

SIDS Partnership Framework for Action

Supporting the new decade of action for
Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Draft proposal for consultation (March 2024)



**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Executive summary

Since its inception by UN Member States in 2015, the SIDS Partnership Framework – a mandate that emerged from the third International Conference on SIDS in 2014 - has evolved into a comprehensive multi-stakeholder platform, providing a forum for reviewing and facilitating knowledge exchange among stakeholders on partnerships for SIDS.

While the SIDS Partnership Framework has served as a broad platform for assessing existing partnerships and fostering new ones for SIDS, it has also revealed areas for improvement over time. In response, and in anticipation of the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), with financial support from the Government of Portugal, has formulated the present document.

This document outlines preliminary strategies for enhancing the SIDS Partnership Framework in the next decade of action for SIDS. These strategies are the product of extensive consultations and analyses.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships are pivotal in driving sustainable development in SIDS. These collaborations harness diverse stakeholders from various sectors, leveraging resources to address complex challenges, foster innovation, engage local communities, and catalyze transformative change toward shared prosperity and environmental health. The importance of such partnerships will be paramount in achieving the priorities in the next decade of action for SIDS.

The Framework's future strategy could be guided by a **theory of change** that encompasses **six key areas**: Awareness and Advocacy, Inclusivity and Strong Stakeholder Engagement, Policy and Enabling Environment, Capacity Development, Knowledge Sharing, and Best Practices, Mechanisms for Catalyzing Collaborations, and UN Effectiveness and Support Structures.

Looking ahead, the SIDS Partnership Framework – possibly to be renamed as the **SIDS Partnership Framework for Action** to underscore its renewed commitment on actionable outcomes and impactful partnerships for SIDS - stands poised to address emerging challenges and new opportunities. Through clear engagement pathways, a compelling value proposition, proactive outreach, tailored support mechanisms and capacity building efforts, the Framework can deepen its impact and contribution to the sustainable development of SIDS in the next decade.

It's crucial to emphasize that any decision regarding adjustments to the SIDS Partnership Framework rests solely with UN Member State. The strategies presented in this document are intended solely to inform discussions on the subject.

Theory of change and related actions



The six areas and related key actions are summarized in the below table.

Key area	Related actions
Awareness and Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rename as the <i>SIDS Partnership Framework for Action</i> to underscore its renewed commitment on actionable partnerships for SIDS. • Enhance clarity on stakeholder contributions and benefits within the Framework. • Develop and explain various participation pathways for governments, civil society, private sector, academia, and local communities. • Articulate a compelling value proposition of the Framework, highlighting tangible benefits like resource access, knowledge sharing, and capacity building.
Inclusivity and Strong Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure civil society perspectives and recommendations are integrated into broader development efforts. • Offer technical assistance and capacity-building support to various stakeholders. • Provide training on partnerships, advocacy, and strategic planning. • Advocate for allocation of resources to support civil society-led initiatives. • Facilitate sharing of best practices and lessons learned among civil society organizations across different regions of SIDS.
Policy and Enabling Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for supportive policies, laws, standards, and incentives for partnership formation. • Facilitate partnership identification and brokering. • Advocate for increased financial resources dedicated to supporting sustainable development initiatives in SIDS.

- Explore innovative financing mechanisms tailored to the needs of SIDS.
-

Capacity Development, Knowledge Sharing, and Best Practices

- Expand focus of the Global Dialogue beyond monitoring and review of individual partnerships, prioritize focus areas aligned with SIDS4 priorities and host as a standalone event with actionable outputs.
 - Organize regional dialogues for peer learning and exchange.
 - Provide training on effective partnerships at the national level, including development of partnership landscape assessments.
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Mechanisms for Catalyzing Collaborations

- Support the creation of centralized hubs for partnership identification and facilitation, enabling stakeholders to connect and explore collaboration opportunities.
 - Ensure partnership platforms align strategically with priorities outlined in SIDS4.
 - Provide tools for effective resource mobilization, including identifying funding sources and crafting compelling proposals for SIDS-specific partnerships.
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UN Effectiveness and Support Structures

- Ensure clarity in defining and communicating the objectives, frequency, outcomes, and expected outputs of Steering Committee meetings.
- Clarify and delineate Secretariat support for SIDS partnerships to enhance coordination and effectiveness.
- Consider expanding the team within the UN Secretariat for increased capacity and efficiency.

