

Researchers

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Migration, Labor Market, and Demographic Dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa (MIMADEM)

Until the end of the 1970s, sub-Saharan Africa was thought by demographers to be “resistant” to sociodemographic changes. Since then, however, most African countries have entered the demographic transition process and experienced dramatic demographic changes. Most countries are now engaged in the first stage of the process that is characterized by a decline of mortality rates in a context of high fertility. The entry into the second stage, where fertility is expected to decline, is occurring at various rates by country, depending on the country’s cultural and political systems, and experience of crises. The second stage of the demographic transition process is also characterized by rapid changes in the demographic structure of the population. These changes are likely to induce a “demographic dividend” if a number of conditions are fulfilled, in particular with respect to the absorptive capacity of the labor market.

The MIMADEM project objective is to re-examine the relationship between demographic dynamics and economic dynamics in Africa in light of the notion of demographic dividend and with a focus on labor markets and migration. From a methodological point of view, the objective is to depart from cross-country data analysis approaches by using existing microdata collected by censuses and sociodemographic household surveys. Using microdata will allow us to re-examine the concept of demographic dividend at two levels: at the microlevel through an analysis of the links between economic and demographic decisionmaking at the household or individual level; and at the “meso” level through the analysis of economic and demographic time series data aggregated at intranational levels. These different types of data will be analyzed using advanced statistical and econometric methods.

The project will be structured around three main research themes:

- Poverty and demographic dynamics.
- Population structure and labor supply.
- Migration, mobility, and the absorptive capacity of the labor market.

Countries where the research will take place

France, Senegal, Mali, and Cameroon

How does the research describe the impact of population/reproductive health on poverty reduction and/or economic growth?

In this research, the impact of population/reproductive health on poverty reduction and/or economic growth is analyzed through the concept of demographic dividend. The demographic dividend can materialize at a specific stage of the demographic transition when the change in the age structure of the population leads to an increased share of the working-age population, thus giving rise to growth opportunities.

How will the research address a policy need, and what kind of policy lesson is expected?

To deliver its benefits, the demographic dividend needs the right mix of economic and social policies. Education, social, and labor market policies will benefit from a better understanding of the economic and demographic processes at work.

Methods used

Advanced statistical and econometric analysis.

Data used

Existing census and household survey data.