



## **NUKU‘ALOFA OUTCOME DOCUMENT**

### **Preparatory Meeting of the 4th International Conference on SIDS for the Pacific Region, 16-18 August 2023**

#### **A. Reaffirming the SIDS Case**

1. We, the representatives of the Small Island Developing States of the Pacific Region, convened in Nuku‘alofa, Kingdom of Tonga from 16 to 18 August 2023, in preparation for the Fourth International Conference on SIDS to be held in Antigua and Barbuda in 2024, as mandated by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 77/245, agree on the following:
  - a. This Outcome Document represents our agreed priorities and recommendations, and will serve as the basis of the Pacific Region's positions to the SIDS inter-regional preparatory meeting to be held in Cabo Verde from 30 August to 1 September 2023;
  - b. The sustainable development priorities of SIDS, enshrined in the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy and the SAMOA Pathway, all of which reaffirm that SIDS remain a special case for sustainable development, is consistent with the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; and
  - c. The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent is the blueprint to advance Pacific regionalism for the next three decades – articulating the region’s long-term vision, values, and thematic priorities.
2. We will continue to be guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, with full respect for international law. We stress the need to strengthen multilateralism and explore innovative approaches to address the unique challenges faced by Pacific SIDS, in accordance with our commitment to leave no one behind.



3. We reaffirm that Pacific SIDS remain a special case for sustainable development in view of our unique, inherent and particular vulnerabilities, including our small size, remoteness, narrow resource and export base, and exposure to global economic, social, political and environmental shocks.
4. We stand united in our pursuit of sustainable development and resilient futures for our countries and peoples. Through transformative cooperative efforts and collective action, we aim to attain a paradigm shift that forges a path that empowers and uplifts all, in harmony with our culture, traditions, leaving a positive impact on our environment, societies, and economies for present and future generations.
5. We reaffirm our commitment to national, regional, and global peace and security and the rule of law which has a central role in ensuring a safe, secure and prosperous region. Peace and security are at the core of global stability and sustainable development, and in a world as interconnected as ours, conflict and insecurity impede the efforts of all countries and make our people more vulnerable.
6. We reaffirm our commitment to national, regional, and global peace and security and respect for the rule of law which has a central role in ensuring a safe, secure and prosperous region. Maintaining peace and security are at the core of global stability and enshrined in the UN Charter. We live in an interconnected world where conflict and insecurity impede all of our sustainable development efforts, exposing our people to become more vulnerable.

**B. Where do we find ourselves today**

7. Taking stock of our collective efforts to implement the SAMOA Pathway, we note the following:
  - a. We have mainstreamed the SAMOA Pathway into national policies, plans and strategies and, it is aligned to intergovernmental commitments, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals, and the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent;
  - b. Our region faces great challenges including the existential threat of climate change; plastics and pollution in our ocean; high rates of non-communicable diseases;



- violence against women and girls; problems of illicit drugs; and the COVID-19 pandemic;
- c. We also have great strengths including our culture and traditions, our resilience, and our island and ocean resources together with our knowledge systems which should be valued in research and foresight planning;
  - d. We recognize the inextricable link between our economies and the oceans and are working diligently to address the ongoing challenges such as biodiversity loss; maritime security; Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, coral bleaching, ocean acidification and beach erosion, including through measures such as the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs);
  - e. We are addressing water scarcity, drought, and saltwater intrusion challenges and recognize the need to transform from water crises to a water secure world;
  - f. We continue to encounter limited access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, renewable energy and call for enhanced international cooperation and support, sustainable investments in energy infrastructure and renewable energy technology, and training in green energy transition.
  - g. We recognized that transportation, including for inter-island connectivity remains a challenge in the Pacific region. We are developing viable national, regional and international transportation arrangements, including improved air, land and sea transport policies that take a life-cycle approach to the development and management of transport infrastructure;
  - h. There is an urgent need to address the special needs of the aged, people with disabilities and other vulnerable communities including through the design of appropriate services
  - i. We continue to experience the loss of professionals and skilled and semi-skilled laborers, through labour mobility; and
  - j. We recognize the need to find durable, long-term, equitable, sustainable solutions, especially to address the challenge of youth employment.
  - k. We recognize the financing for development challenges in the Pacific SIDS and the important work on MVI in the context of supporting the SAMOA Pathway implementation.
8. Climate change remains the greatest existential threat to our region. We are collectively impacted by its adverse impacts, including cyclones and typhoons, droughts, sea water temperature increase, and sea-level rise, as well as ocean acidification which threatens our coral reefs. Furthermore, changes in regional rainfall patterns related to climate change have regionally varying and potentially significant impacts on water supply.