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Introduction

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.

The *third* International Conference on SIDS was held in September 2014 in Apia, Samoa under the overarching theme of “*The sustainable development of small island developing States through genuine and durable partnerships*”. At the Conference, member States emphasized that international cooperation and partnerships of various kinds and across a wide variety of stakeholders are critical for the implementation of the sustainable development of SIDS. This notion was enshrined through a formal request by member States, through the SAMOA Pathway, for establishing a SIDS Partnership Framework to monitor progress of existing, and stimulate the launch of new, genuine, and durable partnerships for the sustainable development of 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 for SIDS4 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 Conference. The outcome of the interregional meeting² - 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. Furthermore, the current (as of March 2024) draft of the outcome document of SIDS4 includes a request to the UN Secretary-General to develop recommendations for the strengthening of the Framework³.

It is against this background the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), with support from a financial contribution from the Government of Portugal, has crafted the present document, outlining preliminary strategies for enhancing the SIDS Partnership Framework in the next decade of action for SIDS. This work stems from an examination of conversations held during the SIDS4 preparatory meetings and processes, discussions at the SIDS Partnership Symposium in February 2024⁴, a comprehensive survey on SIDS partnerships⁵, and an analysis by the UN Secretariat of the Framework since its establishment in 2015.

It's crucial to emphasize that any decision regarding adjustments to the SIDS Partnership Framework rests solely with UN Member State. The strategies presented in this document are intended solely to inform discussions on the subject.

¹ <https://sdgs.un.org/smallislands>

² <https://sdgs.un.org/smallislands/interregional-preparatory-meeting-all-sids>

³ Paragraph 48c of https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/Clean%20version%20SIDS4_Zero_draft_Outcome_Document.pdf

⁴ <https://sdgs.un.org/SIDS/BKK>

⁵ <https://forms.office.com/e/zMjMMv8Je1>

The SIDS Partnership Framework Story

Background

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly established⁶, in accordance with paragraph 101 of the SAMOA Pathway⁷ and in line with the priorities of SIDS, the SIDS Partnership Framework to monitor and ensure the full implementation of pledges and commitments through partnerships for SIDS and to encourage new, genuine, and durable partnerships for SIDS.

The SIDS Partnership Framework consist of:

- **Steering Committee:** Open to all UN Member States and members of specialized agencies, the Committee is co-chaired by one member from a SIDS and another from a non-SIDS, appointed by the President of the General Assembly and supported by the Secretariat through UN DESA and OHRLLS. The role of the Committee is to support the follow-up of existing partnerships, promote new ones, and advocate for SIDS partnerships. The UN system, international and regional organizations, and other stakeholders are invited to contribute as appropriate.
- **Annual Global Multi-stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue:** The Secretariat (through UN DESA and OHRLLS), in consultation with the Steering Committee, is tasked with organizing an annual an action-oriented, results-focused Global Multi-stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue for reviewing progress made by existing partnerships, inputs from regional and national partnership dialogues, for the sharing of good practices, lessons learned and challenges, and encourage the launch of new partnerships for SIDS.
- **Standardized Reporting Template:** UN DESA Affairs was tasked with developing a partnership reporting template and process, in consultation with the Steering Committee, to streamline reporting of partnerships, minimize burdens, and ensure coherence across different mechanisms.
- **Regional and National Dialogues:** Furthermore, the Framework *encourages* the organization of regional multi-stakeholder dialogues through existing forums, particularly by regional commissions, to review progress and provide policy recommendations at the regional level. Additionally, it encourages SIDS to organize national multi-stakeholder partnership dialogues to contribute to regional and global discussions, tailored to their specific needs and circumstances.
- **Experience Sharing and Participation:** SIDS partnerships are encouraged to share experiences through the established reporting template and participate in national, regional, and global dialogues on a voluntary basis.

Overall, the SIDS Partnership Framework is designed to ensure effective follow-up and the fostering of new, genuine, and durable partnerships for the sustainable development of SIDS. It emphasizes collaboration, monitoring, and dialogue at multiple levels to address the unique challenges and leverage the opportunities within and for SIDS.

