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Planning, Steering and Co-ordinating Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals OECD 2016

Governments face a daunting task in implementing long-term strategic priorities such as those embodied in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of the main challenges relates to how best 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.

At the same time, economic and social challenges are highlighting governments' need to strengthen capacity in areas such as long-term strategic planning, risk management and communication, cross-sectoral policy co-ordination and monitoring of progress with implementation.

To address these rapidly evolving challenges, countries are currently looking at ways in which to better steer and co-ordinate long-term strategies such as the SDGs. The governance challenge is significant, although there are institutional mechanisms and tools that could be exploited for this purpose. For example, the centre of government has a number of assets that can help in achieving a coherent and clear response. First, the centre is, technically, policy neutral. Second, the centre has convening power borrowed from the head of government and can bring pressure to bear on departments to adjust policies and commit resources. In principle, with respect to the head of government's priorities, it does not need to rely on achieving consensus through compromise and lowest-common-denominator negotiations. Third, while line ministries, even those with the technical expertise, might have little experience in driving cross-disciplinary policies, the centre usually has co-ordination expertise allied with political sensitivity. As highlighted by the OECD Centre Stage report (2015,) centres of government also frequently lead cross-cutting initiatives, many of which focus on improving governance processes.

At the last meeting of the OECD Centres of Government Network, members noted their interest to review and assess the capacity of governments to steer and co-ordinate the implementation of the SDGs. The OECD is responding to this demand and as part of the OECD's support to the SDGs, will collect and analyse information on the governance mechanisms that are needed to support the implementation of the SDGs in OECD member and partner countries. This is a timely exercise, as governments are being called upon to provide evidence on how they will implement the SDGs by 2030.

Glossary of terms used in this questionnaire

Serious difficulties arise in comparative work on public governance due to use of different terminology for similar organisations and activities, and to different political, administrative and legal systems. For the purpose of this questionnaire, we would like to use common terms, though we understand that the terms may appear artificial and not reflect the usual way of depicting the Centre of Government. The following terms are used in this questionnaire:

Agency: Semi-autonomous public organisation that operates at arm’s length from the government, usually reporting to a ministry and mandated to carry out public tasks (e.g. regulation, service delivery, policy implementation) in a relatively autonomous manner (i.e. with less hierarchy and political influence in daily operations and with more managerial freedom).

Centre of Government (CoG): The term Centre of Government (CoG) refers to the organisations and units that serve the Chief Executive (President or Prime Minister, and the Cabinet collectively) and perform certain cross-cutting functions (strategic management, policy coordination, monitoring and improving performance, managing the politics of policies, and communications and accountability). Unlike line ministries and agencies, the CoG usually does not deliver services directly to the public, and does not focus on specific policy areas. The Centre of Government includes a great variety of units across countries, such as General Secretariat, Cabinet Office, Office/Ministry of the Presidency, Council of Ministers Office, etc. In many countries the CoG is made up of more than one unit, fulfilling different functions. Sometimes, units within other ministries (such as Finance or Planning) are regarded as part of the CoG, as they are responsible for some of the functions mentioned before.

Implementation: The processes and actions that need to be taken, once a new policy and/or law has been adopted, in order to ensure that the policy or law is given concrete effect. Can also be called operationalisation, reflecting the fact that policies have no effect unless and until they are made operational.

Minister: Political head of a ministry (in certain countries, the head of a ministry may be called Secretary or Secretary of State, and minister may be more junior in rank). Ministers are generally in charge of one or more ministries, and have a portfolio of responsibilities derived from the areas of responsibility covered by the ministry or ministries. Some ministers do not head up a ministry, but are in charge of specific issues supported by an office (“minister without portfolio”). In most parliamentary systems, ministers are drawn from the legislature but keep their parliamentary seats. In most presidential systems, ministers are not elected officials and are appointed by the President.

Ministry or line ministry: An organisation which forms part of the central core of the executive branch of government. A ministry is responsible for the design and implementation of an area or sector of public policy and administration (e.g. agriculture, education, economy, foreign affairs), in line with the government plan and strategy. A ministry is also responsible for the direction of agencies under its authority. In some countries, ministries are called “departments.” Sub-national governments may also be organised into ministries. A ministry has a delegated budget to exercise its responsibilities, under the authority and direction of the finance ministry or equivalent organisation responsible for the budget in central government. The term line ministry designates the majority of ministries, which exercise delegated, sectoral powers. The finance ministry is not a line ministry.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): 17 Sustainable Development Goals to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030, part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by world leaders at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015. See <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>.

1. *Please indicate your country

Select:

2. Please provide your name

(name of the person responsible for submitting the country response to the OECD - usually the main member of the Network of Senior Officials from Centres of Government)

3. Please indicate your institution**4. Please provide your email address****1. Institutional Mechanisms for Planning and Co-ordinating Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals****5. 1.1 Has the government established an institutional mechanism or process to guide the implementation of the SDGs?**

Examples of institutional mechanisms and process include: dedicated units, cross-departmental steering groups, regular standing committees, expert panels or steering groups, etc.

- Yes
- No

6. *Please describe the institutional mechanism or process to guide the implementation of the SDGs?**7. What type of support could OECD provide to CoGs to help them start a process?****8. 1.2 Has one or more lead department(s) or agency(ies) been identified for the implementation of the SDGs?**

- Yes
- No

9. Please indicate which departments or agencies have been selected to lead implementation of the SDGs:

- Government Office/Prime Minister/President's Office
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Finance

- Ministry of Environment
- Other:

10. 1.3 Are the SDGs already integrated into an existing national or sectoral development strategy?

