



2025

EACON

CONCEPT NOTE



info@eaccon.com
eaccon.com

Background

The East African Community Conference (EACON) is a high-level regional platform dedicated to advancing dialogue, policy alignment, and cross-sectoral cooperation among EAC member states, development partners, and academic and private sector institutions. EACON served as a dynamic space for policy dialogue, academic exchange, investment facilitation, and public-private collaboration. Each edition of the conference builds momentum for stronger institutional linkages, regulatory alignment, and strategic sectoral partnerships across the region.

EACON 2024, hosted in Mogadishu, brought together over 300 participants from government, academia, the private sector, and development organizations. The conference delivered impactful outcomes, including consensus on the need for policy harmonization, commitments to infrastructure development, and renewed emphasis on capacity building across education, trade, and technology sectors. Delegates also acknowledged the urgency of addressing environmental sustainability and enhancing regional coordination on climate resilience.

EACON 2024 concluded with several impactful resolutions, including outlining key policy priorities and agreements for wide dissemination.

Somali universities signed an MoU with the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) to boost academic cooperation, while the Chamber of Commerce formalized a partnership to strengthen regional trade. A 1,000-scholarship initiative was launched to enhance skills development across East Africa. Delegates also committed to advancing digital infrastructure, trade facilitation, and innovation, while reaffirming regional collaboration on peace, security, and sustainable development.

These outcomes laid the groundwork for EACON 2025, which will move the agenda forward by focusing on practical implementation, investment mobilization, and policy alignment in key productive sectors. With Somalia's EAC membership now active, EACON 2025 provides a timely and strategic opportunity to strengthen regional economic cooperation and deliver tangible benefits for citizens and businesses across the community.





About EACON2025

The East African Community Conference (EACON 2025) is a premier regional forum dedicated to advancing economic integration, fostering trade, and driving sustainable development across the East African Community (EAC). With Somalia's recent accession to the EAC, this year's conference presents a critical opportunity to strengthen regional cooperation, address shared challenges, and explore new avenues for investment and innovation.

The East African Community is one of the fastest-growing regional blocs, yet several challenges hinder seamless economic integration and inclusive growth. Somalia's entry into the EAC signifies a new phase of economic and trade cooperation, but it also highlights the need for targeted policy coordination, capacity building, and infrastructure investment to ensure effective participation in the regional economy. Agriculture remains the backbone of Somalia's economy, contributing over 75% to its GDP and employing the majority of the population. However, low productivity, climate induced challenges, and limited access to modern agricultural techniques continue to threaten food security and economic stability. The use of AI-driven solutions, precision farming, and climate resilient practices can play a transformative role in enhancing productivity and strengthening Somalia's integration into EAC agricultural value chains.

Similarly, the digital payments landscape in East Africa has seen remarkable progress, with mobile money services boosting financial inclusion. However, interoperability gaps, regulatory misalignment, and high transaction costs remain barriers to cross-border trade efficiency.

Somalia's mobile-first financial ecosystem provides a unique opportunity to explore harmonized digital payment systems that could facilitate frictionless cross-border trade and broader financial inclusion. Furthermore, while regional trade is essential for economic growth, non-tariff barriers (NTBs), inefficient customs processes, and weak trade infrastructure hinder its full potential. Addressing these challenges through policy harmonization, investment in logistics, and trade facilitation mechanisms will be crucial for enhancing Somalia's role in the EAC and strengthening intra-regional trade. By tackling these key areas, EACON 2025 aims to serve as a catalyst for actionable partnerships, investment opportunities, and policy commitments that will drive sustainable economic growth in the region.

EACON 2025 will bring together a diverse group of heads of state, policymakers, business leaders, investors, academics, and development partners to discuss key economic sectors vital to the region's prosperity. The conference will focus on agriculture and food security, digital payments and financial inclusion, and cross-border trade and economic integration. By leveraging emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), fintech innovations, and smart trade policies, the discussions will aim to unlock the full potential of regional trade, investment, and policy harmonization. The event is expected to provide a dynamic platform for dialogue, investment matchmaking, and policy advocacy, leading to tangible commitments that will accelerate economic transformation in East Africa. By facilitating high-level engagements and fostering strategic partnerships, EACON 2025 seeks to shape the future of regional cooperation and sustainable development in the EAC.

