



**Asia-Pacific  
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**Advancing** Free Trade  
for Asia-Pacific **Prosperity**

# **Building Capacity in Promoting Inclusive and Responsible Business for Sustainable Growth in Digital Society**

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## **PART ONE      EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report summarizes a series of cases presented at two seminars held under the auspices of the APEC project *Building Capacity in Promoting Inclusive and Responsible Business for Sustainable Growth in Digital Society* (hereinafter abbreviated as the APEC IRB Project). The objective of this project is to enhance the capacities of economies through an exchange of information and sharing of practices in promoting inclusive and responsible business activities in the digital economy, restoring economies' confidence in business and investment, harnessing the opportunities of the digital society in advancing economic sustainability, thus contributing to the well-being of society. The project will also, by making the best of digital technologies, providing fresh perspectives and innovative means to navigate new realities, facilitate the revitalization of the regional economy, and work toward a healthy, resilient, and inclusive APEC community.

The seminars were held online through the platform GoToWebinar in 2020 and Zoom in 2021. Ultimately, for reasons of the pandemic, 58 invited speakers, participants, and representatives from 14 economies, including Australia; Chile; People's Republic of China; Hong Kong, China; Malaysia; Mexico; Peru; the Republic of the Philippines; Russia; Singapore; Chinese Taipei; Thailand; USA and Viet Nam exchanged opinions during the webinar in November 2020 and the workshop in May 2021. Also, in this group, participants and speakers from universities, research centers and international organizations shared their practices and opinions. Meanwhile, given the APEC IRB Project's key effort on gender balance, it is worth noting that 34 of these speakers and participants were female, representing approximately 60%.

The first seminar, *Webinar on Promoting Inclusive and Responsible Business for Sustainable Growth in Digital Society* in November 2020 through the platform GoToWebinar (hereinafter referred to as Webinar 2020). Webinar 2020 was focused on bringing together policymakers and the private sector to enhance capacities of economies through exchanging information and sharing of practices in promoting IRB activities through the digital economy, harnessing the opportunities of the digital transformation in advancing economic sustainability, thus contributing to the well-being of the people of the Asia Pacific.

The second seminar, *Workshop on Building Capacity in Promoting Inclusive and Responsible Business for Sustainable Growth in Digital Society* was co-hosted by the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China in May 2021 through the platform Zoom (hereinafter referred to as Workshop 2021). Workshop 2021 focused on bringing together policymakers, academics and the private sector to share insights, best practices as well as suggestions on ways to enhance the role of both government and business in IRB in the post-pandemic era, restore economies' confidence in trade and investment, facilitate economic and social recovery, thus contributing to the well-being of the people of the Asia Pacific.

IRB roughly refers to the practice of conducting business with ethical, environmental and community goals in mind and addressing the needs of everyone involved, especially the underrepresented, while investing, for-profit and achieve quantitative growth. APEC IRB Project is set to study IRB practices by digital businesses in the APEC region, and how these activities help to improve people's livelihoods, address social challenges, and facilitate sustainable economic growth.

## **PART TWO INTRODUCTION**

### **2.1 Inclusive and Responsible Business**

Inclusive and Responsible Business (IRB) is constituted as a market-based solution where the company is established as an agent that contributes to development and inclusive and sustainable economic growth from the business sector. The OECD has defined responsible business conduct as making a positive contribution to economic, environmental and social progress with a view to achieving sustainable development and avoiding and addressing adverse impacts related to an enterprise's direct and indirect operations, products or services as underlined in the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. IRB gives equal focus to responsible business and inclusive development, which emphasizes the inclusion of all population in economic growth.

The term IRB generally refers to a business model that creates income opportunities and offers affordable and relevant products and services to low-income and marginalized communities (Asian Development Bank, 2018). Thus, from the inclusive and responsible private sector, economically viable models are generated to address the base of the pyramid (BoP)<sup>1</sup> giving access to better living conditions.

In the context of the digital economy, the new technologies expand the concept of inclusion, producing results of improvement in the quality of life of the population. New generations of highly innovative companies achieve aligned visions of various groups in a sustainable and inclusive society from the effective use of technologies, according to principles of social inclusion, transparency, and sustainability<sup>2</sup>

### **2.2 APEC Project (CTI 04 2020T): Building Capacity in Promoting Inclusive and Responsible Business for Sustainable Growth in Digital Society**

The APEC IRB Project (CTI 04 2020T): Building Capacity in Promoting Inclusive and Responsible Business for Sustainable Growth in Digital Society comprises two online activities: an IRB Webinar and a Capacity Building Workshop, due to travel restrictions posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This project supports Bogor Declaration and Osaka Action Agenda as well as Malaysia 2020's Priority in Improving the Narrative of Trade and Investment in inclusive and responsible business and contributes to a more inclusive APEC community by 2030, as stated in the *APEC Action Agenda on Advancing Economic, Financial and Social Inclusion in the APEC Region*. It also responds to APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 to discuss how to foster an enabling environment to promote innovation and improve productivity and drive strong, balanced, secure, sustainable and inclusive growth that brings palpable benefits and greater health and wellbeing

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<sup>1</sup> The concept of companies at the base of the pyramid (BoP) was presented by Professor CK Prahalad, from the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan, and SL Hart, Professor Emeritus at the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management at the University of Michigan, and Cornell University. In the article "Fortune at the Base of the Pyramid", they invited multinational companies to look at the aspirations of low-income and vulnerable people with "a new lens of inclusive capitalism" and to investigate the unexplored potential market formed by the poorest four billion human beings. This market comprises people who have an annual per capita income of less than US \$ 1,500 and represent a "great uncharted territory for profitable growth" and a profitable market (Inter-American Development Bank, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> These manage to integrate efficiently, at a low cost and with few geographic limitations, the participating population of the value chain (BoP), allowing the low-income population to benefit from new forms of employment and better economic opportunities (SNV, WBCSD, 2010).

to all. The project is set to study IRB practices by digital businesses in the APEC region, and discuss how to better leverage the potential of innovation and digital industry to help improve people's livelihoods, address social challenges, and facilitate sustainable economic growth.

