



**Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs**

**New York, 15-16 May 2017**

***Concept Note for Session 2a on***

***“Key priorities for engaging STI for ending poverty in all its forms everywhere (SDG1)”***

Conference Room 4, UN Headquarters New York, 15 May 2017, 11:50 - 13:00 am

## **1. Background**

This session will discuss and explore priorities in terms of science, technology and innovation (STI) policies, approaches and partnerships for achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 (“*End poverty in all its forms everywhere*”). The session’s conclusions will feed into a more general deliberation on SDG 1 progress at the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2017.

STI contributes to the goal of ending poverty, both through its impact on economic growth as well as its ability to directly improve the lives of the poor. However, many developing countries and even some developed countries continue to lack the innovation capabilities that are needed to catch up with the technological frontier. As a result, many of these countries have seen low productivity growth and have failed to diversify their economies’ structures, resulting in unsatisfactory outcomes in terms jobs and growth. In addition, the impact of technological change on social inclusiveness (including gender) and the consequences of technological choices for environmental sustainability may be well worth deeper consideration, in view of the SDG aspirations. At the same time, while some recent innovations, such as mobile phones, have reached millions of the poor, others such as broadband access are still marked by a “digital divide”.

Ending poverty in all its dimensions and forms will therefore require building up STI capabilities among firms and other actors, especially in developing countries. It might also involve a change in the way we approach technology issues and the economic and social change caused by technology, in order to make technology change more inclusive and environmentally sustainable. Ending poverty by 2030 will require experimentation with different ways of solving socio economic problems, including innovative collaboration mechanisms within and across countries, industries and stakeholders.

## **2. Objectives**

The objective of the session is to discuss how current STI policy and deployment can be complemented with new approaches, in order to achieve poverty eradication through productivity, growth and employment changes while at the same time ensuring inclusiveness and environmental sustainability. Experiences and lessons learned from novel approaches to innovation for fighting poverty will be presented, for example, mission-oriented innovation, pro-poor and inclusive innovation, grassroots innovation, social innovation, and open collaborative innovation. The panel may consider formulating recommendations to address key constraints - financial, technological, skills and social constraints - that limit the implementation of new STI approaches to end poverty.

The debate will help illuminate the opportunities that the 2030 Agenda and SDG 1 in particular represent to enable the emergence and development of new forms of technological and non-technological innovation for sustainable development. The debate will also clarify the potential for mutual support between new and more traditional approaches to innovation, including through increased digitalization.

## **3. Format of the session**

The session will begin with a short (90 seconds) innovation pitch by a winner of the Call for Innovations for the STI Forum, followed by a panel discussion. The moderator will introduce the session and give the floor to the panellists for an initial round of remarks (7 minutes each) which will focus on one or two STI applications and/or international

collaboration initiatives relevant to poverty eradication. This will be followed by a moderated discussion and remarks from the floor.

#### **4. Questions for discussion**

The discussion will be guided by the following questions:

- What strategies can be used to effectively scale-up technologies and innovations to eradicate poverty? What experiences do we have with multi-stakeholder collaboration for SDG-oriented STI deployments and in large-scale innovation policy initiatives?
- What models can help leveraging private investment for STI that will successfully reach the poorest?
- What are your top three recommendations for action by the United Nations system, governments, businesses, scientists, civil society, and others?