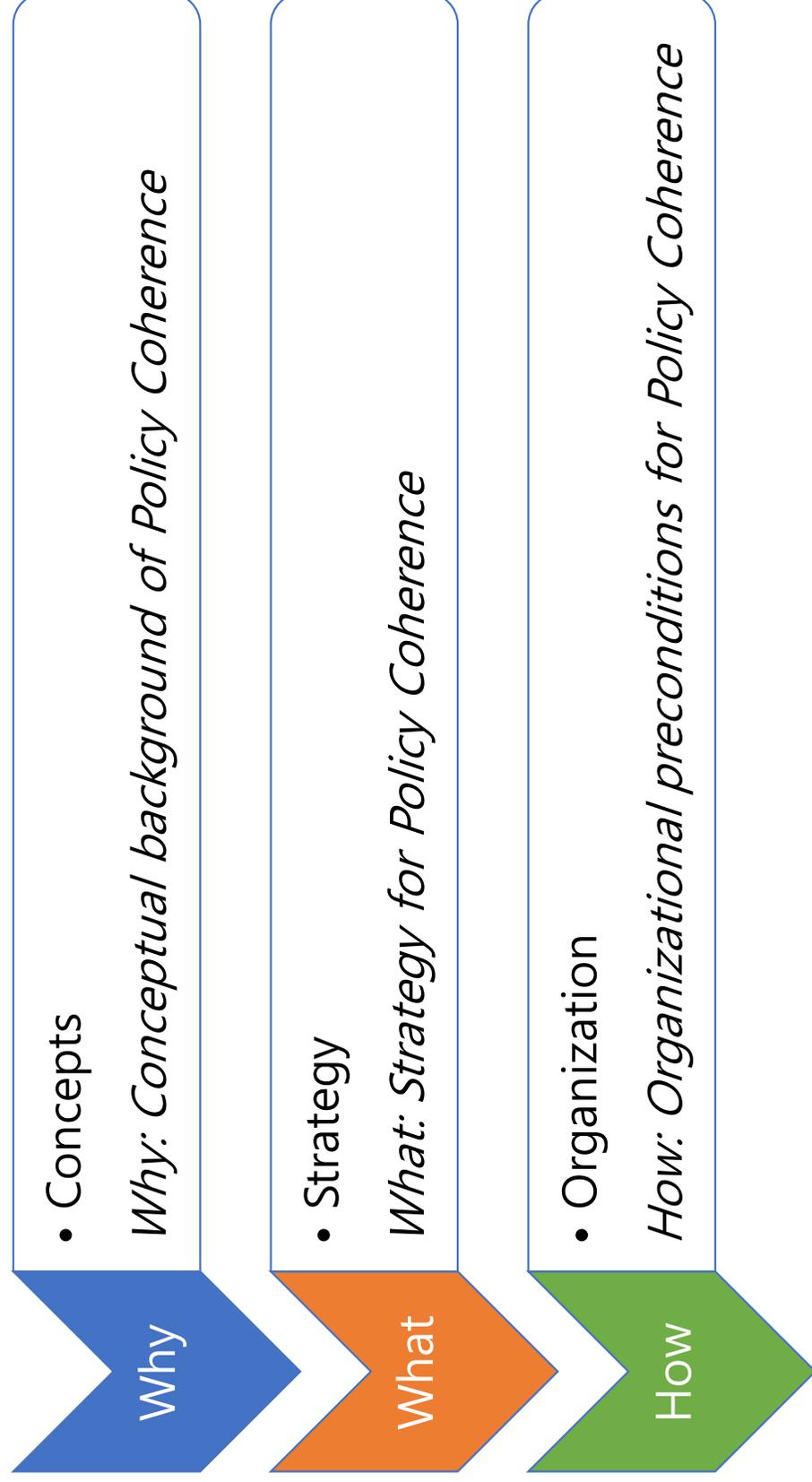
Training of Trainers Toolkit | English

Contributed by UN DESA | DPIDG

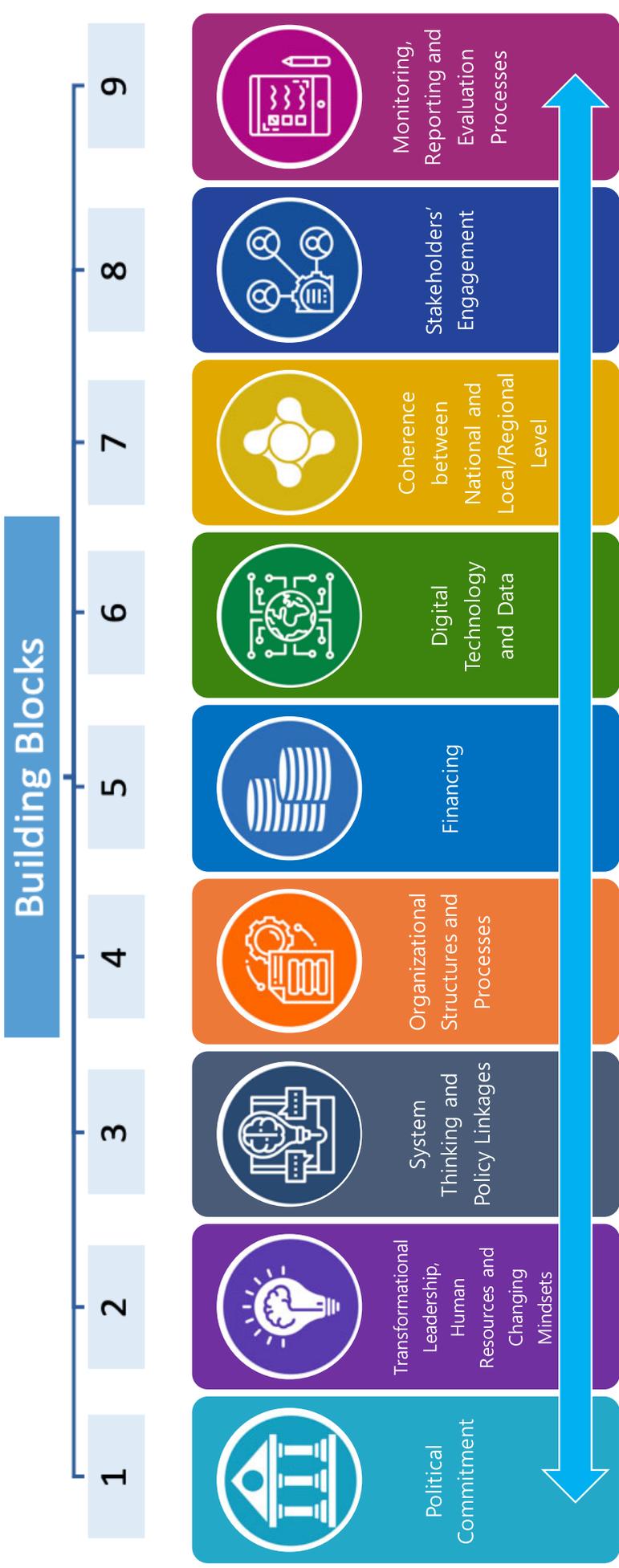
Related SDGs:



Key learning objectives of the Toolkit



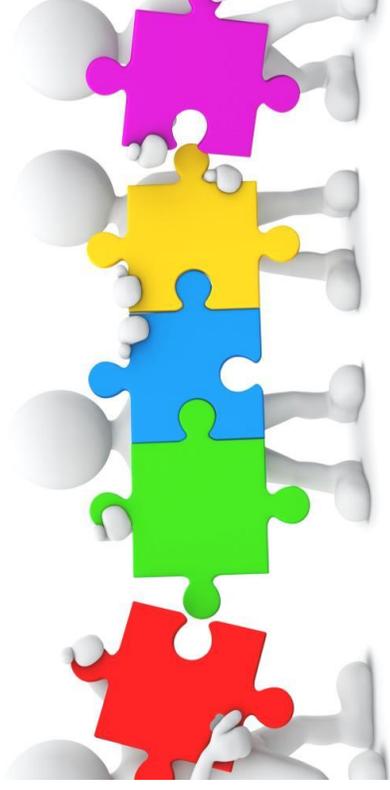
Structure of the toolkit – Building Blocks



