Conference on
“Innovation for Inclusive Development” - 21 November 2012

Tackling high rates of social exclusion and poverty are important challenges for many developing and emerging countries’ development strategies. However, substantial inequalities, high rates of poverty and social exclusion in many emerging and developing countries in spite of successful innovation experiences are a testimony to the fact that built-up innovation capacities is not necessarily inclusive. Many developing countries have successfully developed “islands of excellence” (e.g. lead universities or large modern firms) while the vast majority of firms and individuals lack even basic innovation capabilities, this feeds into wage inequalities. However, at the same time innovative products targeted at, or produced by, low- and middle-income groups should be pursued to address inequalities.

→ The OECD Project on Innovation for Inclusive Development, in cooperation with the OECD Programme on Higher Education and Research for Development (IHERD), which is a four-year programme financially supported by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), seeks to address the policy challenges associated with innovation and inclusive development and aims to convene a dialogue with policy makers and researchers from around the world in South Africa on 21 November 2012. The conference will also be a first step towards creating a network of interested stakeholders for exchanging experience and jointly engaging in research on the 2013-14 OECD Project on Knowledge and Innovation for Inclusive Development.

The conference will bring together stakeholders from South Africa, developing and developed countries as well as representatives from international organisations, NGOs, foundations and the private sector. Discussions will focus on the various policy challenges, providing feedback on potential steps for future project work. They will be based on an OECD report which investigates two key issues: i) how different income groups can benefit more from innovation, and ii) how these groups can themselves play a greater role in the innovation process. Attention will be given to the role of innovation in both growth and social development. The conference will also provide policy makers with insights about practices and perspectives from both developing and emerging and developed economies. It will provide particular emphasis on the South African policy experience.

The agenda covers the following three priority areas for discussion:

1. Innovation with its influence on inequalities focusing on the strongly unequal production structures of many low- and middle-income countries characterised by substantial productivity and innovation performance gaps across businesses;

2. Innovation as a solution focusing on the contributions of innovations such as information and communication technologies but also grassroots innovation;

3. Policy needs and future research matters related to innovation and inclusive development.

The event is organised back-to-back with the MEIDE conference which is organized jointly by CeSTII (Center for Science, Technology & Innovation Indicators) of the Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa and UNU-MERIT (United Nations University - Maastricht Economic and Social Research and Training Centre on Innovation and Technology). The MEIDE conference brings together every year researchers from around the world to discuss the importance of innovation for development. It will take place on 22 and 23 November 2012.
Agenda for the Innovation for Inclusive Development Conference

21 November 2012

Session 1 – Opening Session [09:00 – 10:15]
Moderator: Thulani Mavuso, Chief Operations Officer, Department of Science and Technology, South Africa

Welcome and Opening Remarks: Imraan Patel, Deputy Director-General: Socio-Economic Partnerships, Department of Science and Technology, South Africa
Yuko Harayama, Deputy Director, Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry, OECD
Pierre Mohnen, Professor, UNU-MERIT

Presentation of the OECD Report: Caroline Paunov, Economist, Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry, OECD

Questions and Discussion

Coffee Break [10:15-10:45]

Session 2 – Innovation and Inequalities: Is There a Trade-off? [10:45-12:15]

Emerging and developing countries often have “islands of excellence” which are very innovative, world-leading businesses, sectors, regions and research institutions or universities. These coexist with a large group of unproductive firms, not only in the informal sector.

Questions for the discussions include the following:

• What are the approaches taken by national innovation policies to develop frontier sectors and activities? Do these approaches increase performance gaps across firms?
• What policies are in place to foster dissemination and innovation performance of laggard businesses? Are any of these policies targeting the informal sector?
• Are social issues and inequalities part of national innovation agendas? Which are examples of approaches towards addressing them? Is reducing skills gaps a priority?

Moderator: Dominique Guellec, Head of Division, Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry, OECD

Panellists:
• Michael Kahn, Professor Extraordinaire at Stellenbosch University and Director at Research and Innovation Associates, South Africa
• Parveen Arora, Advisor, National Science and Technology Management Information of the Department of Science and Technology, India
• Gillian Marcelle, Associate Professor of Strategy and Innovation, University of the Witwatersrand
• Bingyou Lu, China Rural Technology Development Center, MOST, China
• Victor P. Mammana, Director, Renato Archer Centre for Information Technology, Brazil
Keynote Speech and Lunch Break

“Inclusive Innovation: A New Emerging Paradigm”

Raghunath A. Mashelkar, President of the Global Research Alliance and National Research Professor

Session 3 – Can Inclusive Innovation Help Tackle Inequality?  
[14:00 – 15:30]

This session will focus on the contributions innovation can make towards improving the welfare of lower- and middle-income groups. A first way is described by “frugal” innovation; these are products that help improve welfare and entrepreneurship of lower-income groups. A second way has been referred to as “grassroots” innovation which are innovative activities undertaken by lower-income groups.

Questions for the discussion include the following:

- What is the potential of inclusive innovation for lower-income groups? What needs to be done to remove barriers to their wider uptake including in rural areas?
- Do ICT-based innovations have the potential to substantially alter opportunities for lower-income groups? What role can private and public sector play? What are successful examples?
- To what extent should national innovation policies focus on “frugal and grassroots innovation”? What should be the main tools?

Moderator: Yonah Seleti, Chief Director: Indigenous Knowledge System, Department of Science and Technology, South Africa

Panellists:
- Fernando Santiago, Senior Program Officer, IDRC
- Brian Child, Associate Professor, University of Florida
- Anupam Khanna, Chief Economist & Director-General, Policy Outreach at the National Association of Software & Service Companies (NASSCOM), India
- Aldo Stroebel, Director of International Academic Projects in the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and Associate Professor, University of the Free State
- Adrian Ely, Head of Impact and Engagement, ESRC STEPS Centre

Coffee Break  
[15:30 – 15:45]

Session 4 - Panel Discussion: Identifying Research Priorities to Inform Policy  
[15:45 – 17:15]

Sessions 1, 2 and 3 have discussed how development leads to substantial transformations of the economic systems of developing and emerging economies, so that distributional issues can be even more substantial. At the same time innovation offers potential means of addressing outcomes of growth dynamics that are not inclusive.
Questions for the concluding discussion include the following:

- What do private and public initiatives do to address financing needs of both laggard businesses and “frugal and grassroots innovation” projects? What can help improve their performance?
- Do policies aimed at supporting innovation foster inequalities in revenues, rewarding only the best trained and most skilled with access to resources? Is there anything policies should do differently?
- What future research priorities are important to help inform innovation policy with regards to inclusive development?

Moderator: Fred Gault, Professor Extraordinaire, Tshwane University of Technology and United Nations University, MERIT

Panellists:

- Bart Verspagen, Director of UNU-MERIT and Director-Dean of the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (MGSoG) at Maastricht University
- Esperanza Lasagabaster, Service Line Manager, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, The World Bank
- Govindan Parayil, Vice-Rector of UNU-University and Director of the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies
- Rasigan Maharajh, Chief Director of the Institute for Economic Research on Innovation, Faculty of Economics and Finance, Tshwane University of Technology

Closing Remarks [17:15 – 17:45]

- Dominique Guellec, Head of Division, Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry, OECD
- Imraan Patel, Deputy Director-General: Socio-Economic Partnerships, Department of Science, Technology and Industry, South Africa

Dinner [20:00 – 21:30]

Background Information and Updates

http://oe.cd/inclusive

Venue

President Hotel, 4 Alexander Road, Bantry Bay, Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa

Contact

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