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FEATURES OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS PROBLEMS: ANALYSIS BASED ON CENTRAL KAZAKHSTAN MONOTOWNS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the paper examines the problem of regional development projects (RDP) in monotowns of Kazakhstan the case of Karagandy region through aims and indicators of implemented programs and projects in order to understand are applicable for these monotowns and its value.

Methodology. With aim to better understanding the evolution and roots of inefficiency of RDP in Kazakhstan on base of Karagandy region monotowns it was adopted a comprehensive review of relevant literature, government programs and its indicators. The necessity of indicators revision and new approach based on project management principles (stakeholders and value) is suggested.

Originality / value of the research. The paper reveals the current state and revealed the root of inefficiency of regional development programs in monotowns and ways of their decision. Usability of key objectives and indicators of regional development programs to single-industry towns of Karaganda region are considered.

Findings. Government programs strongly emphasized the importance of mostly infrastructure projects however, the aim of the programs was to achieve economy diversity. In addition, there were a single indicators and methodology for all monotowns, which are not suitable for all of them. Government reports regarding the results of implemented projects showed only improvements on the power grid and water supply networks but studies and articles in the media state the low efficiency and no impact and value for end-users of these programs and projects – local community.

Keywords: regional development program, regional development projects, project management, indicators, value, stakeholder management, PMBOK.

INTRODUCTION

10 years ago the Government of Kazakhstan adopted the Project of the Program for the development of monotowns in 2012-2020 [1], the results of which should have been impressive: first, the optimization of monotowns according to the production capacity of operating enterprises, and secondly, the diversification of the economy and the development of SMEs. Within the framework of this program, projects aimed at improving infrastructure, diversifying the economy, and improving living conditions of the local community were implemented. After that, several more programs were adopted, the last of which provides for development until 2025 [2]. Based on these programs regional departments developed their own programs. Unfortunately, studies, statistics, government reports, speeches by deputies, and articles in the media state the low effectiveness, and some even note the failure of these programs [3-6].

Indicating a problem of low efficiency of regional development programs, projects and a knowledge gap in this field the paper aims to analyze target and indicators of government programs in order understand are they suitable for regions and is there any impact of projects implemented based on them on local community as for end-users. No previous study has investigated the relevance and results of Program's aims and indicators to the region.

Within the framework of our study we decided analyze relevance of aims and indicators of Regional Development Programs for monotowns of Karagandy region because of 19 newly planned projects, 14

projects, or almost 75 %, are in the Pavlodar and Karaganda regions [4]. Karaganda region is the largest industrial center of the country and one of the four leaders among other regions of the Republic. This region has eight monotowns (Abay, Balkhash, Zhezkazgan, Karazhal, Saran, Satpayev, Temirtau, Shakhtinsk) which are home to 44 % of the region's population (582.6 thousand people), account for 74 % of the industrial production of the region, 35 % of small and medium businesses operate in monotowns (30 966 units of 87 984 units). Since 2014 (2014-2017), 22.9 billion tenge have been allocated from the national and local budgets for their development. The analysis of allocated funds shows that the largest share of funds is directed to the development of infrastructure and improvement of monotowns – 20.9 billion tenge (132 projects) or 91.3 % of the total amount of allocated funds. Since 2013, seven «anchor» projects were launched in single-industry towns with an investment amount of KZT 8.2 billion and 520 new jobs were created [7].

Another reason of interest is that despite the established opinion that the average monthly income in most monotowns does not reach the national level [8] and the difference in salary levels is the one of the main reasons of internal migration in Kazakhstan [9], this is not applicable to monotowns of Karagandy region. An example of this is the study carried out by Maymurunova [10] in which noted that consumer purchasing power of Karagandy region is high. Proportion of the population with incomes below the subsistence minimum in 2018 described in statistical compendium also affirm this and shows that this rate is lower than even in wealthy western part of Kazakhstan and Almaty city. According to this, the rate of standard of well-being and social inequality level is not critical in this region.

The questions that will be answered according to the results of the research are as follows:

RQ1: Are the goals and indicators defined in the regional development programs applicable for monotowns of Karagandy region?

RQ2: What is the result of projects implemented based on aim and indicators of regional development programs?

The rest of the article is structured as follows: In Section 2, the literature on the experience of worldwide and Kazakhstani regional development is presented. Section 3 is concerned with the methodology used for this study and examine the aims and indicators of regional development programs, its relevance to monotowns of Karagandy region. Finally, Section 5 presents the findings of the research, recommendations and areas for future studies.

