

# Essentials for Effective Coordination

Tools for Coordination & the Role of Authority to Guide Coordination

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# The challenge of coordination



Multidimensional (horizontal) problems

- Community renewal, competitiveness, poverty reduction...



And individuals with inter-connected needs

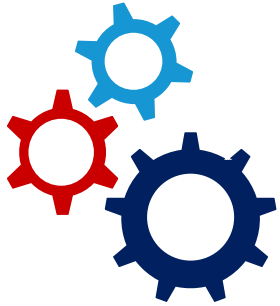
- Vulnerable youth, poor households, the elderly...



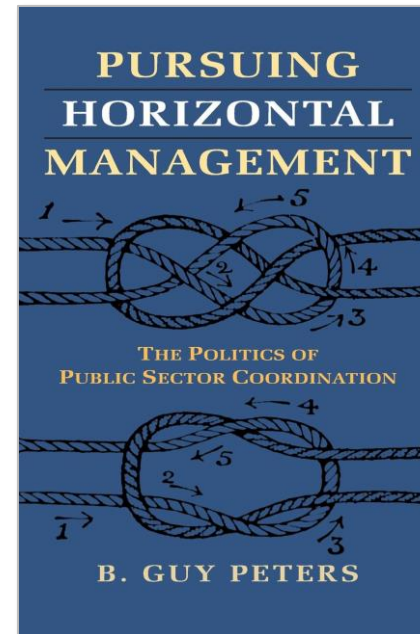
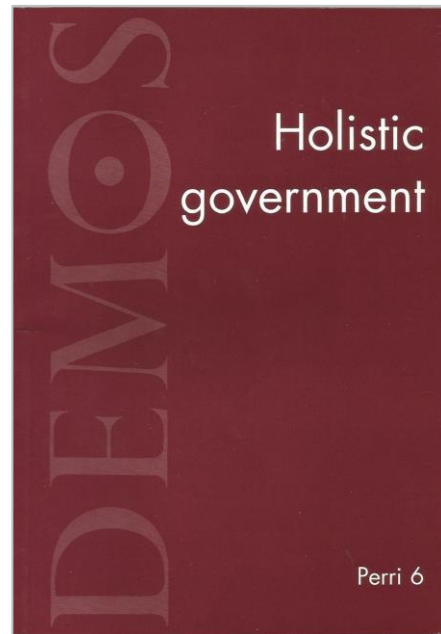
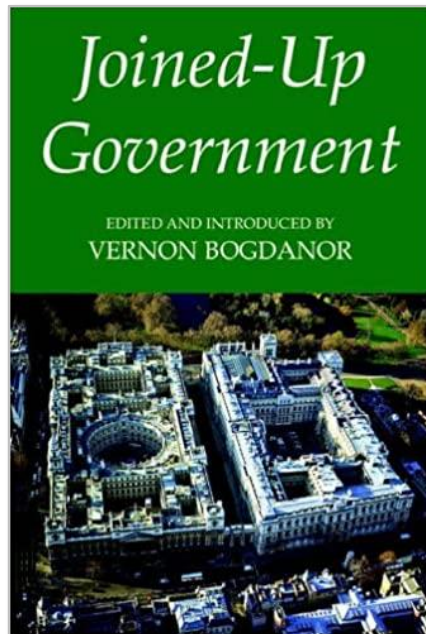
Yet separate (vertical) policy responses

- Ministry X, Agency Y, Program Z...

# The quest for coordination



Renewed interest on how to get the MDAs to work better together.



# “Perfect” coordination is not possible...

- Division of labor is inevitable in large organizations.
- And positive, too:



Specialization and expertise



Clear missions



Political and legal accountability



Budget management

# ... But absence of coordination is harmful



Duplication of efforts and costs.



Inconsistent or contradictory interventions.



Limited impact on the outcomes of interest.



