Summary:
The novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) has revealed the need for countries to boost their innovation ecosystems in order to quickly mobilize and harness technology and innovation to meet national and global challenges in times. In Africa, the number of research institutes, firms, governments and their partners have demonstrated the potential for domestic production of medical supplies, test kits and other tools needed by governments and healthcare professionals. Countries that already had centres with excellent life science and engineering institutes and firms were among the first to sequence the genomes of the virus, develop test methods, identify potential treatment and vaccine candidates and quickly design alternative personal protection gear and medical devices, among others. While a number of African firms and institutions has been covered in the media, they perhaps represent a small portion of all innovative firms and institutes as well as individuals.

The United Nations Commission for Africa and its partners are pleased to invite you to the COVID-19 Innovation and Investment Forum 2020. The Forum will showcase Africa’s innovation and production potential, promote knowledge exchange and information exchange, encourage investment in critical area and facilitate collaboration and technology partnerships. Specifically, it will bring together innovators, investors, government officials and researchers to showcase their innovations and strategies as well as identify innovation gaps, investment needs and industrial opportunities to achieve:

i. Affordable rapid testing;

ii. Enhance medical devices and personal protection gear design and production

iii. Improve efficiency and effectiveness of contact tracing and isolation

iv. Strengthen the capacity to develop and produce drugs and vaccines

v. Government led innovation to ensure key services are delivered safely (remote learning, service delivery etc…)
**Date:** 15-19 June, 2020  
**Venue:** Zoom/Teams; Addis Ababa time

### Draft Programme

<table>
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<th>Monday - 16 June 2020</th>
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| 14:30-15:30          | High Level Panel on Science in Shaping Global Responses to COVID-19  
Government around the world have all claimed that science was informing their responses – to delay or close boarders, implement lockdowns or steps in relaxing measures, use or discourage use of PPEs, testing or if you should go to the clinic or self-isolate, etc. This panel may discuss the extent to which science informed policy, which science, how science was interpreted or otherwise. It may also look at how policy may have influenced science. What determined the different policy decisions among countries even when the science may have been comparable? |
| 16:00-17:00          | High Level Panel Discussion on Lessons in Harnessing and Investing in Technology and Innovation for COVID-19 Response  
Technology and innovation have played a critical role in identifying and decoding the genome of the virus, design of treatment regimes and vaccine candidates as well as rapid response in building testing capacity and production of kits, PPEs and medical devices, among others. The panel may look at how Africa can strengthen its technological base and build its innovation ecosystems to ensure its fit for purpose in future; where Africa’s STI failed and where it performed exceptionally well and to which extent it informed policy making. |
| 17:00-18:00          | General discussion and closing session |

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<th>Tuesday - 17 June 2020</th>
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| 14:00-15:30          | A focus on testing  
High Level Panel Discussion on COVID-19 Testing:  
This panel will look at emerging technologies, tools and methods that can help African countries ramp up testing, given it large rural populations and informal sectors/settlements and wide differences in population densities. |
| 15:30-17:30          | Showcasing Investment Ready Innovations for Rapid and Point-of Care Testing  
Showcasing (10 cases) |
| 1730-18:00           | Closing Session  
Moderator: |

| Wednesday - 18 June 2020 |
Innovations and investing in Medical devices and PPEs

High Level Panel Discussion on Innovation and Investing in Design and Production of Medical Devices and PPES:
Of all items, ventilators and face masks perhaps became the symbol of our collective failure to stress test our healthcare systems. Innovation has prevailed with individuals, institutions, universities and firms, including libraries, converted their learning, training and production platforms into mini-factories for medical supplies. For countries in Africa, this also presents unique opportunities to strengthen national innovation and manufacturing capabilities in these areas of need. This panel will focus largely on the innovativeness and potential of Africa to strengthen its production of medical devices and PPEs.

Showcasing of investment ready innovations for medical devices and personal protection equipment (10 cases)

Closing Session
Moderator:

Thursday - 19 June 2020

14:00-15:30 Innovations and investments in contact tracing technologies and approaches
One of the top questions as countries ease the restrictions is how to trace individual that may have been in contact with a person whose has just been found to be infected with COVID-19, and how to quickly determine which contacts warrant being informed or isolated. This panel will focus on methods and tools, experiences learned elsewhere, reliability of technology in countries where internet and smartphone use may be low and high rural populations, among other concerns. What measures, support and efforts should countries put in place?

15:30-17:30 Showcasing of investment ready innovations for contact tracing technologies and systems
Moderator:

1730-18:00 Closing session

Friday - 20 June 2020

14:00-15:30 COVID Knowledge Exchange
High Level Investment Panel on Innovations in Government and for Governments
COVID-19 disrupted several government services. In response, governments and their partners (both public and private) found new tools and ways of delivering services. This panel will look at innovations by and for governments to bring services to the people. In addition, what are the gaps that governments in Africa wish public and private institutions and firms addressed in the COVID-19 and post-COVID environment?

15:30-17:30 Showcasing of investment ready innovation in government (10 cases)

1730-18:00 Closing Ceremony and Awards
Contacts

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