



# Lessons learned from centre of government delivery units

*Sumedh Rao*  
*Independent consultant*  
*19 May 2022*

## Question

*Identify lessons learned from centre of government delivery units. Where possible, focus on effectiveness and lessons learned after the initial implementation period.*

## Contents

1. Summary
2. Political sponsorship
3. Prioritisation
4. Staffing
5. Routines
6. Coordination
7. Strategy
8. Data collection
9. Approval
10. References

---

*The K4D helpdesk service provides brief summaries of current research, evidence, and lessons learned. Helpdesk reports are not rigorous or systematic reviews; they are intended to provide an introduction to the most important evidence related to a research question. They draw on a rapid desk-based review of published literature and consultation with subject specialists.*

*Helpdesk reports are commissioned by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth, & Development Office and other Government departments, but the views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of FCDO, the UK Government, K4D or any other contributing organisation. For further information, please contact [helpdesk@k4d.info](mailto:helpdesk@k4d.info).*

## 1. Summary

A Delivery Unit (DU) can be defined as “a small group of highly-skilled people working at the cent[re] of government who help line ministries achieve outcomes for a number of initiatives that leadership deems ‘mission critical,’ or top priority” (Kohli & Moody, 2016, p. 1). The archetypal DU is based in the executive of the national government (e.g. prime minister, president) but there are examples of DUs that operate at the sub-national level, such as at the city level (e.g. the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina), the provincial level (e.g. the province of Buenos Aires, Argentina) or at the state level (e.g. the state of Pernambuco, Brazil) (Lafuente & González, 2018; Williams et al., 2021). DUs can also be based at the ministerial or sectoral level (e.g. education level) or at the front-line level (e.g. school level) (Williams et al., 2021).

The first explicit DU was the UK’s Prime Minister’s Delivery Unit (PMDU) which was set up in 2001 and focused on tracking and improving performance in the government priority areas of health, education, security, and transport (Gold, 2017). In the last 20 years since the UK PMDU was set up, DUs have been adapted and implemented in many countries across the world and subsequently, there is an extensive literature on them (Gold, 2017; Williams et al., 2021). Some of this literature is country case studies (e.g. Dumas et al., 2013; Hart, 2017; Scharff, 2014) whereas other literature is synthesis reports based on multiple case studies and extant literature (e.g. Delivery Associates, 2018; Gold, 2017; Lafuente & González, 2018; Todd et al., 2014). This helpdesk report focuses on the latter literature to identify broader lessons learned. The lessons learned converge around the key themes of political sponsorship, prioritisation, staffing, routines, coordination, strategy, data collection and approval:

### Political sponsorship

Strong, visible backing from senior political leaders is seen as essential for the effectiveness of DUs. DUs can be seen as a leadership strategy or even as an extension of their political sponsor. Political sponsors need to devote significant time and energy engaging with DUs on an ongoing basis, and several DUs have failed when this engagement fades. DUs are also helped by political sponsorship at the ministry or department level, for example, by the relevant secretary of state. Loss of political sponsorship can happen when there are no initial ‘quick wins’, when the DU is introduced at the wrong time, and when there is a change of administration.

### Prioritisation

Prioritisation and a clear, tightly defined remit for the DU is important. Successful DUs have had a narrow range of priorities and consistently adhered to them. DUs have become unstuck when priorities are poorly defined, unrealistic, or changed constantly, or when their mandate has broadened too far. A clear remit can improve allyship within the government; when the DU’s role is unclear other government actors may feel threatened or suspect that their work is being intruded on.

## Staffing

In relation to staffing, the key issues are hiring, retention, organisational structure and leadership. With hiring it is important to have an appropriate balance of different types of staff. For example, internal staff can have greater local and sector knowledge, whereas external staff can bring in skills that have been lacking. Another important balance is between junior and senior staff to ensure that the organisational structure is not top-heavy. Much of the DUs work centre around building critical relationships across government; staff must be retained long enough to nurture such relationships. In terms of leadership, leaders should have a track record in performance improvement and the crucial interpersonal skills.

