Call for Expression of Interest to Prepare Issue-Framing Papers for the Evidence for Development Conference to be held May 6-8, 2025

Conference theme: Optimising the Role of Data, Evidence, and Innovations in Africa's Efforts to Create Wealth, Empower Citizens, and Foster Responsive and Inclusive Governance

The Evidence for Development (Evi4Dev) conference is a biennial continental conference organised by the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), the African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP), and other stakeholders1 to center data, evidence, and innovations in Africa's development efforts in order to accelerate progress towards the realisation of the Africa's Agenda 2063 and the SDGs 2030 Agenda. The Evi4Dev Conference will, every two years, convene both government and non-government actors to collectively review progress and agree on urgent actions that governments and other actors will take to put data, evidence, and innovations at the centre of the continent's Agenda 2063 implementation efforts. Primarily the conference will convene governments, scientists, practitioners, knowledge brokers, private sector, media, and civil society. The first Evi4Dev conference will be held in Nairobi on May 6-8, 2024. The theme of this first conference is: "Optimising the Role of Data, Evidence, and Innovations in Africa's Efforts to Create Wealth, Empower Citizens, and Foster Responsive and Inclusive Governance". Read more about the conference here.

To shape and focus the conference discussions on critical STI and EIP practice requisite to drive progress in priority development sectors for Africa, we are inviting Expressions of Interest from leading researchers and experts to prepare "issue-framing papers" for the conference themes and sub-themes. Use this short form here to submit your expression of interest to prepare one or more of the issue-framing papers outlined in Table 1 below. The deadline for submission of the expression of interest is December 10, 2024. Decision on the researchers who will prepare issue-framing paper will be communicated by December 20, 2024.

Some guidance on the timelines for the preparation of the issue-framing papers:

- Complete the systematic desk/literature review by February 28, 2025
- In partnership with conference organisers, have the draft paper 'peer-reviewed' by at least two experts by March 21, 2025.
- In partnership with conference organisers, conduct at least two (virtual) consultative forums to discuss and enrich the results of the review by March 21, 2025.
- Submit final issue-framing paper by April 6, 2025.

Why should you consider preparing an issue-framing paper?

- Submitting a high-quality issue-framing paper will give you an opportunity to inform the discourse at the conference and contribute to accelerating Africa's development efforts.
- High-quality issue-framing papers will be published on the conference website and in the conference book.

Issue and Research Questions	Methods

Issue-framing paper 1a: The status of research and innovations underpinning wealth creation efforts in Africa towards Agenda 2063 goals

Agenda 2063 priorities under wealth creation include:
- **Diversifying economies** to reduce dependence on raw material exports by promoting value addition, industrialization, and manufacturing.
- Establishing the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)** to increase intra-African trade, foster regional integration, and create a single market for goods and services.
- Supporting **small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)** and encouraging entrepreneurship, especially among youth and women, to drive job creation.
- Enhancing the **informal sector** by formalizing it through supportive policies, access to finance, and training to improve productivity.
- Investing in **technology, innovation, and digital transformation** to boost sectors like fintech, e-commerce, and the green economy.

Research Question: What is the status of research and innovations (i.e., STI) underpinning Africa's Agenda 2063 efforts towards wealth creation? **Specific Research Questions:** • Status of research priorities or agenda at regional and country levels? • Status of research generation against the research priorities/agenda identified? • Status of innovations for wealth creation? • Status of funding for research and innovations?	**Study design:** • Systematic desk/literature review • Validate the results of the review through virtual consultative forums (at least 2 consultative forums targeting the anglophone and francophone regions) Scope: • Regional level review (continental and sub-regional focus) • Country-level reviews using 5 country case studies, i.e., one country from each of the sub-regions of Africa (Eastern Africa; Southern Africa; West Africa; Central Africa; and North Africa)

Issue-framing paper 1b: The status of evidence-informed policy-making (EIP) practice driving Africa's wealth creation efforts towards Agenda 2063 goals

Agenda 2063 priorities under wealth creation include:
- **Diversifying economies** to reduce dependence on raw material exports by promoting value addition, industrialization, and manufacturing.
- Establishing the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)** to increase intra-African trade, foster regional integration, and create a single market for goods and services.
- Supporting **small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)** and encouraging entrepreneurship, especially among youth and women, to drive job creation.
- Enhancing the **informal sector** by formalizing it through supportive policies, access to finance, and training to improve productivity.
- Investing in **technology, innovation, and digital transformation** to boost sectors like fintech, e-commerce, and the green economy.

Research Question: What is the status of evidence-informed policymaking (EIP) practice in Africa's Agenda 2063's efforts towards wealth creation? Specific Research Questions:	**Study design:** • Systematic desk/literature review • Validate the results of the review through virtual consultative forums at least 2 consultative forums targeting the

Specific Research Questions:
- Status of EIP practice?
- Status of institutionalisation of EIP practice?
- Status of results-based performance?
- Status of data science for optimising decision-making?
- Status of equity and inclusion in EIP practice?

targeting the anglophone and francophone regions)
Scope:
- Country-level reviews using 5 country case studies, i.e., one country from each of the sub-regions of Africa (Eastern Africa; Southern Africa; West Africa; Central Africa; and North Africa)

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Issue-framing paper 4a: The status of research and innovation underpinning Africa's efforts to transform education systems with a focus on building human capital as per Agenda 2063 goals

Agenda 2063 priorities under education include:
- Ensuring access to quality education at all levels, with a focus on **STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics)** education to prepare the next generation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.
- Promoting **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)** to equip youth with the skills needed for the labor market, particularly in sectors like manufacturing, ICT, and renewable energy.
- Investing in **early childhood development programs** to lay a strong foundation for lifelong learning and cognitive development.
- Encouraging **innovation, research, and development (R&D)** through increased funding and partnerships with universities and research institutions.
- Enhancing **digital literacy and online learning capabilities,** particularly in rural and underserved communities, to bridge the digital divide.

