Human Development & Capability Association

Call for Papers

HDCA 2015 Conference
"Capabilities on the Move: Mobility and Aspirations"
September 10–13, 2015
Washington, DC, USA

Hosted by [Georgetown University](#)

Human development has in large part been a story of mobility. Geographically, people move to seek a better job or a better life, and when they succeed, they move up the socioeconomic ladder, whether as assessed by income or by capabilities. People's aspirations fuel these efforts; yet aspirations can be quashed by poverty, inequality, or social exclusion. Mobility can also pose challenges to human development, ranging from overcrowded cities to widening inequality, as some get left behind. Examining how mobility and aspirations interact provides an important window on the dynamics of human development.

Upward mobility is a dynamic counterpart of equality, offering the possibility that those born in poverty might escape it. Support for basic capabilities, especially in the areas of health and education, is essential to enabling such upward mobility. How do the aspirations of the poor and vulnerable figure into this process? How can their success in meeting them begin to match that of the rich and powerful? Long-entrenched cultural barriers often inhibit social and economic mobility and put in place a kind of social distance. This can make it hard for highly trained professionals, such as doctors, to work effectively with the poor and less educated. How can these barriers be overcome? And how can those who are relatively deprived and excluded be adequately protected against downward mobility resulting from inadequate social policies, war, ill health, educational deprivation, or even climate change?

Such evils and misfortunes spur much of the world's geographic mobility. Among those forced to flee epidemics, economic crises, natural disasters, and human conflicts, the poor and vulnerable are disproportionately represented. How can the ideals of human development adequately reach the world's millions of refugees?   And as another billion of the world's poor migrate voluntarily to cities, or to other countries, aspiring to improve their lot, how can their human development be adequately addressed? All around the world, migration to cities

is putting huge strains on the infrastructure that is meant to provide sanitation, transportation, health, education, and personal safety, thus threatening basic capabilities even while holding out hope for them.

People's aspirations, which can drive them to move, can be a powerful engine of development. Whether individuals', families', or communities' pursuit of their aspirations translates into improvements in their capabilities and functionings, however, is a further question. Understanding people's aspirations, and their capabilities to aspire, is crucial to understanding poverty and human development. Do we know how to encourage aspirations without setting people up for frustration? Where people's aspirations are stunted by lack of opportunities, development will languish; but where people's aspirations are frustrated by barriers to education or employment or needed health care, apathy and resentment may set in.

Importantly, people aspire to agency as well as to well-being. They seek an end to local oppressions. They seek democracy and liberty for their own nations, and a real voice for those nations in international forums. How can these agential aspirations—these political aspirations—be harnessed to promoting human development? At a more theoretical level, aspirations deserve study also because they represent a deeper layer of human psychology than is ordinarily captured by preference-based models.

The theme of mobility and aspirations, then, will provide an enriching way to focus on capability enhancement over time, one that will deepen the social, political, and psychological richness of the capability approach.

Conference Aims and Topics

The HDCA conference aims to bring together people from all over the world from different disciplines and fields interested in the field of human development and the capabilities approach. Papers on the 2015 conference theme 'aspirations and mobility' may explore, amongst others, the following topics:

- measuring social and economic mobility in a capability-based way
- the effect of deprivation and vulnerability on aspirations
- policies for securing capabilities (regarding health, education, etc.) as large numbers of people migrate to new cities
- the capabilities of emigrating and immigrating and the corresponding rights
- understanding the co-development of aspirations and capabilities
- education as shaping aspirations
- aspirations in childhood and youth and transitions to adulthood
- frustrated aspirations as a driver of conflict
- the aspirations of refugees
- parental aspirations for their children and their effect on socioeconomic mobility
- aspirations and the life course
- theoretically modelling aspirations and their effect on behavior
- the conditions under which socioeconomic mobility enhances equality and those under which it exacerbates inequality
- identifying and overcoming barriers to mobility
- securing the relatively deprived against downward mobility

- aspiring to agency: grassroots movements and participatory politics
- linking political aspirations to human development
- the impact of migration on human development
- migration and the post-2015 development agenda
- gender differences in motivations for migration
- achieving greater coherence between migration policy and development policy
- the effect of social remittances on capabilities and aspirations

In addition to papers on the conference theme, papers on all [core HDCA topics](#) are welcome, including but not limited to:

- philosophical and ethical foundations of the capability approach;
- methodological issues in operationalizing the capability approach;
- capability measurement and empirical analysis;
- human rights and development; and
- policy analysis and evaluation by reference to capabilities and agency

Notice: While the papers may come from any discipline and may be theoretical, applied, or policy-based, **every paper must engage with, apply, extend, criticize, or offer insights specifically relevant to the capability approach and/or the human development paradigm.** Since we expect a large number of submissions for this meeting in Washington, **each person is limited to only one individual paper presentation and participation in only one panel presentation**. (An individual may appear as a co-author on additional papers, but must not be the presenter of more than one paper of each of the two types.)