The participants were mainly representatives of the public and private sectors of member economies including universities and innovation centers through nomination by the participating APEC economies, including government officials, ministries of economy and trade, or experts from academia and other relevant organizations.

The Project addresses the capacity-building needs of developing economies by confronting opportunities and challenges in digital transformation, improving the capacity of authorities in creating appropriate policies for the evolving economy, and promoting innovative development through inclusive approaches in the region.

The first one focused on sharing successful stories or IRB, lessons learned, challenges and the role of public-private partnership. The workshop focused on enhancing knowledge of inclusive and responsible business among participants in the APEC region by exploring key elements, policy, initiatives and challenges. Hence, enabling better recognition of the role played by IRB activities in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic by sharing the best practices of digital companies and fostering a closer public-private partnership to enable IRB activities. This capacity-building project emphasized the following areas: (1) Key elements of IRB; (2) Case studies on IRB activities that enable industry recovery and secure people's lives during and after the pandemic; and 3) Public-private partnership facilitating IRB.

The capacity building program studied cases of how the evolving economy, through inclusive and responsible business activities, increases consumer welfare and promotes innovation and economic efficiency. This project addressed the capacity-building needs of developing economies by confronting opportunities and challenges in digital transformation, improving the capacity of authorities in developing appropriate policies for the evolving economy, and promoting innovative development through inclusive approaches in the region. It serves as a platform to identify and share inclusive practices with member economies. This is a useful reference to develop more capacity building initiatives.

The project, as the first IRB-focused capacity development program under CTI, shares knowledge and experiences shared in the 2020 webinar and 2021 workshop to extend the benefits to more economies and deepen the spirit of the APEC community.

## **PART THREE      SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF CASES**

Within the context of the Project “*Building Capacity in Promoting Inclusive and Responsible Business for Sustainable Growth in Digital Society*” organized by APEC together with the participation of University of Chile, a capacity-development program was carried out to study cases of inclusive and responsible commercial activities that have countered the negative impact of COVID-19 in the APEC region.

In November 2020, a webinar was carried out to share the best practices of inclusive and responsible business activities that help in the fight against the pandemic. Success stories, lessons learned, challenges and the role of public-private associations from the following economies were shared: Australia; Chile; Mexico; Peru; Russia and Thailand. In May 2021, a second Workshop was carried out to build capacities in Inclusive and Responsible Business for Sustainable Growth in Digital Society. Successful stories, presentations and discussions from the following economies were shared: Chile; People’s Republic of China; Malaysia; Mexico; Russia and USA. In this document, such experiences are documented by a descriptive analysis.

### **3.1 Summary and Analysis of Cases presented in Webinar 2020**

#### **3.1.1 Case 1/5: Moscow School of Management SKOLKOVO: Inclusion and Responsibility in Education. Russia**

The president from the *Moscow School of Management SKOLKOVO* in Russia, Andrei Sharonov, presented the second case of the first Webinar 2020 session. It’s a private business school whose education is validated by international certifications such as the European Foundation for Management Development and it is a member of the global initiative PRME (Principles of Responsible Management Education). This School of Management is set up as an example of alliances between the Academic World and the Government, that, with private investments, can impulse sustainable growth and digital innovation.

Mr Sharonov emphasized the role of the institution and the people in contributing to sustainable development through inclusion. Through the educational process, they aim to form responsible business leaders who are capable to face world challenges and participate in social changes. They believe that sustainability is an added value for the business, the public sector and the communities, achieving to combine economic, environmental, social and ethical factors, and thus take advantage of the new opportunities for growth and competition within the context of Sustainable Development Objectives. At the same time, the social impact is driven through education, research, networks, and operations, integrating into its educational model the Agenda of Sustainability. *Moscow School of Management SKOLKOVO* has set up centers where experiences in Sustainable Business, Energy Research, Management Ethics, and the Consumer Market are developed.

Digitization materialized with the creation of the first multifunctional virtual class in Eastern Europe and has enabled the transformation of corporate programs operating during the pandemic. Digital transformation is a tool at the regional level to improve the quality of life, taking into account the needs of people and the opportunities of cities. The regional study on digital transformation, shows that digitization is more determined by the quality of policies and human capital than by the capacity of resources. They propose a digital acceleration program for the generation of skills and economic opportunities led by the leaders of the Russian Region. The program proposes: (1) The development of digital demand, the creation of skills and competencies for the effective use of digital platforms and systems; (2) Increase the quality of human capital and promotion of a creative environment that facilitates innovation; (3) The creation of digital offerings and various business models for consumers; and (4) Competition in the market and for

the benefit of the products. Regional administrations and business leaders in traditional industries must become competent customers of digital systems. This would create opportunities to develop products with great global market potential.

3.1.2 Case 2/5: The Rights and Liberties Protection Department of the Ministry of Justice of Thailand: the supplier and regulating role of government in the Private Sector in inclusion and responsibility policies. Thailand.

Director Nareeluc Pairchaiyapoom from the *International Human Rights Division of the Rights and Liberties Protection Department of the Ministry of Justice of Thailand* presented the third successful case in the first session of Webinar 2020. Mrs. Pairchaiyapoom presented initiatives that allowed the government to promote and regulate responsible business behavior to safeguard and protect human rights by the business sector of Thailand through the domestic policy.

