



## Regional and Inter-Regional Preparatory Meetings for the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4)

### Summary of discussions on Partnerships

#### Introduction

Regional preparatory meetings for SIDS4 were held in each of the three regions of SIDS – Atlantic, Indian Ocean and South China Seas (AIS), Caribbean and Pacific - as well as an inter-regional preparatory meeting, to identify and develop input for the Conference while maximizing coherence and complementarity with respect to other preparatory work.<sup>1</sup> The preparatory meetings provided an opportunity for SIDS to assess the progress to date, identify remaining gaps and challenges in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, including the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework, and recognize new and emerging challenges and opportunities for the sustainable development of SIDS.<sup>2</sup>

The co-chairs of the Steering Committee on partnerships for SIDS, Permanent Missions of Portugal and Samoa to the United Nations, facilitated discussions on partnerships for SIDS during the preparatory meetings in each of the three SIDS regions. The sessions on partnerships explored ways to nurture an enabling environment that is supportive of partnership building and how the SIDS Partnership Framework can be strengthened to support meaningful and effective partnerships in the regions. The discussions from these regional meetings informed the inter-regional preparatory meeting in Cabo Verde. The outcome document of the inter-regional preparatory meeting “Praia (Cabo Verde) Declaration” calls for the strengthening of SIDS Partnership Framework to continue its impact on communities, human resources, capacity building, the environment and enhanced knowledge sharing, including information, data, and improved coordination. It requests the establishment of the biennial regional multi-stakeholder SIDS partnership dialogue to facilitate means of implementation. It also calls for the SIDS Global Business Network and the SIDS Global Business Network Forum to be strengthened, as a key part of the SIDS Partnership Framework, toward increased public-private partnerships that contribute to the sustainable development of SIDS and the more strategic promotion of SIDS as potential market opportunities. This paper outlines key messages on partnerships that emerged from the meetings in a non-exhaustive manner.

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<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to General Assembly resolution A/RES/77/245 paragraph 29.

<sup>2</sup> Member states decided by General Assembly resolution 77/245, that the 4th International Conference on SIDS will assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps and challenges in the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy and the SAMOA Pathway, including the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework.

**Atlantic, Indian Ocean and South China Sea (AIS),  
Regional Preparatory Meeting  
Balaclava, Mauritius, 24-26 July 2023**

***“Unlocking meaningful and effective multistakeholder partnerships to support implementation of sustainable development in the AIS region”***

Summary

The AIS regional meeting reaffirmed that engaging diverse stakeholders through partnerships has contributed to the sustainable development of AIS SIDS. It was noted that advancing strategic partnerships, including North-South and South-South collaborations, is crucial for accessing finance, technology transfer, and improving trade relationships amidst global supply chain shifts. Discussion highlighted priority areas for SIDS, which includes making sustainable investments in energy infrastructure, addressing water and sanitation challenges through holistic approaches, and fostering innovative financing mechanisms. The need to enhance cooperation on emerging technologies was noted, particularly Artificial Intelligence, alongside strategic partnerships for digital governance and public services. Concerning the SIDS Partnership Framework, a challenge in monitoring SIDS partnerships was noted, underscoring the need to improve the monitoring system. The importance of involving the private sector in the policy-making process and discussions with governments was also emphasized.

Key points from the outcome document

- **Enhance international cooperation** and sustainable investments in **energy infrastructure and renewable energy technology**.
- **Develop a shared, long-term vision of the future of societies** and resilient prosperity, engaging all development stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, the academia, and youth to facilitate partnerships and investments for economic transformation and collective foresight on future needs in terms of investments, skills, equipment and infrastructure.
- **Boost strategic partnerships both among SIDS and leveraging North-South and South-South partnerships**, to access finance, enhance technology transfer, and improve trade relationships, in a context of a profound shifts in global and regional supply chains.
- **Strengthen international cooperation on water and sanitation**, develop and implement adaptation strategies that consider the water-energy nexus, adopt a holistic approach that considers the water, energy and food nexus, and develop integrated solutions that optimize resource use that promote circular economy principles.
- **Foster partnerships and mobilize resources to develop and scale-up innovative financing mechanisms**, such as the debt-for-nature swap and blue investment bonds, carbon credit and encouraging collaboration among AIS SIDS.
- **Note potential risk of misuse of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence**, while recognizing their potential in preventing and combating the use of information and

communications technologies for criminal purposes Stress the need to enhance coordination and cooperation among States in combating the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes, including by providing technical assistance to AIS SIDS to improve national legislation and frameworks and build the capacity of national authorities to deal with such use in all its forms, including its prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution.