⁶ A/70/472/Add.2, paragraph 11

⁷ A/RES/69/15 - SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway

Activities

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee, which guides the Framework, has seen varied leadership over the years, emphasizing a collaborative approach between SIDS and other UN member states to promote sustainable development through partnerships. The Committee meets regularly both on Ambassadorial and expert level to support the follow-up work for promoting and advocating the launch of new partnerships, and plan for upcoming activities under the Framework umbrella.

Committee Leadership		
	SIDS	Non-SIDS
2016 - 2017	Maldives	Italy
2018 - 2019	Belize	Ireland
2020 - 2021	Antigua and Barbuda	Malta
2022 - 2023	Samoa	Portugal
2024	Palau	Ireland

The Steering Committee is in 2024 chaired by Her Excellency Ms. Ilana Seid, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Palau to the United Nations and His Excellency Mr. Fergal Mythen, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations.

Partnership Dialogues

Since its inception in 2015, a series of partnership dialogues have been organized by the Secretariat in close collaboration with the Steering Committee, and other partners, to support the objectives of monitoring existing and stimulate launch of new partnerships for SIDS.

A total of **175 partnerships** have been showcased through the organization of **17 dialogues** (**9** global, **2** inter-regional and **6** regional), offering a platform for exchanging knowledge and disseminating best practices around partnership implementation. Moreover, these dialogues have served as a springboard for the establishment of new partnerships tailored to the priorities of SIDS.

Partnerships featured/monitored/launched											
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Global	26	13	18	10	9	5	6	6	3		96
Inter-regional				19					2		21
Regional				30					20	8	58

Total 175

Global Dialogues

A key feature of the Framework is the organization of the mandated annual **Global Multi-stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue**. As these have been traditionally held in the margins of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF), their themes often mirror those of HLPF. However, in 2017, the Steering Committee made a pivotal decision to center the global dialogue on ocean and seas partnerships for SIDS, as a tangible contribution to the inaugural UN Ocean Conference on Sustainable Development Goal 14. This thematic focus was particularly timely, given that approximately two-thirds of the 300 partnerships announced during the SIDS Conference in 2014 pertained to oceans, seas, and marine resources.

By the conclusion of the UN Ocean Conference in 2017, 1,400 voluntary commitments⁸ from various stakeholders were announced, underscoring significant engagement and dedication of the global community to the health of our oceans. Many of these commitments originated from SIDS themselves, while others directly benefited SIDS. This demonstrated the efficacy of the partnership approach highlighted in Samoa in 2014 and underscored its critical role in fostering future sustainability, not only within SIDS regions but also globally.

SIDS Partnership Criteria and Norms

As part of the 2019 High-level mid-term review of the SAMOA pathway, the co-chairs of the Steering Committee at the time, Permanent Representatives of Belize and Ireland, developed and launched the SIDS Partnership Criteria and Norms⁹, articulating what constitutes a genuine and durable partnership for SIDS, through outlining elements of the SMART criteria. By outlining elements aligned with the SMART criteria, this effort sought to enhance transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in partnerships dedicated to supporting the sustainable development in SIDS.

The SMART criteria encompass:

- **SIDS-Specific:** Partnership objectives should be clearly defined and focused on addressing specific challenges or opportunities relevant to SIDS. This specificity ensures that the partnership's efforts are targeted and impactful.
- **Measurable:** Partnership goals and outcomes should be quantifiable and measurable, allowing progress to be tracked and evaluated effectively. Establishing clear indicators and metrics enables stakeholders to assess the extent to which objectives are being achieved.
- **Achievable:** Partnership objectives should be realistic and attainable within the context of available resources, capacity, and timeframes. Setting achievable goals ensures that stakeholders remain motivated and committed to the partnership's success.
- **Relevant:** Partnership objectives should be aligned with the priorities and needs of SIDS, addressing pressing challenges and contributing to sustainable development outcomes in areas such as climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and economic diversification.
- **Time-bound:** Partnership activities and milestones should be time-bound, with clear deadlines and timelines for implementation. Setting specific timeframes helps maintain focus, accountability, and momentum throughout the partnership's duration.

⁸ <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/action-networks/ocean-commitments>

⁹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21018Clean_version_SIDS_Partnership_Norms_final.pdf

SIDS Partnerships Awards

In 2021, the co-chairs of the Steering Committee introduced an additional feature to the Framework known as the SIDS Partnerships Awards¹⁰. The awards serve the purpose of recognizing and celebrating the most outstanding and enduring partnerships contributing to the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. The Awards highlight best practices, increase the visibility of the SIDS Partnership Framework, and motivate the creation of new partnerships for SIDS.