Strategic Rationale

The East African region stands at a pivotal moment in its integration journey, navigating both urgent development challenges and unprecedented opportunities for transformation. As regional markets evolve and geopolitical dynamics shift, the need for coordinated action in areas such as food security, digital finance, trade infrastructure, and industrial development has become more pressing than ever.

EACON 2025 prioritizes productive sector cooperation as a central pillar for delivering shared regional prosperity. Strengthening the region's productive base is critical not only for improving sector-specific outcomes, but also for driving inclusive growth, enabling cross-border value chains, and positioning East Africa as a competitive and resilient economic bloc.

The conference takes place at a time when the East African Community is actively working to deepen economic integration. However, this ambition requires more than political will; it demands stronger institutional linkages, harmonized regulations, and investment-ready strategies.

By advancing collaborative strategies across agriculture, digital finance, and trade logistics, EACON 2025 will help member states move from **subsistence to surplus**, from **fragmentation to integration**, and from **aid dependency to market-driven resilience**. This transition is vital to building inclusive economic models that respond to the region's demographic momentum and development aspirations.



Institutional Background and capacity

EACON 2025 is built on a foundation of institutional strength and regional ambition. The conference is convened by a coalition of Somali and international partners committed to advancing economic cooperation, academic collaboration, and policy innovation across East Africa. This year's organizing framework reflects a strategic alignment of government leadership, academic excellence, and development expertise.

The following institutions form the core of this coalition:



Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

The government entity responsible for Somalia's foreign relations, regional integration, and international cooperation. The Ministry houses the Department of East African Community Affairs, which supports Somalia's regional engagement efforts.



Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education of the Federal Republic of Somalia

The national authority overseeing education systems, higher education institutions, and academic development. The Ministry plays a key role in shaping regional academic collaboration and policy dialogue in the education sector.



SIMAD University

A leading private university in Somalia, known for its focus on innovation, entrepreneurship, and policy research. SIMAD is a founding member of the EACON platform and serves as the principal academic coordinator of the conference.



Somali National University

Established in 1954, Somali National University is the country's oldest and most prominent public university. It contributes national academic representation and fosters research collaboration with regional and international partners.



University of Bayreuth (Germany)

An internationally recognized research university with long-standing academic partnerships in East Africa, including capacity-building programs and interdisciplinary research on governance, law, and development.



Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

Germany's leading development agency, supporting technical cooperation across sectors including governance, regional integration, and economic development in the Horn of Africa.



The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA)

(IUCEA) is a regional institution established to coordinate the development of higher education and research across the East African Community (EAC). It works to promote academic collaboration, harmonize education systems, and enhance the quality and relevance of higher education to drive regional integration and socio-economic development. IUCEA plays a key role in fostering mobility, joint programs, and research partnerships among universities in the EAC region, advancing a shared vision for knowledge-driven growth.

This diverse institutional base ensures that the conference is grounded in national priorities, supported by academic excellence, and enriched by cross-sector collaboration—positioning EACON 2025 as a high-impact regional platform for dialogue, policy, and innovation.



Conference Objectives

EACON 2025 is designed to drive tangible outcomes that support regional growth, resilience, and collaboration. The key objectives include:

To promote interdisciplinary research and evidence-based policymaking in support of Somalia's integration into the East African Community, leveraging academic collaboration to inform strategic Policy reforms.

Advance Policy Harmonization and Market Access to support alignment of national regulations, reduce trade barriers, and unlock cross-border opportunities across the EAC region.



Catalyze Investment and Public-Private Collaboration to connect investors, development partners, and private sector leaders with high-impact opportunities in agriculture, fintech, and trade infrastructure.



Conference Themes & Subthemes

THEME

Advancing Productive Sector Cooperation for Socioeconomic Transformation in the East African Community.

EACON 2025 aims to promote deeper regional collaboration that drives inclusive growth, sustainable development, and long-term economic resilience across the Horn of Africa and the broader EAC region.

