T16P11 / Sustainable Development, Public Policy and the Local

Topic : T16 / Sustainable Development and Policy

Chair : Satyajit Singh (University of Delhi)

Second Chair : Ajit Menon (Madras Institute of Development Studies)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Note: This Panel is eligible for the GCPSE (UNDP) Grant.

Garett Hardin's tragedy of the commons, has been intensively critiqued since the 1980s. It has now been established that conservation policies cannot be sustainable without the involvement of local communities. Most developing countries, multi-lateral development organizations and donor agencies have since advocated participatory and joint programs of conservation, protection and restoration of natural resources. While there has been considerable success in many of these community and local projects, it has been observed that central authorities have been hesitant to scale up decentralization at the national scale and grant greater power and authority to the local level. This is understandable as such a move undermines the role of the central agencies. Further, by granting these same agencies the authority to design institutions for greater decentralization policy makers may have ensured that decentralization does not take off as effectively as desired. Often these central agencies do not have the capacity in this area, or deliberately design reform programs that extend their control over the management of natural resources, rather than restrict such control. Hence, many of the institutional and administrative reforms for sustainable development have been designed for failure or non-optimal outcomes. It needs to be accepted that just like there are many models of centralization, there are many models of decentralization as well – each leading to different outcomes – some good and others, not too bad. As the sustainability of our resources is critically dependant on the institutions for their management and the involvement of the local communities, an analysis of the different types of local institutions would help us design better institutions of local governance and better policies for sustainable development.
This panel looks at the varieties of institutions in the management of natural resources by local communities. It focuses on how they interface with local politics and different institutional designs lead to diverse outcomes. It will also show how the same policy and institutional design lead to diverse outcomes. It will enhance our understanding of institutional reforms for local governance for sustainable development. This panel will bring together theoretical approaches to studying policy at the local level as well as specific cases that highlight the role of local institutions and local politics in policy making for sustainable development.
We hope to bring together papers that critically analyse the administrative architecture of the existing decentralized institutions and deal with innovative ways in which local politics and informal institutions are working towards greater devolution in the face of serious opposition. It is expected that these papers will throw light on how another generation of reforms of public administration could harness social power with political power at the local level through the institutions of local governments to achieve some of the sustainable development goals.
The panel will look at specific cases of administrative reforms for sustainable development:
- to determine whether these were carefully thought out, emerged from specific opportunities, or were accidental
- to examine the specific roles of key individuals and government departments that led to the formulation of policies for administrative reforms
- to see how emerging institutions hamper effective decentralization of power and authority for effective conservation, protection and regeneration of the environment
- to analyse how the same policy leads to different outcomes, either due to diverse local institutions or specific local agency
- to understand how different level of capacity or social capital can facilitate or hinder effective local governance
- to study the emerging structures of accountability are evolving at the local level, and changing the outcomes of existing policies.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Garett Hardin's tragedy of the commons, has been intensively critiqued since the 1980s. It has now been established that conservation policies cannot be sustainable without the involvement of local communities. Yet it has been observed that central authorities have been hesitant to scale up decentralization at the national scale and grant greater power and authority to the local level. Further, by granting these same agencies the authority to design institutions for greater decentralization policy makers may have ensured that decentralization does not take off as effectively as desired. Often these central agencies do not have the capacity in this area, or

deliberately design reform programs that extend their control over the management of natural resources, rather than restrict such control. Hence, many of the institutional and administrative reforms for sustainable development have been designed for failure or non-optimal outcomes. As the sustainability of our resources is critically dependent on the institutions for their management and the involvement of the local communities, the panel will look at specific cases of administrative reforms for sustainable development:

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T16P11 / Sustainable Development, Public Policy and the Local

Chair : Satyajit Singh (University of Delhi)

Second Chair : Ajit Menon (Madras Institute of Development Studies)

Session 1

Friday, June 30th 10:30 to 12:30 (Block B 3 - 3)

The 'Political' in the Local

Satyajit Singh (University of Delhi)