Since 2016 the Government has defined the Political Committee on Human Rights and through the “National Business and Human Rights Action Plan”, and has worked on promoting responsible business behavior. The committee involves representatives from the government, state-owned Companies, Civil Society, and the academic world. In 2017, The committee carried out a regional enquiry and a diagnostic study regarding responsible business behavior in Thailand. In 2018, they started writing, through participative dialogues and in parallel with a new inquiry, the “National Human Rights Action Plan” in the business sector. Through its web page, a collaborative platform was generated among the parties to give their contributions to such plan within 10 years. In 2019, the review of the policy draft was carried out as well as the adoption of the Plan by Thailand cabinet. In October 2019, Thailand became the first Asian economy to have a plan at economy scale in that matter, a milestone that allowed for an important recognition by actively showing their intentions to collaborate with other economies to promote responsible business behavior and human rights protection.

The high executives of the Ministry have been motivated to ensure the implementation of the Plan. Stakeholders have been invited to meetings and the government has emphasized that the best business model to follow is the state-owned company. On the other hand, was implemented a study on incentives for the private sector and state-owned companies to be responsible and, together, to promote such behavior. Investigations are being carried out developing measures to safeguard those who work in defense of human rights. The Thailand Government conducts training on responsible companies and human rights, the dissemination of the Plan and the use of the web platform. Thailand experiences are shared with other Asian economies, reinforcing the commitment to responsible business behavior. The four areas that address the National Business Action Plan on Human Rights were agreed according to priority: Human Rights, Community Land, Natural Resources and the Environment.

3.1.3 Case 3/5: China-Peru Investment Development Association: The promotion of inclusive and responsible business for inclusive growth. Peru

Alfredo Rolando, founder of the *China-Peru Investment Development Association* presented the first case in the second session of the Webinar 2020. He presented how inclusive and responsible business activities can help to overcome poverty and achieve more egalitarian societies. Along this line, Mr Rolando indicated when it regards the promotion of inclusive and responsible business, it is key to know about inclusive growth. Lately, nations have prioritized diminishing poverty, aspiring for more egalitarian societies, considering the economy and the strategic connection with social policies. This would allow to reach better inclusion and more prosperous and sustainable economies, regulating employment and salaries, creating better skills and improving access of people to the economic activity.

The main goal for inclusive growth must be more than reducing poverty. It should also consider better economic integration and the creation of strategies promoting these kinds of businesses. In the last four decades, inequality has strikingly increased: the richest are getting further away from the rest and work no longer provides a guarantee for economic participation. More people are living in poverty even though they are integrated into the labor activity, and therefore worrying about poverty should not only entail employment. Other employment risks related to the precarity of work conditions and the lack of rights working for oneself or automation must be considered. The future meaning of inclusive economy, will concern the biggest part of the population, making inequality bigger, affecting productivity and potential growth.

What China has achieved in reducing extreme poverty, is one of the strategies to attend and should be implemented in business. In Peru, a big segment of society is still living in poverty. Foreign investment is of great importance in searching for equality; those who are part of the more vulnerable sector could benefit from this suggested economic activity. Both economies have a long history of economic cooperation through treaties of free commerce, and they, therefore, have a strong economic link in the traditional sectors such as mining and agriculture. Strengthening social inclusion in the traditional sectors is of vital importance for the communities living on farmland and in mining zones. Looking towards the future, China must be considered as one of the leading economies in the development of new technologies through artificial intelligence, 5G and the Internet. For Peru, China is seen as a strategic partner in the exchange of technology and also in the creation of opportunities for Latin America, participating in the digitization of industry and sectors of the economy.

In this sense, DIDI plays an important role in having an advanced platform that can use artificial intelligence to gather valuable information. There are major benefits, products and intelligence that are being gathered in the whole operation, making it possible to visualize the inclusive nature of this business. Usually, the drivers of DIDI are people without access to stable work overtime. This highly competitive application platform has meant important support for the workers and their families allowing for better incomes and benefits - compared to other platforms. DIDI has positioned itself as a company that promotes inclusive and responsible business through technology.

#### 3.1.4 Case 4/5: Scale Capital: Investment in inclusive and responsible businesses. Chile.

Oliver Flögel, the managing partner of *Scale Capital Chile*, presented the second case during the second session of Webinar 2020. He explained how investments in responsibility and sustainability by the private sector and collaboration with the public sector generate an impact on overcoming the crisis. *Scale Capital* is a company that invests in digital business with the goal to change the way people work and interact, generating an effect through shared values. Portfolio's startups from different origins and strategies quickly delivered solutions and help during the pandemic. In line with this, technology is an accelerator of social responsibility.

Among the startups, *Inventa* offers services to third parties with artificial intelligence and language processing to use "Chatbots" to answer the questions of their clients. Considering the available technology to efficiently give information, the Government of Cataluña and Spain decided to eradicate Fake News and inform the citizens correctly about COVID-19. *Zyght*, a health-process company, inserted a free COVID module for its clients on its application. A network where each employee can check if they have a symptom, obtain traceability or review the health measures and safety of the company. It is a tool that helps industrial companies going back to work safely. *Fractal*, is a platform based on the cloud to maintain the assets of hospitals in Latin America to have the medical team controlled, in perfect conditions and to ensure good processes during the pandemic.

*U-Planner* uses artificial intelligence to know the optimum number of students in a classroom according to the availability of fixed assets, teachers, and students. During the pandemic, they have dedicated themselves to organizing education using the new online format. *Simple*, an operator of mobile telephony eliminate the credit score of the clients understanding that this is not only a sanitary crisis but also an economic crisis, anticipating that many will lose the service by not being able to afford it. Instead of consuming and paying at the end, they only must pay in advance. All credit scores are eliminated, delivering a high-level phone service to everybody. They later increased the data consumption due to the rise in use because everything is done from home.

3.1.5 Case 5/5: Secretariat of Digital Government – Presidency of the Council of Ministers: The political crisis, digital citizenship, and the role of technology. Peru.

Mr Diego Llosa, Vice minister of Foreign Trade of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism introduced the policy environment of digital economy in Peru.

