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The UN Innovation Update includes highlights from the innovation activities of UN Entities.  
All UN Entities are invited to contribute



INNOVATION IN DIFFERENT SECTORS



STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES



INNOVATION CHALLENGES & CALLS



## INNOVATION IN DIFFERENT SECTORS

### HEALTH

- ▶ A [joint programme](#) of the UN Country Team led by UNDP and UNFPA used behavioural science to address the low uptake of [HIV testing among youth](#) in Georgia. Co-designed with youth practitioners, NGOs and public sector experts, the team conducted micronarratives [re-search](#) identifying key behavioural barriers. Based on this, a randomised control trial was designed in partnership with behavioural experts and local researchers to improve provision of self-tests and scale up the program with national health authorities.
- ▶ UN Global Pulse is working side by side with other UN partners and researchers to understand what epidemic modelling can teach us about the spread of disease in settlements for refugees and internally displaced people. Collaboratively, the partners have built an agent-based model approach to [simulate the spread of COVID-19](#) and used it in the context of the Cox's Bazar settlement.

- ▶ [UNFPA Uganda's DrugDash project](#) is implementing a mobile and web-based platform that supports district health officers with tracking real-time information on family planning commodity stockpiles to enable accurate and timely decisions on delivery and redistribution of family planning commodities at healthcare facilities. DrugDash has been deployed in 56 health facilities within five districts of Uganda, and will scale up in 42 additional districts alongside the Ugandan Ministry of Health in 2021.



Photo: SparkBlue



The UN Innovation Network is an informal, collaborative network of innovators from UN Agencies. To find out more about the UNIN, please visit our website, where you can also subscribe to our mailing list.

- ▶ The UNAIDS-launched [Health Innovation Exchange](#) and [Cross-Border Impact Ventures](#) launched an [Investor Coalition](#) with a focus on growth-stage innovations for SDG 3: Good Health. It brings together international leadership in venture capital, health systems and global health thought-pioneers. The Investor Coalition is designed to demonstrate that catalytic health technology innovations built for scale and superior market return can also be generated through public-private partnerships and deployed intelligently.

## FOOD & AGRICULTURE

- ▶ WFP's [Market Functionality Index](#) measures market health and its drivers (in 1,271 markets and counting) - a first in ensuring analyses are comparable, replicable, transparent and available within 24 hours. The index helps WFP make informed transfer modality decisions with respect to cash-based assistance and detect changes in market functionality over time.
- ▶ FAO's [1,000 Digital Villages](#) initiative seeks to convert rural villages into digital hubs to turn them into engines for the introduction of e-commerce in rural areas. This will facilitate farmers' access to markets, diversify rural incomes, unleash the potential of digital agriculture, and integrate rural areas in the digital economy. The initiative is run in collaboration with other UN-Entities and private sector partners, including Microsoft and IBM, and was cited by FAO Director General at the [MED – Mediterranean Dialogues](#).



- ▶ In Saint Lucia, the [Joint SDG Fund](#) is providing support to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on household and child poverty. Through an [interactive microsimulation model](#), the first of its kind in the region, the government can now simulate the impacts of shocks on poverty as well as the impacts of different cash transfer options to reduce poverty levels. Using a mix of poverty indicators, the model allows users to compare different scenarios and cash transfer values to achieve the desired outcome. The project is being implemented by WFP, UNICEF, ILO, UNDP and UN Women.

## EDUCATION

- ▶ As part of UNFPA's [Innovation Pipeline to Ensure Rights and Choices](#), [UNFPA China](#) utilised technology to deliver comprehensive sexuality education to middle school students in remote areas. A 2020 evaluation of the 8-session, live-streamed courses, conducted in five pilot schools for 418 students, showed an increase in students' knowledge and confidence in understanding their bodies and having safe, healthy relationships. In 2021, the project will scale up across the province and among additional age groups.
- ▶ Giga released [Connecting the Dots: Impact Outlook 2021](#) to share 2020 achievements, and critical insights and work plans for establishing and scaling connectivity in 17 countries this year and beyond.





