Expert Group Meeting on
"STI Roadmaps for SDGs – paving the pathways for sustainable recovery and future resilience"

Online informal expert consultation – Part 1- 22 June 2020
The consultation was held virtually. About 110 participants joined the meeting.

Flash report

The first part of this informal expert consultation focused on the lessons learnt from the Global Pilot Programme for STI for SDGs Roadmaps from the perspective of the pilot countries: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, India and Serbia and the UN and partners focal points: UNIDO, UNESCO, UNCTAD, the World Bank and EC – JRC. It was open to the interested observers and the candidates to the Global Pilot Programme.

Key messages emerged during the event:

- All five countries participating in the UN-IATT Global Pilot Programme have made a significant progress in terms of STI roadmaps for SDGs.
- Despite the differences in the terms of progress due to the individual approaches and challenges, some common elements emerged in the discussion.
- All countries do agree on the importance of mobilising STI for SDGs, especially in the post COVID-19 era and in the "Decade of Action", taking into consideration different approaches and tools.
- Serbia, Ethiopia and India mobilised STI for COVID response, an inspiring example on how the STI can be used to answer economic, social and environmental challenges.
- All Pilot countries agreed and highlighted the importance of linkages between SDGs but also between STI policies, SDGs and National Development Plans.
- The STI innovation policy is the one to accelerate achievement of SDGs.

Highlights from the welcoming session

Shantanu Mukherjee (UNDESA) delivered opening remarks, highlighting the role of STI Roadmaps in the 2030 Agenda implementation and providing the background of UN-IATT Global Pilot Programme, with the global strategic role of JRC. In light of the current situation, Shantanu Mukherjee also highlighted three elements for discussion:
- COVID-19 underscored the role of local investments in the achieving SDGs.
- Robust recovering funds must accomplish the following: Local authorities need to manage trade-offs, deliver essential services to the ones left behind, secure transition of workforce to emerging sectors of the economy.
- Renewed importance of STI and new forms of global collaboration in many sectors.

Highlights from the session on Country progress in the UN-IATT Global Pilot Programme

Viktor Nedovic (Assistant Minister, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, Serbia) underlined the importance of understanding and mobilising the STI potential in times of crisis. STI for SDGs Roadmaps can provide a good basis for an overview of thematic STI capabilities in each country. Serbian government highlighted as main challenges in the process: mobilising the knowledge and private sector; leveraging the expertise of the knowledge sector, the public sector and non-for-profits; building capacities in the public, private and third sector; supporting partnerships with international actors; leveraging SDG-related assessments and policy design.

Solomon Benor (Director General for Science and Research Affairs, Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Ethiopia) stressed that STI significantly contributed to the MoSHE's pandemic response plan during the COVID-19 crisis. The Pilot program requires joint effort of Ethiopian government with donor and/or international partners. Besides, apart from designing a new STI policy, Ethiopia highlighted the need to execute other pilot program activities related to science, technology and innovation. However, except the involvement on UNCTAD in designing a new STI policy, there seems to be a gap or support with other donor agencies and/or international partners, which would have rather played a key role in executing other and additional pilot programs. As consequence, at the current stage there is little progress with the country's pilot program.

Sachin Chaturvedi (Director General at the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi, India) on the other hand stressed the significant role of multilevel governance for SDGs approach and following the subnational SDG mapping exercised to allow for localized approaches. The process of mapping SDGs for VNR has been just finished and it will be presented shortly.

Wilhelmina Quaye (Director of the CSIR-Science and Technology Policy Research Institute, Accra, Ghana) communicated that Ghana has just prepared the draft of ToR for situational analysis with for specific objectives. Wilhelmina Quave underlined that there is a high demand for STI for SDGs roadmap in Ghana, and that relevant stakeholders are interested in being involved and this can be key to take advantage of local capacities. One of the main challenges that she mentioned was funding to conduct studies.

Tom Ogada (Executive Director, African Centre for Technology Studies, Kenya) indicated that the STI roadmaps for SDGs process is complex and requires expertise and stakeholders from various areas, who would collaborate together having in mind the common goal. He stressed the importance of active involvement of stakeholders and their sustainable engagement and the challenge related data and its access. Clear government priorities would help to make the process smoother.

