Workshop on building capacity and scaling up STI actions and adoption of countries' STI4SDGs Roadmaps in Africa

Oct. 12-13, 2023

Roundtable 1: Strengthening innovation ecosystems through mapping STI potentials and multi-stakeholder engagement: Case Studies and Champions

Co-organizers: DESA, EC/JRC, UNESCO

Thursday, Oct. 12th, 10:00am-11:00am, CR6 UN ECA Conference Room, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Focus of the session

The STI4SDGs Roadmap has been proposed as a useful approach to inform, strengthen, and elevate STI4SDGs policy in areas of common interests among UN Member States, complement UN system initiatives on STI in a demand-driven manner, and effectively facilitate relevant national and international efforts, and pave way for systematic, measurable, and people-centered implementation.

The idea behind creating realistic and action oriented STI for SDGs Roadmaps is to speed up the process of developing new, or adapting existing, solutions in time to meet the SDG goals and targets by 2030 and to ensure that the three dimensions of sustainability are properly addressed.

STI for SDGs Roadmaps are not created in a vacuum. Most countries already have or are developing their research, development and innovation infrastructures and capabilities. A systematic assessment and exchange of national and international experiences have so far been limited, though, in developing and implementing policies, action plans and strategies on STIs specifically for SDGs using systemic and consistent frameworks. The rationale for facilitating a multi-stakeholder collaborative approach is clear. At present, the efforts potentially supporting STI roadmaps are fragmented at international, regional, national and sub-national levels, and do not necessarily have the SDGs or STI as a focus. There is a lack of a coherent framework that guides policymakers and development practitioners to better achieve the SDGs through STI. The session will take stock of the UN progress made by champions and national leads with regard to the science, technology and innovation roadmapping. It will showcase how STI4SDG roadmaps could be designed and deployed as tools to: 1) mobilize resources for STI development in Africa and beyond, 2) raise awareness, 3) share experiences and good practices, 4) create space for continental ideas for developing STI that addresses African challenges and generates opportunities, and 5) mobilize resources, promote networking and collaboration for research and development (R&D) activities in Africa.

Objectives

This session seeks to promote good practices, knowledge sharing, peer learning, international cooperation and partnerships on design and implementation of STI4SDG roadmaps. It will explore

ways through which the UN and other international partners can support national capacities, including through United Nations Inter-Agency Task Team's (IATT) joint work in supporting the development and roll-out of STI policy frameworks, STI action plans and the STI roadmaps; and capacity-building for STI ministries. During this session the panelists will present national and regional initiatives related to design and review of STI4SDGs roadmaps and related policy actions. The event will present the newly established Coalition on STI for Africa's Development, as a voice of Africa on STI in the UN process. It will develop and put on the table concrete (if preliminary) ideas on key elements for a multi-year programme with funding support for scaling up and strengthening international partnerships on STI capacity building for the SDGs. Hence, as a generative space, this roundtable is challenged to come prepared to talk about potential pilots or "test beds."

Questions

•   What are the roles of STI for SDGs Roadmaps in increasing the development of national STI systems, mapping STI capacities and stakeholders, and facilitating evidence-informed policy making and better cooperation in crises?
•   How can STI4SDGs Roadmaps be designed and deployed as potential pathways to sustainable recovery and future resilience?
•   What needs to go into a roadmap to make implementation effective and success beyond meticulously designed policy documents? What practical experiences, success stories, and useful examples of failure can you share? How precisely could these "ingredients" help us bake roadmaps guaranteed to success? Why did the proceed or fail? If failed, what lessons and remedies?
•   How can the UN contribute to developing a more responsive STI4SDG ecosystem in your country through a roadmap approach and related capacity building? What do you think are the priority areas and key levers the UN should target? What resources and capacities (human, natural, financial, technological) already exist in your country that the UN can help build on/scale up/accelerate?

Moderation and Discussion Guidance

The moderator, speakers and discussants will be seated in the inner row of the table with microphone on each seat.

In short opening remarks, the moderator will begin the panel by introducing the subject with a few messages and highlighting the questions for discussion as contained in the session concept notes. The introduction should be limited to 3 minutes.

The moderator will introduce the speakers/keynotes/high-level respondents and guide a conversation among them. In a first round, speakers/keynotes/high-level respondents will make their remarks (maximum of 5 minutes each) which should be aimed at answering questions for discussion.

Speakers' remarks should be informal, focused and frank. They should avoid long descriptions of issues or policies, and not be excessively technical. Rather, they should identify the key challenges, lessons learnt and their policy implications. Most importantly, they are encouraged to present their top three recommendations for action by the United Nations system, governments, businesses,

scientists, civil society, and others. They can also present one or two issues warranting further reflection.

If time permits, the moderator may ask follow-up questions and focus them on the special areas of expertise and experience of the speakers/high-level respondents. speakers/high-level respondents can also react to each other. The moderator will ensure equal time allocation and participation by all.

The moderator will then open the floor to discussants for comments and questions from the floor (maximum of two minutes each for the first intervention and one minute for each additional following intervention).

Interventions can take the form of comments, or questions to the panel or to identified speakers. The moderator can direct such questions accordingly.

The moderator may decide to allow a brief discussion after two or three interventions by discussants. He/she may ask speakers/high-level respondents to make remarks related to one another and to react to specific questions from the discussants.

The moderator will then open the floor to audience for comments and questions from the floor. Audience will need to first introduce herself or himself before making two minutes or less intervention. Time permits, questions posted in Zoom chat from the online participants can be read by the moderator and commented by the speakers/high-level respondents.

Some five minutes before concluding the session, the moderator will pass the floor back to the panellists for concluding remarks of one minute each. S/he should highlight a few key messages from the discussions at the end.