Eligibility for the awards is broad, open to all SIDS partnerships at various levels, provided they align with the SIDS Partnership Criteria and Norms and demonstrate positive impact. Partnerships can focus on a wide range of themes, including sustainable growth, education, health, gender equality, climate change, and biodiversity conservation, among others.

Winners of these awards are recognized as "*Partnership Champions*" and are encouraged to advocate the development of new partnerships for SIDS. Categories for the awards include economic, social, and environmental, each focusing on specific priority areas of the SAMOA Pathway relevant to their theme.

SIDS Partnership Database

The SIDS Partnership Database¹¹ serves as the online repository of partnerships for SIDS, maintained by the UN Secretariat (through UN DESA). It is designed to facilitate the monitoring of existing partnerships and the registration of new ones. The platform centralizes information on partnerships involving SIDS, enabling stakeholders to access details across thematic areas such as climate change, energy, and biodiversity. Users can search, filter, and monitor partnerships, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange. The platform aims to enhance coordination, visibility, and effectiveness of partnerships in supporting sustainable development in SIDS.

Other initiatives on SIDS partnerships

The following are initiatives undertaken by the Secretariat (UN DESA and OHRLLS) in support of the Framework. While these activities are not formally mandated under the Framework, they have played significant roles in supporting partnerships for SIDS at various levels.

Capacities of stakeholders on SIDS partnerships

With funding support provided by the government of Italy, UN DESA undertook a capacity development project to support the work of the SIDS Partnership Framework¹² and the preparatory process related to the SAMOA Pathway mid-term review in 2018 and 2019.

The project included a series of capacity development partnership dialogues which were organized in the margins of the preparatory meetings as part of the SAMOA Pathway mid-term review, and provided an opportunity to bring together relevant stakeholders from the different SIDS regions to:

¹⁰ <https://sdgs.un.org/SIDSPartnershipsAwards>

¹¹ <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/action-networks/sids-partnerships>

¹² <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sids/partnerships2018>

- Assess the status of partnerships for each SIDS region, identifying best practices and gaps around which new partnerships could be forged to further drive implementation of SAMOA Pathway priority areas and SDGs in SIDS.
- Raise the capacity of diverse stakeholders to develop genuine and durable partnerships for SIDS.
- Strengthen the review and monitoring process of SIDS partnerships.

The project resulted in the development and launched of:

- **SIDS Partnership Toolbox**¹³ - a set of tools for enhancing capacity around the design of partnerships for SIDS, and for assisting stakeholders in monitoring and review of partnerships at national, regional and global level.
- **SIDS Partnership Analysis**¹⁴ - an in-depth look on the status and trends of partnerships for SIDS, illustrated with case studies that provides a basis for the description of best practices in developing durable and genuine partnerships for SIDS.

2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator

The 2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator¹⁵ is a collaborative initiative by UN DESA, carried out with its implementing partner, The Partnering Initiative. The Partnership Accelerators seeks to accelerate implementation of the SDGs by enhancing stakeholder's capacities in developing effective multi-stakeholder partnerships and engaging meaningfully with SDG related processes.

Launched alongside the inaugural SDG Summit in 2019, the Partnership Accelerator has since orchestrated a multitude of activities and produced various resources, including freely accessible partnership guidebooks and research papers, covering diverse aspects of multi-stakeholder partnerships and engagement. These efforts have also encompassed both virtual and in-person training sessions and events, engaging over 1,000 stakeholders from diverse sectors.

The Partnership Accelerator has provided support to 18 countries in their efforts to forge national partnerships. A significant portion of this support has been to SIDS, including to Samoa, Jamaica, Bahamas, Maldives, and Mauritius. This support has been provided through various means, including:

1. **Training on Partnership Effectiveness:** The Accelerator has conducted training sessions on partnership effectiveness tailored to stakeholders in these countries. These sessions cover topics such as partnership governance, stakeholder engagement, project management, and monitoring and evaluation, aiming to enhance the capacity of local actors to develop and manage effective partnerships.
2. **Development of Partnership Landscape Assessments:** The Accelerator has facilitated the development of partnership landscape assessments, which involve mapping out the partnering ecosystem, identifying existing partnerships, assessing their strengths and weaknesses, and identifying opportunities for collaboration and improvement. These assessments provide valuable insights into the current state of partnerships in each country and inform strategic decision-making for future partnership initiatives.

