

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Call for Research Collaboration on

The Dynamics and Socio-Economic Impacts of Mega Projects on its Territory and People

Context

UN-Habitat and the Dialog Institute are partnering in development projects and research that looks at the social, economic and environmental impacts of large projects on its territories, local population and the local and regional economy in the State of Pará situated in the Amazon region of Brazil.

The Dialog Institute has more than 30 years of experience with public policies focusing on the development of cities, regions and territories, particularly in regions impacted by mega-projects. Currently, we are looking at the implementation of large-scale projects and making an in-depth analysis of public policy propositions aiming at the regulation and implementation of these projects and the deployment of national and state regulations, particularly at their socio-economic aspects. The current research project – summarized herein - is meant to provide solid evidences to assist in the dialogue with Brazilian institutions about the design of these public policy propositions. This initiative also counts on the institutional collaboration by the Ministry of Environment and the Government of the State of Pará.

The Research

This research project looks at the relationship between mega projects (large enterprises) such as power plants, dams, mines, factories, among others, and the socio-economic phenomena and the territory where there are located and the outcomes and impacts from the relationship between the project and its territory, population and economy. For the purpose of this research, socio-economic phenomena are considered any measurable and / or observable changes generated or stimulated by the mega project (enterprise) on the individual or group of individuals with respect to: i) means of living, standards, habits and traditions; ii) social, cultural and heritage relations; iii) livelihood, productive means and access to income; iv) access to public infrastructure and services; v) physical and moral integrity; vi) family and community relations.

The empirical observations of these phenomena over the years indicate that the behavior of socio-economic variables differs in nature, intensity and comprehensiveness for each mega project. This raises, therefore, the central question of this research: what is the contribution of a large scale project (large enterprise) to the sustainable development in the regional scale?

This central issue unfolds in different hypotheses and research questions that guide this project, namely:

- Is there any pattern of improvement or decline in specific socio-economic indicators?
- Is the improvement or decline of regional socioeconomic indicators correlated with specific economic sectors?
- Is the improvement or decline of regional socio-economic indicators correlated with any pre-existing conditions in the territory? Is there any pattern in the evolution time curve of socio-economic indicators?
- Is there any spatial pattern in the evolution of socioeconomic indicators?

The intention of this research is to investigate, through appropriate methods, and find responses to these questions that can generate hard evidences that can sustain the formulation of suitable public policies to deal with this phenomenon. The scope of work is comprised of the Brazilian territory, but may extend to other countries according to the interest of partners interested in joining this initiative.

Brief Methodological Approach

The initial methodological proposal is divided into two fields:

- Analysis of Socio-economic Indicators: this field research focuses on a set of indicators that unveil the state of socio-economic development at the regional scale. Data collection will strive to demonstrate the behavior of these indicators in three groups of municipalities:
 - Municipalities that host a major mega-project in its jurisdiction;
 - Municipalities neighboring the large-scale project;
 - Control group of municipalities with similar characteristics but without presence of large-scale projects within its territory;

The research will look at the situation before and after the implementation of the mega project seeking all sorts of statistical data and relationships between the data.

- Analyze the input-output matrices of the states and Brazil. The goal is to observe the behavior of the different industrial sectors in relation to their capacity to generate and retain economic value in the territories for later cross-tabulation with socio-economic indicators.

Call for Research Collaboration

This call for research collaboration is aimed at researchers and academic institutions who are interested to partnering in field research, theoretical research and reporting and publication. We aim at attracting Universities and/or Research Centers and their scholars and researchers that have proven track records with fields of research associated to the main topic of this research and is interested in designing the research methodology, its execution and writing up the resulting publication. The deadline for completing the field survey is 04 months and we aim to start in May 2017.

The Dialog Institute makes available a modest seed capital to enable the participation of a suitable partner.

Interested parties should communicate directly to Sérgio Marcondes <sm@institutodialog.org> as soon as possible and express his/her interest to engage and participate in the project.

Research leader: