

# Session 5: How to address interlinkages and principles in the 2030 Agenda?

Advancing the 2030 Agenda: Lessons learnt from the first cycle of the HLPF

10-11 September, New York

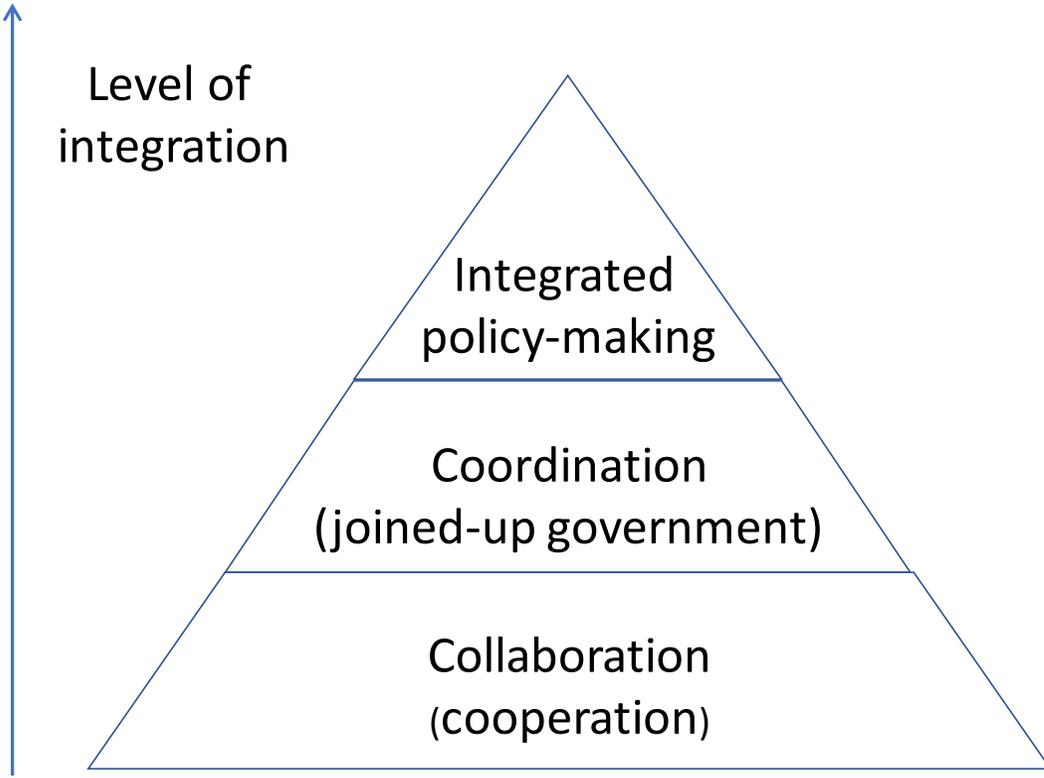
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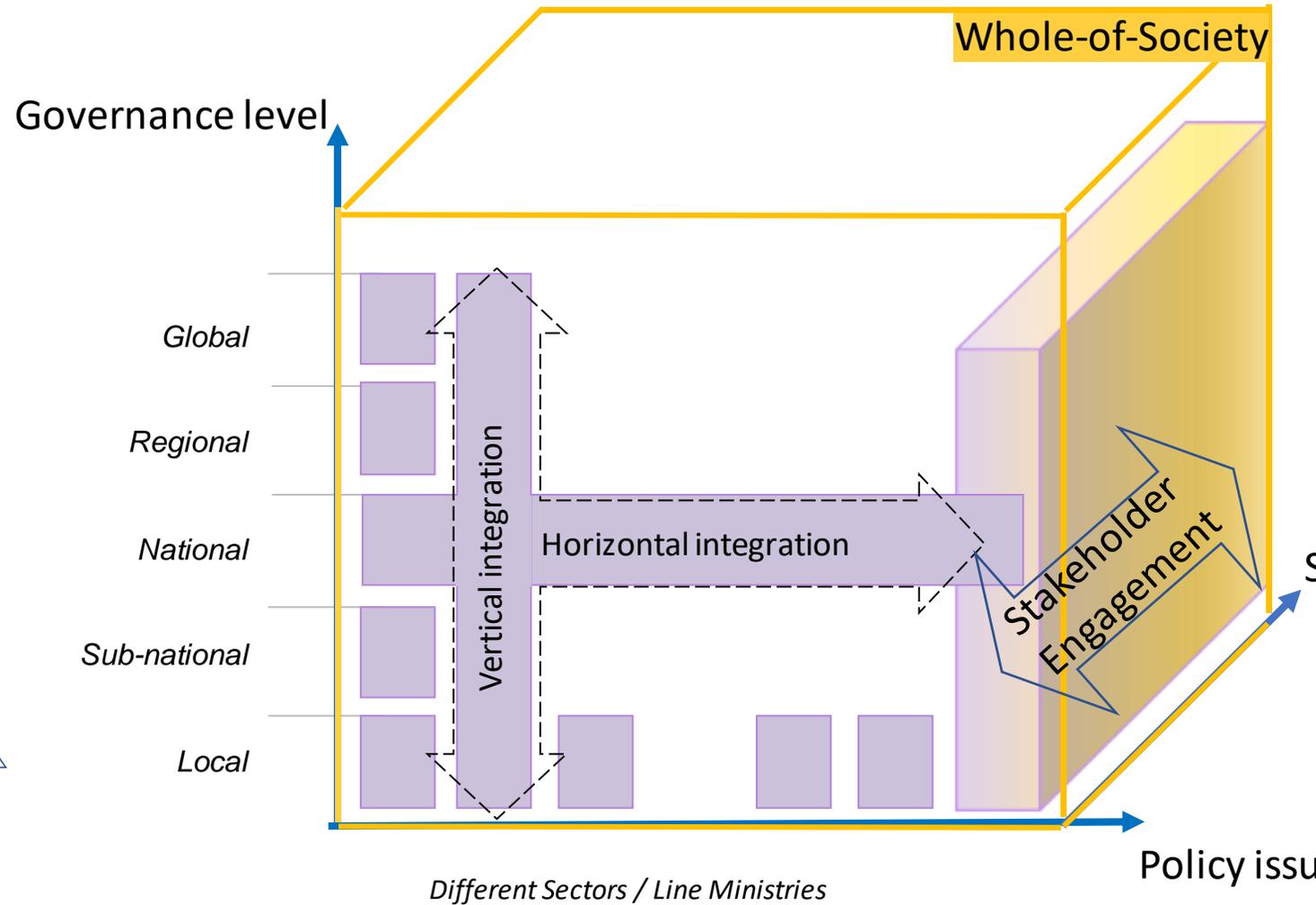
# Outline

