

## **Concept Note for a Webinar on SDG 9, Building Resilient Infrastructure, Promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Industrialization, and Fostering Innovation, and SDG 10, Reducing Inequality Within and Among Countries**

This webinar - in the countdown to the 2023 SDG Summit - is the fifth in SF's series of webinars that will review 2 SDGs each month to see where we are in their implementation, examining interdependencies across goals, and what that means for accelerating implementation. The series, which is supported by UNDESA, UNEP, and the EU, is bringing together a wide range of experts, policymakers, and practitioners with knowledge of the SDGs' interlinkages and insights on integrated approaches that can help to develop recommendations on transformative actions for the SDGs.

Our focus will be on SDG 9 on building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation, and SDG 10 on reducing inequality within and among countries, including synergies and tradeoffs with other goals. The series will continue to explore different ways to enable integrated approaches to SDG implementation. A key aim of the series will be to identify ways to exploit positive interactions and mitigate trade-offs, including by forging multistakeholder coalitions behind programmes of accelerated action. Good practices will be identified for empowering communities, sectoral actors, and cross-sectoral alliances at multiple levels. The intention is to promote the establishment of communities of practice that will continue to collaborate in the lead-up to the SDG Summit and beyond.

Economies with a diversified industrial sector and strong infrastructure sustained less damage and are experiencing faster recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Developing quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure - including regional and transborder infrastructure to support economic development and human well-being with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all - is essential. Infrastructure investment needs to be reoriented in a more sustainable direction, to support non-fossil-fuel local and long-distance transport and energy generation, improved supply of clean water and sanitation, and higher speed reliable internet for all.

Industrial diversification towards more technology-intensive, higher value-added industries and activities is a long-term development project for most countries. Currently, all but two of the 25 most diversified economies (according to the global Economic Diversification Index<sup>1</sup>), are OECD countries (China and Singapore being the exceptions). Of the 103 countries in the data, Angola ranks the lowest; Saudi Arabia,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://economicdiversification.com/the-index/>

# Stakeholder Forum

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Qatar, and Kuwait also rank rather low for countries of their per capita incomes, given their heavy dependence on oil and gas exports. While global manufacturing rebounded in 2021 and 2022 from the pandemic, recovery remains incomplete and uneven. Least developed countries were hit the worst, with 1 in 3 manufacturing jobs negatively impacted by the crisis. According to the United Nations Progress report on SDGs for 2022, global manufacturing production grew by 7.2 percent in 2021, with recovery especially robust in high-income countries where firms enjoyed generous policy support not available in less developed countries. While Europe and Northern America's manufacturing value added (MVA) per capita reached an all-time high of \$5,000 in 2021, MVA per capita in LDCs decreased to \$135 - comparable to 2018.

Specific vulnerable industries (generally low-technology, labour- and resource-intensive industries) were hard-hit by the pandemic, as were service sectors important to many small economies, notably travel, and tourism. The international airline industry saw only 2.3 billion passengers in 2021, sharply down from 4.5 billion in 2019. However, driven by a resurgence of economic activity along with a roaring e-commerce industry during the pandemic, air cargo traffic exceeded pre-pandemic levels by the beginning of 2021 and is maintaining robust growth. Despite the fact that 4G network coverage doubled - reaching 88 percent of the world's population between 2015-2021 - the gap remains significant for least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, where 17 percent of the population are without coverage.

Reducing inequalities and ensuring no one is left behind are integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Inequality within and among countries is a persistent cause for concern. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic appear to have both exposed and deepened structural inequalities. Projections suggest that between-country inequality rose by 1.2 percent between 2017 and 2021, the first such increase in a generation. Within countries, structural inequalities of access to health care, education, employment, income, and wealth have manifested in dramatically different health impacts of the pandemic across racial, ethnic, and economic groups.

Roughly one in five people have experienced discrimination on at least one of the grounds prohibited under international human rights law, such as ethnicity, age, sex, disability, religion, and sexual orientation. In some countries, women are more than twice as likely as men to experience discrimination on the grounds of sex. One-third of persons with disabilities experience discrimination.

The last few years have also seen an acceleration of global refugee and migrant flows, driven by multiple factors including multiple conflicts (most recently and dramatically



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Russia's war on Ukraine which has created more than 6 million refugees fleeing to other countries), and climate-induced changes in weather conditions and livelihood possibilities. For every 100,000 people worldwide, 311 are refugees outside their country of origin, up 44 percent from 216 per 100,000 people in 2015. The number of refugees and migrant deaths worldwide reached the highest absolute number on record in 2021.

This fifth webinar will take place on 30 March 2023 at 8 am EDT / 2 pm CEST, and will last for up to 90 minutes. The recording of the webinar and an audio podcast will be available soon after on the Stakeholder Forum website. A summary will also be produced and will serve as a contribution to the 2023 SDG Summit.

### The following agenda is being proposed:

**8:00 - 8:05** - Welcome and introduction: Charles Nouhan, Chair of the Board, Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future

**8:05 - 8:15** - The interlinked challenge of the SDGs: Jan-Gustav Strandenaes, Senior Adviser, Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future

**8:15 - 9:05** Discussion on SDGs 9 and 10 with experts and Q&A

**Moderator:** Dr. David Horan, Assistant Professor, Trinity College Dublin, and a Fellow at Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future

- Ms. Stine Lise Hattestad Bratsberg, Partner/Head of strategy and transformation in EMA ESG Hub KPMG, Norway
- Dr. Tommaso Ciarli, Senior Research Fellow, Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex Business School
- Dr. Lidia Stępińska-Ustasiak, Area Leader, International Cooperation & Partnerships
- Ms. Andrea Ordonez, Director, Southern Voice in Ecuador
- Dr. Sajid Amin, Deputy Executive Director and founding head of the Policy Solutions Lab at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan
- Ms. Radia Sedaoui, Chief of the Energy Section, Climate Change and Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster, UN Economic Social Commission West Asia (UN ESCWA)

**9:05 - 9:10** - Summary remarks by Irena Zubcevic, Director, Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future

**9:10 - 9:15** - Closing and thanks by Charles Nouhan, SF



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