



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

## High-level event

23 September 2021, 6.30-8 a.m. AST, 12:30-2 p.m. CEST

### Background

In November 2020, the United Nations 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 intellectual property rights (IPR) as part of African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agenda, represent key opportunities to better utilise, strategize and invest in the creative sector.

Acknowledging its potential, many Member States have committed to raising awareness, sharing best practices and promoting cooperation to seize the opportunities and tackle the challenges of creative economy.

For example, the European Union 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, UNIDO and UNCTAD recognize the importance of combining creativity with innovation, digital transformation, trade, intellectual property and opportunity driven entrepreneurship. Consequently, they provide 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 programmes, and strengthen partnerships for a more sustainable and inclusive economic recovery.

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Unedited





## Topics for discussion

Focusing on Africa and drawing on various case studies from East and West Africa, this event, co-organized by UNIDO, UNCTAD and Sound Diplomacy, 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 the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. To that end, the session will bring together sectoral experts, policymakers, 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.

The meeting will explore how the international community could support national efforts of developing countries to increase their participation in and benefit from dynamic sectors and to foster, protect and promote their creative industries, including by way of strategies to appropriately protect and enforce intellectual property for trade and development goals.

- 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 European Union and international partnerships better support the creative industries, particularly in the African region?

## Objectives

- Discover how the European Union, UNIDO, UNCTAD and other international partners are supporting the creative and cultural recovery for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 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.
- Identify 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.



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## Logistics

**Venue:** The event will be held online. The link to join will be provided upon registration.

**Date and time:** 23 September 2021, 6.30-8 a.m. AST, 12:30-2 p.m. CEST.

**More information and registration:** The event requires prior registration [here](#)

**Languages:** English, Spanish, French and International Sign.

## Programme

### Master of Ceremony

- Mr. Patrick Gilabert, Representative, Liaison Office, Brussels, United Nations Industrial Development Organisation

### High-level remarks

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

### Presentation

- Mr. Alejandro Rivera Rojas, Executive Officer, Directorate of Digitalization, Technology and Agri-Business, United Nations Industrial Development Organisation

### Panel discussion

#### *Moderator:*

- Mr. Shain Shapiro, CEO, Sound Diplomacy

#### *Panellists:*

- 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 Chief Executive Officer, FabricsNG, Nigeria
- Ms. Mariachiara Esposito, Policy Officer, General Directorate for Education and Culture, European Commission
- Mr. George Gachara, Managing Partner, HEVA Fund LLP

### Closing remarks

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

## Co-organizers

### United Nations co-organizers



UNITED NATIONS



UNITED NATIONS  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



### Other co-organizers



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES  
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