

DATE:

NOVEMBER 3 – 7 2014

VENUE:

CHENNAI, INDIA

SEVENTH SOUTH-SOUTH INSTITUTE

INEQUALITY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT UNDER NEOLIBERALISM AND BEYOND

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

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 announce – in the framework of the third three-year phase of the *Africa/Asia/Latin America Scholarly Collaborative Programme* – the call for applications for participation in the **Seventh South-South Institute on INEQUALITY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT UNDER NEOLIBERALISM AND BEYOND**. The Institute will be held in Chennai, India, from November 3 to 7, 2014.

Within the ambit of the third phase of the *Africa/Asia/Latin America Scholarly Collaborative Programme*, a series of activities have been scheduled, among them an annual South-South Institute. The Institute is primarily designed to offer research training to younger scholars on the diverse problems and challenges facing the countries of the South. In doing so, we also seek to promote the revival and growth



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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 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 improves the overall quality of their scientific engagements.

1. OBJECTIVES:

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 the glaring inadequacy of much of the theories and methodologies developed in the North, crystallised in the mainstream social sciences, to provide the required instruments for a sound understanding of the problems confronting the countries of the South. Through both the discussion as well the autonomous translation and adaptation of theories and the creation of new ones through the South-South Institute, it is hoped to be able to mobilise young scholars from across Africa, Asia and Latin America to reflect on the alternatives that are available for overcoming the challenges facing the countries 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:

Younger scholars from 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. Applicants should have a demonstrable working knowledge of English. Selection for participation will be on the basis of a competitive process. Altogether, 30 candidates 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:

Each session of the South-South Institute is led by a faculty of Southern scholars who are recognised as people who have made some of the most original contributions to an understanding of the particular theme for which they have been selected to give lectures and help organise working groups. In this way, 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 that will lead the sessions of the Institute will also be tri-continental, underscoring a joint and mutual learning process that should enhance the overall goal of building alternative southern perspectives to dominant discourses that tend to reflect uneven international power relations, and deepening South-South comparative insights. We shall also draw upon intellectual resources we can locate in the countries hosting each edition of the institute.

4. THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE INSTITUTE:

The seventh session of the South-South Summer Institute, as decided by CLACSO, CODESRIA and IDEAS, will take place in Chennai, India. IDEAS will assume overall responsibility within the tri-continental partnership for the Institute. The Institute will run from **November 3 to 7, 2014**.

5. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

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

- 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 10 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 they envisage that they and their institution will benefit from the Institute;
- c.* An updated Curriculum Vitae complete with the names of professional and personal referees of the prospective laureate, the scientific discipline(s) in which s/he is working, the nationality of the applicant, a list of recent publications, and a summary of the on-going research activities in which the applicant is involved.
- d.* A photocopy of the highest university degree obtained by the applicant and of the relevant pages of his/her international passport containing relevant identity data; and
- e.* A letter from the applicant's institution (university department/faculty) or research centre supporting his/her candidature. This statement of institutional support should be done on the institutional letter-headed stationary and must be duly signed and stamped.

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 they were admitted and, in so doing, produce an essay of up to 20 pages for consideration for joint publication and dissemination by CLACSO, CODESRIA and IDEAS in a South-South Occasional Papers series or some other outlet.

6. APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND DEADLINE

The Tricontinental arrangement requires that applicants from Africa should submit their applications to CODESRIA, those coming from Asia to IDEAS and those from 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 17, 2014.** Applications found to be incomplete or which arrive after the deadline will not be considered. Successful applicants chosen by the selection committee will be notified immediately after the 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 *electronically* to:

CODESRIA

Email: south.institute@codesria.sn

Asian applicants should send their applications *electronically* to:

IDEAS

Email: south.institute@networkideas.org

Latin American and Caribbean applicants should submit *electronically* their applications through:

CLACSO's website: www.clacso.org

ANNEX

SEVENTH SOUTH-SOUTH INSTITUTE

INEQUALITY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT UNDER NEOLIBERALISM AND BEYOND

In one among its many usages, neoliberalism refers to: (i) the use of the rhetoric of market fundamentalism, in which the market or ostensibly “free economic exchange” is presented as the most efficient mechanism to work the economic system, to pave the way for the increasingly unfettered functioning of private capital; (ii) the use of the notion of a minimalist state, to be realised by dismantling its developmentalist version, to legitimise the shift of various terms of trade and mechanisms of distribution in favour of the owners of capital and their functionaries and conceal the conversion of segments of the state apparatus into sites for private accumulation; and (iii) the pursuit of a regime of accumulation where, the home market and deficit-financed state expenditure are replaced by exports and debt-financed private expenditure as the principal stimuli to growth.

