

African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) Summit 2025
A Renewed AERC for Africa's New Development Priorities
30th November – 2nd December 2025
Venue: Glee Hotel, Nairobi

Conference MC

Day I, Sunday, 30th November 2025

07:30 – 08:00	Arrival, Registration, Breakfast and Networking
08:00 – 08:30	Welcome
08:30 – 09:00	Opening Remarks
09:00 – 10:00	Session I: High-level Roundtable with African Central Bank Governors The AERC African Central Bank Governors Forum was established in 2014 and currently has a membership of 10 Banks. Currently, Central banks in Africa are navigating an increasingly complex environment as they pursue their core mandates of monetary policy and banking sector regulation. The AERC recognizes the evolving risks—both domestic and global—that challenge Banks in delivering on their mandate and the need for developing adaptive strategies. Through its knowledge partnership with central banks, the AERC aims to deepen the understanding of emerging issues to support with evidence-based policy responses. During the Summit, the Governors and AERC will reflect on strategies to strengthen the knowledge partnership to effectively support central banks navigate the new and diverse challenges.
10:00 – 10:30	Photo Session & Health Break
10:30 – 13:00	Session II: Official Opening by Chief Guest
	Arrival of the Chief Guest Introducing the Chief Guest Chief Guest
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 15:00	Session III: Panel for the AERC African Private Sector Platform The AERC is targeting to establish a platform for a structured engagement with the private sector. This session thus brings together leaders in banking, trade, technology, and manufacturing to share insights on the role of the private sector in driving inclusive growth and create jobs across Africa. Panellists will explore key policy developments at domestic, regional and global levels that affects business performance, safe spaces for engagement with evidence-

	based policy dialogue, the support that businesses envisage from the policy research institutions and suggestions on what an African Private Sector Platform should prioritize for effective engagement.
15:00 – 16:00	Session IV: Panel for the AERC Strategic Plan 2025 – 2035 Since its establishment in 1988, AERC has prepared strategic plans to guide in delivery of its core mandate. During this Summit, AERC is launching its 10-year Strategic Plan and this session will serve to create awareness among stakeholders on what AERC plans to achieve in the decade. The mission of AERC is to strengthen local capacity for rigorous, independent research through an integrated approach that combines research excellence, high-quality graduate training, and strategic partnerships. The 10-year Strategic Plan prioritizes globally competitive training, context-relevant research, and stronger links between research, policy, and practice. By embedding a dynamic, mutually reinforcing model across capacity building, policy engagement, and knowledge co-production for effective policy impact of research, AERC aims to drive impactful solutions to Africa's economic challenges.
16:00 – 16:30	Health Break
16:30 – 18:00	Fireside Chat I - Governance, Security and Economic Fragility Among the prioritized areas of research focus for AERC is in <i>Governance, Security and Economic Fragility</i>. Despite progress made, governance reforms in Africa have largely fallen short, and without urgent, credible action to build inclusive, effective institutions, the continent risks missing both the AU Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, conflicts are increasing both in frequency and intensity, and this is derailing Africa's development by destroying infrastructure, displacing people, and deterring investment. Conflicts also undermine human capital through disrupted education, poor health, and malnutrition. Further, insecurity diverts resources from development to military spending, delaying economic transformation. The research work programme aims to critically explore the complex relationship between governance/institutional quality, conflicts and economic fragility. The discussion will serve to enrich this programme.
18:30 – 21:30	Gala Dinner
	Distinguished Service Awards & Induction of new AERC Fellows 2025 Entertainment

