

A Special Issue of World Development, 2014



Decentralization and Governance

Can decentralization improve a country's quality of governance? If decentralization achieves anything, it should be to alter the type and quality of relations amongst countries' different levels of government. That is, it should change governance, with possible effects on the efficiency of public services and the responsiveness of the state to its citizens. But change for the better? For worse? Such questions are particularly important to those of us who care about development. But bizarrely, they have been overlooked by the vast majority of the (literally) hundreds of published academic studies of decentralization, and the (literally) thousands of "gray literature" papers and reports published over the last four decades, the overwhelming majority of which focus on much more technocratic issues, such as decentralization's effects on investment levels, primary education, access to health, water and sanitation, etc.

A new special issue of *World Development* on Decentralization and Governance, which I had the honor of guest-editing, remedies this problem. The collection came out of an unusual workshop held at Columbia University in June, 2009, sponsored by the **Initiative for Policy Dialogue's Decentralization Task Force**. Seeking to re-unite academics studying decentralization with the policymakers who implement it, the two-day event brought together researchers working at the empirical and theoretical frontiers of decentralization and local government with policy practitioners who have implemented or supported reform at the highest levels of government and international organizations. The purpose of the workshop was not only to exchange ideas, but to marry policymakers' detailed knowledge and insights about real reform processes with academics' conceptual clarity and analytical rigor. The workshop was explicitly structured to facilitate this integration; this collection is the result.

The papers in this collection examine how decentralization affects governance, in particular how it might increase political competition, improve public accountability, reduce political instability, and impose incentive-compatible limits on government power, but also threaten fiscal sustainability. Such improvements in governance can help spur the broad historical transitions that define development.

The authors include some of the foremost authorities on decentralization in the world. The papers are available now on the web (see links below), and will appear in print soon. Enjoy!

Contents

1. **Decentralization and Governance** – Jean-Paul Faguet, LondonSchool of Economics and Political Science
2. **Second Generation Fiscal Federalism: Political Aspects of Decentralization and Economic Development** – Barry R. Weingast, StanfordUniversity
3. **The Politics of Federalism in Argentina and its Implications for Governance and Accountability** – Martín Ardanaz, Columbia University, Marcelo Leiras and Mariano Tommasi, both Universidad de San Andrés
4. **Constitutional Structures for a Strong Democracy: Considerations on the Government of Pakistan** – Roger Myerson, University of Chicago
5. **Decentralization and Veiled Corruption under China's "Rule of Mandates"** – Mayling Birney, LondonSchool of Economics



6. **Water Reforms, Decentralization and Child Mortality in Colombia, 1990-2005** – Claudia Granados Vergara, Hertie School of Governance, and Fabio Sánchez Torres, Universidad de los Andes
7. **Traditional Governance, Citizen Engagement and Local Public Goods: Evidence from Mexico** – Alberto Díaz-Cayeros, University of California, San Diego, Beatriz Magaloni, Stanford University and Alex Ruiz Euler, University of California, San Diego
8. **The Effects of Participatory Budgeting on Municipal Expenditures and Infant Mortality in Brazil** – Sónia Gonçalves, King's College London,

Guest Editor and Author Bios

Guest Editor

Jean-Paul Faguet is the Reader in the Political Economy of Development at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His research and teaching focus on political economy, new institutional economics, comparative politics, development economics and democratic theory. He also chairs the Decentralization Task Force^[1], part of the Initiative for Policy Dialogue. Dr Faguet has published extensively in the field of decentralization and local governance, including *Governance from Below: Decentralization and Popular Democracy in Bolivia* (2012, University of Michigan Press). He trained at Princeton, Harvard, and the LSE.

Contributors

Martin Ardanaz currently holds a position as Fiscal and Municipal Development, Sr. Associate at the Institutions for Development Department of the Inter-American Development Bank. His research interests include the political economy of public finance, with a focus on Latin American countries. He is currently investigating the impact of fiscal windfalls on public expenditure efficiency at the subnational level across Latin America. He holds a PhD in Political Science from Columbia University.

Mayling Birney is a Lecturer (Assistant Professor) at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Her current research focuses on political reform and stability in China; and her broader interests include comparative governance, rule of law, local-national politics, democratization and regime stability, and authoritarian and mixed regimes. From 2007-2010, Dr. Birney held a post-doctoral fellowship in Princeton University's Society of Fellows and Woodrow Wilson School. In 2006-2007, she was a research fellow at the Brookings Institution. In an earlier part of her career, Dr. Birney also explored democratic politics in the United States from various angles, including through professional work as a Legislative Aide in the U.S. Senate. She earned a PhD in political science from Yale University in 2007.

