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

Decentralized Development Planning in Developing Countries

URPL-GP 2665
Spring 2018
Monday, 4:55-6:35 pm
60 Fifth Ave., Room 161

Instructors:

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Description:

The last several decades have witnessed a global proliferation of public sector restructuring, decentralization, and democratization in developing countries. Traditional development planning has adapted (unevenly) 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 with a particular focus on subnational governments. A central theme is that there are certain universal norms and processes in development planning, but the structure and performance of a planning system depend heavily on the economic, political, institutional and cultural context of a particular country. The course outlines and assesses planning models and systems, reviews approaches used by developing countries and international development agencies to support decentralization and local planning, and introduces selected practices and tools used by local planners in developing countries. The overall focus is on how local planning systems, processes and techniques can be strategically designed and implemented to work effectively in different contexts. Case studies and exercises based on them are an integral part of the course.

Main Learning Objectives:

1) To familiarize students with the evolution of the theory and practice of development planning and related public sector systems and procedures 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 approaches/tools used in developing countries;
4) To familiarize students with the approaches of international development agencies to supporting local development planning, and,
5) To help students think about how to cope with real-world constraints on effective decentralized development planning.
Format

The class will meet weekly. The format will blend lecture, in-class exercises and discussion. Class participation is encouraged and expected. Three of the five assignments will require group work, but the largest share of the grade is based on individual assignments.

Requirements

The grade will be based on the following:

Exercise 1 (Team) (10%) Due February 16
Exercise 2 (Individual) (25%) Due March 21
Exercise 3 (Team) (10%) Due April 11
Class Attendance and Participation (10%)
Final Presentation (Team) (15%) In Class April 30 and May 7
Final Paper (Individual) (30%) Due May 14

The assignments will variously involve a mixture of questions to be answered, analysis of policy situations, and the application of basic planning tools and techniques. The final presentation (team) requires you to assess the system (or some aspect) of decentralized development planning in a particular country and the final paper (individual) can build on the presentation or be on a topic or theme of your choice subject to faculty approval. Details will be provided in class.

Please note that the attendance requirement is subject to NYU's Policy on Religious Holidays (https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html)

Please note that extensions on assignment due dates will be granted only if requested in advance for well justified reasons. This policy is adopted out of respect to those who have abided by deadlines, despite having hectic and complex schedules. Assignments handed in late without approved extensions will be penalized one-third of a grade per day.

Academic Honesty and Grading Policy

The course follows the NYU Wagner policy guidelines on academic honesty and grading. It is your personal responsibility to become familiar with these policies. All students are expected to pursue and meet the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity. Please see the NYU Wagner Student Portal for information on the academic code and grading policy (you need to be logged in to access these links).

Academic Code: https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/code
Grading: https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/grading
Readings

There are no required text books for the course. In part this is because the literature on the topic is rather disjointed--some is more conceptual, while other material is more technical; some is rather general, while other material is fairly specific to industrialized or developing countries; some is more oriented towards the goals of planning, while other material centers on processes; some of the concepts, approaches and techniques are relatively new, while others have been around for a long time (although they may have evolved considerably).

Accordingly, we have selected a set of readings that we think contribute to current thinking on the topics being covered. These readings are a mixture of a few older classics and more recent work by both academics and practitioners. The readings are broadly drawn from the planning, social science and public management literatures. Required readings are provided on the NYU Classes course site or can be downloaded from websites provided in the reading list.

You should be aware that the readings vary in quality and complexity, and the connections among some of them may not always seem obvious. We try to synthesize the material in class and we often talk about issues that are not directly covered in the readings. Given this, it is important for you to check in with us or a classmate on what was covered if you are unable to attend class.

Please note that some websites for journals that the NYU Library subscribes to can only be accessed by logging in to your NYU email account and entering through the library system. You cannot get into these password-protected sites from other email addresses unless you have a personal subscription to the journal.

Although there is no text book, we posted on NYU classes a useful volume prepared for Habitat III by the Inter-American Development Bank, UN-Habitat and the Development Bank of Latin America: D. Gomez-Alvarez, R. Rajack, E. Lopez-Moreno and G. Lanfranchi, eds. Steering the Metropolis: Metropolitan Governance for Sustainable Development. (Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank, 2017). It contains chapters on topics relevant for the course (not all are explicitly covered) as well as a range of case studies of particular cities. Some chapters may be of interest to you and may be useful in framing your final course presentations/papers.

