

Side Event to the Multi-stakeholder Hearing for FfD4

Concept Note

Side Event:

Strengthening Science, Technology and Innovation for Achieving the SDGs: Drawing Lessons from the UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism and Innovative Financing Models

Date and Time: Tuesday, October 29th, 2024, 1:15 PM – 2:30 PM

Venue: S-26MM2 Hybrid, UNHQ, New York

Co-organizers: IATT (Interagency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs), co-convened by DESA and UNCTAD, in cooperation with colleagues in UNESCO, UNEP, ITU, FAO, WIPO, UN DCO, and the UN Joint SDG Fund

Context

The 2023 SDG Summit emphasized the importance of bridging science, technology, and innovation (STI) divides and leveraging STI as drivers of sustainable development. The Pact for the Future reaffirmed the potential for STI and digital cooperation to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) if these tools are affordable and accessible to all.

In response to these calls, and in preparation for the discussions at the Fourth International Financing for Development Conference (FfD4), this side event aims to explore lessons learned from efforts since 2015 to leverage STI for SDG implementation, and more specifically on the operationalization of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM). The TFM was established in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (paragraph 123) at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD3) to support the SDGs and was then launched in paragraph 70 of the 2030 Agenda. This side-event will review lessons learned from the TFM and explore how science-policy interface can be strengthened at all levels to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs. The discussions are expected to provide insights on how the crucial links between STI and SDG implementation can be strengthened, including through knowledge sharing, capacity building, data investments, strengthened STI funding and overcoming impediments to accessing new and emerging technologies. These discussions can be considered in the run-up to the FfD4 and to support an ambitious Conference outcome.

Objectives

The side event aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. *Stocktaking of TFM Activities and Lessons Learned:* Review progress, challenges, successes and lessons learnt from the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, identifying gaps and areas for improvement including in relation to emerging challenges/opportunities and the current context of multiple crises and pressures on the SDGs.
2. *The way forward for strengthening the TFM and STI policy actions:* Consider how national and global actors can align their efforts to ensure that science, technology, and innovation make

a decisive difference for sustainable development, and explore ideas for making the TFM more effective, adequately resourced, and valuable to countries efforts at SDG implementation.

3. *STI policy strengthening and capacity building*: Discuss innovative examples of STI strategies and policy instruments at all levels in supporting the achievement of the SDGs, focusing on good practices including in terms of STI4SDGs roadmaps.
4. *Exploration of STI Funding Models*: Assess existing STI funding models and explore innovative funding mechanisms to close STI financing gaps for SDG implementation, including models that are aligned with national SDG strategies and support for the effective operations of the TFM.
5. *Discussing ideas for consideration in the run-up to the FFD4 Conference*: Identify high-impact actions and ideas, including funding models, that might be considered in the run-up to the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4) that could strengthen the impact of STI as a key means of implementation for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Expected Outcomes:

1. *Improved understanding of the TFM's impact*: Stocktaking of the functioning of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, highlighting areas where it can be strengthened to better support global and national STI efforts for SDG implementation.
2. *Recommendations for strengthening STI policies in line with global goals*: Key recommendations on how STI strategies and policies can be better integrated into global efforts to achieve the SDGs, with a focus on actionable policy measures.
3. *Innovative Funding Models*: Proposals for new or adapted STI funding models that can help bridge the SDG funding gap, particularly in developing countries.
4. *Inputs for the FFD4 Conference*: A set of ideas and potential recommendations for consideration in the run-up to the FFD4 Conference, including on how to align STI financing with broader development finance discussions.