Chapter 2.

The governance context of service delivery in the Dominican Republic

This chapter introduces the governance arrangements that guide and shape the delivery of public services in the Dominican Republic and that set the foundation for other policy levers to be fully effective, such as digital government, public innovation and administrative simplification. It describes the current institutional framework governing the provision of services and the numerous reforms that have been undertaken in the past 50 years. The challenges to realise the full potential of the current institutional setting are discussed, including those relating to whole-of-government co-ordination and coherence and the integration of existing information systems, such as those that collect feedback and experience from users and beneficiaries; capacity building; and administrative structure. The role of the Ministry of Public Administration (MAP) as a natural institutional leader is also discussed. The chapter concludes with recommendations to improve the governance underpinnings of service delivery in the Dominican Republic.

Introduction

Rising inequalities and the levels of vulnerability affecting poor households in the wake of the global financial crisis have shifted the attention of society towards achieving inclusive growth, i.e. growth that creates opportunity for all segments of the population and distributes the dividends of increased prosperity, both in monetary and non-monetary terms, fairly across society (OECD, 2016). The dual challenge of delivering stronger growth and more inclusive outcomes places renewed attention on the ability of governments to design and implement policies that create the right conditions for citizens to thrive, such as through better health outcomes and educational opportunities (OECD, 2016).

By connecting people with opportunity, public services play a key role in achieving inclusive growth outcomes. Access to quality services, such as education, healthcare or transportation, is essential to break ingrained cycles of disadvantage. Better outcomes across these essential dimensions (from educational attainment, to life expectancy or housing) are one of the strongest drivers of economic growth in the long run.

Despite significant progress, improving the accessibility, quality and efficiency of public services remains a shared challenge for OECD member countries and beyond. Part of this challenge is related to social, demographic and even geographical drivers (as described in Chapter 1 for the Dominican Republic context), but not exclusively. The full potential of policy drivers that influence the efficiency, effectiveness and access to public services (such as digital governance, innovation or administrative simplification) remains to be developed fully. For these policies to be successful, a solid governance framework must underpin the institutional arrangements that shape the planning, implementation, assessment and continuous improvement of public services. This is particularly true if focusing on the non-income areas associated with improvements in multidimensional inequalities, such as health or education.

The OECD defines public governance as "the system of strategic processes and tools, as well as institutions, rules and interactions for effective policy making" (OECD, 2016). Failures in the governance system could undermine the capacity of the government to achieve inclusive growth, and exacerbate multidimensional inequalities. For example, failures in the targeting mechanism of a conditional cash transfer (CCT) programme could generate more inequality by failing to offset the cost of poorest households to access health and education services. To avoid this, governments need to move towards a whole-of-government approach to leverage "informed decision-making and align vision, incentives, and delivery mechanisms across the policy making cycle" (OECD, 2016). By so doing, governments are also strengthening the institutional framework that sustains the social contract, validating their own legitimacy to govern and setting a solid foundation for stronger levels of institutional trust.

In the context of improving the accessibility, quality and efficiency of public services, the OECD framework on the governance of inclusive growth provides a useful reference of key building blocks for a whole-of-government approach to planning, designing, delivering and assessing public services (Box 2.1).

Box 2.1. Guiding elements of a governance framework for inclusive growth

A defining feature of inclusive growth is multidimensionality, which brings together income and non-income considerations in the definition of intended outcomes. This requires capacity from governments to deal with complexity in policy making, assess policy impacts from broader viewpoints, and identify complementarities and trade-offs between and within policies and policy objectives. The right definition of needs and expectations, together with effective policy and administrative co-ordination mechanisms, become essential pillars for achieving inclusive growth.

Four capacities can be signalled as key in the policy-making cycle for inclusive growth. First is the definition of a whole-of-government vision to guide the identification of measurable goals and outcomes, often reflected in key national indicators (KNIs). Solid information systems are essential to target the right needs and population groups, including place-based considerations.

The second phase focuses on operationalising the vision, which is usually embodied in a medium-term national development plan, programme for government, or coalition agreements. As inclusive growth outcomes are visible over a multiyear period, priority policies and actions will ideally be reflected in a medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF), which can shape the annual dynamic of the budget cycle, thus bridging short and medium-term planning and providing resources to deliver on the shared vision. A number of tools can assist governments in managing trade-offs and understanding distributional impacts (across different social groups and locations) in order to fund inclusive growth priorities. These include: regulatory impact assessments, a more complex ex ante appraisal of current expenditures, investment projects to estimate their financial implications in the long term, as well as input from ex post expenditure and impact evaluations. Co-ordination and performance mechanisms designed to steer government action towards shared outcomes (beyond administrative silos) are critical enabling mechanisms, albeit still weak across many OECD countries. Similarly, innovative forms of service delivery, including more collaboration between service users, providers and professionals, can help better tailor services and their accessibility, including for disadvantaged groups.

The final phase of the cycle focuses on the evaluation of policies to verify their impact on inclusive growth and identify relevant lessons for the next policy cycle. The availability of granular, comparable, timely and usable information, as well as its use across public administration for informed decision making and accountability purposes, is and will continue to be increasingly important.

Throughout the policy-making cycle, openness and stakeholder engagement can be leveraged to render decision making more informed, leading to policies and services that are fairer, more responsive, and closer to citizens' needs.

Source: OECD (2016), *The Governance of Inclusive Growth*, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264202177-en.

In the context of the Dominican Republic, improving access, quality and efficiency of public services through stronger governance underpinnings emerges as a key driver for more inclusive growth outcomes. As discussed in Chapter 1, in the past two decades the Dominican Republic grew faster than the Latin American and Caribbean region, outperforming most of countries in this region. Between 1992 and 2014, the country's growth rate was an average of 5.5%, while the average regional growth rate was 3.1%. Despite the increase in growth, poverty in the Dominican Republic has not decreased proportionally (Arias and Guzman, 2009; World Bank, 2014a). Between 2000 and 2011, just under 2% of the population moved up in the income rank, in contrast with an average of 41% in the LAC region (World Bank, 2014b).

To tackle this, successive governments have placed increased attention on social promotion programmes, particularly in the areas of health and education, following the fiscal impact of the banking crisis in 2003-2004, the Dominican Republic signed a standby agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that included a significant fiscal adjustment. In order to mitigate the impact of this fiscal adjustment on the poor, successive administrations have focused on protecting the most vulnerable population. Among other key initiatives, in 2005 the government established the "*Solidaridad*" programme as a conditional cash transfer (CCT) programme. Later on, it introduced the Single Beneficiary Selection System (SIUBEN) to improve targeting, and created the Administrator for Social Subsidies (ADESS) to rationalise the use of subsidies.

Alongside these efforts, particular attention has been given to reforming the governance framework for service delivery, in order to be able to do more with less. Laws on Public Administration, Planning, Budget and Financial Management were enacted. The government also embarked on the production of a National Development Strategy 2030 that was approved as law by the Congress in December 2012. In addition, the government has concentrated on an institutional reorganisation of social sectors to improve the co-ordination and delivery of social services.

As is explored in the following sections of this chapter, these reforms have had mixed results, mainly due to the lack of enacting regulation, duplicity and fragmentation. MAP and the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development (MEPyD) have not been able to fully develop their role as governing bodies of the public administration system (for MAP) and the planning and public investment system (for MEPyD), and most sectorial institutions and local governments have difficulties assimilating the new institutional framework. For example, despite efforts to unify the planning regions, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health still operate under their own regional structures, hampering the territorial co-ordination of policies. Moreover, for delivery reasons, the Ministry of the Presidency has become an important implementing agency and leads the implementation of several programmes considered high priority by the Office of the President. Although this has provided an opportunity to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the short run, in the medium term it could undermine recent reforms and foster redundancies in the public sector. Further consolidating these efforts will be a key lever to transforming sustained economic growth into gains in multidimensional living standards across regions and population groups.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section describes the evolution of the governance framework for service delivery in the Dominican Republic, with particular attention to the recent reforms. The second section provides an overview and assessment of these reforms and the current governance framework for service delivery. The third section explores the mandate and role that the MAP could play in enhancing service delivery in the Dominican Republic. The fourth section presents conclusions and introduces recommendations.

The governance context of service delivery in the Dominican Republic

Evolution and waves of reforms

The Dominican Republic has undergone several reform processes in the past 50 years that have transformed the centre of government and the mechanisms for policy co-ordination, implementation and evaluation. At the heart of these reforms was the creation

of the National Development Council, the Technical Secretariat of the President, the Institutional Offices of Programming, and the Provincial Development Councils (Box 2.2).

Box 2.2. Summary of waves of reforms in the Dominican Republic

First wave of reform (1965)

The objective of the first wave was to organise the centre of government and the planning system following the transition to democracy. The reform created the following structures:

- National Development Council: Main policy co-ordination body of the government responsible for designing economic and social policies, and defining guidelines for the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of sectorial development plans. Its members were the President, ministers, the head of the Technical Secretariat and the Governor of the Central Bank.

- Technical Secretariat of the Presidency: Advisory body of the President and the National Development Council responsible for co-ordinating the production and evaluation of sectorial development plans; co-ordinating the preparation, execution and evaluation of the public budget; and ensuring a functional public administration. The Secretariat had four subsidiary offices:

  − National Planning Office (ONAPLAN): Governing body of the planning system responsible for the planning process and the public investment budget.

  − National Statistical Office (ONE): Office responsible for producing the statistics for decision making.

  − National Budget Office (ONAPRES): Governing body of the budget system responsible for preparing, monitoring and evaluating the budget of the public sector.

  − National Office of Personnel and Administration (ONAP): Office responsible for regulating the civil service.

- Institutional Offices of Programing: Senior management advisory units responsible for preparing, revising, monitoring and evaluating sectorial plans. These offices were the link between the central system and the sectors.

The first wave created a structure to centralise the planning process, but in practice this structure was undermined by the lack of interconnection between the planning and budget systems as a result of high discretionary spending. Additionally the Technical Secretariat lacked the political capacity to co-ordinate all four subsidiary offices.

Second wave of reform (mid-nineties)

The objective of the second wave of reform was to territorialise the planning system and give a voice to local communities. The reform created the Provincial Development Councils, deliberative bodies at the provincial level with political and civil society representation. Their main function was to co-ordinate with central government regarding the design, implementation and monitoring of relevant projects and policies to achieve territorial cohesion. The Provincial Development Councils had the following structure:

- The Board: Body responsible for defining the policy guidelines associated with the planning process. The Board included all the members of the Council.

- Co-ordinating Committee: Body responsible for organising the meetings of the Board, defining and monitoring the annual working programme of the Council, and developing the methodology and inputs for the preparation of the Participatory Provincial Development Plan.

Box 2.2. Summary of waves of reforms in the Dominican Republic *(continued)*

- Sectorial Commissions: Commissions created by the Council to aid in the planning and implementation process of sectorial interventions relevant to the province. These commissions included regional representation from the sectors.

- Provincial Planning Offices: Bodies responsible for designing, planning, implementing and monitoring the plans and programmes considered relevant by the Councils. These offices were affiliated to ONAPLAN and provided technical assistance to all the sectorial institutions with representation in the territory.

The second wave of reform articulated a sound territorial planning system, but its impact was undermined by the lack of capacity at the provincial level to articulate the planning process and to create the necessary linkages between the sectors and the territory.

Third wave of reform (2004- 2012)

The objective of the third wave was to restructure the role of the centre of government and to better articulate the planning, budget and public administration systems, including the development of performance and feedback mechanisms. The third wave reform brought the following changes:

- The National Development Council was transformed into the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers kept the same functions as the Development Council and new functions were added to reflect the new planning tools.

- The Technical Secretariat of the Presidency was merged with ONAPLAN to create the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development (MEPyD). The co-ordination mandate of the MEPyD was strengthened and new planning tools were created to articulate a long-term vision (NDS) and align medium term plans with the budget (PNPSP).

- ONAPRES and the Ministry of the Treasury were merged to create the Ministry of Finance. In parallel a new Organic Budget Law introduced results-based budgeting and restricted presidential discretionary expenditure by eliminating the account 1401.

- Four Policy Co-ordination Cabinets were created to help with the articulation of government policy in the following areas: 1) social; 2) institutional; 3) economic and; 4) infrastructure and environment.

- ONAP was transformed into the Ministry of Public Administration. The Ministry became the governing body of the new system of public administration with a clear mandate to strengthen institutional performance and service delivery.

- New tools and actors for territorial planning were added and the government started organising the territory in Development Regions as a first effort to create single planning regions (Regiones Unicas de Planificación).

- Transformation of the Institutional Offices of Programing into the Institutional Planning and Development Units.

Sources: Law 55 that creates the National Development Council. Presidential Decrees 613-96 and 312-97 that create and regulate the Provincial Development Councils. Presidential Decree 1082-04 that creates the Policy Co-ordination Cabinet. The Organic Law of Budget (No. 423-06). The Planning and Public Investment Law (No.498-06) and the Presidential Decree 493-07 that regulates it. The Organic Law of Public Administration (No.247-12). Presidential Decrees 685-00 and 710-04 that creates and modify respectively the planning regions.

The current governance framework

The current governance framework is the result of the third wave of reforms, which introduced new elements and revamped those existing to strengthen policy co-ordination, enhance accountability and promote improvements in institutional performance (Box 2.2 above). The beginning of this wave can be traced back to the creation of the Policy Co-ordination Cabinets (Presidential Decree 1082-04) and the enactment of several laws such as: 1) *Ley Orgánica de Presupuesto para el Sector Público, No. 423-06* (Budget Law); 2) *Ley de Planificación e Inversión Pública*, No.498-06 (Planning and Public Investment Law); and 3) *Ley Orgánica de la Administración Pública, No.247-12,* (Public Administration Organic Law). A number of co-ordination bodies, detailed below, were created at the central level.

