

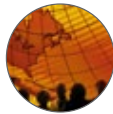


PRESIDENTIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL TRANSITION

Management Agenda: *Collaborate to Achieve National Outcomes*

The Presidential Transition Act points to the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) as a resource for incoming administrations as well as new Congresses.

GAO's **Management Agenda** is a streamlined tool for new leaders to quickly learn about critical management challenges and risks facing the federal government and the actions needed to address those challenges.



Collaborate to Achieve National Outcomes is one of the eight management challenges highlighted in the Management Agenda.

The incoming Administration and Congress face challenges that involve multiple agencies, specifically: inefficient government operations, insufficient collaboration across agencies, and mismanaged federal grants. Strategies to improve how agencies work together can also help them address these challenges.

Read on to learn more about the following challenges:

1. Reduce Fragmentation, Overlap and Duplication
2. Improve Interagency Collaboration
3. Improve Grants Management
4. Build Capacity to Achieve Crosscutting Goals

Reduce Fragmentation, Overlap and Duplication

Challenge: Inefficient Government Operations

Since 2011, we have identified more than 200 areas where government missions are unnecessarily fragmented, overlapping or duplicative across several agencies or programs. We also identified more than 600 actions that could address these areas and achieve financial benefits.

While Congress and executive branch agencies have taken some of the actions we identified, many more remain. We estimate that taking all of these actions would save tens of billions of dollars. Fully addressing these actions will take time and require sustained leadership across agencies and Congress.

Overall Status of Action Items from Prior Annual Reports, 2011-2016, as of November 15, 2016

Status	Number of executive branch actions	Number of congressional actions	Total (percentage)
Addressed	233	27	260 (40%)
Partially addressed	209	13	222 (35%)
Not addressed	86	48	134 (21%)
Consolidated or other	21	5	26 (4%)
Total	549	93	642

Source: GAO. | www.gao.gov

Related GAO Work

- [GAO's 2016 Annual Report](#)
- [Action Tracker](#)
- [Comptroller General Testimony to U.S. Senate on GAO's 2016 Duplication Report](#)
- [Comptroller General Testimony to U.S. House of Representatives on GAO's 2016 Duplication Report](#)

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Key Actions Needed

1. Address remaining actions to reduce fragmentation, overlap and duplication in the federal government.
2. Address remaining actions to achieve cost savings and enhance revenue.








Improve Interagency Collaboration

Challenge: Insufficient Collaboration on Government-wide Issues

Many of the meaningful results that the federal government seeks to achieve require the coordinated effort of more than one federal agency.

Even with sustained leadership, issues that involve multiple agencies are difficult to address because they may require agencies and Congress to reexamine the structure, operation, funding, and performance of a number of long-standing federal programs or activities. Collaboration and improved working relationships across agencies are fundamental to addressing challenges.

Key Considerations for Implementing Interagency Collaborative Mechanisms

Key features		Key considerations
	Outcomes and accountability	Have short-term and long-term outcomes been clearly defined? Is there a way to track and monitor their progress?
	Bridging organizational cultures	What are the missions and organizational cultures of the participating agencies? Have agencies agreed on common terminology and definitions?
	Leadership	How will leadership be sustained over the long-term? If leadership is shared, have roles and responsibilities been clearly identified and agreed upon?
	Clarity of roles and responsibilities	Have participating agencies clarified roles and responsibilities?
	Participants	Have all relevant participants been included? Do they have the ability to commit resources for their agency?
	Resources	How will the collaborative mechanism be funded and staffed? Have online collaboration tools been developed?
	Written guidance and agreements	If appropriate, have participating agencies documented their agreement regarding how they will be collaborating? Have they developed ways to continually update and monitor these agreements?

Source: www.gao.gov.

Related GAO Work

- [Best Practices and Leading Practices in Collaboration](#)

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Key Actions Needed

1. Use a variety of mechanisms to implement interagency collaborative efforts, such as appointing a coordinator, co-locating agencies within one facility, or establishing interagency task forces.
2. Address government-wide issues by developing inventories of programs that give decision makers comprehensive program and funding information.