## Routines

Crises or critical events can arise during government work, and it is imperative that DUs have routines that they adhere to irrespective of such events. One important set of routines relates to performance management – collecting information, assessing this against targets, and responding accordingly. Another set of activities that should be routinised is reviewing the DU's operational focus and generating new ideas. Routine meetings with political sponsors can ensure that DUs act in line with their political sponsors and maintain a level of political sponsorship.

## Coordination

DUs have a specific role in coordination and communication across government, sometimes with actors who have no prior relationship with each other. DUs should amplify senior leaders' authority rather than look to impose their own authority on ministries and departments, as this could be antagonising. The DU should be located close, physically, to both their political sponsors and the relevant ministries or departments, as much of government business is done informally and sometimes through chance encounters. Engagement with stakeholders can ensure buy-in and provide valuable inputs.

## Strategy

Many DUs have historically tended to focus more on indicators and monitoring rather than strategy and implementation though the latter is crucial. To strategise well it is important to ensure sufficient inputs are received. With a new administration, input collection is advisable prior to taking office. Each priority should be budgeted accordingly and as such DUs must strategise in collaboration with those who manage budgets. Timing is crucial; it is important to set up DUs at the start of a political term and accept that DUs have a natural cycle and are time-bound.

## Data collection

Good data is essential, especially as it will help monitor progress against priorities. It is important to collect data regularly and with minimal possible cost. The data should be reliable and attributable; indicators should be well-designed. While DUs can help set up capacity this can delay priorities being achieved.

## Approval

Approval across government and by the public increases the chances a DU will be successful. The public could see the formation of DUs and other delivery efforts as empty political propaganda. Efforts to improve accountability to the public can improve public buy-in. Similarly, where government actors perceive the DU to lack appropriate capacity, to be credit-seeking or to compete with themselves, this may undermine the level of cooperation.

## 2. Political sponsorship

In the DU literature, the most salient point is that political support at the senior level is essential (Delivery Associates, 2018; Gold, 2017; Lafuente & González, 2018; Todd et al., 2014). DUs require strong, highly visible backing from political leadership (Delivery Associates, 2018; Gold, 2017). They should not be seen as an institutional structure but rather as a leadership strategy or an extension of the political sponsor (Behn, 2014; Gold, 2017; Todd et al., 2014).

There has to be real willingness at the very top of government to change behaviour and outcomes, as DUs rely on reflected authority from senior leaders (Todd et al., 2014). After initially empowering the DU politically, ongoing support for the DU can require devoting time in quarterly or at least biannual follow-up meetings (Lafuente & González, 2018). Failure to do this may mean the model fails. Clyne (expert comments) highlights the example of the UK Prime Minister (PM) Tony Blair who maintained a regular cycle of stocktake meetings with the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit (PMDU), which is one of the first examples, historically, of a centre of government delivery unit (Williams et al., 2021). The PM would meet with the DU, relevant ministers and senior departmental officials, often in long meetings of around 1 1/2 to 2 hours and for which the PM would have prepared extensive briefs (Clyne, expert comments). Such commitment is not axiomatic, and Lafuente & González (2018) note situations where politicians have initially warmed to the idea, signalling interest to their cabinet, but at the implementation stage not devoted sufficient time, attention or resources to it.

As well as sponsorship from the executive, there needs to be a degree of political sponsorship from the departments the DU works with, which is often the relevant secretary of state (Clyne, expert comments). This can be especially important after the impact of the creation of the DU wears off, where the ongoing political leverage incentivises other teams to work with the DU to ensure priorities are met (Clyne, expert comments).

Loss of political sponsorship can happen for a number of reasons and at different junctures. At the early stage of a political term, a lack of rapid 'quick-wins' can result in a loss in political sponsorship as the political cost of backing the unit can increase over time (Lafuente & González, 2018). A DU could be introduced too late into term, failing to get a foothold in the centre of government and creating difficulties with stakeholders (Lafuente & González, 2018).