Highlights from session 2 - Global efforts to mobilise Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development Goals

SATO Fumikazu (Councillor for Innovation Promotion, Cabinet Secretariat/Deputy Director General for Science, Technology and Innovation, Cabinet Office, Government of Japan) stressed the significant Japanese impact on shaping the STI roadmaps for SDGs. Japan has been and will continue to be active in supporting global efforts for STI roadmaps for SDGs: e.g. by supporting Pilot countries (in particular India and Kenya); supporting developing countries in policy making and implementation of STI Roadmaps for SDGs; and collaborating with international organizations, strengthening Science and Technology Partnership for Sustainable Development. SATO Fumikazu presented how does Japan promote society 5.0 through its SDG Model which is identified in the SDGs Action Plan but also the Japan's STI for SDGs Roadmaps - 3 approaches translated into 5 roadmaps.

Johan Stierna (Advisor, Growth and Innovation, Joint Research Centre, European Commission) passed three main key messages:
1. The new EU policy places sustainability at the forefront
2. The policy for SDGs is both societal and industrial growth policy
3. The EU acts both at global and local level – combining directionality with localisation and bottom-up creativity

The EU defends multilateralism and partnership approach, as illustrated in the Paris agreement addressing Climate change. The new EU agenda has a specific focus on strengthening collaboration with Africa and neighbouring countries. The European Green Deal is a new pathway for achieving the Agenda 2030 in the EU and beyond – directly contributing to at least 7 SDGs. The European Green Deal mobilises public policy to accelerate and tilt the transitions of social economic systems, so they construct a better society in line with the SDGs. There is a need of understanding the global systemic transitions in our energy, food, manufacturing, mobility and housing

systems, and then work together to influence them and make sure no one is left behind. Innovation, in its broadest sense, is the main tool in this endeavour.

Johan Stierna stressed that Smart Specialisation for Sustainability could be more widely used as a method to engage bottom up creativity. It has the potential to build value from diversity. However, in view of our focus on sustainability, we have to refine the methodology of smart specialisation learning from good examples of local transformative innovation.

Patrick Gomes (Former Secretary General of the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States) highlighted similarity between the European Green Deal approach and the work of the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States - building value through diversity. The global dimension can be achieved by Mobilizing STI through South-South and triangular cooperation. He also stressed the importance of 5P in the context of achieving SDGs: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships. In order to accomplish the first SDG – No poverty – the partnership component is crucial. Patrick Gomes described the mapping exercise which was done (going back as early as 2014) in the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific region attempting to identify how did the STI be mobilized. He also underlined the issue of universal health coverage, systemic approach and interlinkages between SDGs.

Highlights from SESSION 3 - Conclusions on the country progress, STI methodologies and next steps

Clovis Freire (Economic Affairs Officer, Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Section, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD) noted that the pilot has already achieved one of its objectives, which was the production of a guidebook out of the pilots' experience. He pointed out the need of mobilising dedicated funding for implementation of the pilots and future pilots. The main challenge underlined were:
- Focus on the implementation of the roadmaps (not only on the process for the preparation of the roadmap document);
- Bigger engagement of local partners in the preparation of the roadmaps and ensure their participation in the subsequent implementation;
- STI for SDGs - how to harness new technologies but at the same time still put focus on traditional ones.

Clovis Freire highlighted how crucial is to have a solid foundation to have a relevant STI for SDGs roadmap and ensure and effective implementation – e.g. in Ethiopia is crucial to first improve the STI policy and as a second step going for the roadmaps: one of the most important components to take into account are capacity building and coordination mechanisms.

Fernando Santiago Rodriguez (Research and Industrial Policy Officer, Research and Industrial Policy Advice Division, UNIDO) stressed capacity building and stakeholder engagement as two of the most important challenges for the implementation of the pilot program. In the case of Serbia these challenges were addressed very well for the identification of priorities included in the country's Smart specialization strategy. However, local actors now need to embed SDG language in their work and that

requires additional interventions, particularly to incorporate additional social and environmental considerations. He highlighted the opportunity to leverage on collaboration between pilot countries – e.g. Japan, India and Kenya, and to explore ways to articulate with other UN-IATT work streams related to capacity development.