9. We, especially our low-lying atolls, face numerous challenges with respect to freshwater resources, including pollution, the overexploitation of surface, ground and coastal waters, saline intrusion, drought and water scarcity, soil erosion, water and wastewater treatment and the lack of access to appropriate sanitation and hygiene.
10. We reaffirm our commitment to the Pacific Island Forum Leaders' Declaration on preserving maritime zones in the face of climate change-related sea-level rise, which proclaims that our maritime zones, as established and notified to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and the rights and entitlements that flow from them, shall continue to apply without reduction, notwithstanding any physical changes connected to climate change-related sea-level rise.
11. Additionally, some of our countries are susceptible to seismic activity and volcanic eruptions. Compounded with the impacts of nature and biodiversity loss and pollution and waste, these events have resulted in significant economic and infrastructure damage, loss of lives, strains on already vulnerable populations, and the diversion of our limited resources to assist emergency response and recovery, affecting the implementation of long-term sustainable development plans.
12. We continue to encounter significant limitations in terms of financial resources and access to sustainable finance, including climate finance, posing challenges on our ability to effectively implement our development priorities, including the SAMOA Pathway. Difficulties in accessing predictable, sufficient financial support including concessional finance have been further compounded by our restricted access to international financing mechanisms and the burden of high levels of debt. These factors have hindered our ability to allocate the necessary funds for crucial development activities. Additionally, the conventional reliance on GDP/GNI per capita as a primary measure of development finance has substantially restricted access to international financial sources.
13. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a severely impacted social development efforts for on Pacific SIDS in the Pacific, disrupting trade flows, economies, transport and trade, health and education systems and social development efforts. The pandemic has strained resources, increase debt level, diverted attention and funding, and created additional barriers to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the SAMOA Pathway, including sustainable development, poverty reduction, gender equality, and resilience building. The



multiple interconnected crises caused by global economic challenges, conflicts and unrest and the continued impacts of the triple planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution are further exacerbating the challenges we face.

14. We recognize the extremely high prevalence of non-communicable diseases in most Pacific SIDS, in particular cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer and chronic respiratory diseases, and the increasing deaths attributable to non-communicable diseases, the challenges on our health care system and the surge in the burden of resourcing and caring for those with pre-existing and underlying health conditions puts further stress on our national budgets and health infrastructure and systems.

### **C. Transformative Actions to Enhance Environmental Resilience**

15. We call on our international partners to implement the Paris Agreement commitments including limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. We commit to incorporating traditional knowledge and innovations, values, and practices of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in adaptation measures, including biodiversity and nature-based solutions.
16. We welcome the revitalization of the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable and further support the Pacific Climate Change Center.
17. We urgently call on developed country parties to the Paris Agreement to meet their commitments on the provision of climate finance to developing countries, including through increased pledges to the existing climate Funds, including the Green Climate Fund and by developing simplified access procedures for SIDS. We also call on developed country Parties to make good on the COP26 commitment of doubling adaptation finance from 2019 levels by 2025. We also call for the creation of dedicated windows for SIDS under climate financing mechanisms.
18. We appeal to the international community to expedite climate mitigation measures aimed at reducing global greenhouse gas emissions. By working together, we can address these pressing issues and pave the way for a more secure and sustainable future for all.
19. We need to improve access and the mobilization of climate finance and sustainable private finance as a priority.



