



**“July 9, 2021 | 7:30PM-8:30PM (Taipei Time)”**

### **Rationale**

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of the Asian economy. They make up more than 96 percent of all Asian businesses, providing two out of three private sector jobs on the continent. Therefore, fully functioning support measures for SMEs are vital for Asia's economic success.

Since its outbreak, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused border closures and lockdowns in many countries, especially affecting developing economies and vulnerable groups. As the pandemic's first epicenter, the Asia-Pacific region is suffering from the devastating impact on millions of workers and enterprises, posing a major risk to the achievement of decent work and economic growth (SDG 8). The SDG Progress Report by ESCAP indicated that the region showed regressing trends on SDG target 8.5 of “full employment and decent work” in 2020. In addition, nearly 829 million informal workers were impacted by the pandemic, and unemployment increased by 15 million in the same year.

To build the Asia-Pacific economies back better, adaptation of SMEs with innovative and pragmatic strategies in the post COVID-19 era is a key driver. The proposed webinar aims to provide three layers of strategies: First, from the regional level, what and how policies have been implemented to support SMEs for recovery. Second, from the ODA perspective, best practices that have catalyzed cross-sector resources for SMEs development. Finally, on the business aspect, practical approaches that chambers of commerce and businesses have rapidly adapted throughout the pandemic for corporate sustainability. Based on the lessons and experiences learned, the webinar hopes to build synergy among stakeholders for solutions to build a stronger environment for SMEs in the new normal.

### **Purpose**

This side event aims to create a platform to invite all stakeholders from regional, national, and local aspects to share their insights and innovative solutions for the sustainable development and resilience of SMEs. How would they build an enabling environment for SMEs development in the post COVID-19 era? The panel discussion will address cross-sector collaboration and share good practices for the Asia-Pacific region.

## Responding to SDG

- Goal 8-Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Target 8.3-Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services

**Format-** A 60-minute webinar open for registration (using Cisco Webex platform)

## Moderator

George Abraham, Chairman of SME Development Council, Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry

## Panelists

1. Donald Lambert, Principal Private Sector Development Specialist, Southeast Asia Department, Asian Development Bank (ADB)
2. Alex Shyy, Deputy Secretary General, International Cooperation and Development Fund (TaiwanICDF)
3. Robert Kraybill, Managing Director and Chief Investment Officer, Impact Investment Exchange (IIX)
4. Jyoti Vij, Deputy Secretary General, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)

To register, please go to the following link

<https://reurl.cc/XWqOxE>





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Tentative Agenda

Time	Content
07:30-07:40	<p><b>Opening Session</b></p> <p><b>Event Introduction</b> - George Abraham, Chairman of SME Development Council, CACCI</p> <p><b>Opening Remarks</b> - Samir Modi, President, CACCI - Timothy Hsiang, Secretary General, TaiwanICDF</p>
07:40-08:30	<p><b>Panel Discussion</b></p> <p><b>Topic Introduction</b> - George Abraham, Chairman of SME Development Council, CACCI</p> <p><b>1. Beyond the COVID-19 crisis: Designing supportive policies to help SMEs rebound starting from the Asia-Pacific</b> - Donald Lambert, Principal Private Sector Development Specialist, Southeast Asia Department, ADB</p> <p><b>2. Catalyzing cross-sector resources through ODA network for SMEs development</b> - Alex Shyy, Deputy Secretary General, TaiwanICDF</p> <p><b>3. Preparing for the future: How micro-finance institutions provide solutions to advance SMEs</b> - Robert Kraybill, Managing Director and Chief Investment Officer, IIX</p> <p><b>4. Navigating the new normal: How chambers take responsibility and create opportunities for SMEs in the changing environment</b> - Jyoti Vij, Deputy Secretary General, FICCI</p> <p><b>Interactive Dialogue and Q&amp;A</b> - Moderated by George Abraham, Chairman of SME Development Council, CACCI</p>