



Political Economy Analysis in Action

A training course for staff of international development agencies and foreign ministries

Development interventions are more effective when they are informed by an understanding of the realities of power relations, incentives and change-processes. To get real benefits from aid, and minimise the risk of doing harm, development actors need to appreciate the political and economic 'rules of the game' in the places in which they work. This is what political-economy analysis is about.

This course is designed to equip professional advisers and programme managers of multilateral and bilateral development agencies and foreign ministries to identify key institutional challenges and opportunities to promote development in a variety of different contexts, and to draw operational conclusions for strategy, programme design, and ways of working. The course has been run successfully five times, in 2009 and 2010.

Course objectives

By the end of the course, participants will understand:

1. what political economy analysis is, and where it comes from;
2. why it has the potential to improve development policy and operations; and
3. the differences among the available political economy perspectives and tools.

Participants will be equipped to:

1. assess the suitability of different political economy approaches for different operational purposes;
2. apply political economy analysis to some of the top policy issues of the day;
3. ensure that operational lessons can be extracted from political economy studies, and applied in different types of context;
4. provide guidance on what it takes to do political economy analysis rigorously;
5. manage political economy analysis processes effectively in different country settings.

Who is the course for? Who will benefit from attending?

The course is primarily designed for professional advisers and managers of bilateral and multilateral development agencies and foreign ministries. We expect most participants will be active in the areas of governance, conflict, social development (including health and education), economics and livelihoods.

Outline programme and training approach

In order to meet its objectives the programme has been designed to:

- Build specific skills needed to understand political systems, and link this understanding to operational challenges facing development agencies and foreign ministries.
- Explain the full range of relevant tools and frameworks that staff can use when undertaking political economy analysis.
- Apply political economy analysis to country-level assessments and to selected specific problems.
- Reflect the challenges of working with a range of partners across donor governments, and engaging with multilaterals.
- Employ a diversity of method and approach, including a mix of briefings, case studies, working groups and audio-visual material. It will be highly participative, aiming to make maximum use of the experience of participants, and to address issues of concern to them in their working lives.

The course will be residential and will include some evening work.

Before the course

A set of materials, including background reading, will be sent to participants, who will be expected to have read these in advance.

Course providers

The course has been designed and is provided by the Policy Practice (<http://www.thepolicypractice.com/>) and the Overseas Development Institute (<http://www.odi.org.uk/>). The facilitator is Samantha Wade and the core trainers are David Booth and Alex Duncan, with contributions from other specialists.

Duration, dates and venue

The course will last for three days, from Wednesday September 22nd to Friday September 24th, 2010. It will be held at Farnham Castle, Surrey, UK (<http://www.farnhamcastle.com/>), which is convenient for London and airports, in particular Gatwick. Participants are expected to arrive in time for a welcome dinner on the evening of Tuesday September 21st.

Cost

The charge for the training is £1,760 (currently €2,020) plus VAT per person. In addition, the conference cost for three nights (including food and accommodation) is £410 (€470) plus VAT per person. Full payment should be made at the time of application, and cancellation charges will apply from one month before the course.

Travel and visas

Travel and visas will be arranged by participants.

Enquiries, registration of interest, and applications

Please email enquiries and expressions of interest in participating to angela.holton@thepolicypractice.com.

The closing date for applications is Friday August 20th; we advise applying early.