Day II, Monday, 1st December 2025	
07:30 – 08:30	Arrival, Registration, Breakfast and Networking
08:30 – 10:00	Fireside Chat II - Industrial policy and growth strategies The AERC research programme focuses on the <i>Industrial Policy</i> as a key factor in the economic transformation process. Africa's industrial policy must adapt to shifting global dynamics and the continent's unique socio-economic context, where traditional models of industrialization are less applicable. As growth increasingly comes from sectors like ICT, tourism, and food processing, industrial policy should be part of a broader economic transformation agenda, not a standalone solution. To help countries achieve inclusive and sustainable growth, policies must also address the realities of the large informal labour market, integrating it into the formal economy and improving productivity and job quality. The discussion in this session will contribute towards shaping this research programme by bringing out the key priority areas of policy focus and possible growth strategies.
10:00 – 10:30	Health Break
10:30 – 17:00	Parallel Session I: Political Economy of Reforms, Growth & Technical Support to Macroeconomic Policy Management (ESMF) The AERC has been implementing this project in collaboration with National Treasuries in Ethiopia and Kenya. This session explores how African countries can strengthen macro-fiscal policymaking capabilities to promote growth and effectively respond to today's complex challenges, foster inclusive growth, and build long-term economic resilience. Against a backdrop of climate shocks and global uncertainty, the discussion examines how well-designed macro and microeconomic policies can drive structural transformation despite limited resources. Drawing on insights from Kenya and Ethiopia, and supported by the Gates Foundation, the dialogue addresses technical capacity gaps in key ministries and institutions, as well as the political economy of effective policy design and implementation. The session is part of a broader initiative on embedded technical support for Ministries of Finance, with an eye toward cross-country learning and future engagement across the continent.
10:30-13:00	Segment 1: Planning phase project progress updates
	Keynote Address – Political economy of policy reforms: preliminary lessons from Kenya and Ethiopia
	Presentations: Key insights on the experiences of the two country teams embedded for technical assistance
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 - 15:30	Segment 2: Panel Discussion - Implementing Economic Policy Reforms in Africa

	Policy reform is a key driver of economic growth, productivity, and innovation. It also plays a vital role in promoting inclusive development by reducing inequality and expanding opportunities for marginalized groups. Reforms can shape labour markets, trade, and investment flows, influencing both domestic and international economic dynamics. However, implementation is often challenged by political resistance, vested interests, and social risks. Based on the experience of finance and other key ministries and the experience of economic advisors, this session explores how to design and implement effective, balanced policy reforms that support both growth and equity.
15:30 – 16:00	Health Break
16:00 – 17:00	Segment 3: High-Level Policy Panel - Embedded Technical Support for Ministries of Finance Effective technical support to economic institutions is critical for sound policy design, implementation, and long-term institutional resilience. This high-level panel explores the key ingredients for embedding impactful technical support within Ministries of Finance, central banks, capital market agencies, and Ministries of Development. The discussion draws on practical experiences to highlight what works, what doesn't, and how to build lasting capacity through strategic partnerships and local ownership. This bringing forth the key ingredients required for effective embedding of technical support.
17:00 – 17:30	Next Steps – Scaling up Technical Assistance to key policy institutions in Africa
18:00 – 19:00	Keynote address by Nobel Prize winner on Productive Politics for Reforms Prof James Robinson alongside Prof Daron Acemoglu and Prof Simon Johnson were awarded the 2024 Nobel Prize in Economic Science. The Nobel Prize was based on their research work on how institutions are formed and affect prosperity. In their work, they highlight the critical role of political and economic institutions in the evolution of living standards, providing guidance on to how to design policies to promote economic development. This is relevant in addressing the persistent poverty status that African continent finds itself.
19:00 – 21:00	Cocktail/Dinner Book launches 1. " <i>The Domestic Saving Shortfall in Sub-Saharan Africa</i> ", https://www.wider.unu.edu/publication/domestic-savings-shortfall-sub-saharan-africa 2. " <i>The Routledge Handbook of Infrastructure Finance</i> " https://www.routledge.com/The-Routledge-Handbook-of-Infrastructure-Finance/Abor-Macomber-Arun-Murinde/p/book/9781032679297
10:30 – 17:00	Parallel Session II: Regional Policy Engagement Workshop for East Africa (PASHFARM Project)