**What can we do?**

# Two main options

1. Bureaucratic reorganizations (“boxology”)
2. Strengthening the Center of Government (CoG)

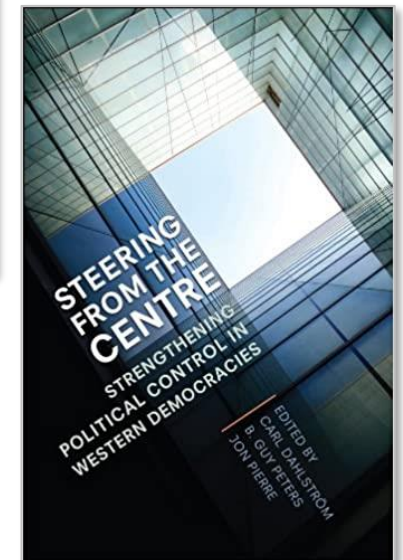
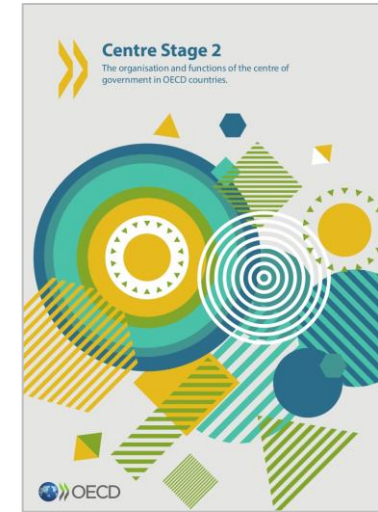
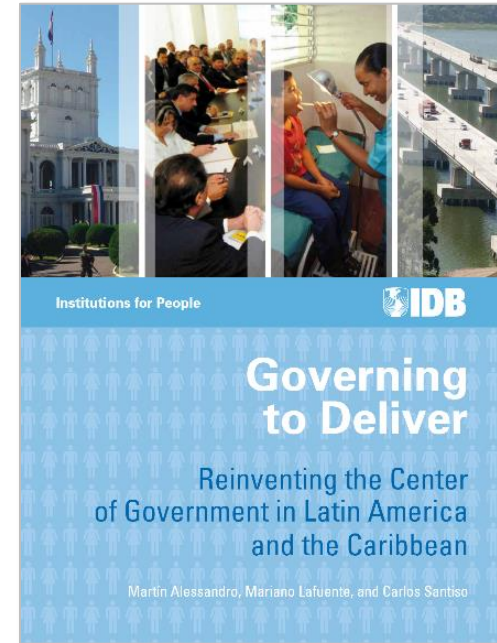
# 1. Bureaucratic reorganizations

- Consolidating multiple entities and programs under the same Department (“superministry”)
  - DHS in USA after 9/11
  - “Coordinating Ministries” in LAC (Social Development, Early Childhood, etc.)
- But limited evidence of effectiveness
  - Sub-ministerial structure becomes more complex
  - Minister faces similar challenge faced by PM before: how to get them to work together
- And potentially new challenges
  - Lack of clear mission / conflicting priorities
  - Slower processes (multiple layers for approval)



## 2. Strengthening the Center of Government

- Units and teams of direct support to the PM and Cabinet that perform cross-government functions.
  - Offices of PM, Cabinet Offices, Planning Departments, Delivery Units...
- Well suited to promote coordination:
  - No bureaucratic “turf” to protect (honest broker)
  - Whole-of-government perspective
  - High-level political backing

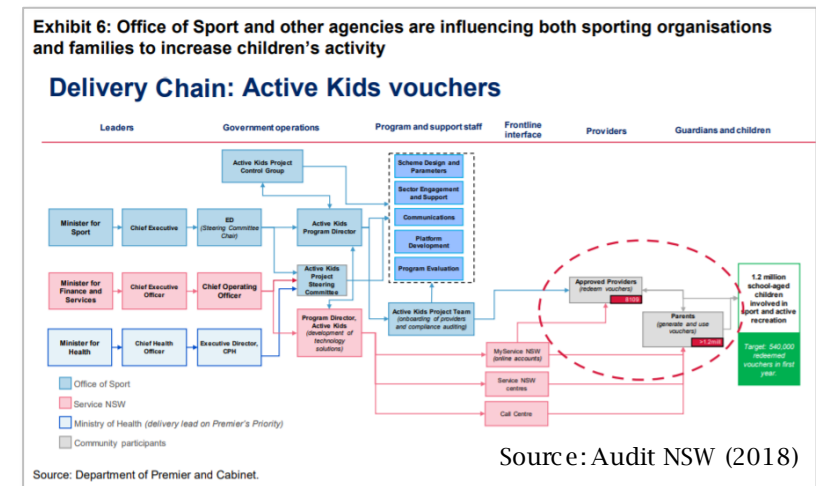


# CoG tools for coordination

- Ensuring shared priorities across the government
- Establishing mechanisms for consultation and arbitration
- Conducting joint stocktakes for monitoring and unblocking obstacles