- No
- Yes

11. Please specify

- National economic development strategy
- Explicit national sustainable development strategy
- Sectoral strategy or strategies
- Other:

12. Is a revision of a national or sectoral development plan envisaged to take account of the SDGs?

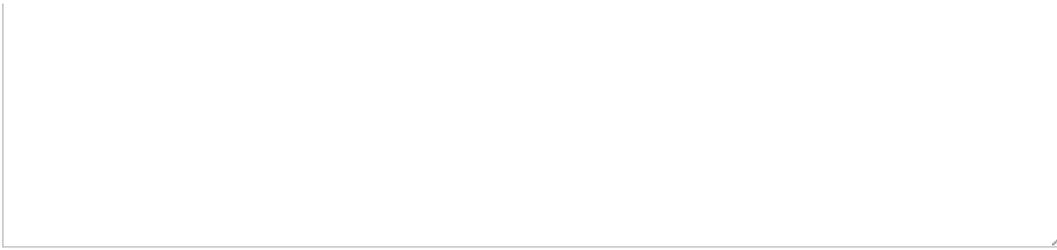
- Yes, a revision to a national economic development plan is envisaged
- Yes, a revision to a national sustainable development plan is envisaged
- Yes, a revision to a sectoral sustainable development plan is envisaged
- No revisions are planned.

13. Please feel free to comment on your response.

14. What do you see as the 2 most positive aspects of the process of organising the planning for implementing SDGs from the perspective of the centre of government?

- Opportunity to better align policies across sectors
- Long-term planning horizon
- Emphasis on indicators and evidence
- International scope
- Other:

15. if selected other above, please specify



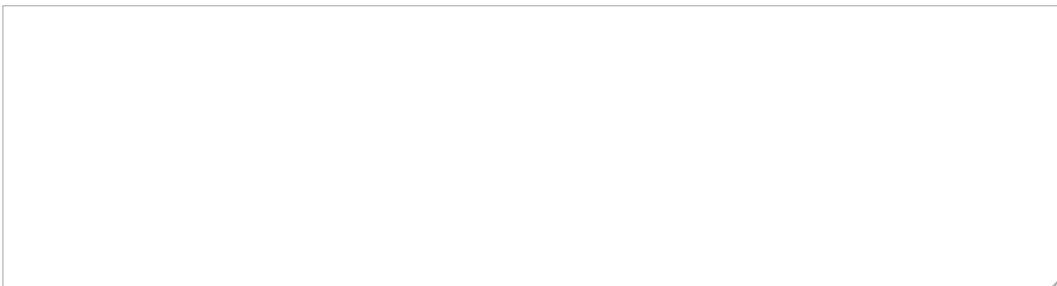
16. Please feel free to comment on your response



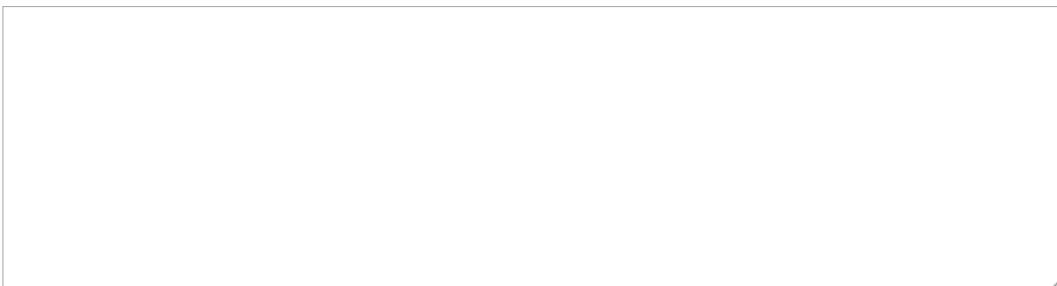
17. What do you see as the 2 main challenges of organising the planning for implementing SDGs from the perspective of the centre of government?

- Time horizon is too long to mobilise support
- Scope is too broad to be practical
- SDGs are cross-cutting and the difficulty of coordinating across ministries or areas of responsibility
- SDGs duplicate country's own national programme so added value unclear
- Perceived irrelevance of SDGs for advanced countries
- Additional resources will need to be mobilised for implementation
- Other:

18. If selected other above please specify:



19. Please feel free to comment on your response



20. 1.6 What tools or actions could help make the SDG implementation more effective?

- | | |
|---|---------|
| Adapting or prioritizing SDGs to fit national priorities/context | Select: |
| Providing additional resources to motivate department/agency engagement | Select: |
| Strengthening citizen/civil society engagement and consultation | Select: |
| Strengthening business sector engagement and consultation | Select: |
| Strengthening scientific /analytical support for better understanding of SDGs | Select: |
| Communicating the global nature of SDGs | Select: |
| Other, please specify below | Select: |

21. Please specify**22. 1.7 Does the CoG currently lead initiatives that could support the achievement of SDGs such as equality, poverty reduction, resource efficiency, climate action, and well- being, etc.**

- Yes
- No

23. Please describe the initiatives led by the CoG to support the achievement of SDGs such as equality, poverty reduction, resource efficiency, climate action, and well- being, etc**24. 1.8 Are non-government stakeholders playing an active role in planning SDG implementation?**

- No
- Yes

25. Does your country envisage providing assistance to developing countries to support SDG implementation?

- Yes
- No

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26. Which of the following stakeholders are involved in the planning for the national implementation process?

Select all that apply

- Industry and business sector
- Civil society
- Municipalities
- Academia
- Other, please specify

27. How are stakeholders involved?

Please select all that apply

- Consultation
- Committees
- Other, please specify

28. At what stage in the processes do you involve the stakeholders?

Please select all that apply

- Adaptation / prioritization of goals to fit national context
- Identification / development of indicators
- Development of national SDG implementation plan
- Coordination of goals across areas of responsibility
- Implementation of goals
- Other, please specify



Thank you for taking the survey.