	This policy outreach event focuses on the Policy Analysis for Sustainable and Healthy Foods in Africa Retail Markets (PASHFARM) in the Eastern African sub-region. It explores how evidence-based research can shape effective nutrition policies in Africa. Discussions are based on practical experiences from ongoing initiatives that aim to improve access to affordable, safe, and nutritious food, particularly for low-income and vulnerable populations. A series of policy briefs present key findings on enhancing demand for nutrient-rich foods, addressing food price shocks, and tackling gendered barriers in informal food markets. Through open dialogue and Q&A, the session identifies clear policy pathways for promoting nutrition-sensitive, inclusive food systems in Africa.
10:30-11:30	Segment 1: Presentation of Research Outputs
10.30-10.45	Official opening of the workshop
10.45 - 11.30	Presentation I: Shaping Policy through Nutrition Research and Action in Africa: Insights and Experiences from Vegetables for All and CASCADE Project Presentation II: Translating Enset Research into Policy and Practice: Insights from Eastern Africa Q & A
11:30 – 13:00	Presentation of Policy Briefs I Q&A
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00-15:45	Presentation of Policy Briefs II Q&A
15:45-16:00	Health Break
16:00 – 17:00	Segment 2: High-Level Policy Round Table
17:00 – 17:30	Next Steps PASHFARM Project, AERC
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10:30 – 17:00	Parallel Session III: Thematic Research Programme
10:30 -18:00	Group B Group C Group D Group E
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Day III, Tuesday, 2nd December 2025	
07:30 – 08:30	Arrival, Registration, Breakfast and Networking
08:30 – 10:00	Fireside Chat III - Unlocking digital potential of Africa The AERC research programme is focused on exploring how to unlock digital potential of Africa. Digital technology is revolutionizing the African economy with potential for inclusive development. The AU 2063 views digital economy as crucial for inclusive economic growth and technological transformation, catalyzing integration, trade and job creation. That said, the continent needs to invest in digital infrastructure, improving digital skills, and creating an enabling regulatory environment to unlock the digital potential. The discussions in this session brings together key players in the digital sector contributing to the conceptualization of the research programme making it more focused on the priorities for the continent.
10:00 – 10:30	Health Break
10:30 – 17:30	Parallel Session I: Data Governance in Africa (Phase I & II) Project Digitization is rapidly transforming Africa's economies, creating new opportunities and laying the groundwork for AI adoption in sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, finance, education, and public finance management (PFM). In the realm of PFM and tax policy, digital tools are enhancing transparency, improving revenue collection, and enabling more efficient allocation of public resources. As digital trade expands under frameworks like the AfCFTA Digital Protocol, strong data governance becomes essential to ensure privacy, ethical use, and equitable access to digital systems. Artificial Intelligence depends on high-quality, well-governed data to drive innovation and scale impactful solutions. However, gaps in infrastructure, regulatory fragmentation, and limited digital literacy continue to hinder progress. This session explores how Africa can build robust digital ecosystems—through inclusive policies, investment in infrastructure, and coherent data governance frameworks—to support economic transformation, effective public sector management, and sustainable development.
10:30-13:00	Segment I: Building Africa's Digital Future: Leveraging Data, AI, and Trade for Inclusive Growth Chair: Mr. Jean Philbert, Chief Digital Advisor, Africa CDC, Ethiopia
10:30 – 10:45	Opening Remarks
10:45 – 11:20	Keynote Speaker
11:20 -13:00	Panel discussion: Digital Trade, Governance of Digital and AI Economies in Africa: What are the policy relevant research ideas?
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00-16:00	Segment III: Data hub

16:00 – 16:15	Health Break and Networking
16:15 – 17:30	Segment III: Panel Discussion - Regulatory Frameworks, Opportunities and Risks
17:30-18:00	Concluding Remarks Vote of Thanks
10:30 – 17:00	Parallel Session II: Regional Policy Engagement Workshop for Southern Africa and Cameroon (PASHFARM) This policy outreach event focuses on the Policy Analysis for Sustainable and Healthy Foods in African Retail Markets (PASHFARM) Southern African sub-region. It explores how evidence-based research can shape effective nutrition policies. Discussions are drawn from practical experiences from ongoing initiatives that aim to improve access to affordable, safe, and nutritious food, particularly for low-income and vulnerable populations. A series of policy briefs present findings on enhancing demand for nutrient-rich foods, addressing food price shocks, and tackling gendered barriers in informal food markets. Through open dialogue and Q&A, the session identifies clear policy pathways for promoting nutrition-sensitive, inclusive food systems in Africa
10:30-13:00	Segment 1: Presentation of Research Outputs
10:30-12:00	Official Opening of the workshop
	Presentation (I): Research and Innovations for Policy Influence: Insights and Experiences from Dryland Cereals and Legumes Research projects Presentation (II): Bridging Evidence and Policy: The Role of Research for Policy Influence (R4P) in Strengthening Nutritious Food Systems
	Photo Session and Networking
12:00 – 13:00	Presentation of Policy Briefs I
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 15:30	Presentation of Policy Briefs II
15:30 – 15:45	Health Break
15:45 – 17:00	Segment 2: High level Policy Round Table Retail Food Market Policies for Nutrition and Health
17:00 – 17:30	Next Steps: PASHFARM Project, AERC
10:30-17:30	Parallel Session III: Technical session for thematic groups
	Group B: Room 1
	Group C: Room 2

	Group D: Room 3
	Group E: Room 4
13:00-14:00	Lunch break
17:30-18:00	Concluding Remarks Vote of Thanks