The Council of Ministers is the main policy co-ordination body of the executive. It discusses and approves the sectorial and territorial policies, programmes, plans and projects, as well as initiatives presented by the governing bodies of the planning and budget system. The Council is composed of the President, the Vice President and the Ministers (Box 2.3).

Box 2.3. Relevant responsibilities of the Council of Ministers

- Propose, deliberate and approve policies, as well as national, territorial and sectorial plans and projects.

- Propose actions for efficient implementation of plans, projects and policies.

- Propose actions to make public administration more efficient.

- Discuss and propose new laws and regulations.

- Discuss the evaluation of national, regional and sectorial plans and policies.

Source: Public Administration Law 247-12.

Policy Co-ordination Cabinets are co-ordination bodies that facilitate the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies in the following policy areas: social, institutional, economic, infrastructure and environment. The social area is co-ordinated by the Vice President; the institutional area by the Minister of the Presidency; the economic area by the Minister of Economy, Planning and Development; and the infrastructure and environmental area by the Minster of Public Works. The Cabinets also include the subsidiary organisations affiliated to each area, which leads to large memberships. For instance, over 25 institutions are included in the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet (Box 2.4).

Box 2.4. Composition of the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet

Members

- Minister of Education, Minister of Health, Minister of Labour, Minister of Sports and Recreation, Minister of Women, Minister of Youth, Minister of Culture and Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Affiliated Organisations

- *Consejo Nacional de la Seguridad Social* (National Social Security Council)
- *Dirección General de Desarrollo de la Comunidad* (General Direction for Community Development)
- *Dirección General de Desarrollo Fronterizo* (General Direction for the Development of the Border Area)
- *Consejo Nacional de Asuntos Urbanos* (National Urban Council)
- *Instituto Nacional de la Vivienda* (National Housing Institute)
- *Instituto de Auxilios y Vivienda* (Aid and Housing Institute)
- *Instituto de Desarrollo y Crédito Cooperativo* (Development and Co-operative Credit Institute)
- *Consejo Nacional de Discapacitados* (National Council for People with Disability)
- *Consejo Nacional de Drogas* (National Council for Drug Policy)
- *Consejo Nacional para la Niñez y la Adolescencia* (National Council for Children and Adolescents)
- *Consejo Presidencial del Sida* (COPRESIDA) (Presidential Council on Aids)
- *Dirección General de Migración* (General Direction of Migration)
- *Instituto de Estabilización de Precios* (Price Stabilisation Institute)
- *Comedores Económico* (Public Canteens)
- *Instituto de Formación Técnico Profesional* (Institute of Technical and Vocational Training).
- *Programa de Apoyo a la Micro, Pequeña y Mediana Empresa* (PROMIPYME) (Programme to Support the Micro, Small and Medium Entreprises)
- *Programa de Medicamentos Esenciales* (PROMESE) (Essential Drug Programme)
- *Fondo de Promoción de Iniciativas Comunitarias* (PROCOMUNIDAD) (Promotion Fund for Community Initiatives/Promotion Fund)
- *Plan Presidencial de Lucha contra la Pobreza* (Presidential Plan to Fight Poverty)

Source: Presidential Decree 1082-04 that integrates the Cabinets of Institutional Policy, Economic Policy, Social Policy and Environmental and Infrastructure Policy.

Particular focus has been given to the introduction of planning tools to guide the planning process, including: 1) setting up the vision through the National Development Strategy (NDS); and 2) translating the vision into medium-term plans that link priorities and resources through the Multiyear National Plan for the Public Sector (PNPSP) (Box 2.5).

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Box 2.5. Planning tools in the Dominican Republic

Multi-year National Plan of the Public Sector (PNPSP) is a tool that allows the translation of the NDS into a multi-year planning framework (usually four years). It includes: 1) policies, programmes and priority projects to be implemented by the public sector; 2) public administration reforms and human resources policies; 3) policies to promote the private sector; 4) priorities in terms of international co-operation; and 5) information on financing needs. It is conceived to be aligned with the medium-term expenditure framework and its preparation is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development (MEPyD).

Regional plans represent the territorial dimension of the PNPSP. They include: 1) a matrix with the institutional and sectorial policies to be implemented in the territory; 2) main development challenges of the region; 3) regional development goals in the medium term; 4) the mechanism for institutional and sectorial co-ordination; 5) roles and responsibilities of the main stakeholders; 6) commitment of resources by the private sector; and 7) a consolidated budget of all the public institutions involved in the region. The regional plans are based on the single planning regions defined by the MEPyD, and are prepared in co-ordination with local governments. The MEPyD is responsible for co-ordinating the preparation of the regional plans.

Sectorial and institutional plans include the policies, programmes, projects and plans to be implemented in the medium term by the sectors and institutions. The sectoral plans include: 1) strategic agenda of the sector; 2) main development challenges; 3) medium terms goals; 4) implementation strategies, 5) financing strategy; 6) roles and commitments of the public sector; and 7) commitments regarding the resource mobilisation strategy. The institutional plans include: 1) institutional analyses; 2) policies, programmes and institutional projects; 3) profiles of institutional products and expected results; and 4) an estimation of financial needs.

Source: Planning and Public Investment Law 498-06 and Presidential Decree 493-07 that Regulates the Planning and Investment Law.

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The reforms have also transformed the governing bodies of the planning and investment system, the financial management and budgets systems, and the public administration. MEPyD became the governing body of the planning and investment system and of the monitoring and evaluation system. Currently, MEPyD is responsible for co-ordinating the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of the NDS, the PNSPS, the regional plans, the provincial plans and the sectorial plans. In addition, it defines the guidelines for the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of the institutional and municipal plans that are the responsibility of the Institutional and Municipal Planning and Development Units (see Box 2.6).

Box 2.6. Institutional and Municipal Planning and Development Units

Institutional Planning and Development Units (IPDU) advise senior management (e.g. minster or director) on the design, implementation, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans, programmes and projects. Their responsibilities include:

- Conduct prospective studies on the goals and outcomes that the institution should achieve in the medium and long term.

- Co-ordinate the development of the Institutional Plan and the Public Investment Plan of the institution.

- Collaborate with the budget programming units.

- Monitor the implementation of projects and programmes.

- Evaluate the impact of the Institutional Plans.

- Design and evaluate public investment projects.

- Assess the organisational structure of the institution and propose measurements to streamline processes.

The Municipal Planning and Development Units play the same role as the Institutional Units but at the municipal level. The co-ordination between MEPyD and these units is as follows:

- The Council of Ministries provides MEPyD with general guidelines once a new administration is inaugurated. These guidelines define the medium-term programme-usually four years - of the government.

- MEPyD transform these general guidelines into planning and evaluation guidelines, ensuring the alignment with the NDS. These guidelines are shared with the Municipal and Institutional Units.

- The Institutional and Municipal Units elaborate their Institutional and Municipal Plans for the next four years, following the guidelines.

- The Institutional and Municipal plans are used to engage in a dialogue with MEPyD to prioritise interventions based on resource availability. The prioritised interventions are included in the PNPSP, ensuring resources for their implementation.

Source: Planning and Public Investment Law 498-06 and Presidential Decree 493-07 that Regulates the Planning and Investment Law.

MAP became the governing body of the public administration and the co-ordinator of the institutional strengthening system. Currently it is responsible for designing, co-ordinating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the plans and projects to make public administration more transparent, efficient and effective. It collaborates with the Institutional Planning and Development Units to streamline processes, improve the quality of public services, and promote a culture of change management.

In parallel, the Minister of Finance became the governing body of the financial management and budget system. Currently it is responsible for preparing the medium-term expenditure framework and co-ordinating the preparation of result-oriented, performance-based and product-based budgets. In addition, the third wave created three structures to co-ordinate interventions at the regional, provincial and municipal levels. These structures, known as the Regional, Provincial and Municipal Development Councils, are responsible for proposing development strategies, prioritising, and monitoring public investment in their respective territorial dimension (see Box 2.7).

Box 2.7. Regional, Provincial and Municipal Development Councils: Composition and articulation

Regional Development Council composition:

Representation is based on the idea of single planning regions, meaning each institution is represented by one official who will represent the provinces integrated under each Unique Planning Region. However, single planning regions have yet to be created in the Dominican Republic. Currently there is a bill in Congress proposing the creation of five single regions. The council has the following members:

- One provincial governor
- One senator and one member of the House of Representatives
- One mayor in representation of all the municipalities that integrate each single planning region
- One representative of the business councils and/or Chambers of Commerce and Production
- One representative of higher education institutions
- One representative of the professional associations
- One representative each of agriculture associations, neighbourhood councils and civil society organisations

Provincial Development Council composition:

- Provincial governor
- Senator of the province and members of the house representing the province
- Mayors of all the municipalities of the province
- One representative of the business councils and/or Chambers of Commerce and Production of the province
- One representative of higher education institutions of the province
- One representative of the professional associations of the province
- One representative each of agriculture associations, neighbourhood councils and civil society organisations

**Municipal Development Council composition:**

- Mayor of the municipality
- President of legislative body ("Sala Capitular") of the municipality
- The heads of the Municipal Boards
- One representative of the business councils and/or Chambers of Commerce and Production
- One representative of the professional associations of the municipality
- One representative each of agriculture associations, neighbourhood councils and civil society organisations

Articulation of the Development Councils: the Municipal Development Council collects the demands and proposals generated by a participatory process, and shares them with the Provincial Development Council. The Provincial Council consolidates them and shares them with the Regional Development Council who, in turn, consolidates and shares them with the Vice Ministry of Planning of MEPyD. As a final step, consolidated demands and proposals are shared across public sector institutions as inputs into their own planning.

Source: Planning and Public Investment Law 498-06 and Presidential Decree 493-07.

The reforms have left a strong network of institutions tasked with planning and co-ordination at the central and sub-national level, as well as specific instruments to channel the planning and co-ordination process. Figure 2.1 presents a simplified representation of the existing governance framework for service delivery in the Dominican Republic, while Box 2.8 summarises the process.

Figure 2.1. Governance framework for service delivery
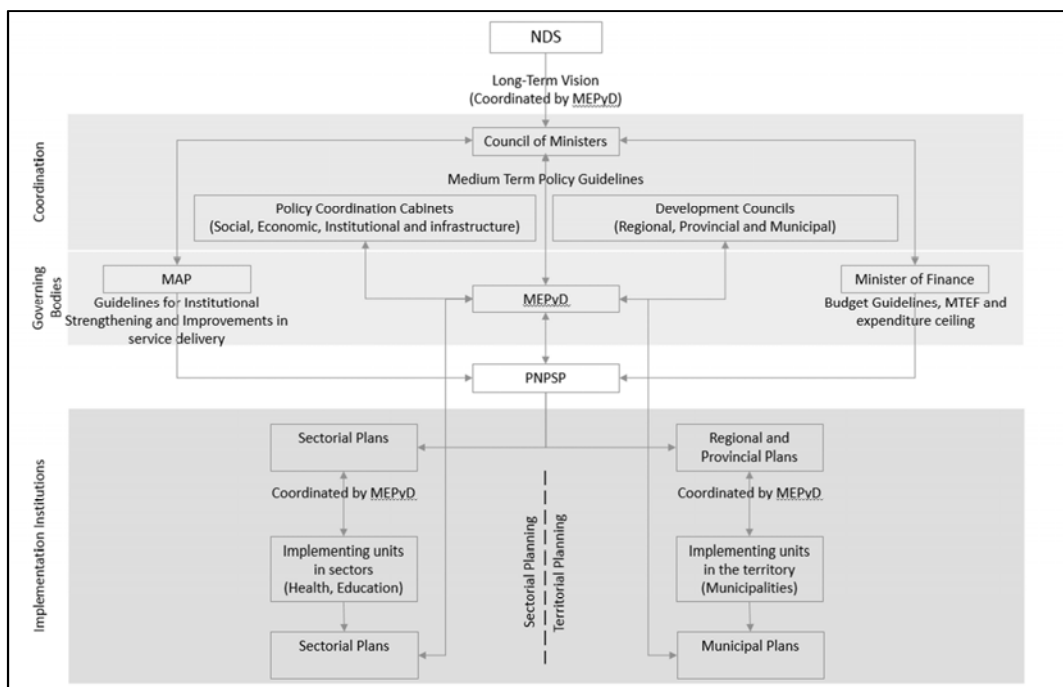
Source: Created by OECD team for this report.

Box 2.8. Summary of the governance framework for service delivery

Based on existing regulations, the following steps can be summarised:

- The NDS defines the long-term vision of the country.

- The Council of Ministers defines general guidelines for the four year PNPSP.

- MEPyD develops the guidelines for the PNPSP, taking into consideration the NDS and the guidelines provided by the Council of Ministers.

- MEPyD shares the guidelines of the PNPSP with Institutional Planning and Developing Units of the sectors.

- The Planning and Developing Units prepare the strategic plans and share them with MEPyD.

- MEPyD consolidate the PNPSP, taking into consideration inputs from the sectors, the Ministry of Finance (budget guidelines and ceilings), and MAP (policies related to the public administration system).

- MEPyD present the PNPSP to the Council of Ministers for approval.

Box 2.8. Summary of the governance framework for service delivery *(continued)*

- Once approved, MEPyD shares the PNPSP with the sector for an update of the institutional plans.

- MEPyD co-ordinates the sectorial regional and provincial plans.

- In parallel, the Ministry of Finance starts to prepare the annual budget.

- Once the budget is approved, the monitoring mechanisms are activated. At the end of the budget cycle, the PNSPS is revised, if needed, and the process starts again.

Source: OECD, based on existing regulations.

Challenges of the current governance framework for service delivery

As described in the last section, successive governments of the Dominican Republic have undertaken important reforms aimed at strengthening the capacity for planning, co-ordination and delivery of services, with a particular focus on social protection. These efforts have led to: the consolidation of a solid planning system, including the NDS and PNPSP; an important network of institutions underpinning the governance of service delivery, including MAP and MEPyD; a strong focus on social protection; and a series of key instruments providing essential information that can be leveraged for improving services, including the SIUBEN.

