



## The 2017 HESPI Conference on IGAD Economies

Call for Papers

### **“Youth Unemployment and Creating Employment Opportunities in the IGAD”**

24-26 September 2017

at Mamoun Beheiry Centre (MBC), Khartoum, the Sudan

Co-organized by:

The Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute (HESPI);

The Mamoun Beheiry Centre for Economic & Social Studies and Research in Africa (MBC);

and

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

## Background

The Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute (HESPI), a regional think tank focused on socio-economic research and institution building, and its partners have conducted annual economic conferences in recent years on the IGAD economies.<sup>1</sup> The Institute feels it is essential to have a platform for researchers and policy makers to discuss the progress made, the promising developments and the challenges that are faced in the sub region. It is believed that the HESPI annual conference offers such a unique avenue for researchers, policymakers and development practitioners to debate economic and social issues of relevance to the region in particular and developing economies at large.

### **The main objectives of the conference on IGAD Economies are to:**

- Offer a venue and an opportunity to discuss and debate important economic and social issues of current concern to the region.
- Contribute to conduct of objective and analytical research on economic and social development of the region.
- Promote knowledge generation, management, and dissemination as an important driver of good policy formulation and implementation in the region

### **The Proposed Conference on IGAD Economies in 2017**

This year's planned conference on IGAD economies will be held on 24-26 September 2017 in Khartoum, Sudan, and is jointly organized by the Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute; Mamoun Beheiry Centre for Economic and Social Research in Africa (MBC) of the Sudan, and the United Nations Economic Conference for Africa (UNECA).

Despite the recent promising economic growth rates registered in some IGAD countries and positive trends recorded in education and health; changing demographics and higher numbers of unemployed youth and the slow pace with which new jobs are created remain principal challenges of the sub region. Participation of youth in domestic economic opportunities is subject to skills development, education, and experience that a large proportion of the vulnerable youth do not possess. There is growing awareness among various governments and development partners of the urgent and persistent challenge of youth unemployment in the region and the rest of Africa. Limited employment opportunities in the region is one of the principal drivers of the illicit outward migration of the youth, skilled and unskilled.

Taking consideration of the urgency of jobless economic growth, and high youth unemployment and underemployment; the 2017 HESPI Conference on IGAD Economies is focused on knowledge sharing and dialogue on policy issues pertinent to creation of employment opportunities for youth, staging the ways forward to reducing the prevalent unemployment, and understanding the attendant migration and dislocations in the sub region and beyond. There will also be two panel discussions on

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<sup>1</sup> The three conferences held so far were on "Economic and Social Developments in the IGAD region", in 2014; "Inclusive Growth and Poverty Reduction in IGAD Region", in 2015; and "Imperatives for Attaining the Sustainable Development Goals in the IGAD", in 2016.

topics of importance to public policy and the regional response to youth unemployment and migration.

**The sub-themes of this year's conference are:**

- Labor market characteristics in the IGAD: employment dynamics, skills development and gaps, and employability in the IGAD.
- The performance of IGAD and low income African countries with respect to job creation and the main drivers of productive employment.
- Industrial development and structural transformation for reducing youth unemployment
- The role of public policy ; costing of job creations and its fiscal implications
- Economic policy for job creation; country, regional, and global best practices and lessons for youth employment.

**The Conference will also include the following two policy forum sessions:**

- The need for regional and international collaborative efforts in addressing youth unemployment issues.
- The dynamics of illicit migration in the IGAD region and beyond and the policy responses.

**Submission procedures**

HESPI, MBC, and the UNECA thus invite interested participants to submit original research papers related to the thematic areas listed above. The sponsors are open to contributions that use rigorous and policy oriented studies and analysis. The papers need to focus on issues of broader impact related to IGAD economies or lessons from other low income economies in Africa and elsewhere. Young researchers from the continent, in particular, are encouraged to submit their research findings.

All interested researchers should send the abstract of their paper by **15 May 2017** to [hespi@igadec.com](mailto:hespi@igadec.com) and [gashaw.tsegaye@hespi.org](mailto:gashaw.tsegaye@hespi.org). Abstracts (**written in English**) should cover the research issues, the methodologies and data to be utilized, and indicate the relevance of the findings to youth employment policymaking. Abstracts selection will be made based on the rigor of the studies and policy relevance. Researchers will be notified about acceptance of abstracts by **31 May 2017**.

Authors with accepted abstracts should send the first draft of the full paper by **31 July 2017** and the final paper by **15 August 2017**. Papers that *do not* meet minimum required standards could be rejected at any stage.

***Important dates and Venue:***

✓ Abstract	15 May 2017
✓ Notification of acceptance	31 May 2017
✓ Deadline for first draft submission	31 July 2017
✓ Deadline for submission of final papers	15 August 2017
✓ Conference Date (3 days) in Sudan	24-26/ September 2017

***Conference Venue:*** Mamoun Beheiry Centre for Economic and Social Studies and Researches in Africa, Khartoum, Sudan.

Papers accepted through this call for papers for presentation would be considered for publication in the conference proceedings. The conference proceedings will be in English with no simultaneous translation.

**Financial support**

Authors of papers accepted for presentation should indicate if they require financial support to cover expenses (full or partial) associated with their participation at the Conference. Only one author per accepted paper will be eligible for support.