Regional development in the world. Analyzed the data regarding regional development starting from 1960s [11] distinguished that RDP have undergone an evolution from industrial to service-oriented, consumer-oriented which showed that RDP based on industrialization approach is not always effective. In addition, RDP principles and values differ from place to place and there is no universal economic theory applicable to RDP. Moreover, successful RDP require community, trust, and social capital. This study shows that current regional development should be based on service and consumer-oriented approach and require community: with people and for people.

Commenting on the experience of western countries [12] states collaboration between local government authorities and leading consulting companies as McKinsey which portfolio includes more than 150 projects all over the world during the 10 years and provides knowledge gained from the British practice as:

- It is necessary to evaluate projects and their value as well as risks at the front-end part of the projects;
- Job creation through commercial development is very expensive;
- Professional education projects showed more efficiency than expected;
- Focus on market growth and assist small companies integrate into it in order to inspire creation of jobs;
- All projects should have a clear strategic vision, aims, and assessment;
- Co-usage of technology;
- Raise fiscal responsibility and planning through budget limits;
- Community and political participation: hearts and minds must be won to steward the resources that are provided;
- Programs' development should be maintained with participation of community leaders;
- Local community should be informed that this is a long-term plan and trust their heads, and the management apparatus must manage the expectations of local community.

Outlining the experience of Germany in restructuring and recovery of the coal industry and coal-producing regions, Adambayeva [13] notes that it was based on development of higher education and creation of an appropriate infrastructure and creation of technology parks and knowledge-intensive industries. These measures, among others, that are steps towards structural change: towards a diversified economy and sustainable development. In addition, an important aspect is that the organization planning projects must coordinate them with the local authority and community. Key aspects in their work are such concepts as «communication with the population», «citizen participation», «qualifications of specialists», «interdisciplinarity», «evaluation of results», «transparency».

Russian experience [14] includes creation of Foundation with project office, launching educational project Academy for the Development of monotowns and conducting the annual rating of monotowns. The rating of monotowns shows results of big educational program including training of project teams of monotowns, studying the basics of strategic and project management, leadership trainings, team building, and project change management which gives outcomes. The winners of the rating [15] are towns that are gradually losing the prefix mono- and begin to live a more fulfilling life, diversify their income, relying on new businesses, building partnerships with entrepreneurs and citizens. This view is supported by Yureva [16], who writes that monotowns' development is most effectively carried out on the basis of the project approach and monotown development projects should provide a close relationship between the goals of strategic development, public expenditures, outcomes, and the principles and tools of the project approach. Beside of this, effective management of development programs is impossible without the presence of specialists possessing modern competences in the field of project management, as well as the corresponding system of their motivation for the result. Zarubin, et al. [17] have highlighted that the distribution and usage of regional and organizational assets can be optimized through using project management principles which allows to concentrate them on the main areas of strategic development. Project management can help to make regional development innovative and optimize not only regional and monetary resources but of scientific and intellectual potential. It is necessary to establish methodology and mechanisms of regional project management based on organizational and operating features (system, process-driven, projection-based, etc.). Another study with expedition to the universities of Russian Federation monotowns [18] outlined the importance of higher education as social mission in monotowns, which can prevent the migration of young people and necessity of increasing education «on the spot».

The most recent studies in regional development, urban regeneration projects study the salience of stakeholders [19-24] in order to provide success, their value for good governance [25] which leads to achieving tangible ones.

Regional development in Kazakhstan. Starting from 2012 the Government of Kazakhstan developed several Programs for regional development and authorities of all monotowns published their own Comprehensive Development plans for next several years. These plans describe the current economic and social situation of the region and fields that should be upgraded (housing, roads, infrastructure, migration, unemployment, etc.). All of them aimed to solve problems with infrastructure, migration outflow, unemployment and creating, developing SME in order to improve the quality of life population in these monotowns. Despite of this all implemented 32 «anchor» projects by 2019 [2] are not innovative in nature, not aimed to diversificate monotowns economy in the long term and mainly related to extraction or primary processing of raw materials like lime production; production of sand, crushed stone, sand-gravel mix and other similar uncomplicated productions. This leads to the expansion of dependency on single-industry companies and commodity curse.

The gap of regional development programs is perfectly emphasized in [5], where authors present deep analysis of them and main conclusions regarding Kazakhstani features are following:

- Top-down administration;
- No requirement regarding how local authorities should attract local private and public;
- Subsidy-based approach that focused on one field;
- Directives and indicators should not be the same for all monotowns and meet their needs, specialties, advantages and disadvantages.

