

Event Concept Note

Scaling Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Industrial Development: A2D Facility Annual Event 2026

Date and Location: 13-16 April 2026, Bogotá, Colombia

Background

As highlighted in the recent United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)'s *Industrial Development Report 2026*, if current practices continue, nearly one-third of the world's population will live below the poverty line by 2050, exacerbated by the impacts of global temperature rises that will lead to more frequent and severe climate-related disasters and loss of life. Reversing this trajectory requires placing sustainable and inclusive industrialization at the core of development strategies with climate innovation a core part of driving growth, job creation and socio-economic resilience through decarbonized industrial systems, such as manufacturing, transport, power, buildings and bio-economies.

This is particularly needed in developing countries where most of the industrial growth is projected to happen and facilitating innovative and transformational projects in low- and middle-income countries are key enablers of system-wide changes. The International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that 35% of the necessary emissions reductions need to come from technologies that are still at the demonstration stage (IEA, 2023), which underscores the critical need to accelerate the commercialization of innovative and “lighthouse” climate solutions that showcase the commercial and technical feasibility of solutions to catalyze scalability and replication.

The A2D Facility Annual Event is organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), which is a specialized agency of the United Nations with a unique mandate to promote, dynamize and accelerate sustainable economic and industrial development. UNIDO's vision is a world without poverty and hunger, where industry drives low-emission economies, improves living standards, and preserves the environment for present and future generations, leaving no one behind.

UNIDO's mandate is reflected in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 9: “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”, but UNIDO's activities contribute to all the SDGs.

The Accelerate-to-Demonstrate (A2D) Facility, managed by UNIDO with funding from the UK Government, aims to accelerate the commercialization of innovative, “lighthouse” climate solutions in developing countries (as defined by countries that are eligible to receive Official Development Assistance (ODA)) through the implementation of demonstration projects in critical minerals, clean hydrogen, smart energy and industrial decarbonization.

The Event

Building on the success of the A2D Facility Annual Event that took place in Kenya in May 2025, the event offers a global platform that brings together key stakeholders, such as project developers, financiers, industry associations, government officials and other key stakeholders to accelerate the development and implementation of demonstration projects in developing countries. Guided by the principle of “progress by innovation”, the event aims at facilitating match-making for developing and accelerating scalable projects, sharing approaches and case studies of successful projects, advancing collaboration, partnership-building and knowledge exchange, and facilitating site visits to see the positive impacts of demonstration projects in action.

The 2026 event will focus on building and strengthening an internationally recognized community of stakeholders engaged in implementing, financing, operating and scaling demonstration projects in developing countries. By convening partners across sectors and countries, the event contributes to UNIDO’s role in facilitating knowledge and technology transfer, fostering partnerships and promoting and mobilizing investments in developing countries. The event will also highlight opportunities for collaboration with UNIDO.

The following guiding questions will steer the event’s discussions and workshops:

- Which innovative financing instruments can be deployed to advance demonstration projects in developing countries? How have existing demonstration projects ensured longer-term commercial viability?
- How can the implementation and scaling of demonstration projects in developing countries be accelerated? What is needed to facilitate scalability and replication?
- How are the main challenges being overcome in areas such as critical minerals, clean hydrogen, smart energy and industrial decarbonization projects?
- What distinguishes a “lighthouse” demonstration project from a standard demonstration project and how can the on-the-ground impacts of projects be communicated in a compelling and engaging way?
- How can gender equality, social inclusion and safeguards be embedded in the implementation and operation of demonstration projects in developing countries? How can community engagement in the design and implementation of demonstration projects be facilitated?
- What is the role of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), UN agencies and international organizations in facilitating the implementation of demonstration projects in developing countries?

Draft Agenda

The Annual Event is a 3-day-event with a variety of formats to maximize match-making and knowledge-sharing, such as plenary sessions, interactive workshops, evening receptions and activities, site visits to demonstration projects and numerous opportunities for networking. The summary draft agenda is below and a detailed agenda will be available soon on the A2D Facility website.

Day 1 – Monday, 13 April	- o Arrival and registration (afternoon) - o Welcome reception and networking
Day 2 – Tuesday, 14 April	- o Opening Plenary - o Impacts Session 1: Monitoring and Reporting - o Finance Session 1 - o Thematic Session 1: Smart Energy (including workshop) - o Thematic Session 2: Clean Hydrogen (including workshop) - o Impacts Session 2: Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) (including workshop) - o Evening Reception
Day 3 – Wednesday, 15 April	- o Thematic Session 3: Critical Minerals (including workshop) - o Thematic Session 4: Industrial Decarbonization (including workshop) - o Impacts Session 3: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) - o Impact Session 4: Impactful Storytelling - o Finance Session 2 - o Closing Plenary - o Evening Activity (dinner and cultural show)
Day 4 – Thursday, 16 April	o Site visits (all day)

Language

The working language of the A2D Facility Annual Event 2026 will be English. Attendees are expected to have a proficiency level of at least C1 or equivalent. Please note that interpretation and translation services will not be provided.

Participation

To apply for the event, please submit the [online application form](#).

Nationals from developing countries (defined as countries that are eligible to receive Official Development Assistance (ODA)) **who currently work in a developing country may be eligible to receive funding to attend this event.** Please note that this is a competitive process, and funded participants will be selected by UNIDO based on alignment with the selection criteria: *potential impact of participation and contributions to developing, implementing, financing or scaling demonstration projects in developing countries.*