20. We are committed to bold climate action and commit to achieving ambitious advisory opinions from ITLOS and ICJ to ensure that all States uphold the rule of international law and prevent further climate harm to our environment and people of present and future generations.
21. We call upon the international community to embrace the adoption of renewable energy technologies, aiming to diminish our region's heavy dependence on fossil fuels. We recognize the intricacies posed by structural barriers that hinder a seamless energy transition. We advocate for the promotion and allocation of resources towards climate-resilient, 'smart' energy solutions, encompassing localised generation options that complement the national grid.
22. We take note of the Port Vila Call to Action by certain Pacific SIDS members for a just transition to a Fossil Fuel Free Pacific and also take note of their call for the establishment of a global alliance to negotiate a Non-Proliferation Treaty to facilitate ending fossil fuel expansion, equitable phase out of fossil fuels, and a global just transition to affordable and accessible renewable energy that fairly, justly and equitably cushion our economies and wellbeing throughout the transition.
23. We acknowledge the work of SIDS-DOCK in promoting the importance of investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency, biodiversity, technology utilization to minimize costs and capacity building and we call on development partners to support the work of SIDS-DOCK in furthering the implementation of SDG7.
24. We call on the international community to urgently upscale investments in renewable energy in Pacific SIDS and to further develop SIDS-specific technologies for renewable energy deployment, including 'smart' energy alternatives.
25. We also call on countries and partners to support the implementation of the Framework for Energy Security and Resilience in the Pacific (2021-2030) to support Pacific SIDS in developing and implementing our own key national energy sector priorities and goals as expressed in national energy policies, development policies, NDC commitments.
26. The slowing of progress in the use and adoption of renewable energy has been partially attributed to the difficulties in assessing financing options due to the onerous processes required. We welcome recent initiatives such as national accreditation to the Adaption and Green Climate Fund with the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT), Secretariat of the



Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Pacific Community and now a Regional Implementing Entity to the Green Climate Fund.

27. We will continue to explore practical ways for streamlining and simplifying procedures and funding instruments to support more efficient allocation of climate finance and explore ways to better adapt to the Pacific context by allowing greater risk taking, innovation and use of a more diverse range of financing instruments.
28. We call for continued support for the implementation of the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) and Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP).
29. We welcome ongoing initiatives aimed at establishing Early Warning Systems that prioritise disaster preparedness for all. The convergence of natural and biological hazards has disproportionately affected the most vulnerable segments of our population, creating a new nexus where disaster, oceans, climate, and health intersect. We note significant reduction in fatalities linked to natural and man-made disasters, indicative of tangible progress in rallying support and adopting transformative approaches to disaster management at both national and regional levels.
30. We commit to support the increased capacity, particularly amongst key national agencies, to improve coordination with international and regional humanitarian partners and donor governments in response to disaster events in the Pacific region. We call for continued support for the implementation of the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) and Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP).
31. We welcome the adoption of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, including the recognition of the special circumstances of SIDS and inclusion of traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities (TKIPLC).
32. Plastic pollution remains a growing problem in the Pacific and is linked closely to the unsustainable and inadequate management of plastic waste. We recognize the high and rapidly increasing levels of plastic pollution and the impacts this has on the environment as well as on livelihoods, health, and the economies of the Pacific. We will work with regional and international partners to control this source of pollution, to support investment in modern integrated solid waste management systems, as well as the development of Pacific



SIDS specific strategies. We will continue to actively participate in the intergovernmental negotiations on the development of a new legally binding global agreement to combat plastic pollution.

