UN Inter-agency Task Team on Science, **Technology and Innovation for the SDGs**

UN STI Forum 2021

High-Level Side Event on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)

for SDGs Roadmaps

Call for Action: Scaling up the Global Pilot Programme on STI for the SDGs roadmaps

Date: Monday 3 May 2021
Time: 08:00-09:30 am EDT // 02:00-03:30 pm CEST
Venue: Virtual Meeting Teams
Co-organizers: DESA, EC/JRC, UNESCO, FAO and UNIDO

Event summary

Background

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda[1] and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognise Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) as means to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the context of implementing the Technology Facilitation Mechanism under the above named Agendas, the Global Pilot Programme on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for SDGs Roadmaps was launched in 2019 with an initial group of five pilot countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya and Serbia), based on a newly developed "Guidebook for the Preparation of STI for SDGs Roadmaps". In February 2021, Ukraine also joined the programme bringing the number of pilot countries to six. The joint work on the Guidebook and Global Pilot Programme has brought together different UN Agencies such as UN-DESA, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNCTAD and the World Bank, together with other international partners such as the Government of Japan, the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission and the OECD. Valuable inputs were also provided by the Group of Twenty (G20) and the 10-Member Group, which is another component of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism. The Guidebook is accompanied by two background papers: on available STI roadmapping methodologies and international partnerships.

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[1] https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/AAAA_Outcome.pdf

During the side event held at the 75th General Assembly in November 2020, a proposal was launched as of establishing the "Partnership in Action" on STI for SDGs Roadmaps. The aim of the Partnership in Action is to mobilise the main actors in the field in further engaging and supporting the work on STI for SDGs roadmaps by providing political support, endorsing the Guidebook and providing inputs for its refinement, as well as by mobilizing additional stakeholders and resources, accelerating the translation of the political ambition and the preliminary findings of Roadmaps into policies and practical STI solutions.

Objective

This event aimed at raising awareness on the results achieved as part of the Global Pilot Programme and by the pilot countries. The discussion focused on the next steps for the scaling up of the Global Pilot Programme on STI for the SDGs roadmaps to reach out to more countries and stakeholders. The event was the occasion to call for organizations, countries, the private sector and donors to actively engage in the expansion of the Global Pilot programme as well as in the promotion of the "Partnership in Action" initiative.

The Partnership in Action will serve as a platform to strengthen the development and implementation of STI for SDGs roadmaps to address the challenge of the economic and social recovery post COVID-19 and the application of greener development models.

This event built on the work of the UN Inter-Agency Task Team sub-working group on STI for SDGs Roadmaps. The Group is co-led by UN-DESA, the World Bank, UNESCO, EC/JRC, and UNCTAD. Its members also include UNIDO, UN-ESCAP, ESCWA, UNDP, and FAO, among others. Substantial support has been provided by international stakeholders, including the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Government of Japan.

Summary

The event opened with the welcome remarks from both the Co-Chairs of the 2021 STI Forum, **H.E. Mr. Andrejs Pildegovičs**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Latvia to the United Nations, **and H. E. Mr. Mohammad Koba**, Ambassador and Charge d'Affaires of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, as well as **Ms. Maria-Francesca Spatolisano**, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, DESA and Officer-in-Charge, UN Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Technology, **Mr. Stephen Quest**, Director General, Joint Research Centre, European Commission, and **Ms. Ismahane Elouafi**, Chief Scientist, FAO.

Mr. Pildegovičs stressed that **t**he Covid-19 pandemic has shown the great power of science technology and innovation. They are the key tools for all the coming global challenges. STI must be an integral part of building back better and greener. STI for SDGs roadmaps serve to align these aspirations to resources, identifying opportunities. Since 2019, Latvia has implemented Smart Specialisation Strategy, identifying priorities in areas with high content of technology. Multi-stakeholders platforms are need to continue working on STI for SDG and the Partnership in action is a welcomed initiative to purse this objective.

