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Editor's notes

Welcome to the fifth issue of **dlgn news**!

This issue is dedicated to informing about the Joint Training Programme on DLG organised by DeLoG in the framework of the Train4Dev Initiative. Additionally, Erika Schläppli writes an article on "Decentralization: a magic bullet for gender equality?" which includes respective links for further reading on the topic.

This issue includes, as well, and for the first time a "Member Review", with the reflections of Norbert Pijls on the DVD Learning Tool on Federalism presented on the **dlgn news** issue 4, highlighting that this Video-set is "*a complete and interesting introduction to federalism*". Also for the first time, three Competence Centers on dlgn in Switzerland share their experience and expertise: The Helvetas Governance and Peace team; the Advokatur Arn Friedrich Strecker and the Swiss Center of Expertise in Social Science – FORS.

Network news received from Switzerland, Honduras, Burkina Faso, Albania and LoGIn share updates on the current events and activities of dlgn members in those countries. Thanks to all of you who sent contributions and updates to us! Finally, five training opportunities on dlgn and related topics for the next months are detailed and described with their respective contact links.

As always, we hope that you enjoy this issue and that it provides you with the information and links you are looking for.

Warm regards,

Kuno Schläfli,

Focal Point DLG, Western Balkans Division SDC

Development Partners offer a Joint Training Programme on dlgn

By [Kuno Schläfli](#), member of the Subgroup T4D of the DeLoG

The subgroup on training of the DeLoG (formerly the Development Partners working group on decentralisation and local governance DPWG-DLG) met in Bonn on August 24th, to elaborate an implementation plan for a joint training programme on dlgn (www.train4dev.net). The training will be organized in the framework of the Train4Dev Initiative and will be constructed on the basis of the training modules used in the pilot course organized last January in Brussels, which was attended by 11 members of the **dlgn**. Feedback from **dlgn** members to the pilot can be found on the following link: http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/Community_Affairs/Community_Activities/Train4Dev_January_2011 and feedback from other participants can be found on the link: http://www.dpwg-lgd.org/cms/front_content.php?idcat=68

In-country training events

The DeLoG offer will comprise training courses delivered upon request by dlg sector groups (issued by their lead agencies) jointly with the partner governments. In the in-country training events, theoretical inputs on various aspects of decentralisation will be complemented by case studies highlighting mainly situations from the host country. The courses will be open to national partners and staff of development partner agencies. This promises to present unique opportunities to discuss the national reform agenda and to develop common views. The organization of in-country courses will be provided by the sector group in the partner country according to the DeLoG rules inspired by T4D experiences, and the trainers will be provided by the DeLoG subgroup.

Generic Modules

The generic modules tested in Brussels will also be used for introductory courses to dlg in an environment marked by increasing harmonization and coordination efforts. The introductory courses, which will be organized by different donors, will be open to all staff of the 26 development agencies, members of the DeLoG. This setup ensures learning and exchange about approaches and modalities of different partners.

E-learning courses

The third training activity, which was discussed by the subgroup, is the organisation of E-learning courses. A GIZ specialized unit will look into that question and examine the advantages and disadvantages of this option to be discussed at the next subgroup meeting, which will be held in Copenhagen around November/December of this year.

Further information on the *Train4Dev Expert Group Meeting Minutes*, the *Concept Note for the Course* and the *training program developed in Bonn*, can be found in the following link:

http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/Community_Affairs/Community_Activities/dlgnews



Decentralization: a magic bullet for gender equality?

By [Erika Schläppi](#)

It is generally assumed that successful decentralization makes government more accessible, accountable and responsive to women. However, it is not always easy for women to enter the local political arena still dominated by men. Women are confronted with a locally powerful combination of (often very patriarchal) social and political forces which hinders them to be elected or to take an independent position and make their voices heard. Moreover, research has shown that women's participation in local government often contributed to reinforce their traditional roles as caregivers and homemakers, rather than helped them to gain more influence over the decisions that affect them. In many cases, substantive gains in balancing men's and women's interests in economic and social development and protecting women's rights were made at national level and not at local level.

Decentralization and local governance do have important potentials from a gender equality perspective, if certain elements are considered. Among other things, women need to be organized and represented politically, at local and national level, with a view to join forces and make their voices heard. Best results on gender equality are achieved when local actors can link up with the existing national frameworks on decentralization and gender equality. Moreover, women are not all the same: Their belonging to different social groups may shape their access to decision-making, services and resources even more than their gender identity, and if local governance is to have a real impact on gender equality, it has to take a differentiated approach.

