

**Training Workshop in Computational Social Science for African Scholars
(CSSFORAFRICA)
October 25 – 27, 2017
Cape Town**

Presentation

Digital-age data (“big data”) is becoming popular and can provide information that can profoundly shape our understanding of social phenomena. While the use of such data is still in its infancy in African studies, their importance cannot be neglected. From 25 to 27 October 2017, prior to the International Population Conference organized by the IUSSP in Cape Town, the first workshop on Computational Social Science for African Scholars will be convened. The purposes of this workshop are to:

1. Introduce computational social science to African social science scholars
2. Present a review of studies using digital-age data and methods from Africa’s perspectives
3. Offer instruction in methods for handling, manipulating and processing these data
4. Create a research collaborative working group on computational social science in Africa

The instructional program will involve lectures, tutoring and a group research project. There will also be outside speakers with relevant expertise from academia, industry, and government. Topics covered will include, quantitative methods in the age of big data, text as data, website scraping, mass collaboration, and ethics. The language of instruction will be in English, with exercises being conducted using R.

The workshop, which is limited to 20-30 participants, is targeted particularly at Ph.D. students, postdoctoral researchers, national statistics officers, and academics working or studying in sub-Saharan Africa, although consideration will also be given to exceptionally, African scholars (students or academics) in the diaspora attending the IPC. Participant’s costs for the workshop, including accommodation and some meals, will be covered, as well as a (capped) contribution to travel expenses. Proficiency in English is a requirement. Participants with less experience in social science research will be expected to complete additional readings in advance of the workshop, and participants with less experience in coding will be expected to complete a set of online learning modules on the R programming language.

Interested applicants should send (i) a curriculum vitae, (ii) a statement (maximum two pages) describing their interest and any current research in computational social science, (iii) a writing sample (not necessarily on digital-trace data and no more than 35 pages) or project idea using digital-age data to cssforafrica@gmail.com in a single PDF file by the 26 of August. Any person interested in sub-Saharan Africa and computational social science who want to contribute is also welcomed to send email to the organizer at cssforafrica@gmail.com.

Important dates

Launch:	31 July
End of the call:	26 August
Notification to candidates:	31 August
Training in R with Datacamp :	September 1 to October 20
Workshop:	25 – 27 October 2017

Preliminary programme

Time	Wednesday (25 October)	Thursday (26 October)	Friday (27 October)
9h00-9h30	Welcome and presentation	Case study	Case study
9h30-10h45	Studies on computational science and challenges	Quantitative methods at the age of “big data”	Mass collaboration
10h45-11h00	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break
11h00-13h00	Speaker	Speaker	Speaker
13h00-14h00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
14h00-15h45	Training (Social network)	Training (Test as data)	Project/Collaboration
15h45-16h00	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break
16h00-18h00	Application/Tutorial	Application/Tutorial	Project/Collaboration

Organizer: [Vissého Adjiwanou, Ph.D.](#)

Vissého Adjiwanou is a Senior Lecturer in Demography and Quantitative Methods at the University of Cape Town (South Africa), and Adjunct Professor at the Université de Montréal (Canada). His research interests include family dynamics, gender studies, female employment in sub-Saharan Africa, and maternal and reproductive health. He will chair a session on family transformation in SSA at the 28th International Population Conference (IPC) in Cape Town. Dr. Adjiwanou’s new research agenda focus on computational social science. He is drained to use this tools to better inform quantitative methods and understand social phenomena particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

