Horizontal and vertical coordination for national SDG implementation

Institutional arrangements for the SDGs
The SDGs
A broad policy agenda

» Wide range of economic, social and environmental objectives

» Apply to all countries – developing and developed

» 17 SDGs

» Subdivided into 169 targets

» Operationalized by 230 indicators

This presentation is based on: Ziekow, 2018.
The SDGs
A network of two interlinked levels

1. By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people [...]
2. By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers [...]
3. Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all [...]
4. By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services
5. By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services
6. By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population [...]

Based on: Le Blanc, 2015.
The SDGs
A holistic approach

» Framework of SDGs demands for a holistic approach:
  › Considering synergies and trade-offs among goals and targets → significant demands on policy formulation and implementation
  › “No one left behind” principle → institutional arrangements (e.g. for inclusion of marginalised groups)
Horizontal coordination

Policy integration as a challenge

Horizontal coordination:
merging different contributions for the overall achievement of the SDGs

Horizontal integration:
balancing the different sustainability dimensions

- Sectoral organization of government – negative coordination
  - Effective, efficient, transparent responsibilities through clear hierarchy, high problem solving capacity due to specialization

- Policy integration
  - Short-term efforts, long-term success (if any), unclear responsibilities, budget allocated along sectoral lines

- SDGs have shifted “tie” between pros and cons of policy integration
Horizontal coordination

New institutional arrangements among authorities at national level

» Not overstraining existing sectoral organization, but allowing for horizontal coordination

Management committee

- High-ranking individuals responsible for development of cross-sectoral policies
- Presidency: office of prime minister

Steering group / coordination committee

- Officials with sufficient rank within sectoral bodies (ministries)
- Working level: strategic control and content of policies

Cross-sectoral working groups

- Sectoral specialists
- Project management: concrete programs or measures for implementation

Budgetary inducements

- Incentives for cross-sectoral policy-making / implementation
- Joint budget for horizontal coordination
Horizontal coordination

Supporting measures

Overarching sustainability strategy
• Integrating sectoral perspectives
• Central steering function: president’s or prime minister’s office
• Joint task of parliament and government

Communication
• Taking into account different cultures and styles of communication

Electronic communication structure
• Data collection on SDG indicators
• Support horizontal and vertical coordination
• Facilitate participation
Horizontal coordination
The role of parliament

» Counterbalance sectoral approach (special committees):

**Joint meetings**
- Of parliamentary committees

**Special parliamentary committee**
- For integrated approach to SDG implementation

**Mixed parliamentary committee**
- Various social groups, elected representatives
- Watchdog for “no one left behind” principle

**Budgetary decision-making**
- Mainstreaming SDGs
Vertical coordination
Making the SDGs work at local level

» Integrating subnational levels of government in SDG implementation
  › Closer to citizens → promote local ownership
  › Local/regional authorities: organized in a more holistic manner
  › Small-scale dialogue with citizens, business and civil society

» Vertical coordination arrangements for policy integration across levels
  › Coordinating organizations as an intermediary between national and local levels: localizing targets
Multi-stakeholder approaches
Creating arenas for structured discourse

» Integrated nature of SDGs requires joint efforts

Stakeholder consultations
• Electronic consultation platform
• Open consultation forums across multiple locations

Multi-stakeholder bodies
• Members from different sectors of the economy and civil society
The case of Germany
An institutional architecture of sustainability

- Regularly updated National Sustainable Development Strategy
- Federal Chancellery (≈ prime minister’s office): responsible for horizontal coordination, updating National Sustainable Development Strategy
The case of Germany
Horizontal coordination among ministries at federal level

State Secretaries’ Committee for Sustainable Development
- Presidency: Head of Federal Chancellery
- State secretaries of all ministries
- Steering of sustainability strategy, coordination of programmes and measures of individual ministries, strategic impulses

Working Group for Sustainable Development
- Presidency: Federal Chancellery
- Heads of sub-departments from the working level of all ministries
- Technical preparation and implementation of the resolutions of the State Secretaries’ Committee, coordination of working level activities
The case of Germany
Parliament and legislation

» Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development

» Sustainability impact assessment for all drafts of laws and regulation
  › Ex ante evaluation conducted by ministry in charge
  › Verified by Parliamentary Advisory Council in parliamentary process
The case of Germany

Vertical coordination with the regional and local level

**Inter-ministerial working group**
- Works together with local authorities

**Regional Network Hubs Sustainability**
- Linking sustainability initiatives of the three levels

**Service centre**
- Assisting with development of local sustainability strategies
The case of Germany
Multi-stakeholder approach

» German Council for Sustainable Development
   › Members from economy, civil society, science
   › Contribute to development of National Sustainable Development Strategy, specify concrete action
Conclusion

» From three dimensions of sustainability to the SDGs’ integrated and inclusive, holistic view of sustainable development

» Transformational character of the SDGs requires a whole habitat of institutional arrangements
  › Horizontal coordination to overcome sectoral fragmentation
  › Vertical coordination to achieve policy integration across levels
  › Multi-stakeholder approach to meet the integrated and inclusive concerns of the SDGs

» The SDGs as a major programme for the global modernization of the public sector
Thank you!

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This presentation is based on:


Further References:

*Sustainable Development*, 23(3), 176-187.