New York University
Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

Decentralized Development Planning in Developing Countries

P11.2665              Spring 2009

Wednesday, January 21, 28 and February 4, 11, 18 (4:55-8:25 p.m.)
Friday, February 13, 20 (9:30 a.m.- 12:50 p.m.)
Waverly 431

Instructors:

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Description:

The last three decades have witnessed a global proliferation of public sector reform, decentralization, and democratization in developing countries. Traditional development planning has adapted to these trends as they have unfolded. This course presents an overview of the evolution of the theory and practice of planning in developing countries. A central theme is that the structure of a planning system and its success in producing good results depend heavily on the economic, political, institutional and cultural context of a particular country. The course outlines and evaluates conceptual planning models and systems, introduces a range of practices and tools used by local planners in developing countries, and reviews approaches used by international development agencies to support local development planning. The overall focus is on how local development planning systems can be designed to work effectively in different country contexts. Detailed case studies and exercises based on them are an integral part of the course.

Goals:

The main goals of the class are:

1) To familiarize students with the evolution of the theory and practice of development planning in developing countries;
2) To provide students with an overview of common types of development planning systems and efforts to decentralize planning processes;
3) To introduce students a range of local planning tools commonly used in developing countries;
4) To familiarize students with the approaches of international aid agencies to supporting local development planning, and,
5) To help students think about how to cope with real-world constraints on effective development planning and implementation.

Format:

The class will meet for a double session seven times during the first five weeks of the semester, five times on Wednesday and twice on Friday. The format will blend lecture and discussion. Class participation is encouraged and expected. Some of the assignments will require group work. The last part of the course will involve student research and presentations on a range of case studies of local planning systems in developing countries.

Requirements:

The grade will be based on the following:

- **Assignment 1** (Individual) Covering Parts I and II (20%)
- **Assignment 2** (Individual) Covering Part III (20%)
- **Assignment 3** (Team) (Covering Part IV (20%)
- **Class Participation** (10%)
- **Final Synthetic Paper** (Individual) (30%)

The assignments will involve a mixture of specific questions to be answered, analysis of policy situations, and application of planning tools and techniques. The final paper will require you to assess the system of decentralized development planning in a particular country. Details on all of the assignments will be provided in class.

Readings:

There are *no required text books* for the course. Relevant readings are provided on the Blackboard course site or can be downloaded from websites provided in the reading list. *Please note that some websites for journals that the NYU Library subscribes to can only be accessed from your NYU email account. You cannot get into these sites from other email addresses unless you have a personal subscription to the journal.*

The attached reading list also provides a number of optional readings. Guidance about the required and optional readings will be given regularly.

Teaching Assistant:

The teaching assistant for the course is Luis Chalico. He has some grading and instructional responsibilities and may be contacted for assistance. His email is: [luis.chalico@nyu.edu](mailto:luis.chalico@nyu.edu).
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Summary Schedule: Spring 2009

I. The Conceptual Foundations of Development Planning (January 21)
   *(Assignment 1 distributed)*

   Part A: The Evolution of Development Planning Paradigms
   Part B: The Urban-Rural Debate and its Implications for Development Planning

II. Broad Approaches to Development Planning Processes and Systems (January 28)

   Part A: Traditional and Alternative Approaches
   Part B: Planning Levels, Institutions, Actors and Linkages

III. Development Planning Systems and Citizen Participation (February 4)
     *(Assignment 1 due; Assignment 2 distributed)*

   Part B: Decentralized Participatory Planning and Budgeting

IV. Local Planning Tools in the Developing Country Context (February 11)
    *(Assignment 2 due; Assignment 3 distributed)*

   Part A: Tools for Identification, Prioritization and Formulation of Development Strategies, Programs and Projects
   Part B: Techniques for Appraisal of Programs and Projects

