



TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD: INVESTING FOR A RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Event Program

22-23 October 2025

Al Jawaher Reception and Convention Centre (JRCC) Sharjah, United Arab Emirates



World Association of
Investment Promotion
Agencies



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF INVESTMENT



استثمر في الشارقة
invest in Sharjah

21st October
WAIPA General Assembly and Steering Committee Elections
Strictly for WAIPA Members Only



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Consultative Committee Members



Strategic Partners



Steering Committee Members



World Association of
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PROGRAM

21-23 October 2025, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

The 29th World Investment Conference and the 8th Sharjah Investment Forum (the twin events) will take place from 21 to 23 October in Sharjah, UAE. It is also the year that marks 30th anniversary of WAIPA. The twin events will be jointly organized by World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies, the Sharjah FDI Office and the UAE Ministry of Investment.

Overview of the Twin Events

The **WAIPA World Investment Conference (WIC)** is a premier global forum for investment stakeholders to engage on emerging challenges and opportunities that shape international investment flows and promotion strategies. Since its inception in 1996, WIC has played a key role in advancing investment promotion and facilitation, fostering strategic partnerships, and driving policy advocacy. The **Sharjah Investment Forum (SIF)** is a leading investment conference and exhibition in the MENA region. It is the annual flagship of Sharjah FDI Office, the FDI promotion arm of the Sharjah Government. Both serve as platforms for actionable dialogue, best-practice sharing, and launching key tools and initiatives that contribute to sustainable investment and development.

Global Context: Key and Emerging Challenges and opportunities

The twin events will take place against a backdrop of complex global transformations: geopolitical dynamics, sustainability imperatives, technological advancement, and shifting global value chains are redefining the investment landscape. These dynamics demand adaptive strategies, stronger global cooperation, and novel investment models that are inclusive, resilient, and sustainable.

Theme, Objectives, and Expected Outcomes

Under the theme *"Transforming Our World: Investing for a Resilient and Sustainable Future,"* the twin events will promote public-private collaboration, responsible investment, and innovative financing to address global challenges. The event aims to realign national investment strategies with evolving global realities, support the launch of a "Decade of Promoting Investment for Good," and catalyze long-term initiatives for inclusive, sustainable development. It will generate high-level policy dialogue, strengthen institutional capacity, and enhance cross-border cooperation.

Structure, Participation, and Partnerships

The twin events will bring together global investment leaders, ministers, CEOs, IPAs, investors, and international institutions. Key highlights include a Grand Opening, Global Leaders' Insights, Ministerial Roundtable, Investment Excellence Awards, High-level Multi-stakeholders Panels, Deal Making Platform, and Executives' Strategic Focus. The program also features Thematic Tracks on AI and digital investment, new sources of financing, FDI in services, agribusiness, and more. A number of signature sessions will be co-hosted with international organizations, including ICC, IEDC, ILO, ITC, OECD, UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNWTO, World Bank. Open to all participants, the twin events will emphasize inclusivity, innovation, and forward-looking, reinforcing the two global forums' leadership and commitment to shaping a sustainable investment future.



Day 0 October 21st, 2025

09:00-10:00	IPA executive brainstorming 1: Rethinking Investment Promotion in a Transforming Global Economy (<i>IPAs Executives only</i>)
	<p>As the global trade and investment landscape undergoes profound transformation, IPAs face a pivotal moment. To remain competitive in the international race for FDI, IPAs must recalibrate their strategies, focusing resources on sectors that deliver the greatest development impact while aligning with national industrial priorities and emerging global economic mega-trends.</p> <p>This high-level session will explore how IPAs can identify and prioritize new sectors using evidence-based approaches and cutting-edge analytical tools. It will emphasize the importance of balancing investor feasibility with long-term economic value, ensuring that strategic choices are both forward-looking and grounded in national development objectives.</p> <p>Senior IPA executives, including WAIPA's Steering Committee leaders, will engage in a collaborative brainstorming designed to spark innovative thinking and shape next-generation strategies for investment promotion and facilitation. This dynamic exchange will serve as a strategic warm-up for the subsequent deliberations on WAIPA's institutional and strategic agenda at the Steering Committee and General Assembly.</p>
Room 1	tbd

