

SIXTH SOUTH-SOUTH INSTITUTE

# DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL VERSUS NEOLIBERALISM: TOWARDS EMPOWERMENT AND INCLUSION

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SEPTEMBER, 25 - OCTOBER, 3 - 2013

SANTIAGO DE CHILE

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS



Consejo Latinoamericano  
de Ciencias Sociales  
Conselho Latino-americano  
de Ciências Sociais



The Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO), the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) and the International Development Economic Associates (IDEAs), are pleased to call for applications for participation in the **Sixth South-South Institute on *DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL VERSUS NEOLIBERALISM: TOWARDS EMPOWERMENT AND INCLUSION*** being held as part of the third three-year phase of the *Africa/Asia/Latin America Scholarly Collaborative Program*. The Institute will be held in Santiago de Chile, from September 25 to October 3, 2013.

Within the ambit of the third phase of the *Africa/Asia/Latin America Scholarly Collaborative Program*, a series of activities have been scheduled, among them an annual South-South Institute. The Institute is primarily designed to offer training to younger scholars engaged in research on the diverse problems and challenges facing the countries of the South. Through the Institute, we are hoping to promote a revival and expansion of comparative thinking and cross-regional networking among a younger generation of Southern scholars. As was done during the first two phases of this programme, the different sessions of the South-South Institute would rotate among the three continents where the lead collaborating institutions are located, namely, Africa, Asia and Latin America. In this way, participants, who will also be drawn from all three continents, are exposed to the socio-historical contexts of other regions of the South as an input that helps to broaden their analytical perspectives and improve the overall quality of their scientific engagements.

## 1. OBJECTIVES

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The underlying objective of the South-South Institute is to offer advanced research training opportunities to participants on various key issues relevant to the South, and the theoretical and methodological perspectives that might be appropriate for gaining a full understanding of the specific situation of the countries and peoples located outside the core of the international system such as it is presently structured. The main premise of this effort is that there are glaring inadequacies in many of the theories and methodologies developed in the North, and crystallised in the mainstream social sciences, which foreclose a sound understanding of the problems confronting the countries of the South. By facilitating discussion of available alternative theories, the creative reshaping of universally available knowledge and the formulation of new approaches at the South-South Institute, we hope to mobilise young scholars from across Africa, Asia and Latin America to reflect on strategies and policy options for overcoming the challenges facing the countries of the South. In the process the Institute will contribute not just to a better understanding of the theories and methodological approaches developed in different regions of the South, but also to the promotion of knowledge that is more relevant from the particular standpoint of the South. It is also expected that participants will become acquainted with the local intellectual environment in the regions where different sessions of the institutes are hosted, and strengthen their comparative research capacities. In sum, the institutes are structured to serve as a unique forum for enhancing a deeper understanding among a younger generation of Southern scholars of the history, politics, economy and culture of the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, and offer an opportunity to participants to develop long-lasting collaborative relationships with their counterparts from other Southern countries.

## 2. ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION AS LAUREATES

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Younger scholars resident in countries of the South and who are pursuing active academic careers are eligible to apply for a place in the Institute. Each applicant should have a university education, preferably with a minimum of a master's degree in any of the social sciences and humanities. Selection for participation will be on the basis of a competitive process. Altogether, 30 people will be selected for participation in the Institute, with 10 each from Africa, Asia and Latin America. The full participation costs of the selected laureates will be covered, including their travel (economy return air tickets), accommodation and subsistence.

### 3. FACULTY

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Each session of the South-South Institute is led by a faculty of Southern scholars who are recognised as people who have made important contributions to an understanding of the particular theme on which they have been selected to lecture and help organize working groups. Just as the young scholars who will be identified to be laureates will be drawn from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the composition of the faculty will also be tri-continental, underscoring a joint and mutual learning process that should deepen South-South comparative insights and advance southern perspectives that are alternatives to dominant discourses that tend to reflect uneven international power relations. We shall also draw upon intellectual resources we can locate in the countries hosting each edition of the institute.

