

The Governance E-Gazette



Maastricht Graduate School of Governance

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Mozambique Madness

A few weeks ago, our academic director Prof. Chris de Neubourg and PhD researcher Melissa Siegel traveled to Mozambique for a week to give assistance to the Economics Faculty of the Catholic University of Mozambique in Beira. The Catholic University of Mozambique is leading in instituting the PBL system and improving the quality of the University. It was a frantic week of (Prof. Chris de Neubourg) giving several lectures, commenting on student presentations from 7am to 6pm and meetings with the coordinators. Also planned into the week was an official lunch with the Dutch Ambassador to celebrate Queen's day in which the Dutch raw herring didn't seem to stand up to the climate, making several guests sick (including the dean of the Economics Faculty, Prof. de Neubourg and the PBL coordinator). A few impressions by Melissa: "Driving in Mozambique was also a challenge; there were several places in which the road had been completely washed away making it necessary to have four wheel drive vehicle if you wanted to go any where. The landscape while beautiful is completely barren of animals due to the civil war in the country and left over land mines. Recently there has also been a great deal of flooding in which many landmines floated to other locations making it difficult to properly judge where they are located anymore. Amazingly there is an official "Men's Day" every Friday....apparently it is very important to have an official day of men every week (there is no "women's day"). I also had the pleasure of learning a traditional Mozambique dance in which men and women dance extremely close in a close to Latin-style dance. "



A Taste of Governance

Last week, the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance organised an 'open day' for potential new master students. As May 18 drew nearer, so did the gloomy-looking clouds which made Charlotte and Rally very uncomfortable. But, luckily, the weather gods were surprisingly merciful as when the hungry students came from their morning workshop, the first rays of sun broke through and everyone enjoyed both delicious treats and weather! About 20 students, mainly from the faculties of Economics and Business Administration, Art and Cultures and the University College were given a chance to join the current master students in a workshop on 'efficient policy making' and investigated future career possibilities in the parallel sessions which were given by professionals who came to talk about their job and the skills needed. Speakers included Emmy Nelissen, working as a consultant for Ecotec, Francesco Rampa, programme officer

for the ACP-EU Economic and Trade Cooperation of the European Centre for Development Policy Management, Maud Huynen, PhD researcher at the International Centre for Integrated Assessment and Sustainable Development and Christiane Ahrendt, a consultant at the development centre of the OECD.

For more information on possibilities to join a lecture or to talk to one of the programme coordinators, please send an email to:

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Development Economics Seminar

The Network of PhD Students in Development Economics in the Netherlands successfully held its 3rd Development Economics PhD Seminar in Maastricht on April 28th, 2006. The opening speech was given by Luc Soete the director of UNU-MERIT, and the keynote speech on Risk, Growth and Poverty was delivered by Stephan Dercon from Oxford University.

In his speech Dr. Dercon discussed how micro-evidence shows that risk is a cause of poverty, and how the policy response to poverty has to be more subtle than arguing that 'growth' or 'redistribution' or 'targeted transfers' for poorest are effective in theory and practice. Five papers were presented in the seminar, the first paper was written by Britta Augsborg from the MGSOG who presented her paper on An Econometric Evaluation of the SEWA Bank in India. Ms. Ausburg presented cross sectional and longitudinal analysis of related data concluding that Microfinance is not an "overnight-cure". Lei Pan from Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam presented her paper on Insurance and Rural Welfare: What Can Panel Data Tell Us? It discussed how structural models of household behavior under risk can be estimated from panel data on production and assets. Philip Lemay from the University of Namur presented his paper which was entitled Insurance for the Poor: The Case of Informal Insurance Groups in Benin, which studied indigenous insurance groups using evidence from urban areas in Benin. The fourth paper was presented by Yoseph Getachew from UNU-MERIT and his paper was entitled Income Inequality and Economic Growth: A Unified Theory. Among Mr. Getachew's conclusions was that the effect of income inequality to economic growth is conditional and could change through time. The final paper was presented by Bejoy K. Thomas from Tilburg University which was on Multidimensional Poverty and Identification of the Poor. Based on field study in a Kerala village in India it illustrated how actors who make the policies and actors who are affected by the policies identify the poor.

Presentations and papers of the seminar can be downloaded via our website: www.governance.unimaas.nl



**Nice to meet you... Christina Behrendt
(Social Protection Financing:
International Labour Office)**

I am writing these words during my yearly stay at Maastricht University.

I teach one module of the Advanced Topics course, together with Franziska Gassmann and Denis de Crombrughe, it is a special course that combines an initiation to econometrics, household survey analysis as well as a one-week workshop on poverty and poverty reduction.

During this week, the students embark on poverty analysis, learn to know different concepts of poverty and possibilities (and limitations) of poverty measurement, assess the effectiveness of existing social protection programmes in reducing poverty and start to dig into some static micro-simulations of possible policy reforms. It is a hands-on course in which we have had lively and very productive discussions, and students quickly acknowledged the potential of these approaches as well as the methodological pitfalls. I should also mention that part of the pleasure of teaching this course is the collaboration with Franziska and Denis, which culminates in a delicious dinner at one of Maastricht's beautiful restaurants – this has developed into a delightful tradition over the last four years. The remaining fifty-one weeks of the year, I am with the Social Security Department of the International Labour Office (ILO) in Geneva. My current work concentrates two main issues: social security statistics and the role of basic social cash transfers in extending social security to those not yet covered. In respect to social security statistics, the new ILO Social Security Database will soon be available as a key tool to collect social security statistics and to calculate indicators on social expenditure, the financing of social protection, the coverage of the population as well as the quality of benefits. National capacity-building seminars have brought together users and producers of social security statistics – for the first time in many countries – to discuss about the available information and prospects for improvement. Basic social cash transfers are increasingly recognized as an instrument of poverty reduction in low and middle income countries. Existing programmes show that such transfers can be an affordable and effective way of extending social protection to vulnerable groups of the population and to reducing poverty.

Although I enjoy teaching very much, I do not regret having traded full-time academic life for work at the ILO. I had spent five years at the University of Konstanz (Germany), where my teaching and research oscillated around related issues on social security and its effects on poverty reduction and income distribution (mainly on minimum income schemes as well as public and private pensions), yet with a slightly different geographic focus on OECD countries. Before joining the ILO almost four years ago, I spent one year as a consultant for the International Social Security Association (ISSA) in Geneva. Since my husband and I settled down in a small village at the French shore of Lake Geneva, my husband and me have been exploring the surrounding mountains with our skis, snowshoes, hiking boots or bikes. We also very much enjoy travelling, be it for a short weekend escape or a longer journey to discover the world.



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