



Human Development &
Capability Association

Call for Proposals, HDCA Conference

Crises, Capabilities and Commitment

September 24-26, 2024

Kolkata, India



Harmony, Gond Painting (artist unknown)

Gond painting is a famous form of folk art of the Gond tribal community of central India

Hosted by



Pratichi (India) Trust



Institute of Development Studies,
Kolkata



Health Information Systems Program

Crises, Capabilities and Commitment

The 2024 HDCA conference has special significance as 2024 marks the 20th anniversary of the founding of HDCA. The conference is being held in Kolkata, West Bengal, India - home of the first HDCA president, Professor Amartya Sen. The conference theme of *Crises, Capabilities and Commitment* has been chosen because the inter-linkages between these three ideas require in depth discussion.

Many multi-faceted crises assail us. Some are global in scope, linked with the assault on our environment, violent conflicts, pandemics and humanitarian challenges. Some crises emerge from episodic events. Others emerge less dramatically linked with a backlash to transformations in social relations, or technologies. Crises, both episodic and cumulative, reveal deep inequalities in capabilities. Crises may be associated with both ‘loud’ and ‘silent’ capability deprivations, in areas such as education, health, disability, political participation and wellbeing. The immediate and visible fallout from crises may precipitate further inequalities in capabilities linked to loss of income and employment, inequity, food insecurity malnutrition, and polarization between groups. The conference will be a setting to discuss the forms of commitment needed to analyze and address many interlinked crises and their stress on capabilities.

The 2024 HDCA Program Committee cordially invites scholars, policy makers, practitioners and other interested parties to develop submissions focusing on:

- 1) *Measuring progress, gaps and slippages in human development:*** Crises are associated with deepening inequities, loss of livelihoods, growing food insecurity, disruptions in education and health services, and much more. To what extent do we know about the long-term and inter-generational consequences of these crises, particularly on poverty, human development and other intangibles? What indicators are relevant and how can they be measured?
- 2) *Recalibrating economic policies:*** Increased geopolitical tensions and conflicts have accelerated rising prices of fuel and food with long term consequences on global trade and macroeconomic stability. All this is happening at a time when governments need to step up investments in social protection and climate action. How should nations prioritize public spending? What policies can nurture sustainable development and address public debts?
- 3) *Human security and wellbeing:*** The world has often been besieged by crises that threaten human security. Calls for “health for all” made in the seventies are not yet realized, and the significance of the demands have been magnified by events like Covid-19. What lessons can be drawn from the efforts of countries to strengthen human security? What new approaches are needed to promote sustainable consumption and production as long-term solutions?
- 4) *Equity and social inclusion:*** As methodologies of identifying the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized have arguably improved, social inequities persist, arising out of intersectional inequalities associated with race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability and more. How do we understand the determinants and consequences of these inequities? How can voices be given to those excluded to strengthen collective action?

- 5) ***Social solidarity, grassroots approaches, and collective action:*** Citizen participation and collective action are crucial in transforming societies and strengthening assurance of human rights enshrined in national Constitutions and public policies. How can citizen awareness be strengthened to enhance social solidarity and collective action? How can citizens hold governments accountable to protect and advance rights? How are social movements being transformed? What roles do digital technologies play?
- 6) ***Revisiting role of the welfare state:*** Over the years, many countries have seen a dilution in State responsibilities towards citizens with regard to the provision of social and welfare services. What new configurations of state and non-state actors are emerging? What are the outcomes with respect to social inclusion? What is needed to address gaps in provision and to develop more equitable societies? Can the idea of human security be extended beyond the confines of the nation-state?
- 7) ***Social protection and capability resilience:*** Many countries have weak social protection systems that fail to offer comprehensive universal coverage ensuring all people a life with dignity. How can ‘decent’ jobs be created? How can we ensure that benefits from employment schemes reach the poorest and in adequate form? What are some innovative ways on providing and financing universal social protection?
- 8) ***Informational and digital capabilities and the shaping of an engagement with crises:*** Crises are inextricably intertwined with information, which has become increasingly digitally mediated. Information is a double-edged sword that can both help mitigate a crisis by building solidarity and commitment amongst actors on the same side, and at the same time escalate a crisis, by supporting networks of ill-intentioned actors. What “information capabilities” are needed to mitigate crises? What role does digital technology play in managing crises and human security?
- 9) ***Work on core HDCA themes is also welcome:***
- Philosophical and ethical foundations and implications of the capability approach
 - Methodological issues in operationalizing the capability approach
 - Capability measurement and empirical analysis
 - Human rights and development
 - Policy analysis, evaluation, and economics related to capabilities and agency
 - Contributions from psychology to understanding human capabilities
 - The capability approach and arts policy and practice
 - Health inequalities, disability and aging
 - Equalities and inequalities for children and youth
 - Education, rights, equalities and capabilities
 - Urban capabilities
 - Transparency, accountability, global governance and public policy
 - The environment and sustainable development
 - Creating social and economic impact in development and public policy using the capability approach

Categories under which proposals may be submitted:

1. **Academic paper sessions**, for which single papers can be submitted. Each paper will be presented in a session with 2 or 3 other submissions (25 minutes per paper)

including Q&A). Please send an abstract of 500-1,000 words, with a list of 3-5 keywords.