### 4. THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE INSTITUTE

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The sixth session of the South-South Institute, as decided by CLACSO, CODESRIA and IDEAs, will take place in Santiago de Chile. CLACSO will assume overall responsibility within the tri-continental partnership for the Institute. The Institute will run **from September 25 to October 3, 2013**. Latin American, African and Asian scholars will constitute the main faculty of the Institute and they will deliver a series of lectures over the duration of the programme. A team of local scholars based in Santiago, Chile's capital city, will complement the faculty with additional academic activities, including meetings. Participation in the activities of the Latin American Sociological Association (ALAS) XXIX Congress (September 29 to October 4, 2013) will be also part of the Institute's programme. CLACSO will work to facilitate the procurement of entry visas to Chile for the prospective laureates whose applications are successful.

### 5. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

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Every researcher wishing to be considered for selection as one of the 30 laureates to be invited to participate in the sixth South-South Institute is required to submit an application that will comprise of the following key items:

- a) An outline research proposal, written in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese, on the subject on which the prospective laureate would like to work during the Institute. The topic selected must be related to the theme of the Institute. Proposals should not exceed 5 pages in length and should have a clearly defined problematic;
- b) A covering letter, of one-page, which should indicate the motivation of the prospective laureate for wanting to participate in the Institute and explain how participation will benefit the candidate and her/his institution;
- c) An updated Curriculum Vitae complete with the nationality of the applicant, the scientific discipline(s) in which s/he is working, a list of recent publications, a summary of the on-going research activities in which the applicant is involved, and the names of two professional/personal referees;
- d) A photocopy of the highest university degree obtained by the applicant and of the relevant pages of her/his international passport containing relevant identity information; and
- e) A letter from the applicant's institution (university department/faculty) or research centre supporting her/his candidature. This statement of institutional support should be on the institutional letter-head and must be duly signed and stamped.

Additional prerequisites can be specified by the organizing regional institutions in keeping with their internal rules.

Prospective laureates for the sixth session of the Institute should have a demonstrable working knowledge of English.

The decision on candidates chosen for participation in the 2013 Institute of the selection committee appointed for the purpose by CLACSO, CODESRIA and IDEAs would be final.

In order to receive the certificate of participation in the Institute, each laureate will be required to draw on the lectures delivered and the course material provided to revise the original proposal on the basis of which s/he was admitted and, in so doing, produce an essay of up to 20 pages for consideration for joint publication and/or dissemination by CLACSO, CODESRIA and IDEAs in a South-South Occasional Papers series or some other outlet.

## **6. APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND DEADLINE**

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As the South-South Institute involves the participation of laureates and faculty from Africa, Asia and Latin America, it has been decided that applicants resident in Africa should submit their applications to CODESRIA, those resident in Asia to IDEAs and those resident in Latin America to CLACSO. The full contact details for CLACSO, CODESRIA and IDEAs are reproduced below for the attention of all prospective applicants. The deadline for the receipt of applications is **July 20, 2013**. Applications found to be incomplete or which arrive after the deadline will not be taken into consideration. Successful applicants will be notified immediately after the Selection Committee completes its work. Notification of results will be done by e-mail, fax or post. The results of the selection exercise will also be published on the websites of CLACSO, CODESRIA and IDEAs.

### **AFRICAN APPLICANTS SHOULD SEND THEIR APPLICATIONS TO:**

#### **CODESRIA**

#### **2012 South-South Institute**

BP 3304, CP 18524, Dakar, SENEGAL

Tel: (221) 825 9822: Fax: (221) 824 1289

Email: [south.institute@codesria.sn](mailto:south.institute@codesria.sn)

Website: [www.codesria.org](http://www.codesria.org)

### **ASIAN APPLICANTS SHOULD SEND THEIR APPLICATIONS ELECTRONICALLY TO:**

**IDEAs at:** [south.institute@networkideas.org](mailto:south.institute@networkideas.org)

### **LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN APPLICANTS SHOULD SUBMIT ELECTRONICALLY THEIR APPLICATIONS THROUGH:**

**CLACSO's website:** [www.clacso.org](http://www.clacso.org)

# DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL VERSUS NEOLIBERALISM: TOWARDS EMPOWERMENT AND INCLUSION

BACKGROUND CONCEPT NOTE FOR THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE CLACSO-CODESRIA-IDEAS SOUTH-SOUTH INSTITUTE 2013

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Neoliberalism has become a dominant force in the world since the late 1980s. It has engineered far-reaching economic reforms that have entirely changed the role of the state, intensified global connections, transformed local productive processes, and undermined national capabilities to direct development. It has had many other impacts too. These include the promotion of a view of individuals and nations as being agents with strategic intent, operating as investment and surplus maximizing machines that increasingly engage with each other through the market.