However, the impact of these reforms remains far from reaching its full potential. First, although the institutional architecture is in place, the lack of enacting regulation, and the difficulties for sectorial institutions to adapt to the new institutional framework, have undermined these new arrangements. Second, the institutions and bodies responsible for policy co-ordination are not operating as such, either for political economy considerations or for a priority focus on implementation. Third, monitoring and evaluation initiatives are relatively new and not fully integrated into the decision-making process. Fourth, the systems that integrate the different levels of accountability are not interconnected.

This section provides an overview of some of the key challenges around the key building blocks of a governance framework for service delivery, namely planning and vision setting, co-ordination and delivery, monitoring and evaluation and accountability.

Vision setting, planning and demand identification

Defining the long-term vision of a country is a fundamental part of the policy cycle for inclusive growth. The vision enables the government to communicate in simple terms its long-term goals and provides an umbrella for policy co-ordination by identifying priority actions and potential complementarities among the different sectors. The vision reflects the political consensus of society and legitimises a policy roadmap for successive administrations to follow.

But the vision by itself is not enough. An overarching, whole-of-government vision must be specific and include outcomes and indicators to measure progress towards achieving the long-term goals. Some countries select key national indicators (KNIs) as a first step in operationalising the implementation of the vision and communicating aggregate targets for the government as a whole.

The overarching vision needs to be translated into sector-wide strategies and their accompanying budgets in order to become operational. The planning and budget processes provide an opportunity to prioritise interventions through an efficient and effective method that allows identifying policy trade-offs based on impact and resource availability. These processes are fundamental because they ensure that inputs are aligned and serve the whole-of-government vision.

The Dominican Republic defined its vision in the National Development Strategy 2030. MEPyD co-ordinated the preparation of the strategy after conducting consultations with all sectors and commissioning several policy documents (e.g. the Atalli Report) to inform the design of the strategy. Congress approved the strategy in January 2012 (Law 1-12), validating the first national planning effort of this magnitude. The NDS is structured in four pillars, and each pillar has several general and specific objectives (Box 2.9). These objectives are linked to policy actions and KNIs that motivate and guide public sector interventions. For example, in the case of education, one of the policy actions underlines the need to provide adequate infrastructure (e.g. schools) to ensure access to primary and secondary education. In the case of health, one of the lines of action underlines the need to strengthen the affiliation mechanism to public health insurance.

Box 2.9. National Development Strategy 2030

The vision of the NDS defines the Dominican Republic as a democratic and social state that promotes equity, equal opportunities and social justice, while efficiently managing its resources in an innovative, sustainable and balanced way. The strategy is divided into four pillars, with general and specific objectives, lines of actions and indicators.

Pilar 1: A democratic and social state with ethical, transparent and efficient institutions that guarantee security and promote equity, national and local development. Objectives within this pillar include: 1) results oriented, efficient and transparent public administration; and 2) rule of law and safe citizens.

Pillar 2: A society with equal opportunities where education, health, decent housing and basic services are guaranteed to the population to promote poverty reduction and territorial cohesion. Objectives within this pillar include: 1) quality education for everyone; 2) decent housing; and 3) integral health and social security.

Pillar 3: An integrated, innovative, diversified, quality-oriented and environmentally sustainable economy that creates and redistributes wealth, induces sustainable growth, creates jobs, and is linked to local and global markets. General objectives of this pillar include: 1) an articulated, innovative and environmentally sustainable economy that favours sustainable economy growth and strong labour markets; and 2) the creation of sufficient and decent jobs.

Pillar 4: A society with sustainable production and consumption practices, with and equitable and efficient management of environmental protection and risks, and that promotes climate change adaptation. The general objectives of this pillar include: 1) sustainable management of the environment; and 2) efficient risk management to minimise, human, economic and environmental losses.

Source: Law No. 1-15 of the National Development Strategy.

The PNSPN 2013-2016 is the first effort to sequence and operationalise the NDS. The main input of the PNSPN is the four-year plan of the administration (2012-2016), known as the Presidential Goals (Box 2.10). The plan includes a series of products, policy and

actions to achieve the medium-term outcomes linked to the KNIs. For example, in the case of education, the PNPSP specifies how many classrooms should be built and repaired between 2013 and 2016. In the case of health, it specifies the number of people who should be affiliated to the public health insurance.

Box 2.10. Selected Presidential Goals (2012-2016)

Education

- Elimination of illiteracy by 2015

- Construction of 29 000 classrooms

- Training of 11 430 new teachers, and 12 500 teachers will receive some type of certification

- Review and update curricula to raise the quality standards of the national education system

- 100% compliance with the school calendar

- 80% of students in initial and basic education with "*Tanda Extendida*"

Health

- Reduction of maternal morality to 50 per 100 000 live births and infant mortality to 15 per 1 000 live births

- Creation of a catastrophic health expenditure fund for people not affiliated with the "*Seguro Familiar de Salud*"

- Centralise drug purchases through PROMESE/CAL

- 100% of the municipalities have a "*Farmacia del Pueblo*"

- Progressive elimination of fee payments in public hospitals

Social Protection

- Register population with disability

- Increase by 200 000 the households benefiting from "*Progresando con Solidaridad*"

- Create the programme "*Quisqueya sin Miseria*"

- Eradication of child labour and its worst forms

- Incorporate 1.3 million poor into the subsidised social security regime.

- Improvement and/or reconstruction of 80 000 homes

Source: MEPyD (2012), *Plan Nacional Plurianual del Sector Público*, Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

The Dominican Republic has followed many good practices used in OECD countries to define and communicate a whole-of-government vision (Box 2.11). Citizens were included in the process, and the government commissioned technical papers to inform the debate, including impact simulations to evaluate the consistency of the goals of the

strategy. All of these measures helped built support and created momentum for the strategy to become law.

When a new administration was inaugurated in August 2012, MEPyD started the co-ordination and preparation of the first PNSPN 2012-2016. A review of the PNSPN suggests that despite efforts to include all of the information regarding plans, programmes and policies, there are still significant gaps regarding the costing of the plan. The only programmes that are budgeted in the PNSPN are those considered to be special programmes. These programmes represented only 12% of the 2013 total budget.

Box 2.11. Centre of government observations and trends in 2014: Vision, leadership and innovation

The success of a government rests on its ability to define a vision for the country that reflects an electoral mandate and is typically designed to increase well-being, prosperity and international competitiveness. In the years following the economic crisis, concerns about budgets dominated in most countries, crowding out any other vision. However, increasingly governments are seeking to be more forward looking and strategic, and most OECD members now have some kind of vision document. This vision has different, interlinked dimensions, including a long-term vision for the nation, usually going beyond growth objectives to embrace well-being and sustainability goals, and a vision for what the government wants to achieve.

The government no longer has a monopoly on defining the vision. While efforts to gather citizens' views could risk raising expectations that cannot be fulfilled, such bottom-up visions can help validate and legitimise government policy. Vision depends on two crucial factors: trust and communication. If citizens do not trust the government, they will not trust its vision. Taking steps to strengthen trust in government more generally will help to ensure greater buy-in on more strategic goals. Communication and ownership are also important. If the vision has a strong narrative, connects to citizens' lives and is well communicated, it can help generate support for difficult reforms. A particular problem faced by policy makers is that the reform process, and its translation into real benefits for citizens, are often too slow, which undermines confidence and enthusiasm for longer-term visions.

Source: OECD (2014), "Vision, leadership, innovation: Driving public policy performance", 33rd Meeting of Senior Officials from Centres of Government, OECD, Paris, www.oecd.org/gov/summary.pdf.

A number of challenges can be identified that are associated with the definition of the vision and its operationalisation. These can help further leverage the potential of current instruments in order to fulfil their planning and co-ordination role. In particular, the sequence of the planning tools can be improved between central and sectorial planning processes. Most of the institutional and sectorial plans preceded the preparation of the NDS and the PNSPN (e.g. Education Decennial Plan 2008-2018, Strategic plan of the Ministry of Health 2010-2014) and were not adapted to reflect the new guidelines of government.

In addition, weak capacity of the Institutional Planning and Development Units undermines the planning process. Despite efforts to train the staff in these units, they still lack the capacity to adapt to the whole-of-government planning approach set up by the reform. Instead, they continue to follow a silo approach. There is also weak interconnection between the planning and budget, whereby the PNPSP and the medium term expenditure framework are not fully integrated.

While some of these challenges, and in particular, the interconnection between planning and budgeting, are shared across a number of OECD countries, good practice also exists. For example, France and New Zealand integrate budget and planning processes by including the KNIs in their budget law (France), or in the decision-making process regarding budget allocations (New Zealand) (Box 2.12).

Box 2.12. Key national indicators and spending decisions: France and New Zealand

France's performance goes beyond gross domestic product (GDP) and the use of KNIs: the over-arching budget law (*Loi organique relative aux lois des finances* or LOLF) groups public expenditure by "missions", which bring together related policy programmes and, in turn, are associated with performance objectives and indicators. Ongoing reform efforts focus on streamlining the indicators to make them clearer for parliamentarians and the public.

In parallel, building on the work of the "*Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi*" Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress, France enacted a law in 2015 requiring the government to present wealth and well-being indicators other than GDP when tabling the annual budget. The goal was to promote debate on policy impacts. The French authorities are currently planning to implement a strategic dashboard using a limited set of internationally-comparable KNIs on the following three themes:

- Economic development indicators, such as foreign direct investment flows to France (OECD), and "Ease of doing business" (World Bank).
- Social progress indicators, such as healthy life expectancy at 65 by gender (OECD), percentage of 18-24 year-olds with no qualification and not in training (France Stratégie/Eurostat), and poverty gaps (World Bank).
- Sustainable development indicators, such as greenhouse gas emissions per unit of GDP (European Energy Agency/Eurostat).

The mission of **New Zealand's** Treasury is "to promote better living standards for New Zealanders", and this is interpreted and applied by the Living Standards Framework. The framework encompasses five broad dimensions grouped under three principal themes (prosperity, inclusiveness and sustainability), which are used systematically as a basis for framing policy advice and evaluation:

- Prosperity:
  - Potential economic growth − higher incomes, stronger growth and efficient allocation of resources
- Inclusiveness:
  - Sustainability for the future − human and physical capital and sustainability of the environment
  - Equity − distribution across society and opportunities for people to improve their condition
- Sustainability:
  - Social cohesion − core institutions that underpin society, self-identity, trust and connections
  - Resilience − ability to withstand unexpected systemic shocks

Sources: OECD (2016), *The Governance of Inclusive Growth*, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264202177-en.

Stiglitz et al. (2012), "Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress", www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr/documents/rapport_anglais.pdf.

Needs assessment and identification

Effective and efficient policy design and implementation is unable to take place if the government does not understand the needs of the population, particularly regarding inclusive growth. Information on the number and location of service institutions (e.g. schools and healthcare facilities), their geographical features, user feedback, transportation networks and economic costs are needed in order to identify the gaps undermining access. Demand identification is fundamental in understanding what it is that the government needs to do, for whom, and where. This information is vital for the prioritisation process and for developing the targeting mechanisms to reach out to the most hard-to-reach users and achieve territorial cohesion.

The Dominican Republic has several instruments that allow for the identification and assessment of needs, including the Poverty Atlas, the SIUBEN, and the Income and Expenditure of Households National Survey (ENIGH) and Multi-Purpose National Household Survey (ENHOGAR).

The **Poverty Atlas** is a system of maps that represents monetary and multidimensional poverty in the territory based on the poverty line (PL) and the quality of life index methodologies. The Poverty Atlas presents the information desegregated in four levels: national, provincial, municipal and *"parajes"* (sites). The production of the Atlas is the responsibility of MEPyD. So far, three atlas maps have been produced. The first atlas was produced in 1997 and included 72 maps. This was used to design a generalised social transfer programme that targeted geographic areas. The second atlas was produced in 2005 and included 437 maps. This was used to develop targeting mechanisms to identify poor households and to eliminate general subsidies. The third atlas was produced in 2014 and included 2 900 maps with desegregated information covering all of the territory for the first time. Besides measuring monetary and multidimensional poverty, the third version of the Poverty Atlas included poverty measurements using an extended version of the unsatisfied basic needs (NIB) methodology. This methodology focuses on determining the poverty level of a household based on the shortcomings of the dwelling.

The **SIUBEN**, a subsidiary institution of the vice-presidency, produces the socio-economic and demographic information required to improve targeting of the social sectors based on a proxy means testing methodology. Among the responsibilities of the SIUBEN are the following: 1) identify, profile, register and prioritise poor households identified by the Poverty Atlas that could be of interest for policy making; 2) update and maintain the database of eligible poor households based on the their life quality index; 3) co-ordinate with civil society on the inclusion or exclusion of households from the CCT programme; 4) guarantee an updated flow of information on socio-economic conditions of households; and 5) produce and disseminate information from the analysis of socio-economic conditions of the households.

ENHOGAR is an annual survey designed to gather specific information demanded by policy makers. For example, the 2013 survey focused on individuals with disabilities and the 2012 survey focused on the social protection system. **ENIGH** is a survey that is implemented every decade and helps to understand the evolution of consumption and spending patterns of households. Both surveys are the responsibility of the National Office of Statistics.

To support the co-ordination of these instruments, and to systematise the production, collection and analysis of poverty-related data, the government created the Inter-

institutional Technical Committee for Poverty Measurement (Presidential Decree 112-15) in 2015. This committee is also responsible for evaluating the impact of policies addressing poverty. The committee is composed of MEPyD, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour, the Central Bank, the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet, the Social Security National Council, and the National Office of Statistics.