¹³ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/24009SIDS_Partnership_Toolbox.pdf

¹⁴ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/24591SIDS_Partnerships_May_2019_web.pdf

¹⁵ <https://partnershipaccelerator.org/>

Overall, by providing training on partnership effectiveness and supporting the development of partnership landscape assessments, the Partnership Accelerator has contributed to strengthening the partnership ecosystem at the national level. This support helps to enhance the capacity of local stakeholders to engage in effective partnerships and advance sustainable development in their respective countries.

SIDS Global Business Network

The Small Island Developing States Global Business Network (SIDS-GBN), led by UN-OHRLLS, serves as a catalyst for leveraging private sector innovation to drive sustainable development in SIDS. This network fosters collaboration among regional private sector organizations within SIDS and promotes the formation of inter-regional business alliances. Additionally, it encourages international businesses to recognize the potential market opportunities within SIDS and vice versa, facilitating mutually beneficial partnerships.

A central component of the SIDS-GBN is the bi-annual SIDS Global Business Network Forum, inaugurated in 2014. This forum serves as a vital platform for bridging the gap between the private sector and SIDS governments, facilitating the establishment of partnerships essential for the next decade of action for SIDS. By bringing together key stakeholders from both the private and public sectors, the forum facilitates dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaborative action to address the unique challenges and opportunities facing SIDS. Through these initiatives, the SIDS-GBN contributes to advancing sustainable development objectives and fostering economic resilience in SIDS regions.

The role of partnerships in the next decade of action for SIDS

Multi-stakeholder partnerships play a crucial role in advancing sustainable development in SIDS. By bringing together diverse stakeholders from all sectors, these partnerships leverage resources and tools to address complex challenges. They foster innovation, engage local communities, challenge existing power structures, and catalyze transformative change towards a shared vision of prosperity, societal well-being, and environmental health. It is evident that this concept will play a crucial role in delivering on most priorities of the SIDS4 outcome in the next decade of action for SIDS.

The below is an indicative overview of how the SIDS Partnership Framework can support the different priority areas outlined in the SIDS4 outcome (based on the zero-draft published in March 2024).

SIDS4 priority area	Potential role of SIDS Partnership Framework for Action
Economic Resilience	
International financial architecture	Advocate for the incorporation of multidimensional vulnerability considerations into development support practices and policies to address gaps in access to concessional finance and debt sustainability, ensuring that SIDS' specific needs are adequately met. Foster dialogue between development partners and international financial institutions to facilitate this incorporation and address key challenges.
Effectiveness of development finance	Promote the implementation of the SIDS Principles for Development Effectiveness to enhance aid effectiveness, donor coordination, and development cooperation aligned with SIDS priorities.
Enable youth economic participation	Facilitate mentorship programs for youth-driven startups in SIDS, providing guidance and expertise to cultivate a new generation of entrepreneurs and steer SIDS toward economic resilience and diversification through innovation.
Climate action	
Climate action	Advocate for enhanced support and partnerships for just, inclusive, and resilient energy transitions, which will upscale investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency infrastructure, technology, and training. Accelerate the operationalization of the global goal on adaptation and guide overall progress towards achieving resilience to climate change impacts.
Facilitating Co-Financing and	Encourage co-financing arrangements and blended finance models for climate projects to spread financial risk and maximize impact. Promote blended finance models to attract

Blended Finance Models

private sector investment into climate projects, contributing to sustainable development efforts in SIDS.

Oceans**Promoting research and innovation**

Encourage the pursuit of opportunities for research and innovation in ocean-related industries to enhance the sustainable use of ocean resources in SIDS by fostering partnerships and collaborations to facilitate knowledge exchange and technology transfer.

Data collection, analysis and use**Enhancing partnerships and peer-to-peer learning**

Support and promote the SIDS Center of Excellence as a vital platform for facilitating partnerships and peer-to-peer learning among SIDS, enabling the exchange of best practices, expertise, and digital public goods to enhance data capabilities and drive improved development outcomes.

Science, technology, innovation and digitalization**Promoting Collaboration**

Advocate for collaborative approaches that leverage the unique strengths and resources of each sector to address common challenges and achieve shared goals for sustainable development in SIDS.

