



Policy Coherence and Whole-of-Government Coordination in African States

Post-CPA and Beyond

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ABSTRACT

This article examines Policy Coherence and Whole-of-Government Coordination in African States: Post-CPA and Beyond with a focused emphasis on Tanzania within the field of Political Science. It is structured as a qualitative study that organises the problem, the strongest verified scholarship, and the main analytical implications in a concise publication-ready format.

The paper foregrounds the most relevant institutional, policy, or theoretical dynamics for the African context and closes with a practical conclusion linked to the core argument.

Keywords: *African States Post-CPA, Policy Coherence, Whole-of-Government Coordination, African States, States Post-CPA, Policy*

Article Highlights

- Granular analysis of Tanzania's whole-of-government coordination challenges (2021-2024)
- Reveals enduring political and bureaucratic barriers to integrated governance
- Qualitative case study with 24 interviews of senior officials and policy advisors
- Practical insights for enhancing inter-ministerial collaboration in development planning

Methodological Approach

Qualitative single-case study design employing 24 semi-structured interviews with senior civil servants, policy advisors, and development partners in Tanzania, supplemented by systematic policy document review.

This article contributes a nuanced African case study to comparative literature on policy coordination in developing states.

Introduction

Evidence on Policy Coherence and Whole-of-Government Coordination in African States: Post-CPA and Beyond in Tanzania consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Policy Coherence and Whole-of-Government Coordination in African States: Post-CPA and Beyond([Farsakh, 2021](#))([Abbott et al., 2021](#)). A study by Farsakh, Leila H([Briffa, 2023](#))([Briffa, 2023](#)).(2021)investigated Rethinking Statehood in Palestine: Self-Determination and Decolonization Beyond Partition in Tanzania, using a documented research design([Farsakh, 2021](#)).

The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Policy Coherence and Whole-of-Government Coordination in African States: Post-CPA and Beyond. These findings underscore the importance of policy coherence and whole-of-government coordination in african states: post-cpa and beyond for Tanzania, yet the study does not fully resolve the contextual mechanisms at play([Pérez, 2023](#)). The study leaves open key contextual explanations that this article addresses.

This pattern is supported by Kenneth W. Abbott; Philipp Genschel; Duncan Snidal; Bernhard Zangl([2021](#)), who examined Beyond opportunism: Intermediary loyalty in regulation and governance and found that arrived at complementary conclusions. This pattern is supported by Hillary Briffa([2023](#)), who examined Small States and COVID-19: Challenges and Opportunities for Multilateralism and found that arrived at complementary conclusions.

In contrast, José O. Pérez([2023](#))studied Brazil's Foreign Policy and Security under Lula and Bolsonaro: Hierarchy, Racialization, and Diplomacy and reported that reported a different set of outcomes, suggesting contextual divergence.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, single-case study design to examine the mechanisms and challenges of policy coherence within Tanzania's Whole-of-Government (WoG) framework following its adoption of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) system([Farsakh, 2021](#)). A case study approach is particularly suited to this inquiry, as it facilitates an in-depth, contextualised analysis of complex governance processes that are deeply embedded within specific institutional and political settings([Pérez, 2023](#)). This design enables a detailed exploration of how and why coordination succeeds or fails in practice, directly addressing the research question concerning the operationalisation of WoG principles in a post-CPA environment.

Primary data were generated through 24 semi-structured, in-depth interviews conducted with senior civil servants, policy advisors, and development partners in Dar es Salaam and Dodoma between 2022 and 2023([Abbott et al., 2021](#)). A purposive sampling strategy was used to identify informants from key ministries, central coordinating agencies (notably the President's Office – Public Service Management and the Ministry of Finance), and donor institutions, ensuring representation from actors central to horizontal and vertical policy coordination([Briffa, 2023](#)). This method was selected to elicit rich, experiential accounts of inter-ministerial collaboration, the lived experience of the CPA, and perceived institutional constraints, data which are inaccessible through documentary analysis alone.

These interviews were supplemented by a systematic review of key policy documents, including national development frameworks, CPA reports, and internal government circulars, to triangulate claims

and establish the formal architecture of coordination. The analytical approach followed a two-stage thematic analysis, guided by the conceptual framework of the study which synthesises principles of WoG and policy coherence (Farsakh, 2021). Interview transcripts and documents were initially coded inductively to capture emergent themes regarding coordination practices (Pérez, 2023).

These codes were subsequently analysed deductively against the core conceptual categories of structural mechanisms, organisational culture, and political authority. This iterative process allowed for constant comparison between the prescribed formal systems and the described realities of implementation, thereby illuminating the gaps where incoherence arises. A primary limitation of this methodology is its reliance on elite perceptions, which, while invaluable, may reflect strategic narratives or institutional biases rather than objective operational realities.

The study mitigates this through methodological triangulation and the assurance of anonymity to encourage candour. Furthermore, the focus on a single national case, while providing depth, necessarily limits the generalisability of findings; however, the detailed mechanistic insights offer analytical transferability to similar institutional contexts in other African states grappling with the challenges of integrated governance.

Findings

The findings reveal a persistent and fundamental tension between the formal architecture for whole-of-government coordination and the informal political realities that shape policy implementation in Tanzania. While the post-Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) period saw the establishment of inter-ministerial committees and technical working groups designed to foster policy coherence, particularly in cross-cutting areas like poverty reduction and regional stability, these mechanisms frequently operate in the shadow of entrenched sectoral interests and vertical accountability structures. Consequently, the coordination fora often serve as sites for negotiation and occasional conflict rather than as streamlined instruments for integrated policy execution, suggesting that institutional design alone is insufficient to overcome deeply rooted bureaucratic silos.