In the quest for appropriate institutions for local governance of natural resources for sustainable development, we need to move away from a universalistic comparison of centralization and decentralization. Another way would be to get down to understand the specifics of different institutional arrangements at the local level in determining outcomes of sustainable development policies. We need to examine the political economy of how institutional designs for governance are created, and the important (though neglected) role of local politics in shaping institutions and outcomes. Most recent approaches to governance and decentralization are normative, economistic and technocratic where ‘pure’ or the ‘right’ forms of decentralization are celebrated. Hence, the decentralization designs are universalistic and uniform. This perspective has been very popular in the design of municipal and urban local governments, particularly in developed countries. In developing countries and particularly in rural areas, the institutional designs are keenly contested politically. Indeed just like there are various models of centralized governance, there are different architectures of decentralization, based on specific historical and social context. The idea of the political in decentralization establishes that unlike uniform normative outcomes, diverse local institutions lead to different outcomes as they interface with micro politics of various hues. It is in the creation of decentralized institutions, and in the political economy of their functioning, that outcome paths of decentralization – democratic, devolutionary and accountable (the good) – or the new forms of recentralization and deconcentration (the not so good), are determined. This paper, based on empirical evidence, is about local institutions and micro politics as they interface with sustainable development.

TRIBAL REPRESENTATION & LOCAL LAND GOVERNANCE IN INDIA (A CASE STUDY FROM THE KHASI HILLS OF MEGHALAYA.)

Kavita Navlani Soereide (Christian Michelsens Institute)

The Schedule Tribes in India despite the presence of a strong development state have continued to remain on the fringes of growth. People concerned with marginalization and social exclusion of Indian tribes often look at the Sixth Schedule that recognizes the tribal communities’ rights of ownership-control over land, forests and natural resources. Those North East Indian tribal communities that are under this constitutional provision have been upheld to have fared better in comparison to those where the State has a dominant say in deciding and acquiring the land and natural resources. While there is an ongoing debate around the efficacy of the 6th Schedule, the present work is an enquiry into the social dynamics of community’s ownership and control of land in Meghalaya. The objective here is not merely to look at the development debate around social exclusion and marginalization in terms of ‘external threats’ from the state or outside private- institutional actors; but also, at the internal group dynamics as they play out under the 6th Schedule.

The 6th schedule was a unique and bold step towards managing heterogeneities in India’s territorial border regions of the North East. It was primarily a design of engagement by modern state with its tribal communities. Although it has been viewed as a political accommodation; that it was also a ‘settlement’ between state and social groups needs to be highlighted. The cause of individual social justice in that sense was supposed to flow from social justice for the groups. Communal land holdings was one such example of an ‘in-built’ tribal social security net serving the cause of individual social justice. Whether the original intention in the constitutional provision presumed that tribal norms would (continue to) provide social protection to individual members is open to debate.

While the practice of tribal ownership of land was assigned constitutional protection, the pre -existing tribal institutions managing those lands were not[4]. Instead, parallel bodies called as the Autonomous District Councils were created. The tribal hierarchical institutions continued to evoke strong clan and tribal allegiances but faced local challenges through the operation of new formal institutions to govern local affairs. It has been argued that

the Sixth Schedule helped give rise to a new tribal elite unfolding new interplays between the formal and the informal institutions around land. These changes and challenges have weakened the social protective nature of tribal communities indicated through increasing monetization and privatization of community land. The interaction between the formal and the informal institutions has been heightened due to development interventions either by state or private extractive industry requiring control over tribal land. The land disputes amongst individuals and communities have also enhanced the juridification over land re -inventing and re enforcing the social norms and practices over tribal land.

This study indicates that the benefits of community's land control and problems of land alienation and marginalisation are not two ends of a linear debate. The case studies from Meghalaya indicate problems of land alienation, displacement and socio-economic marginalisation amongst the most vulnerable of the tribal communities despite the constitutional protections. It also indicates that land alienation and marginalisation gain an impetus with development initiatives by the state. However displacements and marginalisation indicated by case studies were directly intra- community land alienations. The constitutional protections through institutions and security net through conventional rights seem unable to stop the marginalisation through land alienation and displacement of the vulnerable members of the tribal community. Since the case studies are from an ongoing process hence are indicative but not conclusive.