The privatization of public assets as well as of individual life has been essential to this atomizing perspective, based on a view of the market as an all powerful mechanism for the efficient allocation of resources and optimal realization of preferences. Nations too are encouraged to engage with each other through the market in order to fully exploit their so-called comparative advantages.

More insidiously and covertly neoliberalism has in practice been combined with a broader and subtle perspective on governance of the world. The fragmentation of social life and collectivities upon which it is based has therefore been usually opposed to universal values and policies. The subdivision of populations – which starts with the exclusion of the poor and their isolation in their condition of poverty to be targeted by social policies, but encompasses ethnic and racial divisions, among other partial identities – has played a key-role in this process, either through the agency of international organizations and national states or through the role of local agencies and large firms. For democracy, despite the celebration of ‘civil society’, at best a minor role is reserved.

On the other hand, democratic values have been spreading and have come to dominate the world in many ways, and are deepening in practice in many places and respects. Normatively this is hardly contestable, although in practice different regimes have worked to cripple or diminish popular participation. Yet people have all over become restless and non-deferential to authority; have demanded rights, often recognizing themselves as broader collectivities with universal as well as particular aspirations, at different levels of social life. Economic, cultural political and cognitive subjects have all become hotly contested. Whether this outburst of energy has in fact impacted upon state policies is a different matter.

In fact this disjoint movement has entailed a paradoxical situation. Democratic aspirations and practices have grown as people demand room for their exercise. On the other hand, in many contexts and at all levels basic policies are decided in advance, often designed and imposed by international organizations such as the World Bank.

How have these developments unfolded in Latin America, Africa and Asia? How has neoliberalism unfolded economically and in terms of schemes of social and territorial governance and management? What have been the impacts of democratic struggles and developments in terms of popular empowerment and the emergence of alternatives in these diverse regions of the South? Who has propelled democracy? How has the political space evolved and how have political forces responded to these dynamics? How have intellectuals contributed to answer this early twentieth-first century challenge? Which specific characteristics has democracy assumed in each of these continents and the countries that comprise them, and what are their virtues and shortcomings? What lessons can we draw from their experiences? Can we discern common patterns in the projects and practices of neoliberalism as well as democracy in these different regions? If so, what are their commonalities and what are the differences that we should not overlook? Are there ways in which democracy is being renewed in forms that can be generalized? Are there cross-border and cross-continental networks in the activities of social movements and non-governmental organizations that can challenge the networks of capital, states and international organizations? Can we discern new patterns of development and democratization of mechanisms of governance and management?

These are the themes and issues we hope will, among others, feature in discussions at the 2013 South-South Institute.

A number of specific topics can be identified within these themes. These include: the role played in the contradictory situation we have briefly described by diverse social agents: social movements, NGOs, international and multilateral organizations, transnational firms, governments, etc.; the private and often privatized form that economic activity increasingly takes, creating an urgent need to resume the production and use of public goods as well as to reinforce the public and collective dimension of social and individual life; the waves of mobilization that have propelled democracy across the world and the possibility of learning from democratic struggles and processes that have unfolded in different places; the particularized and targeted form that social policy has taken on lately, leading to a fragmentation of social life and the selective incorporation of sectors of the population within it, a mechanized management of social life, territory and social conflict; the possibility of democratizing governance and social policy design, with emphasis on a mix of particular and universal policies and a more complex solidarity; the alternatives available to close the gap between central, peripheral and semiperipheral countries; the renewed concern with environmental issues that have become an important aspect of rethinking development. Addressing these will, of course, lead to a questioning of social scientific knowledge and recognition of the need for its renewal in the face of the demands for a renewal of democracy.