Changes in administration can result in the disbandment of centre of government delivery units as they can be associated too closely with the previous government or not suit the leadership style of an incoming administration (Gold, 2017). For example, in 2010, the UK's incoming government disbanded the PMDU as it was seen to contrast with the decentralisation agenda supported by the incoming prime minister (Gold, 2017).

Warning signs of loss of political sponsorship include if the head of the unit has little or no access to the political sponsor and stocktake meetings are *ad hoc*, routinely cancelled or delegated to another official (Gold, 2017). A loss of political sponsorship can be visible through a less responsive civil service. For example, towards the end of the Australia's Cabinet Implementation Unit period, the unit seemed to lose support from the prime minister and ministers. Departments became slow to respond to requests for progress updates suggesting a perceived lack of urgency (Gold, 2017).

### 3. Prioritisation

Prioritisation and a tightly defined remit have been seen as essential for an effective delivery unit (Dumas et al., 2013; Gold, 2017; Kohli et al., 2016; Lafuente & González, 2018; Scharff, 2014; Todd et al., 2014). As Lafuente & González (2018) argue "[i]f everything is a priority, nothing is a priority" (p.33) and there is importance in selectivity and steadfastness in choosing priorities. It is best to focus on a limited number of key priorities (Todd et al., 2014) which Clyne (expert comments) argues, in practice, means 3-6 particular targets.

A clear remit can also help the DU align itself with allies or partners. A lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities within the DU can mean that other actors in the centre of government or ministries feel threatened by what could be seen as a duplication of, or intrusion into, their work (Lafuente & González, 2018).

It is important that goals are well thought out during the development of implementation strategies and that these are realistic. Where the goals are poorly defined, unrealistic or shift constantly, this can undermine the DU's credibility as well as leading to wasting of time and resources (Lafuente & González, 2018). Where the DU is mandated to intervene in too many areas or there is a constant change in priorities, the DU's impact, focus and convening power will be undermined (Lafuente & González, 2018).

Over time, a DU could lose focus and become involved in short term operational issues, with it being increasingly seen as a structure for constant 'firefighting' rather than longer-term 'legacy building' (Lafuente & González, 2018). Alternatively there can be overexpansion of mandate following an initial period of success. The UK PMDU is cited as an example where an initial small

number of targets (e.g. 4 hour-waiting list, class size) were expanded to include overseeing hundreds of Public Service Agreements. This move from a tight remit to a broad range of monitoring, resulted in insufficient delivery expertise so as to be effective, and concurrently, a loss of credibility as a centre of expertise (Clyne, expert comments; Gold, 2017). Other examples where overexpansion of mandate resulted in DU failure are (Gold, 2017):

- Jordan, where the unit tracked so many projects it became essentially a project management office.
- Sierra Leone, where s lack of mandate clarity resulted in monitoring and advising on a broad range of complex projects as well as strategy work.
- Tanzania, where despite capacity constraints the unit came under pressure to oversee key results in healthcare and the business environment.

Key warning signs that a remit is problematic includes a poorly defined mandate, tracking too many priorities, or there being competing or irreconcilable responsibilities (e.g. policy and delivery) (Gold, 2017).

## 4. Staffing

Several studies highlight the importance of staffing issues, specifically hiring, retention, organisational structure, and leadership (Gold, 2017; Lafuente & González, 2018; Shostak et al., 2014).

In relation to hiring, the literature highlights the importance of a balance in staffing. This includes balance between internal and external people (Gold, 2017). An imbalance between external and internal hires could leave a DU with either too few staff to understand government and use existing relationships, or with too few innovative staff who are able to challenge the status quo. Internal staff may have greater local and sector knowledge, whereas external staff could, for example, bring different expertise, such as in audit and consulting (Gold, 2017).

Another imbalance can be between analysts and advisers, such as in the case of Sierra Leone's first DU where initially, the ratio of advisors to analysts meant that evaluation activities were restricted (Gold, 2107).