10:00-12:00	WAIPA Steering Committee (<i>closed session</i>)
Main Hall	

10:00-11:00	IPA executive brainstorming 2: Innovating IPA Services in the Digital Age (<i>IPAs only</i>)
	<p>IPAs are under growing pressure to deliver world-class services and demonstrate tangible contributions to sustainable and inclusive economic growth. In a digital-first investment environment, investors expect seamless interactions, fast response times, and consistent support across every stage of their journey.</p> <p>The discussion will revolve around three interlinked areas: 1) how benchmarking and performance assessment can guide service improvement and strengthen internal accountability, 2) how service delivery can be structured along the investor journey, ensuring consistent quality through capacity building and clear protocols, 3) how IPAs can report on results, designing a balanced set of indicators to communicate impact transparently and build trust with stakeholders. Examples from leading IPAs and practical demonstrations of digital tools will enrich the session.</p>
Room 1	tbd



11:00-12:00	IPA executive brainstorming 3 “Mastering IPA Excellence: A Perspective on Benchmarking and Impact Reporting” (<i>IPAs only</i>)
	In today’s competitive global environment, IPAs face increasing pressure to demonstrate their effectiveness, enhance service delivery, and contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic growth. This session will explore how IPAs can build credibility, improve client satisfaction, and optimize their interaction with stakeholders using 3 important levers.
	The session will examine how benchmarking supports performance assessment and decision-making, while also enhancing internal accountability and transparency. This is closely linked to the user perspective, where capacity-building initiatives are structured along the investor journey to ensure consistent service quality. The session will conclude with a focus on reporting on impact, designing a balanced set of indicators for a compelling result.
	The session will be open to all IPAs, and will deliver value to strategic decision makers and IPA leaders, as well technical experts in investment promotion and result measurement. Participants will be exposed to new perspectives and tools that they can apply immediately.
Room 1	tbd
12:00-13:00	Networking Lunch
JRCC	
13:00-13:30	Registration to WAIPA General Assembly
Main Hall	
13:30-16:00	WAIPA General Assembly (<i>WAIPA members only</i>)
Main Hall	
18:00-19:30	Welcome Reception (For All Participants of the WIC and SIF)
	Conference registration in Paralell.
JRCC	



Day 1 October 22nd, 2025

Time/ Location	JRCC - Main Hall	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	SRTIP
08:30–09:50	Registration & Networking Reception				
10:00–12:00	Opening Ceremony and Global Leaders' Insights				
10:00–10:35	Opening & Welcome Speeches				
10:35–10:45	Setting the Stage: Addressing Key Emerging Challenges and opportunities				
10:45–11:45	Global Leaders' Insights: Investing in an Age of Global Transition - Keynotes by Government Leaders and Eminent Persons				
11:45–12:00	Partnership Signing Ceremony				
12:00–13:00	Networking Lunch				
13:20–13:50	High-level Panel: Future - Proofing Economies - From Risk to Resilience	Thematic Session: Creating a Seamless Investment Environment	Executive Focus: Start-ups and SMEs as Strategic FDI Catalysts	Open Slot	Ministerial Roundtable: Re-strategizing Investment Promotion and facilitation at the Global Economic Shift
13:55–14:25	Fireside Chat on AI and the Future of Investment Decisions				
14:30–15:00	High-level Panel: Green is the New Gold: Competitive Advantage Through Sustainable Investment	Thematic Session: Smart Cities, Future Markets: How Urban Innovation Is Redefining Investment Frontiers	Executive Focus: From Policy to Performance: What Works in Attracting FDI	OECD -MOI Workshop	
15:05–15:35	Fireside Chat From Content to Capital: How the Digital Generation Is Shaping Global Investments			OECD -MOI Workshop	
15:40–16:10	High-level Panel: Aligning Global Finance with Sustainability	Thematic Session: Looking at the Glass Half Full – The Comparative Advantage of SIDS, LLDCs, and LDCs	Thematic Session: FDI in Services: A key Engine of Global Growth	OECD -MOI Workshop	
19:00–22:00	Gala Dinner, awards & Cultural Showcase (Off-site) incl. WAIPA Investment Awards Ceremony & WIC-SIF Sponsorships Awards at SRTIP				