Research Question: What is the status of research and innovations (i.e., STI) that is underpinning Africa's Agenda 2063 efforts towards education?

Specific Research Questions:
- Status of research priorities or agenda at regional and country levels?
- Status of research generation against the research priorities/agenda identified?
- Status of innovations for wealth creation?
- Status of funding for research & innovations?

Study design:
- Systematic desk/literature review
- Validate the results of the review through virtual consultative forums (at least 2 consultative forums targeting the anglophone and francophone regions)
Scope:
- Regional level review (continental and sub-regional focus)
- Country-level reviews using 5 country case studies, i.e., one country from each of the sub-regions of Africa (Eastern Africa; Southern Africa; West Africa; Central Africa; and North Africa)

Issue-framing paper 4b: The status of evidence-informed (EIP) practice driving Africa's efforts to transform education systems with a focus on building human capital towards Agenda 2063 goals

Agenda 2063 priorities under education include:
- Ensuring access to quality education at all levels, with a focus on **STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics)** education to prepare the next generation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.
- Promoting **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)** to equip youth with the skills needed for the labor market, particularly in sectors like manufacturing, ICT, and renewable energy.
- Investing in **early childhood development** programs to lay a strong foundation for lifelong learning and cognitive development.
- Encouraging innovation, **research, and development (R&D)** through increased funding and partnerships with universities and research institutions.

Research Question: What is the status of evidence-informed policymaking (EIP) practice in Africa's Agenda 2063's efforts towards optimising education? **Specific Research Questions:** • Status of EIP practice? • Status of institutionalisation of EIP practice? • Status of results-based performance in delivery of public services • Status of data science for optimising decision-making? • Status of equity and inclusion in EIP practice?	**Study design:** • Systematic desk/literature review • Validate the results of the review through virtual consultative forums (at least 2 consultative forums targeting the anglophone and francophone regions) Scope: • Country-level reviews (case studies): at least one country in each of the sub-regions of Africa (East Africa; Southern Africa; West Africa; Central Africa; and North Africa)

Issue-framing paper 5a. The status of research and innovation underpinning Africa's efforts on health to realise universal health coverage (UHC) towards agenda 2063 goals

Agenda 2063 priorities under health include:
- Achieving **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** to ensure equitable access to essential health services for all.
- Strengthening health systems by improving **health infrastructure,** ensuring the availability of essential medicines, and expanding the healthcare workforce.
- Enhancing efforts to reduce **maternal, child, and infant mortality** rates by providing better access to prenatal and postnatal care.
- Investing in the **pharmaceutical industry** to increase the local production of medicines and vaccines, thereby reducing dependence on imports.
- Promoting **disease prevention and health** promotion through public health campaigns, addressing communicable diseases (like malaria, HIV/AIDS) and non-communicable diseases (such as diabetes and hypertension).
- Strengthening **pandemic preparedness** by building robust health surveillance systems, as seen during COVID-19, to improve the continent's response to future health emergencies.

Research Question: What is the status of research and innovations (i.e., STI) that is underpinning Africa's Agenda 2063 efforts towards health?	**Study design:** • Systematic desk/literature review • Validate the results of the review through virtual consultative forums (at least 2 consultative forums targeting the anglophone

Specific Research Questions:
• Status of research priorities or agenda at regional and country levels?
• Status of research generation against the research priorities/agenda identified?
• Status of innovations for wealth creation?
• Status of funding for research & innovations?

francophone regions)
Scope:
• Regional level review (continental and sub-regional focus)
• Country-level reviews using 5 country case studies, i.e., one country from each of the sub-regions of Africa (Eastern Africa; Southern Africa; West Africa; Central Africa; and North Africa)

Issue-framing paper 5b. The status of evidence-informed policy-making (EIP) practice driving Africa's efforts on health to realise universal health coverage (UHC) towards Agenda 2063 goals

Agenda 2063 priorities under health include:

• Achieving **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** to ensure equitable access to essential health services for all.
• Strengthening health systems by improving **health infrastructure,** ensuring the availability of essential medicines, and expanding the healthcare workforce.
• Enhancing efforts to reduce **maternal, child, and infant mortality** rates by providing better access to prenatal and postnatal care.
• Investing in the **pharmaceutical industry** to increase the local production of medicines and vaccines, thereby reducing dependence on imports.
• Promoting **disease prevention and health promotion** through public health campaigns, addressing communicable diseases (like malaria, HIV/AIDS) and non-communicable diseases (such as diabetes and hypertension).
• Strengthening **pandemic preparedness** by building robust health surveillance systems, as seen during COVID-19, to improve the continent's response to future health emergencies.

What is the status of evidence-informed policymaking (EIP) practice in Africa's Agenda 2063's efforts towards enabling UHC?

Specific Research Questions:

• Status of EIP practice?
• Status of institutionalisation of EIP practice?
• Status of results-based performance in delivery of public services
• Status of data science for optimising decision-making?
• Status of equity and inclusion in EIP practice?

Study design:

• Systematic desk/literature review
• Validate the results of the review through virtual consultative forums (at least 2 consultative forums targeting the anglophone and francophone regions)
Scope:
• Country-level reviews (case studies): at least one country in each of the sub-regions of Africa (East Africa; Southern Africa; West Africa; Central Africa; and North Africa)