Gender equality does not simply equate increased representation of women in local government or increased presence of women in project implementation. This is a good starting point, but not sufficient. It has been observed that in many countries, women pay the price for scarce resources available at local level. For example, the introduction of user fees for local services in education, water and health can have a significantly stronger impact on poor women than men. If decentralized governance aspires to respond effectively to the needs of the local population (and not only to local elites), it has to be gender sensitive, understanding and balancing the concerns of both women and men of various social groups, and design local policies and public spending accordingly. Thus, gender equality is not only an aim in itself, but a building block of effectiveness of local governance – and an indicator for local governance performance.

Further reading on this topic:

IDRC Women's Rights and Citizenship Program, "Realizing their needs: Women's access to public services in Sector decentralization", [http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Programs/Social and Economic Policy/Womens Rights and Citizenship/Pages/ArticleDetails.aspx?PublicationID=572](http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Programs/Social%20and%20Economic%20Policy/Womens%20Rights%20and%20Citizenship/Pages/ArticleDetails.aspx?PublicationID=572);

[http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Programs/Social and Economic Policy/Womens Rights and Citizenship/Pages/ArticleDetails.aspx?PublicationID=552](http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Programs/Social%20and%20Economic%20Policy/Womens%20Rights%20and%20Citizenship/Pages/ArticleDetails.aspx?PublicationID=552)

UNDP/UNIFEM, A User's Guide to Measuring Gender-Sensitive Basic Service Delivery, UNDP Oslo 2009, http://www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs09/undp_guide_english.pdf

Rebecca Smith (2010), Practice Reports: Decentralization and Women's rights in Latin America: a magic bullet for gender equality? <http://www.capacity.org/capacity/opencms/en/topics/gender-and-social-inclusion/a-magic-bullet-for-gender-equality.html>

BRIDGE/Siyanda (2009) update on gender and local governance, <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/go/home&id=58676&type=Document&langID=1>



Member review: “Learning about Federalism and Fiscal Federalism” Two educational videos and a Facilitator’s Guide.

By [Norbert Pijls](#)

Since the end of the Second World War, the number of federations in the world has increased from 4 to 28 – comprising 40% of the world’s population in 2011. Apparently, there is something very attractive to this form of public administration of countries. As the name explains, the Forum of Federations thinks that this is indeed the case. They produced two educational videos and a facilitator’s guide that can help convince the rest of the world of this fact.

The DVD on Federalism starts quietly with introducing basic characteristics. However, several video seminars later, you need to change your glass of wine for some paper and a pen. By then, the basic notion of a government with constitutionally enshrined different levels that have shared sovereignty is mixed with presidential and parliamentary systems, with the role of regional or national parties, with strong or weak constitutional courts and with the raising, spending and sharing of taxes. The DVD on Fiscal Federalism goes more into detail on this last issue. It touches upon vertical equity (between federal government and constituent units) and horizontal equity (between constituent units). It explains dualist federations (where federal and constituent units administer their own legislated programs) and integrated federations (where the constituent units administer federal laws in specific areas like health care and education). It also has a module devoted to collecting revenues and managing transfers.

The unique selling point of the video is however its combination with the Facilitator’s Guide. This transforms the introductions into a powerful and accessible educational tool. The guide allows going beyond self-paced courses (like the sofa-course your critic took) and using the DVD for guided group discussions. The Facilitator’s Guide is very complete and detailed. It gives tips for planning the courses, suggests questions for guiding group discussions, gives tips for logistics and type of materials needed, and contains evaluation forms, including transcription of the videos.

“Learning about Federalism and Fiscal Federalism” is not only suitable for government officials, researchers, students, journalist, but also for development professionals in the field of public administration reform that would like to put their work into perspective (even if they work in a unitary state). A great strength of the videos is the wealth of examples that are used from federations around the world. It illustrates the theory and makes readers aware of the enormous diversity of federations worldwide. It is regrettable that the videos and the Facilitator’s Guide are - for the moment - only available in English. This limits its usefulness for training purposes in developing countries. But that is only a blemish in what is generally a complete and interesting introduction to federalism.

Reference: “Learning about Federalism and Fiscal Federalism”. Two educational videos and a Facilitator’s Guide: Forum of Federations, Ottawa, www.forumfed.org

Norbert Pijls is Project Coordinator of the Swiss - Kosovan Local Governance and Decentralization Support Project - LOGOS



Competence Centers on dlg in Switzerland:

The Helvetas Governance and Peace Team

From [Esther Marthaler](#) and [Celestine Krösschell](#)

The HELVETAS [Governance and Peace](#) team provides advisory services to HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation programmes and external clients. The thematic fields focus on municipal development, strengthening of civil society, decentralization as a means towards local democratic governance, strengthening institutions and inclusive processes, and involving citizens in decision-making to promote local development. We also offer particular competence in conflict sensitivity, conflict prevention and conflict transformation with the application of respective instruments and tools. Furthermore we have competences in migration and we offer services related to culture, in the sense of promoting artistic expressions in order to create space for dialogue and hence contribute to social inclusion. We want to pursue the idea that "active citizens and effective states" can jointly make a difference. Interrelated topics of the team are the promotion of good governance and democratic principles, human rights, justice, and peace. **LINKS: Brochures:** [Sharing Power for Development](#), [Making Good Local Governance Grow](#), **Guidelines:** [Human Rights-based Approach](#); [Natural Resource Management and Conflict](#). **Project capitalisation:** [Issue Sheet on Public Audit Practice in Nepal](#), [Issue sheet on Development & Peace in Sri Lanka](#).

Advokatur Arn Friederich Strecker, Switzerland

From [Daniel Arn](#), and [Mirjam Strecker](#)

With an interdisciplinary approach, the Advokatur Arn Friedrich Strecker specialises on Organization of the State, Networking with other specialists, Project Management in political contexts, and Decentralization and Good Governance in development contexts. It provides consulting and forensic services to municipalities, cantons, and associations, including non-profit organizations and federal states in constitutional and administrative law issues and process management. Its areas of expertise include the organizational structure of municipalities, inter-municipal and inter-cantonal cooperation, institutional set-up of agglomerations and metropolitan regions, New Public Management, budgets, Public Private Partnerships, division of responsibilities between different levels of government, and financial equalization. Additionally, it supports the directorate of the Association of Municipalities in the canton of Berne by organizing the association's activities, setting up lobbying, protecting the interests of cities and municipalities vis-à-vis the canton, consulting members of the association, and balancing interests between different municipalities. The Advokatur is member of numerous expert committees such as: division of responsibilities between canton and municipalities, reform of system of equalization of finances and burdens, police reform, revision of law on municipalities, among others.

It makes important contributions to different research projects and teaching activities in various courses and has numerous assignments abroad concerning decentralization and local self-governance in Albania, Bosnia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Serbia, Slovakia, and Tajikistan. For further information: www.advokatur-afs.ch

FORS - Swiss Centre of Expertise in Social Sciences

From [Isabelle Renschler](#)

FORS is a social science research and data infrastructures centre servicing the national and international scientific community. It is responsible for some of the major Swiss national scientific surveys, like the Swiss Household Panel (SHP), the national election study SELECTS, the Swiss contributions to the European Social Survey (ESS), the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) and the European Values Study (EVS). FORS also documents, stores, and gives access to a large amount of social scientific data produced in Switzerland, and it serves as an entry point for researchers to access microdata of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (SFSO). Furthermore, FORS collaborators conduct methodological research towards improving data quality, and publish scientific articles based on analyses of survey data. More information on www.fors.unil.ch

Network News

LoGIn - Facebook becomes a Platform for Exchange Amongst Village Council Leaders in the Western Part of India

From [Swati Dogra](#)

An innovative course on Decentralization and Local Governance making use of "Technology Enhanced Learning Process Enablers" (TELPE) was carried out as a pilot in the Western part of India between December 2010 and April 2011. It was supported by the Local Governance Initiative South Asia – LoGIn, the dlg knowledge sharing project of South Asia Division. The 3 module course was offered to 40 elected members of local governments in Kutch (a district in the state of Gujarat). The course was significantly different from most mainstream capacity building efforts invested in by the state and non-governmental actors in (i) its use of ICT tools, (ii) the emphasis on perspective building (on aspects such as benefit sharing) as much as on skills improvement, (iii) its emphasis on building theory from the participant's own experiences and finally (iv) promoting experiential learning through learning-by-doing exercises that complement the classroom sessions. The course was significantly popular for the skills it imparted on the use of social networking tools to enhance experience sharing and peer learning. Besides using Facebook, Twitter, Picasa and You-tube, the trainees are presently engaged in follow-up exercises such as working out the village development product to assess potential for own-revenue-raising, as well as for better negotiating on benefit sharing arrangements. Today, there is a community of grassroots workers, local council members and resource persons connected through technology, who are collaborating with each other daily through teleconferences. Take a look yourself: <http://setupanchayat.wordpress.com/> <http://bannipachchham.wordpress.com/> or read the Deccan Herald reporting on the course <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/168146/panchayat-members-turn-tech-savvy.ht>