Photo: UN Women

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP, LABOUR & ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

- UN Women and ITU ran a [study](#) in Europe and Central Asia to understand the trends in women's participation in the ICT sector (with a focus on COVID-19 repercussions), which resulted in a set of national initiatives to bridge the gender digital divide.
- The [Joint SDG Fund](#) launched a Data School on "Youth and Labour Informality", which aims to strengthen the data skills of 23 local youth organisations in Ecuador. Through scholarships, participants learnt how to manage quantitative data to analyse labour informality. Five data projects were created covering, for example, differences in the youth labour market between rural and urban areas and repercussions of the COVID-19 crisis on youth entrepreneurship. The programme is led by ILO with UN Women and UNDP.
- The ILO, through its [Vision Zero Fund](#), piloted the [DecentWorkChatbot](#) – a public platform to identify occupational safety and health (OSH) deficits throughout the coffee value chain in [Mexico](#). The chatbot empowers actors along the value chain, who are not normally reached through standard survey methods, and thus anonymously crowdsources OSH deficits. The data is used to inform the development of a strategic approach to promoting compliance and enhancing safety and health across the value chain. The chatbot, integrated in a social media page viewed by over 387,000 people from the largest coffee producing region, resulted in over 8,400 people accessing the available materials.
- The ILO's [Enterprises Innovation Facility \(eif\)](#) is assessing the feasibility of an innovation initiative in Mali to explore a formalisation mechanism supporting the transition of enterprises out of informality. The eif will conduct an internal call for ideas for approaches to tackle challenges in creating sustainable enterprises.
- UNAIDS launched the [Solidarity Fund for Key Population Social Entrepreneurs](#) for key populations of the HIV response facing special hardship as a result of COVID-19. The Solidarity Fund supports the creation and scaling of population-led social enterprises, fosters economic empowerment and highlights innovative solutions from the communities, while helping those most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic tide over immediate hardship. It is currently being rolled out in Brazil, Ghana, India, Madagascar and Uganda.



Image: ILO





- ▶ The UN University Institute in Macau explored the use of technology to track the impact of COVID-19 on working conditions in supply chains. The research outputs examine the promise and limit of [remote monitoring in addressing forced and child labour](#) using mobile apps like (such as [Apprise](#)), and distributed ledger technology. The research presents findings of an intervention with global supply chains to [assess working conditions](#) and discusses the role that [technology may play in policy and programmatic responses](#) to the economic downturn, large-scale layoffs and deportations caused by COVID-19.

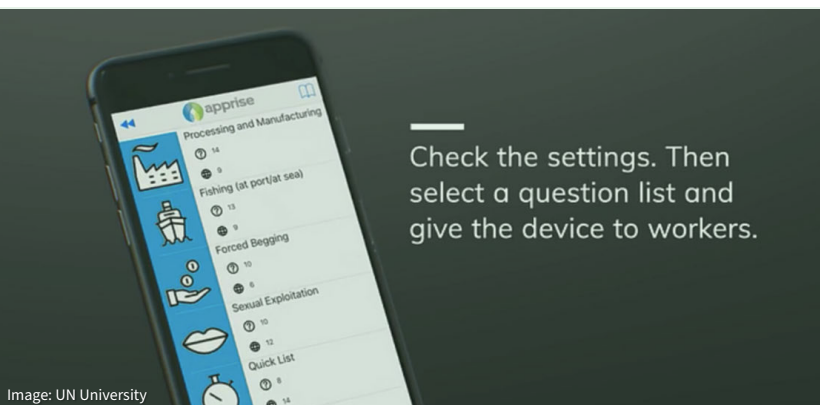


Image: UN University

- ▶ IFAD spearheaded the response to the Secretary-General's call for an urgent and coordinated strategy on COVID-19, launching the [Remittance Community Task Force](#), to address the challenges facing migrants and families from the crisis. For the first time ever, over 40 key stakeholders from the UN, governments and the private sector jointly produced short-term, actionable measures for governments, regulators and the industry. The outcomes are feeding the [Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond](#) and the G20 work on remittances in 2021.

## PEACE & SECURITY

- ▶ UNODC's [Diploma in prevention, investigation of femicide and police action](#) incorporates new technologies, such as virtual reality, in the training of police officers in Mexico. In the immersive experience, the participant must make decisions which reinforces technical knowledge acquired in a practical scenario of a probable femicide.
- ▶ A UN Women pilot in Moldova is addressing sexual harassment and violence by using VR and blended learning approaches.