EACON 2025 will focus on four major sub themes that are critical to strengthening regional economic cooperation and sustainable development: Smart Agriculture and Climate Resilience, Digital Payments and Financial Inclusion, Trade Facilitation and Economic Integration, and Investment and Private Sector Growth.



Agriculture & Food Security

The discussions under this theme will explore how technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and precision farming can transform agriculture in East Africa by improving productivity and sustainability. The use of data-driven approaches, automated irrigation systems, and predictive analytics can help farmers optimize planting schedules, increase crop yields, and mitigate risks associated with erratic weather patterns. Additionally, climate change remains a pressing issue for the region, and this session will focus on climate-smart agricultural practices, including water conservation, sustainable land management, and agroforestry, to build resilience against environmental challenges. Strengthening food security and market access will also be a key area of discussion, as integrating Somalia into EAC's agricultural value chains will provide new trade opportunities and enhance regional self-sufficiency.



Digital Payments & Financial Inclusion

This theme will examine the role of harmonized cross-border payment systems in reducing trade costs and enhancing financial accessibility across EAC member states. The region has seen rapid growth in mobile money services, yet fragmented regulatory frameworks and interoperability challenges continue to hinder seamless transactions. EACON 2025 will explore how blockchain technology, AI-driven financial solutions, and mobile innovations can create a more inclusive, efficient, and secure financial ecosystem. The discussions will also highlight the importance of public-private collaborations in digital finance, focusing on regulatory alignment, cybersecurity measures, and digital financial literacy initiatives to ensure that fintech solutions benefit all segments of society, particularly marginalized and rural communities.



Trade Facilitation & Economic Integration

This theme will address the persistent barriers to regional trade, particularly the non-tariff barriers (NTBs), inefficient customs procedures, and weak trade logistics infrastructure that limit economic growth. The discussions will focus on strategies for removing trade barriers, ensuring that businesses can operate more efficiently across borders. Investment in regional infrastructure projects such as roads, railways, and ports will be a major point of discussion, as improved connectivity is essential for lowering trade costs and enhancing market access. Additionally, policy coordination for seamless trade will be emphasized, as aligning national trade policies with EAC wide regulatory frameworks is crucial for fostering a stronger, more integrated economic bloc.



Investment & Private Sector Growth

The final theme will focus on unlocking investment opportunities in agriculture, fintech, and trade infrastructure. By scaling innovation in agriculture and fintech, this session will highlight promising business ventures that can drive economic growth and job creation across East Africa. Special attention will be given to the role of public-private partnerships (PPPs) in mobilizing investment, ensuring that governments and private sector actors collaborate to fund and implement high-impact projects. This theme will also showcase emerging startups and entrepreneurs, providing a platform for venture capitalists, investors, and development partners to identify and support scalable business models that contribute to sustainable economic development.

Through these four interconnected themes, EACON 2025 will foster actionable discussions and practical solutions to accelerate regional economic growth, trade efficiency, and financial inclusion. The conference will serve as a catalyst for strategic collaborations, investment commitments, and policy reforms, ultimately positioning the East African Community as a leading hub for innovation, sustainable trade, and inclusive prosperity.

Conference Methodology

The conference will feature an engaging mix of formats, including:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 001 | Keynote Addresses by regional and global thought leaders. |
| 002 | Panel Discussions on policy, investment, and technology adoption. |
| 003 | Research & Paper Presentations on agriculture, fintech, and trade. |
| 004 | Investment Matchmaking & Networking sessions with investors. |
| 005 | Exhibitions & Startup Showcases featuring innovative solutions in agriculture, finance, and trade. |

EACON 2025 represents a transformative opportunity to shape the future of economic cooperation, trade, and technology-driven growth in East Africa. By bringing together regional leaders, investors, and innovators, the conference will drive action-oriented discussions and strategic partnerships that strengthen Somalia's role within the EAC and unlock new economic possibilities for the region. With its focus on regional integration, investment facilitation, and technology adoption, EACON 2025 is poised to set a new benchmark for collaborative economic development in East Africa.