A top-heavy organisation can hamper daily operations such as routine data analysis (Gold, 2017). Examples include the Tanzanian President's Delivery Bureau which lacked junior analysts and Sierra Leone's first DU whose high number of senior-level appointees meant clashes of personalities and a tendency towards abstract thinking rather than implementation (Gold, 2017)

Some DU teams have lacked the requisite technical skills and lack expertise in project management and implementation (Lafuente & González, 2018). It is therefore important the DUs are staffed with a diverse range of people with delivery expertise; the most successful DUs have staff with track records of delivery in public services (Clyne, expert comments). There should be sufficient staff with a clear understanding of delivery systems and who understand the

connections between policy makers, service users, and the actors involved in delivery (Todd et al., 2014)

Retention is important as individuals must build crucial relationships with departments through consistent interactions (Hart, 2017). Retention can be undermined by a staffing approach that depends on secondees, consultants and temporary staff. Uncertainty of the unit's long-term future can lead to high turnover, especially in senior posts (Gold, 2017).

In terms of leadership, key attributes are credibility from a strong track record in improving performance, strong interpersonal skills and a leader who will stay sufficiently long in place to ensure change (Gold, 2017). Lafuente & González (2018) note situations where the DU head has lacked the necessary background, taking, for example, a more academic rather than managerial approach, or not being able to sufficiently access or influence ministers. There is also a need for a leadership coalition beyond the DU, which takes ownership for the results agenda of the government (Gold, 2017). Having individual 'champions' in the line ministries increase the chances of achieving the goal (Lafuente & González, 2018). Lafuente & González (2018) argue that in the absence of such champions, they should either be added, or the priority should be reconsidered.

In terms of size, small DUs can be flexible and cohesive, whereas with DUs that are too large, there is a risk that they become involved in too wide a range of activities and replicate existing functions and structures (Todd et al., 2014).

## 5. Routines

Several studies highlight the importance of routines (Delivery Associates, 2018; Gold, 2017; Harrison, 2016; Hart, 2017; Lafuente & González, 2018; Todd et al., 2014; World Bank, 2017). On a daily basis there can be a number of critical short-term issues, and it is the capacity for DUs to rigorously adhere to certain practices, irrespective of any crises – to have them routinised – that has been a key factor for success (Lafuente & González, 2018).

The types of routines highlighted in the literature, relate to performance management, refreshing the DU's focus, and routine meetings with political sponsors. With performance management routines, this involves using baseline data, benchmarks, other information, and mutually agreed targets for regular progress reviews to ensure a focus on delivery (Todd et al., 2014).

In addition to routines in planning, coordination and monitoring, Gold (2017) highlights the importance of routines to review the DU's effectiveness, generate new ideas and refresh the DU's operational focus. Failure to do so can mean that the DU does not adapt to changing circumstances, including changing leadership styles of the political executive (Gold, 2017).

Williams et al. (2021) notes that while political sponsorship can be understood as an input into DUs, the DUs can also leverage this sponsorship through regular contact with the sponsor. Thus, having routine performance review meetings provides a regular forum with which to maintain and leverage political sponsorship.

## 6. Coordination

There are a number of challenges in relation to coordination and connecting parts of government that may rarely have rarely communicated before, as well as managing relationships with political sponsors and service delivery actors (Gold, 2017; Lafuente & González, 2018; Shostak et al., 2014). Through collaborative working, DUs play a key role in problem-solving, supporting and challenging functions (Todd et al., 2014). However, it is crucial that they amplify senior leaders' authority rather than impose their own authority which could result in an adversarial relationship with ministries or departments.

Physical location can be helpful here. Even though the DU is best located outside the systems' line-management hierarchy, it should have direct communication with senior leadership and good communication routes between the DU and relevant ministries or departments (Todd et al., 2014). And as much of government business is done informally and serendipitously, physical location of the DU is critical (Gold, 2017). Proximity to the relevant ministries and the head of government allows formal accountability and communication mechanisms to be bolstered by informal approaches, as well as highlight the DU's symbolic and political importance. Conversely, attempting to operate in a remote location, that is away from the political sponsor and the line ministries or departments, hampers interaction and creates the impression that the unit lacks political traction.

