

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR THE ANNUAL RESEARCH AND POLICY SEMINAR

The Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute of Eastern and Southern Africa (MEFMI) invites interested experts to submit proposals on policy-oriented discussion papers on diverse topics around the Institute's key priority areas of Macroeconomic Management, Financial Sector Management and Sovereign Debt Management for the Annual Research and Policy Seminar scheduled for November 2015 in Harare, Zimbabwe. While experts are free to suggest their topics, the proposed Papers should fall largely within the following main priority themes identified as specifically relevant to address specific knowledge gaps and policy priorities:

1. Mobilization of Resources to Finance Infrastructure and Pro-Poor Growth;
2. Growth, Poverty and Inequality;
3. Public Debt, Growth and Poverty; and
4. Financial Inclusion and Impact on Economic Growth.

Any clarifications on these topics can be obtained from the Director of the Debt Management Programme through e-mail address capacity@mefmi.org, Telephone +263-4-745988/99/91-94

MOTIVATION

The Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region has enjoyed sound growth rates over the last decade and half, relative to historical performance standards and average growth rates for the global economy. According to IMF's April 2015 Regional Economic Outlook, the region is set to register yet another year of solid economic performance, expanding at 4.5% in 2015. While this growth rate puts the region among the fastest growing in the world, the expansion will be at the lower end of the range achieved in recent years, reflecting the impact of the adverse shock that has hit some of the region's largest economies due to the sharp decline in commodity prices (IMF, 2015). In addition, the region's growth outlook remains susceptible to a number of risks, key among them being the tightening of external financing conditions and anemic growth in main trading partners, particularly China and Europe. A central question facing the region today is how to preserve and improve prospects for sustaining high and inclusive growth in the face of global economic uncertainty. As with all other challenges, the current challenges facing the region provide a window of opportunity for reorienting government policies and strategies towards diversifying growth sources and fostering structural transformation.

MEFMI has, therefore, recognized the need to reorient policies towards diversifying growth sources and fostering structural transformation, by creating a platform where policy-relevant knowledge is generated, deliberated, and made available in an accessible and meaningful form to key decision makers. Timely dissemination of policy-relevant research would enable policymakers to make more constructive use of the results to inform policy. Hence, the MEFMI Research and Policy Seminar series seeks to promote research that stimulate dialogue for improved development policy formulation and implementation. MEFMI is, therefore, mobilizing human resources to generate new knowledge through evidence-based research.

MEMBER STATES

OBJECTIVE OF THE SEMINAR

The overarching goal of MEFMI is to improve macroeconomic and financial management and performance that supports economic growth and poverty reduction in the member states. The **MEFMI Research and Policy Seminar** is an annual event organized with the aim of fostering dialogue and exchange of knowledge that contributes to search for solutions to emerging challenges confronting the region, with a view to preserve and improve prospects for sustaining high and inclusive growth.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Seminar will culminate in the publication of accepted papers in a special edition of peer reviewed journal, the **MEFMI Research Journal**. In addition, the papers will be abridged into policy briefings to make them more relevant to decision makers. This is expected to strengthen the link between research and policy by translating research results into policy as well as transmitting policy priorities to researchers. The discussions are also expected to contribute to an understanding of the challenges facing sustainable development in the region and the policy options that exist for addressing these challenges.

SEMINAR FORMAT

The seminar will feature parallel plenary sessions based on invited and contributed papers. The plenary sessions will feature presentations and discussions of papers by experts, moderated by a panel of experts made up of invited prominent academics, policy makers and practitioners, as well as representatives from development organizations who share a deep passion for the development of the region and have unique perspectives on how it can be achieved.

COMPENSATION FOR THE COST OF RESEARCH

MEFMI will pay a fixed honorarium per Paper to the Authors of papers selected. This will be done after the Editors and Reviewers of each Paper are satisfied with the quality of the Paper (s) submitted.

TIME FRAME

One page abstracts of the proposals indicating the topic and methodology should be submitted together with CV not later than **31st July 2015**. These can be sent by e-mail to capacity@mefmi.org or to the Director of Debt Management Programme MEFMI, 9 Earls Road, Alexandra Park, P. O. Box 66016, Kopje, Harare, Zimbabwe. Telephone numbers +263 4 745988/91-94, Fax +263 4 745547.

Authors of the accepted abstracts will be notified by **14th August 2015** and they will be expected to submit final versions of their papers no later than **15th October 2015** to allow time for an expert review of the papers, web posting and inclusion in the seminar materials.

MEMBER STATES