Conference Facts and Figures

EACON 2025 is set to be the largest and most strategically significant edition since the inception of the East African Community Conference. Taking place in **Mogadishu, Somalia**, the event reaffirms Somalia's growing role in the regional integration landscape, marking its **second time hosting a high-level EAC gathering post-accession**. The conference will bring together leaders, institutions, and innovators to advance productive sector cooperation and regional economic transformation.

Key Statistics



Dates:
October 7-8, 2025



Panel Discussions:
4 multi-sectoral panels



Duration:
2 Days



Academic Presentations:
10+ peer-reviewed research papers



Participants Expected:
350+ delegates



Exhibitors:
15+ regional innovators and SMEs



Countries Represented:
10+ (All EAC member states + observer states and partners)



Matchmaking Sessions:
2+ facilitated investor developer meetings



High-Level Delegations:
100+ Ministers, Directors, CEOs, Managers and others!



Languages Supported:
English and Somali
(simultaneous interpretation available)



Keynote Addresses:
10+ regional and global thought leaders



Important Dates

June 28,
2025



Abstract
Submission Deadline

Notification of
Abstract Acceptance



July 15,
2025

October
07-08
2025



Conference
Date



Featured Panels

These panels are curated to address transformative themes that will define the trajectory of the East African Community's socioeconomic development.



Panel 1: Agriculture and Food Security in Somalia: Building Resilient and Smart Systems for Sustainable Growth

This panel will explore long-term strategies to strengthen Somalia's agricultural productivity and food systems. Topics include the role of agri-tech and digitalization, improved market access, and institutional reforms aimed at enhancing food security and climate resilience.



Panel 2: Building a Unified Digital Payment Ecosystem for the East African Community.

This session will address the critical need for interoperable payment systems across mobile money and banking networks. It will focus on aligning regulatory frameworks, harmonizing KYC and data protection standards, and reducing transaction costs to boost regional digital trade and financial inclusion.



Panel 3: Somalia's Integration in the EAC Market: Legal, Institutional and Economic Dimensions

Focusing on the pillars of EAC market integration, this panel will explore Somalia's alignment with regional trade laws, standard harmonization, and the institutional frameworks needed to facilitate seamless cross-border commerce.



Panel 4: Public-Private Partnerships for Regional Industrialization and Productive Sector Growth

This panel will explore the role of PPPs in driving industrialization and strengthening value chains across productive sectors. The discussion will highlight enabling policies, case studies from the region, and pathways for mobilizing joint investments in infrastructure, manufacturing, and agro-processing.



Matchmaking Sessions CEO Roundtable at EACON 2025

The **CEO Roundtable matchmaking sessions** are a flagship post-conference feature of **EACON**, dedicated to high-level discussions on investment opportunities and business integration strategies within the East African Community (EAC). This exclusive gathering brings together business leaders, influential policymakers, and key stakeholders to foster meaningful dialogue and strategic partnerships.

CEO Roundtable 1: **Unlocking Capital – Investment Opportunities in Somalia and the EAC**

This high-level session brings together institutional investors, private equity leaders, development finance institutions (DFIs), and CEOs from high-growth sectors. The focus will be on identifying bankable projects across agriculture, fintech, renewable energy, and manufacturing. Participants will explore risk-sharing mechanisms, blended finance models, and investor protection frameworks to accelerate capital deployment in Somalia and the wider EAC market.

CEO Roundtable 2: **Building a Collaborative Academic Ecosystem – Partnerships, Research, and Evidence-Based Policymaking**

This roundtable will bring together university leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders to discuss deepening higher education integration across the EAC. Key topics include forging bilateral agreements, recognizing academic qualifications, and promoting interdisciplinary research. The session will emphasize evidence-based policymaking and strategies for fostering academic collaboration, research partnerships, and capacity development to drive regional competitiveness.

As a cornerstone of EACON 2025's commitment to actionable outcomes, the CEO Roundtable sessions will deepen dialogue and generate real opportunities for deal-making, strategic alignment, and cross-border partnerships that will shape the economic future of the East African Community.



Profile of Participation

EACON 2025 will convene a cross-section of stakeholders critical to advancing regional integration, innovation, and economic growth in East Africa.

Target Participants Include

Government leaders will include Heads of State and relevant Ministers from EAC member states.

High-level officials from national investment promotion agencies and trade authorities will also take part in shaping regional cooperation frameworks.