So as to better engage with multiple stakeholders and engender a belief and willingness to change, an effective communication strategy is important (Todd et al., 2014). This can involve publicising the work, and ideally the eventual successes of the relevant ministries or departments. Stakeholders should be actively engaged in analysis of delivery issues and ownership of outcomes (Todd et al., 2014). An example of an approach to stakeholder engagement is the 'Labs' introduced by the 'PEMANDU' delivery unit in Malaysia which focused on planning and implementing solutions to remedy delivery constraints (Todd et al., 2014). The "Labs" are 6- to 9-week stakeholder workshops which break down priorities into discrete projects with responsible ministries, timelines, and performance indicators (World Bank, 2017). These can create ownership and motivate the teams involved (World Bank, 2017).

Todd et al. (2014) argue that it is important to strike a balance between planning and delivery. The authors note that governments usually employ annual planning and budgeting cycles but switching to longer-term planning (e.g. 3 years) can shift focus towards more meaningful indicators. This is because for some outcomes it can take several years to witness a significant change.

## 7. Strategy

There is a need to develop delivery strategies and have the adequate inputs for this (Lafuente & González, 2018). Such inputs could be in-depth studies of relevant issues, such as sector-specific knowledge, and knowledge delivery chain processes and workflows. In situations of the DU starting with a new administration it would be advisable to collate inputs and develop strategies either before the elections or during the transition period (Lafuente & González, 2018).

There should be adequate budgetary resources for each priority (Todd et al., 2014). Some governments have co-located the DU within the ministry of finance so as to increase coherence between delivery and budgeting (Todd et al., 2014). It is important to note that the DU should not be in charge of budgeting as that risks involvement in system-wide discussion on resource allocation rather than a focus on unblocking delivery obstacles (Todd et al., 2014). That said, the DU should engage somewhat with budget teams to influence resource allocation and prevent strategic impact being undermined (Lafuente & González, 2018).

In their analysis of the implementation of DUs in Latin American Countries (LAC), Lafuente & González (2018) apply Behn (2014)'s four complementary stages to their analysis:

- 1) Setting up indicators, goals, and protocols to ensure quality, timely information.
- 2) Drafting a strategy that establishes the causality between the activities and results sought, the timelines, resources, and those responsible for implementation.
- 3) Setting up mechanisms to deploy appropriate resources (e.g. technological, financial, human, physical) to execute this strategy.
- 4) Setting up monitoring and evaluation, and warning mechanisms to identify gaps between actual and expected performance.

Lafuente & González (2018) argue that these stages shift a system from monitoring to achieving results. However, they note that some DUs have focused more on stages 1 and 4, which focus on indicators and monitoring and evaluation whereas stages 2 and 3 on strategy and implementation mechanisms have not been implemented. These DUs may have thus reached planned milestones, for example, through a system of traffic lights, but this may not have necessarily relate to real change.

An analysis of LAC DUs finds that introducing a new DU management model after the administration's first year has not been successful (Lafuente & González, 2018). They argue that as the dynamics of a cabinet are often defined in the first few months of taking office it is important to set up the DU the start of the mandate. Clyne (expert comments) argues that with DUs that there is a natural cycle where political salience and authority of a new team may reduce over time. As such DUs can often be time-bound rather than permanent fixtures.

A shift in focus of ministries or departments away from overall spending and the role of services to an individual citizen-level perspective on outcomes can shift behaviour change across the systems (Todd et al., 2014). One approach is to involve front-line workers directly in analysing problems and developing solutions, another is to set up specific interactions between frontline workers and service users (Todd et al., 2014).