 Mr Koba underlined that STI has allowed to overcome some of the challenges presented by the pandemic, but inequalities in STI became also more evident during the pandemic. He offered three recommendations: 1. Multi-stakeholder approach is key to support the application of STI for SDGs. 2. Continue mobilizing support for developing countries in STI, financing investments in ICT infrastructures. 3. Multi-stakeholder cooperation to develop capacity building in STI. He stressed that the Partnership in Action could lead to transform these points into concrete actions and scale up STI for SDGs roadmaps.

Ms. Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, affirmed that DESA is committed to support countries through the TFM and highlighted the vital role of STI in finding solutions to global challenges. She reminded that no one size fits all and STI for SDGs roadmaps can help to provide specific solutions. She mentioned the achievements of the IATT working grouo such as the progress report and policy briefs. She confirmed the need to engage in the Partnership in Action to scale up the initiatives undertalken so far. She highlighted the need to close the gap in digital capacities. In this context she reminded the roadmap for digital cooperation launched by the UN Secretary General and led by the Office of envoy on technology at UN. She confirmed the support to the Partnership in action.

Mr. Stephen Quest highlighted that, the EU stays committed to multilateralism and praised that intensified and consolidated cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations. He mentioned that the EU Smart Specialisation methodology was recognized as a one of global methodologies for the identification of place-based STI priorities aligned with the SDGs. He emphasize that the Smart Specialisation for Sustainability has greatly benefited from the work undertaken with the UN Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for SDGs and in particular the activities within the Global Pilot Programme for the development of STI for SDGs Roadmaps. He reiterated that all actors need to be on board of the Partnership in Action on STI for SDG Roadmaps, which represents a unique opportunity for the international community, governments and the private sector to make sure that more and more countries and regions will be able to contribute to and benefit from the development of STI for SDGs Roadmaps. He reaffirmed the European Commission's commitment to continue working towards this objective by providing assistance in the development and implementation of STI for SDGs roadmaps through Smart Specialisation Strategies for Sustainability.

Ms. Ismahane Elouafi, expressed appreciation for the Global Pilot Programme in the six pilot countries. She affirmed that the Partnership in action will serve as a key platform to further develop the implementation of STI for SDGs roadmaps. FAO is committed to this initiative and is exploring any way to achieve zero hunger also through STI. UN Secretary General's food summit that aims at delivering on all SDGs will focus also on how to accelerate progress towards SDG1 and SDG2 through STI. She mentioned that FAO is also working to scale up efforts to strengthening the capacity of agricultural innovation systems. FAO is strongly committed to the work of IATT and the Global Pilot Programme.

The opening session was followed by the keynote speech delivered by **Dr. Michiharu Nakamura,** UN Secretary's General 10-Member Group to Support the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, who provided some updates on key achievements, lessons learnt and roadmap implementation of the working group on

STI for SDGs roadmaps. He described the main milestones of the work on STI for SDGs roadmaps, including the drafting of the Guidebook, the launch of the Global Pilot Programme and the Progress report. He provided an overview of the key elements included in the Guidebook, as well as the main achievements of and lessons learned from the Global Pilot Programme:

- All six pilot countries have chosen a narrow set of SDGs (SDGs 1, 4, and 2 are the most commonly chosen goals).

- Involving the highest level of government in the process to develop a vision, goals and targets.

- Monitoring and evaluation is a critical element as it will enable countries to learn from the implementation experience and to adjust as well as to take into account the impact of changes in the context, i.e., the current COVID-19 crisis.

- The most common challenge has been getting stakeholder involvement and active participation.

- A related challenge has been getting a focus on SDGs into the development of national plans and the STI plans.

- Major challenge has been the availability of updated data and relevant expertise.

- The lack of specific budget to develop and more importantly to implement the STI for SDG roadmap.

Dr Nakamura suggested some recommendations for the way forward:

1. Enhance national capacity for STI for SDGs

2. Design and implement comprehensive roadmaps

3. Expand the Global Pilot Programme to other countries

4. Setting up a community of countries developing and implementing roadmaps through the Partnership in Action initiative

The event continued with representatives from Pilot countries (Ghana, Kenya, Serbia, Ukraine) who share the state of play in the development of the STI for SDGs roadmaps, main challenges and way forward.

