

SIDS Partnership Symposium

Advancing partnerships in support of the new Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States

19 and 23 February 2024, United Nations Conference Center, Bangkok, Thailand

Organized by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, in the margins of the 2024 Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

Background

In its resolution 77/245, the UN General Assembly reaffirmed its call for the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4)¹ to be convened in 2024. Hosted by Antigua and Barbuda, SIDS4 will take place on 27-30 May 2024 under the theme “*Charting the Course Toward Resilient Prosperity*”. The Conference will agree on a bold new Programme of Action for SIDS to support SIDS to achieve their sustainable development objectives over the next ten years.

A key outcome that stemmed from the *third* International Conference on SIDS² was the establishment of the SIDS Partnership Framework as a mechanism to promote, monitor, and stimulate the launch of new partnerships for SIDS. Established in 2015, the SIDS Partnership Framework has evolved into a broad multi-stakeholder platform, providing a space for reviewing the progress of SIDS partnerships and facilitating the sharing of good practices and lessons learned among all stakeholders.

In 2023, a series of preparatory meetings took place within each of the three SIDS regions, along with an interregional preparatory meeting for all SIDS, with the primary objective of identifying and formulating valuable contributions for the SIDS4 Conference. The outcome of the interregional meeting³ - the “*Praia (Cabo Verde) Declaration*” - called for the *strengthening* of the SIDS Partnership Framework to continue its impact on communities, on human resource, capacity building, the environment and enhanced knowledge sharing, including information, data, and improved coordination.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships have a crucial role in driving implementation of sustainable development in SIDS. By aligning interests and combining public, private and people resources and levers for change, they are uniquely placed to find innovative solutions, engage locally, challenge entrenched power, and drive a transformation towards the vision everyone on the planet can get behind: a prosperous economy, thriving society and healthy environment. It is evident that this **concept is equally applicable to all the priority areas** that have emerged from the preparatory process of SIDS.

¹ <https://sdgs.un.org/smallislands>

² <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/small-islands/apia2014>

³ <https://sdgs.un.org/smallislands/interregional-preparatory-meeting-all-sids>

SIDS Partnership Symposium

On 19 and 23 February 2024, UN DESA, in collaboration with ESCAP, will host a two-day SIDS Partnership Symposium as an associate event to the 2024 Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD)⁴, held at the United Nations Conference Center, Bangkok, Thailand.

The objectives of the SIDS Partnership Symposium include:

1. Gather insights and perspectives from SIDS stakeholders on how the **SIDS Partnership Framework** can be improved in its upcoming phase to bolster implementation of SIDS priorities through partnerships in SIDS.
2. Explore how to **enhance coalitions and partnerships on two key regional SIDS priorities** (as identified in the *Praia (Cabo Verde) Declaration*), including through financing, technological innovation, data, capacity development, trade initiatives, and statistics.
3. Foster **peer learning and exchange of knowledge among of stakeholders** in building effective collaborations for SIDS.

The APFSD will in 2024 will be organized under the theme: “*Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: The effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions in Asia and the Pacific*”. The Forum will also place a special emphasis on the Sustainable Development Goals that will be reviewed at the 2024 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, namely **Goal 1** (No Poverty); **Goal 2** (Zero Hunger); **Goal 13** (Climate Action); **Goal 16** (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions); and **Goal 17** (Partnerships for the Goals).

To complement the APFSD and remain focused on topics relevant to Asia-Pacific region, the SIDS Partnership Symposium will center its attention on how to enhance coalitions and partnerships for the following two key SIDS priorities, as identified in the *Praia (Cabo Verde) Declaration*:

Priority area 1 - Science, Technology, and Innovation for SIDS

Unlocking the transformative power of science, technology, and innovation (STI) for sustainable development requires robust partnerships. Collaborative efforts are pivotal for implementing solutions that enhance social services, create economic opportunities, and safeguard the environment. Partnerships also play a crucial role in advancing digital transformation and promoting context-specific research and analysis to strengthen the science-policy interface.

Enhancing strategic partnerships is essential, both within the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) community and through North-South, South-South, and triangular collaborations, including SIDS to SIDS. This approach is vital for accessing technical and technology transfers, fostering trade and investment relationships, and expediting inclusive economic growth.

⁴ <https://www.unescap.org/events/apfsd11>

Priority area 2 - Climate and Development Finance

Climate and development financing entails the strategic allocation of financial resources to initiatives that concurrently tackle climate change and broader sustainable development efforts. This comprehensive approach integrates endeavors to enhance climate resilience, mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and achieve social, economic, and environmental sustainability. The diverse mechanisms of climate and development financing, ranging from grants and loans to investments, are typically channeled through national governments, international organizations, and financial institutions.

The effectiveness of climate and development financing hinges on robust partnerships and collaborations. Working collectively on a global scale, nations can leverage their combined strengths to confront the interconnected challenges of climate change and sustainable development.

The overarching goal of climate financing is to empower countries, particularly developing nations, to implement measures addressing climate-related challenges. This encompasses transitions to renewable energy, adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, and the creation of infrastructure resilient to extreme weather events. Crucially, climate financing plays a vital role in assisting countries in meeting their climate-related commitments, as outlined in international agreements like the Paris Agreement. It is indispensable for achieving global climate goals and supporting vulnerable communities in adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Programme

19 February 2024	
Day 1 - Partnership Dialogue	
09.00 AM – 09.15 AM	Opening and purpose of Symposium
09.15 AM – 09.30 AM	Presentation - Strengthening of the SIDS Partnership Framework in the next programme of action for SIDS
09.30 AM – 10.30 AM	Introduction to effective partnering - by the 2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator
10.30 AM – 11.00 AM	Coffee and networking break
11.00 AM – 12.45 PM	Priority area 1 - Science, Technology, and Digitalization <i><u>Presentations and interactive discussion</u></i>

01.00 PM – 02.00 PM	Lunch
02.00 PM – 03.45 PM	Priority area 2 - Climate and Development Finance <i><u>Presentations and interactive discussion</u></i>
03.45 PM – 04.00 PM	Coffee and networking break
04.00 PM – 04.45 PM	Wrap up discussion – Emerging ideas for strengthening of the SIDS Partnership Framework in the next programme of action for SIDS
23 February 2024	
Day 2 - Policy Dialogue	
<i>Part of UN DESA's Global Policy Dialogue Series</i>	
10.00 AM – 10.30 AM	Opening and reporting back from Day 1
10.30 AM – 11.45 AM	Advancing partnerships in support of the new Programme of Action for SIDS <i><u>Multi-stakeholder panel discussion</u></i>
11.45 AM - 12.00 PM	Closing and next steps

Outputs

The Symposium will contribute to the development of two outputs, which will be submitted to the Steering Committee on SIDS Partnerships for further consideration.

1. **Recommendations** on how the SIDS Partnership Framework can effectively be strengthened in the new Programme of Action for SIDS.
2. **Assessment of requirements** for scaling up development of partnerships on select priority areas, including mapping of key actors and initiatives, required resources, capacity building and technology transfer, deliverables, and impact.
 - a. Next steps would envision organizing dedicated roundtable discussions with donors and interested actors to operationalize these two partnerships.