33. We value and depend upon our vast oceans and our island resources and the integrity of our natural environment and in this connection, we commit to pursuing the opportunities in the context of the blue economy, including in relation to fisheries, aquaculture, energy and mineral resources, blue finance and carbon trade, and employment generation.
34. We place great value on the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and its resources through sound, responsible ocean governance. In this regard, we underscore that any deep-sea mining activities must be conducted with utmost responsibility, sustainability and respect to our marine ecosystems.
35. We call for support to increase capacity, particularly amongst key national agencies to improve coordination with international and regional humanitarian partners and donor governments in response efforts to disaster events in the Pacific region.
36. We recognize that an integrated ecosystem approach to ocean-related activities is needed to optimize opportunities. It should be based on the best available science, give due regard to conservation efforts and precautionary approaches and ensure coherence and balance among the three dimensions of sustainable development.
37. We commit to the protection of biodiversity and the full [inclusion of civil society- move to social] especially traditional leaders, women and people with disabilities. (include words that refers to the Global Biodiversity Framework – Fund/envelope for SIDS)
38. Pacific SIDS have extraordinary marine and terrestrial biodiversity that in many cases is fundamental to their livelihoods and identity, providing biodiversity and the ecosystem services and are at grave risk. We seek further cooperation from developed partners to:
  - a. conserve biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources;
  - b. expand the export of organic, natural, sustainably produced and locally grown produce and products; and
  - c. improve access to financial and technical resources for the conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity.





39. We note the establishment of the SIDS Coalition for Nature.

#### **D. Revitalizing Our Economies: Strategies for Dynamic and Inclusive Growth**

40. We are committed to shaping and leading our own sustainable development path. We ascribe high priority to the pursuit of strategies that stimulate sustained and inclusive growth.
41. We call for the adoption of the Multi-Dimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) by the UN General Assembly, including the establishment of an interim secretariat that will support its operationalization and implementation by all stakeholders, including as a criterion for access to low-cost and long-term financing for Pacific SIDS based on this Index.
42. We acknowledge the need for additional financial resources and investments in productive sectors for generating jobs and creating dynamic economic growth opportunities and call for the UN system and partners to support these opportunities.
43. We commit to strengthen national policy coherence based on data, and we call on our development partners to improve aid effectiveness and aid transparency, development cooperation and donor coordination in line with our national and regional priorities. We commit to transforming the region fully towards a blue-green economies and to prioritizing aid to the most vulnerable.
44. We commit to explore ways on how to make remittance flows more structured and predictable, including from diaspora, and how to incentivize and harness these resources for productive investments.
45. Tourism remains an important driver of sustainable economic growth and decent job creation. We commit to:
  - a. develop and implement policies that promote resilient and sustainable tourism;
  - b. improve tourism infrastructure including technology and air links;
  - c. modernize and diversify the tourism sector with special emphasis on investments in marketing, statistics, data and research;
  - d. design and implement participatory measures including through culture to enhance employment opportunities, in particular for women, youth and persons with disabilities, in the tourism sector; and



e. Diversifying and shifting to more sustainable tourism models and investing in new technologies could help to shape recovery efforts post global pandemic.

46. We call for more affordable and accessible digital technologies to increase minimum levels of proficiency in sustainable digital skills, achieve universal and meaningful connectivity, and facilitate inclusive economic growth. We commit to strengthening our ICT regulatory institutions and frameworks, upgrading our infrastructure including alternative internet connectivity options to enhance resilience. We further commit to investing in cyber security and related awareness programmes to safeguard networks and users from cyberattacks and online fraud.
47. We urgently need to address transportation issues in Pacific SIDS including inter and intra island connectivity. We commit to:
- a. accessing environmentally sound, safe, affordable and well-maintained transportation services;
  - b. advancing the safety of land, sea and air transportation;
  - c. developing viable national, regional and international transportation arrangements, including improved air, land and sea transport policies that take a life-cycle approach to the development and management of transport infrastructure; and
  - d. increasing energy efficiency in the transport sector, including for food security.