Analysis of aims and indicators of regional development programs in Karagandy region. The study methodology used the systematic approach, which provides methods of logical, statistical analysis and synthesis based on studies, statistics, government reports, speeches by deputies, and articles in the media. Considered four key indicators and aims of implemented programs and projects based on them: the level of migration outflow, unemployment rate, development of engineering infrastructure and development of small and middle enterprises.

The indicators of the first program, launched in 2012, were announced as follows [1]: reduction of the unemployment rate (the unemployment rate in each monotown must not exceed 5 % by 2020), development of small and medium-sized businesses, increase in the share of small and medium-sized businesses, GDP and GRP growth of these monotowns depending on the regional level. In addition, all Programs cover situation with migration outflow and infrastructure.

Further, we reviewed the goals and indicators of development programs, their relevance to the Karagandy region, and whether they were achieved:

1) Reduce the level of migration outflow

Migration outflow is one of the well-known signs of monotowns. Internal migration is influenced primarily by economic and partly by social factors. According to the study [26], 61 % of population from Zhezkazgan and Satpayev are willing to relocate to other regions of Kazakhstan and Russia and young people (17-20 years old) considering this more than others do. As the main reason for migration, they indicated the lack of opportunities for young generations, low quality of education and healthcare services, lack of jobs for women and no chance for professional retraining, barriers for entrepreneurship and innovation.

The National Bureau of Statistics year on year states [27] the outflow of population from the Karagandy region, despite the relatively high level of social attractiveness of the region and the balanced labor market [28] (Figure 1):

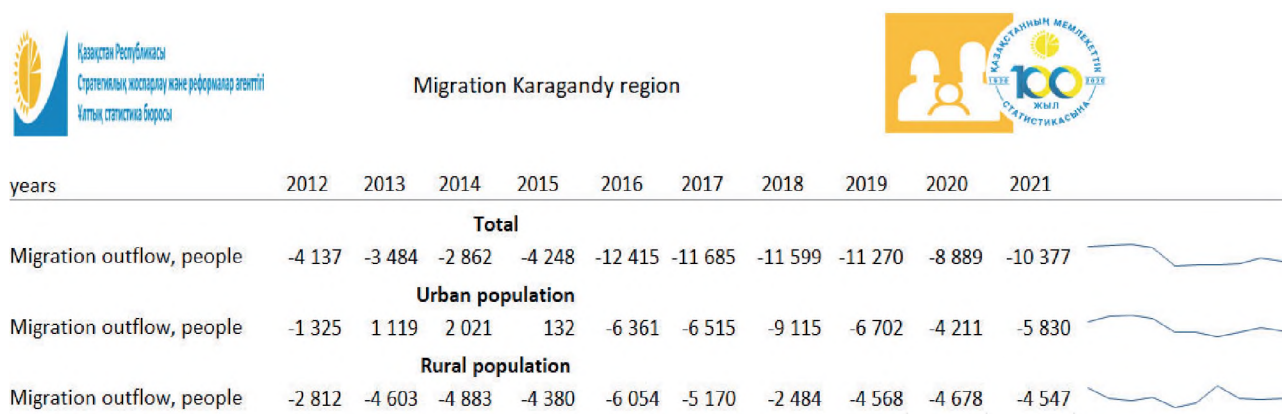


Figure 1 – Population migration of the Karagandy region

Note – based on source [27]

Moreover, SWOT-analysis regarding the development of Karagandy region shows as weaknesses and threats negative migration balance and low natural increase, low population density, respectively [7]. The surge in inter-regional migration indicators in 2014-2018 by 2.1 times actualizes the risks of growing social tension due to the growing load on kindergartens, schools, clinics, hospitals and other social institutions in big cities like Almaty, Nur-Sultan and absence of demand on them in monotowns [29]. According to the recent information announced at the meeting on the development of monotowns the economically active population, especially young people, mostly migrates and the share of the elderly population is more than 11 %, while the national average is 7.8 % [4-5].

Taking into the account the fact of negative migration balance in Karagandy region it can be concluded that this aims and indicators of regional development programs is not achieved.

2) Reduction of the unemployment rate, %

In accordance with indicators of Program for the development of monotowns in 2012-2020, it was planned to reduce the unemployment rate in monotowns – to a level not exceeding 5.0 % by 2020. But this indicator seems not applicable for monotowns of Karagandy region: data from the region development program for 2016-2020 shows a decrease in the number of economically active population, as well as the number of employees and self-employed over the period 2014-2016 (Figures 1, 2). At the same time, the number of the unemployed was not changed significantly and it is about 5 %.

