



**THE AFRICA/ASIA/LATIN AMERICA SCHOLARLY COLLABORATIVE
PROGRAM**

Research Grants 2012

Call for applications

The Collaborative Tri-continental Program was launched in 2005 by the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO), the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) and the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA) with the purpose of carrying out high quality social science research and enhancing the production of knowledge suitable for fostering southern perspectives on critical issues, and feeding these into global debates. The Program includes an annual South-South summer institute, research conferences, and grants for advanced research. The research grants are intended to promote collaboration among researchers from the South and to stimulate analytical empirical studies on topics of relevance for their regions and for the Global South.

The call for applications is open to candidates of all disciplines of the Social and Human Sciences, as well as to researchers of other sciences with projects linked to the main theme of the year: “*Global Environmental Change, Agrarian Transformation and Food Sovereignty in the South*”. The intensity of unprecedented environmental challenges facing humanity has been inexorably increasing in recent years. Depletion of natural resources, mismanagement and mal-distribution of land, galloping urbanization and forced displacement of whole populations, all of which have their origins, at least in part, in environmental change, have become sources of concern for governments, civil society organizations and the research community. The main reason for choosing this theme is related to the necessity of understanding the complex dynamics associated with global environmental change (GEC) - which express themselves mainly, though not exclusively, through climate change, agrarian transformation and food sovereignty. It brings into play a set of questions that require urgent reflection, investigation and discussion by scholars of the Global South. Our starting point is that the scope and scale of interaction between GEC and food provisioning are changing dramatically, particularly in relation to the risks of climate change, biodiversity loss and water scarcity, as well as in terms of linkages to energy systems; and as food systems become more global in their networks of production, consumption and governance. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA) argues, for example, that humans have changed ecosystems more in the last 50 years than in any other comparable period in history, causing land degradation pollution, and the depletion of water and other natural resources in ways that undermine food and water security. Key trends include rapid increases in cultivated land, loss of coral reefs and mangroves, doubling of water withdrawals, doubling of nitrogen and phosphorus use, and declines in the size and habitats of many species, as well as unprecedented rates of species extinction.

But what have the different stakeholders achieved in terms of mastering the global environmental changes and of their impacting on the natural resources? How much have we contributed as researchers from the Global South towards the emergence of a coherent global understanding of the multiple dimensions of these phenomena?

The interconnectivity of the challenges gives rise to dynamics and processes that need to be understood through new concepts and notions forged by rigorous research. Despite the creation of institutions dealing specifically with global environmental change and food security, little progress has been made. Instead climate change, habitat loss, land expropriations and other negative processes are continuing apace, compromising food sovereignty as well as the very process of ‘development’ in many developing countries.

Human activities, including those related to producing, processing, packing, distributing, retailing and consuming food, are partly responsible for changing the world’s climate through emissions of greenhouse gases and changes in land use patterns. These activities have multiplier effects on aspects of global environmental change, including changes in freshwater supplies, air quality, nutrient cycling, biodiversity, land cover and soil fertility. Simultaneously, increases in population and wealth are leading to ever-growing demands by society for food, while increasing urbanization is leading to proportionally fewer people producing food. It is in this context that land expropriations have been implemented as a miraculous solution that can stimulate development through increased investment by agro-industrial companies in poor countries in Africa and elsewhere, leading to increased food production for a growing global population, and increasing the efficiency of natural resources use.

Land expropriation is also motivated by increasing challenges of producing food in rich countries because of climate change and/or the increasing cost of importing food into those countries which cannot produce food (such as the gulf countries) because of the financial crisis. The fundamental question about the conditions under which food production takes place thus arises. Through the concept of “food security”, the dominant global discourse on food provisioning and policy emphasizes access to adequate nutrition for all, and has thus served to promote a “corporate food regime”, i.e. large-scale, industrialized corporate farming based on specialized production, land concentration and trade liberalization. Attaining food security for all is clearly more complicated than just producing more food. Already, global food production exceeds current nutrition requirements yet over 1 billion people do not have access to sufficient food. Some experts are of the view that food security’s inattention to the political economy of the corporate food regime blinds it to the adverse effects of that regime, notably the widespread dispossession of small producers and global ecological degradation.

This research project will prioritize research into the interconnected issues of GEC and food sovereignty. These issues have been on scientific research agendas for some time. Recent research has begun to engage both socio-economic and bio-geophysical determinants of food security. The transformations of the African and Latin American agriculture systems are also increasingly conceptualized in terms of an “agrarian question of the dispossessed” that can only be resolved through a wide-ranging agrarian reform. The focus is on how and what contribution land and agrarian reform can make to reducing inequality and addressing the structural nature of rural inequalities, and poverty, and how those agrarian changes are affecting the changes occurring in the African, Asian and Latin American cities, reducing food dependency and enhancing food sovereignty in the South.