Photo: UNDP

- ▶ COVID-19 has severely impacted justice and legal systems around the world and rendered in-person hearings challenging or impossible. UNITAR in partnership with the Justice and Corrections Service of the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI), created a [Toolkit on Remote Hearing Decision-Making](#). The Toolkit provides practical step-by-step guidance for the use of legal stakeholders (e.g. judges, lawyers, court and ministry officials) responsible for the administration of justice, who are interested in establishing a remote hearing system.
- ▶ UNICRI and the United Arab Emirates launched the [AI for Safer Children Initiative](#), which seeks to build capacities of law enforcement agencies to leverage AI to combat the rise in online child sexual abuse materials.
- ▶ In Tanzania, UNODC – with support from the US - provided capacity development for the intelligence unit of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. The training leveraged AI technology through the Semantica PRO software, which facilitates decision-making, enabling authorities to arrest poachers and prevent further cases.
- ▶ OICT is the emerging technology partner for the [UN-OCT's Countering Terrorist Travel Programme](#) with the objective to enhance Member States capacity to use API and Passenger Name Record (PNR) data to detect terrorists and criminals and their travel movements. The [goTravel](#) platform has been successfully deployed in the Caribbean Community States (CARICOM), Botswana, Ivory Coast, and Azerbaijan and deployments to other countries are planned.
- ▶ The UNDP Accelerator Labs are partnering with [TED Healthy Internet Project](#) to fight misinformation. Labs in Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Sudan, Namibia, Kenya, Togo, and Argentina are accelerating the testing of a browser extension and leading a global experiment on crowd-sourced moderation.



- ▶ UNICRI carried out a study on the malicious use of social media during COVID-19 pandemic and the technology options to counter it, releasing a report [Stop the Virus of Disinformation](#).
- ▶ The UN University's [Managing Exits from Armed Conflict](#) (MEAC) initiative explores why individuals exit armed conflict and which interventions are effective at encouraging transitions. In Nigeria and Colombia, the project advances data collection and integration methods that can support impact assessments and evaluations. A [recent report](#) (discussed in a [UNIN webinar](#)), explores the state of management and integration of conflict exit data across the UN, challenges, opportunities, and benefits to enhancing data integration in this space.
- ▶ UNICRI and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism are conducting research on counter-terrorism in the age of artificial intelligence and convened two expert group meetings to examine the potential threat of malicious use or abuse of AI and the possibilities for using AI to counter the terrorist use of the internet and social media in South and South East Asia.
- ▶ UNODC, in partnership with the EU and Moroccan Ministry of Interior, organised training for government investigators on [telephone database analysis and reporting](#). The training offered insights into tools such as the Mer-



Photo: UNODC

cure V4 software for reading and interpreting data, using various analysis methods, and applying a blockchain technique to storing public information.

- ▶ OICT teamed-up with [UNOCT](#), [CTED](#) and [UNODC](#) to launch [goFintel](#), an innovative strategic analysis platform to shift away from a siloed approach to intelligence and expand terrorism financing investigation capabilities to access information from multiple diversified data sources. [This platform enables Member States](#) to rely on secure architecture for advanced information sharing, data transmission, and cross-functional operational capabilities with multiple stakeholders for parallel investigations, exploiting associated "non-financial" information and examining terrorist links to other criminal activities.
- ▶ UNICRI and the European Union Intellectual Property Office launched a deep dive research project to explore the impact of artificial intelligence on infringement and enforcement of copyright and design.



## STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES

### ENABLING INNOVATION

- ▶ UN-Habitat, with support from UN-OICT and HafenCity University Hamburg, have established [the UN Innovation Technology Accelerator for Cities \(UNITAC Hamburg\)](#). UNITAC will promote open and participatory governance of data and digital platforms, innovations related to mapping, spatial analysis and data visualisation as well as principles of people-centred smart cities. The Lab, which is funded by the German Government for four years, is composed of urban, technology and innovation experts who will contribute to the development of technologies to solve the world's most pressing urban challenges and accelerate progress towards achieving the SDGs, particularly Goal 11: Sustainable Cities & Communities.



Photo: UNCDF

- ▶ UNDP's first [Data Strategy](#), launched in March 2021, aims to enable UNDP to leverage data as a strategic asset with consistent, transparent data standards; empowering effective and responsible use of data to achieve sustainable development outcomes.



