



Forum of Federations

THE GLOBAL NETWORK ON FEDERALISM

JOINT SERVICE DELIVERY IN FEDERAL COUNTRIES

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Roundtable on Service Delivery Reform in Federal Systems

in a Time of Austerity

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OUTLINE

- Overview of Forum of Federations comparative project
 - Dean-Boutilier report
 - October 2011 roundtable
- General observations
- Questions for discussion



WHAT IS JOINT SERVICE DELIVERY?

- Horizontal and/or vertical arrangements:
 - Horizontal: coordination or integration of services within one level of government – e.g. across a number of departments and agencies
 - Vertical: coordination or integration of services between two or more levels of government
- “Joined up” arrangements have been implemented or are being considered for:
 - Transactional services: front counter and IT-based channels (websites, call centres) for services from more than one department; integration of ‘back office’ services (e.g. IT, human resources)
 - Complex human services – e.g. homelessness, mental health – that cannot be addressed by one department/agency acting alone



DEAN-BOUTLIER REPORT: SCOPE

- Forum of Federations commissioned Tony Dean (former Ontario Cabinet Secretary) and Marie Boutilier (U of Toronto) to prepare comparative background report
- Focused on innovative examples of collaboration between national and subnational governments in Canada, Australia, Germany and United Kingdom
- 32 interviews; asked about lessons learned, challenges of current context, future of the initiative
- Draft case studies reviewed by interviewees
- Final report (2012) available at:
http://www.forumfed.org/pubs/Report_Joint_Service_Delive.pdf



DEAN-BOUTLIER REPORT: FINDINGS (1)

- Constitution and its operation affect approach:
 - Germany's quite clear distribution of law-making and administrative powers has been an impediment
 - Canadian governments (despite few areas of concurrent jurisdiction) have developed various arrangements
 - UK turning to place-based delivery, with some (but variable) collaboration with local government
- Technology is a common denominator:
 - Government-wide IT platforms are important pre-condition for portals, front counter/back office integration
 - Facilitates assessment and ongoing improvement – performance and outcome measurement, benchmarking



DEAN-BOUTLIER REPORT: FINDINGS (2)

- Joint delivery enabled by technology can improve service at lower cost
 - Can sharply reduce transaction costs
 - Clear trend towards virtual co-location – Australia, Canada, UK
 - However, limits of physical co-location may have been reached
 - Virtual integration allows integrated service bundles and one-step identity validation
- Virtual co-location may be less threatening for public sector workers
 - Physical relocation and disruption less significant



DEAN-BOUTLIER REPORT: FINDINGS (3)

- Joint delivery of human services:
 - Involves joining up government departments, other level(s) of government and communities
- Entails listening to what communities need, mapping and aggregating services – e.g. for children, the elderly
- UK approach: moving beyond focus on joining up departments to better ‘wrap’ services around special needs clients, supported by case managers
- Recent major cuts in spending in UK may hamper further progress and lead to a return of ‘siloed’ behaviour



FORUM OF FEDERATIONS ROUNDTABLE (1)

- Theme: Joint Service Delivery in Canada and other Federations; Ottawa, 21 October 2011
- Some 30 participants from Canadian federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments; leading academics and researchers in public management and governance
- Dean-Boutilier report (advanced draft) distributed beforehand, focus of opening session
- Presentations on notable Canadian initiatives, including Service Canada, Institute for Citizen-Centred Service, ServiceOntario
- Report (John Langford and Leslie Seidle)
http://www.forumfed.org/post/Langford_Seidle_JDS_ottawa_oct2011.pdf



SERVICE CANADA

- Established in 2005 following experience with 'single window' delivery in a number of provinces
- Extensive network of front counter (more than 600 offices) and virtual services of Government of Canada. In 2009-10 Service Canada staff:
 - Served 7.7 million clients in person
 - Responded to 58.6 million telephone calls
 - Received 55.1 million website visits
- Has moved into interjurisdictional arrangements:
 - Vital events agreements (six provinces): one application to register a child's birth municipally, get provincial birth certificate and federal Social Insurance Number and child tax benefits
 - Ottawa: office co-location with Service Ontario and city



INSTITUTE FOR CITIZEN-CENTRED SERVICE (ICCS)

- Not-for-profit organization which works with governments across Canada: centre of expertise and champion for citizen-centred service delivery
- Established by senior federal and provincial officials, supports two intergovernmental service delivery councils (composed of senior officials)
- Intergovernmental research/dissemination agenda
 - Since 1998, six comprehensive 'Citizens First' surveys: ratings of services provided by three levels of governments
 - Common Measurement Tool: client satisfaction survey instrument to facilitate benchmarking across jurisdictions
 - Certified Service Manager Program: certification for public sector managers responsible for external and internal service delivery



FORUM OF FEDERATIONS ROUNDTABLE (2)

- In federal countries, more than one level of government delivers services within policy fields that are important to citizens – e.g. social programs
 - Citizens expect timely, accessible and transparent services – not concerned about which jurisdiction is actually responsible
 - Service integration is important to business – regularly carry out transactions with more than one government level
- Channel migration – moving as many services as possible online – is a clear trend
 - Responds to citizen expectations for easy, 24/7 access
 - Raises issues for certain segments of population – lower income, dependent elderly, Aboriginal people – who have limited access to online services



FORUM OF FEDERATIONS ROUNDTABLE (3)

- Cost is increasingly a significant factor in potential moves to joint service delivery
 - Some argue that online delivery is demonstrably cheaper
 - However, capital costs of building systems to support complex service transactions are often high
 - Significant risks – e.g. privacy– associated with such moves
- For some, cost cutting is displacing citizen-centred service enhancement as driver of reform
 - Integration often seen as way to cut jobs within the units that will be integrated
 - Resistance within traditional service delivery units could lead departments to retreat to protecting core activities



FORUM OF FEDERATIONS ROUNDTABLE (4)

- Challenges to further moves to joint service delivery: within governments:
 - Territoriality, transaction costs required to build and maintain partnerships, funding modalities that focus on traditional departments/agencies rather than joint ventures
 - Norms/culture of parliamentary systems value 'upward' management in support of ministers more than horizontal collaboration
- Challenges to further intergovernmental collaboration in service delivery:
 - In addition to the above, ministers may be concerned about loss of visibility for 'their' programs resulting from integration
 - Issues about who is accountable when problems arise with consolidated or integrated services



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What is the best rationale for reforms leading to consolidated or integrated delivery of public services?
 - More responsive service to citizens
 - Cost reduction
 - Both
- What are the particular challenges of/potential benefits from arrangements that join up services between levels of government?
- Who should provide leadership for such reforms?
 - Ministers
 - Senior civil servants
 - Both