The attached reading list also provides a number of supplementary (optional) readings, some of which are posted on NYU Classes or links are provided, but others you will have to locate on your own in the NYU Library or elsewhere. These readings are intended to illustrate the state of the academic and practitioner literature--they are not comprehensive. Guidance about the required and optional readings will be given regularly.

At the end of the Resources area of NYU Classes is a folder with a set of selected case materials on decentralization and a folder with a set of selected case materials on subnational/intergovernmental planning systems. We will refer to these from time to time, and they may be useful as supplementary reading and/or for developing your final course presentations/papers.
PART I: OVERVIEW AND KEY PLANNING ISSUES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (January 22, 29 February 5)

Class 1: The Evolution of Development Planning Paradigms and Cultures
Class 2: The Rural-Urban Debate in Development Planning
Class 3: Development Planning and Public Expenditure Management
Exercise 1 (Team): Due February 16

PART II: DECENTRALIZATION AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF MULTI-LEVEL PLANNING AND FINANCING SYSTEMS (February 12, 26, March 5)
(No Class on February 19--Presidents Day Holiday)

Class 4: Decentralization: Local Governments, Participation and Partnerships
Class 5: Multilevel and Local/Urban Planning: Institutional Design and Reality
Class 6: Urban and Metropolitan Governance and Finance
Exercise 2 (Individual): Due March 21

PART III: STRATEGIC INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING
(March 19, 26, April 2)
(No Class on March 12--Spring Break)

Class 7: An Integrated Territorial Approach to Local Development Planning I
Class 8: An Integrated Territorial Approach to Local Development Planning II
Class 9: Selected Tools for Strategic Development Planning
Exercise 3 (Team): Due April 11

PART IV: BUILDING DEVELOPMENT PLANNING SYSTEMS AND THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE
(April 9, 16, 23)

Class 10: Approaches to Building Decentralized Planning Systems I
Class 11: Approaches to Building Decentralized Planning Systems II
Class 12: City Development Strategies and Metropolitan Planning

PART V: PRESENTATIONS (TEAM), SYNTHESIS AND LOOKING FORWARD
(April 30, May 7)

Class 13: Presentations I
Class 14: Presentations II and Open Discussion (driven by student questions submitted in advance)

Final Assignment (Individual) due May 14
Decentralized Development Planning in Developing Countries

Outline and Reading List

I. OVERVIEW AND KEY DEVELOPMENT PLANNING ISSUES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (January 22-February 5)

Prior to doing the other required readings, please have a quick look at the following two (very different) cases written by applied planning researchers from Zimbabwe and Bangladesh. You do not need to focus on the details (we will look at detailed cases later), but please think about the main messages and questions you believe are raised by the experiences:


For those who need a concise refresher/review of international development thinking (especially for those without an international development background), you may wish to read:


1. The Evolution of Development Planning Paradigms and Cultures (January 23)

This session concisely reviews the evolution of development planning in developing countries, following the transformation from a focus on economic growth to a broader development perspective; the movement from dominance by technical analysis to a greater incorporation of political process; and the shift from centralized to more decentralized planning. We also briefly consider the role of planning culture and the transferability of planning approaches across different contexts.

Readings marked with an "**" are available on NYU Classes.
**Required Readings**


**Note:** *National Development Plans* for selected countries that we will be discussing to varying degrees during the semester--Cambodia, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, the Philippines, South Africa, and Uganda--are located in a labeled sub-folder on NYU Classes under Part I. You may wish to have a quick look at some of them to get a sense of what plans look like.

**Supplementary Readings**


2. **The Rural-Urban Debate in Development Planning (January 29)**

This session introduces a long-contested issue in development with considerable relevance for planning—the relative role of rural areas versus urban areas in promoting economic development and social well-being. We take a brief look at some key issues and trends and note the growing re-emergence of interest in rural-urban linkages, secondary cities and national urban strategies.