- ▶ The UN Environmental Assembly adopted a new [Digital Transformation subprogramme](#) for UNEP. One of the first initiatives will be to [launch the Coalition for Digital Environmental Sustainability \(CODES\)](#), a global multi-stakeholder process, to anchor environmental sustainability needs within the [Secretary-General's Digital Cooperation Roadmap](#) and catalyse a digital planet for sustainability. A dynamic online community of practice will be built on [UN SparkBlue platform](#).



- ▶ The UN Global Pulse network started the year with a retreat where its labs and teams came together to reimagine and brainstorm contributions to the innovation ecosystem in the next few years. The team will share insights shortly.
- ▶ DPPA's Innovation Cell launched exploratory work on new methods of strategic foresight to advance future-leaning thinking related to conflict prevention, mediation, and peacebuilding. Working closely with the UN Development Coordination Office, DPPA is developing and supporting strategic foresight pilot projects in Northeast Asia, West Africa, and the Americas, applying innovative process design methods and new technologies. The Innovation Cell and its partners are also working on a foresight card game related to peace that will be released later this year.
- ▶ To help address the complexity of challenges that the UN will face moving forwards, UN Global Pulse added a new stream of work to its portfolio and designed a Futures and Foresight programme. This [blog](#) discusses what the programme will look like.
- ▶ Together with its constituents, ITU experiments with new innovations, tools, and methods to create novel approaches to complex challenges whilst at the same time future-proofing its programs, products and services. To pioneer these approaches at a global scale, ITU is establishing I-CoDI -

[the International Center of Digital Innovation](#), and piloting first initiatives. ITU welcomes the engagement and leadership from governments, business, civil society, donors and finance experts.

- ▶ UN Women announced the launch of an innovative multi-stakeholder '[Action Coalition](#) on Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality' to generate new commitments to:
  - Bridge the gender gap in digital access and competence
  - Invest in feminist technology and innovation ecosystems
  - Build inclusive, transformative and accountable innovation ecosystems
  - Prevent and eliminate tech-facilitated gender-based violence and discrimination

UNICEF and ITU are co-leaders of this initiative and all UN Entities are invited to join.

- ▶ At the IMF, the creation of the Office of Innovation and Change (OIC) brought together the Innovation Lab Unit and Change Management Unit to amplify innovation and support change across the Fund. The OIC will support steering a prioritised portfolio of organisational change initiatives and foster a culture of innovation.
- ▶ WFP's Innovation Accelerator was honoured in Fast Company's [10 Most Innovative Companies \(Not-For-Profit category\) of 2021](#).
- ▶ Arm renewed its partnership with UNICEF Innovation for 3 years, focusing on connecting young people to the benefits of technology and accelerate innovation to meet the Global Goals. The partnership will support the African Drone and Data Academy, flood modelling in Malawi, and Giga.
- ▶ The [Musk Foundation](#) and [Dubai Cares](#) joined Giga to map and connect schools in Rwanda, Kenya, and Sierra Leone and fund accelerated efforts to establish connectivity.



Photo: UNICEF







Photo: WFP

## DEVELOPING NEW SOLUTIONS

- ▶ WFP launched [drones.wfp.org](https://drones.wfp.org), with support from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, to help the humanitarian community develop responsible and ethical use of drones in disaster assessment, in-air connectivity, and crop monitoring.
- ▶ In April 2021, IFAD will launch [Data.FIDA-ESA](#), an M&E and financial reporting tool for IFAD staff and the public (depending on the interface). Piloted in the Malawi portfolio, the tool will improve programme management, track project impact, promote South-South Triangular Cooperation while providing visibility to communities' investments and best practices.
- ▶ With support from the World Bank, Saint Lucia adopted a government-wide [e-Governance Portal](#) (e-GP) using a Software as a Service model through a commercial e-GP provider. The cloud solution for the portal will avoid disruption of services due to frequent hurricanes, thereby enhancing resilience to climatic shocks. The electronic procurement system will also reduce travel and carbon emissions. The portal will unlock performance and growth benefits for Saint Lucia by improving the costs of government purchases, increasing value for money, reducing corruption, increasing trust in government and tax compliance.
- ▶ IFAD developed - through thorough testing, outreach and training - a [streamlined, automated voting process](#) that frees up time for strategic interaction with IFAD Governors.