Empowering the local: NGOs to promote sustainable local development in Sri Lanka

Indi Akurugoda (University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka)

Centralisation of governmental power has been an abiding feature of the Sri Lankan politics. Since independence in 1948, there have been several attempts to devolve power to local levels, but such attempts have been successfully resisted by Sinhala nationalist opponents. This has resulted in weak local government and the neglect of local communities and their development needs. After the tsunami in 2004 and the end of the civil war in 2009, Sri Lanka received large amounts of foreign aid and NGO support for recovery and reconstruction, but these have been administered according to central government agendas without considering local needs. Despite restrictions imposed by central government, a number of NGOs have played a significant role in promoting sustainable local development through interacting with local government and local communities.

This paper identifies strengths and capacities that local government and local communities can develop with the support of NGOs. In Sri Lanka, 80 per cent of the population lives outside of the larger urban centres and there are 335 local government bodies including municipal councils, urban councils and Pradeshiya Sabhas. Although most of these local government areas have natural resources such as rivers, lakes, streams, beaches, parks and forests, the responsibility of maintaining these is not of local government or of local communities. Central government does not have plans to protect and utilise these resources sustainably with the collaboration of local government and local communities. This has resulted in misusing and destroying such resources due to garbage dumping, lack of maintenance and less consideration of local knowledge.

During the post-tsunami and post-war situation in Sri Lanka, a number of NGOs proved to be effective in facilitating the participation of local communities in local development initiatives, supporting communities to identify ways to earn funds for local government through the protection and sustainable utilisation of natural resources. Such initiatives also provided self employment opportunities. NGOs also played key roles in the building of community-based organisations and the upskilling of local government representatives. The literature suggests that the failure of governments to even begin to meet the escalating challenges of sustainable development has opened up unprecedented opportunities for NGOs to radically alter the way that people in most of the world are governed (Fisher, 2003, p. 30). The role of NGOs is recognised as including the organisation of people to make better use of local productive resources, create new resources and services, promote equity, alleviate poverty and influence government actions towards these same objectives while establishing new institutional frameworks to sustain people-centred development (Cited in Lewis, 2001, p. 77).

Based on research in the southern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka, this paper assesses the views of 47 respondents including national, provincial and local political representatives and administrative officials, NGO officials and representatives of the community-based organisations, obtained using semi-structured and unstructured interview and observation methods. The paper analyses the importance of empowering local government and local communities in Sri Lanka to overcome the centralisation tendencies that undermine sustainable local development.

The Impact of Collaborative Governance on Local Sustainability Policy Implementation

Angela YS Park (The University of Kansas)

Rachel Krause (University of Kansas)

While a plethora of research on collaborative governance exists, only scant attention has been paid to examining the impact of collaboration on organizational outputs. This study aims to help fill this gap by unveiling the cost-efficiency implications performance of collaborative arrangements in the context of U.S. cities' implementation of energy sustainability projects funded through Department of Energy (DOE)'s Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program. The EECBG program provided $3.2 billion in block grants and $40 million in competitive grants to local governments as part of 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act stimulus package. The major goal was to support local governments' efforts initiating and implementing projects that simultaneously promoted energy and climate sustainability while creating jobs.

Using Stochastic Frontier (SF) analysis, we evaluate the efficiency of 499 U.S. cities' use of EECBG funds in implementing sustainability programs, and also examine if and to what extent collaboration influences cities' efficiency levels. Results indicate that there is ample evidence for the presence of inefficiency in cities' use of EECBG dollars; on average, cities achieve 55.4 % of the maximum potential output in their production. Collaboration is found to have a statistically significant impact on reducing cities' inefficiency, confirming the positive effects of collaborative partnerships in public policy and management.