Mauricio Castro, an expert in social research from the Secretariat of Digital Government of Peru, explained the relation between technology and the political situation. Peru has gone through a particular period, in which the citizen organization and technology got a relationship with sustainability, inclusive growth and digital economy.

During the last two decades, strong growth has been achieved at the macro-economic level thanks to democracy and public-private investment. The citizens have seen an improvement in their quality of life because of social programs and redistribution policies, but structural inequalities persist and they are an impediment to sustainable growth. It's necessary to be more inclusive, through government work and the private sector. Digital technologies are decisive for economic reactivation and to maintain economic and social stability. The design of effective public policies and stimulating the digital ecosystem generates more possibilities and interactions between citizens and new industries, such as DIDI, Uber and other applications with international standards. There is a new way of handling users and they are demanding a new agreement. The last political crisis interrupted democratic continuity, re-established thanks to the organic action of the citizens stimulated by technology. The digital citizenry is a combination of popular digital culture and political activism.

The Government has worked to design a digital ecosystem that includes the Academic World, public officers, civil society and excluded populations: Quechua, Aymara y Ashaninka. The objective is to guarantee quality internet for all citizens, linking the digital economy to reactivation, the competitiveness of the productive processes, developing accessible digital services, strengthening digital talent, creating a culture of innovation and the ethical management of data intelligence. In the future, the digital citizenry must be available for everybody through universal internet access, developing digital skills in schools and broadening the offer of digital services. Public policies must have continuity, and the government must leave behind traditional bureaucracy and go towards a digital administration that allows carrying out the rights of the citizenry. This digital ecosystem between the public and private entities is fundamental for economic reactivation, especially in the more affected sectors. This current initiative had as focus the more vulnerable population, intervening in these markets thanks to technology and joint work. These markets were transformed with the help of FinTech and digital applications toward electronic commerce allowing to safeguard the citizenry in the face of COVID-19.

## **3.2 Summary and Analysis of Cases presented in Workshop 2021**

3.2.1 Case 1/9: OECD Center for Responsible Business Conduct.

Manager, Asia of the OECD *Center for Responsible Business Conduct*, Tihana Bule, presented the first case in Workshop 2021. The OECD is an inter-governmental organization that operates in a similar way to APEC, with 38 member economies, including 8 APEC economies, seeking to advance better policies, standards and experiences.. OECD works through close to 300 committees and working groups of policy makers and experts who cover almost all areas of policy making. One of these areas is responsible business conduct, which is under the responsibility of the Investment Committee and the Working Party on Responsible Business Conduct (RBC). 50 economies currently participate in this work and the OECD engages with virtually all APEC economies to various degrees.

Among the global trends on RBC, there has been evolving and increasing expectation over the last decade on how business should interact with society and in particular the rise in demand on companies to understand and address their comprehensive impacts on the people and the planet, including in their supply chain. Bule stressed that evidence exists that responsible business is good business and is a strategic way to compete in the market, as also highlighted by uptake of RBC by investors and other market participants. Needs and social responsibility are a fundamental part of the structure of business models and not solely related to corporate philanthropy. transformations.

OECD has developed one of the main international instruments on RBC, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the related guidances that help businesses operationalize the Guidelines. Importantly, the Guidelines and the related UN and ILO instruments in this regard align. A key tool is risk-based due diligence, which is a process through which companies can identify and respond to negative environmental and social impacts. The key focus of the OECD guidances is the help companies integrate RBC in their risk management systems and corporate governance. . The private sector decides differently depending on the circumstances, so the design is developed to complement each company's risk management policies and the approach facilitates and makes the process more practical. Bule highlighted that the landscape of "digital" business is vast (e.g. online platforms, social media, digital ledger technology, big data and online service providers). Digitalization has also had a significant impact on business models and has changed traditional industries, and has even in many instances changed the notion of what a business is (e.g. companies that are born global).and Bule highlighted two aspects in this context when it comes to RBC: (1) New digital tools can accelerate development, and enable businesses to strengthen their efforts to act responsibly, in particular as it relates to responsible supply chain management (e.g. blockchain technology to manage supply chains, machine learning and analytics to track risk) and (2) At the same time, the digital transformation can also lead to business causing or contributing to social and environmental harms in new ways (e.g. risk of bias and discrimination in the use of artificial intelligence,.. Therefore, the key takeaway is that existing instruments on RBC provide a framework that can help companies 1) understand and meet their responsibilities in this new landscape and 2) can also help considering adverse impacts in emerging technologies where regulation is still minimal.

### 3.2.2 Case 2/9: APEC Study Center of Nankai University. China

Deputy Director, Tu Hong, from APEC Study Center of Nankai University presented key terms for the Workshop and the role of IRB. First, key terms are introduced for the Workshop: (1) Corporate Social Responsibility: For better corporations, working conditions, anti-corruption laws, community support, among others; (2) Environmental, Social and Governance: How corporations and investors manage to involve government and environmental concerns in their programs and business models. The difference from the previous term is that technologies are considered more expensive; (3) Inclusive business: providing goods, services and livelihoods on a commercially viable basis, whether at scale or scalable, to people living on the base of the

economic pyramid, making them part of the value chain of the core of the companies. companies such as suppliers, distributors, retailers or customers; and (4) Poverty alleviation: Include low-income communities within its value chain without losing sight of profit generation (WBCSD and SNV, 2006).

The social approach can rise the value of the company through two mechanisms: (1) Increase shareholder wealth by increasing money flows by increasing investment in certain companies with securities, (2) Maximize the benefits of investors with more valuable responsible investments. The business community will become increasingly pragmatic and people-oriented. Inclusion is part of the APEC agenda, and by 2030 the goals are to share prosperity and opportunities with all APEC members and vulnerable groups. By 2040, an inclusive, open, dynamic, resilient and peaceful Asia-Pacific community is expected; and to achieve this, it is considered: (1) Exchange and investment; (2) Digitization and innovation and; (3) Strong, balanced and secure system with sustained and inclusive growth. It will be key for Inclusive and Responsible Businesses to be more comprehensive and balanced considering women and youth; be safe and sustainable while ensuring food safety; speed up transactions that save energy and improve resource management; the struggles against climate change and natural disasters, and digitization that encourages and enhances inclusive economic participation.

