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

Decentralized Development Planning in Developing Countries

P11.2665 Fall 2010
Monday, 4:55 p.m. Silver 208

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 commonly 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 strategically designed and implemented 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 weekly. 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** (Team) Covering Part I (15%)
- **Assignment 2** (Individual) Covering Part II (15%)
- **Assignment 3** (Individual) Covering Part III (15%)
- **Assignment 4** (Team) Covering Part IV (15%)
- **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 or to do a paper on a topic or theme of your choosing subject to faculty approval. 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 Gundula Loffler. She has some grading and instructional responsibilities and may be contacted for assistance. Her email is: gundula.loffler@nyu.edu.
PART I: OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND SELECTED CASES

Week 1: The Evolution of Development Planning Paradigms (September 13)
Week 2: Planning Systems in Different Contexts/Country Case: Kenya (September 20)
Week 3: Planning Systems in Different Contexts/Country Case: Cambodia (September 27) (Exercise 1 distributed)
Week 4: First Exercise (October 4) (Exercise 1 due October 8)
Week 5: Discussion of First Exercise (October 11) (Final Paper Guidelines distributed)

PART II: DEVELOPMENT PLANNING APPROACHES AND PROCESSES

Week 6: The Urban-Rural Debate and Broad Planning Approaches (October 18)
Week 7: Planning Levels, Institutions, Actors and Linkages (October 26) (Exercise 2 distributed)

PART III: DEVELOPMENT PLANNING SYSTEMS AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Week 8: Public Expenditure Management and Local Government Planning Systems (November 1) (Exercise 2 due)
Week 9: Decentralized Participatory Planning and Budgeting (November 8) (Exercise 3 distributed)

PART IV: LOCAL PLANNING TOOLS IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRY CONTEXT

Week 10: Tools for Identification, Prioritization and Formulation of Development Strategies, Programs and Projects (November 15) (Exercise 3 due)
Week 11: Techniques for Appraisal of Programs and Projects (November 22) (Exercise 4 distributed)

PART V: BUILDING PLANNING SYSTEMS: INTERNATIONAL AID AGENCY APPROACHES AND COUNTRY STRATEGIES

Week 12: Overview of Approaches to Development Planning and Governance/Capacity Building: Social Funds, Local Development Funds, and City Development Strategies (November 29) (Exercise 4 due)
Week 13: Strategically Defining and Approaching Reform I: Cambodia, Nicaragua, Yemen (December 6)
Week 14: Strategically Defining and Approaching Reform II: Kenya, Uganda (December 13)

PART VI: SYNTHESIS AND LOOKING FORWARD

Week 15: Drawing Lessons and Open Discussion (December 15: Monday class schedule on
Wednesday) (Final Paper due December 17)

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Fall 2010 Paul Smoke

Decentralized Development Planning in Developing Countries

Outline and Reading List

I. Overview of Development Planning and Selected Cases (Sept. 13-Oct. 11)

A synthetic overview of the theory and practice of development planning with selected case illustrations. The cases will be used to introduce concrete planning issues in the developing country context. We will return to the cases later with a forward looking perspective after going into more depth on planning concepts, approaches, systems and tools.

A. The Evolution of Development Planning Paradigms (Sept. 13)


Recommended

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


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.

**B. Planning Systems in Different Contexts** (Sept. 20-27; In-Class Exercise, Oct. 4-11)

**Kenya (September 20)**


**Recommended**


Cambodia (September 27)


Recommended


II. Development Planning Approaches and Processes (Oct. 18-26)

Overview of the major approaches to and prominent debates in planning and implementation— rural vs. urban, project- driven, sectoral, integrated, strategic, and collaborative—as well as centralized, decentralized and multi-level planning systems.

A. Broad Planning Approaches and the Rural-Urban Debate (October 18)

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


**Recommended**


B. Planning Levels, Institutions, and Actors and Linkages (Oct. 25)


*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 (Nov. 1-8)

Overview of key dimensions and issues of local planning practice: strategic planning, capital development programming, performance budgeting, spatial-socioeconomic planning linkages, and participatory approaches/mechanisms

A. Public Expenditure Management and Local Government Planning Systems (Nov. 1)


Recommended


**B. Decentralized Participatory Planning and Budgeting (Nov. 8)**

*UNCHS and Municipal Development Partnership for Eastern and Southern Africa, Participatory Budgeting in Africa – A Training Companion with cases from eastern and southern Africa; Volume I: Concepts and Principles, UNCHS (2008), Ch. 3 pp 32-38


Recommended


IV. Local Planning Tools in the Developing Country Context (Nov. 15-22)
Overview of key planning tools used in developing countries: mapping the local context and environment, problem identification, project prioritization, project cycle management, and project appraisal

A. Tools for Identification, Prioritization and Formulation of Strategies, Programs and Projects (Nov. 15)


Recommended


B. Programs and Projects Appraisal Techniques (Nov. 22)


Recommended


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

V. Building Planning Systems: International Aid Agency Approaches and Country Strategies (November 29-December 13)
Review recent 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.

A. Overview of Approaches to Development Planning and Governance/Capacity Building (November 29)


Recommended


**B. Strategically Defining and Approaching Reform**


Recommended

Various additional readings on countries covered in this section are posted under the recommended readings on Blackboard.

VI. Synthesis and Looking Forward (December 15)

Open discussion driven by student questions on key lessons from experience, ongoing debates and future directions and prospects for local and intergovernmental planning. Class members will be asked to submit questions one week in advance of the final class.