Ms. Yulia Bezvershenko, Director General of the Directorate on Science and Innovation, Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, specified that Ukraine is at the very beginning of the programme. Ukraine has already identified SDGs priorities and has developed implementation documents on SDGs. Ukraine is happy to join the programme and has had already a very successful experience on Smart Specialisation. Ms Bezvershenko stressed the need to have effective coordination of Stakeholders since the beginning which will help throughout the process, including at the implementation stage. Currently Ukraine is defining a "Roadmap to the Roadmap" which is about the Multi-stakeholders' level governance led by the Vice-Prime Minister. There will be working groups under different ministries. Academia and civil societies will be also involved in the process.

Dr. Viktor Nedović, Director of Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Entrepreneurship Project – SAIGE, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of Serbia, explained that the development of the STI for SDGs roadmap in Serbia is based on Smart Specialisation methodology in collaboration with JRC and UNIDO. The strategy of Smart Specialisation for Serbia was adopted in February last year. The major priority areas are ICT, food for future, creative industries, key enabling technologies, energy efficiency and eco-smart solutions. Some of these

priorities are directly connected to SDGs. Serbia has nowdDeveloped the action plan / STI for SDGs roadmaps, which was adopted in April this year. Serbia is setting up a set of actions for M&E of the roadmap. Mr Nedovic Affirmed that Serbia welcomes the Partnership in Action and is looking forward to partnering with the IATT on this.

Dr. Wilhemina Quaye, Director, CSIR- Science and Technology Policy Research Institute of Ghana, described that Ghana has completed the Roadmap and is now in the implementation phase. Ghana is focusing on SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, and 9 and is trying to identify the STI gap to achieve the targets set for the country. The Ministry of Environment, Science and Innovation is leading the process. Also other actors such as private sector, youth and civil society, have been involved to identify ways for STI and jobs. For each of the SDGs, targets and specific activities have been identified and are to be reached through STI. The focus has been to reinforce the existing STI policy, by reinforcing financing mechanisms, partnerships and collaborations, creating regional innovation hubs, and constant learning among countries. Ghana has been looking at strategic technology development. STI for SDGs roadmap is aligned to other national policies for social and economic development.

Prof. Tom Peter Migun Ogada, Executive Director of the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS), Kenya described that the Kenyan pilot project is led by the Department of Planning, within the Ministry in charge of Treasure which also hosts the SDGs secretariat. It is also led by Ministry of science, technology and innovation. The roadmap in Kenya takes into consideration the "Big 4", which means prioritizing on agriculture, manufacturing, housing and health until 2022. The process of STI for SDGs roadmap started focusing on agriculture and SDG2 (2.3 is key to ensure food security in the country). Following the Guidebook, Kenya has identified gaps in the agricultural sector (value-added, processing, etc.). Prof Ogada also described some key lessons learnt: the Guidebook is very important tool for bringing together stakeholders in the STI sector. Need to mobilize resources both for the development of the roadmap and the implementation. Therefore Kenya welcomes the Partnership in Action initiative.

During the second panel friends and partners of the STI for SDGs roadmaps shared perspectives on the way forward and concrete steps for the establishment of the Partnership in Action

H.E. Mr Silvio Gonzato, Ambassador, Deputy Head of Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, stressed that by joining forces it is possible to contribute to STI for SDGs. The high-level representation of the event is a testimony of the importance of this topic. The European Commission is committed to Agenda 2030 and the European Union is a major actor in STI to address global challenges. **Mr Gonzato** affirmed that the encouraging results of the Global Pilot Programme, are the basis to scale up the programme. He welcomed the initiative of the Partnership in Action, which is the key tool to allow more and more countries to contribute to and benefit from new approaches and lessons learnt from peer exchanges. He invited all stakeholders to join the experience of STI for SDGs Roadmaps in order to make it grow and consolidate. He suggested to use the occasion of the next High Level Political Forum to organize a high-level side event where these efforts can be further disseminate and can attract more countries.

H.E. Mr. Tetsuya Kimura, Ambassador for Economic, Social and United Nations Management Affairs, Japan, highlighted that in today's globalized world, no country can stand alone to address current challenges. Japan made recommendations for the operationalization of the Partnership in Action:

1. Learn about the cost associated with the expanded pilot programme under the Partnership in Action;
2. More detailed considerations of the buy-in to the Partnership in Action initiative from the various STI stakeholders, such as member states, the private sector, academia, scientific research centres and civil society. This would help creating incentive mechanisms.
3. Prioritize on certain SDGs areas.