These tools can significantly assist the government in better targeting services across the needs of population groups and place-based considerations, particularly with the creation of the Poverty Committee, which helps to co-ordinate interaction between the tools. The Poverty Atlas has improved significantly since the first version was produced. Today it offers desegregated data across all of the territory, which provides an opportunity to improve further on the targeting of social policy, particularly in the *"parajes"* of rural areas that were not included in the previous versions of the Atlas. SIUBEN operates in a similar way to the *Cadastro Único* (Brazil) and has built an informative database to inform policy making and link the assessment of needs and identification of users to the planning process. The ENIGH and ENHOGAR surveys are in the process of being systematised and are playing an important role, at least at the central planning level, in the design of policies related to safety nets.

However, full integration between these tools, needs assessment, user identification and the planning process remains to be achieved. With the exception of the CCT programme, *Progresando con Solidaridad* (PROSOLI), SIUBEN is not being used to inform social policy. For instance, there is no evidence that the information gathered related to gaps on health and education is systemically used by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education to determine the supply-side interventions.

Government co-ordination

Efficient co-ordination is key to ensuring that policy responses are joined up or mutually supportive, and encourages shared ownership for outcomes. The ability to co-ordinate across different government institutions in a way that overcomes administrative or institutional silos contributes to the effectiveness of the government in improving outcomes for people. Conversely, failures of planning and co-ordination can lead to overlap and duplication, administrative burden, lower levels of employee engagement and lower levels of efficiency and effectiveness, which negatively affect how citizens assess their governments.

As the public policy challenges facing governments become increasingly complex and multidimensional, and the forms of intervention to address them involve an increasingly large range of actors, governments across the OECD have identified the need to reinforce the centre of government function as a priority in structuring and co-ordinating government actions more effectively and efficiently.

In the context of aligning public services to deliver on outcomes, pursuing a whole-of-government approach emerges as a priority for the Dominican Republic (Box 2.13). A whole-of-government perspective aligns different sectors and administrative units towards targeting and delivering joined-up outcomes beyond administrative silos, encouraging policies to reinforce each other and avoiding duplication.

Box 2.13. What is whole-of-government

"Joined-up government" or "whole-of-government" approaches are associated with a desire to ensure the horizontal and vertical co-ordination of government activity in order to improve policy coherence, better use resources, promote and capitalise on synergies and innovation that arise from a multi-stakeholder perspective, and provide seamless service delivery to citizens and businesses. It requires government bodies, regardless of type or level, to work across portfolio boundaries to achieve shared goals and to provide integrated government responses to policy issues. Such an approach applies to both formal and informal working methods, and to the development, implementation, and management of policies, programmes and service delivery. Improved co-ordination and integration – the foundation on which "whole-of-government" rests – is not new to the public administration. It is, however, gaining attention, as governments react to the silos and fragmentation that, in some cases, have been exacerbated by new public management (NPM) reforms, as well as to asymmetries arising from structural devolution at the central level, greater complexity in policy challenges, and a need for efficiency gains.

The term "whole-of-government" is broad, and applies to both central and sub-national (regional and local) levels and policy sectors. It also includes the relationship between government and external actors. Assessing whether or not a "whole-of-government" approach is in place depends on numerous factors. Three inter-related ways to estimate "joined-up-ness" include: 1) measuring the degree to which elements of good practice are being followed; 2) engaging in stakeholder dialogue, i.e., do stakeholders notice a difference?; and 3) evaluating outcomes that may be best suited to addressing the impact of a "whole-of-government" approach, as opposed to the processes behind it (Pollitt, 2003). Academics studying whole-of-government approaches identify at least three primary lessons: first, one size does not fit all and horizontal approaches may not be appropriate for the entire public sector in all situations. Second, there is often a "bottom-up" element to initiating and promoting single government approaches, and thus room needs to be made for this possibility since it can strengthen "joined-up-ness". Third, embedding a whole-of-government working culture is a long-term endeavour. It requires time to develop, implement and take root, and thus it must be "owned" by the full government and public administration, rather than be seen as the initiative of any single political party.

Sources:

OECD (2011), *Estonia: Towards a Single Government Approach,* OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264104860-en

Christensen, T. and P. Laegreid (2006), "The Whole-of-Government Approach: Regulation, performance, and public sector reform", Working Paper 6, Stein Rokkan Centre for Social Studies.

Management Advisory Committee (2004), *Connecting Government: Whole-of-Government Responses to Australia's Priority Challenges*, Commonwealth of Australia.

Pollitt, C. (2003), "Joined-Up Government: A Survey", *Political Studies Review*, Vol. 1.

Leveraging the centre of government

The main body for policy co-ordination at the centre of government in the Dominican Republic is the Council of Ministers. The Council relies on two ministries: the Ministry of the Presidency and the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development. The former is the Technical Secretariat of the Council and in charge of aligning the government towards achieving the goals of the administration's four-year programme. The latter is in charge of translating the four-year programme of the government into the PNSPN.

The Council of Ministers was first introduced with the Public Administration Law in 2012, and is not yet fully operational. In practice, the Council meets to discuss the size of the ministerial appropriations during the budget preparation, while co-ordination of high-

level policy usually takes place during one-on-one meetings with the Minister of the Presidency. There are two additional elements that undermine the potential of the Council of Ministers to become the highest co-ordination body of the government: 1) the lack of clarity on how the Council of Ministers should operate; and 2) the tendency of the Ministry of the President to focus more on the delivery of projects, rather than on its co-ordination role.

These factors raise a number of important challenges regarding co-ordination. First, the lack of an enacting regulation that describes the function of the Council, which creates significant gaps between the design of the reform and its implementation. In the case of the Council of Ministers, the missing regulation is undermining the potential of this co-ordination body, relegating it only to budget discussions. Second, the absence of this central co-ordination role is aggravated in a context of weak institutional incentives to break administrative silos, including the predominant focus on specific project implementation rather than whole-of-government co-ordination by the Ministry of the Presidency.

More remains to be done regarding the co-ordination and alignment of priorities. This alignment is fundamental to ensure that a whole-of-government vision for inclusive growth can be achieved, particularly taking into consideration the need to deliver joined-up outcomes in a context of limited resources. Having a strong centre of government (CoG) that is capable of steering a shared vision across administrative units and levels of government is essential to overcome natural administrative silos and set up accountability mechanisms that create incentives to enhance co-operation across and within sectors. The shared use of up to date, objective information, such as can be provided by existing tools in the Dominican Republic, can go a long way towards achieving this goal.

Sector co-ordination: Ministerial cabinets and the Policy Co-ordination Cabinets

According to the legal framework, sectorial co-ordination in the Dominican Republic is the responsibility of two bodies: the Ministerial Cabinets and the Policy Co-ordination Cabinets. Ministerial Cabinets help Ministers to co-ordinate, plan, monitor and evaluate the policies, programmes and projects that fall under their jurisdiction. Ministerial Cabinets consist of all the Vice Ministers and the heads of the subsidiary organisations affiliated to the respective Ministry. The Policy Co-ordination Cabinets are responsible for co-ordinating institutions and ministries in an aggregated policy area (e.g. social sector).

There is no evidence to suggest the operationalisation of Ministerial Cabinets. This may be due to the lack of a co-ordination tradition in the decentralised and affiliated institutions that traditionally have operated outside the realm of ministries. Furthermore, there is no clear indication as to how Ministerial Cabinets should interact with the Policy Co-ordination Cabinets. Out of the four existing Policy Co-ordination Cabinets, only the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet is active. However, the co-ordination functions of this cabinet are undermined for three main reasons. First, its co-ordination role gave way to a mostly implementation role when it was tasked with the responsibility of running key social programmes, managed outside the realm of line ministries. Second, co-ordination and feedback mechanisms with line ministries, such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, are not fully developed. Third, the launch of the General Direction of Special Programmes (DIGEPEP), a unit housed in the Ministry of the Presidency and tasked with a co-ordination mandate, created duplicity and overlap with the functions of

the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet, further incentivising a narrower implementation role.

A rationalisation of existing co-ordination mechanisms at the sector level is essential, in line with good comparative practice (Box 2.14). This could be achieved by first narrowing down the specific institutional arrangements (e.g. giving content to Ministerial Cabinets and Policy Co-ordination Cabinets, and clarifying the role of DIGEPEP in order to avoid duplicities). Second, by making them fully operational with the necessary regulatory actions. Third, by making them agile and responsive to the co-ordination needs that often cut across policy silos. For example, the Ministry of Public Works plays an important role in the programme of school construction, but it is not part of the Social Cabinet.

Box 2.14. Ministerial committees in Chile

Ministerial committees in Chile are inter-ministerial co-ordination bodies, created by presidential decree, with a specific objective that requires the intervention of multiple ministries to be achieved. They are composed of several ministers, and decisions are taken by a voting process. If there is a tie, the vote of the minister presiding the committee decides. Each committee usually has an Executive Secretariat, composed of the relevant deputy ministers, that meets on a monthly basis to monitor the implementation of the decisions made by the committee. In addition, the Division of Inter-ministerial Co-ordination of the Ministry of the Presidency is responsible for providing technical support.

Source: Prepared by the OECD with information from the Ministerio Secretaria General de la Presidencia.

These changes, supported and enabled with clear guidelines and directions from the CoG, including a revamped role of the Council of Ministers and more clarity regarding the articulation between DIGEPEP and other co-ordination mechanisms, would go a long way to minimising existing co-ordination failures and possible duplicities, particularly in the social sector (Box 2.15).

Box 2.15. Duplicity and fragmentation risks in the social sector

Fragmentation and duplicity are two of the characteristics undermining the co-ordination, efficiency and effectiveness of social policy in the Dominican Republic. According to the Presidential Decree that created the Policy Co-ordination Cabinets, there are at least 28 institutions at the national level responsible for designing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and shaping social policy. Many of these institutions share similar responsibilities with small differences that often do not justify the existence of parallel administrative structures. These duplicities may lead to inefficiencies in social spending, while complicating the co-ordination capacity of the already overstretched Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet.

Examples of co-ordination weaknesses and possible duplicity can be found in the areas of housing and child policy, among others.

Housing policy: The National Housing Institute (INVI) and the Aid and Housing Institute (INAVI) provide similar services associated with government housing, including construction and financing. It is not clear if these two institutions need independent administrative structures, how effective any existing co-ordination mechanisms are, or their articulation within the context of the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet.

Box 2.15. Duplicity and fragmentation risks in the social sector *(continued)*

Child Policy: at present, there are two programmes that focus on enhancing children rights: the National Council for Children and Adolescents (CONANI) and the *Quisqueya Empieza Contigo* programme. According to the legal framework, the former governs the national protection system for children, and the latter provides services to enhance children rights. In practice, both institutions offer similar services, raising potential risks of co-ordination and duplicity.

Source: Presidential Decree 1082-04 (2004), Presidential Decree No. 536-05 (2005), Presidential Decree No. 491-12 (2012), www.conani.gob.do, www.invi.gob.do and www.inavi.gob.do.

Territorial Co-ordination

The Planning and Investment Law created several tools to improve the co-ordination process at the territorial level, including municipal, provincial and regional plans, as well as development councils at the municipal, provincial and regional levels.

As of today, the government of the Dominican Republic has made important progress in identifying the territorial disparities in the country through the Poverty Atlas and the SIUBEN. Nonetheless, given the lack of enacting regulations, and in the absence of the single planning regions, there still much to do in order to achieve co-ordination at the territorial level. Institutions still use their own regionalisation structures to plan at the territorial level, making it difficult to steer a whole-of-government approach using a common planning unit. For example, the Ministry of Education has 18 planning regions and the Minister of Health has 9 planning regions.

The Regional, Provincial and Municipal Development Councils were created by the Planning and Investment Law to co-ordinate and advice on the preparation of regional, provincial and municipal plans. These councils don't exist in practice, with some exceptions at the municipal level. However, there has been some progress associated with the preparation of municipal plans, mainly due to the technical support of the international community, the Ministry of Public Administration and the Dominican Federation of Municipalities (FEDOMU), a non-governmental organisation that promotes municipal development and democracy. Out of the 155 municipalities and 231 municipal districts, only 36 municipal development plans have been prepared, which represent less than 10% of the plans that should be prepared.

An evaluation of the structure of several of these plans reveals that the level of depth of the plans varies by municipality. Nonetheless, most of the plans are well structured and include a profile of municipal investment projects, municipal programmes with their respective budget, and a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. Although some of the plans make reference to the NDS 2030, they do not seem to be in line with the strategy. One explanation for this could be that the municipal plans were prepared prior to the approval of the NDS 2030.

Given the multidimensional nature of inequalities, and the need to achieve joined-up outcomes, it is important that the planning and implementation process of policies takes place in a homogenous space. The absence of a regionalisation scheme that helps to effectively co-ordinate actions in the territory undermines co-ordination at the territorial level, and does not allow for a territorial unit to become the unifying unit for policy co-ordination. There is currently a bill in Congress proposing five single planning regions

that should lead to the harmonisation of the sectorial regional schemes. This proposal is based on the Colombian experience of the "*Regiones Administrativas y de Planificación Especial*" that integrates several departments into an administrative unit to facilitate policy co-ordination and joined-up outcomes.

There is also a sequencing aspect to planning that would allow for better co-ordination between the central planning system and municipal planning. When the NDS was prepared, many municipal plans were already developed and therefore did not take into consideration the policy guidelines of the NDS. However, it is to be expected that the municipal plans prepared once the new municipal administrations are inaugurated in 2016 will be aligned with the NDS.

The Dominican Republic is a highly centralised country, with more than 50% of the population concentrated in 7 of the 32 provinces, this means that many of the Municipal Development and Planning Units lack the technical skills necessary to meet the demands of the new planning process. In addition, most of the training provided has been focused on the Institutional Planning and Development Units, while training for the Municipal Planning and Development Units has not been fully deployed. Under the *Programa de apoyo a la Sociedad Civil y Autoridades Locales* (PASCAL) programme, only 40 municipal governments have received training, which represent 10% of municipal and municipal district governments that should be involved in the preparation of the municipal development plans.