- Policy integration: a brief panorama
- Current efforts at the national level in the context of SDG implementation
- How has integration featured at HLPF since 2015?
- Could/should the HLPF do more to promote integration, and if so, how?

# Policy integration



Source: Meijers and Stead, 2004



# Understanding interlinkages in the 2030 Agenda: recent developments (1)

- Awareness of the need for integration is not new (Rio 1992)
- Before the SDGs: national sustainable development strategies; Climate/land/energy/water nexus; pilot editions of the Global Sustainable Development Report, etc.
- Since 2015: Research on interlinkages is mushrooming.
- From review of scientific literature (ICSU) to modelling to awareness raising and visualization tools (IGES). ICSU; academia; think tanks; SSRN; UNEP; WCMC; etc.
  - 100s of articles just last year.
  - Whole research programmes by large consortia (e.g. Future Earth) created on this.
  - Many events worldwide (e.g. nexus conference 2)

# Understanding interlinkages in the 2030 Agenda: recent developments (2)

- Current academic research focuses on interlinkages among issues themselves, much less on how to address them in practice; much focus on the global level
  - Relative importance of interlinkages, synergies and trade-offs depends on the national context
  - Relevance to governments?
- Efforts to apply the methodologies and insights to capacity development/ technical assistance
  - e.g. ESCAP, UNDESA, UNDP guidebook.
- Seems to be few systematic reviews of existing legal and regulatory frameworks as they apply to policy coherence in specific nexuses
  - But see TCU's look at target 2.4 in Brazil
- Institutional aspects of integration not well covered
  - but see e.g. U. De Zoysa's work in Sri Lanka, work by SAI Indonesia.
- Integration is intrinsically difficult to measure
  - costs as well as benefits; trade-offs between those not well understood and context-dependent.

# Policy integration in the context of SDG implementation: current efforts at the national level

- Integration taken seriously by governments as they try to implement the SDGs
  - Some of these efforts documented in VNRs, in UN publications (WPSR 2018), in OECD publications
  - Supreme audit institutions worldwide have started to bring light on these efforts through SDG preparedness audits
- Horizontal integration: coordinating /steering structures or mechanisms for SDG implementation, alignment of SDGs and national strategies and plans, identification of priorities for addressing synergies, trade-offs
- Vertical integration: many initiatives (e.g. vertically integrated monitoring and evaluation structures)
- Engagement: also many initiatives
- Because integration difficult to measure, lack of evidence of “success”.
- Importance of supporting tools/ instruments, in particular planning and budget processes.

# How has integration been featured at HLPF since 2015? (1)

## 1. global level

- SDG progress report organized by SDG and does not address synergies and trade-offs
- Pilot editions of the GSDR featured integration prominently; were discussed in the science-policy interfaces sessions of HLPF in 2015, 2016.
- Consideration of interlinkages, synergies and trade-offs is a work track of the ongoing edition of the GSDR
  - How the GSDR will feed into the HLPF is yet unclear
- Dedicated expert meetings in preparation for HLPF (e.g. Vienna Dec. 2016)
- 2018: “integration lab” one of the VNR labs in the margins of HLPF
- some consideration at official HLPF sessions reviewing individual SDGs (e.g. oceans in 2016)
- integration not covered in detail in Ministerial declaration
- unclear if and how integration will be touched upon in the HLPF declaration in 2019

# How has integration been featured at HLPF since 2015? (2)

## 2. Regional level

- unknown. Was it featured at all in regional forums on SD? In SG's reports summarizing those (CHECK)

## 3. National level

- integration covered a bit in VNRs
  - policy coherence was one of the categories of the voluntary guidelines for VNRs CHECK in the VNR summaries done by DSD how much this covers.
- However, no time for exchange of experiences among countries during HLPF proper.

In sum, quite limited coverage

- logical result of general parameters of HLPF (see previous sessions): mandated and other inputs; time for exchange among countries during HLPF; and intergovernmental outcome

# Could/should the HLPF do more to promote integration, and if so, how?

- Arguably, given the importance of integration at all levels for the success of Agenda 2030, integration should be an important consideration at the HLPF
- Going to the national level, the main value the UN could bring is to provide a venue for exchanging experiences on what institutional and policy approaches work for integration
- How to do more depends very much on:
  - the general parameters of the HLPF and the follow-up and review system for the Agenda as currently defined by resolutions 67/290 and 70/299 ;
    - If those stay the same, limited scope for doing more at HLPF proper, as this would come at the expense of something else
  - the means for the HLPF to play an agenda-setting role, including its legislative outcomes
    - HLPF under the auspices of the GA in 2019 will clarify how far the evidence on progress will feed back into policy adjustments across the range of issues in the Agenda
- Ultimately, take-up of the suggestions below (or others) will depend on the appetite of Member States