## 8. Data collection

Good quality data and metrics are essential to measure what matters (Todd et al., 2014). The capacity for timely information collection and quality assurance can help gauge progress on whether the DU is fulfilling its role (Lafuente & González, 2018). The focus should be on regularly collecting reliable and attributable data with minimal possible cost and only on the small number of priorities (Todd et al., 2014). In terms of indicators, Delivery Associates (2018) argues that they should be meaningful (i.e. citizens will care if the number changes), moveable (i.e. something that the DU can have leverage over), and measurable (i.e. having the data available immediately or at most within 3 months).

One common issue is insufficient capacity within the wider delivery system to support the unit's data-tracking systems and/or develop good-quality delivery plans (Gold, 2017). In some cases the DU sets up such capacity once in the role and while this beneficial it can delay the achievement of the mandated priorities (Lafuente & González, 2018).

## 9. Approval

Public approval can impact on DU legitimacy and therefore longevity (Lafuente & González, 2018). Rather than see the DU as an attempt to impose accountability around priorities, the public may see this as political propaganda and distrust information. Even where there have been positive results, public distrust can undermine the DU model's perception amongst political sponsors. Lafuente & González (2018) argue that it is important to introduce elements of public accountability to provide incentives within governments and in particular within line ministries to remain focused on the administration's priorities. They illustrate this with two examples (Lafuente & González, 2018):

- Uruguay: Through ministerial council meetings that were open to the public, the DU played a key role in ensuring accountability.
- Argentina: The City of Buenos Aires DU, through annual public accountability events with the head of government and a website, played an important role in the communication and accountability of public commitments.

Where line ministries and departments do not see the value of DUs, they may not share information, disagree over data accuracy, or otherwise distrust the information (Lafuente & González, 2018). In these situations, the perceived lack of technical and political capacity may mean the DU cannot influence key actors and leverage resources.

Where the DU takes credit for achievements, rather than the political executive and the line ministries, this can create tension and undermine collaboration (Lafuente & González, 2018). This can also be true where the DU has a high profile, competes politically with sectors, or has sectoral specialists who are seen to compete with ministers who are ostensibly responsible for priorities. There is a risk of DUs becoming isolated or that the DU institutionalises tensions

between the centre of government and departments (Gold, 2017). In terms of resolving this Gold (2017) highlights two models: embedding delivery unit staff members within the delivery systems and building a leadership coalition.

## 10. References

- Behn, R. D. (2014). *The PerformanceStat Potential: A Leadership Strategy for Producing Results*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Delivery Associates. (2018). *Success delivered: How delivery units make a difference for governments and the citizens they serve*. [https://assets-global.website-files.com/5fff9800b9f86a19055527f4/60358f69859211c7e2adb936\\_Success\\_Delivered.pdf](https://assets-global.website-files.com/5fff9800b9f86a19055527f4/60358f69859211c7e2adb936_Success_Delivered.pdf)
- Dumas, V., Lafuente, M., & Parrado, S. (2013). *Strengthening the Center of Government for Results in Chile: The Experience of the Ministry of the Presidency and its President's Delivery Unit (2010-13)* [Technical Note]. Inter-American Development Bank. <https://publications.iadb.org/en/strengthening-center-government-results-chile-experience-ministry-presidency-and-its-presidents>
- Gold, J. (2017). *Tracking delivery: Global trends and warning signs in delivery units*. Institute for Government. <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Global%20Delivery%20report.pdf>
- Harrison, T. (2016). *The role of the centre in driving government priorities: The experience of 'delivery units'* [Working Paper]. Oxford Policy Management. <https://www.opml.co.uk/files/Publications/corporate-publications/working-papers/wp-role-centre-driving-government-priorities.pdf?noredirect=1>
- Hart, C. (2017). *The Albania Delivery Unit: A case study on accountability in action*. Growth Lab. [https://albania.growthlab.cid.harvard.edu/files/albania-growthlab/files/hart\\_2017\\_accountability\\_in\\_action\\_-\\_albanian\\_delivery\\_unit.pdf?m=1527708899](https://albania.growthlab.cid.harvard.edu/files/albania-growthlab/files/hart_2017_accountability_in_action_-_albanian_delivery_unit.pdf?m=1527708899)
- Kohli, J., & Moody, C. (2016). *What is a delivery unit?* (Delivering Results Series). Deloitte. <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/public-sector/us-fed-what-is-a-delivery-unit.pdf>
- Kohli, J., Moody, C., & Buskey, M. (2016). *How should a delivery unit be designed?* (Delivering Results Series). <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/public-sector/us-fed-delivering-results-series.pdf>
- Lafuente, M., & González, S. (2018). *Do Delivery Units Deliver?: Assessing Government Innovations*. Inter-American Development Bank. <https://doi.org/10.18235/0001155>
- Scharff, M. (2014). *Translating Vision into Action: Indonesia's Delivery Unit, 2009-2012*. Innovations for Successful Societies, Princeton University. <https://successfulsocieties.princeton.edu/publications/translating-vision-action-indonesias-delivery-unit-2009-2012>
- Shostak, R., Watkins, J., Bellver, A., & John-Abraham, I. (2014). *When Might the Introduction of a Delivery Unit Be the Right Intervention* [Practice Note]. World Bank.