### 3.2.3 Case 3/9: SKOLKOVO Innovation Center. Russia.

The Chief Representative in China of SKOLKOVO Innovation Center, Evgeny Kosolapov did a presentation in the context of *Inclusive Economic Participation in Digital Economy*. Russia is an economy that lives on traditional industries such as fuel, limited and finite resources, so the government is rethinking how to change them for more sustainable resources and that these enhance human solutions. New technologies will build sustainability through the generation of potential markets and the modernization of industries. Kosolapov mentions that the innovation business is growing and attractive to investors from Russia and other economies.

It is a priority to analyze the infrastructure and resources necessary for this objective and which actors are fundamental and responsible for the articulation. Currently, 300 accelerators and incubators are working on accelerating research and knowledge production in conjunction with research institutions. Along the same lines, they are in charge of finding and integrating new international and domestic innovations through incentives to be part of the scientific section in the areas of (1) Energy and efficiency; (2) Pharmaceutical and medicine; (3) Software and artificial intelligence and (4) Industry. Traditional businesses can be approached and made more efficient through digitization and generating a positive impact on the environment and people.

### 3.2.4 Case 4/9: Trina Solar, China.

The Public Affairs Director of Trina Solar, Tori Liu did a presentation about one of the world's leading solar energy project developers, located in China, Japan, the United States, Europe, Central and South America and economies in Asia and the Pacific. Trina Solar is a high-efficiency and high-tech solar energy provider. It has developed energy solutions in 100 economies and are also contributing to the production of jobs and sustainability in the world through the energy transition and increase in the levels of clean energy.

In the context of inclusive policies, they have promoted access to electricity in isolated regions and / or affected by various phenomena. They have been concerned with expanding the benefit of this resource to more people, by promoting best practices and sustainable policies allowing access to basic services for the most vulnerable communities. Through the donation of solar energy modules, they have contributed to the recovery of Nepal after the earthquake, schools in Tanzania, among others. Trina Solar promotes the generation of new markets in the context of innovation.

### 3.2.5 Case 5/9: The role of Public University on Inclusive Technological Development: University of Chile.

The Head of the Gender Unit, Catalina Lamatta, and the Coordinator of the APEC project, Constanza Bohle, both workers of the Vice Rectory for Research and Development of the University of Chile and professionals in gender, spoke about the role of the Public University in the inclusive technological development.

Chile is presented with respect to the APEC economies with macroeconomic and social indicators, a rentier economy dependent on natural resources, and a weakened government without incentives to reinvest in technological development and diversify the productive matrix. The existing inequalities that affect women, sexual dissidents, people with disabilities, the poor, migrants, are rooted in the economic model. Anthropocentrism, colonialism, patriarchy, neo-liberalism and the insistence on the domination and exploitation of nature are part of the root of inequities. Development today is competition, uneven growth, accumulation of the few and hunger of the many. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic made social and environmental inequalities more visible and profound. Extractivism generates irreparable environmental damage and in a globalized world, its consequences are shared.

The presentation was emphatic in considering the social-political context in which APEC economies are found, where not all of them will achieve the 2030 Agenda. The context that promotes readjustment and social innovation through new strategies of participation and cooperation between economies taking advantage of the technology for virtuous democratic dialogue from spaces like APEC. To talk about inclusion it is not enough to talk about access. Therefore, at this moment in history, inclusion must guarantee the right to live in peace and harmony with nature and make knowledge and wisdom available so that economies can rebuild in a sustainable, coordinated, integrated, ecological. and inclusive way.

In Chile, social movements have been the protagonists of this, and through a democratic and egalitarian constituent process, diversity and new visions of the development model have gained space. It is important to promote technologies with social impact from public institutions, reordering domestic priorities through a joint dialogue of the public-private virtuous circle. The Public University then has the role of guiding, promoting and articulating, through diverse dialogues, the creation and transfer of knowledge, ensuring that public resources, which belongs to everyone, guarantees economically inclusive participation.

### 3.2.6 Case 6/9: Mobility Systems Center of MIT Energy Initiative

The PhD Research Program Manager, Johanna Moody, from the Mobility Systems Center of MIT Energy Initiative, presents how the introduction of bundled services determines the behavior of users of transportation applications and enables the opening of new sustainable markets.

Unlike the exclusive services, the grouped service pursues the idea of sharing the vehicle and the costs with other passengers in similar destinations and times. This allows the expansion of mobility in urban areas, less pollution and congestion. Based on the investigation of shared and individual service users from three cities in Mexico: Mérida, Toluca and Aguascalientes between June and July 2020, associated consumer service has a negative connotation to the action of grouping, but to the extent that the study is deepened if DIDI had not been available, users would not have moved, others would have used private cars and / or taxi; and several would have moved through the shared service if it had not been limited. This last point is where Mrs. Moody stresses that the sustainable market must be promoted and talks about the importance of registering mobility data for the continuous improvement of cities.

Those who finally adopted the shared service and were able to reduce two more times, the price and the expenses incurred in the comparison at the time this modality was not available. Therefore, the mobility capacity between users is expanded in this new system. In addition to the benefit to users, at a company level, there is a reduction in the total number of kilometers traveled, reducing congestion and Co2 emissions in the city, making trips more efficient.

### 3.2.7 Case 7/9: Malaysia's approach towards digital innovation, Academy of Sciences Malaysia.

CEO of Academy of Sciences Malaysia, Hazami Habib, presented Malaysia's approach towards digital innovation. Inclusive policies promote growth and digital innovation, considering technology as the fuel of the future. The objective for various sectors of the industry is to internalize the technology. The problem is the distance between the private and public sectors since socio-economic development and the priorities of science and technology companies are distant. The challenge is to bring the private sector closer to collaborate and commit to social needs.