Japan is committed to continue working together with IATT on STI for SDGs.

H.E. Mrs. Carolyn Oppong-Ntiri, Deputy Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations, welcomed the achievements described during the event. She expressed the need to scale up the Global pilot programme with key activities that connect to priorities of respective countries such as food, health, sustainable and environment management. She suggested that the next phase should have about 24 countries and another 24 in the future. She emphasized that mobilization is key. Countries and governments need to show commitment in the programme. The benefits of the programme should be maximized through greater awareness initiatives. She pointed out that capacity building is also very important, as well as reliable M&E systems to ensure that implementation stays on track.

Mr. Kareem Hassan, Executive Director of ESCWA Technology Centre, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, agreed that STI for SDGs roadmaps is critical for development. ESCWA is working at the promotion of the interface for STI policy planning in support of the SDGs and the adoption the UN STI for SDGs roadmaps guideline in the Arab region. ESCWA will empower local communities through STI and entrepreneurship for industrial and economic development in cooperation with regional and national actors.

Mr. Victor Konde, Scientific Affairs Officer and Officer-in-Charge, Green Economy, Innovation and Technology Section of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), provided the perspective from Africa. He stressed that it is important not only to scale up the number of countries, but also support their implementation phase. There is only 9 years missing until 2030 and we need to understand what else can be done to speed up on the attainment of SDGs. UNECA is developing a policy implementation guide.

Ms. Marta Pérez Cusó, Economic Affairs Officer, Technology and Innovation Section, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), agreed that STI is crucial for the SDGs and to overcome today's challenges, but yet we cannot use the same policies we used before. She expressed the need to move from economic-focused policies to STI policies that balance environmental challenges. She emphasized that everyone needs to benefit from essential technology and that it is necessary to move from mere policy advice to policy co-creation. She acknowledged that the Guidebook has been very useful to develop STI for SDGs roadmaps in the region, namely in Cambodia and Mongolia and that Partnerships are essential to learn and generate transformative change. She expressed support to the Partnership in Action and to the broader collaboration mechanism of the IATT.

The event concluded with remarks by **Ms. Peggy Oti-Boateng**, UNESCO, Director of Science Policy and Capacity-Building, and **Mr. Hiroshi Kuniyoshi**, UNIDO, Managing Director, Deputy to Director-General and Director a.i. Dept of Policy, Research and Statistics.

Ms Oti-Boateng commended the achievements of the Pilot countries and praised the IATT members' work which shows that it is possible to deliver as one UN. She stressed that STI is imperative to accelerate SDGs. Roadmaps can be a game changer in bringing all actors together especially in times of Covid-19. She highlighted the need to work on several areas such as agriculture, food, health, as well as gender equity and have additional support to ensure that countries can implement roadmaps. She supported the Partnership in Action hoping that more partners and stakeholders can join this effort.

Mr. Kuniyoshi, commended IATT for having achieved important results such as the Guidebook which helps making progress in the development on STI for SDGs roadmaps for the Pilot countries. He emphasized that the Partnership in action should continue leveraging this one-UN approach. He affirmed that UNIDO stays committed to continue working together with JRC to support Serbia for the development of the Roadmap. Mr Kuniyoshi stressed that strategic priority setting, commitment of resources and partnerships are key for the continuation of this initiative.