New Blog Contribution – Voices 2.0 – Revolutionizing Participation with Development Cooperation

From [Patrick Kalas](#)

The “Facebook Revolution” is in everyone’s mouth: How come? What does the power of web 2.0 imply for operational activities aiming to increase participation in socio, economic and political change processes? Patrick Kalas (former ICT4D officer/SDC) illuminates this phenomenon, not without sparking a critical reflection on its side-effects, and shares key findings from an upcoming SDC working paper on the issue. To read more about this topic have a look at the following Blogs at World Bank: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/publicsphere/voices-20-revolutionizing-participation-within-development-cooperation>;

At SDC: <http://www.sdc-learningandnetworking-blog.admin.ch/2011/07/12/voices-2-0-revolutionizing-participation-within-development-cooperation/>



West Africa Division: Regional Seminar on Local Public Management

From [Nathalie Nikiéma](#)

From the 12th to the 16th of September, the SDC West Africa Division is holding a Regional Seminar on la **Gestion Publique Locale** hosted by the COOF in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The seminar will include the following themes: Specific Experiences of the COOFs in Strengthening the Local Public Management in West Africa; the impact of the Local Public Management on poverty and two excursions to the municipalities of Koudougou and Ouahigouya. The results of the seminar will be shared in the next issue of the **dlgnews**. For more information about this seminar, contact Nathalie Nikiéma at nathalie.nikiema@sdc.net

Proyecto en arranque: “Apoyo Directo para Inversiones Municipales” (APIM) en Honduras y Nicaragua

From [Mayra Espinoza](#)

El “Proyecto de Apoyo Directo para Inversiones Municipales” (APIM) se enmarca en la estrategia de la Cooperación Suiza de apoyo a la gobernabilidad local en Centro América. Este proyecto apoya los procesos de descentralización que Nicaragua y Honduras han emprendido, desde muchos años atrás, contribuyendo a la reducción de la pobreza en zonas rurales. Basándose en la modalidad innovadora de apoyo presupuestario mediante la transferencia de recursos al presupuesto municipal tiene el propósito de facilitar la ejecución de los Planes de Desarrollo Municipal (PDM) y de los Planes de Inversión Multianual (PIM) y otras iniciativas estratégicas orientadas al fortalecimiento de la transparencia institucional y la democratización de procesos de desarrollo local. El objetivo principal del proyecto es de “contribuir a mejorar las condiciones de vida y acceso a servicios de calidad de la población que vive en mayores condiciones de pobreza” en 20 municipios de Honduras y en 12 municipios de Nicaragua, llegando a aproximadamente 720.000 personas. Los componentes del proyecto son de mejorar: a) las capacidades en los procesos de gestión financiera y control interno municipal; b) la calidad de las inversiones apoyando las capacidades municipales de gestión del ciclo de proyectos de inversión municipal; y c) los procesos de gestión participativa y auditoría social de los recursos, para asegurar su apropiación por la población. Mayor información sobre este proyecto se lo encontrará en el siguiente link: www.cosude.org.ni

Results and challenges of gender mainstreaming and gender in Politics in Albania: dldp Report on Gender Support

From [Valbona Karakaçi](#)

Gender equality as a cross-cutting theme is one of the strategic approaches of the second phase of the Decentralization and Local Development Program (dldp) in Albania. A two-fold approach for promoting gender equality in local governance issues has been adopted by dldp: promotion of gender equality in local governance and lobby to increase representation and performance of women in policy-making bodies, especially in local councils. This month dldp presents a Report on Gender Support, which details the strategic approach of the dldp and its main achievements; the main challenges and lessons learned; and an outlook into the future of the program. The summary report can be downloaded from the website of dldp: <http://www.dldp.al/images/docs/report%20on%20gender.pdf>

Training Opportunities

Symposium International: Les processus de Décentralisation et leurs actualités dans les Suds"