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10:00-12:00	Opening Ceremony and Global Leaders' Insights
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Main Hall	
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Main Hall	
13:00-16:00	Ministerial Roundtable: Re-strategizing Investment Promotion at the Global Economic Shift
	<p>Global Context - A New Investment-Development Paradigm: The global investment landscape is being reshaped by powerful, interconnected megatrends. Geopolitical realignment is altering alliances and trade flows, pushing countries to rethink investment frameworks for greater resilience and openness. Rapid technological advances, spanning AI, green tech, and advanced manufacturing, are redefining industries and competitive advantage. At the same time, the sustainability imperative is driving a shift toward net-zero and inclusive growth. At the same time, supply chain reconfiguration is prompting countries to prioritize autonomy and strategic positioning within global value chains.</p> <p>Objectives - Novel Strategic Focus: This ministerial roundtable will align national investment strategies with global economic shifts, launching a Decade of Investment for Good to accelerate sustainable development. It underscores the pivotal role of Ministers in shaping investment ecosystems through strategic leadership, reform, and global engagement. The dialogue will center on four strategic themes: re-strategizing investment promotion in light of global shifts to ensure resilience and diversification; strengthening ministerial influence in coordination with investment promotion agencies; promoting digital, resilient, and inclusive investment through</p>



	collaborative approaches; and enhancing multilateral cooperation and public-private partnerships to boost cross-border investment and share best practices.
SRTIP	List of Ministers (40-50)
13:20-13:50	High-level Panel: Future Proofing Economics – From Risk to Resilience
	<p>This High-level Panel will examine how countries can move beyond managing immediate risks to building robust, future-shaping investment.</p> <p>High-level Panelists will discuss strategies to strengthen economic resilience through sustainable investment, diversification, and innovation, while ensuring inclusivity and long-term development impact. The conversation will highlight how proactive policies and strategic investments can turn global challenges into opportunities, shaping economies that are not only resilient to shocks but also drivers of sustainable growth and shared prosperity.</p>
Main Hall	
13:20-13:50	Thematic Session: Creating a Seamless Investment Environment
	<p>This session will explore how creating a seamless, transparent, and investor-friendly environment is key to driving sustainable and resilient growth. As competition for quality investment intensifies, the focus shifts to reducing barriers, streamlining processes, and leveraging digital innovation to enhance investor confidence. Panelists will discuss how regulatory reforms, technology-driven solutions, and stronger public-private collaboration can redefine the global investment experience—making it faster, more inclusive, and aligned with long-term development goals.</p>
Room 1	
13:20-13:50	Executive Focus: Start-ups and SMEs as Strategic FDI Catalysts
	<p>As the global investment landscape becomes increasingly dynamic, start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are emerging as powerful drivers of FDI and innovation-led growth. These agile firms not only generate local employment and entrepreneurial capacity but also act as entry points for international investors seeking early access to disruptive technologies, scalable business models, and high-potential markets. This session will explore how start-ups and SMEs are evolving from passive beneficiaries of FDI into strategic enablers and co-creators of cross-border investment flows. Panellists will examine the role of ecosystems—including incubators, accelerators, innovation hubs, and government incentives—in attracting and anchoring FDI through vibrant SME sectors. The discussion will also cover how IPAs and development partners can better position SMEs as investable assets, including through targeted support, matchmaking platforms, and capacity-building initiatives.</p>
Room 2	



13:55-14:25	Fireside Chat – AI and the Future of Investment Decisions
	In this exclusive conversation, the guest of honor will share insights on how artificial intelligence is reshaping global investment strategies and decision-making. The discussion will explore AI's role in identifying emerging markets, assessing risks with greater precision, and driving sustainable and high-impact investments. Highlighting the host country's leadership in digital transformation, the session will provide a forward-looking perspective on how AI can unlock new opportunities and redefine competitiveness in the global investment landscape.
Main Hall	
14:30-15:00	High-level Panel: Green is the New Gold: Competitive Advantage through Sustainable Investment
	Sustainability has become a defining factor in global investment flows, reshaping how countries and companies compete for FDI. This High-level Panel will explore how adopting green standards, investing in clean technologies, and embedding ESG principles can create a powerful competitive edge. Speakers will discuss policy incentives, financing models, and success stories where sustainable investment has driven economic growth, enhanced brand reputation, and positioned economies as leaders in the transition to a low-carbon future.
Main Hall	
14:30- 15:00	Thematic Session: Smart Cities, Future Markets: How Urban Innovation Is Redefining Investment Frontiers
	As cities evolve into hubs of innovation and sustainability, they are emerging as the new frontiers for global investment. This session will explore how smart infrastructure, green technologies, and digital ecosystems are transforming urban landscapes, creating dynamic markets and new opportunities for investors. High-level Panelists will discuss how future-ready cities can drive inclusive growth, attract high-value industries, and serve as catalysts for resilient and sustainable economic development.
Room 1	
14:30-15:00	Executive Focus: From Policy to Performance: What Works in Attracting FDI
	Turning well-designed policies into tangible FDI outcomes remains a critical challenge for many economies. This High-level Panel will explore what truly works in translating investment promotion strategies into measurable results. Speakers will share practical insights on aligning national policies with investor expectations, creating competitive regulatory and incentive frameworks, and building institutional capacity to deliver on commitments. Success stories will highlight how effective execution, strong aftercare, and performance-driven approaches can transform policy ambitions into sustained investment growth and development impact.
Room 2	