V. International Development Agency Approaches to Supporting Local Development Planning (February 13)

   Part A: Overview of Recent Approaches: Social Funds, Community Driven Development, Local Development Funds, City Development Strategies and Sector-wide Approaches
   Part B: Strategically Defining and Approaching Reform

VI. Case Studies of Local Development Planning Systems and Synthetic Discussion (February 18 and 20)
     *(Assignment 3 due February 20)*
Final Paper due on March 2.
Decentralized Development Planning in Developing Countries

Outline and Reading List

I. The Conceptual Foundations of Development Planning (January 21)

A synthetic overview of key concepts from development economics, public finance and urban and rural development that have shaped the theory and practice of development planning.

A. The Evolution of Development Planning Paradigms


Recommended

D. Conyers and P. Hills, An Introduction to Development Planning in the Third World (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 1984), Chapters 1-4.


B. The Urban and Rural Debate and its Implications for Development Planning


Readings marked with an "*" are required and are available on Blackboard. Readings marked with a "**" are required and can be downloaded from the internet site provided.
II. Broad Approaches to Development Planning Processes and Systems (January 28)

*Overview of the major approaches to planning and implementation—project-driven, sectoral, integrated, strategic, and collaborative—as well as centralized, decentralized and multi-level planning systems.*

A. Traditional and Alternative Approaches to Planning

*Conyers and Hills (1984), Chapters 5 and 8, pp. 67-87, pp. 130-153.


**Recommended


P. Healey, Collaborative Planning (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997).

**B. Planning Levels, Institutions, and Actors and Linkages


*Conyers and Hills, Chapter 12-13, pp. 193-228.


Recommended


S. Fritzen and Patrick Lim, “Problems and Prospects of Decentralization in Developing Countries,” LKY School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore, 2006.

J. Cohen and S. Peterson, Administrative Decentralization Strategies for the 1990s and Beyond (West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1999), Chapters 1-3, pp. 1-68.

B. Smith, Decentralization: The Territorial Dimension of the State, (Boston, MA: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), Chapter 2, pp.18-45.

III. Development Planning Systems and Citizen Participation (February 4)


Recommended


**B. Decentralized Participatory Planning and Budgeting**


Recommended


IV. Local Planning Tools in the Developing Country Context (February 11)

Overview of key planning tools used in developing countries: mapping the local environment, problem identification and prioritization of development projects, project cycle management, and project appraisal

A. Tools for Identification, Prioritization and Formulation of Strategies, Programs and Projects


*Queensland Department of Local Governments, Sports and Recreation SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Training Kit, Workbooks 1 and 2.


Recommended


**B. Programs and Projects Appraisal Techniques**


Recommended


M. Rogers, Engineering Project Appraisal, Blackwell Science (2001) Ch.10 and Ch.11 pp.195-257

**V. International Development Agency Approaches to Supporting Decentralization and Local Development Planning (February 13)**

Review recent donor approaches and strategies to support development planning and governance/capacity building, including Social Funds, Community Driven Development, Sector-wide Approaches, Local Development Funds, and City Development Strategies.

**Note:** The readings for this section are not separated into Part A and Part B because many of the readings cover both an explanation of the various programs (Part A) and the strategy for their use (Part B).


*L. Romeo, Yemen: towards the Formulation of the National Program for Local Governance and Development (N-PLGD). LDI report 03/08 (2008)

Recommended


VI. Case Studies of Local Development Planning Systems (February 18 and 20)

Detailed cases of intergovernmental development planning system reform are summarized, critiqued and discussed.

We will cover in detail three cases, one each from Africa (Uganda), Asia (Cambodia), and Latin America (Nicaragua). The cases will be selected to cover a spectrum of experience in different regions. Each case will include a presentation by an expert involved in the case (one of the faculty members or a guest speaker) and a class discussion on the case.

The readings will be a mix of academic papers on the case countries, project documents, and evaluation documents. The readings will be posted on Blackboard at least one week in advance of the case presentation/discussion in class.