



Innovation ecosystems in Sub-Saharan Africa: the path towards localised STI for SDGs roadmaps

12 July 2022,
7:30am-9:00am EDT
1:30pm-3:00pm CEST

Virtual Meeting (WebEx)

Co-organized by
Serbia Mission to UN, European Commission - Joint Research Centre, UN-DESA, UNESCO

[Register here](#)

Concept Note

Background

The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development highlighted the role of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) as key means to promote the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this context, the Annual Multi-stakeholder Forums for Science, Technology and Innovation (STI Forum), supported by the Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (IATT) advocated for an increased mobilization of STI towards the SDGs. STI for SDGs Roadmaps are fully recognized as suitable instruments that can be used by countries to integrate SDGs in STI policy agendas. In 2021, two UN General Assembly resolutions ([A/RES/75/316](#) and [A/RES/76/213](#)), recognized this role and advocated for increased partnerships and collaborations.

STI for SDGs Roadmaps are operational and concrete action plans and strategies useful in strengthening national, regional and local STI systems for SDGs and in effectively mobilizing national efforts and resources. The roadmaps also offer opportunities for countries' ownership and strengthening of capacities, as well as for international partnerships to harness STI for the achievement of the SDGs.

In 2019, the IATT launched the Global Pilot Programme on STI for SDGs Roadmaps with an initial group of five pilot countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya and Serbia). In February 2021, Ukraine also joined the programme bringing the number of pilot countries to six. The programme supports pilot countries in developing their STI for SDGs roadmaps following the framework described in the "[Guidebook for the Preparation of STI for SDGs Roadmaps](#)". The Guidebook is accompanied by two background papers: on available STI roadmapping methodologies¹ and international partnerships². The advancement and

¹ See [Background paper: Overview of the existing STI for SDGs roadmapping methodologies](#)

² See [BACKGROUND PAPER: International STI collaboration and investment for Sustainable Development Goals](#)



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achievements on the development of STI for SDGs roadmaps in the six pilot countries are described in the [Progress Report](#).

Following the successful experience of the Global Pilot Programme, driven by the need to facilitate experience sharing and to allow more countries to engage in the development of roadmaps, the “[Partnership in Action](#)” was launched co-lead by Serbia and Ghana at the UN STI Forum in May 2022.

As more countries are expressing interest in the development of STI for SDGs roadmaps, additional initiatives and programmes are now being carried out. In 2022, the Joint Research Centre together with Directorate General for International Partnerships of the European Commission launched a project on STI for SDGs roadmaps in Sub-Saharan Africa, which focuses on the design of roadmaps in up to 5 countries in the region.

The event is the occasion to share preliminary findings on the analysis of innovation ecosystems in Africa, as well as at sharing experiences and the expectations of pilot countries.

In this context, the Permanent Mission of Serbia to the United Nations, in collaboration with EC/JRC, UN-DESA, and UNESCO organizes the event “Innovation ecosystems in Sub-Saharan Africa: the path towards localised STI for SDGs roadmaps” at the margins of the High-Level Political Forum 2022 (HLPF 2022).

This event builds on the work of the UN Inter-Agency Task Team sub-working group on STI for SDGs Roadmaps co-led by UN-DESA, UNESCO, EC/JRC, the World Bank, and UNCTAD.

Objectives

The event will aim at:

- Sharing progress and achievements in the development of STI for SDGs roadmaps in the context of the Global Pilot Programme.
- Discussing needs, challenges and expectations for the development of STI for SDGs roadmaps with a specific focus on the African context, taking into account recovery plans to build back better from COVID-19 and the present risk of energy and food crisis.
- Providing insights on the next steps for further applications of STI for SDGs roadmaps and development of the Partnership in Action

A presentation of the innovation ecosystems in selected Sub-Saharan African countries will set the scene for the discussion. The event will be the occasion to share preliminary findings of the project carried out by the Joint Research Centre on STI for SDGs roadmaps in Africa on STI performances and institutional set-up in selected countries in the region.

The discussion will be enriched by interventions from distinguished representatives of pilot countries who will share their experiences and lessons learnt in the development of STI for SDGs roadmaps in the context of the Global Pilot Programme. They will share their perspective on main challenges and needs for future implementation. Representatives from Sub-Saharan African countries that expressed interest in developing STI for SDGs roadmaps will contribute in the event by sharing their expectations and their insights for potential next steps in the roadmaps development. UN IATT partners, STI practitioners and

representatives of countries from other regions will share their perspectives on the way forward and possible streams of work in the context of the Global Pilot Programme and the Partnership in Action.

Following the launch of the Partnership in Action, the event will represent a call for more countries to join the Partnership by sharing experiences and engaging in STI for SDGs roadmaps. The event is expected to contribute to raising awareness on the significance of STI for SDGs roadmaps to mobilise the necessary STI potential to build more sustainable and resilient societies.

The event is aligned with this year's theme of the High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF) and builds on the outcome of the STI Forum 2022.

Description of the event

The 1.5-hour side event will be held virtually on the margins of the HLPF 2022. The first part of the event will be the occasion to share the overview on STI performances in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the second part, countries developing their STI for SDGs roadmaps in the context of the Global Pilot Programme, as well as countries willing to engage in the process will share their experiences, achievements, and expectations. Discussants will provide their reflections on the way forward and suggest their perspectives on actions to apply the lessons learnt in Sub-Saharan Africa while scaling up the work on STI for SDGs Roadmaps. The floor will be open for questions of participants through the WebEx chat box.

Draft PROGRAMME	
(10 minutes)	Welcome and opening remarks
(15 minutes)	Keynote speech: STI performances and SDGs achievement in selected Sub-Saharan African countries
(12 minutes)	Lessons learnt on the development of STI for SDGs roadmaps, the Global Pilot Programme and the Partnership in Action <i>Panelists (3-4 minutes max each):</i> <i>Representatives of Pilot countries (i.e. Ghana, Serbia, Kenya)</i>
(13 minutes)	Expectations on the design of STI for SDGs roadmaps in Sub-Saharan Africa <i>Panelists (3-4 minutes each):</i> <i>Representatives from Sub-Saharan African countries interested to develop STI for SDGs Roadmaps (i.e. Gambia, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal)</i>
(30 minutes)	Discussion on the and way forward for further applications and development of the Partnership in Action <i>Discussants (2-3 minutes each):</i> Representatives from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Commission-Joint Research Centre



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• African Union Commission• IATT Members (i.e. UNECA, UNESCO, UNIDO)• Countries representatives <p><i>Q&A session with the public (through WebEx chat box)</i></p>
(10 minutes)	Closing remarks