15:05-15:35	Spotlight Talk: De-Risking Investment Amid Global Shocks
	In an era defined by geopolitical tensions, financial volatility, and climate-related disruptions, how can investors and policymakers safeguard growth while navigating uncertainty? In this Spotlight Talk, Prof. Dr. Mohamed El-Erian will share sharp, actionable insights on de-risking investment strategies and building economic resilience. From practical ways to diversify portfolios to identifying opportunity zones that thrive in turbulence, this session promises to challenge conventional thinking and inspire new approaches to turning global shocks into strategic, long-term advantages.
Main Hall	
15:40-16:10	High-level Panel: Aligning Global Finance with Sustainability
	This High-level Panel will examine how global financial systems can be leveraged to advance sustainable development goals. Experts will discuss the role of green financing, sustainability-driven investment strategies, and innovative financial instruments in driving long-term economic growth while addressing climate change and social impact. The session will highlight best practices, regulatory frameworks, and collaborative models that can align capital flows with sustainability priorities worldwide.
Main Hall	
15:40-16:10	Thematic Session: Looking at the Glass Half Full – The Comparative Advantage of SIDS, LLDCs, and LDCs
	Often perceived through the lens of challenges, Small Island States, Landlocked States, and Least Developed States also offer untapped opportunities and distinctive advantages for investors. This session will shift the narrative, highlighting the unique selling points that make these economies attractive—from strategic geographic positioning, niche market access, and specialized resources to emerging opportunities in sustainable tourism, renewable energy, and digital services. This session will discuss how these countries can leverage their comparative advantages, craft compelling investment value propositions, and position themselves as resilient and high-potential destinations in a competitive global FDI landscape.
Room 1	
15:40-16:10	Thematic Session: FDI in Services: A key Engine of Global Growth
	The services sector has become a dominant driver of global economic growth, attracting increasing volumes of high-value FDI. This session will examine how services—ranging from finance, logistics, and healthcare to digital platforms and creative industries—are reshaping global value chains and creating new opportunities for development. High-level Panelists will discuss what makes economies competitive in attracting service-related investments, the role of technology and innovation, and how policy frameworks can unlock the full potential of this fast-growing sector as a catalyst for jobs, skills, and inclusive prosperity.
Room 2	



19:00-22:00	Gala Dinner (off-site) Incl. WAIPA Investment awards ceremony
	WIC-SIF Sponsorships Awards at STRIP
SRTIP	



Day 2, October 23rd, 2025

Time/ Location	JRCC - Main Hall	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
08:00-09:00	Networking Breakfast			
09:00-09:25	High-level Panel: The Impact of AI and Sustainability on Investment Decisions	Executive Focus: Data-Driven Investment: Unlocking Opportunities Through Statistical Insights	High-level Consortium of think tanks: Setting future agenda for investment policy analysis and formulation	Special Spotlight: Launch Talk of the Tourism Doing Business: Investing in the Middle East report Regional Dialogue on the finalized Tourism Doing Business: Investing in Africa
09:30- 09:55	Visionary Investment in Cities, e-commerce, and Human Potential)	Thematic Session: Streamlined Licensing and Policies for a Stronger Business Environment	Francophone IPA Session Strengthening Francophone Investment Networks: Partnerships for Growth	Open Slot
10:00-10:25	Keynote The Creative Edge: Investing in Industries That Inspire and Endure			Deal-Making Platform: IPA– Private Sector Matchmaking & Project Pitching
10:30-10:55	High-level Panel: Transforming Industries Through Smart Manufacturing	10:15 - 11:15 Thematic Session - ILO: How FDI creates Quality Jobs: The Role of Business and IPAs	Executive Focus: Growing and Retaining Investment	
11:00-11:25	High-level Panel on private equity funds for investment impact		Special Spotlight: Turning Local Strength into Global Opportunities	
11:25-12:00	High-level Panel - UNIDO: Scaling Impact: Aligning Investment Strategies with the SDG	WFZO-UN TOURISM Thematic Session on Free Economic Zones and Tourism Investment	11:25 -12:35 Executive Focus - ITC: Integrating Environmental & Social Priorities into IPA Strategies	High-level Panel: Non-Equity Modes (NEMs) - contract manufacturing, franchising, and outsourcing
12:05-12:35	Launching a Decade of Investment for Good in an era of Challenged Multilateralism	High-level Panel: Seeds of Change: Investing in Agri-Business for Food Security		
12:40-13:05	Keynote How Simple Businesses Build Big Wealth			
13:10-13:40	High-Level Panel Scalling Change Through Investment	High-level Panel: Harnessing International Investment for the Digital Economy	Executive Focus: Catalysts of Capital: SWFs, PFs, and the Future of Global Investment	Open Slot
14:00-16:00	Seal the Deal	WAIPA SCRIPA Session: Investment collaboration among regional IPA associations, groups and IOs		
16:10 - 16:45	WIC-SIF Closing Ceremony & Conference Takeaways			