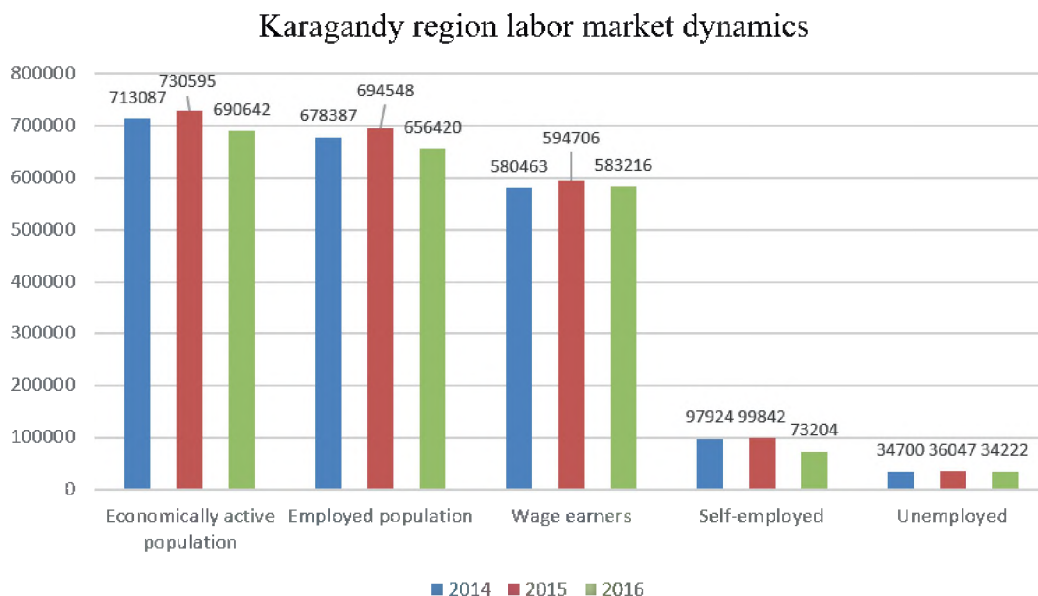


Figure 2 – Karagandy region labor market dynamics

Note – based on source [7]

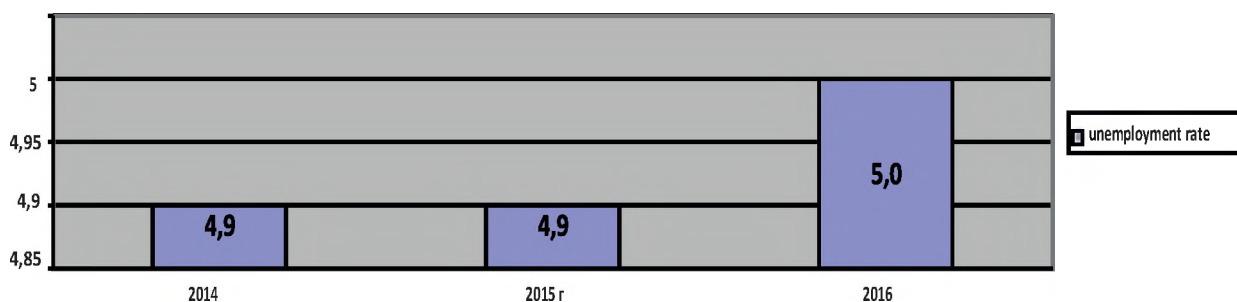


Figure 3 – Dynamics in decline unemployment rate, %

Note – based on source [7]

The main reasons of above data are the birth dearth, the high level of internal migration of the population under 18 years [30] of age and increase of mortality rate. Thus, the total mortality for three years (2014-2016) increased by 0.4 %. The total mortality rate was:

- in 2014 – 9.87 per 1000 population, higher than the national level by 29.4 %, in the ranking 12th place in the republic;
- in 2015 – 9.81, higher than the national level by 31.3 %, 12th place in the republic;
- in 2016 – 9.91, higher than the national level by 34.5 %, 12th place in the republic [7].

Considering all this the indicator and aim to reduce the unemployment rate is not applicable for this region because of population drop. Moreover, Labor agency report forecasts [31] indicates the shortage of labor in the region starting from 2022.

