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Editor's notes

Welcome to the eighth issue of the **dlgnews**, which presents the two new **dlgn** Learning Projects on **"Civil society participation and accountability on local governance processes"** and **"Outcome Measurement in local governance programmes"**. A short article on the effect that cuts to state and local governments can have on women from the Economic Policy Institute Blog precedes a report from ALDA on the best practices of cooperation between Local Authorities and Civil Society Organisations in development cooperation. News from DeLoG about the presentation of the **evaluation of the European Commission's (EC) support to decentralisation** are included in this issue together with a summary of the **SDC Policy Paper on decentralisation processes in developing and transition countries** and a presentation of **International IDEA's new Political Finance database**. In this issue two competence centers for dlgn present themselves: **KEK-CDC Consultants** and **fast4meter, Switzerland**. The Network news's section includes the **Evaluation of Land Reform in Madagascar** and a **paper on inter municipal cooperation in Albania**. Finally, as always, we are happy to share the Training Opportunities for 2012 on topics related to dlgn.

We also take the opportunity to express our gratitude and recognition to **Annick Vuilleumier**, who after three years of working for SDC has decided to take on a new career path. The construction period of the network was an intensive time, and we thank Annick wholeheartedly for her hard work and contributions to dlgn, wishing her all the best for her future. **Christa Romagnini** (christa.romagnini@deza.admin.ch) has assumed Annick's functions in May and we welcome her to our team!

Kuno Schläfli,

Focal Point DLG, Western Balkans Division SDC

Two new dlgn Learning Projects

After a period of preparation of new activities in the **dlgn**, two new learning projects have been launched in April. One is on **"Civil society participation and accountability on local governance processes"** and has the objective of promoting joint learning from the SDC experience and selected local governance programmes. It will also encourage the formulation of operational and strategic recommendations related to mechanisms of accountability and participation in local governance processes and decision making.

The other learning project **"Outcome Measurement in local governance programmes"** has the objective of promoting joint learning from the experience of SDC and other agencies on methods, tools and 'good practice' of outcome measurement. Good practices shall be identified, compiled, analyzed and shared to provide guidance and orientation for the future.

The fact sheets can be found at: <http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/dlgnnews>. For more information contact Pascal Arnold (pascal.arnold@helvetas.org) or Kuno Schläfli (Kuno.Schlaefli@deza.admin.ch).

Strong effects that cuts to state and local governments have had on women



From David Cooper *working Economics – from the Economic Policy Institute Blog*

David Cooper comments on how cuts to state and local government workforces, while being a significant drag on the economy as a whole, are particularly damaging for women. He addresses that, in 2011, in the United States, women made up 46.6 percent of the overall labour force, but among state and local workers, about 60 percent are women. Because women are so disproportionately represented in state and local jobs, they also have taken the brunt of the job losses in state and local governments. Of the net change in total state and local employment between 2007 and 2011—a decline of roughly 765,000 jobs—70 percent of the drop is from female employees. Today, there are about 540,000 fewer women in state and local jobs than in 2007, compared with about 225,000 fewer men.

He also looks at this problematic through the proportion of people from state and local jobs currently unemployed. According to the Current Population Survey, in 2011 women made up about 62 percent of those who reported that they were unemployed and that their most recent job was from the state or local government sector. This is lower than the female share of the net change in state and local jobs mentioned above, suggesting that some of the women who lost state and local jobs since the recession have either found private sector work or exited the labor force. Nevertheless, it is still larger than the overall female share of state and local employees.

He further notes that since the recession began, men have faced larger job losses than women in the private sector. But as of January 2012, the overall unemployment rate for both genders is the same at 8.3 percent. In fact, when you look at the gender breakdown of the employment to population ratio—the proportion of the total population currently employed—the most recent figures show improvement only for men. The ratio for men declined from 69.8 percent in 2007 to a low of 63.3 percent in December 2009. It has since risen a bit, up to 64.5 percent in January 2012 (still one of the lowest percentages on record.) For women, however, the employment to population ratio in 2007 was 56.6 percent and it has fallen virtually every month since then, hitting 52.9 percent in January 2012. It has not been that low since 1987. For more information on this issue, have a look at: <http://www.epi.org/blog/state-local-government-cuts-hurt-women/>

