

For any country or government, improving government interoperability can be a complex, risky, and expensive endeavor. The **Government Interoperability Improvement Framework** (see Appendix) was developed to help government managers take the first step in understanding the multi-dimensional and complementary nature of capability in a network of organizations and to begin to think in a new way about the need to examine capability in the context of a specific setting and on an ongoing basis. Determining the maturity level of individual organizations to engage in effective interoperability initiatives is useful, but it is the capability of the network to create interoperability that is of interest here.

The **Government Interoperability Improvement Framework** is comprised of the capability dimensions from Tables 5a and 5b above along with the three government interoperability maturity levels described in Table 4. As a starting point, we suggest two approaches for applying the **Framework**: 1) focus on a specific policy domain or a level of government, and 2) focus on a specific initiative.

**Applying the Framework in a specific policy domain of level of government.** In the first approach, a government executive can use the framework to assess the overall capability of that policy domain or level of government to improve interoperability. This application of the framework might reveal a gap in the capability of an overall policy domain to collectively make decisions through a joint governance structure such as a governmentwide governance body, yet, identify a variance in capability to measure the performance of their efforts. A review of the capability dimensions and maturity levels in the context of a local, state, regional, or national level or by focusing on a specific policy or program area such as criminal justice or public health can provide a snapshot of a government's current capability to improve interoperability.

**Applying the Framework in a specific initiative.** A second approach for using the framework focuses specifically on a single initiative and is applied by a project manager or executive sponsor to a planned or in-development government interoperability initiative. This use of the **Framework** could help determine if government resources are being used efficiently in developing capabilities that are most relevant to the interoperability initiative. An assessment at this level, for example, might reveal an overall high capability in terms of organizational compatibility, yet, identify that the individual agencies have varying levels of capability in terms of creating a secure environment for information sharing.

Both approaches to using the **Framework** provide new information about the capability of a network of organizations to create interoperable government. This new information can be used to make judgments about the level of maturity held by a network of organizations, and subsequently be used to guide investment decision making about creating new government interoperability capability in that network. Using the **Framework** provides new insight about capability in the specific context of a network and guides decision makers to more effectively make decisions about where to focus and sometimes, refocus, government attention and resources to fully support the vision of better government services and programs delivered through more efficient and effective partnerships among government, civil society, and the private sector.

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