Action is the creation of a reference framework of science and technology of innovation that allows grouping and involving the sectors in politics. 10-10 Malaysia Science, Technology, Innovation and Economy (MYSTIE) Framework (MySTIE) identifies 10 drivers of digital technology to promote digital innovation, meet needs and strengthen business sectors; and 10 socioeconomic drivers to promote social issues. The technological drivers impulse the socioeconomic drivers, ensuring from the industry that all policies are consistent. This will allow a multiplier effect of the modernization of the industry thinking about the government's investment for greater sustainability and growth over time. For the implementation it follows the next steps 1) Identify economic drivers with social impact, (2) Evaluation of infrastructure, intellectual capital, integrity, incentive, institutions, interaction, or internationalization to implement technological innovation, (3) Guarantee inclusion and potential multiplier effect of technology. They have identified 30 areas that must be connected through digital technology to enhance interaction, inclusion, and productivity. These are classified into: (1) Economic drivers, (2) Economic-social dual impact, and (3) Social welfare catalysts. The Malaysian government developed a digital knowledge platform with academia so scientists can share research that nurtures industry in an open innovation ecosystem. They hope to also develop a collaborative platform between industry and government, believing in this methodology as a mechanism for sustainable development and shared prosperity.

### 3.2.8 Case 8/9: Smart transportation for Sustainable Development, DiDi Mexico.

The General Manager of DiDi Rides Mexico, Juan Andres Panama, presented about smart transportation for sustainable development. To face the new challenges, it is vitally to know the ecosystem and adapt to it through innovations.

Recent projects have focused on achieving mobility with the lowest possible emission of pollution in the world and, to achieve this goal, it is expected that by 2030 there will be at least one million electric and autonomous vehicles. In this line, the first electric vehicle on the platform automatically controls and supplies energy, being the vehicle with the highest efficiency, with a help and assistance panel.

On the other hand, the database, Big Data, the use of AI and technology in the economies with a presence has made it possible to promote Smart Cities. Some of the measures translate into the synchronization of lighting and traffic lights to predict traffic congestion and the digitization of bus routes for public transport for smart mobility. The work of permanent collaboration between

the governments and DiDi in economies such as China, Mexico and Brazil have made it possible to reduce road congestion, reduce costs and reduce pollution.

### 3.2.9 Case 9/9: Innovation and Sustainable Development Policy, Ministry of Economy, Mexico.

The General Director of Innovation, Juan Carlos Altamirano, and General Director of Agenda 2030, Alfredo Gonzalez Reyes, of the Ministry of Economy, Mexico, presented about the role of innovation and sustainable development policy for inclusive development in different regions.

The priority of integrating small businesses into the world economy by promoting inclusive and responsible business. In a world of limited resources, it is necessary to work with the business sector and responsible investment that promotes sustainable development through digitization. The generation of digital capabilities as well as access to knowledge platforms seek the development of small and medium-sized companies. The platforms allow facilitating the connection between companies, providing commercial technical information, offering products /services, and promoting expansion in the global market. The government also provides guide inputs such as recommendations on (1) Promotion and safe use of delivery platforms, (2) Promotion of electronic commerce and (3) Adaptation of digital technologies through tools for small businesses. Digitization has favorable impacts on the economy since it allows maintaining production, but it also has challenges such as adapting infrastructure, reliable regulation, financial inclusion, promoting the development of technological and digital skills, adjusting the model, and encouraging international cooperation for better policies around digital technologies. Along the way, it is necessary to ensure that innovation is not again a source of inequity, it creates quality jobs and contributes to planetary viability.

## 3.3 Summary and Analysis of external cases:

### 3.3.1 Case 1/3: Laboratoria: Technology right from the start, code that transforms women's lives. Latin America

A social technology company that promoted a Latin American movement of women in technology in Brazil, Chile, Colombia Mexico, and Peru. The masculinization in the field of technology worldwide motivated Laboratoria to create the diversity necessary for innovation, allowing low-income women without higher education to train in the field of technology as developers and providing support for labor insertion in technology companies. This empowers women through access to work and better income. The challenge has been to contribute to the entrance of more women into the workforce and to be a source of Latin American female talent for the whole world. To transform the productive matrix, talent is needed, and especially women's contributions.

Laboratoria identifies talented women who have failed to start a professional career and who demonstrate high learning potential, commitment to the program and aspire to build a career in technology through their 6-month Bootcamp, which has a project-based learning model, where technical and life skills are built. It's free until women enter the tech world of work.

### 3.3.2 Case 2/3: Fab Lab: Digital transformation for all, democratize knowledge. Chile

It was created for the materialization of ideas through innovation and the manufacture of technologies from a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach. Worldwide, the Global Fab Labs Network, with a presence in South America, allows projects with an international perspective. Among the objectives is the democratization and inclusion of knowledge of

technological development in its direct and indirect community through projects with social impact.

Fab Lab created the Virtual Environment for Technological Education, a web platform that seeks to generate capacities and knowledge for the development of scientific-technological projects in students of educational establishments throughout Chile. Workshops have been held for school children throughout Latin America, on issues of Renewable Energies and Biomaterials Development. Likewise, in the context of COVID-19, the laboratory manufactures a shield due to the urgency and importance of this type of device for the effective protection of health officials who are on the front line. To achieve this, they worked with volunteers: students, graduates and professors of the Federico Santa Maria Technical University, who continue to work intensely to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### 3.3.3 Case 3/3: Fracción: Digitally fractioning the way to generate inclusion in health. Chile

This Fracción pharmacy was a Chile born business, with the dream of improving access to medicines for Chilean families and becoming one of the most important digital pharmacies with fair prices and good accessibility.

