

Facilitating Investment in SDG Projects: Spotlight on the SADC Region



PROGRAMME

Online, 28 and 29 April 2022
(14:00-17:00 Central Africa Time – GMT+2)

Background

The economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted investment flows worldwide. Global foreign direct investment (FDI) fell by 42% in 2020.¹ Although the decline was concentrated in developed countries, sustainable development goal (SDG)-relevant greenfield investment in developing and transition economies is now almost 20% lower than before 2015, international project finance - which is crucial for productive capacity and infrastructure development and therefore for the SDGs – declined by more than 30%.² In Africa, SDG-relevant investment fell by 39%.

The pandemic also had a severe impact on the operations of institutions attracting FDI. Travel restrictions and lockdowns accelerated the pace of digitalization in investment promotion agencies (IPAs), helped fast-track the adoption of online investment procedures and reinforced investment facilitation services. Importantly, it also altered for many their priorities with more attention to SDG sectors.³ Pandemic-induced changes to IPA operations came on top of other challenges like the New Industrial Revolution, rising protectionism, the sustainability imperative and new opportunities that can galvanize African IPAs including growing national markets and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

This seminar for Southern African Development Community (SADC) member countries which is being organized in partnership with the Mauritius Economic Development Board (EDB) will cover:

- a. FDI trends and prospects with special attention for investment in SDG sectors, including projects in the food sector, healthcare, ICT, renewable energy, and the blue economy.
- b. IPA experiences in adapting to the new normal and expanding facilitation services to SDG investment projects.
- c. The way forward for bilateral investment agreements in view of the AfCFTA Investment Protocol negotiations.

¹ UNCTAD (January 2021), *Investment Trends Monitor*, Issue 38.

² UNCTAD (April 2021), *SDG Investment Trends Monitor*, Issue 3.

³ UNCTAD (April 2020), IPA Observer No. 8 Special Issue, *Investment Promotion Agencies Striving to Overcome the COVID-19 Challenge* and UNCTAD (July 2020), IPA Observer No. 9 Special Issue, *Post-COVID-19: Investment Promotion Agencies and the "New Normal"*.

Preliminary Programme

Day 1, 28 April 2021

Moderator: Ms. Fifi Peters, Journalist, South Africa

14:00 - 14:20 Opening:

- ▶ Mr. James Zhan, Director, Division on Investment and Enterprise, UNCTAD
- ▶ Mr. Ken Poonoosamy, Chief Executive Officer, EDB Mauritius

14:20 - 14:40 FDI and SDG investment trends in pandemic times.

- ▶ Mr. Paul Wessendorp, Chief, Investment Promotion Section, UNCTAD.

14:40 - 15:40 Panel: Regional cooperation in support of investment in the SDGs.

- ▶ Mr. Peter Varndell, CEO, SADC Business Council
- ▶ Mr. Mário Lironel, Senior Officer, Finance and Investment, SADC Secretariat
- ▶ Mr. Moses Ikiara, Director of the Board, COMESA Regional Investment Agency
- ▶ Mr. Ken Poonoosamy, Chief Executive Officer, EDB Mauritius

Discussant: Mr. Sokunpanha You, Regional Integration and Trade Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

15:40 - 15:50 Break-video

15:50 - 16:50 Facilitation of investment in SDG projects. Presentations by IPAs.

- ▶ [Invest South Africa: Facilitating investment in healthcare.](#)
Mr. Yunus Hoosen, Head, Invest South Africa, Department of Trade and Industry
- ▶ [Seychelles Board of Investment: Investment opportunities in the blue economy.](#)
Mr. Lenny Gabriel, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Seychelles Investment Board
- ▶ [Namibia Investment Promotion Development Board: Investment opportunities in the green economy.](#)
Mr. François van Schalkwyk, Executive: Investments & New Ventures, NIPBD

16:50 - 17:00 Wrap up for the day and overview of day 2.

- ▶ Ms. Natalia Guerra, Senior Capacity-building Coordinator, Investment Promotion Section, UNCTAD

Day 2, 29 April 2021

- 14:00 - 14:30** International investment policies in Africa: towards a new continental investment protocol.
▶ Mr. Hamed El-Kady, Officer-in-Charge, International Investment Agreements Section, UNCTAD
- 14:30 - 15:00** Interactive session: What are the policy options for reforming international investment agreements and what is the role of IPAs in this process?
- 15:00 - 15:30** Mainstreaming SDGs in investment promotion: the case of Costa Rica.
▶ Ms. Karin Lachner, Marketing and Communication Manager, CINDE
- 15.30 - 15:50** Networking virtual coffee-break: facilitated discussions in small groups on mainstreaming SDGs in investment promotion.
- 15:50 - 16:00** Back to plenary for final exchanges and conclusion of the session.
- 16:00 - 16:20** Virtual-site visit to Beau Plan Smart City by Mr Nicolas Eynaud, General Manager of Novaterra (organized by EDB Mauritius).
- 16:20 - 16:30** Wrap up, evaluation and closing.
▶ Mr. Paul Wessendorp, Chief, Investment Promotion Section, UNCTAD