- Recognize the need to **sharing best practices on data in order to facilitate SIDS peer-to-peer learning, and better monitoring and evaluation of implementation**. Foster better data understanding, use and generation through, inter alia, the exchange of best practices and expertise, technology transfer, educational and training programmes for disaster risk reduction, economic growth, sustainable development, and climate change adaptation.
- **Recalled that the SIDS Partnership 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; acknowledged 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; and welcomed the SIDS Partnerships Award, which recognises and rewards the most noteworthy partnerships with SIDS.
- Recognize that the Mid-term review of the SAMOA Pathway in 2019, revealed some partnership challenges faced by SIDS in the AIS region including inter alia inadequate data and statistics for monitoring and evaluation, digital information and infrastructure, sustainable and predictable financing, and capacity building; and acknowledged that governments should **have clear articulation of national priorities to enable north- south, south- south, triangular and SIDS- SIDS partnerships at global, regional and national levels including with the private sector and other stakeholder engagement are needed to address these challenges, and call for scaled up approaches for our region**.
- **Build strategic partnerships for the digitalization of governance and public services**, e-administration, e-Government, e-health, distance learning to improve efficiency, quality, and accessibility of these services, including by investing in infrastructure, equipment and skills, and building strategic partnerships with SIDS and other partners, including to jointly create or procure digital solutions, and build capacities for the optimal use of open source digital tool.
- **Strengthen the intra-SIDS cooperation to leverage the benefits of Science, Technology and Innovation**, including to explore the establishment of a Technology Bank for AIS SIDS to foster SIDS-SIDS cooperation.
- **Convene a high-level meeting of the AIS region** to discuss the modalities for a coordination mechanism.

**Caribbean SIDS,  
Regional Preparatory Meeting  
Kingstown, St Vincent & the Grenadines, 8-10 August 2023**

*“Unlocking meaningful and effective multi-stakeholder partnerships to support the sustainable development of the Caribbean region”*

Summary

The discussion during the Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting highlighted the critical role of SIDS Partnership Framework in ensuring that SIDS partnerships remained high on the United Nations’ agenda. Some of the recommendations for building partnerships in the Caribbean region included optimizing diasporas, creating policy frameworks, enlisting businesses in sustainable development leadership and initiatives, and engaging local organizations and civil society. It was noted that key aspects of effective partnering involve creating policy frameworks; establishing platforms to facilitate dialogue and knowledge exchange; developing inclusive mechanisms for multi-sector engagement; providing funding and financial instruments; fostering public-private partnerships; and maintaining capacity-building efforts. Building on existing relationships and avoiding duplication were also noted as critical elements in partnering. For the next decade of actions, it was suggested to scale up interventions, leverage private sector financing, advance energy transition, and enhance regional partnerships. The discussion also outlined key aspects of SIDS partnerships, including taking a whole-of-society approach, conducting biennial partnership reviews, strengthening inter-regional partnerships, rebuilding trust with financial institutions, ensuring balanced financial arrangements, and improving donor coordination.

Key points from the outcome document

- **Bring science and technological innovations to SIDS** in leveraging digital technology and capacity building in science, technology, engineering and mathematic (STEM), and technology transfer to improve access to the digital economy.
- **Support investments in disaster risk reduction** including disaster risk data, risk analytics, multi-hazard early warning systems, digital technology and geographic information systems, sharing of best practices for risk assessment and risk mapping, and investment in human and institutional capacity development.
- **Strengthen national and regional health systems, including through public-private partnerships, and** promote healthy behaviors and lifestyles in SIDS to combat communicable and non-communicable diseases.
- **Support low-cost and innovative financing** through initiatives like blue and green bonds and public private partnerships.
- **Improve collection, verification and sharing of data across various data platforms and including by modernizing national statistical systems** with regional coordination and support from international partners and the UN system.