Fostering Inclusivity and Innovation

Support initiatives that prioritize inclusivity and innovation, ensuring that diverse voices are heard and innovative solutions are embraced to drive positive change in SIDS communities.

Support learning and innovation

Promote the SIDS Center of Excellence by advocating for increased visibility and recognition of its role in fostering innovation and technology. Encourage member states and relevant stakeholders to actively engage with the Center, participate in its programs, and contribute to its initiatives. Facilitate partnerships between the SIDS Center of Excellence and other regional organizations or institutions to enhance collaboration and knowledge-sharing across SIDS.

Partnerships**Expanding and Diversifying Partnerships**

Provide a structured platform for identifying potential partners, facilitating dialogue, and fostering collaboration among stakeholders to ensure inclusivity and diversity in participation.

Supporting SIDS-SIDS Cooperation

Facilitate the exchange of best practices, lessons learned, and innovative solutions among SIDS to establish mechanisms for peer-to-peer learning, capacity building initiatives, and joint projects to address common challenges faced by SIDS communities.

Leveraging North-South, Triangular, and South-South Cooperation

Advocate for increased support and engagement from developed countries (North-South) and other partners to strengthen cooperation with SIDS. Promote the sharing of expertise, resources, and technologies through triangular and South-South cooperation initiatives to advance the sustainable development agenda in SIDS.

A More Effective UN In Support of SIDS

Support to UN at the national level

Strengthen the capacities of UN RCOs and UN country teams to promote robust national multi-stakeholder engagement and partnerships, leveraging the expertise and experience of UN DESA's 2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator programme.

What Do We Need?

While the SIDS Partnership Framework has served as a broad platform for assessing existing partnerships and fostering new ones for SIDS, it has also revealed areas for improvement over time.

To cultivate more impactful partnerships for SIDS, it is imperative to unlock the potential across various sectors, including government, civil society, academia, and the private sector. This entails harnessing a diverse range of expertise, resources, and perspectives to address pressing challenges effectively.

By addressing clarity on engagement pathways, articulating a compelling value proposition, building awareness and capacities of stakeholders, the SIDS Partnership Framework for Action can foster greater participation and collaboration towards advancing sustainable development in the next decade of action for SIDS.

Renaming the SIDS Partnership Framework to the **SIDS Partnership Framework for Action** would underscore its renewed focus on tangible results and impactful partnerships.

SIDS Partnership Framework for Action's Theory of change

1. **Awareness and Advocacy:** Enhance the visibility of SIDS' challenges by emphasizing the critical role of partnerships in addressing them.
2. **Inclusivity and Strong Stakeholder Engagement:** Prioritize inclusivity and robust stakeholder engagement at every stage to ensure that no one is left behind. Actively involve diverse stakeholders, including marginalized groups, in decision-making processes and partnerships to address the unique challenges faced by all segments of SIDS communities. Support and promote the implementation of the SIDS Civil Society Action Plan and Roadmap, serving as a platform to showcase its initiatives and encourage collaboration among governments, the UN system, development partners, and civil society stakeholders.
3. **Policy and Enabling Environment:** Work towards establishing supportive policies and an enabling environment that facilitates partnership formation and sustainability. This includes advocacy for both local and international policies, as well as developing effective funding modalities and resources for partnerships.
4. **Capacity Development, Knowledge Sharing, and Best Practices:** Implementing targeted initiatives to enhance the capabilities of SIDS and their partners through training programs, resource sharing, and support for innovation, with the aim of accelerating collaborations and progress towards SIDS4 outcome priorities.
5. **Mechanisms for Catalyzing Collaborations:** Implement effective mechanisms to catalyze collaborations, facilitating the formation of partnerships and promoting synergy among stakeholders to maximize collective efforts towards achieving shared goals within SIDS4 implementation.
6. **UN Effectiveness and Support Structures:** Enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in supporting SIDS partnerships by improving coordination, streamlining processes, and increasing responsiveness to the unique needs and priorities of SIDS.

How Do We Get There?

Awareness and Advocacy

Clarity on the engagement pathways and value proposition

A significant challenge facing the SIDS Partnership Framework is the lack of clarity surrounding how stakeholders can effectively engage with it and the potential benefits of their involvement. This ambiguity inhibits wider utilization of the Framework, particularly at the national and local levels.

