Creating ownership at the national level: Lessons learned about blueprints, toolboxes and silos

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**Introduction Session 8, HLPF
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Point of departure / principle

Balancing universality with national contexts is essential for successful implementation of the SDGs ->

We need the principle of "Common But Differentiated Governance" (CBDG)*

Creating national ownership should be built on existing values and traditions (as much as necessary & as little as possible)

[HOW to implement the SDGs (= their GOVERNANCE) depends on differences in problems/urgencies, geography, history & traditions, and cultures/values]

["Governance is how governments and other stakeholders work out solutions and create opportunities for societal challenges" (after Meuleman 2008)]

SDGs: "Ultimately, it's all about governance" (Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President European Commission, 2015)

* *Meuleman, L. and Niestroy, I. (2015) Common But Differentiated Governance: A Metagovernance Approach to Make the SDGs Work. Sustainability 2015, 7, 12295-12321.* http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14615517.2014.956436
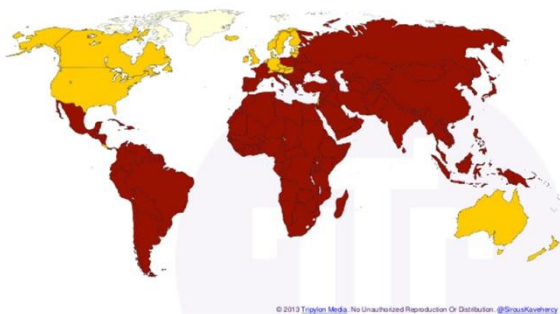
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Don't use external blueprints for SDG implementation, even if they are (wrongly) called 'best practices'.

Do use inspiring examples and translate them to work in your (national) context

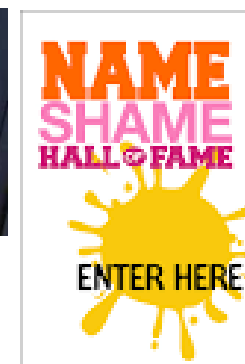**CULTURAL DIVERSITY**
INDIVIDUALISTIC VS. COLLECTIVISTIC

Civil society ownership:
- Fully accepted, or
- No organised CSOs, or
- No culture of raising voice
- (huge silent majority, small vocal minority), or
- .....

and/or

2. Use the full governance toolbox

- Don't exclude any governance tools *a priori*

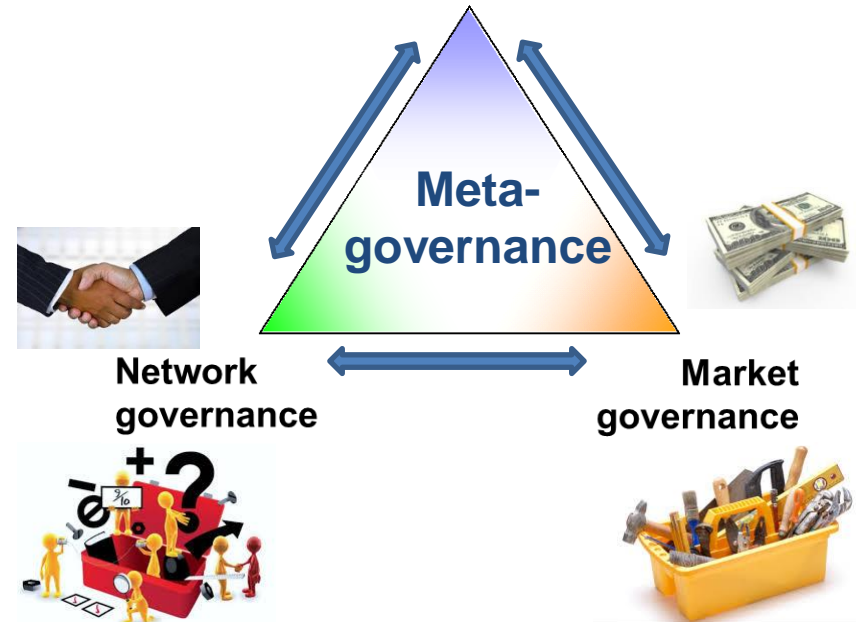- Do understand national preferences for certain toolboxes

- Do have all toolboxes ready to innovate and to prevent governance failures

- Do make HLPF a place / proxy for SDG **metagovernanc**e (*governance of governance*, mindful of specific contexts)

Hierarchical governance

Meta-governance

Network governance

Market governance

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Break down **mental silos** if they prevent change

Don't break down institutional silos if they provide the necessary structure, reliability, transparency, communication points;

-> We need to 'teach silos to dance'"*: Create cross-cutting projects, partnerships, stimulate open-mindedness and collaboration; change procedures to open them up

* See guest article at www.IISD.org next week

To conclude: National ownership…

- …requires "Common But Differentiated Governance" (CBDG)

- … requires using inspiring examples but always translate them

- … requires using all governance toolboxes and making HLPF a place/proxy for SDG metagovernance *(governance of governance)*