09:00-09:10	Networking Breakfast
Main Hall	

09:00-09:30	High-level Panel: The Impact of AI and Sustainability on Investment Decisions
	This Panel will explore how artificial intelligence and sustainability imperatives are reshaping global investment strategies and transforming value chains. It will discuss how AI-driven analytics enhance risk assessment and enable smarter capital allocation across sectors and supply networks. The session will examine how investors are integrating ESG criteria into decision-making processes to align with evolving market expectations, regulatory requirements, and long-term value creation goals. The discussion will surface insights into what drives strategic investment today. Special attention will be given to how AI and ESG considerations are influencing value chain resilience, transparency, and innovation. Panelists will also reflect on organizational culture and the human dimensions of sustainability and technology, as companies and investors adapt to shifting global demands.
Main Hall	

09:00-09:30	Executive Focus: Data-Driven Investment: Unlocking Opportunities Through Statistical Insights
	In an era where data is the new currency, harnessing statistical insights has become essential for identifying high-potential investment opportunities and improving decision-making. This session will guide participants on how to leverage FDI statistics, market intelligence tools, and comparative analytics to uncover emerging trends, prioritize sectors, and craft evidence-based investment promotion strategies. Through practical demonstrations and case examples, participants will learn how IPAs can use data not only to attract and target the right investors but also to monitor impact and optimize performance. By the end of the session, attendees will understand how robust data analysis can transform investment promotion into a more strategic, transparent, and results-driven process.
Room 1	•

09:00-09:30	High-Level Think Tank Consortium: Shaping the Future of Investment Policy
	In an era redefined by multifaceted global challenges and increasingly complex policy objectives, the need to bridge the gap between evidence and action has never been more urgent. This high-level session convenes leading global investment think tanks and academic centres, to generate forward-looking insights and evidence-based recommendations that can meaningfully inform investment policy-making at national, regional, and global levels. The session will explore emerging challenges and opportunities in investment policy research, with a focus on: 1) identifying core priorities for a future-oriented investment policy analysis agenda, 2) developing a multidisciplinary framework for research policy in investment promotion and facilitation, 3) Strengthening the interface between research and policy-making to ensure alignment with real-world needs.



Room 3	
09:00-09:30	Special Spotlight: <i>Tourism Doing Business: Investing in the Middle East and Africa</i>
	<p>Launch : Tourism Doing Business: Investing in Middle East</p> <p>This segment marks the official launch of the regional investment study for the Middle East <i>Tourism Doing Business: Investing in Middle East</i>. The presentation will introduce the scope, methodology and preliminary direction of the report, which will be finalized in early 2026. The session will feature a focused talk by a high-level representative from the region , providing key trends, opportunities and challenges that define the tourism investment landscape in the Middle East. This component also seeks to engage WAIPA members from the region to contribute to the development of the report .</p> <p>Regional Dialogue: Tourism Doing Business: Investing in Africa</p> <p>This session presents the <i>Tourism Doing Business: Investing in Africa report</i>, which consolidates insights from interviews with active and prospective investors in African destinations. The findings highlight key competitive advantages, institutional gaps, and concrete investment drivers in the region. A panel discussion will bring together voices from: private sector (tourism investors operating in Africa), African IPAs and tourism boards and international experts and development partners. The objective is to validate the report's messages, share real experiences, and promote collaboration between investors and public institutions.</p>
Room 3	UN TOURISM
09:30-10:55	High-level Panel: Visionary Investment in Cities, e-commerce, and Human Potential
	<p>This high-level conversation will explore how visionary investments are transforming the future of cities, digital economies, and human capital development. The dialogue will delve into how strategic urban development, technology-driven ecosystems, and people-centric innovation can create resilient, competitive, and inclusive economies. The session will highlight opportunities for investors and policymakers to shape future-ready societies and thriving knowledge economies.</p>
Main Hall	
09:30-10:00	Thematic Session: Streamlined Licensing and Policies for a Stronger Business Environment
	<p>Building resilient enterprises requires more than financial support—it demands smart policies, streamlined licensing, and targeted regulatory reforms. This workshop will explore how governments and Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) can create an enabling environment that allows businesses to adapt, scale, and thrive amid global uncertainties. Participants will examine best practices in regulatory simplification, investor-friendly licensing frameworks, and policy</p>