The special case of key social programmes

The banking crisis of 2003-2004 created an internal shock that forced the government to rethink the governance framework for the delivery of social services. Reform focused on mitigating the impact of the crisis in poor households, with particular attention to the areas of health and education.

In 2005, Presidential Decree 536-05 created the programme *Solidaridad*. Under this new programme, the government consolidated the three most emblematic stand-alone social assistance programmes managed by the Office of the President: 1) *Comer es Primero*, which provided monthly cash transfers to poor households to buy food; 2) *Incentivo a la Asistencia Escolar*, which provided cash transfers to poor families with children between the age of 6 and 16 to offset the costs of educational materials; and 3) *Dominicanos con Nombre y Apellido*, which provided monetary assistance to offset the cost associated with the process of obtaining a national ID. The decree also transferred the responsibility of *Solidaridad* and the new Single Beneficiary Selection System (SIUBEN) to the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet.

In 2012, *Solidaridad* was merged with *Progresando* (Presidential Decree 488-12), a programme that was under the Office of the First Lady, resulting in PROSOLI. In addition, the government created the Social Subsidies Management Office (ADESS) to manage the cash transfer and subsidy mechanisms. The government also introduced *Quisqueya Sin Miseria* as a strategy to enhance the effectiveness of social policy. This strategy has three main components: 1) *Plan Nacional de Alfabetizacion Quizqueya Aprende Contigo*, a programme that aims to eliminate illiteracy in the country; 2) *Plan Quisqueya Empieza Contigo*, which is focused on providing access to early childhood (0 to 5 years old) services; and 3) *Quisqueya Somos Todos*, which is focused on enhancing the productivity of local communities and developing Integrated Local Development Plans. To manage QUISQUEYA, the new administration created (Presidential Decree

491-12) the Direction of Special Programmes (DIGEPEP) under the Ministry of the Presidency. Box 2.16 summarises the responsibilities of this new institution.

Box 2.16. Selected responsibilities of DIGEPEP

- Design interventions and promote institutional co-ordination to reduce poverty.

- Promote formulation and implementation of Integrated Local Development Plans.

- Promote concentrated and co-ordinated actions of all institutions to support Quisqueya sin Miseria.

- Monitor and evaluate the activities related to Quisqueya sin Miseria.

Source: Presidential Decree 491-12 that create the General Direction of Special Programmes.

The consolidation of safety net programmes, first under SOLIDARIDAD and then under PROSOLI, followed the trend in the region, particularly regarding Brazil's *Bolsa Familia* and Mexico's *Oprtunidades*. However, since these programmes were consolidated under the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet, rather than line ministries, a number of co-ordination issues have emerged. First, the nature of the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet has been reoriented towards implementation, leaving a co-ordination vacuum in the sector.

In addition, the creation of DIGEPEP has generated an overlap of functions with the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet and with other institutions affiliated to the Cabinet. Currently, the government has two bodies co-ordinating programmes associated with poverty reduction. The Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet is responsible for PROSOLI, and ADESS is responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the strategy *Quisqueya sin Misieria*. In addition, there is an overlap in the interventions of ADESS and other institutions affiliated to the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet.

For example, the National Council of Children and Adolescents and *Quisqueya Empiza Contigo* target the same population and offer similar services. These programmes are also run and managed independently from complementary efforts led at the sector level by the corresponding ministries (e.g. Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health). The Dominican Republic could benefit from further consolidation and rationalisation efforts, as has been the case in other countries in the region (Box 2.17).

Box 2.17. Co-ordination approaches to key social programmes

Bolsa Familia (Brazil) and *Oportunidades* (Mexico) are two of the most successful examples of CCT programmes in the world. The success of these programmes relies on a strong underlying co-ordination mechanism.

Bolsa Familia and *Oportunidades* are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Social Development. In both cases, centralisation was the result of a consolidation process of several stand-alone social protection programmes at the federal level. For example, in the case of Brazil, *Bolsa Escola, Bolsa Alimentação, Cartão Alimentação,* and *Auxílio-Gás* were consolidated under *Bolsa Familia* and transferred to the Ministry of Social Development.

In both cases, the programmes have strong technical co-ordination bodies that facilitate vertical and horizontal co-ordination. For example, in the case of Mexico, the co-ordination body is the *Comisión Nacional de Desarrollo Social* (National Commission for Social Development). The Commission is chaired by the Minister of Social Development and its members include the ministers of education, health, labour, agriculture and environment, as well as the local government officials responsible for social development polices in each state, and one representative of the national municipal associations. According to the institutional framework, the main responsibility of the Commission is to co-ordinate the programmes, policies and investments necessary to achieve the objectives of the Social Development National Policy.

In the case of Brazil, co-ordination at the federal, state and municipal levels is the responsibility of the *Comissão Intergestores Tripartite* (Tripartite Inter-Management Committee) of the Unified Social Assistance System. The Committee is headed by the Ministry of Social Development and is responsible for co-ordinating the interventions associated with *Bolsa Familia* at the federal, state and municipal level. For this, there is a protocol that establishes the necessary procedures to guarantee the supply side of the programmes associated with *Bolsa Familia*.

Sources: Gob (2016), Gob website, www.gob.mx/sedesol.

Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome (2016), Website, Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome, www.mds.gov.br (accessed October 2016).

Cámara de Diputados Del H. Congreso de la Unión (2004), *Ley General de Desarrollo Social de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos*. , Secretaría General, Secretaría de Servicios Parlamentarios, Retrieved from www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/264_010616.pdf.

BIT (2014), *Co-ordination institutionnelle et socle de protection sociale: Expériences en Amérique latine: Argentine, Brésil, Chili, Mexique, Uruguay*, Bureau international du Travail, Geneva.

World Bank Group (2004), *Brazil's Bolsa Familia Programme*, Shanghai poverty conference: case study summary, http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website00819C/WEB/PDF/CASE_-63.PDF.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation allows the government to test the impact of policies in action toward achieving inclusive growth, and allows them to make the necessary corrections to ensure the desired goals are met. Even though the monitoring and evaluation function had existed in the Dominican Republic (traditionally by monitoring budget execution) since 1965, it was not until recently (Presidential Decree 267-15) that the national system for monitoring and evaluation was launched (Box 2.18).

Box 2.18. The new national system for monitoring and evaluation

Presidential Decree 267-15 outlines a series of instruments that will be part of the national monitoring and evaluation systems. These include a National Evaluation Agenda and accountability mechanisms including an Annual Progress Report on NDS and the PNSPN, and institutional reporting, including of sectorial, institutional and regional plans, and presidential priorities.

The Decree also establishes a commission to govern the system, chaired by the Vice Ministry of Planning of MEPyD and including: 1) the Vice Ministry of Co-ordination and Governance of the Ministry of the Presidency; 2) the Vice Ministry of Budget of the Ministry of Finance; 3) the Vice Ministry of Public Services Monitoring of the Ministry of Public Administration; and 4) the National Office of Statistics (ONE).

Source: Presidential Decree 267-15 that Regulates the National System for Monitoring and Evaluation.

A key aspect of the monitoring and evaluation national system, launched in 2016, is to strengthen the flow of information from the sectors and the regions to the centre of government, interconnecting all the monitoring and evaluation systems available in public institutions. Today, the government has in place a number of systems devoted to monitoring and evaluation, albeit not integrated:

- The national system of public investment (SNIP), managed by MEPyD, defines a set of rules, instructions and procedures that aim to order the process of public investment. The system contains information planning, technical analysis, monitoring and evaluation of investment projects across the public sector.

- Financial Management Integrated System (SIGEF) is the financial management information system of government. It allows the Ministry of Finance to monitor the financial management practices of public sector institutions, and to better manage resources through the Single Treasury Account. For citizens, it improves transparency and accountability by providing real-time information on public spending. There are 245 public sector institutions covered by SIGEF, with 65 still not incorporated.

- Governance Management System (SIGOB) is an online management system that keeps the Office of the President informed about the progress and obstacles related to the 118 presidential goals. SIGOB also facilitates co-ordination with the managers responsible for each goal through a system of intermediate-goals and alarms.

In practice, and following the planning system described earlier, two key monitoring processes focused on results are currently taking place without being fully integrated: one is related to the implementation of the NDS, managed by the MEPyD and leading to an annual color-coded report, and the other to presidential priorities (Box 2.19).

Box 2.19. SIGOB-METAS: Managing goals and objectives in Colombia

Modelled on Colombia's SINERGIA, SIGOB is a system to programme and manage goals and objectives directly linked to the presidential goals. It has the following objectives: 1) keep the Office of the President informed on the progress and restrictions of the goals; 2) influence the implementation of the programmes and projects relevant to the goals through an alarm system; 3) organise the workflow through task forces; 4) keep citizens informed of the progress of the goals.

The management network behind SIGOB is composed of:

- **Manager of the goal**: is a technical focal point for the presidential goal and responsible for monitoring the implementation of the actions associated with the goals and reporting.

- **Institutional co-ordinator**: is responsible for co-ordinating all the actions associated with the presidential goals in the realm of the institution, and keeping senior management informed about the progress.

- **Senior manager**: is responsible for monitoring the progress associated with the presidential goals at an aggregated level, and decides on risk-mitigating actions.

- **Committee of Presidential Goals**: is the accountability mechanism of the system that keeps the Office of the President informed about the progress of the goals and any associated transversal risks.

Source: Ministerio de la Presidencia de la República Dominicana (2016), Metas Presidenciales, http://minpre.gob.do/metas-presidenciales-rd/, (accessed October 2016).

As the new national monitoring and evaluation system advances, a focus on integrating dispersed systems and building capacity would be highly desirable. SIGOB could be strengthened to fulfil that role, following the steps of Colombia's SINERGIA (Box 2.20) by first expanding its scope to include the objectives of the NDS, second by introducing an evaluation component, third by expanding institutional coverage, and in the future by integrating a territorial dimension.

Box 2.20. Monitoring government performance: Colombia's SINERGIA

Colombia has developed and refined a comprehensive information system to monitor and evaluate how the country is reaching its main goals. This system has allowed the country to discuss its priorities and identify its biggest challenges. Through SINERGIA, Colombia has integrated all of the information from the different entities and sectors, with diverse indicators, clear guidelines and targets. Through a complete set of indicators, the government has developed user-friendly dashboards and traffic lights to display the information.

SINERGIA is led by the Directorate of Public Policy Evaluation within the National Planning Department. SINERGIA must be implemented by all sub-national governments, with the aim of aligning municipal and departmental policy interventions and investment agendas with those of the National Development Plan (this monitoring component is called SINERGIA TERRITORIAL). SINERGIA measures the progress and goals of the projects included in the National Development Plan through three main tools:

Box 2.20. Monitoring government performance: Colombia's SINERGIA
(continued)

- SISMEG (monitoring): A set of performance indicators that measure policy outputs and outcomes as identified by the National Development Plan. The system is built following a pyramidal structure with three main levels: strategic, sector and management. Strategic indicators are at the top and are related to the main government pillars as stated in the National Development Plan. These are followed by the President and the Council of Ministers. Sector indicators describe sector-specific goals and are monitored by the President and each minister in bilateral meetings and within each ministry. Finally, management indicators are standard indicators that are measured for all of the entities to track institutional efficiency.

- SISDEVAL (Sistema Nacional de Evaluaciones): A system to evaluate the outcomes of the main public policies and programmes implemented within the framework of the National Development Plan. Every year, the policies that will be evaluated are elected by a committee of the Department of National Planning (DNP) and approved by the National Commission on Economic and Social Policy (CONPES). Policies are evaluated by a recognised and experienced third party (consultancy) in order to guarantee objectivity and transparency in the process. Since the creation of SISDEVAL, the number of evaluations has increased significantly, from one evaluation in 2003 to 32 in 2011.

- Polls: Nationwide polls are carried out periodically to compare public perception and government results. The results of the polls are public and can be found on the SISDEVAL website. Surveys measure perception of the way the government is achieving the goals it has set.

Through SINERGIA, follow-up is readily available. The presidency, the government and citizens can follow up on the government's performance. It is an essential tool for building trust in government.

Source: OECD (2013), *Colombia: Implementing Good Governance*, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264202177-en.

Capacity building efforts will be required to achieve full implementation

A critical issue that may undermine the full implementation of the new national monitoring and evaluation system is the lack of capacity in public Institutional Planning and Development Units. According to the new institutional framework, the Institutional Planning and Development Units are responsible for conducting the monitoring and evaluation of policies, programmes and projects in their sectors.

However, these units, with few exceptions in the education and health sectors, do not have the resources to conduct monitoring and evaluation, and when they do, it is usually focused on specific programmes, mainly as a result of their need to comply with the needs of international financial institutions. Moreover, given that not all the sectorial and institutional plans are in place, it is difficult for these units to determine the monitoring and evaluation agendas, which transfers many of these responsibilities to the upstream ministries (e.g. Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development) or the Office for National Statistics (ONE) that are already overstretched in terms of resources.

The capacity of ONE will need to be strengthened. Statistics and indicators are fundamental elements for monitoring and evaluation as they provide the quantitative

information that will serve as a benchmark to measuring the progress achieved and the impact of policy implementation. If the quality of the statistics being produced is not technically sound and does not follow certain standards, then the information that is being produced by the monitoring and evaluation process will not produce the necessary information to make the adjustments in policy implementation or to draw significant lessons for policy design. In the case of the Dominican Republic, despite recent efforts to standardise the production of statistics in certain areas, ONE still faces challenges associated with insufficient resources and political leverage to co-ordinate the National System of Statistics, including: 1) capacity to co-ordinate with other public institutions on the production of statistics; 2) enacting regulation, methodology and standardisation to systematise the production of statistics; and 3) support from public institutions that do not understand the importance of statistics.

Currently, ONE is working on improving the production of statistics in the areas of economy, agriculture, education, environment, health and social security. However, it also faces internal organisational challenges, including: 1) an unstable and possibly insufficient budget; 2) high turnover rate of personnel and lack of qualified technical staff to meet the demands for statistical information; 3) absence of a clear remuneration policy; 4) an inconsequential performance evaluation system; and 5) lack of a training programme tied to career advancement. There are also implementation issues associated with the lack of resources available to strengthen the National System of Statistics.

