



## Bold Short term and Long-term Fiscal policy in Africa in the context of COVID-19

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

### Announcement in Brief

**Type :** Short Term Course  
**Program Area :** Planning  
**Beginning of the course :** 04 January 2021  
**Duration :** 7 Weeks  
**Language :** English & French  
**Location :** Web Based E-Learning  
**Fee :** Covered by the UNECA  
**Application Deadline :** 24 December 20  
**Specific target audience :** Tax Technocra  
**Website :** <http://services.unidep.org/e-idep/>  
**Applications :** <https://www.unidep.org/?apply>



Module 1 : Dette et viabilité de la dette

Module 2 : Mobilisation des recettes :  
recettes fiscales et non fiscales

Module 3 : FFI et gestion des recettes tirées  
des ressources naturelles

## PROGRAM RATIONALE

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The whole of the planet is under the devastating Covid 19 pandemic. Governments are helping their citizens to weather the shocks experienced in the form of lost lives and livelihoods. The pandemic is a major threat to the progress made so far in achieving some of the targets of the 2030 SDGs and millions of households are moving into poverty and destitution with important gender dimension. Some of the huge and ongoing challenges for governments are the accumulation of debt, fiscal deficit and loss of development finance via IFF (illicit financial flows) and the large volume of non-tax revenue that go missing due to lack of internal and external problems that perpetuate existing leakages of proceeds from natural resources. There are dramatic declines in the price of primary exports from Africa and of its natural resources. The implications of the lost revenue from the slump in international commodity prices will be felt for many years to come.

There are impending problems of environmental degradation and global warming. Spatial economic realities are important and there are voices that echo the fact that cities with their immense economic growth potential can drive the process of green economic recovery from the devastating consequences of Covid 19 and also to mitigate the future detrimental impacts of other global shocks such as climate change. We are at crossroads amid all these complex and interrelated problems that make it imperative to have a vision for a bold and radical short-term fiscal policy in the continent. All these topics attracted high level meetings almost everywhere in Africa in recent years before and after the Covid 19 Pandemic e.g. Cameroon (2020), Cote d'Ivoire (2019) Uganda (Feb 2020); South Africa (2019), Nairobi (2018) and London (2018, 2019, 2020)...etc.

Fiscal policy can be used to put emergency and long-term measures as part of the overall economy wide mitigation response to Covid19 and stimulate the African economy during recovery phase of the pandemic. The content of the course heavily draws on my research over the years including the work I did with colleagues at UNECA, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Additional research reports and journal articles will be used to provide rigorous material to course participants. Our concern in the training should move beyond the questions of "what is the socio-economic impact of Covid 19?" to questions such as "What can be done from fiscal policy perspective now and in the future?". The course is not a theoretical delivery on macroeconomic of fiscal policy but it is anchored on insights from relevant theories. The relevant material will be presented to participants in user friendly and non-technical manner. Therefore, for technical materials cited in the training PowerPoint slides, there is a choice for participants to make because they will be labelled as optional due to the technical nature of the work. In some instances, supplementary material (e.g. webinar recordings, blogs...etc) will be provided to reinforce understanding.

There are important ECA reports that will be useful for our training. For instance, I was a member of a core team in charge of compiling the ECA report on the socio-economic impact of Ebola which was published in 2014 (<https://www.uneca.org/publications/socio-economic-impacts-ebola-africa>). There are numerous lessons that we can learn from past epidemics such as Ebola and HIV/AIDs. One important policy instrument for short-term and long-term response to the pandemic is fiscal policy. Likewise, we will work together to investigate and understand the power of fiscal policy in mitigating the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic and how countries are attempting to recover their respective economies.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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The training programme will cover critical fiscal policy issues of debt sustainability, debt cancellation, debt restructuring, non-tax revenue collection, tax evasion, capital flight, and fiscal space. Note that we are still in the middle of the pandemic and the economic problems in the continent emerge from other shocks too (e.g. the locust invasion devastating Eastern Africa). Therefore, there are a number of emerging issues and existing issues evolve in a dynamic fashion following the trajectory of the pandemic and its effect on the macroeconomy. Based on existing and evolving issues, we interrogate a number of key policy issues and ongoing questions.

