

Modern world transformations imply increasingly intense interactions between global political and economic forces and local social structures. The debate on possible development paths in the face of challenges related with climate change, increasing inequalities and competitiveness, intensification of migration, individualization of life, also affect local communities, often cut off from the global flow of information, however much more vulnerable to the occurrence of various risks, both environmental and economic. Our intention is to explore development dilemmas of selected local communities of Central America, putting forward the hypothesis that in their case, westernization of the way of life they are subjected to in recent decades, among other factors, by localization of projects for the development of infrastructure, as well as clash between Western civilization values with traditions and local cultures' values, are expressed in discourses and developmental dilemmas. They often take the form of protests and social conflicts resulting from reciprocal misunderstanding about what is development and how do individual actors and social groups perceive and understand it.

In order to be able to verify the hypothesis, the research will be carried out in accordance with the following objectives:

1. Presentation and explanation of social perceptions of development, in the context of local changes resulting from the location of large economic infrastructure;
2. Showing the interference and interdependencies between regional and local socio-political discourses and the external economic and political forces;
3. Providing knowledge about individual and collective attitudes of local communities in Central America towards the way of life and work;
4. Indication of relations between economic and demographic changes in the investigated communities and the developmental dilemmas they are faced with, which result from the location of the investments;
5. Enrichment of the knowledge of social understanding of development through creation of a picture(s) and definition of development, based on the conducted research and its compilation and comparison with the functioning definitions of development.

The research will be carried out on previously selected areas, taking into account those included in the preliminary research procedure, where there were social conflicts resulting from the location of large infrastructure projects, namely:

- Hydroelectric power plants (Reventazón in Costa Rica and Barro Blanco in Panama)
- Mega tourist parks (Guanacaste in Costa Rica and Bahia de Tela in Honduras),
- Mines „Libertad” and „La India” in Nicaragua.

We anticipate that the project will be executed for 36 months, which is sufficient time for gathering, selection and processing of the collected materials, information and data, through the use of various research methods and techniques. The basic data collection methods will be: field observations, in-depth interviews and surveys which are adequate to study social groups and processes. They will provide information for further analysis.

Social research using qualitative and quantitative methods will be carried out during the fieldwork. The above methods and techniques will be supplemented with a library query (including books, journals and diaries), which will allow, among other, to analyze social discourses and economic and demographic changes. For the latter also statistical analyses will be helpful.

In the final phase of the research, especially when formulating final conclusions, the comparative analysis method will be helpful.

Proposed project:

1. Will enrich and complement foundations of epistemological and ontological studies development research, including the understanding of this process by local Central American communities;
2. Will expand the perception of contemporary relations between local communities and global processes and economic and political forces;
3. Will deepen knowledge about the local effects of the interference of external forces with which Westernization of lifestyle is associated.

Until now, this approach has not been applied in research on development in Central America, which makes the project innovative and original.

The results of the research will be disseminated through publications, both monographs and scientific articles, participation in scientific conferences, and popular science forms such as exhibitions, lectures and interviews. The project will have its own scientific blog, thanks to which everybody will be able have free access to research results.