In order to achieve the full potential of the national monitoring and evaluation reform, it will be critical to prioritise the interconnection between the systems available for monitoring and evaluation (SNIP, SIGEF and SIGOB). As explained, monitoring and evaluation are key elements for ensuring inclusive growth as they provide fundamental inputs to ensure that the policies implemented are achieving the desired outcomes. The Ministry of Public Administration, as the governing body of the co-ordination and institutional strengthening system, has developed certain tools to evaluate performance, but these efforts seem to lack articulation with existing government systems, which will be discussed in the next section. In the case of the Dominican Republic, monitoring and evaluation have mostly been stand-alone practices that are not fully integrated into the policy cycle or the whole-of-government approach.

Accountability

Accountability is important for inclusive growth for several reasons, including the creation of incentives for horizontal co-ordination to deliver joined-up outcomes, and protection of the under-served population against the organised interests of powerful groups. This section will discuss four types of accountability that matter for improving public service delivery in the Dominican Republic: 1) vertical accountability to the centre of government to account for policy objectives and joined-up outcomes; 2) internal accountability for institutional strengthening; 3) client accountability to improve the quality of services; and 4) social accountability to build trust and strengthen transparency.

Vertical accountability

Organisational alignment ensures that all aspects of a government's operations are focused on the realisation of its purpose, both strategically (management to achieve the government's vision) and operationally (the ability to deliver on the government's objectives). This involves setting and monitoring performance objectives effectively, including the ability to generate and use performance data, and a strong audit and control

environment, which includes governance mechanisms that empower staff and ensures accountability government-wide.

The NDS, the PNPSN and their monitoring tools provide a framework to enhance vertical accountability in the Dominican Republic. In addition, the 2016 Budget includes three initiatives to provide indicators and results that can be used to hold some public sector institutions accountable: 1) a multi-year result-based budget for the Immunisation Programme (PAI); 2) product-based and result-based budgets in the ministries of health, education, agriculture and labour; and 3) product-and-service-based budgets in 63 institutions (Box 2.21).

Box 2.21. Budget initiatives in the Dominican Republic

With the new Organic Budget Law (No. 423-06), the Dominican Republic introduced changes to the budget process that allow for the implementation of results-based budgeting as a step towards results-based management. This reform implies that the country will move away from its traditional input-based approach towards a greater focus on impact. To further test different approaches, the government is implementing the following initiatives:

Multiannual Result-Based Budget of the Expanded Immunisation Programme (PAI):

PAI is an initiative of the World Health Organization to improve vaccination coverage and eliminate certain diseases. The results-based budget document for this programme includes spending projections for the period 2016-2019, identifies the value chain of the programme from product to impact, and outlines the goals to be achieved by 2019, linking them to the goals of the NDS. The Budget Office indicates that this initiative has allowed for the linking of programme goals with financial needs, but recognises the need for a cultural change to ensure that budget programming is based on performance and not on an incremental approach, as has been the tradition.

Result-based budgeting pilots in the ministries of education, health, labour, and agriculture:

The Dominican Republic has been piloting results-based budgeting in four ministries since 2013 to distil lessons that can help shape the implementation of this initiative across government. In the 2016 budget, the government introduced some elements to allow this agenda to advance, including: improvements in the definition of the budget programmes to facilitate the link of financial resources with concrete objectives, and improvements in the financial management system to support the monitoring of the financial resources and the objectives they are helping to achieve. In the case of the four pilot ministries, the budget document includes information on the mission, vision and objectives of the organisations, as well as information on NDS objectives their programmes contribute to achieving. The biggest challenge so far has been the inclusion of cost estimates of public production, given the lack of necessary information generally available.

Source: DIGEPRES (2016), *Anexo al Proyecto de Ley de Presupuesto General del Estado*, Presupuesto Fisico 2016, Tomo III, http://www.digepres.gob.do/?page_id=847.

Despite this progress, the few organisations conducting monitoring and evaluation are not interconnected, and in practice there is no formal process to use the information produced to inform policy-making and policy-shaping cycles. The information between the sectors and the centre of government is not shared on a consistent basis but rather upon request, and the lack of periodicity in measurements undermines impact evaluation. Different evaluation systems report on different priorities (e.g. presidential goals or the

NDS), which undermines a whole-of government mechanism to enhance vertical accountability that is aligned with the national vision. Moreover, despite the existence of these and other tools (including those focused on institutional strengthening), there is a general absence of an incentive system that punishes and/or rewards performance, which also undermines vertical accountability.

As discussed earlier, full implementation of the new national monitoring and evaluation system will be essential to overcome existing fragmentation. An example of good practice in this regard is provided by Scotland. Their website ScotlandPerforms.com is a simple-to-understand tool that helps stakeholders track progress towards a reduced set of whole-of-government strategic objectives (see Box 2.22).

Box 2.22. Scotland Performs: Measuring and reporting on government progress towards strategic objectives

"ScotlandPerforms.com" is a website that measures and reports on the progress of government in Scotland towards its strategic objectives. The website explains the importance of the National Outcomes, describes the elements that influence these National Outcomes, and the role of the government. Each National Outcome is also clearly related to a strategic objective and measured by a set of national indicators. Altogether, 50 national indicators track progress towards the achievement of the National Outcomes, and, ultimately, the delivery of the purpose of the government. Users can see how Scotland is progressing through "direction of travel" arrows on the "Performance at a Glance" page, which indicate whether performance is improving, worsening or staying the same.

There is close alignment between the evidence-based approach adopted by Scotland Performs, and the outcome-based accountability approaches used in the implementation of major strategic initiatives in Northern Ireland, such as the Delivering Social Change Framework.

Source: Scottish Government (2011), "An introduction to Scotland's National Performance Framework". Retrieved from http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/933/0124200.pdf.

Internal accountability

The Dominican Republic has put in place several initiatives that promote institutional strengthening and offer an opportunity to enhance internal accountability within public sector institutions. These initiatives are mostly driven by MAP, given its role as governing body of the institutional strengthening system, and include the Common Assessment Framework and the National Quality Award.

The **Common Assessment Framework (CAF)** is a methodology to self-evaluate institutional performance. The European Institute of Public Administration indicates that this methodology is "based on the premise that excellent results in organisational performance, citizens/customers, people and society are achieved through leadership driving strategy and planning, people, partnerships, resources and processes". The CAF consists of a self-evaluation process that promotes an honest dialogue between the members of the organisation, and should result in a plan to improve the areas that need to be strengthened.

Closely linked to the CAF, the **National Quality Award** recognises best practice in the context of institutional performance. Organisations can apply for this award by submitting their annual CAF self-evaluation and their proceedings to MAP. The winners are selected by a panel consisting of members of civil society, the private sector, and the

education sector. Out of the 330 organisations that have applied, 118 have been recognised.

Box 2.23. The National Quality Award

National quality awards are an effective means, used by several OECD and partner countries, to foster change in the organisational culture of public institutions, and improve service delivery through the diffusion of best national and local practices, promoting innovation in the public administration and other sectors.

In the Dominican Republic, MAP co-ordinates and organises a successful annual international quality week (*Semana de la Calidad*), during which a high-profile conference is held on good and promising practices in the Dominican public administration. Exemplary practices are presented by all state bodies, and prizes are awarded by the President or Vice-President of the Dominican Republic. The jury is a mix of public, private, civil society and academia representatives. The main objective of the annual conference – linked to the National Quality Award (launched in 2005) – is to acknowledge, stimulate and exchange quality practices in order to achieve better public services for citizens and businesses. It is also a strong incentive for public institutions to systematically evaluate themselves, by applying the CAF model, and to participate in the Monitoring System for the Municipal Public Administration (SISMAP).

Another valuable instrument developed by MAP are bench-learning seminars, during which the national award winner and the winners in the category of promising practices share their knowledge, experience and lessons learned with the rest of the Dominican public administration. The latest bench-learning seminar was also attended by representatives from the private sector.

Recent "big prizes" have been awarded to *Hospital Quirúrgico y Traumatológico* (Surgical and Trauma Hospital Juan Bosch) in 2015; *Junta de Aviación Civil* (Civil Aviation Board) in 2014; and *Seguro Nacional de Salud* (SeNaSa, National Health Insurance) in 2013.

Source: MAP (2015), Organizaciones Reconocidas Periodo 2005-2015, Ministry of Public Administration, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, http://map.gob.do/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Organizaciones-reconocidas-Periodo-2005-2015.pdf.

Both initiatives have great potential to become powerful tools to enhance internal accountability, but the absence of a system of incentives undermines their impact. For example, in the case of the award, the organisations that receive an award for their performance do not receive a budget incentive or any other type of support to continue promoting internal institutional strengthening. Moreover, these initiatives are not connected to the tools and systems associated with vertical accountability, which breaks the link between the institutional performance of organisations and their capacity to deliver better results for citizens. The United States (Box 2.24) has successfully bridged internal accountability with vertical accountability by linking institutional performance to the planning and budget process.

Box 2.24. Performance dialogue in the US federal government

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) was introduced in 1993 with the aim of fostering the use of performance information among federal managers. However, its success remained limited. Mainly it did not sufficiently succeed in involving leadership and focusing on prioritisation or management. As a result, the Bush administration introduced the Performance Assessment Rating Tool (PART; 2003-08) in an attempt to overcome the shortcomings of the GPRA. Nevertheless, although PART focused more on programmes, and more data and information have been produced in the scope of these programmes, the use of the produced information remained limited.

The GPRA Modernisation Act was adopted in 2010 (enacted in 2011). It established performance improvement roles and responsibilities across all levels of government, a goal framework and performance reviews, and modernised performance reporting. A major innovation regarding performance responsibilities has been the establishment of a full-time Performance Improvement Council, which advances and expands the practice of performance management and improvement by supporting the achievement of cross-agency and agency priority goals, as well as by creating opportunities for best practice exchange and capacity building. The established goal framework consists of three groups of goals:

- The federal cross-agency priority goals (15 in total, at the time of writing), which are set by the President every four years, and reviewed quarterly by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and by the Performance Improvement Council. These goals are meant to increase the co-ordination on outcomes that cut across multiple agencies and focus on the impact through improved implementation.
- The agency priority goals (96 in total, at the time of writing), set by agency heads every 2 years and reviewed quarterly by the respective agency's chief operating officer and the performance improvement officer, drive progress on near-term, implementation-focused priorities. They do not reflect every priority, but complement the broader set of goals included in the agency's strategic plan.
- The strategic goals and objectives (303 in total, at the time of writing), set every four years and reviewed strategically on an annual basis by agencies and the OMB, are supported by multiple strategies, programmes and performance indicators. The strategic objectives break down the broad strategic goals of an agency. There are about 10-30 strategic objectives for each major agency.

Performance assessment and reporting are essential for improving the usefulness of performance and programme information. The OMB states in its analytical perspectives for the fiscal year 2011: "The ultimate test of an effective performance management system is whether it is used, not the number of goals and measures produced" (OMB, 2010: 73). Thus, in the scope of the GPRA Modernisation Act, the performance information of agencies is put on a central website[1] with quarterly updates on priority goals, and annual updates on all goals. Furthermore, a government-wide list of programmes has been set up, which is updated annually.

The review of the strategic goals and objectives synthesises available performance information and evidence to inform budget, legislative and management decisions. They are conducted by the agencies for each strategic objective in an agency's strategic plan. The reviews are designed to help meet the needs of leadership in identifying opportunities for reform proposals, executive actions, communication opportunities, etc. Detailed agency guidance on the process is made available.

Note: [1]www.performance.gov.

Sources: Moynihan, D.P. and S. Lavertu (2012), "Does involvement in performance reforms encourage performance information use? Evaluating GPRA and PART", *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 72, No. 4, pp. 592-602.

Mirza, A. (2014), "Improving government performance in the US", presentation at Portugal-OECD seminar, Lisbon, 27-28 October.

Internal accountability can also be strengthened through a solid performance management system across the civil service. For further discussion and recommendations, see OECD (2015b).

User accountability

Understanding user needs and experiences allows governments to tailor services provision and improve access, including for disadvantaged groups. The solution to many contemporary societal challenges is not necessarily more public services, but rather better targeted, better designed services that improve access for the most hard-to-reach users. The traditional model of service provision, based on individual administrative transactions, should be replaced with whole-of-government solutions, recognising the need to make users part of the design of relevant services (OECD, 2016).

In the case of the Dominican Republic, the following tools could be leveraged to inform the design and improvement of services, building on user experience and feedback: the Observatory of Public Services, SERVQUAL, 311, and the Citizens' Charters.

The **Observatory of Public Services** is an online portal to monitor the quality of public services managed by MAP and currently under development. The Observatory has the following components planned: 1) a directory of public services that contains all the services provided by the government; 2) a section on users' expectations that describes user needs both in terms of access and quality; 3) a section on best practices to inform the redesign of services and promote knowledge exchange; and 4) a section that contains surveys associated with user feedback. The three most important areas of the Observatory, which are the directory of public service and sections on user expectations and best practices, are still under construction.

SERVQUAL is a survey that measures the level of satisfaction among public service users at the-point-of-service, taking into consideration five dimensions: 1) the tangible dimension that measures the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials; 2) the reliability dimension that measures the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately; 3) the responsiveness dimension that measures the willingness to help customers and provide prompt service; 4) the assurance dimension that measures the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence; and 5) the empathy dimension that measures the caring and the individualised attention provided.

311 is an online and phone service that allows citizens to submit complaints and suggestions about public sector providers. Once the complaints are received, they are transmitted to the service provider in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery.

Citizen Charters (CCs) are public agreements between citizens and service delivery providers that clearly codify expectations and standards in the realm of service delivery (Box 2.25). In the Dominican Republic, they are also used as a tool to promote the simplification of processes in public sector institutions. Currently, there are 17 CCs in place and 10 under preparation, out of 300 that should exist (not counting local governments).

Box 2.25. The benefits of developing Citizen Charters

Citizen Charters (CCs) are public agreements between citizens and service delivery providers that clearly codify expectations and standards in the realm of service delivery. "Effective CCs typically share a number of key characteristics, including clear and simple language; realistic and measurable performance standards; a dedicated grievance redress mechanism; and an effective public relations strategy to increase users' awareness about the CC. If designed and implemented correctly, CCs have the potential not only to foster greater public satisfaction with a government's performance, but also to ameliorate corruption-related risks and provide benchmarks that stakeholders can use to monitor government's performance in the realm of service".

Potential benefits of CCs include:

- Enhance accountability by providing citizens with a clear understanding of service delivery standards, including timetables, user fees for services, and options for grievance redress.

- Increase organisational effectiveness and performance by making a public commitment to adhere to measurable service delivery standards.

- Create a way for both internal and external actors to objectively monitor service delivery performance.

- Create a more professional and client-responsive environment for service delivery.

- Foster improvements in staff morale.

- Decrease opportunities for corruption by increasing transparency and citizen awareness.

Source: Post, D. and S. Agarwal (2011), "Citizen charters: enhancing service delivery through accountability", *Social Development how to series*, World Bank, Washington, DC, http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/543241468135929562/Citizen-charters-enhancing-service-delivery-through-accountability.

Within sectors there are a number of specific, albeit isolated, initiatives to capture and measure performance based on user feedback, particularly in the realm of hospitals (Box 2.26).

Box 2.26. Performance management in hospitals

The Ministry of Public Administration and the Ministry of Health signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen the institutional capacity of hospitals and improve service delivery. The process was based on the CAF methodology and the plans for institutional strengthening that resulted from the self-evaluation exercise. Institutional strengthening focused on the following areas to promote change management: teamwork, interpersonal relations, leadership, strategic planning, report writing and presentation, and conflict resolution. At time of writing, more than 11 000 staff have been trained in 59 hospitals.

Source: Information provided by MAP during fact-finding mission to Dominican Republic.

Despite the availability of these tools, their potential is not fully realised. First, their implementation has been very limited. The Observatory is under construction and the directory of service delivery and the sections on user expectations and good practices are still missing, and SERVQUAL has only been implemented in one province. There is no interconnection between these tools and there is no evidence that the information gathered on performance is used in the planning process. The feedback mechanism associated with the 311 is apparently not working properly, and there is no evidence of any follow-up action once a complaint is received.

The Observatory of Public Services is one of MAP's key initiatives, but its full operational definition remains to be defined, including what role other organisations, even those outside government, would play. International experience indicates that Observatories should be either the responsibility of civil society organisations (CSOs) or a joint effort between CSOs and government to establish a dialogue to improve services and make service provision more transparent. The expected section on user expectations could be useful to inform the design of services, as long as the feedback loop and the follow-up mechanisms are strengthened, which seems to be a systemic problem in the Dominican Republic. The directory on service provision could also be linked to the one-stop-shops in different sector, offering an opportunity to further integrate service provision from the perspective of service users. In addition, greater involvement of CSOs could help feed information to the Observatory on the access, quality and transparency of service provision regarding social accountability.

Partnering with citizens to enhance transparency builds trust and support for service delivery. In the Dominican Republic, there are three key initiatives:

- Anticorruption Participatory Initiative **(IPAC)**: A multi-stakeholder coalition (civil society, private sector and government) to enhance transparency. It is organised around 10 working groups. Each working group has produced a policy matrix identifying key reforms, a time framework for the implementation of the reforms and the institution responsible for implementation. These matrixes are monitored using a colour-coded system that denotes the progress of the reforms. The Ministry of the Presidency uses the progress reports to hold accountable the public institutions responsible for the reforms. So far, the initiative has helped to speed up reforms, particularly related to the establishment of the government single account and improving procurement processes.

- Dominican Initiative for the Quality of Education **(IDEC)**: Follows the same approach as the IPAC, but in the education sector. It is organised in 10 working groups. The reforms in the education sector are still ongoing and, according to the report of the first semester of 2014, most are moving forward as planned.

- **Institutional Oversight Commissions**: The main objective of these commissions is to oversee the procurement process of public sector institutions to ensure transparency and discourage corruption. The Commissions are composed of renowned members of civil society, including journalists. Currently there are 15 active Oversight Commissions.

In the past five years, the Dominican Republic has been able to build a strong relationship with CSOs, despite a history of confrontation. The approval of 4% of GDP for the education sector helped to build trust and created a space for co-operation between CSOs and government. However, there are some issues that could undermine this relationship. The government should focus on ensuring follow-up actions and meeting

their commitments regarding the initiatives detailed above, or create new initiatives that promote strategic partnership with CSOs in order to consolidate a partnership relationship rather than a relationship based on ad-hoc interests.

Shared accountability challenges

Despite a strong network of accountability mechanisms, a number of challenges undermine their full integration into informed decision making, and possibly the transparency of government reporting. First, the lack of incentives in vertical, internal and client accountability systems significantly undermines their impact. Incentives are the driving force behind the motivation for institutions to deliver better and more efficient results, regardless of the client. In the Dominican Republic, vertical accountability is mainly enforced through the monitoring of the NDS and the PNSPS, and through some initiatives associated with performance-based budgeting. However, none of these tools include enforcing mechanisms for if an institution derails from its commitments. The same is true for internal and client accountability systems. For internal systems, neither the CAF nor the National Quality Award include strong incentives for organisations to continue improving their performance, particularly if costly actions are required for them to meet their institutional strengthening objectives. For client accountability systems there is no clear understanding of the implications for an organisation that delivers below standard services.

Second, there is a lack of interconnection between the different tools. This challenge is mainly associated with user accountability, for which at least four tools co-exist but are not integrated. It is not clear how the information being produced is fed into the policy-making and policy-shaping cycle. On the one hand, these tools seem to be gathering information on user experience, but on the other hand, it seems that the information gathered is neither systematised nor centralised to draw common lessons that can lead to the development of a sound strategy by the Ministry of Public Administration to enhance the quality of service provision.

Finally, there is slow progress in the implementation of the different tools, possibly due to co-ordination and capacity concerns. Even though most tools have been designed, their level of implementation is relatively low. The most relevant modules of the Observatory, the directory of the public services and the section on user expectations, are still missing. The SERVQUAL has only been deployed in one province, and the number of CCs, including those under preparation, covers less than 10% of organisations.

The role of the Ministry of Public Administration

Structure of the Ministry of Public Administration

The Ministry of Public Administration (MAP) is the governing body of the public administration and of the institutional strengthening system. Its responsibilities include: regulating public administration, promoting institutional strengthening, promoting e-government, designing and implementing the performance evaluation of public sector management, and ensuring the quality of public services. MAP is composed of the following vice ministries:

- **Vice Ministry of Public Function**: Responsible for the professionalisation and regulation of the civil service.

- **Vice Ministry of Institutional Strengthening**: Responsible for leading the reform and modernisation process of public sector institutions and promoting change management. It has the following departments: 1) Department of Assessment and Organisational Design, which is in charge of advising and guiding public sector institutions in the optimisation of their organisational structure; 2) the Direction of Process Simplification, which is in charge of promoting the implementation of quality management models and approving and evaluating the Citizen Charters; and 3) the Department of Change Management, which is responsible for promoting a culture of change management to improve performance.

- **Vice Ministry of Municipal Support**: Responsible for promoting, advising and supporting the implementation of measurements to improve the performance of municipalities.

- **Vice Ministry of Public Services Monitoring**: In charge of designing and implementing the mechanisms to monitor and evaluate public services. Its main responsibility is the Observatory of Public Services, although it can also develop guidelines and tools to measure citizen perception of service provision.

- **Vice Ministry of Institutional Performance**: Responsible for establishing the standards for evaluating the performance of public sector institutions, as well as implementing performance evaluations. It has the following departments: 1) the Department of Institutional Management Evaluation, which is in charge of conducting evaluations and advising public sector institutions on the implementation of the CAF, as well as promoting the principles of efficiency, effectiveness and transparency in the public administration; and 2) the Department of the National Quality Award, which manages all of the processes related to the award.

- **Vice Ministry of Innovation and Modernization**: In charge of designing and implementing projects to improve access to services. It has two departments: 1) the Department of e-government, which is in charge of promoting the use of ICT to improve access to services; and 2) the Department of Public Administration Research, which is responsible for conducting research to inform the policy-making processes associated with public administration.

In addition to the six vice ministries, MAP has a subsidiary institute, the National Institute of Public Administration (INAP), which is responsible for designing, co-ordinating and implementing training programmes for the civil service (a full description of INAP can be found in OECD, 2015b).

Current initiatives and identified challenges

The Strategic Plan of MAP 2012-2016 (2014 Revision) includes the actions the ministry is implementing to strengthen its role as governing body of the public administration system. The most important activities are summarised in Box 2.27.

Box 2.27. Selected activities included in the Strategic Plan of MAP (2012-2016)

- Training of human resource departments on methodology to evaluate the performance of civil servants and to plan for human capital needs to improve service provision.

- Simplification of processes in public sector institutions, mainly focusing on expanding the scope of Citizen Charters and on implementing pilots to streamline processes in a small number of institutions.

- Strengthening of the internal capacity to conduct monitoring and evaluation of the institutional performance initiatives that result from the CAF, including strengthening the capacity of the Direction of Monitoring and Evaluation and increasing the number of institutions conducting self-evaluations that could apply for the National Quality Award.

- Compilation of public sector services to develop the directory of public services of the Observatory. Currently MAP has collected around 50% of the services available.

- Development of regulation for the national monitoring system to measure the quality of services and of the public service law.

Source: MAP (2014), *Plan Estratégico del MAP, Revisión 2014*, Ministry of Public Administration, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, http://map.gob.do/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/PLAN-ESTRATEGICO-MAP-2012-2016-2da-Rev-Sept-2014.pdf.

MAP is the only governing body out of the three created by the third wave of reforms that evolved from a national office to a ministry. However, this evolution did not imply a significant adjustment in budget allocations, undermining the capacity of MAP to implement the necessary measures to improve the performance of the public sector. As a result, there are significant lags in the deployment of the Observatory of Public Services or capacity building needs for public sector innovation.

In addition, public sectors institutions have not yet fully adapted to the new role of MAP. This, in combination with an unfunded and ambitious strategy that focuses on many important actions at the same time, could risk the ability and credibility of the ministry to become an agent of change.

MAP and service delivery

Given its mandate, MAP can play an important role in improving service delivery, particularly by promoting the elimination of duplicities and the rationalisation of the public administration, including the rationalisation of social programmes. In addition, MAP can play a key role in developing the necessary regulation for the Council of Ministers to become operational, while creating a strong link with the Policy Co-ordination Cabinets. By doing so, MAP would help bridge the whole-of-government approach with the sectorial co-ordination mechanisms. In addition, it could support a transformation and operationalisation of the Policy Co-ordination Cabinets into co-ordination bodies that are flexible, cut across silos and focus on demand-driven issues, along the lines of Ministerial Cabinets in Chile. This will add flexibility to the cabinets and will make them more efficient by reducing the number of members and by emphasising the priority goal, instead of the sector.

Regarding the quality of public services, MAP should continue training and promoting the tools available in its toolkit (CCs, SERQUAL, and Observatory) to influence the quality of service delivery. However, the success of this strategy will depend on two factors: 1) the development of a system of incentives that awards institutions that are performing well and penalises those that are not; and 2) the integration of all available tools into a system that interconnects all the information being produced. For example: CCs can provide the baseline to measure the quality of service provision, SERVQUAL can be used to measure the quality of service provision using the CCs as a benchmark, and the Observatory and the 311 system can help to verify the information provided using third-party monitoring.

Regarding institutional strengthening, MAP can play an important role, but its ultimate impact would likely rely on its own institutional capacity to provide support to the organisations that are developing or implementing their institutional strengthening plans as a result of the CAF. It is key for MAP to develop the necessary credibility that will allow it to steer the institutional strengthening of the public administration.

Conclusions and recommendations

Strong underlying governance structures, particularly those focused on co-ordination, information sharing and strong centre of government direction, are an essential building block for improving service delivery and, ultimately, achieving inclusive growth. The Dominican Republic could benefit from the following recommendations, which seek to build upon the many efforts and structures currently in place.

Leverage the potential of the existing whole-of-government planning process and tools to inform policy design and implementation by:

In the short term

- **Reactivating the role of the Council of Ministers in defining the next four-year programme of the government**. The recent elections offer a unique opportunity for the Council of Ministers to exercise the whole-of-government steering role the law attributes to it, as it is the first time that an NDS will be in place to guide the definition of the PNPSP. The preparation of the next PNPSP 2016-2020 would thus benefit from: 1) ensuring full alignment with the priorities and goals set forth in the NDS; and 2) ensuring that implementation and/or co-ordination gaps identified throughout the implementation period of the current PNPSP are addressed. In this regard, an evaluation of the implementation of the PNPSP (2012-2016) would be essential to help distil lessons to address implementation challenges and identify further co-ordination opportunities.

- **Aligning institutional and municipal plans with the guidelines of the NDS and the future PNSPS 2016-2020**. Alignment is a key challenge to achieving the full potential of the current planning processes and instruments. In this regard, the recent elections offer an opportunity to revisit existing plans in order to revise, update or, in some instances, prepare them in alignment with the whole-of-government planning documents. MEPyD, with support from MAP, could prepare and disseminate guidelines in late 2016/early 2017 to allow the institutions and municipalities to revise, update or prepare the institutional and municipal plans by the first half of 2017.

