THE GOVERNANCE CHALLENGE OF IMPLEMENTING THE SDGS
THE ROLE OF THE CENTRE OF GOVERNMENT

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1. The Centres of Government Network
2. The Centre of Government and the SDGs
3. Institutional Mechanisms in place to guide the implementation of the SDGs
4. The challenges and opportunities of implementing the SDGs from the perspective of the CoG
The Network of Senior Officials from Centres of Government is one of the OECD’s highest level policy networks.

Its main aims are to:
- Review ways of making the centre of national government work more efficiently
- Achieve a more in-depth understanding of decision and policymaking systems
- Examine the role of the CoG in broad governance issues

The agenda has shifted -- increasingly the CoG focuses on the pro-active role of the centre of government; and how it tackles global agendas.

Met in Stockholm (October 25-26) to discuss the role of CoG in implementing the SDGs.

Survey on Planning and Coordinating the SDGs with 34 countries participating.
Coordination of complex initiatives has become a key role of the Centre

From 2008-2012, “has the number of cross-ministerial policy initiatives – increased, decreased or remained fairly stable?” (OECD CoG survey)

The principal change is from “routine” coordination to pro-active, high-priority coordination (and implementation)
Why the Centre of Government in supporting the SDGs?

- Technically **policy neutral**
- **Convening power** linked to the head of government and political sensitivity
- **CoGs expertise on supporting cross-cutting/horizontal projects**
- Centres of government are **currently leading initiatives that support the implementation of SDGs** (gender equality, poverty reduction, resource efficiency, climate action, wellbeing)
- Support **vertical as well as horizontal coordination** to help localise the SDGs
Almost all Centres of Government report having an institutional mechanism in place to support the implementation strategy for the SDGs.

But countries have chosen very different paths:
- new committees or mechanisms (permanent ministerial and inter-ministerial groups, strategy units)
- using existing institutions
- still reflecting on how best to organise to support the SDGs

In 31% of countries the Centre of Government is leading and in another 31% jointly leading with other line ministries.

Co-ordination in a number of countries is also being done at the sub-national level.

Most countries are involving their national statistical offices in developing indicators and have done a gap analysis of their national context.

Many countries have set up coordination mechanisms or pacts with non-governmental organisations.
The biggest opportunities from the perspective of the CoG

Most positive aspects of the process of organising the planning for the SDGs from the perspective of the centres of government

- Opportunity to better align policies across sectors
- Long-term planning horizon
- Emphasis on indicators and evidence
- International scope
The biggest challenge from the perspective of the CoG

Most challenging aspects of planning for the SDGs from the perspective of the centres of government

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

• The breadth and complexity and long-term nature of the SDGs means **how governments can best align policies in practice is key to achieving them.**

• **Institutional mechanisms** are in place to support the SDGs but differ significantly between countries

• The Centres of Government recognise that the **SDGs are a governance challenge** and yet at the same time an **opportunity**

• The SDGs are also a **multi-level governance challenge and better data is needed.** The wellbeing dimension is key to achieving the SDGs, particularly at local level.
The **survey was a first step** to a more in-depth review of country practices on the role of the CoG.

As a second step, the analysis and case studies could focus in particular on the role of the CoG in:

- monitoring the SDG process;
- managing trade-offs;
- integrating the SDGs into the budget process; and
- bringing stakeholders on board including business and civil society.

As a third step, peer-to-peer exchanges of good practices could support the development of mechanisms in the delivery of their SDG targets.
THANK YOU

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