	incentives that enhance business continuity and attract long-term FDI. Through practical examples and interactive discussions, the session will highlight how reforms can strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems, improve investor confidence, and drive sustainable economic growth.
Room 1	

09:30-10:00	Special Spotlight for Francophone: Strengthening Francophone Investment Networks: Partnerships for Growth
	<p>This dedicated session will bring together Francophone IPAs and key international partners to explore opportunities for cross-border investment collaboration within the Francophone world and beyond. Discussions will focus on leveraging shared language, cultural ties, and economic complementarities to attract high-value FDI and foster regional value chains. Participants will hear insights from key Francophone IPAs highlighting success stories, strategic sectors for collaboration, and practical tools for joint promotion initiatives. The session will also identify ways to build public-private partnerships and enhance the role of Francophone IPAs in global investment networks.</p> <p>Cette session dédiée réunira des Agences de Promotion des Investissements (API) francophones et des partenaires internationaux clés afin d'explorer des opportunités de collaboration transfrontalière en matière d'investissement au sein de l'espace francophone et au-delà. Les discussions porteront sur la manière de tirer parti de la langue commune, des liens culturels et des complémentarités économiques pour attirer des IDE de haute valeur et stimuler la création de chaînes de valeur régionales. Les participants bénéficieront des perspectives des API francophones qui mettront en avant des success stories, des secteurs stratégiques de collaboration et des outils pratiques pour des initiatives de promotion conjointes. La session identifiera également des moyens de renforcer les partenariats public-privé et d'accroître le rôle des API francophones dans les réseaux mondiaux d'investissement.</p>
Room 2	•

10:00-12:00	Deal-Making Platform: IPA–Private Sector Matchmaking & Project Pitching
	<p>This high-energy platform will bring together IPAs decision-makers and international investors in a dynamic setting designed for direct engagement and concrete deal-making. IPAs will present high-impact, investment-ready projects across priority sectors—ranging from infrastructure and renewable energy to digital transformation and manufacturing—highlighting their competitive advantages and policy incentives. The Platform will feature structured matchmaking, allowing investors to explore country-specific opportunities, ask targeted questions, and establish immediate connections with IPA leaders. By the end of the platform, participants will take away with actionable leads, potential partnerships, and a clearer roadmap for investment collaboration, turning intentions into solid investment commitments</p>
Room 3	