**Required Readings**


**Supplementary Readings**


3. **Development Planning and Public Expenditure Management (February 5)**

This session places development planning in the broader framework of public expenditure management (PEM), which has been a neglected element in the planning literature. We review basic PEM principles and the PEM cycle and highlight the relationships between development planning and multi-year investment programming and annual budgeting.

**Required Readings**


**Supplementary Readings**


*V. Elmer, *Capital Improvement Plans and Budgets*, (Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute, 2009).

**II. DECENTRALIZATION AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF MULTI-LEVEL PLANNING AND FINANCING SYSTEMS (February 12-March 5)**

1. *Decentralization: Local Government, Participation and Partnership* (February 12)

   *This session provides an overview of public sector decentralization and the role of local governments in development planning in the context of diverse and often complex multi-actor environments. We also take a very brief look at participation and partnerships with nongovernmental actors as elements of local governance relevant for local development planning.*

   **Required Readings**


Supplementary Readings


This session examines the ways in which local and urban governments are embedded in larger national institutional and fiscal structures and considers how this affects their ability to develop and implement development plans. Given the great institutional variation across counties, we briefly consider selected cases to illustrate a range of intergovernmental arrangements for delivering public functions, including development planning.
**Required Readings**


*K.V. Sundaram, Decentralized Multilevel Planning: Principles and Practice (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1997), Chapters 2, 4, and 5; pp. 51-66, 98-147. *(Skim this as an example of a conventional multilevel planning system).*


**Supplementary Readings**


3. **Urban and Metropolitan Governance and Finance (March 5)**


**Supplementary Readings**


**III. STRATEGIC INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING (March 19-April 2)**

1. **An Integrated Territorial Approach to Local Development** (March 19, 26)

   This session reviews the evolving movement towards subnational plans that strategically integrate spatial, socioeconomic and environmental planning. We highlight and illustrate policy decisions that must be made about the territorial scale of planning, planning instruments and processes, multi-level coordination mechanisms; and national planning oversight and support. We conclude by outlining an emerging synthetic territorial approach to local development.


Supplementary Readings


*Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (South Africa), Guidelines for the Development of Municipal Spatial Development Frameworks (Pretoria, 2012).


*A. Todes. Rethinking Spatial Planning. (Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, 2008).


2. **Tools for Strategic Development Planning (April 2)**

This session introduces selected basic techniques of strategic planning. We focus on Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis, but also provide a brief review of multi-criteria analysis (MCA), the logical framework approach (LFA) and project appraisal techniques. These tools are commonly applied in strategic planning to identify development goals and strategies and to develop policies, programs and projects intended to achieve them.

**Required Readings**

*ODI. *Context Assessment SWOT Analysis*, (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2009)


**Supplementary Readings**


[NB: a free AHP Excel Template, with instructions on its use can be downloaded from http://bpmsg.com/new-ahp-excel-template-with-multiple-inputs/]


IV. BUILDING DEVELOPMENT PLANNING SYSTEMS AND THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE (April 9-23)

1. **Approaches to Developing Decentralized Planning Systems** (April 9, 16)

This session reviews the evolution of approaches used by developing countries and international development partners to build local development planning systems, governance and capacity. We link these various approaches to broader international donor agency support for decentralization.

**Required Readings**


**Selected recent approaches and initiatives may be explored at:**

World Bank Urban Development Strategy Overview and Videos
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLopq6yGfmFAv6CFB0hkSm2z_lWrW_p2wH

UNCDF Local Development
http://www.uncdf.org/local-development-finance

UN-Habitat Urban Planning and Design
https://unhabitat.org/expertise/2-urban-planning-and-design/

**Supplementary Readings**


2. **City Development Strategies and Metropolitan Planning** (April 23)


**Supplementary Readings**


More information and cases are available here: [http://www.citiesalliance.org/cds](http://www.citiesalliance.org/cds)
V. PRESENTATIONS, SYNTHESIS AND LOOKING FORWARD (April 30 and May 7)

In this section, student teams will give presentations on decentralized development planning in specific countries. Each presentation will be followed by a brief discussion period.

In the second part of the final class meeting, the instructors will provide some synthetic comments, but the focus will be on an open discussion driven by student questions about 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.

Individual final papers are due no later than 5 pm on May 14th.