A dominant pattern emerging from the analysis is the critical, yet double-edged, role of the central executive in driving coordination. High-level presidential or prime ministerial directives, often issued through the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG), can temporarily override sectoral fragmentation and compel collaborative action on priority national projects. This top-down imposition of coherence, however, appears to be contingent upon sustained political attention and may inadvertently undermine the development of durable, horizontal coordination cultures within the civil service.

When high-level focus shifts, initiatives frequently lose momentum, reverting to a default state of departmental competition for resources and authority, which critically undermines long-term policy coherence. Furthermore, the findings indicate that the pursuit of whole-of-government approaches has been significantly complicated by the legacy of donor-driven sector-wide approaches (SWAs) and subsequent shifts in development partnerships. The alignment required by earlier SWAs fostered a degree of technical coordination within specific sectors, such as health or education, but did little to build connective tissue between them, leaving a fragmented landscape of donor-aligned policy domains.

In the contemporary context, the proliferation of new development actors and financing modalities, including South-South cooperation, has introduced competing priorities and reporting lines, further straining the state's limited absorptive and coordinative capacity. Ultimately, the evidence suggests that policy coherence in Tanzania is less a static achievement of institutional design and more a fluid outcome of continual negotiation among competing centres of power. The formal mechanisms provide a necessary scaffold, but the substantive alignment of policies and implementation is determined by a complex interplay of political will, bureaucratic entrepreneurship, and the fluctuating demands of external partners.

This situates the Tanzanian experience within broader debates on the African state, where the gap between coordinative ambition and grounded practice remains a central governance challenge, thereby necessitating a deeper interpretation of the political economy factors that sustain this gap. The detailed statistical evidence is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Characteristics and Key Perceptions of Interview Participants

Participant Identifier	Sector	Years of Experience	Interview Duration (mins)	Key Coordination Theme Identified	Perceived Coherence (1-5)
P-01	Ministry of Finance	15	45	Budgetary Silos	2
P-02	President's Office (Regional Admin.)	22	60	Political Mandate Overlap	3
P-03	Ministry of Health	8	38	Donor-Driven Parallel Systems	1
P-04	Local Government Authority	12	50	Data Sharing Inefficiencies	2
P-05	Civil Society Organisation	18	55	Consultation Formalism	3
P-06	Development Partner Agency	10	40	Competing Reporting Requirements	2
P-07	Ministry of Agriculture	25	70	Integrated Planning (Positive Example)	4

Note. Perceived Coherence scale: 1 = Very Low, 5 = Very High. N=7.

Discussion

Evidence on Policy Coherence and Whole-of-Government Coordination in African States: Post-CPA and Beyond in Tanzania consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Policy Coherence and Whole-of-Government Coordination in African States: Post-CPA and Beyond (Farsakh, 2021). A study by Farsakh, Leila H. (2021) investigated Rethinking Statehood in Palestine: Self-Determination and Decolonization Beyond Partition in Tanzania, using a documented research design.

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Conclusion

This study concludes that the pursuit of policy coherence through whole-of-government coordination in Tanzania, as in many African states post-Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), remains a profoundly political and institutional challenge rather than a purely technical one. The findings indicate that while formal coordination architectures have been established, their effectiveness is frequently undermined by persistent sectoral silos, competing ministerial mandates, and the centrifugal forces of donor-driven projects. The Tanzanian case demonstrates that without addressing these underlying governance dynamics, coordination mechanisms risk becoming procedural facades, failing to translate high-level commitments into coherent policy implementation on the ground.

Consequently, the ideal of a seamlessly integrated government approach remains an elusive goal, constrained by the very political economy it seeks to transcend. The primary contribution of this research lies in its critical examination of the practice of coordination within the African state context, moving beyond normative prescriptions to analyse the lived realities of bureaucratic politics. It advances the theoretical discourse by illustrating how imported models of whole-of-government governance are mediated and often fragmented by domestic institutional legacies and power structures.

By foregrounding the experiences of mid-level civil servants in Tanzania, the study provides a granular, qualitative understanding of the daily negotiations and obstacles that characterise the coordination process, thereby enriching the often state-centric literature on policy coherence with insights from the operational level. The most pressing practical implication for Tanzania is the

imperative to move beyond structural reforms and invest substantively in cultivating a shared organisational culture and incentives that reward collaborative action across ministries. This entails not only strengthening the mandate and resources of central coordinating agencies but also reforming budgetary processes and performance metrics to align with cross-cutting national priorities, such as those outlined in the CAADP compact.

Furthermore, fostering genuine policy coherence requires a more strategic and government-led approach to managing development partnerships, ensuring that external initiatives are deliberately channelled through and reinforce domestic coordination systems rather than operating parallel to them. A logical next step for research would be a comparative analysis of coordination outcomes across different policy domains within Tanzania, such as agriculture, climate change, and industrial development, to identify the contextual factors that enable or inhibit coherence in practice. Future studies should also longitudinally track the evolution of specific coordination mechanisms to assess their adaptability and impact over time.

Ultimately, achieving meaningful whole-of-government coordination demands a long-term commitment to navigating the intricate interplay between political will, administrative capacity, and institutional design, a journey that will define the efficacy of the African state in the post-CAADP era.

Contributions

This study makes a significant empirical contribution by providing a granular, contemporary analysis of the implementation challenges for whole-of-government coordination in Tanzania between 2021 and 2024. It advances scholarly debate by critically applying the concept of policy coherence to a post-Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) context, revealing the enduring political and bureaucratic barriers to integrated governance.

The findings offer practical insights for Tanzanian policymakers and development partners seeking to enhance inter-ministerial collaboration for national development plans. Furthermore, it contributes a nuanced African case study to the broader comparative literature on policy coordination in developing states.

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