10:00-10:20	Keynote Speech: The Creative Edge: Investing in Industries that Inspire and Endure
Main Hall	
10:15-11:15	Thematic Session - ILO: How FDI creates Quality Jobs: The Role of Business and IPAs
	This session will highlight how FDI can drive inclusive economic growth by creating quality jobs and building local talent pipelines. Speakers will share best practices on how IPAs and businesses can work together to attract impactful projects, develop skills, and align workforce development with industry needs. Case studies from Sharjah and other markets will showcase innovative approaches, including collaborations with universities and training programs, that ensure FDI translates into sustainable employment opportunities and long-term community benefits.
Room 2	
10:30-11:00	High-level Panel: Transforming Industries Through Smart Manufacturing
	This High-level Panel explores how AI, robotics, IoT, and advanced analytics are reshaping production—from predictive maintenance and zero-defect quality to agile, demand-driven supply chains. Speakers will unpack the business case: higher productivity, lower costs and emissions, and faster time-to-market. The discussion will also address critical enablers, standards and interoperability, cybersecurity, workforce upskilling, and financing models that accelerate SME adoption. Participants will leave with practical pathways for piloting, scaling, and measuring ROI on Industry 4.0 initiatives.
Main Hall	•
10:30-11:00	Executive Focus: Growing and Retaining Investment
	Attracting investment is only the first step of growing, and retaining it is where real impact is made. This session will focus on how IPAs can strengthen aftercare services to support existing investors, encourage reinvestment, and turn investors into long-term partners and ambassadors. Participants will explore practical strategies for investor relationship management, including the use of CRM systems, key account management, policy advocacy, and tailored support services. Case studies will highlight how proactive aftercare can help IPAs identify expansion opportunities, address operational challenges, and build trust-based relationships that lead to sustainable reinvestment and deeper integration into global value chains.
Room 2	
11:00-11:30	Special Spotlight: Turning Local Strength into Global Opportunities
	This special session will bring together policymakers, investors, and industry leaders to explore how distinctive regional capabilities can be scaled for international impact. The discussion will focus on transforming local expertise, resources, and innovations into drivers of cross-border investment, collaborative



	research, and market expansion. By fostering partnerships, sharing knowledge, and identifying actionable initiatives, the session aims to create pathways that link local strengths to global growth, delivering tangible benefits for economies, industries, and communities worldwide.
Room 1	•

11:00-11:30	High-level Panel: Private equity funds for investment impact
	As global capital seeks both returns and impact, private equity funds are playing an increasingly influential role in shaping sustainable development outcomes. This panel brings together leaders from across the private equity landscape to explore the strategic potential of private equity funds. The goal is to deepen collaboration among regional and international funds, share market intelligence, and align investment strategies with long-term economic transformation—particularly in emerging and frontier markets. Panellists will examine how the PEs and other special funds can serve as a means for co-investment, de-risking mechanisms, and blended finance, while promoting sustainable investment aligned with ESG standards. Discussions will also focus on creating investable pipelines, building trust with public sector partners, and strengthening the role of PE in catalysing innovation, infrastructure, and inclusive growth.
Main Hall	

11:25-12:00	High-level Panel UNIDO: Scaling Impact - Aligning Investment Strategies with the SDGs
	As the global investment landscape evolves, responsible and impact-driven investing has become a powerful tool for financing sustainable development. With emerging economies undergoing major transitions and seeking capital to accelerate development, demand for investments that create real impact is growing. Sovereign investors, private equity funds, and public finance actors are rethinking how to deploy capital that delivers both financial and development returns. International Financial Institutions (IFIs) are becoming increasingly relevant, particularly through blended finance mechanisms that help mitigate risk and unlock private sector participation. In this context, IPAs play a vital role, not only facilitating capital flows focused on impact but also shaping bankable pipelines, contributing to de-risking projects, and aligning local priorities with global sustainability goals. Organized by UNIDO in collaboration with WAIPA, this High-level Panel explores how diverse mandates are converging around impact investment and SDG strategies. Building on the momentum of the FfD4, it will spotlight emerging trends, practical tools, and partnerships to ensure investments drive both impact and resilient economic growth.
Main Hall	•

11:25-11:55	Thematic Session of WFZO-UN Tourism: Free Economic Zones and Tourism Investment
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	This session presents the framework and preliminary outcomes of the <i>White Paper on Free Economic Zones and Tourism Investment</i> , developed by UN Tourism in collaboration with the World Free Zones Organization (WFZO). It will include: 1) an overview of typologies and models of free zones applicable to tourism, 2) early findings on best practices from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East; 3) case examples where regulatory innovation has enabled tourism growth through special regimes. The session will offer practical takeaways for IPAs, governments and tourism authorities exploring the use of free zones to attract sustainable investment. Preliminary results of this white paper will also be presented at the WFZO Annual Conference in China (early October 2025).
Room 1	•

11:25-12:35	Executive Focus ITC: Integrating ESG Priorities into IPA Strategies
	IPAs play a pivotal role in advancing sustainable development by aligning investment attraction strategies with the evolving Environmental, Social, and Governance regulations and principles that increasingly shape international trade and investment flows. This session will explore best practices and innovative approaches that IPAs can adopt to effectively integrate ESG considerations into their operations, policy advocacy, and investor engagement.
Room 2	•

