

## Peer Review Report

# Review Report on Examining Intersectoral Action as an approach to implementing multistakeholder collaborations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

Review, Int J Public Health

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### EVALUATION

#### **Q 1** Please summarize the main theme of the review.

The objective of this article was to investigate how intersectoral action (IA) is understood in the theoretical and empirical literature and to explore key features of successful models used by not only Canadian governments but also in the countries that are signatories to the SDGs. Based on a narrative review, the authors concluded the need to address the role of power in IA for health and the need to review the definition and understanding of the concept of equity.

#### **Q 2** Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

The strong points of the article are as follows. The first strong point relates to the authors' efforts to describe their search strategy: the search terms, the database, the diverse website as well as the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Second, the research objectives are clearly stated. The review covers a long period from 2000 to 2020; which is very significant. In addition, most references are appropriate and have been critically appraised. Intersectoral action is broadly presented in this review. In this sense, the article is relevant to the readers who are new in this large and complex topic.

Weak points. I find that the review does not highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the literature. The results are well summarized, but I have great difficulty identifying issues relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals. The authors neither provide profound analyses of the included studies nor highlight the controversies around the intersectoral topic. Intersectoral action is presented as an "easy" and "simple" process. This is far from what is reported in the theoretical literature and in practice. The following questions remain unanswered: what is the real theoretical and practical contribution of this narrative review? How can it shed light on intersectoral action practices within the framework of the sustainable development goals?

#### **Q 3** Please provide your detailed review report to the authors, structured in major and minor comments.

##### Major comments

The objectives of the article were to examine how Intersectoral action is understood and explore the main characteristics of successful models put in place by signatory governments. But to what extent? The reader assumes that this is to inform practices for achieving the goals of SDGs which is "leave no one behind" health equity. If this is the goal, then it would be better to highlight the obstacles to the establishment and progress of intersectoral action.

First, why do the authors only focus on facilitating factors when the authors themselves have mentioned that these factors are not always transferable without adapting them to contexts. In particular, developing countries face additional constraints due to their political situation and socio-economic conditions which may hamper the establishment and operation of such an approach. Second, the authors should decide whether keep their goals of exploring models of success or put them in the context to allow readers to understand how these models might be applied in the context of the SDGs. In this perspective, the review would contribute to the development of the approach for experts and practitioners.

In addition, the analysis is not profound. It is far from being critical, contrary to what the authors say in their introduction "we critically reflect on the results from a narrative review of how intersectoral action has been defined and conceptualized ...". In my opinion, the article does not broaden the knowledge based on intersectoral action in health. In contrast, the authors made an important point in their conclusion regarding how equity is defined and understood in intersectoral action. I think this is an interesting point. If the authors want their article to serve both theory and practice, they should look at equity by including the notion of power.

#### Minor comments

a) The review emphasizes the factors facilitating the design and implementation of intersectoral action. It would be better to address the facilitators of the functioning of intersectoral action. The authors could explain how power relations affect the conduct of IA and its effect on intersectoral action.

b) Institutional factors did not articulate clearly. These factors are common to all forms of intersectoral action for health at all levels. What is specific to institutions since the form of intersectoral action corresponds more to collaboration between state institutions. There are several studies on institutional limits and constraints and their effects on the success of intersectoral action for health.

c) Regarding power, it is true that there is not abundant literature on this topic, but Dewult and Elbers (2013) have developed a conceptual framework that explains how power is used in intersectoral partnerships in health sectors. This reference may be helpful.

d) The results are related to intersectoral action at the macro level. But what about the micro-level? It would be better to talk about facilitating or constraining factors at the micro-level. One of the targets of SDG 17 is capacity building. From an equity perspective, how can we reach marginalized populations and strengthen their capacity to act on their health if intersectoral action for health is not applied at the micro (local) level?

#### PLEASE COMMENT

**Q 4** Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?

Yes

**Q 5** Does this manuscript refer only to published data? (unpublished data is not allowed for Reviews)

Yes.

**Q 6** Does the manuscript cover the issue in an objective and analytical manner

Yes.

**Q 7** Was a review on the issue published in the past 12 months?

No.

**Q 8** Does the review have international or global implications?

Yes if the authors agree to edit the article. Otherwise no.

**Q 9** Is the title appropriate, concise, attractive?

The title of the article is inappropriate. The article is titled: "Understanding Canada's approach to intersectoral action in the Sustainable Development Goal Era". The reader expects to read text that documents the intersectoral action approach developed or adopted in Canada, but the authors did not mention it anywhere in the manuscript. Is there an approach that is specific to Canada? if so, the authors must submit it. Otherwise, the title should be changed.

**Q 10** Are the keywords appropriate?

Yes the keywords are appropriate.

**Q 11** Is the English language of sufficient quality?

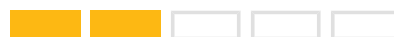
Yes

**Q 12** Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

Yes.

#### QUALITY ASSESSMENT

**Q 13** Quality of generalization and summary



**Q 14** Significance to the field



**Q 15** Interest to a general audience



**Q 16** Quality of the writing



#### REVISION LEVEL

**Q 17** Please take a decision based on your comments:

Major revisions.