**E. Forging a Path to Empowerment, Equity, Inclusion, Peaceful Societies and Safe Communities**

48. We recognize that social development, is one of the three dimensions of sustainable development, and is crucial to ensure development progress of small island developing States. We therefore support efforts to enhance social protection and inclusion, to improve well-being, and to guarantee opportunities for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.
49. We confirm that the Pacific SIDS have strengthened international cooperation in the cultural field, in line with UNESCO's international conventions reaching close to universal ratification of the World Heritage Convention and the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Regional and local capacities have been reinforced in the protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage as well as the development of cultural and creative industries. Despite this, the assessment on culture and sport shows significant levels of stagnation and regression in recent years.



50. We acknowledge the importance of traditional knowledge and culture in the planning and implementation stages such as in (PEBACC) and strengthening stakeholders experience of participating in the formulating and implementation of policies and activities.
51. We are determined to build synergies between climate change and social protection agendas and to strengthen social protection policy and legal frameworks with a view to building a comprehensive social security system.
52. We note the importance of increasing agricultural productivity, to improve overall food security and nutrition and reducing food import dependency – as well as building knowledge of new technologies among local entrepreneurs, engineers, and technicians, governments can reap the benefits of a long-term strategy for capitalizing on future opportunities.
53. We note the urgently need to improve water and sanitation infrastructure to provide clean and safe drinking water, proper sanitation facilities, and hygiene education. Access to safe and clean water, as well as adequate sanitation facilities, remains a pressing challenge for many Pacific SIDS. Efficient water resource management, physical infrastructure development, and innovative solutions are vital to address water scarcity and inadequate sanitation.
54. In this regard, we are committed to:
  - a. develop institutional and human capacities for the effective, inclusive and sustainable implementation of the integrated management of water resources and related ecosystems, including supporting women’s engagement in water management systems;
  - b. provide and operate appropriate facilities and infrastructure for safe drinking water, sanitation, hygiene and waste management systems, including the provision of desalination technology where economically and environmentally feasible;
  - c. facilitate the expansion of wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse in the context of the sustainable and efficient use of water resources; and
  - d. improve water-use efficiency and work towards eliminating over-extraction, especially of groundwater, and to mitigate the effects of saltwater intrusion.
55. We reaffirm our commitment to policy responses in health and social investments for improvements in healthcare and social protection systems, growth in the quality of physical infrastructure, and promote economic diversification.



56. The drivers of NCDs are complex and multifactorial and despite several global and regional agreements and commitments there has been limited translation into concrete local action. We call for the use of science and data to support the implementation of preventive measures to reduce the incidence of non-communicable diseases, such as promoting healthy lifestyles, tobacco control, and access to affordable healthcare services.
57. While the COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges to all our governments, it presented an opportunity for a reset, rethink and rebuild of strategies and to strengthen pertinent institutions. We are committed to revitalizing strategies to achieve better health care systems, accessible to everyone, thereby leaving no one behind.
58. We support small island developing States in their commitment to an approach to development that is focused on poverty eradication, which should ensure that people, particularly those living in poverty, have equal access to education, health, food, water and sanitation and other public and social services and access to productive resources, including credit, land, training, knowledge, information, and know-how. That approach enables citizens and local communities to participate in decision- making on social development policies and programmes.
59. We call on our partners and the international community for urgent action and investment to foster innovative solutions towards reviewing and revamping our education delivery models with a view to improving teacher attraction and retention strategies, strengthening partnerships between the homes and the school as well as the development of inexpensive, alternate models of delivery.
60. We commit to increase investment in the quality of education and training to provide opportunities for better access to technical & vocational training, especially for youth and women and girls but also for people living with disabilities, while reducing gender disparities in the labour market; and promoting the rights of workers for all in the Pacific SIDS remains a high priority.
61. We recognize the importance of strengthening social protection systems that build the capacity and resilience of populations to cope with and adapt to environmental shocks without falling into poverty, particularly given the highly disruptive impacts of climate change in the Pacific while supporting the transition of workers to more sustainable forms of production and decent work through up- and re-skilling programmes and active labor market policies.