Other news on dlg

Working Together for Development Alliance - ALDA

On 28th March 2012, the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) launched the Working Together for Development (WTD) Alliance through the International Conference Local Authorities (LA) and Civil Society Organisations (CSO): a partnership for development. ALDA, together with the 21 partners and associates of WTD, commits to share at the European and National levels the best practices of cooperation between LAs and CSOs in development cooperation. The President of the Committee of the Regions, Ms Mercedes Bresso, who opened the Conference, highlighted the strong efforts of the Committee in this direction and the strong support to ALDA in its work. For more information about this event have a look at the following site: <http://www.wtd-alda.eu/>



Presentation of the evaluation of the European Commission's (EC) support to decentralisation

From the DeLoG newsletter

On 12th March 2012, the EC presented the results of the global independent evaluation on its support to decentralisation processes in Brussels. DeLoG members were invited and the following development partners were present: Belgium, France, KfW, Spain, Sweden and GIZ//DeLoG secretariat. DeLoG is prominently featured in the report and it is recommended that the EC should further strengthen its efforts towards donor harmonisation mainly through its engagement in DeLoG. It further recommends that the EC should start to address the recommendations made in the DeLoG publication "Busan and Beyond".

The evaluation team finds the provided support by the EC to decentralisation processes highly relevant. However the evaluation draws a mixed picture in terms of reaching the set objectives of the EC support, mainly contributing to improved local governance (democratic and accountable administration structures increased citizen participation) and to contribute to more effective and efficient local service delivery. The full report is to be found:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2012/1300_docs_en.htm and further information can also be found at: <http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/dlgnews>

SDC Policy Paper on decentralisation processes in developing and transition countries: evidence based lessons learnt

This SDC policy paper is based on evaluations from development partners such as UNDP, the World Bank, GTZ (GIZ), NORAD and OECD. The study recommends adopting a more strategic orientation with a view to involving local and national stakeholders in the decentralisation process, to assess and monitor the context carefully. Additionally, it recommends to actively invest in harmonisation and coordination and to focus on more effective capacity building for local partners by learning from experience. The paper can be found at: <http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/dlgnews>

International IDEA's new Political Finance database

The database contains information on the political finance laws and regulations of 179 countries. Some of the issues covered by the database, which draws on over 1,000 pieces of legislation and other documentation from across the globe are: how political donations are regulated; the limits on where money can come from and how much can be given; disclosure rules and transparency; and oversight and sanctions for breaches. The database can be used by anyone with an interest in political reforms and political party and candidate finance. The information is a complete update and revision of earlier versions, so if you are interested in how money in politics is controlled and regulated in your country check out the Political Finance database at www.idea.int/political-finance

Competence Centers

KEK-CDC Consultants

From Katharina Walker

KEK-CDC Consultants offers consultancy services to organisations of the public sector and to non-profit organisations both in Switzerland and abroad. Its services relate to the complete project cycle from feasibility studies and planning to evaluations; facilitation of organisational development processes, management coaching, concept development, studies as well as organisation and moderation of learning events. The total staff consists of 15 persons, including senior consultants and junior consultants. KEK-CDC Consultants is working in the areas of international cooperation, humanitarian aid, integration, vocational education, labour markets, welfare policy, social pedagogy, and public management. KEK-CDC Consultants is involved in a number of mandates related to decentralisation and local governance: backstopping of the Decentralisation and Local Development Programme (dl dp) in Albania, planning of a governance and decentralisation project in Mongolia, learning project on donor support to sustainable municipal finances, and support to strategic planning of municipalities in Bangladesh. For more information, please have a look at www.kek.ch

fast4meter, Switzerland

From Pierre Walther, and Catherine von Graffenried

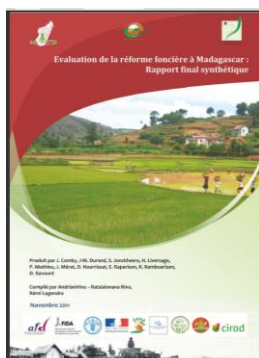
We are a creative team and support partners in designing, planning, and the evaluation of Local Governance Projects. In all steps, communication is an essential part. Here, we believe in the power of stories, to exchange knowledge and to win people for change. We love to facilitate events with large groups (>100 people), but also with executive teams, to clarify visions and objectives (what), strategies (how), or to formulate action plans (what to do next). We elaborated a method for measuring outcomes of Local Governance projects, and we edited a report on aid effectiveness. We have particular know-how on infrastructure planning, water services, environmental and social impact assessment. We also planned public-private-partnership projects and have some know-how institutional contexts and political realities in Latin America, Asia, GUS countries, the Balkans, and Africa. For further information have a look at: www.fast4meter.ch