3) Developing engineering infrastructure

Analysis of governmental programs and government authorities interview regarding the results of these programs have shown that they included data mainly on projects for infrastructure improvements [32-34]. The figures of these improvements are usually are not differ from year to year. Thus, at the end of 2017 reported that allocated funds will be increased 5-fold to 37.8 billion tenge, and in 2018 the infrastructure of growth points will improve by 10 %, wear and tear will decrease by 15 %. In addition, at the end of 2018 following information was published: in the conduct of regional development program reduced the wear and tear of water supply networks by 10 %, and the wear and tear of power grids by 12 %. Despite this, at a meeting on the development of monotowns the President noted that the engineering infrastructure of single-industry towns is dismal [4]. However, it is unclear are the projects for engineering development (modernization of utilities) part of regional development or just renovation projects with huge budgets and low impact for these monotowns. Infrastructure development as aim appears in all regional development programs implemented during last 10 years and it is uncertain when it will be achieved and is there any need in infrastructure development projects where population is crucially outflow.

4) Development of small and medium-sized enterprises / supporting economic diversification and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

Over the years of the Program implementation the number of active small and medium-sized businesses in single-industry towns increased from 25.5 (2012) to 32.4 (2017) or 27 %. In the republic as a whole for the same period this indicator increased by 34 % [34]. It follows that monotowns lag behind the national average.

Examined the problem of informal youth employment in monotowns of Kazakhstan [6] revealed that small businesses are poorly developed and mostly represented with enterprises in the sphere of retail trade (sale and purchase and provision of household services to the population), but other fields, such as processing of agricultural products, are not thrived. In these towns, it is not easy to establish small businesses for service people as tutors, beauty industry specialists, pastry makers and others, while «citizens would like to see projects that help improve local education and organize small and middle-sized businesses in service, logistics, tourism» [26].

Maymurunova [10] proposes that for SMEs development necessary to not only increase the financial and entrepreneurial literacy of the population, guarantee the openness of the government and preferences for SME, form comfortable conditions for their development but also create complex of actions directed to generation of a certain image of a local formation, its advantages and values. Small business in monotowns of Karaganda region is practically absent in such areas of economic activity as information and communication, health care and social services. Professional, scientific and technical activities are poorly developed.

Discussion. The paper reveals that main studies on regional development programs and implemented projects in Kazakhstan have the same understandings of gaps as well as it reveals a lack of focus on value oriented projects with co-creating value with all stakeholders and especially with local community.

Answering to the research question:

Are the goals and indicators defined in the regional development programs applicable for monotowns of Karagandy region?

the results of this study indicate that only two of for indicators and aims are essential for monotowns of Karagandy region: the level of migration outflow and development of SME. As the region is facing with population drop, the aim to reduce the unemployment rate is not applicable. Engineering infrastructure development is the most cited results of Programs by official reports and interview of government authorities in public media and its results are ambiguous.

Regarding the second research question:

RQ2: What is the result of projects implemented based on aim and indicators of regional development programs?

the current study shows that implemented projects are still inefficient and have not mastered the most important areas of value oriented, sustainable and innovative activities for these towns.

Concluding the results of the study following recommendations are suggested:

- The aims and indicators for each monotown should be indicated based on its features;
- Necessary to establish a new scientific based approach on planning and implementing projects and programs with intention quality portfolio, program planning, balanced structure of projects with KPI;
- Focus on proper selection and typology of projects based on needs of local community, location and advantages / disadvantages;
- Control, monitor quality, results and the value of these projects;
- Expand the management of regional development through project management practices and principles;
- Insure the inventory of implemented programs and projects to understand their value and outcomes;
- Use lessons learned from implemented projects for future ones;
- Adopt experience of countries similar to Kazakhstan;

Limitations of the study: Current study is based on literature review of regional development projects in media, government reports and programs. There is no information regarding implemented or planning projects, their features, management (including project team information, methodology, stakeholders and risk analysis, monitoring, timetable, results, lessons learned, etc.) available in open resources. Therefore, there is no opportunity to analyze if there any project management practices, principles, methodology of these projects, efficiency of project teams but analysis of indicators and aims shows that they were not achieved via implemented projects. Second, authors considered regional development program in monotowns of Karagandy region, which are differ from monotowns of south and north Kazakhstan.

We propose the future research in this field should be based on empirical case studies analyzing implementation of regional development projects in Kazakhstan.