Improve Grants Management

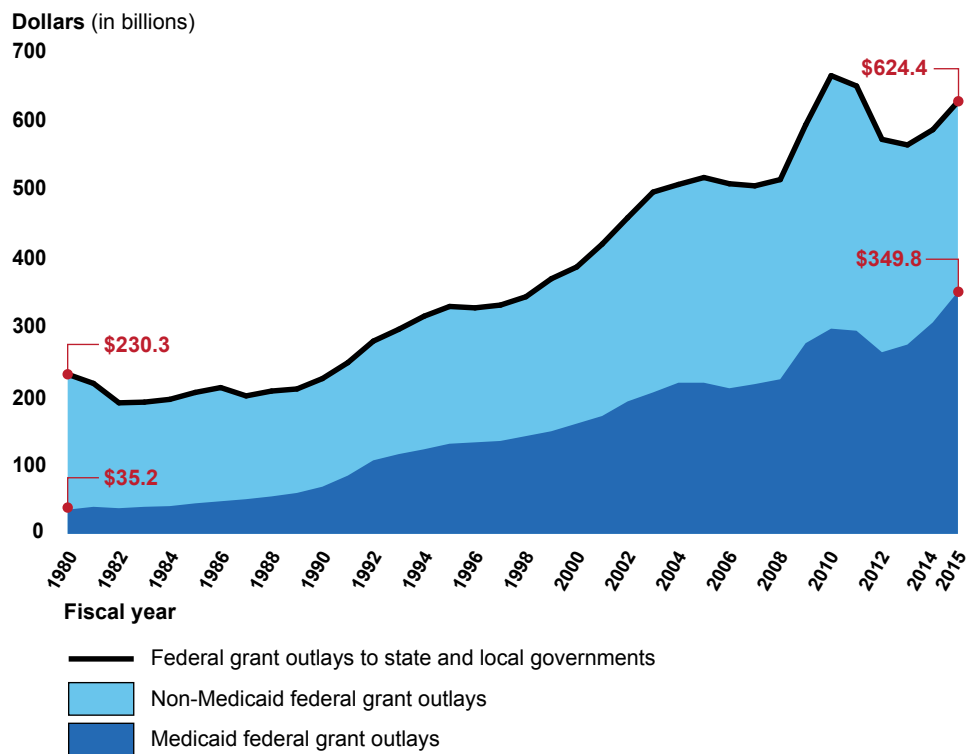
Challenge: Complex and Diverse Grant Mechanisms

Federal grants to state and local governments for various purposes provide funding to address vital needs in areas such as health care, transportation, education, and social services. Outlays for these grants have increased since 1980.

Growth in both the number of grant programs and level of funding has created diversity and complexity in the federal grants management process. This complexity could make it more difficult to coordinate and consolidate grant programs or compare grant administrative costs across different programs and draw meaningful conclusions about the overall effectiveness of grants in helping to achieve results.

In addition, many grant-making agencies have not closed out expired grants in a timely manner. As of the end of fiscal year 2015, expired grant funds in the Payment Management System—a grant management system—alone were worth almost \$1 billion that could be redirected to other projects or returned to the Treasury.

**Total Federal Outlays for Grants to State and Local Governments, in 2015
Constant Dollars, Fiscal Years 1980-2015**



Source: GAO analysis of Office of Management and Budget data. | www.gao.gov

Related GAO Work

- Federal Grants to State and Local Governments

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Key Actions Needed

- Streamline and simplify the grants management processes.
- Monitor grantee performance to determine whether program goals are being achieved.
- Improve the timeliness of grant closeout so unused funds can be redirected to other projects and priorities as authorized.

Build Capacity to Achieve Crosscutting Goals

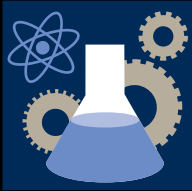

Challenge: Insufficient Performance Measurement and Reporting

The Office of Management and Budget coordinates with agencies to develop federal government priority goals (known as cross-agency priority or CAP goals). These goals are broad mission and management goals that require agencies to work together to achieve.

For example, improving STEM education is one mission CAP goal. Efforts to achieve this are led by the Office of Science and Technology Policy and the National Science Foundation. An example of a management CAP goal is improving customer service. The Office of Management and Budget and the Social Security Administration lead efforts to achieve that goal.

Accurate and reliable performance information is critical to monitor and track progress on achieving the current set of mission and management CAP goals.

Examples of Cross-Agency Priority Goals and Goal Leaders

	Mission Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goal: STEM Education	Goal Leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Office of Science and Technology Policy• National Science Foundation
	Management Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goal: Customer Service	Goal Leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Office of Management and Budget• Social Security Administration

Source: Performance.gov. | Modified from GAO-16-509

Related GAO Work

- [Best Practices and Leading Practices in Collaboration](#)

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Key Actions Needed

1. Continue to build capacity and provide senior leadership support for implementing CAP goals.
2. Report the actions that CAP goal teams are taking, or plan to take, to develop performance measures and quarterly targets to track progress