



Decentralization and Local Governance in Developing Countries: A Comparative Perspective

(MIT Press)

Pranab Bardhan, Dilip Mookherjee

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Over the past three decades the developing world has seen increasing devolution of political and economic power to local governments. Decentralization is considered an important element of participatory democracy and, along with privatization and deregulation, represents a substantial reduction in the authority of national governments over economic policy. The contributors to *Decentralization and Local Governance in Developing Countries* examine this institutional transformation from comparative and interdisciplinary perspectives, offering detailed case studies of decentralization in eight countries: Bolivia, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, South Africa, and Uganda. Some of these countries witnessed an unprecedented "big bang" shift toward comprehensive political and economic decentralization: Bolivia in 1995 and Indonesia after the fall of Suharto in 1998. Brazil and India decentralized in an uneven and more gradual manner. In some other countries (such as Pakistan), devolution represented an instrument for consolidation of power of a nondemocratic national government. In China, local governments were granted much economic but little political power. South Africa made the transition from the undemocratic decentralization of apartheid to decentralization under a democratic constitution. The studies provide a comparative perspective on the political and economic context within which decentralization took place, and how this shaped its design and possible impact. **Contributors** Omar Azfar, Gianpaolo Baiocchi, Pranab Bardhan, Shubham Chaudhuri, Ali Cheema, Jean-Paul Faguet, Bert Hofman, Kai Kaiser, Philip E. Keefer, Asim Ijaz Khwaja, Justin Yifu Lin, Mingxing Liu, Jeffrey Livingston, Patrick Meagher, Dilip Mookherjee, Ambar Narayan, Adnan Qadir, Ran Tao, Tara Vishwanath, Martin Wittenberg

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