Alberto Díaz-Cayeros is an Associate Professor of International Relations and Pacific Studies and Director of the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies (USMEX). Prior to coming to IR/PS, Alberto was an assistant professor in the Stanford University Department of Political Science. He is affiliated with the Center for Democracy, Development, and Rule of Law (CDDRL), the Stanford Center for International Development (SCID), and is a member of the board of the Center for Latin American Studies. Before taking a position at Stanford, he taught at UCLA and Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México in Mexico City. He has also been a researcher at CIDAC, a think tank in Mexico City. In 1997, Professor Díaz-Cayeros received a PhD in Political Science from Duke University with a specialization in comparative politics, political economy, and international political economy. His current research interests include poverty, development, federalism, clientelism and patronage, and Mexico. Díaz-Cayeros is currently working with Federico Estévez and Beatriz Magaloni on a book manuscript entitled *Strategies of Vote Buying: Social Transfers, Democracy and Welfare in Mexico*.

Sónia Gonçalves is a Teaching Fellow in Economics in the Department of Management, King's College, London. She has a PhD and an MSc in Economics from the London School of

Economics. She has done research on the political economy of public service delivery and participatory democracy in Brazil, as well as on the role of the media and political accountability.

Claudia Granados Vergara is a graduate student in public policy at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin. Her fields of concentration include economics, political economy, public management and public policy.

Marcelo Leiras is Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Sciences, Director of Undergraduate Studies in Political Science and International Relations at the Universidad de San Andrés (Argentina), and Researcher at the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research (Conicet-Argentina). During 2009 he was Postdoctoral Associate in the Program on Democracy, MacMillanCenter for International and Area Studies, YaleUniversity. His most recent work analyzes the impact of decentralization on party system nationalization and the effect of political competition on judicial stability. He holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Notre Dame.

Beatriz Magaloni is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at Stanford University. Prior to joining Stanford in 2001, she was a Visiting Professor at UCLA and was a Professor of Political Science at Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM), Mexico. She won the American Political Science Association's Gabriel Almond Award for the Best Dissertation in Comparative Politics in 1998. Her book, *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico* (Cambridge University Press) won the Leon Epstein Award in 2007 for the best book published in the previous two years in the area of political parties and organizations and the best book award given by the Comparative Democratization section of the American Political Science Association. Dr. Magaloni's research interests include authoritarianism, democracy and regime transitions; political economy of development; and Latin American politics.

Roger Myerson is Glen A. Lloyd Distinguished Service Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago. In 2007, he was co-winner of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences with Eric Maskin and Leonid Hurwicz. Dr. Myerson's publications, *Game Theory and Probability Models for Economic Decisions* furthered the theoretical research on game theory, information economics, and economic analysis of political institutions. Winner numerous accolades including an honorary doctorate from the University of Basel in 2002, he is a Fellow and former Midwest Vice President of the AmericanAcademy of Arts and Sciences. He was elected Vice President of the Econometric Society in 2006. Dr. Myerson holds a PhD from HarvardUniversity.

Alex Ruiz Euler is a PhD candidate in political science at the University of California, San Diego. His fields of concentration include comparative politics and political theory with a focus on Latin America.

Fabio Sánchez is Professor of Economics at the Universidad de los Andes (Bogotá, Colombia), where he was also Director of the Center for the Study of Development Economics from 2002-2008. His teaching and research focus on development economics, economic history, political economy, and econometrics. His publications include numerous papers and four books on such subjects as mutual contagion of conflict and coca production, decentralization and access to social services, human capital and the labor market, and the determinants of productivity growth in Colombia.

Mariano Tommasi is Professor of Economics at Universidad de San Andres in Argentina. He specializes in political economy and institutional economics, with focus on developing countries. He has held Visiting Professorship positions in Economics, Political Science, and Latin American Studies at Yale, Harvard, and TelAvivUniversity, and a Visiting Professorship at the University of California – Los Angeles. He has been the President (2004-2005) of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association. He was a recipient of a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship (2006-2008). He has been an advisor to several Latin American governments, and to international organizations such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. He



has published articles in numerous economics and political science journals, as well as several books. He holds a PhD in Economic from the University of Chicago.

Barry R. Weingast is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution as well as the Ward C. Krebs Family Professor in the Department of Political Science at Stanford University; serving as chair of that department from 1996 to 2001. His research focuses on the political determinants of public policymaking and the political foundations of markets and democracy. He has authored and edited numerous books and journal publications focusing on U.S. politics and regulation, economic reform and political economy. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and recipient of the 2006 William H. Riker Prize in Political Science. Dr. Weingast earned a PhD in economics from the California Institute of Technology in 1978.

[1] See <http://www0.gsb.columbia.edu/ipd/programs/program.cfm?ptid=2&prid=16>

March 21st, 2014 | [News from the Department, Publications](#) | [0 Comments](#)

⌵