Program Committee

Chair: Susan Martin, Georgetown University
Achin Chakraborty, Institute of Development Studies, Kolkata
Ilana Feldman, George Washington University
James Foster, George Washington University
Garance Genicot, Georgetown University
Caroline Hart, University of Sheffield
Zina Nimeh, United Nations University-MERIT/Maastricht University
Henry S. Richardson, Georgetown University

Conference Structure

In addition to keynote lectures and other plenary sessions, the conference will accommodate six types of session:

- **Full academic paper sessions**, for which single papers can be submitted. They will be presented in a session with 2 or 3 research papers (30 minutes per paper including discussion/questions). Please send an abstract of 500-1000 words, with a list of 3-5 keywords.

- **Thematic panel sessions** are submitted as a whole under a single theme that is related to this conference's theme or to the theme of one or more of the HDCA's thematic groups. Panel proposals are welcome from the thematic group coordinators as well as from people unaffiliated with the thematic groups. The sessions will be 90 minutes long, and so will accommodate 3 or 4 component papers. Each panel should have a coordinator who submits an abstract for the panel of up to 1000 words with 3-5 keywords. In addition, an abstract of 500-1000 words, with a list of 3-5 keywords, should accompany each of the component papers of the proposed panel. The coordinator will act as a contact person for the panel session and the other panel presenters. Note that the standards for evaluating panels will the same as for the full academic papers. If not all the papers in the proposed panel session are evaluated favorably, then the papers will be regarded as individual papers and may be allocated to other sessions.
- **Author meets critics sessions** in which an author presents a summary of a recent book or large piece of research. Each author should send a 500 word synopsis of his or her book/ research project with 3-5 keywords and include the names of one to two confirmed discussants.
- **Roundtable sessions** for which it would be inappropriate to present formal academic papers, but which aim to engage policy makers or governmental stakeholders or to arrange discussions with practitioners about practical approaches to dealing with the problems that are the focus of the conference. Please send an abstract of 500 - 1000 words that lists the participants, indicating whether their participation is confirmed, and includes a list of 3 -5 keywords.
- **Poster presentation sessions** for which dedicated time slots will be available in the program, so that authors can clarify their poster to the circulating audience. Posters could present a research project, some field-work done, a case study, or an early-stage research proposal. Please send an abstract of 300-600 words, with a list of 3-5 keywords.
- **Young scholar meets senior scholar sessions** in which graduate students will present their research plan or work in progress (proposals should be 500-1000 words, with 3-5 keywords). HDCA Fellows will provide feedback and chair the discussion.

Please indicate clearly in your proposal under which category you wish it be considered.

Kuklys Prize for best paper from a graduate student

At the conference, the HDCA will award the annual Wiebke Kuklys Prize for the best paper presented by a graduate student. All graduate students who will not have received their degree before the 1st of September 2015 and are presenting a paper at the 2015 HDCA conference under their sole authorship are eligible to be considered for this prize. If you wish your paper to be considered for the prize, please indicate this on the submission form. Please note: if you are competing for this prize**, the full paper must be submitted by the 15th of July 2015**. The winner of the 2015 Wiebke Kuklys Prize will be awarded a cash amount with the aim of contributing to the student's graduate work, by allowing her/him to buy equipment or books, or to attend a conference. The name of the winner will be announced at the closing plenary session of the conference, which the author must attend.

Journal

We encourage papers presented at the conference to be submitted for publication in the Journal of Human Development and Capabilities. This HDCA-owned journal is a peer reviewed multi-disciplinary journal for people-centered development. See the journal webpage for more information on the journal and on how to submit your paper.

Conference Registration, Fees & Scholarships

On-line conference registration will open in the Spring of 2015. Scholars and students from low- and mid-income countries will pay a significantly reduced registration fee, as the following schedule indicates:

- Professional, high-income country, early ($375)
- Professional, high-income country, standard ($425)
- Professional, low- or mid-income country, early ($50)
- Professional, low- or mid-income country, standard ($75)
- Student, high-income country, early ($200)
- Student, high-income country, standard ($225)
- Student, low- or mid-income country, early ($30)
- Student, low- or mid-income country, standard ($50)

As in previous years, the HDCA also aims to make partial financial assistance available to those who need it. For this meeting, Georgetown University has agreed to double the total amount available for scholarships by offering a matching amount. More information will be made available on the conference website, http://hd-ca.org/conferences/2015-conference-washington-d-c.

How to Submit Your Proposal

Please submit your proposed poster, paper, or panel via the submission site (https://www.conftool.pro/hdca2015/), using the appropriate form.

If you encounter problems with the online submissions system, please email the conference organizers at HDCA@georgetown.edu.

In order to ensure academic quality, all submissions will be reviewed by two reviewers, at least one of whom is an HDCA Fellow or a senior researcher in the field.

Important deadlines:
- Submission of proposals: **February 15th 2015**
- Announcement of acceptance/rejection: **April 15th 2015**
- Deadline for conference registration at early-bird rates: **July 10th 2015**
- Submission full papers/posters to be included on the conf. CD: **July 31st 2015**
- Final deadline for conference registration (with regular rates): **August 27th 2015**