Policy frameworks and institutional arrangements

UN Expert group meeting on policy integration in government in pursuit of the SDGs
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Guiding questions

• When have efforts to promote horizontal integration in government been most productive?
• How have traditional institutional arrangements been reorganized to be more flexible, adaptive, effective, and collaborative in order to promote integrated policy making?
• When might it be most difficult to connect policy processes in pursuit of the SDGs?
• What are some proven indicators of policy integration in government administration?
Guiding questions

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Guiding questions – first thoughts

• When have efforts to promote *horizontal integration* in government been most productive?
  • More than horizontal

• How have traditional institutional arrangements been *reorganized* to be more flexible, adaptive, effective, and collaborative in order to promote integrated policy making?
  • Deeper than organization

• When might it be *most difficult to connect policy processes* in pursuit of the SDGs?
  • Shaped by context, complexity, history, trust, and risk

• What are some *proven indicators* of policy integration in government administration?
  • Some lessons from research on knowledge networks and policy modeling
Integration

• SDGs have an explicit definition: to integrate social, economic, and environmental policies towards sustainable human development

• Researchers and practitioners ascribe other meanings to “integration” that are also important to the discussion:
  • Coordination
  • Cooperation
  • Collaboration
  • Consultation
  • Cross-boundary thinking and action
  • Network forms of organization and action
Institutions

- Established official organizations having an important role in the life of a country (Oxford English Dictionary)
- Established laws, practices, or customs (Oxford English Dictionary)
- Customs, practices, relationships, or behavioral patterns of importance in the life of a community or society (Free Dictionary)
- Durable, socially-embedded systems of norms and rules that structure social interactions (Hodgson, 2006)
  - Socially constructed
  - Contextual
  - Infused with knowledge, know-how, and meaning
  - Formal, legal, explicit
  - Informal, non-legal, tacit
Typical policy-making experiences

- Multiple independent policy processes
  - With own history, power relationships, stakeholders, data, techniques and costs

  \[ \ldots \text{Result in} \]

- Mutually unaware policy choices

  \[ \text{That generate} \ldots \]

- Multiple *inter*dependent policy outcomes
  - Often unexpected
  - Often undesirable (depending on your POV)
  - Difficult to understand and disentangle
Key considerations for SDG policy integration

• Boundaries
• Networks
• Complexity
• Stakeholders
• Knowledge
Boundaries

- Culture
  - (national, regional, ethnic, religious, social, professional . . )
- Language
- Jurisdiction
- Sector
- Domain
- Organization
- Hierarchy
- Development level
- Experience
- Capability
- Knowledge & expertise
- Processes & practices
- Physical distance
# Networks

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Stakeholders

• Any group that can affect or be affected by a policy decision
• Some are powerful, others powerless
• Varying skills and capability to participate
• Diverse knowledge and information to contribute
• Selection, representation, and voice are fundamental determinants of trust in the process and trust in the institutional players
Knowledge

- Meaning
- Explicitness
- Codifiability
- Embeddedness
- Dynamics
- Quality
- Fitness for use
Two streams of research

• Public sector knowledge networks
  • Multi actor networks to address complex public problems beyond the capability of single organizations
  • Focus on interaction among policy, management, data, and technology within a given a social context

• Policy modelling and governance
  • Focus on tools and techniques for complex policy modeling to support decision making
  • Includes policy informatics, data analytics, and data quality
  • Considers policy makers, analysts, and stakeholders
Lessons about integration from research on public sector knowledge networks

- Complexity and difficulty reflect the combination of scope (i.e. number and kinds of boundaries) and purpose.
- Trust is a powerful determining factor for collaboration and sustainability of the network.
- The nature of knowledge poses its own challenges.
- Stakeholder expectations and early experiences set the tone and direction. Early mistakes are hard to overcome.
- A formal legal framework is necessary for legitimacy, but political support and multiple forms of leadership are also needed.
- Existing policies are the greatest obstacle to success. The greatest barriers come from lack of authority, not prohibitions.
- Organizational barriers are serious and pervasive but amenable to innovation, creativity, and risk-taking.
- The network itself can be an asset regardless of its substantive achievements.
- Successful networks combine self-interest, common interest, and public value.
Cases

• **Air quality monitoring**
  - AIRNow-I Shanghai. Involved the US EPA and Shanghai Environmental Monitoring Center to update and enhance AIRNow for global use in air quality monitoring and forecasting.

• **Public health surveillance**
  - HAJJ-MDSS. Built by the Saudi Ministry of Health and US CDC to allow rapid detection of infectious diseases among Hajj pilgrims and to enhance prevention and control measures through real-time surveillance information for public health decision making.

• **Geospatial data**
  - NYS GIS Data sharing cooperative. Involves a broad multi-sector community of practice in geo-spatial data sharing and governance.
Lessons from policy modeling research

• Involve carefully selected stakeholders, well-matched to the policy goals. Recognize the limitations of representation.
• Educate stakeholders about their roles and how they will contribute. Manage both involvement and expectations.
• Engage facilitators who have expertise and can build trust in the process.
• Select tools and techniques suited to the problem and to the capabilities and knowledge of participants.
• Consider policy making a learning process as well as a decision process. Expect to make discoveries and adjust for them.
• Invest in post-implementation evaluation and adjustment.
Cases

- **Land use planning**
  - UrbanSIM program on transportation and land use planning. A land-use modeling system, that helps policy makers and stakeholders understand the 20–30-year impacts of different choices regarding land use and transportation on community outcomes including effects on the economy and the environment. UrbanSim estimates the direct effects of different infrastructure and policy choices as well as estimates about how individual and group responses will affect the outcomes.

- **Global public health**
  - KidRisk Project on polio eradication. Uses extensive stakeholder engagement and a range of computational and modeling techniques to develop integrated analytical models to evaluate the global risks, benefits, and costs of policy choices for polio eradication.

- **Interconnected development goals**
  - Millennium Institute Threshold 21 (T21) development model. Makes accessible system dynamics modeling tools and other analytic techniques to help national leaders use systems thinking and tools to analyze and understand the interconnectedness among economic, social, and environmental factors, and issues of environmental sustainability, peace and security.
Guiding questions v.2

• What conditions promote and support holistic understanding of complex problems and environments and the many boundaries they represent?
• How can traditional institutional actors be made more open to flexible, adaptive, evidence-based, and collaborative policy making?
• What institutional factors stand in the way of policy processes that will address the SDGs in an integrated way?
• What are some successful cases of policy integration in government administration and what do they tell us?
Selected references

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