

IFTSPA
INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON TRANSFORMATIVE SOCIAL POLICIES
IN AFRICA

CHEIKH ANTA DIOP UNIVERSITY
19-20-21 NOVEMBER 2024



Mobilization around social policies

Call for papers

The African continent is often perceived and presented as a homogeneous entity. This trend is certainly reductive since it erases de facto the differences and socio-cultural, political and even the trajectories of each country. However, these contextual elements are to be considered in particular in attempts to explain or explain their difficult « *take off*» or then their «refusal of development». Therefore, to question the springs of the problematic of the development of African countries is sometimes a complex exercise. For this exercise, we assume the bias of questioning the place of social policies in public development policies. Overall, we ask: What are the links between economic and social policies? What are their assumptions? What are their potential processors on the beneficiaries? In short, what are the modalities of operationalization, the strengths and weaknesses of these policies on the beneficiary populations?

The field covered by social policies is very broad and can be covered by the following themes: social protection, security at work, vocational training and full employment, fight against social exclusion, child protection, health policy and health insurance, social housing, etc. Social policies therefore remain intrinsically linked to development policies since their overall impacts on beneficiary populations serve as indices for the classification/categorization of countries. Because of their impact on social relations, social policies reveal their transformative potential. Finally, they are powerful instruments for reducing socio-economic, spatial and even gender inequalities.

The empowerment of women, significant for 20 years, challenges the patriarchal system. Today, what space is open to women to overcome the constraints and limits imposed by this system? Do the many initiatives of women offer solutions? If so, are these solutions sustainable?

Moreover, if poverty is multidimensional, policies to address it must also be multidimensional. Income distribution programs or support for the consumption of the poor exist. Their peculiarity lies in their non-contributory nature, that is to say that their financing is operated on tax revenues. In this, they are different from the contributory forms of social protection financed by contributions that determine eligibility for benefits. Some programs (cash transfers, food vouchers, school canteens, therapeutic supplements, extended vaccination, social grants, social pensions, etc.) are partly directed to poor households. How effective and efficient are these programs? What value should be placed on programs that facilitate access to certain assets by the poor through microfinance or cash transfers? Should we remember that this multidimensional character of poverty, also analysed as an absence of rights related to the exclusion of public goods and the market, is seen in a context where community networks no

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longer play their role of social protection. Hence our question: are kinship or community still the framework for taking charge of the necessary solidarities, especially in the city?

Progress is certainly noticeable. In many countries, it remains to be seen how to establish real equitable and inclusive development policies to establish a social protection floor, guaranteed by retirement pensions for the elderly, support for people with disabilities, family allowances, employment guarantees or services for the unemployed.

Most recently, the Covid-19 pandemic has revealed the need to rethink social policies by further integrating uncertainties related to major endemic and/or emerging epidemics in Africa. We must therefore agree with Robert Castel (2003)¹ that the association of the rule of law and the social state should lead to a «society of like» where, in the absence of strict equality, each person is independent and protected against the vagaries of existence.

Objectives of the Forum

This Forum follows a *Gendered and Transformative Social Policy research project in Post-COVID-19 Africa* implemented by GETSPA, funded by Open Societyet led by the University of Ghana. To date, GESTPA is the only project to have initiated a continent-wide research program to document not only the historical trajectories of the social policies of African states but also the assumptions underlying them. Indeed, 33 teams of university researchers have been formed based mainly on geographical and linguistic criteria to conduct research on the trajectories of social policies from the colonial era to the post-COVID period. The results of this important research are unprecedented sources of knowledge on the issue of social policies in Africa. Thus, as an extension of the GETSPA project, this forum is a framework for exchanges and interactions with other actors involved in research, advocacy and social policy planning (governments, civil society, experts, researchers, etc.).

In addition, from a comparative perspective, we plan plenary conferences on the history of social policies in Quebec, France and Africa and round tables for practitioners, Speakers share their experiences and better understand how policies drive social change. The Forum will provide an opportunity for social policy stakeholders to share their research findings, analyses, experiences and testimonies.

Types of communications expected

¹ Robert Castel, 2003. *Social insecurity*, Seuil.

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- A review of research on the state of the art in one of the fields of social policies in Africa.
- An analysis of a social policy in a given country or a multi-country comparative study in a recent period.
- A presentation and analysis of innovative experiences in social matters¹, likely to provide relevant lessons for other situations.

Expected format of proposals

- Title of the communication.
- Name, function, affiliation and e-mail of authors.
- Summary of the paper of 500 words maximum in French or English in Word format that presents the problem, the methodology and the main results.
- Three to five keywords.

Criteria to be met

- Be in touch with the theme of the Forum.
- Contribute to the advancement of knowledge.
- Be written in French or English
- Be submitted by June 10, 2024 to fipstadakar24@gmail.com

Announcement of proposals accepted by July 31, 2024.

Possibilities of publication of texts

Speakers who wish to submit a text in the form of an article or a monograph, resulting from their presentation, in view of the publication of a special issue of the journal *Afrique contemporaine* in 2025 after acceptance by its editorial board. Additional information will be provided after the Forum.

Scientific Committee and Organizing Committee

These two committees are composed of academics, researchers from African, European and Canadian universities working on themes related to social policies, African societies and international development.

Abdoul Bâ, University of Évry (France)

Aïcha Bara, Ibn Zohr University (Morocco)

Sheikh Saad Bouh Camara, University of Nouakchott (Mauritania)

¹ Presentations of experiments in video format of up to 4 minutes are accepted.

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El Hadji Malick Sy Camara, Cheikh Anta Diop University (Senegal)
Louise Carignan, University of Quebec at Chicoutimi (Canada)
Ibrahima Dia, Cheikh Anta Diop University (Senegal)
Mouhamed Moustapha Dièye, Cheikh Anta Diop University (Senegal)
Mamadou Dimé, University Gaston Berger (Senegal)
Rosalie Diop, Cheikh Anta Diop University (Senegal)
Alioune Diouf, Expert (Japan International Cooperation Agency)
Fatou Marone Diouf, PhD student in regional and territorial development, (UQAC)
Samba Diouf, Cheikh Anta Diop University (Senegal)
Yvette Onibon Doubogan, Parakou University (Benin)
Leila Feraj, Francophone Observatory for Gender Inclusive Development (OFDIG)
Marie Fall, University of Quebec at Chicoutimi (Canada)
Sylvain Landry Faye, Cheikh Anta Diop University (Senegal)
Catherine Flynn, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (Canada)
Souleymane Gomis, Cheikh Anta Diop University (Senegal)
Pierre Jacquemot, Institut d'études politiques de Paris (France)
Kadidiatou Kadio, Institute for Research in Health Science (Burkina Faso)
Marie Langevin, Université de Québec à Montréal (Canada)
Paul Mayoka, SocioAntropoesis Institute (France)
Lamine Ndiaye, Cheikh Anta Diop University (Senegal)
Christophe Ndoly, Félix-Houfouët-Boigny University (Ivory Coast)
Adama Sadio, Catholic University of West Africa (Senegal)
Ndeye Faty Sarr, University of Quebec at Chicoutimi (Canada)
Josiane Stoessel, University of Haute-Alsace, (France)
Almamy Sylla, University of Bamako (Mali)
Ousmane Wagué, University of Nouakchott (Mauritania)