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АЙМАҚТЫ ДАМУ БАҒДАРЛАМАЛАРЫНЫҢ ЕРЕКШЕЛІКТЕРІ: ОРТАЛЫҚ ҚАЗАҚСТАН МОНОҚАЛАЛАРЫ НЕГІЗІНДЕ ТАЛДАУ

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АНДАТПА

Зерттеу мақсаты: Қарағанды облысының моноқалаларын үлгі ретінде ала отырып, Қазақстандағы өңірлерді дамыту жобаларының мәселесін атқарылған бағдарламалар мен жобалардың мақсаттары мен көрсеткіштерінің осы қалаларға сәйкестігін және қаншалықты құнды екенін қарастыру.

Әдіснамасы. Қазақстандағы өңірлерді дамыту жобаларының эволюциясы мен тиімсіздігінің түп тамырын түсіну үшін Қарағанды облысының моноқалаларын үлгі ретінде ала отырып, сәйкес әдебиет, мемлекеттік бағдарламалар және олардың көрсеткіштеріне талдау жасалды. Көрсеткіштерді қайта қарау қажеттілігі және жобаларды басқару қағидаларына сәйкес (мүдделі тараптар мен құндылық) негізделген жаңа тәсіл ұсынылды.

Кабинеттік талдау әдебиетті қарастыру мен Жобаларды басқару бойынша білім жинағының нұсқаулығын (РМВОК) [1] талдауға негізделіп жасалды.

Зерттеудің бірегейлігі / құндылығы. Бұл зерттеу өңірлерді дамыту жобаларының моноқалалардағы қазіргі жағдайын, тиімсіздігінің түп тамырын және шешу жолдарын айқындайды. Өңірлерді дамыту жобаларының негізгі мақсаттары мен көрсеткіштерінің Қарағанды облысының моноқалаларына сәйкестігі қарастырылды.

Зерттеу нәтижелері: өңірлерді дамыту жобалары көбіне инфрақұрылымға қатысты жобалардың маңыздылығына мән берген. Алайда, жобалардың мақсаты экономиканы әртараптандыру еді. Сонымен қатар, барлық моноқалалар үшін сәйкес келе бермейтін біртекті көрсеткіштер мен әдіснама келтірілген. Жүзеге асырылған жобалар жайында мемлекеттік есеп берулер электр және су желілеріне қатысты нәтижелерді көрсетеді, бірақ зерттеулер мен БАҚ мақалалары бұл бағдарламалар мен жобалардың тиімділігінің төмендігін және олардың негізгі тұтынушылары – жергілікті халыққа әсері мен құндылығының жоқтығын көрсетеді.

Түйін сөздер: өңірлерді дамыту бағдарламасы, өңірлерді дамыту жобалары, жобаларды басқару, көрсеткіштер, құндылық, мүдделі тараптарды басқару, PMBOK.

ОСОБЕННОСТИ ПРОГРАММ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОГО РАЗВИТИЯ: АНАЛИЗ НА ПРИМЕРЕ МОНОГОРОДОВ ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОГО КАЗАХСТАНА

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АННОТАЦИЯ

Цель статьи рассмотреть проблему проектов регионального развития (ПРР) в моногородах Казахстана на примере Карагандинской области через цели и показатели реализуемых программ и проектов, чтобы понять, применимы ли они для этих моногородов и какова их ценность.

Методология. С целью лучшего понимания эволюции и корней неэффективности ПРР в Казахстане на примере моногородов Карагандинской области был проведен комплексный обзор соответствующей литературы, государственных программ и их показателей. Предложена необходимость пересмотра показателей и новый подход, основанный на принципах управления проектами (заинтересованные стороны и ценность).

Оригинальность / ценность исследования. Статья раскрывает текущее состояние и выявляет корни неэффективности программ регионального развития в моногородах и пути их решения. Рассмотрена применимость ключевых целей и индикаторов программ развития регионов к моногородам Карагандинской области.

Результаты исследования. Правительственные программы подчеркивали важность преимущественно инфраструктурных проектов, однако целью программ было достижение разнообразия экономики. Кроме того, для всех моногородов существовали единые показатели и методология, которые не подходят для всех из них. Правительственные отчеты о результатах реализованных проектов показали только улучшения в электросетях и сетях водоснабжения, но исследования и статьи в СМИ говорят о низкой эффективности и отсутствии влияния и ценности для конечных пользователей этих программ и проектов – местного сообщества.

Ключевые слова: программа регионального развития, проекты регионального развития, управление проектами, индикаторы, ценность, управление заинтересованными сторонами, PMBOK.

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