## TRAINING & CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

- ▶ Incorporating insight from across the UN System on COVID-19's impact on people, teams and units, UNSSC has designed new learnings, including [Future of Work: Navigating Continuous Change](#). This Programme offers practical tools to contextualise; scope; strategise; struc-

ture teams; and make decisions in times of uncertainty, when we must rapidly adapt and adjust to deliver. Relatedly, the Executive Leadership for the Future of Work Programme - specifically designed for Directors - examines how to become more responsive and adaptive, while setting priorities and providing direction.

- ▶ Harnessing the new interest in virtual capacity development, DESA launched an innovative digital [programme on infrastructure asset management](#) as well as training toolkits on [social inclusion of vulnerable groups](#) and [digital government for Public Service Delivery](#), which are part of the [Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs](#).

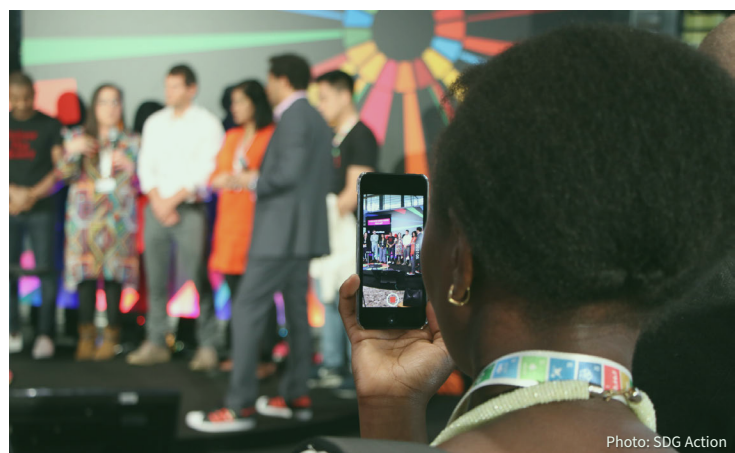


Photo: SDG Action

- ▶ UNWTO and UNSSC hosted a [live event](#) on the [UN Innovation Toolkit](#), which gathered representatives from across the innovation ecosystem and highlighted the key role of partnering with concrete examples of public and private collaborations. Through a moderated panel discussion, this multi-stakeholder event explored the use and contextualisation of the Toolkit, focused on one of the critical pillars of innovation: Partnerships. Watch a recording [here](#).



- ▶ **UN Women's Regional Innovation Facility** for Europe and Central Asia completed a series of Innovation Labs for Gender Equality focusing on experimentation and adaptive leadership across 12 country offices.
- ▶ **Acknowledging the potential of youth** to drive innovation, WIPO's new guide [Addressing Climate Challenges with Innovation](#) helps young people understand how they can use innovation to respond to the climate crisis. The guide is designed to facilitate group discussions and inspire action with practical resources and tools for using green technologies and intellectual property.

## ▶ FACILITATING KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

- ▶ **UNIN - in collaboration with ITC-ILO and UNDP** – hosted a webinar on using [virtual reality for trainings, meetings and events](#). The event sparked a lot of interest in connecting further in the space of VR and led to a follow-up conversation and considerations of starting a new UN Group on VR, similar to the ones on [Blockchain](#) and [Behavioural Science](#).
- ▶ **UNEP - in partnership with UNDP, the IMF, Oxford University and the GIZ** - launched the [Global Recovery Observatory](#), a live database of government spending and 4,000+ policies related to COVID-19 in the 50 largest economies (soon 89). It tracks and assesses the potential impacts of COVID-19 spending policies on the environment, society and the economy.
- ▶ **At ITC, the HQ-field team for knowledge sharing** organised the new discussion series "[ITC Shares](#)", which creates a platform to exchange experience between colleagues. In the first session, colleagues from the field shared how they are supporting enterprises to become more resilient and prepare for future crises.
- ▶ **UNICEF's Office of Innovation has launched** a global inventory for innovation and Technology4Developments projects across product, programme, frugal, innovative financing, data, and digital innovations. While currently for UNICEF colleagues only, [INVENT](#) will become an open, global hub where anyone can explore, discover, connect, and contribute to the world of innovation for development.