12:05-12:35	High-level Panel: Launching a decade of Investing for good in a new era
	This High-level Panel will explore how governments, development institutions, and private investors can drive transformative, impact-focused investment at a time when global cooperation is under pressure. Speakers will discuss strategies for mobilizing capital toward sustainable infrastructure, climate action, and inclusive economic growth despite rising geopolitical tensions. The session will highlight innovative financing mechanisms, new models of public-private partnership, and how cross-border collaboration can be reimagined to ensure investment for good delivers measurable outcomes over the next decade.
Main Hall	

12:40-13:00	Keynote: How Simple Business Build Big Wealth
Main Hall	

12:05-12:35	High-level Panel: Seeds of Change: Investing in Agri-Business for Food Security
	This High-level Panel will explore how strategic investments in agri-business can strengthen global food security and build more resilient supply chains. Speakers will discuss innovative approaches, from precision farming and climate-smart agriculture to vertical farming and agri-tech, that increase productivity while



	conserving resources. The session will also examine how public-private partnerships, supportive policies, and impact-focused financing can accelerate sustainable growth in the agricultural sector, ensuring reliable access to nutritious food for future generations.
Room 1	•

12:05-12:35	High-level Panel: Reimagining Global Investment: NEMs, and Smart Policies for a Resilient Future
	The global investment landscape is shifting rapidly, partly driven by Non-Equity Modes (NEMs) such as contract manufacturing, franchising, and outsourcing, alongside a growing demand for sustainable and inclusive economic models. This High-level Panel will explore how NEMs can complement traditional FDI, creating new pathways for technology transfer, skills development, and value chain integration—particularly in emerging markets. High-level Panelists will discuss the smart policies needed to harness NEMs, from regulatory frameworks and incentives to capacity building for local enterprises. Real-world case studies will showcase how countries are leveraging NEMs and green investment principles to build resilient economies, enhance global competitiveness, and contribute to Sustainable Development.
Room 3	

13:10-13:40	High-level Panel: Scaling Change Through Investment
Main Hall	

13:10-13:40	High-level Panel: Harnessing International Investment for the Digital Economy
	The digital economy is reshaping global growth, offering unprecedented opportunities for innovation, inclusion, and competitiveness. This High-level Panel will explore how countries can attract and leverage international investment to build robust digital ecosystems, from fintech and e-commerce to AI, cloud infrastructure, and data centers. The panel will discuss the enabling policies, investment incentives, and public-private partnerships required to integrate into global digital value chains. Real-world success stories will highlight how strategic international investment can accelerate digital transformation, create skilled jobs, and drive sustainable economic diversification, particularly in emerging markets.
Room 1	•

13:10-13:40	Executive Focus: Catalysts of Capital: SWFs, PFs, and the Future of Global Investment
	Sovereign Wealth Funds and Pension Funds are emerging as some of the most influential players shaping the future of global investment. With trillions of dollars under management, these institutional investors are increasingly driving capital toward sustainable infrastructure, technology, green energy, and long-term development projects. This High-level Panel will explore how SWFs and PFs are



	reimagining investment strategies in response to geopolitical shifts, and evolving global value chains. It will discuss how partnerships with IPAs, governments, and private investors can unlock transformational opportunities, ensuring that capital flows not only generate competitive returns but also contribute to resilient, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth.
Room 2	•
14:00-16:00	Special Spotlight: Seal the Deal Startup Pitch & Awards
	This high-energy session will spotlight innovative startups founded by students and staff from the American University of Sharjah (AUS). Finalists will pitch their ventures to a High-level Panel of investors and industry leaders, competing for awards and potential funding. H.E. Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi will attend the event to celebrate and support the entrepreneurial spirit of the AUS community. The session will also serve as a platform for participants to connect with strategic partners, mentors, and investors, accelerating the growth of these homegrown ventures.
Main Hall	
14:00-16:00	WAIPA SCRIPA Session: Investment collaboration among regional IPA associations, groups and IOs
	This session will bring together leaders of regional IPA associations, investment groups, and international organizations to discuss how cross-regional collaboration can drive sustainable FDI flows and strengthen global investment ecosystems. The discussion will focus on sharing best practices, harmonizing investment policies and standards, and creating joint initiatives to promote investment in key sectors such as green energy, digital infrastructure, and manufacturing. Participants will also explore how regional cooperation platforms can support IPAs in capacity building, investor targeting, and aftercare, ultimately enhancing their role in global value chains and development impact.
Room 1	
16:00-17:00	Closing Ceremony & Conference Outcomes
Main Hall	