We have the following indicating list of issues and questions;

- Discuss the role of fiscal policy in mitigating the effects of Covid 19 and at the same time achieving key objectives of macro-stability, equity and efficiency, and sustainable long-term growth in Africa.
- Review best practices of designing emergency fiscal stimulus packages to mitigate the effect of pandemics (e.g. Covid 19) that are critical to tax and expenditure policy in Africa.
- Review of the size of city economies, their revenue generating potential (both tax and non-tax revenue) and power to mitigate the impact of the pandemic;
- Use various tools, techniques and fiscal space expansion possibilities (both from internal and external sources) to assess the Africa's fiscal stance, and debt sustainability.
- Discuss the long-term fiscal policy options available in handling other key structural problems such as Ebola, HIV Aids as well as the current pandemic and its long-term effects;

## CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

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This training will focus on three key topics of policy priority for African governments :

### **Module I : Debt and Debt sustainability**

- Key concepts. External debt vs domestic debt; securitized debt; Debt sustainability vs sustainability, debt servicing, concessional v non-concessional loans;
- Measurement issues: what really the actual debt level, the tax and non-tax revenue collected, and the volume of capital flight and/or illicit financial flows out of the continent.
- Current policy issues i.) debt; ii.) unsustainable debt financed infrastructure iii.) Enhanced initiative for heavily indebted poor economies (completion point) iv.) IMF monitored economic programme;
- Policy measures taken at global level (e.g. cancelling of debt, postponement of repayments, restructuring). These measures cover both concessional and non-concessional debt.

### **Module II : Revenue mobilisation : tax and non-tax revenue**

- Key concepts.; tax effort; tax havens, tax-GDP ratio, fiscal consolidation...etc
- Measurement: the tax and non-tax revenue collected, and the volume of capital flight and/or illicit financial flows out of the continent.
- Current policy issues i.) tax incentives and race to the bottom; ii.) fiscal discipline, fiscal consolidation, and revenue generation for expanding the fiscal space under covid 19; iii.) social protection expenditure and its sustainability (e.g. the recent urban productivity safety net programme of Ethiopia that is funded by the World Bank) (iv.) city GDP and cities as sources of fiscal resources for recovery from Covid 19.

### **Module III : IFF and Natural Resource revenue Management**

- Key concepts. capital flight vs IFF; tax havens, tax-GDP ratio, resource rents, poorly negotiated contracts ...etc
- Measurement: the volume of capital flight and/or illicit financial flows out of the continent. Divergence between capital flight and IFF volumes
- Current policy issues of i.) management of oil revenue in a climate of volatile commodity prices; ii) asset recovery

## METHODOLOGY

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This self-paced course will be delivered from 04 January 2021 to 26 February 2021. Participants are able to self-assess their understanding of learning materials through built-in quizzes and exercises. Additional resources, including suggested readings are provided for participants who wish to deepen their knowledge of a course topic. The course will be delivered in English and French. The pedagogical team made up of a Course Director and the tutor will provide daily on-line assistance to participants at scheduled times. An Internet connection is required to interact with both Course Director and tutor.

The course will run over a period of seven weeks. The seventh week will be dedicated to a final evaluation or exam that will assess participants' knowledge. Additional resources such as bibliographies, web links and optional readings are provided for participants who wish to deepen their knowledge of the course topic.

## TARGET AUDIENCE

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The course targets groups and individuals that are interested in mastering a strategic and multi-sectoral approach to how government revenue (taxes and non-tax), spending and public debt can be marshalled in pursuit of sustainable development goals in Africa They include:

The course targets mid-level to senior policy officials working in the following Ministries

- Middle and senior level policy officials and managers directly connected with or responsible for tax system, financing, managing, monitoring and evaluating development in their countries;

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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### Acceptance to the Course

Applicants to the course are expected to have, as a minimum, a bachelor's degree preferably where courses related to statistics, planning, project management ,monitoring and evaluation. In addition, two years of work experience will be required. Women candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.

Until the registration deadline, participants are accepted to the course on a rolling basis and subject to availability of slots.

Applications must be completed exclusively on IDEP online application platform at <https://www.unidep.org/?apply>

### Certificate of Completion

A Certificate of Completion will be issued by IDEP to all participants who successfully complete the course-related self-assessments presented for each module.

### Technical Requirements

Access to internet is an essential condition for participation. The following specifications, as a minimum in terms of hardware and software, are required to take this e-Learning course, please consult your Network Administrator or Systems person to ensure that you have the following:

- Platform: Windows 95, 98, 2000, NT, ME, XP or superior; Mac OS 9 or Mac OS X; Linux
- Hardware: 64 MB of RAM, 1 GB of free disk space
- Software:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader
  - Adobe Flash Player
  - Microsoft Office (Windows or Mac) or Open Office
  - Browser: Google chrome, Firefox 36 or higher or Internet Explorer 7 or higher
- Modem: 56 K
- Note that JavaScript, Cookies and Pop-ups must be enabled

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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