AFRICA INTEGRATION MONITORING: AFRICA REGIONAL INTEGRATION INDEX, OTHER INTEGRATION INDEX

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

Announcement in Brief

Type :	Short Term Course
Program Area :	Regional integration and trade
Beginning of the course :	1 March 2021
Duration :	3 Weeks
Language :	Bilingual (English - French)
Location :	Web Based E-Learning
Fee :	Covered by UNECA
Application Deadline :	22 February 2021
Specific target audience :	No
Website :	http://services.unidep.org/e-idep/
Applications :	https://www.unidep.org/?apply

PROGRAM RATIONALE

The need to have accurate and updated data in virtually all areas is paramount to making informed choices and evaluating alternatives. Thus, in assessing and monitoring regional integration in Africa, relevant decision-making requires skills not only in assessing regional integration but also in understanding its various components.

Furthermore, the dramatic effects of COVID-19 point out the need for enhanced production of African finished goods and services that can be easily traded on the continent and thus this COVID-19 crisis provides an impetus to accelerate African regional integration.

The United Nation Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) have produced the African Regional Integration Index (ARII), which is a tool for measuring and evaluating regional integration on the continent.[1] It assesses the progress of regional integration in five areas of economic and social integration and offers many opportunities for use in policy formulation, analysis and targeted policy measures in relation to Aid for Trade and other areas.

Of particular importance, of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Country business index (ACBI) aims to measure the implementation of the AfCFTA and how it actually affects businesses. The developmental impact of the AfCFTA, including gender dimensions and implications for vulnerable groups have been taken into account. According to the 2020 ACBI final pilot report of UNECA, the dimensions of the index are Good restrictiveness and costs, Investment and services restrictiveness, African FTA knowledge and use and Business environment.

Otherwise, a first version of ARII has been produced at 2016, it assesses the progress of regional integration in five areas of economic and social integration (Trade Integration Productive Integration, Macroeconomic Integration, Infrastructural Integration, Free Movement of People)   The second edition of the Africa Regional Integration Index (2019 ARII) is built to address some limitations of the first one. The most significant change is that the 2019 ARII ranks African countries not only in their respective regional economic communities (RECs) (as ARII 2016) but also within the African continent. The 2019 ARII report highlighted essential recommendations that help to accelerate regional integration. Specifically, within the five regional integration dimensions, the continent is performing poorly on productive and infrastructural integration. These two dimensions are very important for the other three dimensions (trade, macroeconomics and movement of people) to function properly. To improve productive integration, the report recommends prioritising the development of regional value chains and technological advancement, among others.

Due to COVID19, a number of African economies are under severe strain. Economic activity has been disrupted with key sectors bearing the brunt of the pandemic. Mastering the tools to monitor regional integration, specifically ARII and ACBI present opportunities to speed up Africa's integration agenda, especially the implementation of the AfCFTA.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The major goal of this online course is to create a pool of experts in the assessment of African regional integration. Specifically, the course aims at deepening the knowledge of participants on the Africa Regional Integration Index. With this capacity building program, participants will be able to track progress made by African countries on regional integration goals within their regional economic communities (RECs) and across Africa and also to evaluate five dimensions of regional integration for the 54 African countries and for the eight RECs recognised by the AU. Also with ARII, participants will be able to identify strengths and weaknesses for each of the 54 African countries and the 8 RECs within its five dimensions of regional integration.

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[1] *Director of Regional Development and Regional Integration at the African Development Bank,* **M. Mupotola**

CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

This training focuses on ARII 2019 and AfCFTA Business index. For the part related to ARII, the course will be primarily based on ARII 2019 User Guide, "Making sense of Regional Integration Indexes: A Guide to better understand and use the information in Regional Integration Indexes". Moreover, it will rely heavily on a user-friendly and interactive dedicated web-platform that showcases the data for all dimensions and indicators of ARII 2019.

For the part related to AfCFTA Business index, the focus will be on the overwiex of the index with all the following dimensions (AfCFTA Implementation, AfCFTA Impact, Trade for development, and Easing trade in Africa).

The course consists of five modules:

- **Module 1** : A foundation of regional integration index
- **Module 2** : Introduction to the web-platform
- **Module 3** : Familiarity with data and interpretation of results
- **Module 4** : Using ARII to create country profiles
- **Module 5**: Other integration index and its use

METHODOLOGY

This first part of this course is self-paced and will be delivered from 15 February 2021 to 26 February. 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 practical dimension delivered in the last week will be synchrone as series of webinar with activie participation.

The course will run over a period of 3 weeks. The forth 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

The course will target middle and senior managers working in the field of / or responsible for monitoring and evaluation of regional integration in their country. In particular, target participants include Officials of national statistical agencies professionally interested in regional integration and Regional Economic Community Officers in Africa.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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.uni-dep.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

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