Certified by the Institute of Public Health, it has a physical store and uses Azure, Microsoft's cloud service, for all its technological infrastructure. This social enterprise promoted two public policies that seek to reduce people's spending on medicines. On the other hand, to subscribe to the Cenabast Law, taking advantage of values up to 80% cheaper than what the government allows and making fractioned medicines available to the population even in territories without access to pharmacy.

## **PART FOUR      DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Webinar 2020**

The five cases presented in the 2020 Webinar have two geographical locations: three of them from Latin America (Chile, Peru and Mexico) with a strong focus on existing structural inequalities in the region despite growth and technological advances, and the fourth in other APEC economies (Australia, Russia, and Thailand), focusing on the importance of public-private collaboration and articulation with their functions for inclusive policies. Latin American experiences show the great difference in progress between APEC economies and, therefore, inclusive growth must aim for more than reducing poverty, it must require economic integration and new strategies for sustainable development.

It is a particularity of the session with exponents from Latin American economies that the dominant discourse refers to the existence of social and economic challenges related to the structural inequalities of the economies despite the growth of recent years and inclusion based on access to economic opportunities. If these are not resolved, all the gaps in the digital aspect will remain or will deepen. As pointed out by Álvarez, I., Quirós, C. , Marín, R., Medina, L. y Biurrún, A., (2021) Some authors endorse the close relationship between digital and social inequalities and, therefore, the persistence of inequality directly impacts an individual's chances of prospering, rather than simply surviving (Hilbert, 2011; Van Dijk and Van Deursen, 2014; Wei, 2012; Wei and Hindman, 2011; Warschauer and Matuchniak, 2010; Keil, 2008). This accounts for the great difference in progress between APEC economies.

The pandemic has also reminded us that societies are closely connected and that they have a shared future, which is why a more resistant, sustainable, and intelligent society is required. It is needed to strengthen the Sustainable Agenda and promote values that combine economic, social, environmental, and ethical factors through social impact to take advantage of opportunities for growth and competitiveness from inclusive businesses. The government should act in the proactivity domain in order to detect problems and act from the strategic link with the private sector of the industries should promote frameworks for responsible business conduct in pursuit of human rights through government policies. It is believed that a facilitator on the part of the government could be eliminate unnecessary regulation from a focus on security that guarantees inclusion, social equity and responsibility. This should ensure that the business sector is responsible for human rights. It is relevant that both the traditional public and private business sectors promote responsible business conduct. For this reason, it is important to maintain a private-public ecosystem that promotes innovation without economic barriers for citizens.

### **4.2 Workshop 2021**

The nine cases presented in Workshop 2021 can be divided into three categories: two presented in Panel 1 focused on Understanding IRB in the New Development Context; three presented in Panel 2 focused on Inclusive Economic Participation in Digital Economy and four cases presented in Panel 4 about Mobilizing Digital Innovation for a Sustainable Future.

The first panel addresses the characterization of IRB, key concepts and the relevance it assumes around inclusive development and the challenges of the 2030 Agenda. Likewise, digitization can have both positive and negative consequences, so it is relevant to promote corporate responsibility in sectors where regulation is minimal. The second panel, focuses on rethinking the development model based on natural resources through the use of innovative technologies and international cooperation for the transformation of the productive matrix of economies where inclusion and protection of the public are fundamental. In the third panel, the cases reveal the importance of Big

Data for the creation of sustainable markets and potential innovative solutions from the government that take advantage of the multiplier effect of technology and that what is relevant is to ensure that this innovation is not again a source of inequity.

Both the Webinar 2020 and the Workshop 2021, showed initiatives with a strong link between the private sector, academia, and the government. They share the relevance of articulation in promoting the objectives of the Sustainable Agenda and the fight against the pandemic and its negative socioeconomic consequences. APEC economies must take advantage of their virtuous and collaborative relationship that can be strengthened through the digital transformation of all sectors. Collaboration between all actors is highlighted as fundamental, as an aspect of inclusion, which allows the strategic connection between the economy and social policies to achieve more prosperous and sustainable economies through public and private dynamics to overcome inequality.

The new generations of highly innovative companies must align their visions and values in the position of a sustainable and inclusive society to address needs and inequalities, according to their contexts. The experience of these companies must be linked to the academic world to consider new training processes for young students.

Economies through their governments should promote and create international IRB frameworks and work together with the inclusive business sector and academia in creating strategies. These strategies must consider the various interpretations of concepts such as inclusion, development, growth and sustainability.

## **PART FIVE Observations**

Based on the summary and analysis of all cases presented in the webinar and workshop, the following observations are provided by the Project Leaders on how relevant stakeholders can promote IRB. Policy tips and recommendations should not necessarily be taken as specific step-by-step instructions on what to do. It must be recognized that for policymaking to be truly effective, the specific conditions of the individual economy must be fully considered. Rather, we intend the policy suggestions and recommendations to serve as guiding principles that enable policymakers to guide various stakeholders in promoting IRB creation, targeting technologies, and building future capacities.

### **5.1 Generating research and data with a gender perspective at the Base of the Pyramid**

The characterization of the population must recognize the intersectionality of gaps, inequalities and violence pertinent to the context, which means considering quantitative and cultural aspects. This allows the design and implementation of effective inclusion mechanisms throughout the value chain, granting sustainability over time to production in the inclusive business sector. In this way, the members belonging to that economy, with their cultural particularities, will be better distinguished.

It is not feasible to continue implementing policies for a universal member or addressing inequalities separately. Incorporating the gender perspective in the data collection at the Base of the Pyramid allows interrogating phenomena that differentially impact men and women, revealing situations of inequality in different areas of life, considering a gender approach in the production of statistics and using gender-sensitive concepts to the expansion of information to highlight what is invisible to current data (CEPAL, 2016). Research, Development, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (R+D+i+e) processes must be conducted on the basis of respecting laws and regulations of each member economies, and promoted with a gender perspective that allows the creation or opening of spaces, generating technological development that leaves no one on the sidelines and addresses social problems. These processes can be supported by the public academy with broad expertise in these matters and link with public policies.