- Acknowledge with appreciation the vital role that partnerships have played in mobilizing financial technical and technological resources for SIDS. **Call for the establishment of the Biennial Caribbean SIDS Partnership Forum, and look forward to the scaling up and development of durable and transformational partnerships at all levels, as well as the strengthening of the SIDS Partnership Framework** which has been instrumental in monitoring and stimulating the launch of new, genuine and durable partnerships for the sustainable development of SIDS.
- **Deepen South-South and triangular cooperation for more effective mobilization** of financial, technical and technological resources.
- **Recognize the importance of SIDS cross-regional consultations on Caribbean SIDS' priorities and on emerging issues threatening to hinder their progress, and they stand committed to meeting biennially in Davos-style dialogues with partners and stakeholders to align the SIDS4 agenda with the ever changing global and regional contexts in which they operate.**
- The persistent development challenges of Caribbean SIDS require **enhanced global partnerships for development and international cooperation, adequate provision and mobilization of all means implementation** and continued support to achieve internationally agreed goals.
- **Revitalize the regional coordinating mechanism** to advance political advocacy on SIDS issues at the regional level and facilitate SIDS-SIDS cooperation to promote greater synergy in monitoring and implementing the SIDS programme of action and 2030 Agenda.

**Pacific SIDS  
Regional Preparatory Meeting  
Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 16-18 August, 2023**

***“Improving Partnerships around technology and digital economy in Pacific SIDS”***

Summary

The discussion in the Pacific regional preparatory meeting focused on partnerships related to technology and digital economy in Pacific SIDS. The discussion emphasized the need to regularly convene regional dialogues, monitor effectiveness of partnerships, and strengthen the SIDS Partnership Framework. The session also highlighted the pivotal role of partnerships in addressing challenges within the digital economy and utilizing technology to overcome obstacles in Pacific SIDS. Mention of initiatives like the Electronic Single Window and investments in cybersecurity aimed at enhancing the efficiency of the digital ecosystem, however, signaled concerns about cyber-attacks and underscored the need for robust cybersecurity measures. Bridging the digital divide, especially in rural-urban and generational gaps, was considered crucial and as were investments in digital infrastructure and affordable connectivity. The suggestion to explore alternative options, such as Starlink, for internet connectivity resilience during disasters was made. Legislative upgrades were deemed necessary to align with digital development, and collaborative efforts essential to address challenges in digitization including affordability.

## Key points from the outcome document

- **Enhance international cooperation and support, sustainable investments in energy infrastructure and renewable energy technology**, and training in green energy transition.
- **Provide continued support for the implementation of the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) and Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP).**
- **Advance cooperation with developed partners to conserve marine and terrestrial biodiversity**, including the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, expand the export of organic, natural, sustainably produced and locally grown produce and products, improve access to financial and technical resources.
- **Foster innovative solutions towards reviewing and revamping 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.
- 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. Pacific SIDS 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**. There is an urgent need to establish a Pacific SIDS Data hub for better data management and research.
- **Improve partnerships around data and statistics** for monitoring and evaluation, digital infrastructure and transformation, STI, sustainable and predictable financing, and capacity building. 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.
- **Recall the SIDS Partnership 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. Welcome the SIDS Partnerships Award, which recognizes and rewards the most noteworthy partnerships with SIDS.
- **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.
- **Convene biennial Pacific regional multi-stakeholder partnership dialogue** to foster, knowledge exchange, and support the review and implementation of existing partnerships for the Pacific region, with a view to facilitate aid, investment, trade and technology transfers and creation of new partnerships emanating from such review.
- **Provide funding and financial instruments** to support collaboration and partnership initiatives that incentivize collaboration and help stakeholders implement their ideas and projects.

