

Call for papers | Gulf Research Meeting 2026 workshop | GCC-Sub-Saharan Africa Economic Relations: Energy, Mining, Infrastructure, and Food Security

We would like to inform you about the call for papers for the workshop “GCC-Sub-Saharan Africa Economic Relations: Energy, Mining, Infrastructure, and Food Security,” which is being organized as part of the upcoming Gulf Research Meeting (GRM) and will take place in Cambridge from July 21 to 23, 2026.

Abstracts may be submitted by January 5, 2026.

This workshop, organized by the directors Damyana Bakardzhieva (Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy), Hubert Kinkoh (Chatham House, CARPO) and Sebastian Sons (CARPO) examines the multidimensional relations between the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Sub-Saharan African states with a focus on key sectors such as energy, mining, infrastructure, and food security. By analyzing various concepts and strategies underpinning Gulf engagement in Africa, the workshop seeks to unpack the multiple dimensions of energy diversification, infrastructure development including ports, railways, and aviation, agricultural initiatives, and mining activities. It argues that these engagements are driven by both geoeconomic and geopolitical imperatives. Furthermore, the workshop contributes to academic and policy-oriented debates on agency in Gulf-African relations by offering deeper insights into concrete partnership models, asymmetric power dynamics, instruments of power projection, and mechanisms of mutual leverage. Central to this inquiry is the notion of dual agency defined as the projection of influence by Gulf actors, alongside the strategic recalibration of external partnerships by African states in pursuit of sovereignty and enhanced economic opportunity. Bringing together early-career and senior researchers from the Gulf region, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the international scholarly community, this workshop aims to provide a nuanced and differentiated perspective on this complex and contested topic. Through the presentation of concrete case studies at bilateral, minilateral, multilateral, and non-state levels it seeks to critically engage with the concept of geoeconomic statecraft, or economic diplomacy. In doing so, it draws upon new qualitative and quantitative data concerning investments, development projects, key actors and networks, as well as local perceptions and assessments of these engagements.

You find more information on the workshop [here](#).

Please also check the modalities for paper submission [here](#).

We are looking forward to receiving your abstract. Please also share the call for papers with other interested colleagues.