62. Priorities to improve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the Pacific SIDS include:
  - a. increasing women's representation in decision-making including in parliament and government, as well as by supporting women's political participation;
  - b. addressing discrimination in schools, colleges and the workplace including through enforcing laws against discrimination, providing training for employers and employees, and creating awareness of the issue;
  - c. eliminating violence against women and girls by enacting laws on violence against women and girls in all spheres (including at home), providing support services for victims of violence, and raising greater awareness of the issue; and
  - d. increasing women's access to education, sports (Fiji) and healthcare by providing financial assistance to women, building schools and clinics in remote areas, and addressing cultural barriers that prevent women from accessing education, sports and healthcare.as well as addressing.
63. Recalling Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (PLGED) in 2012, invigorating collective efforts to lift the status of women in the Pacific and empower Pacific women and girls to actively participate in economic, political and social life.
64. In the Pacific region advancing women in leadership and decision-making extends beyond attempts to elect women to local and national governments. Promoting shared decision-making at the household level, in communities, and in management of natural resources is a key step in the process of changing social norms about women's rights to participate across all levels of society.
65. COVID-19 pandemic severely affected the economies of all Pacific countries, on all levels, including revenue from the tourism sector, which still has not been restored to pre-pandemic levels. Resource provision was significantly impacted, including a lack of health care services, a loss of school days noting women, children and people with disabilities were particularly and adversely affected.
66. The acknowledgement of the importance of traditional knowledge and culture in the planning and implementation stages, such as in the Pacific Ecosystem Based Adaptation to Climate Change (PEBACC), and strengthening stakeholders experience of participating in the formulating and implementation of policies and activities.



67. We are determined to build synergies between climate change and social protection agendas and to strengthen social protection policy and legal frameworks with a view to building a comprehensive social security system, reaffirming the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection, adopted by ESCAP member States in October 2020.

#### **F. Strengthening Institutional and Statistical Capacities**

68. We recognized that the collection of accurate data is effective for decision making processes. We note that Pacific SIDS national and regional data infrastructure is lagging, in terms of human, technological, financial (Fiji) and institutional capacity. We stress the importance of evidence-based and data driven approaches that acknowledges our local knowledge systems to resource mobilization and monitoring and planning.
69. We express concern about the gaps in data experienced in Pacific SIDS and the need to ensure that systems are in place and that data must be available publicly.
70. We support the 10-year Pacific Statistics Strategy and the Pacific Statistics Methods Board to ensure best practice methods and standards are documented for the collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of all official statistics and other statistical indicators and issues as appropriate and ensure statistics are ‘fit for purpose’ for use by Pacific SIDS.
71. We recognize the importance of supporting the national statistics bureau and ensure best practice methods and standards are documented for the collection and use of data. We support the establishment of a global SIDS Data hub and call on the international partners to consolidate and coordinate various data platforms and data related initiatives in order to facilitate ease of use and access for Pacific SIDS. We urgently need to establish a Pacific SIDS Data hub for better data management and research.
72. We note with concern that Pacific SIDS face significant challenges in data collection and analysis, in terms of technological and institutional capacity. In this regard, we stress the need to foster better data understanding, use and generation through, inter alia, the exchange of best practices and expertise, technology transfer, educational and training programmes for climate change and disaster risk reduction, inclusive economic growth, sustainable use of ocean resources and blue economy, and digital transformation.



73. We recognize that the collection of robust and disaggregated data can strengthen the provision of basic services to Pacific SIDS and support effective governance and decision-making processes.