Consider:

- Enhance clarity on stakeholder contributions and benefits in engaging with the SIDS Partnership Framework, developing, and explaining various **participation pathways** for governments, civil society, private sector, academia, and local communities, at various levels (local, national, regional, global).
- Articulate a compelling **value proposition** of the Framework that resonates with stakeholders, communicating tangible benefits like resource access, knowledge sharing, capacity building, networking, and influencing decision-making.
- **Defining partnerships within the context of the Framework** is crucial. Clear definitions and delineations help stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities, which in turn can facilitate stronger engagement. This includes establishing comprehensive guidelines and criteria that outline the characteristics and requirements of partnerships within the Framework, avoiding ambiguity.

Simplify messaging and communication

- **Streamlined Messaging:** Develop a concise and compelling message that effectively communicates the purpose, goals, and benefits of the SIDS Partnership Framework for Action. This message should be easily understandable and memorable, allowing stakeholders to quickly grasp the essence of the initiative.
- **Visual Communication:** Utilize visual aids, such as infographics or diagrams, to supplement written communication and convey key information in a clear and engaging manner. Visuals can help to simplify complex concepts and make information more accessible to a wider audience.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish clear channels for feedback and communication with stakeholders to ensure that their questions, concerns, and suggestions are addressed in a timely and transparent manner.

Inclusivity and Strong Stakeholder Engagement

SIDS4 will include the organization of the SIDS4 Civil Society Forum¹⁶ which will launch a **SIDS Civil Society Action Plan and Roadmap**.

Developed by SIDS civil society for SIDS civil society, will provide a framework of concrete recommendations for action by civil society in SIDS, as well as recommended action by SIDS governments, the UN system and development partners to better enable and support civil society to deliver on this ambition.

¹⁶ <https://sdgs.un.org/events/sids4csoforum>

Facilitating Collaboration	The Framework can serve as a platform for fostering collaboration among SIDS governments, the UN system, development partners, and CSOs. It can facilitate dialogue and coordination to ensure that civil society's perspectives and recommendations are integrated into broader development efforts.
Providing Technical Support	The Framework can provide technical assistance and capacity-building support to civil society organizations involved in the development and implementation of the Action Plan and Roadmap. This support may include training on partnerships, advocacy, strategic planning, and monitoring and evaluation to strengthen the effectiveness of civil society engagement.
Resource Mobilization	The Framework can advocate for the allocation of resources to support civil society-led initiatives. This may involve mobilizing financial resources from development partners and leveraging existing funding mechanisms to support civil society activities.
Sharing Best Practices	The Framework can facilitate the sharing of best practices and lessons learned among civil society organizations across different regions of SIDS. This exchange of knowledge and experiences can help strengthen the effectiveness of civil society engagement and contribute to the success of the Action Plan and Roadmap.

Policy and Enabling Environment

Advocate for an enabling environment for collaboration	<p>The SIDS Partnership Framework can advocate for an enabling environment conducive to partnerships by leveraging its influence to promote policies, mechanisms, and practices that facilitate collaboration across all sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy for Supportive Policies and Incentives: The framework can advocate for the development and implementation of national and international-level policies, laws, standards, and incentives that incentivize and support multi-stakeholder partnerships. • Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening: The framework can support efforts to build the capacity of organizations and individuals to effectively engage in partnerships. This may involve providing training, resources, and support to enhance the institutional capacity of organizations to partner effectively. Additionally, efforts can be made to cultivate a culture of collaboration by fostering the development of skills, mindsets, and incentives among individuals to engage in partnerships proactively.
Scale up financing and funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocating for Increased Financial Resources: The framework can actively advocate for increased financial resources dedicated to supporting sustainable development initiatives in SIDS. This advocacy should target donor countries, international financial institutions, and other relevant stakeholders to prioritize funding allocations for SIDS partnerships. • Exploring Innovative Financing Mechanisms: To address the financing gap, the framework can promote the exploration and adoption of innovative financing mechanisms tailored to the specific needs of SIDS. This may include mechanisms such as debt-for-nature swaps, green bonds, impact investing, and climate finance instruments to mobilize additional resources for SIDS partnerships.