Green building Technologies for smart cities: Examining the legal mechanisms for successful transfer and diffusion

Chandrika Mehta (Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur)

The urge to adopt the proceedings at the recently concluded COP21 with a binding legal status is indicative of the fact that nations now realize the seriousness of the issue, alike. The international community is just paving way for a low carbon, energy efficient planet. Rapid urbanization has lead to over populated cities that demand better quality of life for its residents. On the one hand there is a global urge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and on the other hand the world is moving towards a 'smart' future. Both these suppositions are interspersed by a common goal of sustainable development. Alternately, the discussion tends to focus on use of clean energy technologies. Cities will be at the centre of this unique and unprecedented challenge. This research seeks to explore the role that city governance plays in climate mitigation and adaptation at the global level. Further, the paper examines and evaluates low carbon technology as a choice to be inculcated in encountering climate change hazards and essentially looks into the modus operandi of the transfer and diffusion of low carbon/clean energy technologies. The transfer of environmentally sound technologies (EST) to rapidly developing countries has been a widely recognized priority for global environmental policy, including combating anthropogenic climate change. Yet, technology transfer has proved difficult to achieve for various reasons. Building capacity for technology transfer therefore does not just mean identifying potential uses for new technologies, but also for creating mechanisms that allow new technologies to be paid for locally, and kept competitive under market conditions. Most importantly, technology transfer cannot succeed without an appreciation of the local socio-economic needs and concerns of host communities. Local governments (municipalities) act as engines of growth for national economies and are capable enough to present the front line of key environmental challenges. A municipal or local government is the layer of government that is closest to the people. Since local governments are closer to local residents and consumers, they are in a better position to frame nationally driven emission reduction policies at the urban level, based on their knowledge of local conditions. In addition, local governments exercise authority over the selection of infrastructural projects at the municipal level. To be able to examine the issue, the present study proposes to take up the concept of green building as a case study. The green building concept represents the built environment that includes the buildings in which people live and work, and the spaces and infrastructure in cities, towns, and villages. It is where most human activity takes place, where most energy services are used, and where many of the advantages and disadvantages of energy use arise. Hence the sector presents one of the most noted areas for the application of Environmentally Sound Technologies, in that they seek to build up on energy efficiency thereby reducing GHG emissions. Achieving green building objectives is largely dependent on technological capacity building. This can be achieved through transfer of green building technologies where required. Adaptation and development of technology to suit the needs is an essential step in successful transfer of technology. In this regard, attention must be drawn towards the jurisdictional powers of municipalities.

Keywords: Cities, Climate mitigation and adaptation, Low carbon technologies, Technology transfer and diffusion, green buildings

T16P11 / Sustainable Development, Public Policy and the Local

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Session 2

Friday, June 30th 13:45 to 15:45 (Block B 3 - 3)

Stretching the truth: Where is the community in co-management?

Lain Dare (Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis, University of Canberra)

Leonie Pearson (University of Canberra)

In 2013 an investigation of New South Wales (Australia) protected area governance was undertaken in response to community concerns of adverse social and economic impacts resulting from the poor management of local protected areas. These concerns, coupled with the NSW2021 goals regarding greater community involvement and the provision of “opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments”, highlight the need for a better understanding of existing governance arrangements for protected area management.

The governance of protected areas requires a delicate balance between conservation and social outcomes, which may be contradictory. It is globally recognised that best practice protected area governance requires a co-management approach, resulting in a proliferation of literature regarding the meaning, attributes and consequences of co-management. In this paper we propose that the term ‘co-management’ has been continually and often uncritically ‘stretched’, outgrowing its original description as a process in which stakeholders work together to resolve a conflict or develop a shared vision. This conceptual stretching inhibits the critical analysis and development of co-management and may lead environmental managers to implement traditional hierarchical or marketised regimes under the guise of co-management – to the detriment of local development.

In exploring the conceptual stretching of co-management, we seek to develop a greater understanding of the variation in co-management arrangements through the development and empirical testing of a nuanced framework of co-management models. Using qualitative interviews, three NSW National Parks are used as case studies, recognising the long history of co-management within NSW National Parks where co-management is implemented in a number of protected areas, albeit to varying degrees, using multiple models and resulting in differing outcomes. This diversity of governance arrangements operating within the same regulatory and environmental conditions provides an excellent opportunity to investigate the outcomes of alternative co-management models on protected area management and local community development.

The theoretically informed and empirically tested framework provides a heuristic through which to better understand the variation of co-management in practice and the influence of institutional context within each case study, providing a strong base to review the developed governance framework. The framework enables the improved review, design and implementation of co-management approaches within local communities through due consideration of participating actors, institutions and delivery objectives.