### **G. From Vulnerability to a more Resilient Future/Resilient Prosperity**

74. Our special circumstances as SIDS may make us different, but they do not take away our potential to partner as equals, collaboratively pursuing mutual gains for our countries and our peoples. It is only through mutual respect and shared opportunities that we can grow together and reap the benefits of our cooperation. This is how SIDS aim to navigate the next 10 years. This is a call for an attitude change in projecting our future. It is not about SIDS or partners as two different entities. It is about us sharing one planet and walking together on the same path towards a prosperous future.
75. We recall the SIDS Partnerships Framework and the work of the United Nations Steering Committee on SIDS Partnerships, including in monitoring the progress of existing partnerships and encouraging the launch of new, genuine, and durable partnerships.
76. We acknowledge that there have been some positive impacts of partnerships on beneficiaries such as governments and communities, on human resource, capacity building, the environment and enhanced knowledge sharing, including information, data and improved coordination.
77. We call on partners to improve partnerships around data and statistics for monitoring and evaluation, digital infrastructure and transformation, STI, sustainable and predictable financing, and capacity building. We acknowledge that governments should strengthen national policymaking to foster north- south, south- south, triangular and SIDS- SIDS partnerships at global, regional, subregional and national level STI including with the private sector and all other stakeholders.
78. We will support the digitalization in areas related to deliver public services and distance learning, among others, to improve efficiency, quality, and accessibility of these services, by investing in infrastructure and skills.
79. We will strengthen building strategic partnerships with Pacific SIDS and other partners, including to jointly create or procure digital solutions, and build capacities for the optimal use of open-source digital approaches and tools.



80. We call for the biennial convening of the Pacific regional Multistakeholder Partnership Dialogue to foster, knowledge exchange, and support the review and implementation of existing partnerships for the Pacific region, with a view of facilitating aid, investment, trade and technology transfers and creation of new Partnerships emanating from such review.
81. We need to provide funding and financial instruments to support collaboration and partnership initiatives that incentivize collaboration and help stakeholders implement their ideas and projects.
82. We call on fostering collaboration through public-private partnerships, where government entities, multilateral development banks and private sector organizations work together to achieve common goals, including fostering the innovation and digitalization.
83. We welcome the SIDS Partnerships Award, which recognises and rewards the most noteworthy partnerships with SIDS.
84. We must focus on improving complementarities between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent to shape aspirations in the Pacific and identify ways to connect with the other internationally agreed development agendas and other initiatives.

## **H. Means of Implementation**

85. In order for SIDS to reach their development objectives, sustainable finance that is fit for purpose, tailored to the small size and capacity constraints of SIDS, needs to be provided. Quality, quantity, and access to finance needs to be measured and increased and/or optimised. Currently, SIDS face barriers to accessing finance, including climate finance, due to lack of capacity and lack of data, as well as a fragmented finance architecture, which as small countries with small population sizes, make it very difficult to access finance at scale that allow them to finance projects. Additionally, many SIDS struggle with high debt levels due to the COVID pandemic and need cooperation from partners to restructure their debt burdens, so they have the opportunity to get back on track.
86. Committed actions:





- a. Streamline and simplify application requirements from donor countries, MDBs/IFIs, and other financial institutions that support the sustainable development for SIDS. For example, agreeing on one set of sector-specific criteria across various financing institutions, so that SIDS may use one application to access various sources of funding;
- b. Pilot SIDS windows and/or SIDS-specific special financing vehicles that allow for reduced requirements, given small financing project sizes, and high current barriers to access such as SIDS window for Global Environmental Facility, other MDB SIDS exclusions;
- c. Support the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI), as a tool to evaluate the vulnerabilities of SIDS and enhance their ability to access development and climate finance, including Official Development Assistance;
- d. Explore and implement creative arrangements and risk reduction mechanisms that allow SIDS to access low and concessional financing rates, including government guarantees, and insurance schemes;
- e. Explore and facilitate innovative solutions to address high-levels of debt in SIDS, including debt forgiveness, term extensions, debt-to-nature swaps, and so forth;
- f. Secure preferential access to markets, and finance, and address all forms of debt by the establishment of a dedicated debt relief mechanism for SIDS, including for the Pacific region; and
- g. Measure, publish and optimise speed of applications processes, so as to make transparent to SIDS how long the process may expect to take, and shorten the time to project implementation.

## **I. Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation**

87. We recognize the need to sharing best practices data in order to facilitate SIDS peer-to-peer learning, and better monitoring and evaluation of implementation.
88. We call for a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Programme of Action of the 4<sup>th</sup> International SIDS Conference.