

## **UN IATT Webinar Series on the Joint SDG Fund**

**Tuesday 11 February 2025, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

**At the margin of the Third PrepCom Session of the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4)**

### **Background and Purpose**

As the United Nations' flagship global development fund, the Joint SDG Fund's mandate is two-fold: to supercharge the United Nations development system (UNDS) for more effective collaboration, and to drive systemic transitions that accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the country level, with a focus on integrated policy and SDG financing. By offering a unified platform, the Fund enables UN Agencies, Funds, and Programmes to align and integrate their efforts under the strategic direction of Resident Coordinators (RCs), fostering a collaborative approach that harnesses the complementary strengths of diverse UN entities, creating synergies that yield results far greater than what could be achieved by separate actions.

The recently adopted "Pact for the Future" underscores the need to better harness science, technology and innovation (STI) for poverty eradication and SDG achievement. Action 33 also stresses the critical role of the UN in this area and the need to strengthen the UN's capacity to leverage science and technology, as well as support national governments in utilizing these tools for sustainable development and bridge the science and technology gap between developed and developing countries. The Joint SDG Fund is already promoting the application of STI across different sectors, including digital, agriculture, trade, entrepreneurship, climate action, and financial inclusion. Several joint programmes focus on leveraging innovations to accelerate progress towards multiple SDGs while prioritizing inclusion of marginalized groups and women.

As a key example of this work, the Joint SDG Fund (the Fund) is investing in digital transformation to accelerate progress towards the SDGs. By supporting inclusive and effective digital solutions across various sectors, the Fund promotes transparent public services, resilient food systems with increased access to markets, greener practices, resilient socioeconomic growth as well as gender equality.

In alignment with its strategy to support SDG transitions, the first funding round on digital transformation was launched at the SDG Summit in September 2023 by the Deputy-Secretary General and the European Union. Supported by the inter-agency Technical Support Group, led by the ITU-UNDP Joint Facility and involving UNESCO, UNICEF, UNCDF, UNEP, and UNCTAD, with FAO expected to join, the Fund has co-designed 22 joint programmes led by RCs and implemented by 24 UN entities. One-third of the portfolio targets LDCs or LLDCs. The total budget is \$66.5 million, with \$40.3 million from the Fund supported by the European Union, Spain, and Sweden, and \$26.1 million in co-funding. Most funding is directed towards 13 High Impact Track (HIT) countries, expected to facilitate catalytic impact within 2-3 years and generate \$380 million in financial leverage.

Against this background, the Joint SDG Fund invites all IATT members to join a Webinar dedicated to exploring the critical role of the Joint SDG Fund in strengthening UNCT capacities support member states in deploying STI for the SDGs.

## Objectives

- 1. Present the Joint SDG Fund as a critical instrument to turbocharge the SDGs**  
Explore the critical role of the Joint SDG Fund in strengthening the capacities of United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) to support member states in deploying science, technology, and innovation (STI) for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- 2. Illustrate the Digital Portfolio of the Joint SDG Fund**  
Discuss how the Joint SDG Fund can enhance the integration of STI across various sectors to accelerate progress towards the SDGs, with a focus on inclusion and sustainability.
- 3. Foster UN Collaboration for SDG Achievement**  
Examine how the Fund promotes collaboration among UN agencies to leverage the complementary strengths of diverse entities and drive more effective outcomes in the context of STI and SDG implementation.

## Agenda

**Moderator:** Wei Liu, Sustainable Development Officer and IATT Coordinator, UN DESA

### 1. Welcome and introduction

Astra Bonini, Chief of Integrated Policy Analysis Branch, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UN DESA

### 2. Overall context: the Joint SDG Fund and SDG acceleration, from the Pact for the Future to the Financing for Development Forum

Lisa Kubriel, Director Joint SDG Fund

### 3. Joint SDG Fund's Digital Portfolio: country examples

Nenad Rava, Head of Programme, Joint SDG Fund

### 4. Q&A Session

- Lead Discussants:
  - Alex Wong, Senior Advisor, Executive Office, ITU
  - Laura Hildebrandt, Digital Transformation Implementation Specialist, UNDP (tbc)
- Open Discussion – all IATT members

### 5. Closing and next steps

Angel González Sanz, Head of Technology, Innovation and Knowledge Development Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD

## Guiding Questions

Following questions aim to stimulate meaningful discussion and align with the goals of showcasing the Fund's impact, exploring collaboration opportunities, and identifying actionable recommendations for the future.

### 1. General Context

- How is the Joint SDG Fund positioned to serve as an instrument for the implementation of the Pact for the Future and the Digital Global Compact?

### 2. Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) for SDGs

- In what ways can STI be effectively utilized to accelerate progress on SDGs 3, 5, 8, and 17, particularly in developing countries?
- What are some concrete examples of how the UN system is supporting the application of STI towards SDG acceleration at country level?
- How does the Fund's work on digital transformation contribute to fostering resilient food systems, transparent public services, and socioeconomic growth?

### **3. Challenges and Opportunities**

- What are the primary challenges in deploying STI at the country level, particularly in LDCs and LLDCs, and how can these be mitigated?
- How can UN entities working on STI can collaborate to respond to the need for enhanced country level capacity in this area.
- How can funding models for STI be innovated to address financial gaps while ensuring alignment with national SDG strategies?

### **4. Collaboration and Partnerships**

- How does the Joint SDG Fund enhance collaboration among UN IATT to leverage their collective strengths for STI integration in SDGs?
- What strategies can strengthen partnerships between governments, the private sector, and international organizations to maximize the impact of STI on sustainable development?

### **5. Future Directions**

- How can the outcomes of the Joint SDG Fund's initiatives inform discussions at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4)?

### **Expected Outcomes**

Participants will gain a clearer understanding of how the Joint SDG Fund leverages science, technology and innovation to address SDGs. They will leave with practical insights into the Joint SDG Fund's joint programmes and potential partnership opportunities, fostering a network of global actors committed to integrating STI into sustainable development efforts.