

A1: Question Guide for Identifying Underlying Barriers to Institutional Coordination

- Who is this tool for? This question guide is closely linked to the maturity matrix for inter-agency coordination presented in the implementation toolbox. It is intended to provide a point of entry for considering how coordination on population targeting can be improved between health and non-health agencies. It should benefit anyone with an interest in defining the actual obstacles to coordination more precisely before investing resources in efforts at improvement. Officials may wish to consider going through this guide as a team, perhaps using it as the basis for initial workshops on improving coordination.
- How was it produced? Discussions in many of the workshops held by the Learning Collaborative during 2021 have helped to identify and define the problems of coordination experienced by participants, as well as some of the ways these have been tackled both by participants and in other countries across the globe. One workshop in particular (held in September 2021) was particularly helpful in informing this question guide.

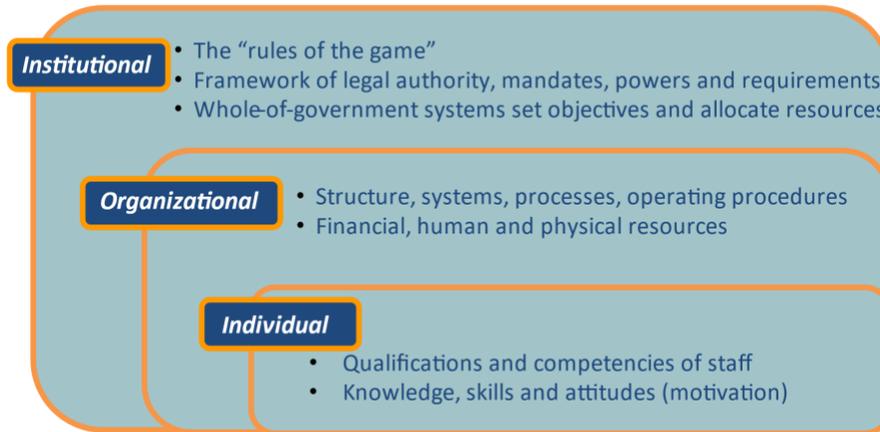
Introduction

The first step towards better coordination and cooperation across government must be to identify where the most significant barriers to improvement are located. Only then can effective action be taken.

This question guide should be read in conjunction with the institutional coordination maturity matrix which provides the framework for a more detailed analysis of the factors affecting national capacity for coordination between ministries, departments and agencies. This guide aims to provide a checklist of the principal obstacles which may stand in the way of greater coordination, and of progressing between the levels described in the matrix.

Like the matrix, the question guide is based on a simple three-level model (shown below) which the Learning Collaborative on Population Targeting has adopted to structure its discussions on institutional coordination.

Figure 1: Obstacles to coordination: three-level model



Question Guide

The following questions outline common barriers faced in institutional coordination. Responses are given as ‘yes’ or ‘no’ for simplicity, but it may be helpful to consider these as broad discussion points in an early-stage inter-agency workshop on coordination. Responses may also be followed by a prioritization exercise to decide which of the barriers identified are the most important to overcome right now.

1. Do the organizations concerned have conflicting or contradictory legal powers or responsibilities which restrict coordination? If YES:	YES/NO
1a. Have you used the checklist of mandates (Tool A2) to identify more precisely the source of the problem?	YES/NO
1b. Would it be practicable to seek amendments to any problematic legislation?	YES/NO
2. Do high-level structures (committees etc.) exist to provide governance and leadership for coordinated population targeting efforts? If YES:	YES/NO
2a. Do they include all the organizations that need to be involved?	YES/NO
2b. Do they meet sufficiently frequently to be effective?	YES/NO
3. Has the basis for cooperation been established in Memoranda of Understanding (or similar documents) which reflect the interests of all the organizations concerned?	YES/NO

4. Do whole-of-government systems (budgeting, planning, financial control) make it difficult to establish common objectives and share resources?	YES/NO
5. Has a technical coordination unit, technical working group or similar been set up to enable technical experts to share knowledge and solve problems? If YES:	YES/NO
5a. Do the members work effectively together?	YES/NO
5b. Are they empowered to take the necessary decisions?	YES/NO
6. Do internal systems of delegation and performance management adequately incentivize collaboration between organizations?	YES/NO
7. Are coordination and cooperation hampered by inadequate resources?	YES/NO
8. Is coordination hampered by inadequate capacity (staff, software/hardware, business processes) to manage shared data?	YES/NO
9. Is it clear and agreed which individuals from the different agencies it is most important work together, and do these people currently have strong interpersonal relationships?	YES/NO
10. Do staff have sufficient knowledge and skills to manage shared data and develop integrated systems?	YES/NO
11. Are staff motivated to cooperate with counterparts from other organizations?	YES/NO