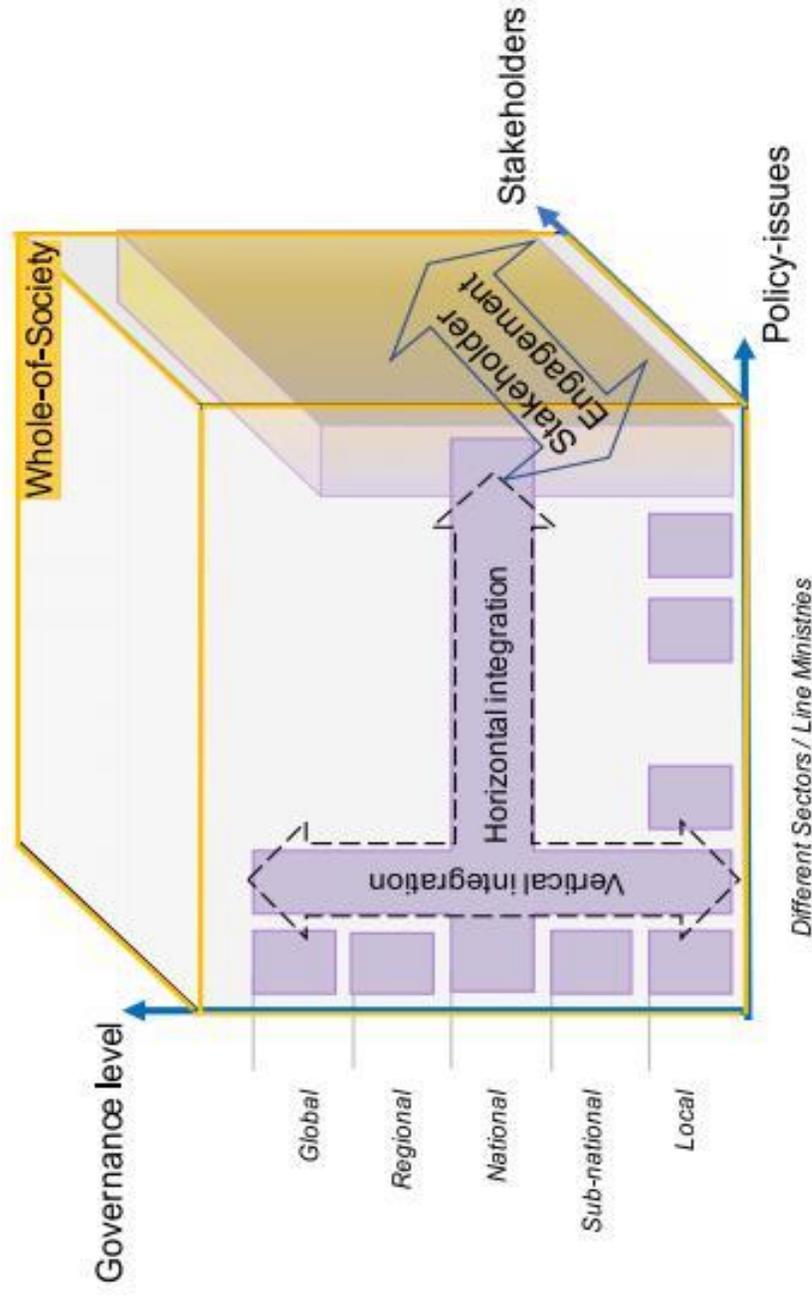
Key concepts:

Coordination as a pre-requisite for policy coherence

- Adjustment of actions and decisions across ministries to achieve a consistent policy output involving all relevant considerations and actors



