Summercourse 7 - 9 July 2008

Decentralisation and Local Governance

How do decentralisation policies contribute to poverty reduction in developing and transitional countries? In what way can a transfer of power and budget from central to local authorities lead to better services at the local level? How can dialogue be stimulated between national governments and local stakeholders? And how can local governments be made more accountable to their citizens?

These are the key questions that will be discussed during the summercourse Decentralisation and Local Governance. The course is designed for professionals dealing with decentralisation processes and local service delivery in developing and transitional countries. It will provide you with indicators for assessing and monitoring decentralisation practices and increase your insight into decentralisation processes in different contexts, such as fragile states or countries with ethnic tensions. Fiscal decentralisation, sources for local income generation and local leadership issues will be discussed, as well as aid modalities and the role of the donor community.
Experts

Contributions come from practitioners in the field of decentralisation and local governance, with extensive experience in various parts of the world.

* **Paul Smoke**, professor and director of the international programs office at the University of New York’s Wagner Institute, is a leading expert in fiscal decentralisation. His experience in research and technical assistance has extended to Cambodia, Uganda, South Africa, Ethiopia, Vietnam, India, Palestine, Yemen, Brazil, Nepal, Egypt, and the USA. He has worked with various international organisations, including the World Bank, UNDP, UNCDF, African Development Bank, DFID, SIDA and GTZ.

* **Otto Stapel**, is an experienced and all round expert in the field of public administration and local governance and specialised in participatory policy making. For VNG International, he worked in projects aimed at developing local government in a.o. Sudan, Afghanistan and Iraq.

* **Glendal Wright** works as an independent consultant for UNDP, USAID and EU projects on local governance and decentralisation. Before, he was policy advisor at the UNDP Regional Centre in Bratislava and the UNDP Country Offices in Ukraine and Macedonia. Glendal worked on public finance and intergovernmental relations projects for the World Bank, USAID, and DFID in many of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. He has edited and co-authored textbooks on public finance and public management with focus on the problems of transition in Central and Eastern Europe that have been translated into six languages.

* **John Jackson**, a local governance expert, has worked as a civil servant for 21 years in local, national and public sectors at senior levels. John is broadly experienced in advising and training local government staff in Eastern Europe, Turkey, Russia, Georgia, Armenia. In these countries, he developed several National Training Strategies together with governments and led the Best Practice Programme in cooperation with local government associations. He also developed a toolkit for strengthening local government associations and a leadership benchmark for mayors.

The course facilitator will be a trainer of MDF, a Dutch worldwide operating management training and consultancy bureau with branches in Tanzania, Congo, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Brussels.
Learning Objectives

The Decentralisation and Local Governance summer course aims to support you in:

- Assessing decentralisation practices in the countries you work in
- Increasing insight into the various factors that influence performance at the local level
- Understanding the effects of decentralisation policies on local service delivery and poverty reduction
- Thinking about interventions and strategies for a more effective implementation of decentralisation in partner countries
- Exchanging experiences with other professionals in the field

Content

We will start with identifying the challenges you face in your daily work and the expectations you have for this summer course. Your input will determine topics for discussions and exercises during the course.

The programme consists of four modules:

- Assessing decentralisation practices
- Fiscal decentralisation
- Local leadership and accountability
- Decentralisation and development goals
Day 1 — Assessing decentralisation practices

The first day of the course will discuss indicators for assessing decentralisation practices. We start with an overview of indicators for political, administrative and fiscal decentralisation. Factors for horizontal and vertical coordination and indicators for capacity at a local level will be identified.

We will continue with the context of decentralisation practices and discuss the characteristics of countries with sub-national authoritarianism and elite capturing, countries with territorial cleavages and ethnic or religious tensions, and fragile states. Otto Stapel will share his experiences with developing local government in fragile states such as Afghanistan, Sudan and Iraq.

In the afternoon, you will discuss in groups the indicators that are most relevant for your working practice and instruments for gathering the information needed to assess and monitor decentralisation.

Day 2 — Zooming in on the local level

On the second day we will focus on the local level. The morning will be dedicated to fiscal decentralisation, and the afternoon will be about local leadership and accountability.

A municipal finance game will introduce you to the world of local financing. After this ‘appetizer’, Paul Smoke will talk about fiscal decentralisation in developing and transitional countries. Inter-administrative grant transfers, local taxes and user fees related to decentralised services will be discussed. Paul will illustrate fiscal decentralisation in various countries with research results and his own experiences. He will also define the obstacles to fiscal decentralisation and the ways to approach issues of implementation.

In the afternoon, we will zoom in on local government capacity. Local leadership and accountability, ethics and integrity, and instruments for increasing citizen involvement will be discussed by John Jackson. He will talk about his experiences in developing leadership, management and technical skills at the local level. He will explain the role local government associations can play both in capacity development and advocacy with central governments.
Day 3 → Decentralisation and development goals

Under which conditions do decentralisation policies most benefit the poor? In what way do they contribute to the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals? These questions are addressed by Glendal Wright, who will present UNDP research results in the field of decentralisation. He will describe the characteristics of countries that can be classified as either positive or negative performers and draw lessons for the donor community.

In the afternoon, we will discuss the following questions: How do decentralisation policies fit within Sector Wide Approaches? How can we stimulate a more pro-poor focus with partner countries? And how can we contribute to a stronger dialogue between central government and local stakeholders?

Finally, you will prepare an individual action plan that describes the steps you can take yourself to contribute to a more effective implementation of decentralisation and a better delivery of local services in partner countries.

Application procedure and course fee

The participation fee is €2,195.- per person (incl. VAT). This includes all training related costs, documentation, drinks and lunches during the course and dinner on the first and the second day. Hotel accommodation in The Hague can be found from €90.- a night.

If you want to register, please complete the application form at www.thehagueacademy.com/traiprog-courses2008 before 1 June 2008. Upon receipt of your application we will send you a confirmation and an invoice. The course fee can be paid either by credit card or by bank transfer. Conditions for payment and cancellation can be found at our website as well.

For more information please contact us at info@thehagueacademy.com or visit our website www.thehagueacademy.com.