- ▶ **The Green Growth Knowledge Partnership** - led by UNEP, UNIDO, the World Bank, OECD, and GGGI - launched the [Green Forum](#), an interactive community for a sustainable economic transition. The Forum allows users to create dedicated groups on specific themes, initiatives, and projects. [Sign up](#) to join the conversation.
- ▶ **ITC's Innovation Lab is running** the "Coffee Roulette" initiative, to encourage informal communication between ITC colleagues while working from home. Every week colleagues opt-in to be matched randomly with other two colleagues, and agree on a time to have a virtual coffee and get to know each other. 150 connections have been made since the start of the pilot in December 2020, which has received very positive feedback.
- ▶ **UNCTAD launched the [Technology and Innovation Report 2021](#)**, which critically examines the possibility of frontier technologies such as AI, robotics and gene-editing widening existing inequalities and creating new ones. The report helps policy makers assess the opportunities offered by frontier technologies and understand and reduce the risks associated with them. The report also includes a country readiness index covering 158 countries.





## WORKSHOPS, EVENTS & CONFERENCES

- ▶ UNIN continued its learning series on [Fundamentals of Blockchain](#) with sessions showcasing [Blockchain Use Cases for the SDGs](#) with case studies on financial transactions (UNDP), record keeping (UN OICT), and supply chain (WFP), as well as introducing [Cryptocurrencies and Wallets](#) (with UNICEF). The Learning Series will continue to introduce how UN Entities are already [applying blockchain in their work](#).
- ▶ DESA's [UN World Data Forum](#) successfully took place virtually in the midst of the pandemic. 70+ sessions covering data issues related to COVID-19, open data, citizen science, artificial intelligence, data privacy and more. The Forum included speakers from 300+ organisations and attracted over 10,000 participants. DESA's new [Global Calendar of Statistical Events](#) provides information on upcoming data and statistics events.



- ▶ In 2020, UNIDO convened a special webinar series on [Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development \(ISID\) in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution \(4IR\)](#). This series explored how UNIDO's mandate of ISID and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can be advanced through innovations with guest experts from governments, multilateral organisations, the private sector, and the academia. The series featured sessions on technologies like blockchain, AI, VR, 3D printing, drones and big data for agriculture, fisheries, food industries, energy, cosmetics, automotive and other industries.
- ▶ WFP Executive Director, David Beasley, spoke at the 2021 World Economic Forum (starts at [19m45s](#)), where WFP and WFP announced the launch of new global [Food Innovation Hubs](#).

