Meeting of Senior Officials from Centres of Government

Steering and Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals
The Role of the Centre of Government

Stockholm, Sweden
25-26 October 2016

Agenda
AGENDA

Meeting of Senior Officials from the Centres of Government (CoG):
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The Role of the Centre of Government
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MONDAY 24 OCTOBER 2016

18:30  Welcome reception

TUESDAY 25 OCTOBER 2016

9:30-10:00  Opening of the meeting
- Ms. Ulrika Modéer, State Secretary to the Minister for International Development Co-operation and Climate, Sweden
- Ms. Mari Kiviniemi, OECD Deputy Secretary-General

10:00-10:15  Introductory presentation on the SDGs
- Dr. Åsa Persson, Stockholm Environment Institute

10:15-12:15  Session One
Implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals

A principal issue for governments with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals is how to align policies in practice given the breadth and complexity of the SDGs, the mixed track record of most governments in working horizontally, and the need to include an unprecedented range of public and private actors in both policy formulation and implementation. Implementing the SDGs is a formidable governance challenge. The OECD pre-meeting survey will provide a snapshot of progress so far, identify different approaches that countries are taking and highlight the role that the centre can play.

Questions for discussion

- Have the ambitions of the SDGs translated into political mobilisation at the domestic level yet?
- What benefits do the SDGs offer with respect to achieving productive economies and inclusive societies?
- Has a clear plan for implementation been agreed? What different management options were considered?
- What are the main assets and skills the centre brings to the implementation process?

12:15-12:30  Group photo
Focus on key horizontal themes in the SDGs (Breakout sessions)

Within the SDGs, several issues stand out as particularly cross-cutting. In some cases, these are policy agendas that have been promoted by or have been directly co-ordinated from the centre. These breakout sessions will explore how the framework provided by the SDGs can help to promote these important issues and the potential role of the centre.

- **Breakout group 2a: Sustainable production and consumption**

  This complex SDG goal focuses on improving the use of natural resources and energy in the production and consumption of goods and services. Sustainable consumption and production aims at “doing more and better with less”. Achieving this objective will necessarily involve the participation of, and co-ordination across, a very wide range of stakeholders, including business, consumers, policy makers in multiple departments, researchers, scientists, retailers, media, and development co-operation agencies.

  **Questions for discussion**
  - What are the key challenges your country faces in introducing a large-scale “circular economy” policy?
  - Has your country established a formal strategy? Have targets been agreed?
  - How can co-ordination be ensured? Are policies and responsibilities at different levels of governments and among different ministries compatible with an economy-wide sustainable production and consumption strategy?

- **Breakout group 2b: Integration of migrants**

  In 2015, asylum applications reached unprecedented numbers. Our countries are called to respond to large movements of refugees and other migrants in an effective and co-ordinated way. Anticipation, reception and integration are the keywords. Responding to this humanitarian challenge is implicit in multiple SDGs. Building on experience over the past year with co-ordinating policies across central government and with local government to integrate migrants is an important perspective that needs to be integrated into SDG implementation.

  **Questions for discussion**
  - How might the SDGs help to improve how migration is managed by government? Could the long-term nature of the SDG goals counterbalance immediate political and social pressures emanating from the current migration crisis?
- What role does the centre currently play in migration policy? Is there a need for more active leadership or coordination from the centre?
- What are the challenges faced by the centre of government in developing government-wide communication on the issue of migration?

- **Breakout group 2c: Integrity and anti-corruption**

Building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels is an important foundation for achieving the SDGs. This requires co-ordinated government-wide efforts to instill integrity and prevent corruption. Centres of government often have a key role in promoting standards of behaviour across the public service and in leading and communicating broader anti-corruption agendas.

*Questions for discussion*

- What seems to be missing in current anti-corruption policies? Why is the perception still apparently strong that governments do not do enough to enforce integrity?
- How can the SDG process bring fresh momentum, both internationally and domestically?
- How can the centre of government do more in this area? What is its comparative advantage with respect to the law enforcement sector?

- **Breakout group 2d: Gender equality**

Women’s participation and empowerment have been identified as a key component for sustainable development and gender equality is Goal 5 of the SDGs. While some progress has been made in OECD countries, the SDG process can give a boost to an agenda that is often driven from the centre but that depends on the active participation and commitment of all public agencies as well as actors from the private and non-government sectors.

*Questions for discussion*

- Why is progress on gender equality so slow in most countries? From the perspective of the centre of government, what are the main obstacles?
- How might the SDG process strengthen or rejuvenate existing gender equality strategies?
- Can the centre of government steer the development and implementation of a cross-government or cross-society strategy for achieving Goal 5? What can the centre bring that is new?

18:30-20:30 **OFFICIAL DINNER**
WEDNESDAY 26 OCTOBER 2016

9:30 Report on the breakout sessions

10:00-11:30 Session Three
Planning and budgeting for performance and impact

This session will explore practical ways to ensure coherence between measures and policies for achieving SDG goals and the allocation of resources, both annually and on the more medium term. This is a crucial issue for ensuring both an optimal use of resources and a better monitoring of results. The session will include input from the OECD’s Senior Budget Officials Network.

Questions for discussion

- In general, is the budget process used effectively to align resources with policy priorities?
- Have the budgetary implications of implementing the SDGs been assessed? Has a process for allocating appropriate resources been considered?
- How can the centre of government better link strategy with resource allocation? Can performance budgeting be an effective tool to support implementation of the SDGs?

11:30-12:30 Conclusions
Taking the SDG agenda forward

Conclusions by the Chair and closing remarks by Mr. Adralan Shekarabi, Minister for Public Administration, Sweden.

12:45-13:30 Lunch