Since the 1970s, countries across the globe have adopted policy regimes informed by neoliberal ideology of the above kind. Many factors provided the background to the rise of neoliberalism, which included the inability to sustain the post-War “golden age” characterised by reasonable growth, low unemployment, low inflation and a welfare state; the failure of most post-War developmentalist states to implement successful import substituting growth strategies; the adoption of policies of domestic and external deregulation and the shift in favour of more “outward-oriented” growth strategies; the associated tendency in developed and developing countries to deregulate the financial sector and the resulting proliferation of finance; to name just a few.

The ascendance of neoliberalism as the dominant socio-economic philosophy since the 1980s was as much of an ideological phenomenon as an economic one. Advocates of neoliberalism argued for the freedom of individual agents to make decisions in the economic sphere, without interference from the state. In defense of that position the market was presented as a neutral and benign mechanism, characterised by arms-length transactions between similarly placed even if differentially endowed agents. In a parallel drawn with political democracy, this system where individuals exercise choice by voting with their dollars, was seen as more democratic in its operations and as empowering individuals.

The argument that the free market is more democratic and empowering became over time the clarion call for enforcing neoliberalism across the globe, and any form of government intervention or regulation was portrayed as infringement on the democratic space of individuals by a behemoth State. Examples of government failures were touted as evidence of the inherent problem of a State regulated economic sphere, and even global trade was sought to be liberalised with minimum possible regulation by member states. A liberalised global framework promised greater income for developing countries from their exports, a route to industrialisation for capital starved poorer countries with investments from developed countries, and a creator of new markets which would raise global productivity and thereby eventually equalise the standard of living across national boundaries. Thus the ‘freedom’ that liberalisation promised was to also usher in a new age of democratic empow-

erment that would erase global and local inequalities and lead to convergence of incomes between and within nations. Such a process of ‘globalisation’ is an intrinsic part of the neoliberal agenda, and the Washington Consensus was touted as the global affirmation for such a new world order.

Decades of experience of this neoliberal world order has provided ample evidence that we now live in a more unjust world than before. The withdrawal of the state has led to the emergence of powerful private entities, and increased the power for global finance and transnational companies which are guided only by the motive of profit with no social compulsions, and are not even democratically accountable for their actions. Finance capital has emerged as the Frankenstein of capitalism, and now threatens the foundations of the very system that gave birth to it. Under neoliberalism, decentralisation of power and authority has been curbed severely.

The consequence of this power of and concentration of gains with the top 1% has been a huge increase in inequality that makes nonsense of the rhetoric of democracy that neoliberal ideologues advanced. Nor has neoliberalism succeeded in delivering higher growth. On average the era of globalisation that neoliberalism launched has recorded lower growth than earlier, and definitely when compared to the “golden age”. In some regions, such as South America, it resulted in more than one “lost decade” with low growth, high unemployment and hyperinflation. And as the recent, and still ongoing, financial crisis and Great Recession showed, the rise of neoliberalism has also increased economic instability with grave welfare consequences.

Not surprisingly for more than a decade now many countries, especially in Latin America, have gone “beyond” neoliberalism, experimenting with alternative policy regimes. The experiment is still on, but already many positive results are visible. In this background, the issues of inequality, democracy and development during and after neoliberalism are of immense significance for the global South. The developing countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia had their unique set of challenges which led to each adopting different policy mixes for development in different phases of their post-War history. The homogenised policy framework enforced on these countries under the neoliberal agenda is now proven to be ill suited to address these country specific challenges.

How have various countries in the South coped with this challenge of neoliberalism? How have the associated economic changes affected the social dynamics in these countries? Has neoliberalism been able to address the issue of inequality and development, or has the neoliberal model of development exacerbated the problem of inequality? How do the pre and post liberalisation periods compare in terms of changing trends in inequality, poverty, unemployment, etc? How has the changing nature of State power affected democracy in these developing countries? Has neoliberalism empowered democratic governments, or given rise to more autocratic States? Has neoliberalism caused economic and political power to be concentrated in the hands of the elite in these countries? How have the political formations in these countries oriented themselves with the advent of neoliberalism? How has social tolerance in cases of ethnic, racial or other social divides been shaped in the liberalised period? These are some of the themes and questions that the 2014 South-South Institute would like to explore.