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/Resources/285741-1368636830774/When\\_Might\\_the\\_Intro\\_of\\_a\\_DU\\_Be\\_the\\_Right\\_Intervention\\_FINAL.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/Resources/285741-1368636830774/When_Might_the_Intro_of_a_DU_Be_the_Right_Intervention_FINAL.pdf)

Todd, R., Martin, J., & Brock, A. (2014). *Delivery Units: Can they catalyse sustained improvements in education service delivery?* Cambridge Education. <https://www.camb-ed.com/intdev/article/252/delivery-units>

Williams, M. J., Leaver, C., Mundy, K., Mansoor, Z., Qarout, D., Asim, M., Bell, S., & Bilous, A. (2021). *Delivery approaches to improving policy implementation: A conceptual framework* (DeliverEd Working Paper). Education Commission and Blavatnik School of Government. <http://educationcommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Delivery-Approaches-to-Improving-Policy-Implementation.pdf>

World Bank. (2010). *Driving Performance through Center of Government Delivery Units*. World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/10465>

World Bank. (2017). *Driving Performance from the Center: Malaysia's Experience with PEMANDU* [Working Paper]. World Bank. <https://doi.org/10.1596/26495>

## Acknowledgements

We thank the following experts who voluntarily provided suggestions for relevant literature or other advice to the author to support the preparation of this report. The content of the report does not necessarily reflect the opinions of any of the experts consulted.

- Tom Harrison, IDS
- Mariano Lafuente, IABD
- Kirsche Vincent, Delivery Associates
- Belinda Wood, Strategy Execution Advisors
- Patrick Diamond, Queen Mary University London
- Rhys Clyne, Institute for Government
- Dana Qarout, Oxford University

## Suggested citation

Rao, S. (2022). *Lessons learned from centre of government delivery units*. K4D Helpdesk Report 1150. Institute of Development Studies. DOI: [DOI: 10.19088/K4D.2022.115](https://doi.org/10.19088/K4D.2022.115)

## About this report

This report is based on six days of desk-based research. The K4D research helpdesk provides rapid syntheses of a selection of recent relevant literature and international expert thinking in response to specific questions relating to international development. For any enquiries, contact [helpdesk@k4d.info](mailto:helpdesk@k4d.info).

K4D services are provided by a consortium of leading organisations working in international development, led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), with the Education Development Trust, Itad, University of Leeds Nuffield Centre for International Health and Development, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM), University of Birmingham International Development Department (IDD) and the University of Manchester Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute (HCRI).

This report was prepared for the UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and its partners in support of pro-poor programmes. Except where otherwise stated, it is licensed for non-commercial purposes under the terms of the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#). K4D cannot be held responsible for errors or any consequences arising from the use of information contained in this report. Any views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of FCDO, K4D or any other contributing organisation.

© Crown copyright 2022.