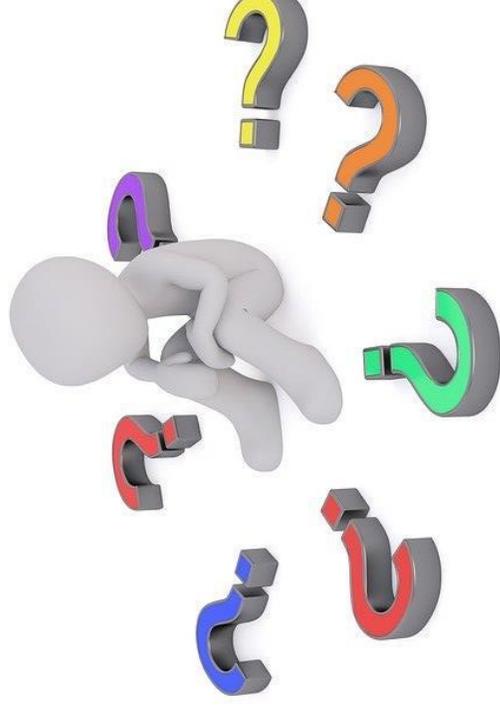
Horizontal and vertical integration



Round table to check participants' existing understandings

Examples for lead questions

- Are you aware of an example from your own working background that represents a coherent policy?
- **In your experience: What are core ingredients for well-working institutions?**



Why is inter-ministerial coordination difficult?

Organizational reasons I – ministries as silos

- Incongruence of division of competences and the interdependence of policy problems
- Ministries differ in how they perceive the world
- Ministries have diverging priorities, goals, preferences
- Organizational affiliation shapes what actors find important and which goals they have



Why is inter-ministerial coordination difficult?

Organizational reasons II – ministries protect their turfs

- Ministries tend to protect their area of responsibility from the interference of others as they compete for political attention and scarce resources



Organizational reasons III – information is power

- Information is distributed unevenly and not widely shared in government
 - *Coordination problems as obstacles for policy coherence*
 - *Yet, coordination across ministries is crucial for coherent policies*





Thank you!

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publicadministration.un.org
unpan.un.org

Readiness Assessment on Institutional Arrangements for Policy Coherence to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The Questionnaire

Section 1: Institutionalization of political commitment towards policy coherence



Summary: the country has institutionalized its commitment towards policy coherence for sustainable development at the highest political level through a vision, legal and normative frameworks.



1. Do you have a National Development Strategy and Plan?

Is there a framework for sustainable development (national strategy, action plan, guidelines) based on a long-term vision and goals (e.g., 10 years) embedded in the National Sustainable Development Plan? If no, or don't know, please go to question 4

- Yes
 No
 Don't Know

2. What governance principles and values are highlighted in the National Sustainable Development Vision? Please answer below:

3. Does your National Development Plan reflect/incorporate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals?

- Yes
 No
 Don't Know

This is section 1 of the Readiness Assessment on Institutional Arrangements for Policy Coherence to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development developed by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG).

4. If you answered no or don't know to question 1, is there a similar instrument put in place? Please specify.

5. Is there a legal or equivalent statement endorsed at the highest political level spelling out the government's commitment to the integrated and coherent implementation of the SDGs? If not, please go to question 11

- Yes
 No
 Don't Know

6. If you answered yes to the previous question, has it been endorsed for the whole of government?

- Yes
 No
 Don't Know

7. If you answered yes to the previous question, has it been endorsed for specific sectoral/ cross-cutting policies?

- Yes
 No
 Don't Know

8. If yes to the previous question, for which specific sectoral/ cross-cutting policies? Please answer below:

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9. Has the legal or equivalent statement endorsed at the highest political level (which spells out the government's commitment to the integrated and coherent implementation of the SDGs) been published? If no or don't know, please go to question 11

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

10. If it has been published, please indicate where: (please check all that applies)

- National law
- Official policy/ national development policy
- Regulation
- Vision
- Strategy
- Action plan
- Other:

11. Is there an operational plan/ action plan to support the implementation of the national development plan?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

12. Has your government identified priority policy areas for policy coherence?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

13. Have timelines been set for the achievement of policy coherence objectives in the national development plan? If no or don't know, please go to question 15.



- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

14. If timelines have been set for the achievement of policy coherence objectives in the national development plan, please provide more information.

[Empty text box for question 14]

15. Are you aware of whether your domestic policies take international commitments into consideration (e.g., Paris Climate Agreement (UNFCCC), Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Samoa Pathway, Copenhagen Convention on Climate Change, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, etc.)? If yes, please give (an) example(s):

[Empty text box for question 15]

The Readiness Assessment will be available on the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) website soon at unpan.un.org

