

Responding to Crisis: Strengthening Finance and Trade Resilience to Global Pandemics and Health Emergencies in Sub-Saharan Africa

Prosperity

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This activity is supported with funding allocated from the State of Qatar contribution to the UNITAR Strategic Framework Fund. UNITAR is grateful to the State of Qatar and other contributors for supporting the SFF. The SFF was established by the UNITAR Board of Trustees in 2018 to support projects and activities that respond to needs of developing countries and in particular the least developed countries, African countries, the small island developing States and countries in and emerging from conflict, in order to strengthen capacities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

COVID-19 has highlighted severe fragilities and inequalities within and among nations. While the impact varies per country or region, LDCs in Sub-Saharan Africa face greater risks of negative impacts of the pandemic due to lack of economic resilience and diversification.

Although the pandemic is considered a public health crisis, it is not the only, and may not even be the gravest challenge the pandemic poses. Devastating socio-economic effects of the virus have disproportionately affected fragile countries that are already battling high poverty, political instability, weak state institutions, poor infrastructure and vulnerability to disasters and shocks. Public sector officials' understanding of available policy space to address the health, social and economic costs of the virus is an essential tool to respond to the crisis.

Recognizing the need to build back better, UNITAR's Division for Prosperity launched a programme in partnership with

the Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations focused on strengthening finance and trade resilience to global pandemics and health emergencies in Sub-Saharan Africa.



At the end of the course, the participants should be able to:

- Develop practical skills necessary to master the challenges of pandemics, as a risk factor, on finance and trade resilience.
- Assess finance and trade policy decisions and responses that have optimal impact in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Advance understanding and communication to better contribute to preventing and overcoming friction, barriers, misunderstandings, and prejudices in responding to pandemics and health emergencies.
- Engage in a culturally diverse learning environment and build a network of professional relations with fellow participants and experts.



This programme covers a wide range of topics aimed at building the participants' understanding on responding to the crisis through strengthening finance and trade resilience. Below are the different lecture topics and its short description.

- Week 1
 - **The Perceived Impact of Global Pandemics on Trade and Expected Implications on Development** (Presented by Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations, Geneva)
- Week 2
 - **An Overview of the Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the Global Recession on SSA Economies** (Lecture by Prof. Léonce Ndikumana, Distinguished Professor of Economics; Director of the African Development Policy Program, PERI, University of Massachusetts, Amherst)
 - **The Role of International Organizations in Providing Financial Support to Crisis Affected Nations** (Presented by Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations, Geneva)
- Week 3
 - **The Global Community's Support to the Response to the Pandemic in Africa** (Lecture by Prof. Léonce Ndikumana, Distinguished Professor of Economics; Director of the African Development Policy Program, PERI, University of Massachusetts, Amherst)
 - **Lessons Learned: A History of State Responses to Health Emergencies** (Presented by Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations, Geneva)
 - **Trade facilitation and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to build stronger African Economies Post COVID-19** (Lecture by Mr. Komi Tsowou, Economist, Africa and LDC Division, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD))
 - **Mobilizing domestic resources in Africa through Curbing trade-related Illicit Financial Flows** (Lecture by Ms. Carlotta Schuster, Economist, Africa and LDC Division, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD))
- Week 4
 - **Lessons from Domestic and Global Policy Responses to the Covid-19 Pandemic in Africa** (Lecture by Prof. Léonce Ndikumana, Distinguished Professor of Economics; Director of the African Development Policy Program, PERI, University of Massachusetts, Amherst)
- Week 5
 - Final Presentations and Evaluation
- Week 6
 - Final Presentations and Evaluation



The program utilizes tailored teaching methods including live and recorded lecture sessions, group activities, mentoring, self-directed reading and research, and case study analysis to create an interactive online learning environment for the participants. The programme takes a case-based learning approach where participants are

grouped together to interact, build their knowledge and work together to examine country-specific policy responses. Participants will be assigned to one of the several country groups representing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The programme is developed and delivered in collaboration with the Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations and is intended to enhance primarily public sector officials' understanding of trade and finance resilience and its important linkages with pandemics and health emergencies, crisis management, decision making, and international relations.

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The programme is intended for public sector officials from LDCs in Sub-Saharan Africa who are involved in local and national fiscal and trade policy responses (from Ministries of finance, economy, trade, planning, central banks and other allied national stakeholders), to support their economies and businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Officials from LDCs in Sub-Saharan Africa are encourage to participate.

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This course is free of charge. Limited slots are available subject to a selection process taking into account the geographical and institutional distribution as well as gender balance.

A certificate will be issued to all participants who complete the course-related assignments and assessments successfully.

Participants are expected to have a reliable internet connection, webcam, microphone and speaker throughout the duration of the course.

The course schedule is subject to change.

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