Kornelia Tzinova (Assistant Programme Specialist, Division of Science Policy and Capacity-Building, UNESCO) was stressing on the lessons learnt from the pilot process, notably to the need to build capacities in STI governance. She also highlighted how the national ownership of the process is essential to gain the commitment of actors and political leadership for the important strategic exercise, and to ensure a process of learning by doing. She highlighted the importance of bigger engagement of all STI stakeholders including academia, private sector, civil society, and that special attention should be put on gender equality and youth. As reflections for the next steps, she underlined the need to consider the implementation of the future roadmaps as a priority and the following aspects should be taken into account: assessing main gaps and designing appropriate mix of policy instruments; setting up mechanism of governance and coordination; emphasis on cooperation between UN agencies, notably the UN country teams, and collecting feedback on guidebook.

Naoto Kanehira (Senior Private Sector Specialist, the World Bank) highlighted some key characteristics of the country methodology and processes framed within 3 dimensions:
- horizontal (STI, SDG, national development strategies and connection between them, overlaps, connectivity) – all Pilot countries made lots of progress in the input structure;
- vertical - top down versus bottom up or national/central versus locally owned territorial based approach – how the national and decentralized plans work in the same directions;
- systemic – interdependencies, trade offs and co-benefits among the SDGs, six entry points – how STI for SDGs roadmaps can take onboard this framework to translate on the national, local, subnational actions.

Naoto Kanehira also highlighted the importance of the three key pillars of international partnerships, from the Guidebook: i) building national STI capacities (e.g. IATT supporting roadmap pilots); ii) boosting flows of technology and knowledge (market and non-market channels, such as through the TFM online platform, UNDP accelerating labs); and iii) brokering collective action to produce STI as global public goods to address global gaps. Naoto Kanehira stressed IATT's plans to extend and strengthen the current Pilot Programme to broader country participation and deeper and wider engagement of partners, through the proposed "Partnership in Action" informed by the these three pillars.

Monika Matusiak (Coordinator for Smart Specialisation and Sustainable Development Goals, Joint Research Centre, European Commission) stressed that there is a solid progress in the countries and agreed that one of the main issues is to prepare the base for the implementation and mobilise resources. The EU is entering the new programming period 2021-2017 – where sustainability and Green Deal are considered as a key policy and affecting in fact all policies including Smart Specialisation. JRC's

goal will be to make Smart Specialisation more sustainable, with direct and measurable inputs for the achievement of SDGs. Next steps of the JRC are to conclude the development of the roadmaps in pilot countries and scale up the work - using the the gained experience in the EU MS and to create partnerships with developing countries. Monika Matusiak underlined that to work on the STI roadmaps, countries' readiness and awareness is key to implement the policy measures that will be funded by national budgets (e.g. Serbia) but there is also a need to mobilise international partners and donors. Monika Matusiak also underlined the need of creating partnerships and share the knowledge and gained experience with developed countries.

Highlights from the Closing remarks

Mikel Landabaso Álvarez (Director for Growth and Innovation, Joint Research Centre, European Commission) delivered the closing remarks. He recalled that the Global Pilot Programme and its purpose should be about transforming theory into delivery and action. Capacity building is needed for this purpose. Moreover, good governance and capacities are capable of translating the plans beyond mapping to build and implement concrete actions. Mikel Landabaso Álvarez stressed also the importance of the financial component - the long-term financing, intangible and capable of investing in high-risk revenues.

Furthermore, Mikel Landabaso Álvarez pointed out the governance issue (e.g. mentioned by Ghana and Ethiopia) – and intergovernmental cooperation – and the role of leadership at the highest level. He recalled the interlinkages and interdependencies of the SDGs (mentioned by India and Kenya), highlighting that the sectorial approach would not work anymore, while an holistic approach is the key: the way to tackle the complexities of this problem is through innovation. The STI policy is the one to accelerate the achievement of SDGs. Mikel Landabaso Álvarez also mentioned the European Green Deal policy as a new Smart Specialisation Strategy for the EU with the triple bottom line: social, environmental and economic, i.e. the medicine needed at the current moment to cure the EU weaknesses in terms of SDGs.

Mikel Landabaso Álvarez expressed the willingness for collaboration with the UN agencies and the World Bank on the Global Pilot Programme: these pilots open the opportunity to use science and evidence for accelerating the development process in those places that are most in need, without leaving nobody behind. Finally, Mikel Landabaso Álvarez referred to the power of diversityas a source of innovation and growth.

This flash report was drafted by Karolina Horbaczewska, Monika Matusiak, and Alice Siragusa