Investors including venture capitalists, angel investors, and institutional financiers will engage with scalable ventures and policymakers.

Research centers and innovation hubs from universities across the EAC will share applied policy research and prototypes.

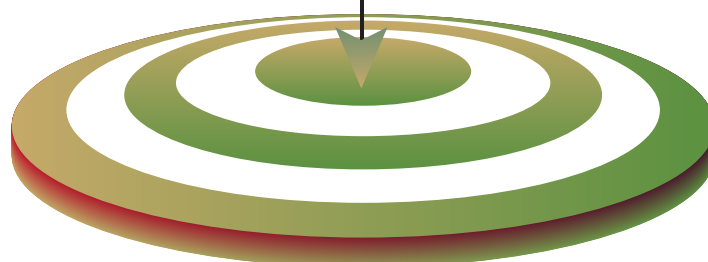
Diaspora professionals with investments and interests in Somalia and the broader EAC region will attend to explore re-engagement opportunities.

Representatives from the EAC Secretariat, African Development Bank, World Bank, UNDP, European Union and development partners will contribute to policy and investment discussions.

CEOs and executives from top regional agribusinesses, fintech startups, logistics firms, and infrastructure companies will be in attendance to explore market opportunities.

Leading scholars and researchers specializing in regional trade, climate smart agriculture, AI, and economic development will present their work.

Regional youth, green entrepreneurs, women-led business coalitions, and civil society organizations will contribute perspectives on inclusive economic transformation.



Media Coverage

EACON 2025 will implement a dynamic and far-reaching media strategy to ensure regional and global visibility before, during, and after the event.

Media Strategy Highlights

- The conference will partner with major regional media outlets, including The EastAfrican, Business Daily, NTV Uganda, and Citizen TV Kenya, to ensure widespread regional coverage.
- National and International media outlets such as Somali National TV, Radio Mogadishu, Al Jazeera, BBC Africa, and Reuters will provide global visibility and attract international interest.
- More than 20 accredited journalists and correspondents will report live from the venue, offering daily updates, interviews, and insights.
- Key sessions will be broadcast in real time via EACON's official digital channels, including YouTube, Facebook Live, LinkedIn, and X (formerly Twitter).
- The event is expected to reach over 500k+ viewers during and immediately following the conference.
- A dedicated on-site media centre will include branded interview zones and press briefing stages for keynote speakers, partners, and innovators.
- Each day will feature official press briefings and media engagement opportunities, supported by curated media kits.
- The official conference hashtag **#EACON2025** will be used to drive digital engagement across all platforms.
- EACON's digital marketing campaign is expected to generate over 1 million impressions across social media platforms.

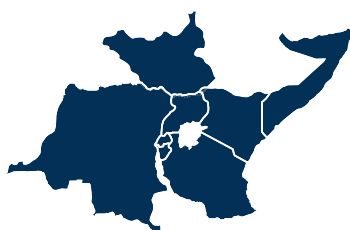


Expected Outcomes

EACON 2025 is designed to deliver bold, tangible outcomes that accelerate regional integration, innovation, and inclusive growth. The conference will conclude with a set of high-impact deliverables that advance the East African Community's strategic agenda:

- 1 A formal EACON 2025 Communiqué summarising outcomes, endorsed commitments, and outlining actionable policy recommendations on trade facilitation, digital finance, and agricultural transformation, co-endorsed by member states and key stakeholders.
- 2 A portfolio of Investment Commitments and Declarations from regional and global investors, showcasing capital mobilisation toward agriculture, fintech, and trade infrastructure projects.
- 3 The launch of Cross-Border Trade and Digital Finance Partnerships, including interoperability pilots, regulatory dialogue platforms, and multi-country collaboration frameworks.
- 4 A set of Research-to-Policy Briefs generated from academic sessions, feeding into EAC-wide policy harmonisation efforts and informing evidence-based regional decision-making.
- 5 The reinforcement of a Somalia-EAC Integration Taskforce, supported by technical partners, to coordinate regulatory alignment, knowledge transfer, and capacity development.





2025
EACON



info@eaccon.com
eaccon.com



@EACON