



## **AFRICAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE 2012**

Serena Hotel

Kigali, Rwanda

30 October – 2 November, 2012

### **Fostering Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Africa in an Age of Global Economic Uncertainty**

#### **CALL FOR PAPERS**



African Development Bank Group



United Nations Economic  
Commission for Africa



United Nations Development  
Programme

## **Background**

These are tumultuous times for the global economy. The recovery in the US is sluggish, the debt crisis in Europe is unresolved and there are signs of a slower growth in China. The global economic crisis that started in 2007 has not bypassed Africa. According to the 2011 African Economic Outlook produced jointly by the AfDB, OECD, UNECA and UNDP, economic growth in Africa slowed from an average of 6% in the years prior to the onset of the crisis to 3.1% in 2009. In 2011 high food and fuel prices and political unrest in several North African countries also slowed growth. However, since then the recovery has picked up and is forecast at 5.8% in 2012 close to pre-crisis levels.

Growth prospects are underpinned by an expected continuation of good economic policies, strong demand from emerging markets and from within the region, and rising commodity prices. However, several risks remain for the growth prospects for Africa. These risks are linked to the uncertainty in the global economy, lingering political challenges within several countries and the narrower space that exists in many countries for further counter-cyclical policies. Countries that face structural constraints related to undiversified economies, poorly developed infrastructure, shrinking export revenues, and a lack of long term financing are particularly vulnerable.

With the uncertain outlook for economic growth in the world and Africa come deep concerns about the prospects for continued reduction in poverty and improvements in other measures of development. Even before the crisis, accelerating progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goal of cutting in half poverty by 2015 was a challenge. There has also been insufficient progress in critical areas such as food security, employment creation, and child and maternal health. These challenges are being exacerbated by persistent inequalities in development outcomes. Moreover, issues of sustainability of the development process itself are intensifying given pressures from rapidly growing populations and the increasingly negative effects from environmental degradation and climate change. These pressing issues will need to be effectively addressed in a post-2015 agenda that must be shaped by the people of Africa.

Bolstering economic growth in Africa is critical but it is clearly not enough. Recent events in North Africa and elsewhere have once again shown that aggregate advances in economic and social indicators, impressive as they may be, must be accompanied by empowered citizens and equal opportunities. Policy makers need to be particularly concerned that growth translates into broader gains in human welfare, that the benefits of development accrue more evenly and that issues related to sustainability of development are effectively addressed. A central question facing Africa today is therefore *how to foster inclusive and sustainable development in the current age of global economic uncertainty?* This complex question forms the overarching theme for the 2012

African Economic Conference, which will take place in Kigali, Rwanda from 30 October to 2 November 2012.

### **Objectives of the Conference**

The specific objectives of the African Economic Conference (AEC) are:

- To promote knowledge management as an important driver of policy dialogue, good policy planning and implementation;
- To foster and promote innovative thinking among researchers, development practitioners and African policymakers;
- To encourage and enhance research on economic and policy issues related to the development of African economies;
- To provide an opportunity for Africans in the Diaspora, regional and sub-regional organizations to disseminate their research findings as well as share information with African policymakers on the work they do in the region.

With these objectives, and as have been demonstrated during the past six annual Conferences, the AEC has become a major forum that brings together leading academics and development practitioners from across the globe towards fostering dialogue and exchange of knowledge that contributes to the search for solutions to the development challenges of Africa.

### **Format of the Conference**

The 2012 Conference is organized around the theme: **Fostering Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Africa in an Age of Global Economic Uncertainty**. The Conference comprises plenary and concurrent sessions. The plenary sessions will feature presentations and discussions by invited prominent academics, policy makers, business and opinion leaders, as well as representatives from development organisations who all share a deep passion for the development of the continent and have unique perspectives on how it can be achieved.

The concurrent sessions will feature presentations of papers by scholars and development practitioners from the African continent. These high quality analyses will contribute to our understanding of the challenges facing inclusive and sustainable development in Africa and the options that exist for addressing these challenges in light of the prevailing uncertainty in the global economic environment.

Policy-oriented papers that are linked to the overall theme of the conference are of particular interest. Papers that address the following other themes are also welcome:

- Economic growth, poverty reduction and inclusive development.

- Economics of sustainable development including sustainable patterns of consumption and production.
- Food and nutrition security and the prospects for a double Green Revolution in Africa.
- The changing role of macro-economic and structural policies in Africa.
- Private sector development and employment generation.
- Challenges to economic, social and environmental sustainable development and implications for the post 2015 agenda.
- Deprivations and inequalities in income and non-income measures of welfare.
- The role of foreign direct investment, trade, regional integration and new economic partnership.
- Strengthening Africa's economic institutions, building infrastructure and expanding markets for the poor.
- Technology transfer and innovation for inclusive and sustainable development.

Accepted papers should not have been published prior to the conference and a small number of papers presented at the conference will be considered for a special edition of the peer reviewed journal, the *African Development Review*. A prize for the best paper presented at the conference, selected by a panel of distinguished experts, will be announced at the closing ceremony.

### **Time Frame**

Authors should submit an extended abstract of 500-1500 words, including an outline of the paper, or a full paper (preferred) along with an updated CV following the instructions on the website: [www.africaneconomicconference.org](http://www.africaneconomicconference.org) before **1 June**, 2012. All authors will be notified of whether their abstract was accepted by **6 July**. Authors of accepted abstracts will be expected to submit final versions of their papers no later than **31 September** before the conference to allow web posting and inclusion in conference materials.

### **Sponsorship**

At the time of submitting the abstract all authors are requested to indicate whether they will require financial support from the organisers to cover travel expenses, accommodation and a small daily allowance. Only one author per paper will be eligible for support, which is further reserved for presenters from African research institutions.