2. **Research and Action sessions**, for which a set of presentations can be submitted, describing and analyzing a particular field of action and the way it links with the human development paradigm and/or capability approach. Each session will include 3 or 4 other presentations (20 minutes per presentation including Q&A). Please send an abstract of 500-1,000 words, with a list of 3-5 keywords describing the particular field of action and an abstract of 500-1,000 words, with a list of 3-5 keywords, for each of the presentations included in the proposed session. The coordinator will act as the contact person for all presenters.
3. **Thematic panel sessions**, for which a set of papers on a single theme related to this year's conference theme or to the subject of one or more of the HDCA's thematic groups is submitted. Panel proposals are welcome from the thematic group coordinators as well as from people unaffiliated with them. We particularly welcome interdisciplinary panels and panels that combine academic perspectives with those of practitioners. Each thematic panel should have a maximum of three presentations. It is also possible to propose two panels on the same theme. Each thematic panel must have a coordinator who submits a panel abstract of up to 1,000 words, plus 3-5 keywords as well as an abstract of 500-1,000 words, with a list of 3-5 keywords, for each of the papers included in the session. The coordinator will act as the contact person for the thematic session(s) and the other panel presenters. (NB: If not all of the papers in the proposed panel session are evaluated favorably, the approved papers will be regarded as individual academic papers and may be allocated to the sessions in point 1.)
4. **Author-meets-critics sessions**, in which an author presents a summary of a recent book or larger piece of research. Each author should send a 500-word synopsis of the relevant book or research project, along with 3-5 keywords. The submission should also include the names of one or two confirmed discussants. Discussants can be researchers, but we particularly encourage including at least one practitioner (or organization) as proposed discussants.
5. **Roundtables**, which are intended to engage policymakers or (non-)governmental stakeholders, or to organize discussions with practitioners about practical approaches to dealing with the problems that are the focus of the conference. Please send a 500 - 1,000 word abstract, plus 3-5 keywords. Also include information on the roundtable participants, affiliations, and whether the participation of each of them has been confirmed. Submissions can be academic-led or practitioner-led.
6. **Young-scholar-meets-senior-scholar sessions**, intended for graduate students to present their research plan or work in progress (paper proposals should be 500-1000 words, with 3-5 keywords). Senior scholars, including HDCA Fellows, will provide feedback and chair the discussion.
7. **Documentaries** – If you would like to present and discuss your film or documentary during this conference, please send in a proposal with background and motivation (500-1000 words).

8. **Poster**, for which dedicated time slots will be available in the program so that authors can communicate their ideas to the circulating audience. Posters could present a research project, some completed fieldwork, a case study, or an early-stage research proposal. Please send an abstract of 300-600 words, with a list of 3-5 keywords.

Please note:

- You will be required to identify the broad theme for your proposal to enable us to allocate it to reviewers (for example, education or health), as well as the relevant Conference sub-theme.
- Since we expect a large number of submissions, each person is allowed to be involved in a maximum of two proposals and these must be for different types of sessions (e.g. full paper and thematic panel)
- The same proposal may not be submitted more than once to different kinds of sessions, for example, full paper, poster, and young scholar.
- For panel proposals, the panel organizers may not substitute a non-reviewed paper if a presenter withdraws

While the papers may come from any discipline and may be theoretical, applied, or policy-based, **every paper must engage with, apply, extend, criticise, or offer insights specifically relevant to the capability approach and/or the human development paradigm and aligned with the conference theme and sub-themes.**

Each proposal will be peer reviewed by panels appointed by the program committee. The **main criteria for evaluating the various kinds of submissions** will be; novelty/originality; clarity and structure; significance/impact/relevance to/engagement with the capability approach and/or human development; methodology and methods; fit with the conference theme.

Kuklys Conference Prize

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 have not been awarded their degree before September 1, 2024 and are presenting a paper at the 2024 HDCA conference under **their sole authorship** are eligible to be considered for this prize. If you wish for your paper to be considered, indicate so on the online submission form. To compete for this prize, the **full paper must be submitted by 15 July 2024**. The winner of the 2024 Wiebke Kuklys Prize will be awarded a cash amount (the purpose of which is to contribute to the student's graduate work, for example, in the form of equipment or book purchases or conference attendance). The name of the winner will be announced at the closing plenary session of the conference, which the author must attend. Check previous winners <https://hd-ca.org/kuklys-prize-best-conference-paper-by-grad-student#:~:text=The%20Kuklys%20prize%20is%20annually,development%20and%20the%20capability%20approach>.