At the same time, natural resource exploitation is increasingly subject to global power relations, with the powerful essentially challenging the sovereignty of weaker nations regarding the exploitation of these resources (oil, strategic minerals, land and water). Added to this is the expansion of the emerging economies of the South which requires access to massive energy and natural resources. The resultant hegemonic processes have implications for sovereignty.

The challenge for the South is to understand how all these forces are interrelated, how they affect the South, and what therefore can be done to counter them. Consequently, while disaggregating the challenges might appeal because it simplifies the issues, it does not necessarily make a coherent understanding of the issues across disciplines, countries, and contexts. Such coherence would allow researchers to address questions of the inter-linkages between climate change and food crisis and the changing articulation of the global South economies into the global economies through new forms of land and natural resource expropriation.

Given this importance of inter-disciplinarity, research needs to build on the wealth of disciplinary studies that have characterized most GEC and food-related research to date, as well as on reflections that have been developed in the framework of social movements in the South. But new interdisciplinary agendas based on an integrated framing of the issues and challenges involved in the interaction between food sovereignty and GEC need to be set to move research forward. Challenges for research include responding to new needs for developing adaptation agendas and facilitating communication amongst researchers of the South working on a range of issues. Developing research agendas in support of food sovereignty policy formulation will definitely become more complicated under the pressure of global environmental change and requires systematic analysis that cuts across scales and levels. An innovative research approach that integrates a wide range of concepts and methods is needed if science is to support policy formulation and resource management more effectively.

This platform aims to help set the stage for further research on these critical issues. The researchers participating in this programme will be asked to critically reflect upon the theme, identifying what they believe are the most relevant and useful research questions and developing scientific contributions on how the underlying issues and questions differ from one region of the world to another. Priority will be given to experienced researchers based in institutions in the South with a strong track record of carrying out inter-disciplinary research. Special attention will be given to projects involving the elaboration of alternative methodologies, the generation of new empirical data and the critical interrogation of dominant theoretical paradigms.

ELIGIBILITY

The objective of this call is to select research projects on the themes and sub-themes described above and it is open to experienced researchers who have masters or doctoral degrees. Candidates are required to be supported by organizing institutions (APISA, CLACSO or CODESRIA) or their host institutions.

The execution of the research will not exceed the 12 months period starting in **June 2012**. A mid-term report will be submitted six months after the beginning of the research. A final report will have to be presented no later than 30 days after the date of expiry of the grant

period, in accordance with the terms of contract to be signed with the organising institutions. The final report will include a text in an adequate format so as to allow its edition and publication as a book or monograph in paper or electronic format in the website of APISA/CLACSO/CODESRIA.

Altogether 9 (nine) proposals (three per region) will be selected with a maximum grant of USD 10,000 per project. The resources allocated would be freely utilized in all activities related to the research: information collection, data gathering and processing, book purchase and related expenses. Resources cannot be used for project designing or for direct or indirect costs of the supporting institutions.

Additional requisites can be included by the organizing regional institutes to fulfil their internal rules.

APPLICATIONS

Applications should include:

A research proposal (with a maximum of 8 pages prefaced by an abstract of 100 words - A4 paper, Times New Roman 12 font size, 3 cm margins-) presenting the research problem and research methodology (including the sources to be examined), reviewing the relevant literature, and indicating the relevance of the research to one or both thematic areas established; An academic curriculum vitae (with a maximum of 3 pages); A short timetable; A letter of support signed by an authority of the host institution; Applications should be written in English, Spanish, French or Portuguese.

As the Collaborative Tri-continental Program involves the participation of scholars from Africa, Asia and Latin America, it has been decided that applicants who are residents in Africa should submit their applications to CODESRIA, the applicants resident in Asia should submit their applications to APISA and those in Latin America to CLACSO. The full contact details for APISA, CLACSO and CODESRIA are reproduced below for the attention of all prospective applicants. The deadline for the receipt of applications is **April, 30th 2012**. Applications found to be incomplete or which arrive after the deadline will not be taken into consideration. An independent Selection Committee charged with screening all applications received will meet shortly after the deadline for the receipt of applications. Successful applicants will be notified immediately after the Selection Committee completes its work. The results of the selection exercise will also be published on the websites of APISA, CLACSO and CODESRIA.

African applicants should send their applications electronically to:

CODESRIA

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BP 3304, CP 18524, Dakar, SENEGAL

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

Email: research.grants@codesria.sn

Website: www.codesria.org

Asian applicants should send their applications electronically to:

APISA (Secretariat)

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Rm. 701, William Hall
2401 Taft Avenue, Manila
PHILIPPINES 1004
Email: apisasecretariat@gmail.com
Website: www.apisanet.com

Latin American and Caribbean applicants should send their applications electronically to:
2012 South-South Research Grants
Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO)
Estados Unidos 1168, C1101AAX, Ciudad de Buenos Aires, Argentina
Tel. [54 11] 43049145 Fax [54 11] 4305 0875
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