



Parallel event

22 October 2025
Concordia 1
10–11.30 a.m.



Igniting entrepreneurial potential: UNCTAD Empretec in the age of transformation

Description

Entrepreneurship is a powerful driver of innovation, inclusive economic growth and sustainable development. The UNCTAD Empretec programme has trained over 550,000 entrepreneurs across over 40 countries in the global South, fostering a vibrant and resilient community of leaders of startups, microenterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises.

By equipping entrepreneurs with behavioural tools, business skills and access to funding and networks, Empretec has helped transform ideas into viable enterprises, many of which have become key contributors to job creation and innovation in their communities.

Shifts in the global economy demand new approaches to entrepreneurship support; approaches that are agile, inclusive and future-oriented. In response, the Empretec programme has undergone a comprehensive transformation under the new Empretec 2.0 plan, prioritizing innovation, digital readiness, data-driven impact measurement and tailored support for high-potential startups in key development sectors.

Discussions at this event will reflect on the achievements of the Empretec programme, share best practices and explore the future orientation of the programme, with participants engaging in a forward-looking dialogue on how entrepreneurship can shape equitable, inclusive and sustainable development.

Programme

Opening remarks: UNCTAD Secretary-General/Deputy Secretary-General

Panel 1. Entrepreneurship and evolving digital and green economies

Questions

- How can policymakers and decision-makers ensure that entrepreneurship education remains inclusive and aligned with the evolving demands of digital and green economies?
- Which indicators can best capture the broader impact of entrepreneurship support programmes, beyond basic measures?

Panel 2. Scaling impact: Smarter support for entrepreneurs in a changing world

Questions

- How can business development and Empretec centres be leveraged to improve the delivery and accessibility of business development services for small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups in developing countries?
- What role should peer-to-peer mentoring play in entrepreneurial ecosystems, and how can its quality and sustainability be ensured?

Moderator: To be confirmed

Interpretation

English, French

Contact

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