Pre-Conference Events

A program of events to introduce participants to a range of social and arts initiatives in Kolkata concerned with human development will take place over the two days prior to the

conference. HDCA Thematic groups will organize meetings during the preconference program. On pre-conference day 1/ Sunday 22nd September 2024 conference participants are welcome to join guided trips to Shantiniketan, Kolkata or ‘Durga Puja Pandal Hopping’. Pre-conference day 2/Monday 23rd September 2024 will include climate hackathon, editorial panel, and a panel with activists, practitioners, policy and researchers.

We welcome proposals for the pre-conference sessions using innovative and alternative formats like workshop, creative works/film screening/performance/video games and digital proposal. Please contact the Program Committee well in advance of the proposal deadline to submit your ideas for preconference events at hdcakolkata2024@gmail.com

Events for the pre-conference program can also be submitted to the conference organizers via one of the HDCA Thematic group coordinators (see <https://hd-ca.org/thematic-groups>).

Conference Format

Kolkata conference will be open to both in-person and online participation. A variety of sessions, events and panels will be organized during pre-conference days and three conference days.

	Open Access	Participation through online platform	In-person participation
Pre-conference Day 1			Yes
Pre-conference Day 2		Yes	Yes
Keynote Lectures Public events	Yes	Yes	Yes
Plenary sessions		Yes	Yes
7 Parallel Sessions		Yes	Yes
Poster exhibition			Yes
Meetings			Yes
Documentaries			Yes
Conference Dinner			Yes
HDCA Membership and Journal subscription		Yes	Yes

HDCA Summer School

The HDCA will be holding a two-day summer school (20 and 21 September 2024), for doctoral students working with the capability approach in the days prior to the annual conference. Senior HDCA academics will work with participants to deepen knowledge and understanding of multiple forms and applications of the capability approach and to develop critical enquiries into a range of subjects and methodological approaches relevant to human development. There will be opportunities for participants to present and discuss their own research. Further details and application instructions will be communicated closer to the event and will be made available on the conference webpage: <https://hd-ca.org/conferences/2024-hdca-conference-kolkata-india#anchor1>.

HDCA Journal

We encourage papers presented at the conference to be submitted for publication in the Journal of Human Development and Capabilities. This peer reviewed multi-disciplinary journal is a key source of scholarly debate for members of the HDCA. See the journal webpage for more information on the journal and on how to submit your paper: <https://hdca.org/publication-and-resources/journal-of-human-development-and-capabilities>.

Conference Registration, Fees & Scholarships

On-line conference registration will open in April 2024. Students and scholars from low- and mid-income countries will pay reduced registration fee, and some concession rates will be available for participants from high-income countries.

Registration rates are as follow:

	In-person	Online
Resident in High Income Country		
Early bird	\$320	\$160
Standard	\$360	\$200
Concessions ^o + students early bird	\$190	\$120
Concessions ^o + students standard	\$230	\$160
Resident in Low- or Middle-Income Country		
Early bird	\$160	\$80
Standard	\$200	\$120
Concessions ^o + students early bird	\$90	\$50
Concessions ^o + students standard	\$130	\$90

^oNGO worker or similar or unwaged

Scholarships

The HDCA and the local organising committee will award a limited number of scholarships to scholars with limited or no resources to attend the conference. The demand for scholarships usually far exceeds the available funds and therefore we encourage only those who really need financial support to apply.

Details will be made available in due course on the conference website.

How to Submit Your Proposal

Please submit your proposal for the conference, via the submission site by February 29, 2024 using the appropriate form. The submission portal will open on January 20, 2024. If you encounter problems with the online submissions system, please email the conference organizers at: hdcaolkata2024@gmail.com

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.

The submission link will be made available on the conference webpage: <https://hdca.org/conferences/2024-hdca-conference-kolkata-india#anchor2>

Important deadlines

January 20, 2024	Submission open
February 29, 2024	Submission of proposals and scholarship applications closes
April 15, 2024	Announcement of paper acceptance/rejection
June 15, 2024	Deadline for conference registration at early-bird rates
July 15, 2024	Submission of full papers entries for the Kuklys prizes
August 22, 2024	Final deadline for conference registration at standard rates

Conference Program Committee:

Antara Dev Sen, Pratiche (India) Trust & The Little Magazine

Achin Chakraborty, Institute for Development Studies, Kolkata

Manabi Majumdar, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences; & Pratiche (India) Trust

Sundeeep Sahay, University of Oslo; & Society for Health Information Systems Program (HISP India)

Simantini Mukhopadhyay, Institute for Development Studies, Kolkata

Nozomi Sakata, Hiroshima University

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