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In the framework of UNCTAD15 and the Global Services Forum Week 2021

Create, Innovate, Recover: digitalizing creative industries for a sustainable recovery in Africa

Date: 23 September 2021

Time : 12h30 – 14h CEST

Language : English and French

[Registration link](#)

Online dialogue organized by UNIDO, UNCTAD, and Sound Diplomacy, as an official session of the Global Services Forum Week 2021, contributing to the 15th Session of the Ministerial Conference of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD15) in October 2021, which theme is “From inequality and vulnerability to prosperity for all.”

Background

In November 2020, the UN declared 2021 the “International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development”. The creative economy is not only one of the most rapidly growing sectors of the world economy, but also a highly transformative one in terms of income generation, job creation, and export earnings, thus contributing to the 2030 Agenda. In the context of the African region, the application of new digital technologies in this sector, its positive impact on gender equality, the local development it generates through tourism, and the effective protection and promotion of IPR as part of AfCFTA agenda, represent key opportunities to better utilise, strategise and invest in the creative sector.

Acknowledging its potential, the European Union has committed to boost cultural and creative industry in its partner countries. The EU Strategy for international cultural relations focuses on supporting culture as an engine for sustainable social and economic development and on promoting culture and intercultural dialogue for peaceful inter-community relations, at home and abroad. Similarly, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) recognizes the importance of combining creativity with innovation, digital transformation and opportunity driven entrepreneurship. Consequently, the Organization provides technical assistance to build skills, spur innovation and competitiveness, promote trade opportunities and develop export capabilities.

The impact of COVID-19 on creative industries was significant, hence the urgent need to explore innovative ideas, put in place development programs, and strengthen partnerships between European and African stakeholders for a more sustainable and inclusive economic recovery.

Topics of discussion

This multi-stakeholder dialogue will explore the importance of innovation and digital transformation in the creative sector and how they can contribute towards the recovery from the Covid-19 crisis and



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International Dialogue on Digital Transformation and Creative Industries

the achievement the SDGs, with various case studies from East and West Africa. The session will bring together sectoral experts, policy-makers, development actors, artists, and business leaders, to share perspectives and concrete ideas, and identify how international partnerships can further enhance programmatic opportunities in the African region.

- How can innovation and digital technologies be harnessed for the development and growth of inclusive and sustainable creative industries?
- How have the creative industries been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic? How is the digital transformation of the sector supporting the recovery and enhancing its resilience?
- What are the most urgent needs to be addressed to unlock the full potential of the creative industries? How can we close the digital gender gap in the sector?
- How could the EU and international partnerships better support the creative industries, particularly in the African region?

Expected takeaways

- Discover how the EU, UNIDO, UNCTAD and other international partners are supporting the creative and cultural recovery for the achievement of the SDGs;
- Understand how the creative sector contribute to employment generation and a knowledge-based and innovation-driven economic development, particularly in East and West African states;
- Learn how innovation and digital technologies can be harnessed for the development and growth of inclusive and sustainable creative industries.
- Identification of synergies and opportunities for cooperation on the subject matter at subregional and regional levels.
- Raise awareness on the potential of digital transformation and creative industries for advancing inclusive and sustainable industrial development in the continent.

Agenda

Master of Ceremony : Mr. Patrick Gilabert, Head of the Liaison Office in Brussels and Representative to the European Union, UNIDO

High-level remarks:

- Ms. Miho Shirotori, OiC, Division on International Trade and Commodities, UNCTAD
- Mr. Bernardo Calzadilla Sarmiento, Managing Director, Digitalization, Technology and Agri-Business, UNIDO
- Ms. Friederike Kärcher, Head of Division Media, Culture, Creative Industries, Sport, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany

Presentation by Mr. Alejandro Rivera Rojas, Executive Officer, Directorate of Digitalization, Technology and Agri-Business, UNIDO

Panel discussion, moderated by Mr. Shain Shapiro, CEO, Sound Diplomacy:



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- Ms. Mariachiara Esposito, Policy Officer, Cultural Policy, EU Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (EAC), European Commission
- Ms. Em Ekong - Executive Director, Urban Inclusion and Lead, Lagos Cultural Recovery Task Force
- Ms. Maureen Fondo, Head Copyrights and Related Rights, ARIPO
- Ms. Chy Onwuka, Founder and CEO, FabricsNG
- Mr. George Gachara, Managing Partner, HEVA Fund LLP

Closing remarks:

- Mr. Jean-Claude Kassi Brou, President, Economic Community of West African States Commission (tbc)
- Mr. Peter Mathuki, Secretary General, East African Community (tbc)

Target audience

- Relevant stakeholders and institutions from the EU and East and West Africa
- Potential partner Organizations and donors
- Actors of the cultural and creative industries in Africa and worldwide
- International community
- Civil Society

For further information and to confirm your availability, please contact:

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Mr. Patrick Gilibert, Representative of UNIDO in Brussels: p.gilibert@unido.org



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