

**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD), twenty-seventh session
Geneva, 15-19 April 2024**

**The role of science, technology, and innovation in reinforcing the 2030 Agenda
and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of
sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions**

Statement by

H.E. Ms. Leah Buendia
Undersecretary for Research and Development
Department of Science and Technology
Philippines

DISCLAIMER: The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

Twenty-seventh Session of the CSTD
15-19 April 2024 | Geneva, Switzerland

MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE ON

“The role of science, technology, and innovation in reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions:

Contribution to the 2024 theme of ECOSOC and HLPF on sustainable development and the implementation of its 2023 Ministerial Declaration”

15 April 2024, 12:00-13:00

DR. LEAH J. BUENDIA

Undersecretary for Research and Development
Department of Science and Technology
Republic of the Philippines

Thank you very much, Chair.

Excellencies,

The Report of the Secretary-General on the Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals states that by early 2023, only 12 per cent of the SDG targets are on track, more than half are moderately or severely off track, and some 30 per cent have either seen no movement or regressed. The pandemic may have adversely impacted the progress that have been made and now is the time for us to double our efforts.

With the rapidly changing societies and with the various crises the world is facing, time and time again, it has been proven that science, technology, and innovation is a critical driver for sustainable development.

The Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) remains an important platform to discuss the most pressing issues and how STI can provide solutions to address them. It is also the avenue to further deliberate on how STI could aid in further advancing the Sustainable Development Agenda. The CSTD can continuously conduct studies and encourage collaborations among Member States to come up with joint initiatives that would contribute to the SDGs.

In line with this, the Philippines is pleased to share that through our and the USA's membership in the CSTD, we were able to co-organize with UNCTAD a workshop on Harnessing STI for Disaster Risk Reduction on 29 February to 01 March 2024 in Metro Manila. Among the STI development challenges in DRR that emerged during the discussions of 14 Member States is the management and availability of data. The Philippines, experiencing extreme weather events and facing various natural hazards, has put DRR in one of its STI priorities and recognized that data and technological innovations are key to mitigating risks. One of its concrete examples is the development of GeoRisk Philippines that serves as a central resource of information on natural hazards and risk assessment. It also led to the creation of PlanSmart Ready to Rebuild that is an automated planning tool that can systemically generate a rehabilitation and recovery plan to a community hit by a disaster. Through this, impact and losses could be reduced and lives could be saved.

The global challenges we face are intertwined. Poverty alone is multidimensional and can affect various facets in human lives. One of the ways STI could help in eradicating poverty is through providing livelihood opportunities and technological assistance. The Philippines, through the Department of Science and Technology's Community Empowerment thru Science and Technology (CEST), empowers the poorest and most depressed communities in the country through STI interventions in health and nutrition, water and sanitation, primary education and literacy, livelihood or economic enterprise development, disaster risk reduction, and climate change adaptation.

The Philippine President has also shown his commitment in SDGs 1 and 2 that in 2023, he has announced that the administration's ultimate goal is poverty alleviation and to ensure that Filipinos enjoy a good, healthy, and productive life. The Philippines has created an Inter-Agency Task Force on Zero Hunger. More than having abundant food supply, our people should also receive adequate nutrition to survive. Science may come into play here through food technologies. The Philippines has been implementing a Malnutrition Reduction Program for the youth that involves direct feeding of complementary food packages. There is also a bread called "Enhanced Nutribun or e-Nutribun" that is packed with micronutrients like iron and Vitamin A. Now, more private companies are adopting this food technology which is an affordable and easily accessible nutritious food option for public consumption.

Excellencies,

We have to learn from the lessons of the past and replicate the successes that we have witnessed or practiced. First is that we need to assess if our infrastructure, policies, and technological innovations are inclusive and sustainable. We need to involve all stakeholders when we develop our innovations and policies even as early as in the ideation phase to ensure that they are tailor fit to the needs of the society. We have to bridge the gap and work together to address the setbacks in our SDG targets, especially in poverty, hunger, climate action, and peace.

This is also possible through science communication that is reliable. Both the policymakers and experts need to help the general public and all other sectors understand the power of science to encourage support. We need to build trust and we can only do that if we have fair and just mechanisms. Let us continue helping each other, especially the developing countries and the vulnerable sectors.

Thank you.