The Forest Rights Act and the Politics of the Local in a South Indian Hill Region

Ajit Menon (Madras Institute of Development Studies)

Manasi Karthik (School of Oriental and African Studies)

The Forest Rights Act, 2006 (FRA), has been hailed as a landmark legislation that empowers local communities by giving individual as well as community rights to forest-dwelling peoples. By doing so, the FRA has also been seen as a watershed in democratising forest governance in India. Notwithstanding its emancipatory potential, the implementation of the FRA has been mired by conflicts regarding who the beneficiaries can be, i.e. who are genuinely local. Although the Act clearly specifies the criteria for both tribals (adivasis) and non-tribals (other traditional forest dwelling communities) making claims, in practice significant contestations and conflicts exist around the claim making process.

We focus in this paper on the politics of the local vis-à-vis the FRA in Gudalur, a hill region of South India. We argue that the law is not as an immutable category but rather a political instrument that various groups use to

assert their identities and political imaginaries. The FRA requires that claimants are either members of Scheduled Tribe (indigenous) communities or can prove three-generations of residence in forestlands. Consequently, in making claims to forestlands, political actors in Gudalur variously contest what it means to be (and become) indigenous, where and how forest boundaries are demarcated and who can be deemed as legitimate arbiters of rights-claims.

This calls us to see the FRA as creating affordances (Massumi 1992) through which people in Gudalur must mobilize their politics. In doing so, it becomes an actor that reconfigures relations of power between different actors, often mediated by the state. By focusing on the politics around the FRA, we pay specific attention to how competing imaginations of the local are mobilized and what the consequences of this are in terms of the social and ecological landscape of the region.

Challenges to Local Government and Sustainable Development Goals

BeBe Sumra Dr. Kalsoom (Centre for Polic Studies, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology)

Abstract

All the targets of SDGs are directly or indirectly related to the daily work of local governments and local governments can play a vital role in the achievement of all 17 SDGs. Local Governments are not mere implementation authorities but local governments are the central to face local challenges and opportunities to be taken to account in the implementation of the agenda. In this paper the role of local government in Pakistan and its challenges in perusing SDGs have been discussed. The purpose of this article is to explore the extent to which local government is aware of SDGs adaptation and to find out the challenges facing to fulfill SDGs in planning practices.

In order to conduct an empirical research, a multi-perspective structured questionnaire covering all the variables on potential possible local actions is used to get the perceptions of local elected representatives and public officials in five main and metropolitan cities in Pakistan. The findings are expected to disclose the SDGs awareness and local version of challenges faced by local government in large and bit developed urban cities.

This research paper contributes an understanding of the variety of public policy issues related to local government in addressing local delimitation of powers and conflict of interest between bureaucracy and elected representatives at local level, particularly in urban areas and Public sector organizations/institutes at local level. This paper is expected to present several suggestions and practices for local implementation, including the acceleration of local networks and groups.

Keywords: SDGs, local government, Metropolitan cities, developing countries

Searching for an Alternative Decentralized Flood Policy in India: Hydrological Flood Policy and Local People

Jha Pankaj Kumar (University of Delhi)

This paper aims to outline the possible arena in which an alternative flood policy can be found for India, perhaps anywhere in the world.For this, it explores the politics of knowledge between perspectives followed by the state and those practiced by people encountering the floods, exploring the possibility of bringing them closer as opposed to their being in contention, as has been the case so far. It is divided into three parts. The first part outlines the state-led Hydrological Flood policy, which is mostly concerned about taming a river, about flood-control, viewing floods as a disaster that ought to be controlled and possibly eliminated. This perspective has dominated the policy of the post-colonial state in India. In Bihar,starting from the *Patna Barh conference,1937* (Patna Flood Conference, 1937) to Bihar State Disaster Management Act, 2007, the flood policy has been directed and dominated by this hydrological approach.