L'Institut National de la Décentralisation et du Développement Local Malgache (INDDL) est désireux de s'ouvrir à une capitalisation aux expériences internationales donc Le Symposium International sur « Les processus de décentralisation et leurs actualités dans les Suds », les 14 et 15 décembre 2011, à Antananarivo, sous le patronage du Ministre de l'Aménagement du Territoire et de la Décentralisation. Ces deux jours doivent être l'occasion pour les acteurs malgaches de communiquer avec leurs homologues de tous les pays. Ces échanges porteront sur les bilans et enseignements des périodes précédentes, les perspectives et horizons d'une Décentralisation, pensée et vécue comme facteur de développement économique et de promotion sociale, et permettant aux collectivités de rendre un service public territorial de qualité pour des citoyens responsables. Les dossiers de candidatures devront comporter la biographie d'intervenant, un résumé de l'intervention en langue française et les coordonnées de l'intervenant. Chaque dossier sera soumis par courrier électronique et par voie postale en 2 exemplaires, avant le 30 septembre 2011 date limite de dépôt des dossiers. Contacts : Rajaonesy Gabhy (inddl.dr@gmail.com) et Tanchoux Jacques (jacques.tanchoux@cnftp.fr)

Training Course on Peace-building, Decentralisation and Local Governance

From November 28 to December 9, 2011, The Hague Academy for Local Governance is offering a course on Peace building, Decentralization and Local Governance together with the Barcelona International Peace Resource Centre. This course will be held in Barcelona Spain aiming to equip staff from bilateral donor agencies, multilateral agencies, NGOs and civil servants working for ministries and local governments with a sound theoretical framework, useful tools and new ideas for providing support to local governments. Cases of decentralization reforms and local level peace building efforts in countries such as Afghanistan, Uganda and the Balkans will be discussed. The deadline for registration is September 30, 2011. For more information on this course and the application form contact Emmely Bens at info@thehagueacademy.com or look into the website: <http://www.thehagueacademy.nl/training-programmes/open-courses-2011/training-peacebuilding-decentralisation-and-local-governance/>.

Training course on Fiscal Decentralization and Local Finance

From 6 – 11 November, 2011, The Hague Academy for Local Governance is offering a course on Fiscal Decentralization and Local Finance in cooperation with the Urban Institute in Washington. Public finance expert Jamie Boex will present theory and several practical cases from different countries such as Afghanistan, Armenia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Tanzania, Georgia, Russia, Malawi, Nepal and Uganda. The course will be held in the Netherlands and has a fee of €2.850. This includes accommodation, meals as well as training materials and travel during the training. The course language will be English. The deadline for application is September 19, 2011. For more information contact: info@thehagueacademy.com or have a look at the following link: <http://www.thehagueacademy.nl/nc/training-programmes/open-courses-2011/training-fiscal-decentralisation-and-local-finances/>

Training course on Climate Change and Sustainable Local Development

From 17 – 21 October, 2011, The Hague Academy for Local Governance is offering a course on Climate Change and Sustainable Local Development. In this intensive one-week training course, leading experts will share with you the latest insights on climate change adaptation and mitigation, including the design and implementation of sustainable local development programmes in order to protect the global environment, as well as improve the quality of life of citizens. Furthermore, visits to innovative projects in various Dutch cities that focus on issues such as combating air-pollution and sustainable water management will be part of the program. Throughout the course there will be ample of time to share your experiences, ask questions and learn from your fellow participants. The fee for this one-week training course is: €2.850. This includes accommodation and meals (for 5 nights) as well as training materials and travel during the training. The course language is English. The deadline for application is September 19, 2011. For more information contact: info@thehagueacademy.com or have a look at the following link: <http://www.thehagueacademy.nl/training-programmes/open-courses-2011/training-climate-change-and-sustainable-local-development/>

Participatory Natural Resource Management (NRM): A Collaborative Course between the IIRR and the Natural Resource Management Center (NRMC)

From January 16 - 27, 2012 the IIRR and the Natural Resource Management Center (NRMC) will offer a course on Participatory Natural Resource Management. This course advocates for the participatory approach to NRM. Participants will be exposed to various community based and managed NRM programs and projects in the Philippines (IIRR) and India (NRMC). They will also be introduced to participatory tools and approaches in collecting data and on concepts and principles in participatory monitoring and evaluation. There will also be a discussion on gender and livelihood in NRM and global/local issues affecting the management of natural resources. The course fee is USD 1.800 and double occupancy room and board is USD 850 per person for the duration of the course. Application forms can be downloaded from the IIRR website: www.iirr.org and for further information contact: education.training@iirr.org

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dlgnews Contact

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
Division Cooperation with Eastern Europe
Focal Point Decentralisation and Local Governance
Freiburgstrasse 130
3003 Berne
Switzerland
E-Mail: annick.vuilleumier@deza.admin.ch



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Direktion für Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit DEZA
Direction du développement et de la coopération DDC
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