



## **RESILIENCE IN ACTION: SOCIAL POLICIES TO NAVIGATE UNCERTAINTY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

### **XVI Ministerial Development Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean**

#### **Side Event 3 - Innovation Showcase Sustainable Solutions for Social Resilience**

#### **Concept Note**

While technological innovations have always driven development, the current pace of innovation is unprecedented. The current transitions are fundamentally reshaping the world we live in while presenting an opportunity to shift towards more environmentally conscious, economically sustainable and socially inclusive economic models.

At the heart of these transformative shifts lies innovation—the catalyst driving these transitions forward. Innovation is not merely a byproduct but an essential force steering the course of these transitions. It paves a path for the emergence of new approaches, methodologies, and technologies to address pressing development issues of our time. The green and digital transitions – if approached inclusively, thoughtfully, and strategically – could be leveraged to deliver the SDGs.

Although progress against the SDGs has faced substantial setbacks, the green and digital transitions provide an opportunity to accelerate our efforts to address development issues by harnessing innovative solutions. In fact, digital technologies stand as a linchpin, capable of directly impacting up to 70% of all SDG targets.<sup>2</sup> However, there is still a gap between the intricate challenges nations face today and the traditional, linear approaches typically employed in governmental and developmental planning. Many governments acknowledge this disparity yet struggle to adapt and bridge the gap effectively.

Moreover, the green and digital transitions present challenges linked to the uptake of new business models, adequate standards and laws, financial incentives, behavioral change, among others. Countries may need to pursue diverse transition paths depending on their national circumstances. These transitions must be addressed with a whole-of-society approach –including leveraging the catalytic power of governments, the talents and expertise of the private sector, and the knowledge of civil society.

Recognizing that bridging this gap can have a catalyst effect on development efforts to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs, this side event will showcase innovative solutions from a range of regional stakeholders contributing to build resilient societies in LAC. By emphasizing a variety of perspectives and approaches, the session aims to highlight success stories, share best practices, and encourage collaboration among decision makers capable of implementing these innovations on a larger scale. This collective effort aims to amplify their impact and drive meaningful change in social development.

This side event will spotlight the potential of leveraging innovation to advance social development, particularly in the realms of inclusive economic growth, adaptive social protection, and digital inclusion. Through a series of engaging presentations, a diverse lineup of speakers will share unique insights from innovative initiatives



from their respective regions and areas of expertise. Each speaker will share compelling success stories, lessons learned and effective strategies, highlighting the impact of their work on community resilience and sustainability.

This dynamic one-hour event will feature six innovative initiatives that are contributing to building resilience in the region:

- **“Bioenergy from Rum distillery wastewater and Sargassum Seaweed”**- Legena Henry, CEO & Founder, Rum & Sargassum Inc.
- **“BlueBOT: Community Participation in Conservation and the Blue Economy”** - Antonio Hollingsworth, Executive Director, Bajan Digital Creations Inc
- **“How to improve social protection with digitalization (and a modest amount of money)?”** - Luis da Silva da Palva, Regional Social Protection Specialist, UNDP
- **“Sustainable, Deforestation-Free Coffee in the Ecuadorian Amazon: Catalyzing Social, Economic, and Environmental Transformation”** - Patricia Serrano, Regional Program Specialist Climate & Forests, UNDP
- **“Interoperability: Collaborations to Enhance Social Protection”** - National Registry of People – Oscar Rivera, Commissioner, National Registry of People of Honduras
- **“A Big Data Approach to Environmental Justice and Conflict Sensitivity in Lithium Governance”** - Fernando Aramayo, Fernando Aramayo, Programme Coordinator and Institutional Management, UNDP Bolivia