

Workshop II: Decentralized governance for poverty reduction

(United Nations Development Programme)

Policymakers, development practitioners and experts are increasingly recognizing the significance of effective decentralized governance in reinforcing democracy and promoting economic and social development. Both the international community and governments in developing countries are advocating decentralization as a key element in poverty reduction through promoting citizens' participation; providing better services for the majority of the population; and insuring greater government responsiveness to citizens' demands. Experience has shown that, overall, local governments are in a better position to respond to citizens' needs and to interact in a constructive way with community-based organizations

This workshop will focus on strengthening decentralized governance institutions, policies and human resources capacities. Promoting effective local financial management will also be given particular attention. Participants will discuss how to design effective local government bodies and processes and insure that they function efficiently. Strategies of local capacity building will be discussed through case studies of local development projects, assessment of donor-supported programmes, and good practices of decentralized governance. Furthermore, the workshop intends to explore citizens' involvement in the elaboration and implementation of local development programmes, through partnerships and consultative processes. The use of ICT as a tool to enable decentralization and strengthen local governance will also be explored.