# Ideas for increasing the coverage of integration in HLPF (1)

## 1. At the HLPF

- mandated SG's report on interlinkages among the SDGs being reviewed each year (as was the case for CSD) – this would require legislative changes).
  - in the absence of additional mandated documentation for the HLPF, an avenue for documenting progress on integration would be the report of the IATF on FFD (mandated), through the review of target 17.14 on policy coherence for SD (not done so far)
- add a component on integration in the SDG indicator framework
  - not realistic? would take a long time to materialize
- carve a space for an “interlinkages” session each year during the first week of HLPF, focusing on the SDGs under review that year - no legislative change needed
- provide more time for discussion at HLPF, including among VNR countries - would require legislative changes
- Ensure that the conclusions of the GSDR 2019 on how to address synergies and trade-offs are taken up by the Ministerial declaration every 4 years and can trigger new intergovernmental discussions as necessary
  - unclear if appetite for this

# Ideas for increasing the coverage of integration in HLPF (2)

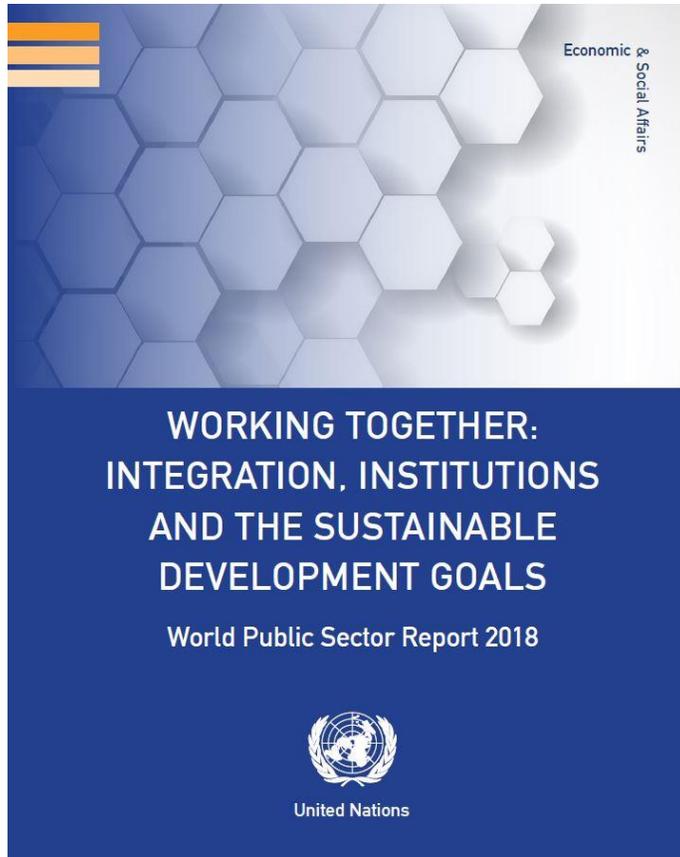
## 2. Around the HLPF (would not require legislative changes)

- Beef up the “integration lab” in VNR labs
- informal preparatory meetings focused on integration among the SDGs considered each year, using previous experiences as a template
- side events, etc., focusing on integration

## 3. Outside HLPF proper - HLPF could encourage them - perhaps the more promising leads?

- “implementation conferences” on specific SDGs, featuring nexus approaches
  - e.g. blue economy around ocean conferences
  - look at SDGs in an integrated way and provide support / encouragement to countries to progress in this direction
- further nexus conferences mixing academia and government officials
  - would have to avoid sectoral silos and focus more on cross-cutting instruments (integrated planning processes, budget processes, institutional setups, financing, measuring success in integration)
- encourage efforts by international organisations, programmes and think tanks to measure progress on integration, through e.g. joint modelling efforts, policy forums, development of (non official) indicators and analytical frameworks that look at integration as opposed to progress on individual SDGs
- encourage talk with Supreme Audit Institutions and others working on this at national level

# World Public Sector Report 2018



How can governments, public institutions and public administration foster integrated approaches to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs?

<https://publicadministration.un.org/en/Research/World-Public-Sector-Reports>