- … requires teaching silos to dance: don't just break them down

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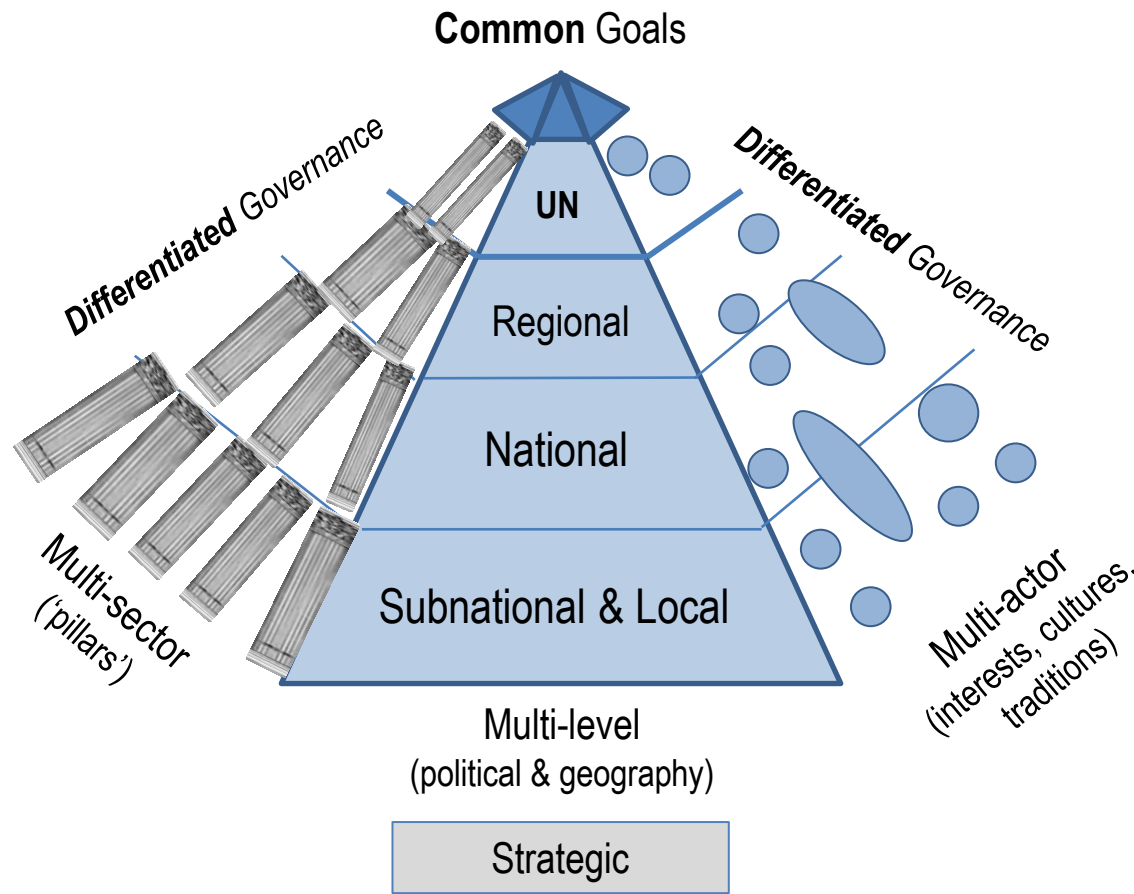Introduction Session 8, HLPF
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Thank you for your attention!

Operational

Possible Step-by-Step Approach:

1. Mapping the relevant governance environment
2. Problem-setting & challenges
3. Evaluation/SWOT
4. Policy options, objectives, targets
5. Design of governance framework(s)
6. 'Management' of governance framework(s)
7. Evaluation & review of governance framework(s)

Common Goals

Differentiated Governance

Differentiated Governance

UN

Regional

National

Subnational & Local

Multi-sector ('pillars')

Multi-actor (interests, cultures, traditions)

Multi-level
(political & geography)

Strategic

Governance principles & Metagovernance strategies

- Long-term vision
- Reflexivity
- Not 'or' but 'and'
- Resilience
- Combine tools from different governance styles
- Switch to another style when needed
- Ensure maintenance of the governance framework; deal with governance failures

Instrumental

Toolbox of Solutions:

- *Hierarchical solutions* (e.g. coercion, laws & rules, central steer, control & reporting)
- *Market solutions* (e.g. incentives & other market-based instruments, contracts)
- *Network solutions* (e.g. collaboration with empathy & trust, volontary agreements/ covenants, informal institutions)

Example different formats for different national traditions/culture

Topic: Creating ownership & new solutions for environmental implementation gaps

What? Preparation of national dialogues in 29 EU Member States in 2017, with
- National/subnational/local governments (including the political level)
- Civil society & business

Who? Initiative of European Commission, DG Environment: Environmental Implementation Review (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/index_en.htm)

How? (principles / work in progress)
- No blueprint for the dialogues, but several suggested formats which can be combined (or even only used as inspiration);
- Try to combine / back-to-back with other/existing meetings
- Find out what works well and what not: ask government & CSOs in the country
- Make it a co-production & make together an inventory of relevant actors

The 3 basic governance styles (hierarchy/network/market) differ in around 50 features, where they have different operational shapes

Examples:

Governance styles	Examples of typical features of the styles
Hierarchical governance	Rational, reliable, stability, legitimacy, justice, accountability, risk averse, government-centered, centralised, planning and design, authoritative, instructions, one-way communication, dependency, subordinates, obedience, rules-based, command and control
Network governance	Partnerships, collaborative learning, co-creation for innovation, informal arrangements, trust-based, harmony, communication as dialogue, process management, diplomacy, mutual dependence, mutual gains approach, consensus, voluntary agreements, covenants
Market governance	Rational, cost-driven, flexible, competition as driver for innovation, price, marketing, decentralised, bottom-up, individualist, autonomy, self-determination, empowering, services, contracts, incentives, awards and other market-based instruments

Sources: Meuleman (2008): Public Management and the Metagovernance of Hierarchies Networks and markets (PhD dissertation, Springer, Heidelberg: 35 features); Meuleman (2017, in preparation: **Metagovernance and Sustainable Development (50 features)**