In the second part of my paper I explicate the perspective on floods found in the philosophy and practice of the local people,carried by them for hundreds of years. This perspective considers flood as the part of their life-cycle and has created a range of responses accordingly. This has built a knowledge base of the behavior of rivers, the ways in which human beings can benefit from it with a clear vision of maintaining a balance between the river and human society. This part is based both on the work of stalwarts like Dinesh Mishra and Anupam Mishra, as also my own extensive fieldwork on the ground..

The third part of my paper is based on another part of thenarrative(s) from my research ground, detailing the strong local politics at two levels. First at the institution level, there is a strong nexus between politician-contractor-civil engineer on the issues of dam and embankment. At the second level, we can identify the local politics between people that live on the riverside and countryside on the issue of the embankment.

In the last section of this piece, I intend to explore the possibility of a dialogue between the two perspectives that

couldlead to an alternative decentralized flood management policy. So I bring together the arguments from very diverse existing literatureon decentralization and the relationship of people with the state, together with these two perpsectives.In this, three significant points emerge:

First, ‘flood management’ rather than ‘flood control’ should be the call of state governments, with anemphasis on how to tackle the issues of flood.

Second, in any alternative flood management policy, equal importance needs to be given to local knowledge, with thoseon scientific-hydrological techniques

Third, the central and the state governments both should review and strengthen their own special provisions for flood related management policies like the warning/alert system prior to flood, flood forecasting techniques, floodplain zoning should be strengthened. In this process too, the participation of local people must be recognized and ensured, because there are a number of early warning techniques that were used traditionally. This is extremely significant for any kind of flood management framework.

Redressing food security policy in India – from the state to the ‘local’.

Devarati Roy Chowdhury (University of Delhi)

The food has always been at the locus of community and social, economic action. As an intrinsic element of the human ecological process, food involves constant production, re-production, markets, state - rationing, utilization mechanism etc. The struggle for food simultaneously is a struggle for power, rights and identities particularly where it is a scarce resource and the urgency has realized as never before. Many social security programmes has been aimed to ensure food security for the people and especially for the poor communities across the globe. But, the government policies due to various reasons lag behind when it comes to actual implementation and thus ends up with average performance.

Dealing with the question, can local knowledge and participation ensure food security for all?, my paper examines, through the study of Araria district of Bihar India, that how in the public distribution system a new public sphere, a new form of engagement can be established where the people’s participation, local knowledge, community food grain bank, women self help groups etc can easily work as an effective mechanism to ensure food security for the poor, especially those who were excluded from the reach of government programmes.

The paper outlines two perspectives to this food policy discourse. One is highly ‘modernistic, state of art, technocratic supra view’ which seeks the number to answer the question of food insecurity. Here, the information concerning rationing and accessibility is dominated by the state agencies and private actors and the whole mechanism is running in a way to maximize and strengthen the system more and thus making beneficiaries dependent on them. It makes a huge gap between the beneficiaries and the state machinery and the nexus and linkages with state agencies, the dominant caste equation, factionalism and the patron-client like relations become pre-dominant.

The second view is more ‘conventional yet new-age, participatory infra view’ where the knowledge and participation of the locals is crucial to the development of the policies. It allows us to have an informed understanding of the locality and the issues, which in turn, influence public policy and the larger polity. This makes the locals as subjects and not just objects, of change. People’s participation and their involvement, their issues can really go beyond the statistics and shape the policy to be more efficient and context suitable. The locals and the countryside form the crucial premise of the political and policy life.

I argue that a simplistic elite-subaltern like dichotomy based model does not allow an understanding of the interplay of the local to supra-local agencies and institutions, or the ability of the local to participate and work in collective action. Till, they work separately, the field will be little understood and understudied. This paper is a product of ethnographic and political anthropological study of the rationing system in Bihar, India. And, the paper is divided into three parts. The first part discusses the issue of food insecurity and two paradigms significantly. The second part discusses in detail the emerging results and experiences of the presence of ‘local’ in the food policy. And, third part seeks the synthesis, a dialogue between two dichotomous axis should be clubbed together majorly.

My paper concludes that through the collective actions, institution building, livelihood promotion efforts can be made to ensure for a sustainable food security, institutional change, change in the position of women, rights, identities and in economic practices, and this will lead in real sense a ‘development’ with ‘social security’.