- **Foster 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.

## SIDS Inter-Regional Preparatory Meeting, Praia, Cabo Verde, 30 August – 1 September, 2023

### *“Operationalizing the SIDS Agenda”*

#### Summary

The discussion at the inter-regional meeting centered on enhancing means of implementation. On financing, it was observed that the international financial architecture is no longer sufficient for today's financing landscape. Urgent reform was needed in its operational models to enhance access for vulnerable countries and amplify their representation in governance structures. The need to move beyond GDP and utilize the Multi-Dimensional Vulnerability Index, along with streamlining the process for accessing climate financing, was underscored. In this context, the need to enhance cooperation and coordination was noted, among SIDS, international and multilateral development banks, donor partners, the private sector, and UN entities.

On the SIDS Partnership Framework, key elements regarding partnering were highlighted, such as, the importance of building trust among partners, the necessity to ensure the quality and durability of partnerships while overcoming short-termism, the significance of SIDS-SIDS cooperation for sharing best practices, and the pivotal role of UN entities and Resident Coordinators. Looking ahead to the next decade, it was suggested that the SIDS Partnership Framework could be strengthened through various measures: improving the database with quantitative targets for registering new partnerships, scaling up training modules, enhancing synergies between the Steering Committee on Partnerships for SIDS and SIDS Global Business Network to attract private sector investment, and operationalizing biannual regional dialogues on SIDS partnerships with the active engagement of Resident Coordinators. Furthermore, the importance of engaging non-government stakeholders was emphasized, including reaching out to vulnerable and marginalized groups, youth, local and regional governments, the scientific and technological community, and the private sector. These stakeholders play a crucial role in holding governments accountable for their actions and in creating and spreading awareness among citizens of international agreements.

#### Key points from the outcome document

- Call for **public-private sector partnerships** and appropriate capital market instruments, and technical assistance from development partners **to enhance bankability and feasibility of sustainable blue economy projects**.
- Call for **Partnerships with regional and international partners to control the source of plastic pollution**, to support investment in modern integrated solid waste management systems, as well as the development of country specific strategies to reduce the risk of disasters.

- **Facilitate partnerships and investments for socio-economic transformation**, and develop a shared, long-term vision of the future of societies, promoting resilient prosperity and engaging all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, the academia, and youth.
- **Strengthen partnerships to support investments in disaster risk data, risk assessment and analytics**, impact-based forecasting, surveillance and monitoring, integrated multi-hazard early warning systems, digital technology and geospatial information systems, sharing of best practices for risk assessment and risk mapping, and investment in human and institutional capacity development.
- **Acknowledge the SIDS Partnership Framework in monitoring the progress** of existing partnerships and encouraging the launch of new, genuine, and durable partnerships. **Welcome the SIDS Partnerships Awards**, which recognizes and rewards the most noteworthy SIDS partnerships. Strengthen SIDS Partnership Framework to continue its impact on communities, on human resources, capacity building, the environment and enhanced knowledge sharing, including information, data and improved coordination.
- **Establish the biennial regional multi-stakeholder SIDS partnership dialogue** with a view of facilitating means of implementation, inter alia, financing, investment, trade, technology transfer, capacity building and creation of new Partnerships.
- **Strengthen the SIDS Global Business Network and the SIDS Global Business Network Forum** toward increased public-private partnerships that contribute to SIDS' sustainable development and the more strategic promotion of SIDS as potential market opportunities.
- **Support the implementation of the partnerships proposals** formulated within the SIDS Coalition for Nature's frame in order to **bridge SIDS' priority gaps, such as finance, knowledge - data, science, technology, and biodiversity mainstreaming**.
- **Boost strategic partnerships among SIDS and leverage North-South and South-South and triangular partnerships, including SIDS to SIDS**, which is essential to access to technical and technology transfers, advance trade and investment relationships and accelerate inclusive economic growth.
- **Foster collaboration through public-private partnerships**, where government entities, multilateral development banks and private sector organizations including philanthropic organizations to work together to achieve common goals, including fostering innovation and the digital transformation.