

An online training course for staff working in International Development

The Policy Practice and ODI are delighted to announce the opportunity to undertake our Political Economy Analysis in Action training course. The training is based on the flagship course we have provided over 60 times both online and face-to-face since 2008 for multilateral and bilateral organisations, international think-tanks and NGOs.

The core course tutors are **Alex Duncan** (Policy Practice), **Ed Laws** (ODI), **Gareth Williams** (Policy Practice), **Laure-Hélène Piron** (Policy Practice) and **Neil McCulloch** (Policy Practice). It is facilitated by **Samantha Wade** (Policy Practice).

What is the course and who is it for? Political economy analysis (PEA) is about understanding the contexts – global, national, sectoral and local – in which development and foreign policy happen and the incentives that determine how the relevant actors behave and interact with each other.

The course is designed to equip participants to identify the challenges arising from political economy features of the contexts in which they work, and to draw well-grounded conclusions for policy, strategy, or programme design and implementation.

By the end of the course, participants will understand:

- What political economy analysis (PEA) is, and the different operational contexts in which it has a role
- How it can be used to improve foreign and development policies and engagements
- What tools and frameworks are available for PEA and how they can be applied

Participant requirements:

The online training comprises 10 interactive sessions spread over 19 weeks, with 5 Reading Weeks. We estimate that 40+ hours are needed to complete the course, or about 4 hours per week.

You are given access to an online teaching platform. This provides you with a combination of study guides, video lectures, an online library, webinars and several stimulating

case studies. You will be working in a small Study Group, either with colleagues from your own organisation or a mixed Study Group with participants from across the globe.

You will be expected to work through session materials each week (one session per week), do essential reading, meet weekly in your online Study Group and complete a weekly group task. There are also five webinars during the course.

When: 5 September 2022 – 17 January 2023

The course starts on 5 September and Webinar 1 is on Thursday 15 September 2022.

Cost: Early bird offer of £650 (plus VAT if applicable) if you apply before 30 June 2022.

If applying after 30 June, the cost is £695 (+ VAT if applicable).

We can offer groups of 5+ from the same organisation a discounted price of £650 (+ VAT if applicable) per person.

To apply - please fill in the online form

Apply Now

The deadline for applications is 31 July 2022.

If you have any questions, please contact us on training@thepolicypractice.com

The course will change the way you think and work on development, humanitarian support or foreign policy. In a recent survey of alumni participants, over 90% of respondents said that the course had changed the way they thought about their work in development, humanitarian support or foreign policy – and a majority of respondents reported that they had changed the design or implementation of policies, programmes or projects as a result of applying ideas learned on the course.

'It was really good to see such a rich exchange of perspectives in such a respectful, kind and professional space. Very fruitful.'

'This course is excellent value for money. The staff and tutor's commitment to the topic and to our learning really shone through.'

'This is one of the best courses I have taken in my current role. It was relevant and well delivered.'

'Fantastic course which prompted many discussions within my current team based on their country office experience and with colleagues. Very high quality tutors, materials and support.'

A brief training course curriculum

Session 1: Working better on development: how PEA fits in

International interventions are more effective when they are informed by a solid understanding of context – global, regional, country-level, sectoral or local. This session explains the idea of PEA as well as associated concepts such as thinking and working politically (TWP). It gives a sense of how PEA, and TWP, relate to participants' professional background and job.

Session 2: Applied PEA making a difference – experiences and lessons

This session explores the range of ways in which applied PEA, and TWP more generally, can make a difference to the quality of international engagements. It examines three relevant case study experiences and provides a systematic summary of the ways in which the practice of applied PEA differs from more conventional approaches to international development and other international policy and interventions.

Session 3: A framework for PEA

This session lays out the basic Framework that we use for PEA at a high level. This session explores the first two parts of the Framework: what is the problem and why does it happen? It describes some principles for how to frame a political economy problem well and introduces a tool for analysing problems and identifying the proximate causes - and also lays out the analytical steps needed to understand why a given problem occurs. We discuss foundational factors, formal and informal institutions/rules of the game, and actors and the various influences upon them.

Session 4: A country level PEA exercise – Indonesia

This session introduces a set of key political economy concepts: rent-seeking; political clientelism and political settlements. The session considers political economy factors at a country level with a practical exercise on Indonesia - a country with a complex domestic political economy.

Session 5: Extracting Implications/Pathways of Change

This session explains the third part of the PEA Framework which is concerned with the question of how change happens and how external actors can support change. It introduces the key concept of pathways of change and also explains how these can be used to develop intervention strategies.

Session 6: Power and participation in applied PEA

This session goes into more depth about how to make use of the Framework and illustrate how applied PEA benefits from multi-disciplinary approaches. In this session we explore how to understand power relations and social norms from social and anthropological perspectives, and their practical implications for undertaking PEAs – both in terms of participatory processes and research methods. A case study from Sudan illustrates how participative and inclusive PEAs offer tools for everyone. The session ends with guidance on planning, undertaking and communicating applied PEA research.

Session 7: Addressing collective action problems in complex systems

This session introduces a set of concepts from institutional economics and collective action theory that can serve the practical purpose of illuminating typical issues at a variety of levels of international engagement, from the 'grass roots' to the global. The session explores different kinds of problems that PEA can be applied to. In particular, the session focuses on information or collective action problems where different actors share broadly similar interests and objectives, but may face various challenges in working together to achieve better outcomes. The session underlines the relevance of adaptive working as a style of thinking and working and outlines key issues in effective systems for monitoring, evaluation and learning in adaptive management.

Session 8: PEA at the global level: PEA as applied to the international climate negotiations

This session applies PEA at the global level, specifically to the international climate negotiations. International negotiations rarely happen in a political vacuum and are rooted in country and regional issues. But each has its own particular political dynamic and context. Climate change can be seen as the most global, urgent and complex of all international issues offering multiple PEA perspectives. This session explores how applied PEA can help in understanding the problem and possible pathways of change. It draws out issues of asymmetry in negotiations, the opening up of international negotiations to multiple actors and interest groups, and the need for alignment between international and national decision-making.

Session 9: Inclusive growth and conflict prevention in the Horn of Africa: a cross-border case study of the political economy of Berbera port and corridor

This session gives participants a crucial opportunity to apply problem-focused PEA to challenges that are both general (how to promote inclusive development and how to prevent or reduce conflict) and particular to the Horn of Africa, with a focus on Ethiopia and Somaliland. The session invites participants to use the PEA Framework and to apply PEA methodology to understand what is involved in identifying a plausible pathway of change, and to identify policy implications and potential areas of interventions, as a result of the analysis.

Session 10: Conclusions and takeaways

This final session provides practical suggestions on how to embed an applied PEA approach to the day-to-day work of participants. The session also invites participants to reflect, as teams and as individuals, on what they are taking away from the course and its possible implications for their work.