

Panel UAPS : Capabilities Approach In Population Studies

The Capabilities Approach (CA), developed by Amartya Sen (Nobel Prize in economics), has deeply influenced the new conceptions of human development. Economic growth is not any more seen as an end per se, but becomes a means for the development of the real opportunities of people. Above all, wellbeing cannot be reduced to its economic dimension but has to be considered in its multiple dimensions. The spread of this intellectual movement in Africa and its contribution to the development policies and programs is still limited. It is also nearly absent from population studies and programmes although it represents a tool for structuring analyses, identifying priorities and focusing on inequalities. In particular, it is a powerful framework to link population dynamics to individual behaviour by questioning the reasons why people sharing the same context can vary in their quality of life. The panel aims to pursue preliminary work realized by a few demographers¹ to familiarize African demographers with the Capabilities framework, its concepts, its applications, and develop applications in population studies. It will also build bridges with the network of researchers that use and further develop the CA within the Human Development and Capabilities International Association (HDCA).

Concretely, the panel plans to start by developing competences in this regards among African demographers through an e-learning program and thus create a network that will serve as a platform of exchange and training. The panel will then consider the contribution of the Capabilities Approach in the study of two major challenges in African population issues, i.e. family demography and the demographic dividend. The objective is to elaborate in a small working group a preliminary document about ways to apply the CA to these two topics. This document will serve as a reference for a call of papers among UAPS members for workshops that will be organized in part as side meetings in population and capabilities Conferences.

UAPS members who would like to take part to the launching of the panel at the IUSSP Cape Town Conference and/or to further activities should inform the panel chair of their interest (Claudine.Sauvain@unige.ch). More information will be sent to them in due time.

¹ Application of Sen's Capabilities Approach to Demographic Analysis in Africa. Etude de la population africaine (UEPA/UAPS). Vol 28, No 2 (2014). <http://aps.journals.ac.za/pub/issue/view/58>.

A.M.Nouhou, S. Cissé, A.D. Fané, A. Gakou Doumbia et Cl. Sauvain-Dugerdil (2016) : Stratégies familiales et qualité de vie au Mali à travers les données du recensement. 7th African Population Conference, Johannesburg 2015. <http://aps.journals.ac.za/pub/article/view/895>

A training workshop and a session about "the Capabilities Approach in African Demography" have been organized at the occasion of the 25^{ème} anniversary of ISSP (Institut Supérieur des Sciences de la Population) in Ouagadougou in July 2016.