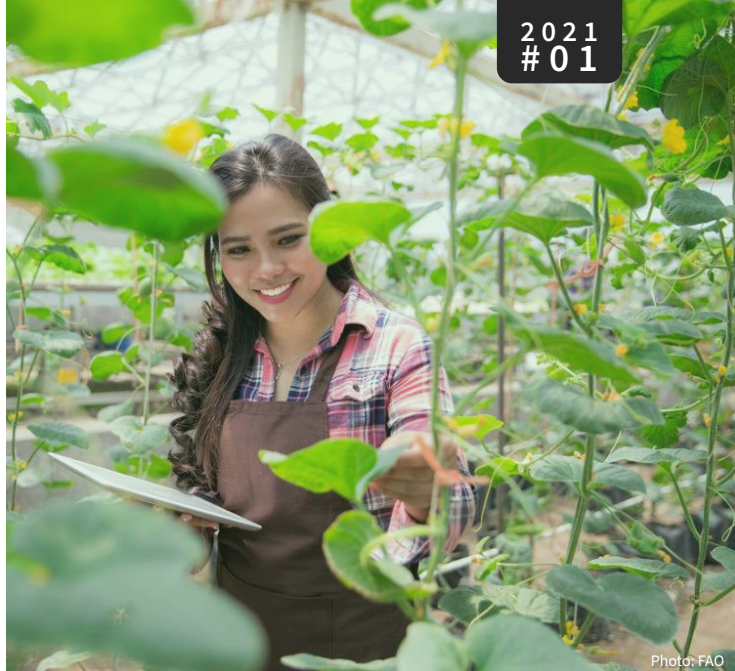


Photo: FAO

- ▶ Recognising the centrality of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for food systems transformation, FAO will host the [UN Food Systems Summit 2021 Science Days](#) (8 – 9 July 2021). The events, which will include diversity of perspectives based on science, aim to increase awareness about STI for food systems and inspire trust through public mobilisation and engagement. The Science Days will produce recommended of actions feeding into the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit.
- ▶ The IMF hosted a conversation on [collaboration between economists and technologists](#) to lay the groundwork for a better future (with Microsoft) and on the social impact of automation on employment (with Oxford University).
- ▶ 8 weeks, 30 conversations - [Innovation Days](#) is UNDP's corporate R&D effort. It aims to engage with the "edges": individuals, communities, organisations and policy makers from different sectors who are building new futures, designing new paradigms and challenging the status quo.
- ▶ WFP's Executive Board met with a focus on "Celebrating Humanitarian and Development Innovations at Scale for Zero Hunger" and the Government of Germany confirmed its continued support of WFP's Innovation Accelerator [for 5 more years](#).
- ▶ ITU continues to explore and help innovators who have scalable AI ideas, start-ups, or scale-ups towards achieving the SDGs to be recognised and have a global impact. This year, ITU will welcome promising start-ups from around the world to join the [AI for Good Innovation Factory](#), a pitching platform for AI start-ups within the [AI for Good Global Summit](#). Watch 35+ previous episodes featuring promising AI start-ups working towards the SDGs [here](#).





Photo: UNDP



## INNOVATION CHALLENGES AND CALLS

- ▶ In Egypt, members of the UN Country Team (incl. ITU, FAO, UNESCO, UNDP and WHO) teamed up with local and regional academics, entrepreneurs, tech startups and policy makers to organise an [interregional challenge on AI for development partnership](#). Across the Middle East and Africa, 200 applicants from 20+ countries competed to pitch ideas on deploying AI to address development challenges, especially related to hunger, health, jobs and innovation, with the winning ideas receiving cash prizes.
- ▶ In March, ESCAP celebrated its [1<sup>st</sup> Innovation Award](#), which recognised and rewarded in-house innovators by giving them visibility across the organisation and encouraged the sharing of innovative practices to inspire colleagues. After an extensive innovation mapping exercise across the organisation, a shortlist of innovations which used digital technologies, harnessed data for impact, and changed the way ESCAP works, were voted on by staff. The three category winners were:
  - An AI real-time speech captioning innovation that saved 95% of the usual cost;
  - The National SDG Tracker, a tool for countries to track progress on the SDGs;
  - The overall winner was the Waste Management Revolution project at the UN Compound in Bangkok, which has led to a 45% increase in recycling and prevented over 1 million single-use catering items per year from becoming waste.
- ▶ The [25 winning start-ups](#) of [UNWTO's Global Start-Up Competition](#) are currently receiving mentorship from Amadeus, Google, Mastercard and Telefónica; technological support from Amazon Web Services; and connections to the UNWTO Innovation Network, IDB Lab, Venture Capitalists and others. In addition, the start-ups will also participate in an event within the framework of the International Tourism Fair.
- ▶ To shine the spotlight on inspiring breakthroughs with results and impacts on SDG implementation, DESA initiated two open calls and received [500 SDG good practices](#) and over 300 innovative government initiatives for its [UN Public Service Awards](#).
- ▶ The IMF's [COVID-19 Call for Ideas](#), launched to support staff and membership during the pandemic, received 50 submissions from across the institution. The four winning projects, which will receive seed funding and implementation support, are
  - IMF Institute Learning Channel;
  - Green Recovery Data Hub;
  - Tracking Income Inequality in Real Time;
  - Tracking Real-Time Activity in Countries Lacking Timely GDP Data: A Machine Learning Approach.





- In 2020, the [UN Technology Bank](#), in partnership with Turkey and UNDP, launched the [SDG Impact Accelerator](#) (SDGia) programme as an opportunity to unlock and boost entrepreneurial talent to improve livelihoods among displaced people in Bangladesh and Uganda. In Uganda, a call was issued inviting start-ups to work on digital agriculture solutions, while in [Bangladesh](#), the focus was on financial inclusion. 20 start-ups were selected to showcase their innovative solutions in Bangladesh and 21 in Uganda. Following the Pre-Acceleration Program, five start-ups from each cohort will be selected to continue with the Acceleration Program between May-June 2021. The UN Technology Bank continuously builds partnerships to support the enhancement of ecosystems for innovation in the LDCs and support to start-ups to scale up.
- In collaboration with the Creative Business Network, UNWTO is hosting an [Investment Readiness Workshop](#) to support start-ups from the European Union seeking funding for their ideas. UNWTO also partnered with the [Singapore Tourism Accelerator](#) to provide growth opportunities to technology start-ups which may be [eligible for pilot funding](#).



Photo: Shutterstock