Key outcomes and messages

- The role of STI for SDGs Roadmaps in the achievement of Agenda 2030 and sustainable post-COVID recovery is fully recognized by different stakeholders
- The Guidebook for the development of STI for SDGs roadmaps is a relevant tool which has been found to be useful both by policy makers and supporting organizations
- Representatives from pilot countries highlighted concrete results, the major milestones of the work on STI Roadmaps and the planned next steps.
- Need to scale up the Programme through the establishment of the Partnership in Action
- Need to mobilize resources both for the development of the roadmap and the implementation
- Further raise awareness on the achievements on STI for SDGs roadmaps in other important Forum, such as the High Level Political Forum.
- Multi-stakeholders engagement is key for the continuation of the Programme and the implementation of Roadmaps
- Presentation of the Guidebook for the Preparation of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for SDGs Roadmaps in the different languages (Chinese, English, French, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Arabic and Japanese) and new graphic design.
- Launch of the Progress Report – the Global Pilot Programme on STI for the SDGs Roadmaps
- Launch of the UN-IATT series on STI Policy briefs as part of the work on STI roadmaps for SDGs

Participation

The virtual event was attended by **115 participants**, including speakers and audience. Participants were representatives of countries and organizations related to STI for SDGs.

AGENDA	
25 minutes	Moderator**: Wei Liu,** Technology Facilitation Mechanism Coordinator, Sustainable Development Officer, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), United Nations Headquarters **Welcome and opening remarks** **H.E. Mr. Andrejs Pildegovičs**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Latvia to the United Nations, Co-Chair of the 2021 STI Forum **H. E. Mr. Mohammad Koba**, Ambassador, Charge d'Affaires of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, Co-Chair of the 2021 STI Forum **Ms. Maria-Francesca Spatolisano**, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, DESA and Officer-in-Charge, UN Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Technology **Mr. Stephen Quest**, Director General, Joint Research Centre, European Commission **Ms. Ismahane Elouafi**, Chief Scientist, FAO
25 minutes	**Keynote: Global Pilot Programme: Key achievements, lessons learnt and roadmap implementation** **Dr. Michiharu Nakamura,** UN Secretary's General 10-Member Group to Support the Technology Facilitation Mechanism – Launch of the Progress Report and Policy Briefs series (10 minutes) Moderator: **Ana Persic**, Chief a.i. of Section for Science Policy and Partnerships, UNESCO **2 minute interventions from Global Pilot Countries:** • **H.E Dr. Fozia Amin**, State Minister for Innovation and Technology development and administration of the Ministry of Innovation and Technology of Ethiopia (*state of play and next steps)* • **Ms. Yulia Bezvershenko**, Director General of the Directorate on Science and Innovation, Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine *(roadmap to the roadmap)* • **Dr. Viktor Nedović,** Director of Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Entrepreneurship Project – SAIGE, Ministry of Education, Science and

	Technological Development of Serbia *(announcement of Roadmap adoption and focus on implementation actions)*
	• **Dr. Wilhemina Quaye**, Director, CSIR- Science and Technology Policy Research Institute, Ghana *(announcement of Roadmap adoption and focus on implementation actions)*
	• **Prof. Tom Peter Migun Ogada,** Executive Director of the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS), Kenya (*state of play and next steps*) *Discussants:*
	IATT and representative(s) from non-pilot countries who are interested in contributing (5 minutes)
30 minutes	**Partnership in Action - a possible way forward : representatives of the group of friends** *This session would bring together potential Champion countries and other stakeholders to identify key activities to scale up the global Pilot Programme in the framework of the Partnership in Action, and toward launching of a High-level Informal International Advocacy Group.* Moderator: **Monika Matusiak**, Head of Sector, Smart Specialisation – Global Outreach, Joint Research Centre, European Commission **3 minute interventions from the friends and partners:** • **H.E. Mr Silvio Gonzato,** Ambassador*,* Deputy Head of Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations • **H.E. Mr. Tetsuya Kimura**, Ambassador for Economic, Social and United Nations Management Affairs, Japan • **H.E. Mrs. Carolyn Oppong-Ntiri**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations • **Mr. Kareem Hassan**, Executive Director of ESCWA Technology Centre, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia • **Mr. Victor Konde,** Scientific Affairs Officer and Officer-in-Charge, Green Economy, Innovation and Technology Section of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) • **Ms. Marta Pérez Cusó**, Economic Affairs Officer, Technology and Innovation Section, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) Q&A session with the public
10 mins	**Closing remarks** **Ms. Peggy Oti-Boateng**, UNESCO, Director of Science Policy and Capacity-Building

	Mr. Hiroshi Kuniyoshi, UNIDO, Managing Director, Deputy to Director-General and Director a.i. Dept of Policy, Research and Statistics