

LAD Workshop Course: The How of Policy Reform

Government efforts at policy reform in the developing world have often come up short. Some initiatives have been announced with great fanfare but failed to make it through complex and sometimes opaque policymaking processes. Other reform initiatives have developed problems during policy implementation, such as exceeding planned budgets, falling behind overly-ambitious schedules, developing coordination issues between government agencies or different levels of government, or facing resistance from the “frontline workers” who are actually delivering the program. Other reform initiatives have fallen victim to rent-seeking by politicians or bureaucrats. Still other policy innovations have had promising results in early “pilots” that were not duplicated when they were rolled out on a wider basis.

This course examines why policy reform initiatives often have disappointing results, and tries to give policymakers and policy implementers tools that can be useful in anticipating, addressing and overcoming challenges that they are likely to encounter in trying to bring about policy reforms. The course is organized around a common set of five challenges that policymakers encounter in most policy reform initiatives:

- building coalitions of support among stakeholders
- implementing policy reform
- changing the behavior of target populations (businesses, individuals and/or frontline workers)
- building state capacity
- scaling up and avoiding mission drift in reforms

Rather than a single “template” or “roadmap” for policy reform, the discussion of each challenge is organized around a “checklist” of frequent barriers to reform, a set of warning signs that a particular barrier may be a serious impediment to a proposed reform initiative, and a set of strategic options for trying to overcome those barriers. The importance of local and policy sector context in “diagnosing” specific reform challenges and in choosing strategies to address them is emphasized throughout the course.

The format of the course includes three major components. A morning lecture sets out a major theme for the day—one of the five challenges--and introduces a set of analytical tools that can be used to anticipate impediments to reform and strategic options for overcoming them.

The second component of the course is analysis of particular cases of policy reform. Some of these cases are from the Leadership Academy for Development’s own library of cases. Others come from the Harvard Kennedy School and other sources. Still others are developed by LAD’s partner institutions in the course of our partnership with them. And other, “curated” cases are developed from a mixture of primary and secondary materials about a particular, often currently unresolved, policy debate. Case discussions are designed to be highly interactive, with the instructor guiding the discussion, but the course participants taking the lead in developing the case analysis, linking it to analytical categories developed in the lecture, and proposing and weighing the merits of various

policy alternatives. Participants are often called upon to play the roles of the case protagonist, various case stakeholders, or advisors to the case protagonist. Most of the cases are open-ended: the outcome of the case is not revealed so that participants' discussions are not swayed by thinking that the actual outcomes was either "correct" or inevitable.

The third component of the course is group projects that address policy issues that are currently confronting governments in the region where the course is being held. Ideas for group projects are generated and decided by class participants themselves, and governments are encouraged to send groups of individuals to the course who can "brainstorm" reform options and strategies that are currently on their agendas. After deciding on a project topic, each group spends part of the day working on that topic and applying that day's material to refine their proposal and strategy. Each group presents their proposal on the final day of the course.

Intended Learning Outcomes

After the completion of the course, participants will be able to:

- Understand major challenges to policy reform
- Anticipate and diagnose barriers that are likely to arise for specific reform alternatives
- Assess the advantages and disadvantages of specific strategies for addressing reform challenges

Course Duration: Generally 5 days.

Course Leaders: Francis Fukuyama, Mary Hilderbrand, Kent Weaver

Countries where Course has been offered: United States (World Bank headquarters)

**SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR A FIVE-DAY “THE HOW OF POLICY REFORM”
COURSE**

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Session 1	Lecture: “Building Coalitions for Reform”	Lecture: “The Challenge of Implementation in Development”	Lecture: ”Promoting Behavior Change by Businesses and Individuals”	Lecture: “Building State Capacity and Good Governance”	Lecture: ”Scaling Up Policy Innovations and Avoiding Mission Drift”
Session 2	Case: ”The Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board” or ”Building a New Health Insurance System for Georgia”	Case: ”Facilitating Trade through Effective Border Control: Costa Rica's Challenging Reform Agenda”	Case: ”Diminishing the Size of the Informal Sector in Medellin”	Case: ”Gifford Pinchot and the US Forestry Service”	Case: Akshaya Patra: Feeding India’s Schoolchildren”
Session 3	Case: Protecting the Environment in Dom Eliseu, Brazil” or ”Building a New Health Insurance System for Georgia”	Case: ”Administrative Decentralization in Peru” or ”The Case of the Unskilled Meritocracy”	Case: Guinea Worm in Africa or Polio Vaccination in Nigeria	Case: ”Police Reform in Georgia” or ”Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission”	Group project meetings
Session 4	Group project meetings	Group project meetings	Group project meetings	Group project meetings	Group project presentations

Note: Cases listed here are for illustration only. LAD works with its partner institutions to select teaching cases that will be useful in the region where the course is held.