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CALL FOR PAPERS

2nd IGAD Scientific Conference on Migration and Displacement

Human Mobility in the Context of COVID-19

22-24 Feb 2021

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in cooperation with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) are organising a regional conference on “Human Mobility in the Context of COVID-19.” IGAD hereby cordially invite abstracts to be submitted for presentation at the upcoming conference on 22-24 February 2021.

The IGAD region hosts 4.2 million refugees and around 8.1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). Intra-regional movements like (seasonal) labour migration, mobile populations, cross-border trade, transhumant pastoralists, mixed migration, irregular migration, displacements through conflicts or due to rapid and slow-onset environmental events and disasters are predominant features of migration and displacement in the region. To facilitate intra-regional mobility IGAD Member States just recently endorsed a Free Movement and Transhumance Protocol and steps are underway to accelerate the adoption of a roadmap for implementation of the protocol.

The spread of COVID-19 virus had significant impact on mobility in general and more specifically on cross-border mobility and mixed migration. The immediate response to mitigate the spread of the virus included travel restrictions and border closures, which left many stranded. Large numbers of migrant workers in the Middle East and other countries have been stranded or forcibly returned to their country of origin unsettling their livelihoods and posing an additional burden to the health systems in countries of origin. Remittances from large diaspora communities outside the region are shrinking as the pandemic impacts the economy of host countries in unprecedented ways, which has led to reduction or loss of the diaspora’s income. This will have a huge impact on economies of migrant sending communities and countries, since remittances are the most stable form of foreign currency. Adverse effects of lockdowns on livelihoods in the medium and long-term are yet to be seen, but it is evident that migrants and refugees are among the most vulnerable with little capacity to absorb the shocks of this pandemic.

Objective

The scientific conference aims to investigate the lasting effects of the pandemic on livelihoods and the multitude of impacts on migrants, refugees and returnees, IDPs, host communities, and on mobile groups in border regions. More importantly, researchers are invited to identify impacts particular to the IGAD region, and to propose solutions and evidence-based policy recommendations to IGAD and its Member States.

IGAD is calling on researchers and practitioners from universities, research centres, think



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thanks, international organisations and NGOs to submit high quality abstracts on the following themes.

Themes

- 1. Vulnerability in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic:** What are the (new) vulnerable mobile groups that need special protection during the pandemic (e.g. transhumant pastoralists, truck drivers and commercial sex workers, internal migrants in urban centres, IDPs, stranded migrants at frontiers and in transit camps)? What are the impacts on trafficked and smuggled persons? Have traffickers and smugglers changed their strategy and if so how? How could the protection need of these groups be better addressed by IGAD Member States?
- 2. Protection of migrant workers' rights:** What are the challenges that migrant workers face during the pandemic? How can migrant workers be effectively protected against collective expulsions and deportation to their home countries in the midst of a pandemic?
- 3. Livelihoods of cross-border traders and communities:** Are there causal links between border closure, loss of livelihoods, economic decline and inter-communal conflict in cross-border communities? How are transhumant pastoralists affected? Which innovative support programmes, such as cash-based approaches, could be effective to improve livelihoods and prevent conflicts in cross-border communities?
- 4. Human mobility in the context of multiple disasters:** Climate-induced disaster displacements such as flooding and the locust invasion on top of the COVID-19 crisis create a multiple disaster situation, food insecurity and loss of livelihoods. What are the causal connections to disaster displacement and how can communities build resilience against multiple disasters?
- 5. Virtual education of migrants, refugees and IDPs during the pandemic:** What are the consequences of the lockdown and the pandemic on education, training and skills development of IDPs and refugees? What are the recommendations for Member States in making education accessible to mobile and displaced populations? What is the impact of COVID-19 on the on-going inclusion of refugees in the IGAD Member States through the Comprehensive Response Framework (CRRF)/Global Compact on Refugee (GCR) and regional IGAD frameworks, such as the Djibouti Declaration on Refugee Education?
- 6. Gender dimension of COVID-19 impacts:** Do implications of COVID-19 differ between migrant and refugee men and women? Do restrictions, lockdowns and other measures that are taken to contain the pandemic disproportionately affect and discriminate migrant women and girls? What should be considered to outline gender responsive measures?
- 7. Diaspora and remittances:** What are the impacts of COVID-19 on remittances in the IGAD region? How has the sharp decline of remittances impacted refugee families and what alternatives have refugees resorted to in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic? How can the impacts be mitigated in Member States?
- 8. Migration data collection, analysis and use during the pandemic:** How can Member States tackle the challenge of collecting disaggregated data during lockdowns and contact restrictions? How can IGAD ensure the availability and accessibility of timely, disaggregated data on migration and displacement to make informed decisions during



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the pandemic? Accurate information is also pivotal for migrants. How can IGAD harness technology to better gather and disseminate information on migration routes.

Submission guidelines

This call for papers invites international scholars and practitioners especially those from the African continent and IGAD region with expertise in the subject matter to submit abstracts. Submitted abstracts should relate to the conference themes and follow the below guideline:

- Abstracts should be written in English or French and be 250-300 words;
- Interested authors should send a one-page CV/ bio, with latest publications and contact details (email address and phone numbers);
- Submissions should indicate the theme that the abstract falls under;
- All submissions will be peer-reviewed, and accepted authors will be invited to write and present a paper of 3500-4000 words;
- Conference funding support will be dependent on the timely submission and acceptance of the full research paper;
- Selected research papers will be published.

Please send your abstracts and other documents to this e-mail address: migration-conf-2021@igad.int

Important Dates

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 25th October 2020

Notification of acceptance of abstracts: 20th November 2020

Deadline for final full paper submission: 15th January 2021

Partners

This Conference is organized by IGAD, GIZ and IOM in cooperation with universities and think tanks in the region, namely the Addis Ababa University, Maseno University, the Kenya Institute of Migration Studies (KIMS) and the Institute of Security Studies (ISS).

Organising committee

For any enquiries regarding the conference call for papers, please contact: Dr Abdi Hersi (abdi.hersi@igad.int)

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