In the medium term

- **Strengthening the capacity of the Institutional Planning and Development Units to better articulate sectorial planning, monitoring and evaluation with the central systems**. As key agents in the preparation of institutional plans and the monitoring of their implementation, Institutional Planning and Developing Units should be strengthened in terms of their human and technical capacity to steer the planning, monitoring and evaluation framework. In addition, higher levels of interaction between these units across sectors would be highly desirable, not only to facilitate increased co-ordination and joined-up efforts towards delivering shared outcomes, but to act as go-between and articulation mechanisms across government to facilitate the institutionalisation of guidelines, priorities, systems and processes.

- **Leverage the role of MAP as a change and institutional strengthening agent**. MAP is tasked with supporting capacity building efforts across the public sector and should be leveraged as a strategic partner. To better perform this function, MAP would benefit from revisiting its strategic plan and sequencing its interventions based on priorities. In parallel, MAP could reinforce the Vice Ministry of Institutional Performance to better advice public sector institutions on how to improve their performance and promote change management to set up the necessary institutional conditions that will lead to improvements in service provision.

In the longer term

- **Building a stronger link between the medium-term vision set out in the NDS and budget and spending decisions**. Translating goals into action requires alignment between strategy and resource allocation. A first step would be to ensure that the costs of the most relevant programmes are included in the PNPSP to strengthen the link with the budget process. Inclusive growth outcomes, by their nature, are typically visible over a multiyear period (unlike output and activity measures). For this reason, alignment with the MTEF should be built in order to ensure the sustainability of key national indicators beyond those affected by special programmes, and guide annual allocations of resources.

- **Consider conducting multidimensional ex ante budget impact assessments to determine the long-term impact of budget decisions, particularly in key areas of spending**. Understanding the potential impact of budget allocation is fundamental for prioritising interventions and identifying policy trade-offs. In the long term, the government could benefit from conducting such ex ante budget assessments in key areas of spending, including poverty, household income and well-being impacts (OECD, 2016).

Achieve the full potential of existing information systems to inform planning, monitoring and evaluation through a stronger focus on interconnection and needs assessment for policy design by:

In the short term

- **Evaluating how the information generated by the Poverty Atlas, SIUBEN and the ENIGH and ENHOGAR tools are integrated, or not, into policy design and evaluation in key areas of government**. Available government

information systems are able to produce important information with a good level of detail, to inform policy design, and support new evaluation efforts. However, as discussed there is a gap between potential and actual use of the information available. The government should undertake an in depth evaluation effort to understand where the gaps are and what the drivers are across different sectors and institutions, with a priority focus on the social sectors, so that mechanisms and incentives can be put in place to ensure the full integration of information currently available into policy making. The Inter-institutional Technical Committee for Poverty Measurement (Presidential Decree 112-15), with support from MAP, can play a key role in undertaking this assessment and formulating the necessary measures to correct existing gaps.

In the medium term

- **Interconnecting the available government systems that produce key information for demand assessment and monitoring and evaluation, particularly in the social sector**. The Dominican Republic has several systems that are able to provide useful information to conduct monitoring and evaluation. However, this information remains within each system, thus undermining the potential for data analysis that integration would bring. Achieving integration at the level of needs and progress assessment systems (Poverty Atlas, SIUBEN, ENIGH and ENHOGAR surveys) would not only facilitate a more integrated approach to information management, but increase the possibility for the use of this information for programme design and evaluation across the public administration, and beyond through special programmes.

In the longer term

- **Strengthening ONE's capacity to develop guidelines for the production of statistics and to co-ordinate and govern the National System of Statistics**. Having a strong baseline and indicators that measure the impact of policy implementation is fundamental to ensure a functioning monitoring and evaluation system. According to ONE, one of their biggest challenges to achieving this is the lack of culture and capacity at the sectorial level to produce sound statistics and indicators. The government should assess the needs of the statistic system and provide the necessary resources to ensure that the sectorial institutions have the capacity to produce sound statistics to guarantee that the information generated by monitoring and evaluation is useful for policy making and policy shaping.

Strengthen co-ordination at the centre of government to deliver a whole-of-government approach for better service delivery:

In the short term

- **Enabling and leveraging the co-ordination role of the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers, introduced by the 2012 Public Administration Law, is the main policy co-ordination body of the executive**. However, the necessary regulation that gives content and process to this mandate remains to be enacted, undermining its steering and co-ordination potential. To make the Council fully operational, the government should first develop the mechanisms through which the Council will co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate policy, including its articulation with the Policy Co-ordination Cabinets. Second, it

should develop the protocol for decision making, including the nature of the resolutions, i.e. mandatory vs. recommendations, reporting mechanisms etc.

- **In parallel, rationalising and updating Policy Co-ordination Cabinets to fulfil their role in steering the design, implementation and assessment of policies**. While originally designed to support the Council of Ministers in its co-ordination role, the Policy Co-ordination Cabinets (economic, social, environmental and institutional) have, to date, not operated as planned. Only the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet is active, and it has a strong focus on the implementation of key social programmes. These co-ordination functions are essential, however, particularly as many of the outcomes reflected in the NDS, and thus in the future PNPSP, will require efforts across sectors to be achieved. The government would benefit from reactivating these co-ordination structures under a more flexible approach in order to focus on particular policy priorities and goals that require inter-sector co-ordination. These committees could be supported with a technical secretary unit that would report to the Secretary of Presidency (given its co-ordination role of the Council of Ministers), as a means to support and monitor the implementation of its resolutions.

In the medium term

- **Fully leveraging the role of MAP to strengthen the institutional foundation for whole-of-government co-ordination**. As governing body of the public administration, and co-ordinator of the institutional strengthening system, MAP plays a key role in transforming the public sector in the Dominican Republic. Proactively involved in a number of initiatives, MAP would benefit from stronger budgetary and means capacity, and increased ability to push forward transformational change, including, for example, the rationalisation of the public sector in the Dominican Republic.

In the longer term

- **Developing a system of incentives that create a culture of co-ordination among the highest levels of government**. To date, policy co-ordination usually takes the form of one-on-one meetings between sectorial institutions and the Ministry of the Presidency. In order to encourage institutional incentives towards horizontal co-ordination and co-operation, the Ministry of the Presidency should focus on reinforcing this co-ordination mechanism through a system of incentives, and by holding organisations accountable for the decisions made in the Council. Signalling at the highest levels will be an important driver of change. For instance, the Ministry of the President could enhance its co-ordination role, while delegating its current implementation and delivery focus on line administrative structures (e.g. social sectors).

Strengthen co-ordination mechanisms between the central and local levels of government by:

In the short term

- **Approving and implementing the creation of single planning regions**. Since 2000, the Dominican Republic has been trying to organise the country into development regions to create administrative structures that better allow for co-

ordinating policies, identifying synergies and achieving joined-up outcomes in single territorial units. To date, territorial planning is hampered by the existence of multiple regionals schemes in the different sectors that undermine policy co-ordination. Following Colombia's example, and as planned already in a draft law, the country could benefit from the creation of single planning regions to organise the planning exercise in the territory. This should be followed by a reorganisation of the planning regional structures of the different sectors to facilitate policy co-ordination and enable the operationalisation of the regional committees.

In the medium term

- **Taking advantage of the opportunity created by the incoming administrations at the national and local levels to launch and articulate the municipal, provincial and regional committees, which would create the conditions to implement the municipal, provincial and regional plans**. According to the legal framework, territorial cohesion would be the result of an articulation between central planning and territorial planning. However, territorial co-ordination and the development of the plans at the regional, provincial and municipal level cannot take place if the bodies to co-ordinate policies do not exist. One option that the government has is to create these structures in pilot regions, with their respective provinces and municipalities, to test their functionality and articulation before deploying them across the territory.

In the longer term

- **Developing the capacity of Municipal Planning and Development Units so that they have the competencies necessary to articulate municipal planning with central planning**. One of the biggest challenges of the current governance framework for service delivery is the capacity gap in the Municipal, Planning and Development Units to cope with recent reforms. The government should develop a strategy to develop these capacities as an initial step before centralising all the functions associated with municipal planning, budget, monitoring and evaluation and institutional strengthening in these units. The efforts initiated under the joint programme between MAP and the Dominican Federation of Municipalities (FEDOMU), which has led to the development of 36 municipal plans, as well as efforts undertaken as part of increasing capacity building through the PASCAL programme, should be continued and deepened.

Rationalise and strengthen co-ordination and alignment in the social sector by:

In the short term

- **Appointing and defining a clear co-ordinating structure to enable the effective co-ordination of social policy**. According to the existing legal framework, the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet is the body responsible for co-ordinating social policy. However, its day-to-day activity has veered towards implementation. In parallel, a new General Direction of Special Programmes has been created, also tasked with a co-ordination mandate. In practice, this raises duplicity risks, while undermining much needed whole-of-government steering in the social sector. The government should rationalise existing structures, and fully grant co-ordination and steering capacity to a single entity. A possibility could be

to reinforce the co-ordination role of the Social Policy Co-ordination Cabinet, supported by an advisory function at the level of Presidency.

In the medium term

- **Rationalising the size and administrative structure in the social sector**. An assessment of the composition of the social sectors in the Dominican Republic reveals the presence of institutional duplicities that affect the efficiency of the sector. A number of programmes pursuing similar objectives are being implemented from different administrative structures. In addition, co-ordination mechanisms have been tasked with implementation mandates. The government, supported by MAP, could benefit from an assessment of competencies in the social sectors, regrouping functions and eliminating the institutions that do not add value to social policy.

- **Focusing on co-ordination and information sharing mechanisms to deliver joined-up outcomes across administrative structures and specific programmes**. To strengthen the capacity of the government to achieve joined-up outcomes, particularly in key initiatives such as PROSOLI, co-ordination and information sharing protocols should be put in place and implemented between key players, including the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the existing information systems, special programmes and supporting management structures. These could be integrated into the future PNSPN and specific performance assessment measures.

In the longer term

- **Considering alternative institutional set ups to facilitate an integrated approach to social programmes**. The size and importance of social programmes in the Dominican Republic has led to increasing and visible investments, particularly through special programmes. However, many of the objectives pursued by these programmes are complementary, and directly or indirectly linked to activities at the line ministry level. In addition, the information systems developed to support these programmes have not yet been institutionalised across the public administration. In order to minimise duplicity and maximise the use of existing information and infrastructures, for example between PROSOLI and Quisqueya sin Miseria, the government could explore alternative institutional set-ups to co-ordinate, steer, and implement key social goals and programmes. Different examples in the region, including from Mexico, Chile or Brazil, can provide useful insights (Box 2.17).

Fully capitalising on the vision of the new national monitoring and evaluation system by:

In the short term

- **Assessing the integration of existing performance management systems**. The government can benefit from pursuing the interconnection of SIGEF, SNIP, SIGOB, the Monitoring System for the Municipal Public Administration (SISMAP) and other available systems at the sectorial level, in order to centralise all of the information relevant to performance management. This integration can

be further leveraged by focusing on rendering operational information in real-time on a number of key goals that are closely linked to the NDS and PNSPS.

- **In parallel, launching the interconnection of all systems that exist to gather user feedback and identifying avenues for the use of this information on service improvement, monitoring and re-design**. Interconnecting user feedback tools to enhance client accountability. MAP has several tools available to monitor service delivery from the user perspective that are not well articulated, such as CCs, SERVQUAL, 311 and the Observatory. The government can gain from interconnecting all of these tools and centralising the information being produced, which would allow it to better evaluate services, design more efficient interventions, and strengthen the feedback loop. For example, CCs can provide the baseline to measure the quality of service provision, SERVQUAL can be used to measure the quality of service provision regarding the CCs, and the Observatory and the 311 system can help to verify the information provided using third-party monitoring.

In the medium term

- **Strengthening the link between vertical accountability and internal accountability to improve institutional performance**. In the Dominican Republic, the link between vertical accountability and internal accountability is not clear, even given the evidence that institutions with sound management practices usually perform better. The Dominican Republic could explore options to include plans in the performance contracts indicators associated with the institutional strengthening to reinforce this link and force organisations to base their institutional strengthening plans on their performance needs. The goal is not to create a system that measures everything, but rather to ensure that what matters is adequately measured and performance appraised. The revised US Performance system (Box 2.24), which focused on priority goals, including cross-agency priority goals, can provide a useful example of how to combine accountability and performance without overwhelming the system. Assessing and distilling lessons learned from the experience of performance and results-based budgeting pilot initiatives could help further refine the system.

- **Strengthening internal accountability by enhancing incentives for institutional strengthening**. To promote change management and improve the performance of institutions, the government of the Dominican Republic relies on the Common Assessment Framework and the National Quality Award. To further advance this agenda, the government could provide budget incentives for the organisations that receive an award. Part of the incentive could be used by the winning institutions to finance institutional strengthening plans or training activities for staff.

In the longer term

- **Consider an integrated approach to monitoring the quality and impact of key services, including through direct user feedback**. Several OECD countries have introduced a life event approach to service delivery to improve the planning process and the quality of service delivery. The "life events" or "user's journey" approach designs service delivery around the key life events of a user and provides a framework for the government to collect evidence that services are

delivered in an effective and fair manner from the user's point of view. First, the key life events of a typical user are selected (e.g. giving birth, graduating from university, or starting up a business). Second, a representative survey identifies how many users have recently experienced a particular life event and how many of them find administrative steps related to this life event complicated (fair, inclusive, etc.). Third, a focus group of users who recently experienced a particular life event goes through a "customer journey mapping" to identify the concrete bottlenecks in service delivery. This approach helps governments to focus resources on the most problematic areas of service delivery, identify opportunities for co-ordination, and improve transparency and accountability, especially when done repeatedly (OECD 2016).

- **Building partnerships with civil society organisations to strengthen the Observatory of Public Policy**. The Dominican Republic has several stand-alone initiatives in the area of social accountability, but none are formally integrated into the Observatory of Public Policy. The government could benefit by integrating third-party monitoring to the Observatory and by establishing a dialogue with CSOs to improve services and make service provision more transparent.

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