### **5.2 Digital impact for the population at the margin (Base of the Pyramid)**

From the analysis of social inequalities, the diversity of digital gaps is obtained. The close relationship between digital and social inequalities is known, therefore, the persistence of inequality will directly impact an individual's development possibilities, which affects the production, impact and inclusive growth of economies.

This task requires the innovative capacity of the government and digitization, where the private sector can contribute with its experience. Promote the modernization of the internal management processes of the economies, unifying associated data, guaranteeing transparency and efficiency of government management processes. Ensuring the population's training and access to digital technology is a priority, considering that digitization could deepen gaps in the population at the margin. The strengthening of public education institutions that train and educate the paid and unpaid working population should be promoted. This allows supporting industries in the processes of training skills, experiences for hiring, placement, training and promotion at all levels of the value chain under consideration of socio-cultural aspects.

### **5.3 Sustainable approach to IRB models in the digital economy**

Talking about effective inclusion, in the IRB business model, must first address access with affirmative action policies or quotas. Then design policies and mechanisms that allow fulfilling performances of members in the workplace and society in order to avoid replicating social segregation. A set of measures must be defined to guarantee equality and eliminate barriers that hinder or limit such objective.

Likewise, the business sector must make progress in recognizing the vulnerable population as members of the law, promoting and guaranteeing social and labor rights in their operation, even in contexts of minimal legislation, particularly when talking about the digital economy. It's paramount the work of the business sector with public higher education institutions, mainly in the areas of administration, finance and commerce, which allows consolidating new values and principles in IRB models and installing new forms of leadership in young students and professionals.

#### **5.4 Public - Private investment in science and technology**

Effective inclusion considers sustainable growth of economies. In a globalized world with a socio-sanitary and environmental crisis, the defense and preservation of intergenerational rights is a priority. Promote value-creating government, considering the cumulative nature of research and development, through the generation of financial incentives that allow linking the technological demand of the private sector with the demands of the public, cooperatively and pertinent to the social and environmental context.

The business sector must be directly engaged in inclusive financing, in line with the requirements of economies, for the creation and transmission of knowledge and technologies that accelerate social equality. The vulnerable population should be considered as a key member of the ecosystem and as a priority the preservation of intergenerational rights in the operations of the business sector, the end of corruption and corporatism.

#### **5.5 Technology for broader dialogue in APEC**

IRB standards and regulations are variable and also the understanding of this type of business diverges depending on each economy. It is difficult for the business sector to be consistent with the different regulations and frameworks.

The social, political and economic context of each economy imply different interpretations of key concepts such as inclusion, development, growth and sustainability. Spaces for dialogue and capacity building projects of an international nature should be promoted in a sense that it generates reflections on understanding the diversity of worldviews and agreeing on common aspects and goals. Current technology allows greater participation in the processes, so the continuity of this capacity program can generate wealth in the medium and long term, promoting a greater diversity of stakeholders in the economies.

#### **5.6 Virtuous circle of articulation and collaboration**

The global development of the digital economy must enhance electronic commerce. For this, the cyberspace must be safe and respectful for all people. Investment in science and technology is not only necessary to improve production processes, but also to develop appropriate technological platforms for each context.

The virtuous circle between academia, the business and public sector, communities and international organizations will allow inclusive economic participation to the extent that all

sectors actively cooperate in pursuit of technological development oriented to domestic priorities and a cyberspace that promotes equity and justice. In this way, we guarantee healthy and binding relationships between the public and private space. Finally, the articulation and cooperation between public and private science and technology institutions is a priority to innovate in: the productive matrix of economies dependent on the extraction of natural resources, traditional industries and development of technological platforms appropriate to each context.

### **Key Takeaway**

A key takeaway from all the cases is that a structural review of the global economy and the advance of inequalities about the growth of the APEC economies should be made. For this, the characterization of the population must be improved in quantitative terms and also in cultural and social aspects with a gender perspective, and the proposals made in this document. Technology promotes a new paradigm and world scenario of a conscious population and a vision of development that requires commitment, articulation and cooperation of the ecosystem: the business sector, governments and international organizations, with human rights, ethics, the environment environment and gender equality.

It is inferred that affirmative action policies or participation quotas are not enough to overcome poverty, so the design of policies and mechanisms that allow access and full performance of members in the workplace and society, it is vital to update the concept of inclusion in IRB. The IRB in the digital economy must articulate and cooperate in virtuous relationships, public and private to implement solutions together with governments and academia. Initiatives such as data collection and analysis, design of technological and digital tools for the needs of groups on the margins, as well as the generation of digital capabilities for the population, are resources that allow guaranteeing a dignified life as a central value to carry out the inclusion.

Concerns about IRBs are considered in execution in contexts of capitalist development models. Work should be done within the broad IRB frame of reference, emphasizing the difference with Corporate Social Responsibility, seeking structural integration in the business model. At the same time, there is a concern in the neoliberal economic model that precarizes and generates inequalities in societies. The digital economy has been displaced by capital creating centralized and standardized universals, with the danger of monopolies. The new forms of social capitalism that the IRB reproduce unlike the collaborative economy, if they are connected to social relations, or pretend to be, from their initial purpose seeking to overcome poverty and its connection with the Sustainable Development Goals, but in practice, it runs the risk<sup>3</sup> of reproducing and making the population at the Base of the Pyramid vulnerable.

The pandemic has also reminded us that society is connected and that it has a shared future, where a more resilient, sustainable and intelligent society is required. Failure to advance in this line could create a perfect scenario to deepen digital divides and structural inequalities.

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<sup>3</sup> Disparity in the economic fortunes and challenges. (Poblador, 2017)