# Coordination by shared priorities

- Leading the strategic management / planning of the government priorities to ensure that:
  - The objectives of different MDAs are consistent
  - They are all aligned to the priorities of the PM/Cabinet
- Promoting joint objectives:
  - Cross-Agency Priority Goals (USA) / Public Service Agreements (UK)
  - Joint “delivery chains”



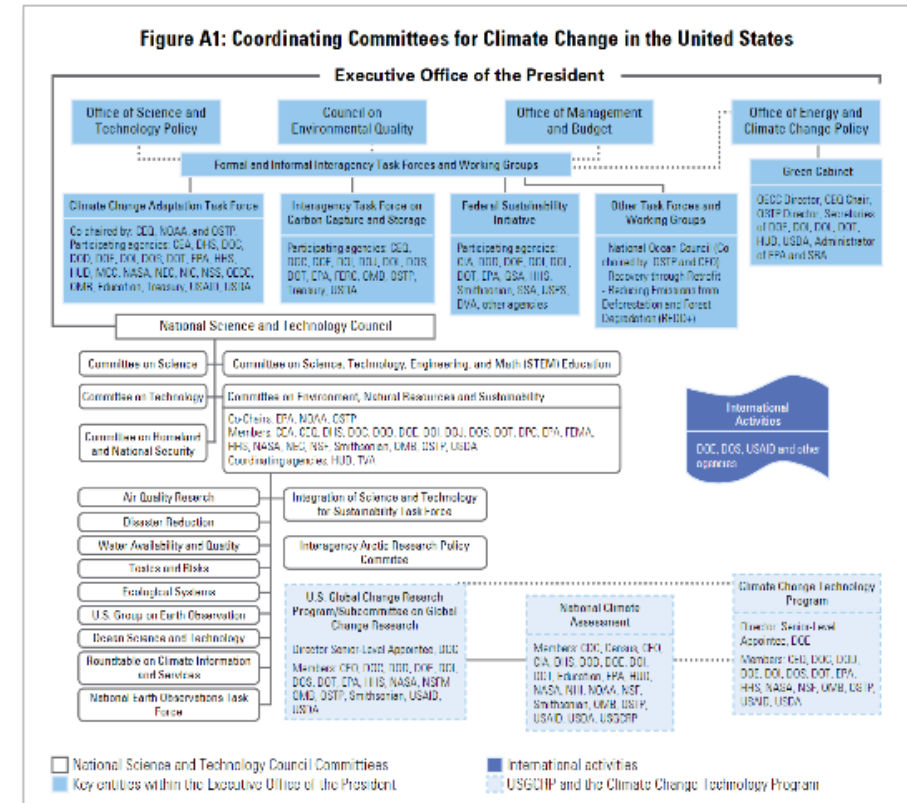
# Coordination by consultation and arbitration

- “Classic” CoG-led inter-ministerial instances:

- Committees / Sub-cabinets
- Task forces
- Working groups
- Ministers without portfolio (“czars”)

- Risk of proliferation of coordinating bodies:

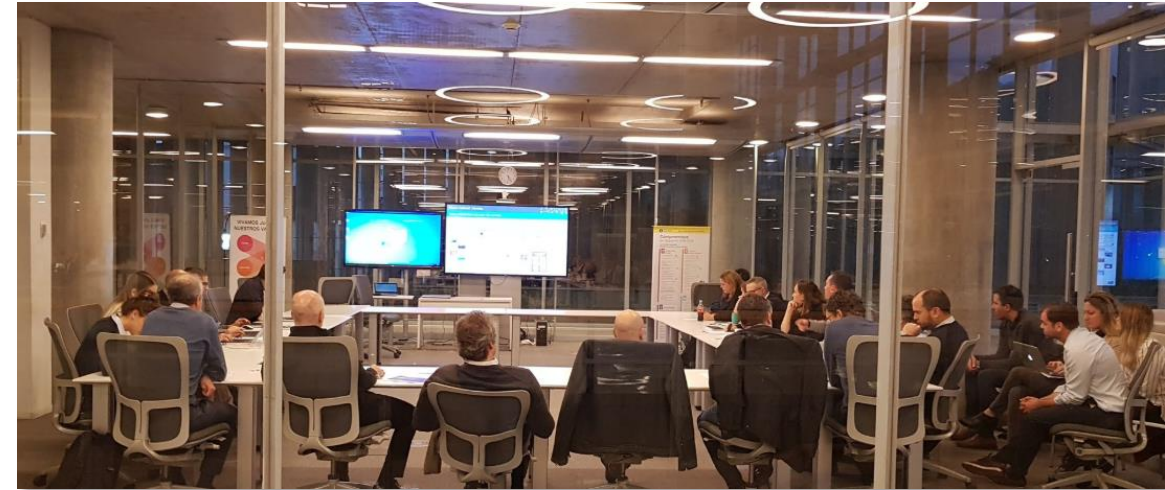
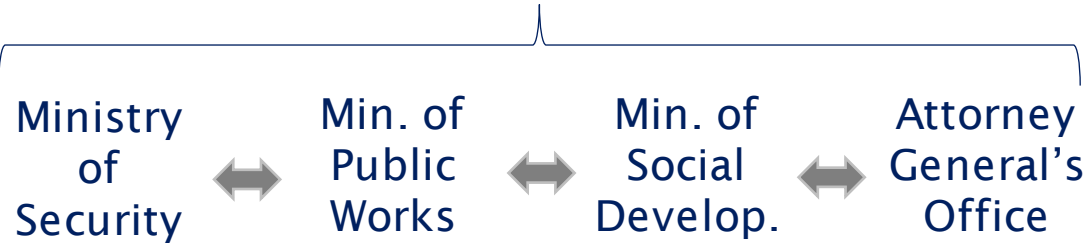
- Lower-level attendance; cease to be decision-making bodies
- If we are coordinating all day... who is implementing?
- *Who coordinates the coordinators?*



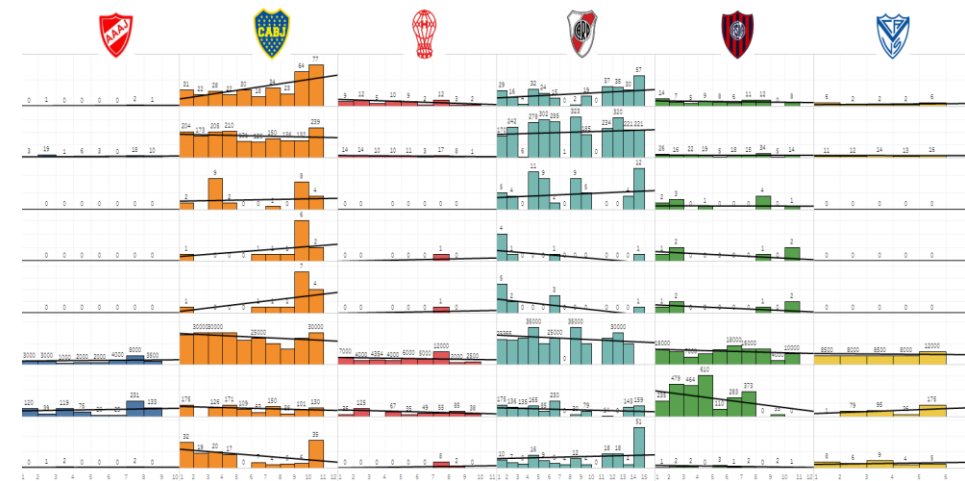
Source: GAO (2011)

# Coordination by joint stocktakes

Goal: reducing violence in football stadiums



- Monthly meetings: Mayor + CoG + relevant ministries
  - Data-driven monitoring
  - Problem-solving
- All present at the table
  - No room for “passing the buck”



# Some final lessons in CoG practice

- Clarity of roles and responsibilities of CoG units
- Prioritize: where can the CoG add more value?
- Political mandate + technical/managerial capabilities
- Integrated approach to planning - coordination – monitoring – unblocking obstacles
- The “spotlight” belongs to PM/Ministries
- Honest broker vs. director of policy
- “Culture eats strategy for breakfast”

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