Network News

Evaluation of Land Reform in Madagascar

From Jacques Mérat

HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation is pleased to share the results of the evaluation of the land reform process in Madagascar. This evaluation has a strong emphasis on decentralization. The results indicate that transversal capacities of local governments such as budgeting, financial management, mobilizing own resources, coordinating services and handling participatory procedures need to be strengthened before sector plans can be successfully implemented. Everything on this reform can be found at: <http://www.observatoire-foncier.mg/> and the report (in French) is also to be found: <http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/dlgnews>



Paper on inter municipal cooperation in Albania: planning and funding

From Valbona Karakaçi

This paper is a joint contribution of Albanian Fund of Development (ADF) and the **dldp** programme, both organizations with experience in planning and funding local development strategies and projects. It contributes to further promoting the necessity to support cooperation initiatives for inter Local Government Units (InterLGUs) related to local planning and funding instruments. The paper is prepared based on recent practical experience of Inter-LGU in Albania. Secondary sources are used for presenting the context and the rationality of InterLGU in planning and funding mechanisms. At the end of the paper, conclusions are drawn and recommendations are developed to contribute to the debate and discussions, based on the practical experience. The paper was presented at the SCO-AI and CoE national conference held on March 2012. More information on the paper to be found: <http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/dlgnews>

Training Opportunities

Training Courses at the Duke Centre for International Development

The Duke Center for International Development (DCID) at Duke University (Durham, NC, USA) is pleased to announce that they are currently accepting applications for their short-term training courses in public policy and finance. DCID will provide student housing, emergency medical insurance, course materials, and access to the Duke University Libraries and computer facilities. Groups of three or more participants who have the same sponsor are eligible for discounted pricing. Please contact dcidexed@duke.edu with any questions. More detailed information including online application forms and course descriptions can be found on the following website: <http://sanford.duke.edu/centers/dcid/executive/open/index.php>. The offered programs cover the following areas:

Tax Analysis and Revenue Forecasting

Dates: June 24 - July 20, 2012

Who should apply?: public sector executives at mid- and upper-level management; professionals in multilateral and regional banks and other international organizations involved with fiscal affairs; private sector professionals who are in a position to apply these concepts and techniques; consultants providing assistance to decision-makers in public and private sectors.

Fiscal Decentralization and Local Government Financial Management

Dates: July 8 - 27, 2012

Who should apply?: government officials, policy makers, program managers, politicians, and consultants dealing with decentralization and local government reforms.

Budgeting and Financial Management in the Public Sector

Dates: July 22 - August 10, 2012

Who should apply?: budget analysts, economists, accountants, auditors, and administrators in the central ministries of finance and planning; professionals from state- or provincial-level ministries of finance and planning; professionals from sector ministries; professionals from public enterprises; professionals from aid agencies

Storytelling seminar

Stories are different from facts, figures and statistics. Therefore, more and more people acknowledge the power of stories for their company or their projects. The seminar is intended to encourage professionals to develop professionally and privately through stories. It addresses the basics about the new storytelling method and practise through exercises. The trainers are Catherine de Graffenried, storytelling expert and Pierre Walther, geographer, consultant with 20 years of international experience. The seminar will take place in Bern on the 13th of June and the cost is 490 CHF. For more information have a look at: www.fast4meter.ch

Courses offered by the Wageningen University

International Course on Rural Decentralization and Local Governance

This course will take place in the Netherlands from the 3d to the 14th of September, 2012. The course fee is 3300 Euro and do not include travel and accommodation expenses. For more information and for registration follow: http://www.cdi.wur.nl/UK/newsagenda/agenda/Décentralisation_en_millieu_rural_et_gouvernance_locale.htm

An international course on Planning and Implementation of Impact Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

in collaboration with the Institute of Sciences and Population (Burkina Faso) and the African Evaluation Society. This course will take place in Ouagadougou from the 1 to 11 October, 2012. The course fee is 2600 Euro and do not include travel and accommodation expenses. For more information and for registration follow the link: http://www.cdi.wur.nl/UK/newsagenda/agenda/Planification_et_suivievaluation_participatifs.htm

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