

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS FORUM – STI FORUM

STAKEHOLDERS ONLINE BRIEFING

6 April 2021

Summary

Background

The “[Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs](#)” (STI Forum) was created by UN Member States as part of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), reflecting their belief that STI solutions will be central to any meaningful progress toward making the SDGs a reality. The first annual two-day Forum was held in 2016, and the event has been growing in size and scope since then.

The STI Forum is a unique UN platform for debate, discussion and creation around STI for the SDGs. It attracts global participation from Ministers and other policy makers at all levels, private sector leaders, civil society representatives and the science and technological community. The formal programme features a series of thematic panel discussions, and it is enriched by informal side events and exhibitions organized by governments and other partners to share their expertise and views. The Forum results in a summary presenting the key takeaways and recommendations from the formal discussions as well as the side events.

The STI Forum, as a multi-stakeholder space, will include the participation of stakeholders from a broad range of sectors, including non-governmental organizations, civil society, academic institutions, the scientific community, local and regional governments, the private sector and philanthropic organizations among others.

In this regard, UN DESA, in collaboration with the Co-Chairs of the 6th STI Forum, organized an online briefing to share information with stakeholders about the STI Forum, including opportunities for stakeholder participation and contribution.

Summary of the Discussions

H.E. Mr. Andrejs Pildgovičs – Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Latvia, Co-Chair of the 2021 STI Forum : The 6th edition of the STI Forum will be held virtually on May 4 and 5. The forum serves as a global and multi-stakeholder mechanism for both developed and developing countries that facilitate pragmatic in-depth discussion on a wide range of science, technology and innovation issues intended to accelerate progress towards the SDGs. Participants are encouraged to engage in broader discussions on STI’s role in development solutions to ensure synergistic activity, maintain engagement and expand involvement among stakeholders.

H.E. Mr. Mohammad Koba – Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Indonesia: Support for economic and social recovery is also key to our discussion. To promote inclusion and harness global opportunities in the advancement of gender equality, the STI Forum should emphasize the importance of women and youth participation in STI. Further, the lessons learned from the pandemic highlight a need

to better equip scientific and technological access and discovery to resolve global challenges. This is an opportunity to consider the next steps of the TFM.

Mr. Shantanu Mukherjee – Chief, Integrated Policy Analysis Branch, Division for Sustainable Development Goals: The 6th STI Forum will touch on lessons learned from the pandemic, effective paths towards the SDGs, harnessing global opportunities for transformations in 2021, emerging science and technology trends, digital cooperation, promoting inclusion to accelerate innovation, supporting national capacities through the TFM and delivering in Decade of Action for achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Side events will be hosted from May 3 to May 5 to complement the official sessions. Organizers interested in hosting side events should complete the form by clicking on the following link before April 9: <https://sdgs.un.org/tfm/STIForum2021>.

Dr. Paulo Gadelha, Coordinator, FIOCRUZ Strategy for the 2030 Agenda. 10-Member Group to support the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM): Health may be a significant anchor for shaping a sustainable and inclusive economic recovery. The pandemic has emphasized positive STI reception through the collaborative spirit of innovation and bringing to market safe and effective vaccines in one year. Potential brought by the convergence of significant scientific funding, common platforms for research and development, genomic banks, emerging technologies such as gene editing, AI and big data processing has offset some of the collateral from the war on vaccines.

Ms. Marta Galambos – Major Group Children & Youth: Science, technology and innovation will be a critical component in recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021 STI Forum should be gender, age, and regionally balanced. The format of the STI forum should reflect relevant stakeholder involvement and perspectives at all levels of the session. The economic fallout of the pandemic has disproportionately affected young people in many countries, and includes links with many other SDGs, such as working on employment and meaningful work, as well as education for young people. Priority themes should include global governance on digital technologies with the recently established roadmap on digital cooperation. There needs to be a more critical and urgent dialogue, as well as policies to ensure that digital tools serve as public goods that benefit people everywhere, not just tools that further justify concentration of power of data, and finance in the hands of a few private entities.

Mr. Justin Perrettson, Head of Sustainability Partnerships, Scouting & Ventures, Novozymes. Business and Industry Major Group: Tackling both economic and environmental crises is about catalyzing action, resources, and getting people to collaborate. The ongoing ECOSOC and HLPF review provide an opportunity to strengthen the inclusiveness and effectiveness of the Science Technology and Innovation Forum to focus on action and partnerships with businesses. The Forum should bring together different innovators and collaborators from the private sector, research and academia, and civil society to determine the best way forward. The STI Forum should be a laboratory for open processes of innovation and multilateral partnership between businesses, non-governmental entities, and citizens.

Dr. K.N. Gunalan, Chair, WFEO UN Relations Committee, Scientific and Technological Community Major Group: The pandemic has not only highlighted inequalities but also widened the gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged, to the notable detriment of women's employment. Engineering should play a more proactive role in the fight against COVID-19 and in the pursuit of truly transformative recovery. The Forum should emphasize the role engineering has in building capacities and in the implementation of advanced technologies. In this discussion, the Forum should address trust and

confidence in STI (and Engineering), promote responsible use of data to reinforce delivery of the SDGs, and maximize the potential of emerging technology. By highlighting gaps between SDGs and the current capacity of science and engineering, we can convey the pathways needing innovation among youth.

Interactive Discussions: Participants contributed to the discussion by asking questions through the chat feature, highlighting issues related to inclusion, transparency and adaptability in the realm of science and technology. Participants weighed in on the involvement of indigenous knowledge and the inclusion of women, young girls, and families in poverty to ensure that the future of STI reduces inequality. Additional questions were raised regarding role of risk management and building trust amid uncertainty throughout STI development. Questions pertaining to adaptability called on the various ways in which policies, infrastructures and institutions could collaborate to take full advantage of emerging technologies and techniques, while remaining innovative and competitive.

For more information on the event, check the STI Forum 2021 website [here](#) and watch the discussions from the Stakeholders Online Briefing on YouTube [here](#).