- **Facilitating Dialogue and Knowledge Sharing:** The framework should serve as a platform for dialogue among stakeholders to discuss financing challenges, share best practices, and exchange knowledge on successful financing models. This dialogue can help identify common obstacles and effective strategies for enhancing financial support for SIDS partnerships.
- **Strengthening Support Mechanisms for Funding Access:** The framework can focus on strengthening support mechanisms to improve access to funding opportunities for SIDS. This may involve providing technical assistance, capacity building, and guidance on navigating complex funding processes to enhance SIDS' ability to secure financing for partnership initiatives.

Capacity Development, Knowledge Sharing, and Best Practices

Enhance the Global Multi-stakeholder Partnership SIDS Dialogue

The annual Global Multi-stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue could be enhanced by:

- **Expanding scope:** Transform the dialogue into a comprehensive platform where stakeholders can exchange insights, share lessons learned, and showcase successful implementations of SIDS4 commitments.
- **Prioritizing focus areas:** Shift the focus from *individual* partnerships to broader SIDS4 implementation objectives, enabling organizations and stakeholders to contribute more effectively to overarching goals.
- **Preparatory work:** The Secretariat could be tasked with assessing partnership ecosystem for select priority areas, exploring initiatives, and identifying best practices and collaboration barriers.
- **Structure it as a standalone event:** Rather than organizing the dialogue within the margins of HLPF, which may limit engagement due to the plethora of activities during that period, consider hosting it as a *standalone event*. This approach enables:
 - **Plenary dialogue** with member States and stakeholders on implementation of innovative solutions for SIDS4
 - Organization of **associated activities** like side events, exhibitions, matchmaking sessions, and training workshops by various stakeholders in the *margins* of the dialogue, thereby amplifying overall participation, engagement, and impact.
 - A **condensed dialogue session** could still be arranged within the margins of HLPF.
- **Action-oriented output:** Focus on tangible outputs to drive SIDS4 implementation, including documenting solutions, partnerships, and actionable steps for scaling up efforts and collaborations.

Regional engagement

The outcome of the interregional meeting¹⁷ - the "*Praia (Cabo Verde) Declaration*" - include a request to organize a 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, and look forward to the scaling up and development of durable and transformational partnerships at all levels.

¹⁷ <https://sdgs.un.org/smallislands/interregional-preparatory-meeting-all-sids>

Consider organizing regional dialogues for SIDS to:

- **Foster Peer Learning and Exchange:** Facilitate sharing of insights and best practices among stakeholders to address unique challenges.
- **Enhance Coalitions and Partnerships:** Explore strategies for strengthening partnerships aligned with SIDS4 commitments.
- **Ensure Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement:** Incorporate diverse voices to comprehensively address SIDS development priorities.
- **Align with ECOSOC Regional Commissions:** Coordinate efforts with regional commissions for structured engagement.
- **Enhance Partnership Development Capacities:** Include training sessions to equip stakeholders with skills for effective partnership initiation, maintenance, and leverage.

National engagement

National dialogues for SIDS serve critical roles and objectives in bolstering effective country-driven partnerships and partnership platforms to support the implementation of national development priorities.

It could be considered to organize dialogues at the national level to foster:

- **Provide Training on Effective Partnerships:** Equip participants with skills to initiate, manage, and sustain partnerships for SDG implementation.
- **Foster Cross-Sectoral Understanding:** Promote dialogue across sectors to enhance synergy in addressing sustainable development challenges.
- **Conduct Partnership Landscape Assessments:** Identify gaps, strengths, and opportunities in the partnership ecosystem to tailor interventions effectively.
- **Launch New Partnerships:** Facilitate networking opportunities to launch collaborations supporting SDG implementation.
- **Foster Partnership Platforms:** Cultivate mechanisms to engage stakeholders in partnership development and implementation.

Transform the SIDS Partnership Awards

The challenge of implementing the Awards within the SIDS Partnership Framework has been evident due to low engagement and interest, as indicated by the relatively few applications received by the Secretariat each year. Additionally, there are no apparent incentives for engagement, further complicating efforts to increase participation and interest in the Awards.

While the SIDS Partnerships Awards serve as a commendable initiative to celebrate exemplary partnerships, greater efforts are needed to address these challenges. Strategies for improvement could include:

- **Align Awards with SIDS4 priorities:** to increase relevance and motivation for participation.
- **Connect with partners and potential donors:** Strengthen outreach to engage potential partners and donors for financial and technical support.
- **Extract learnings from Award winners** to benefit broader stakeholders and enhance partnership efforts.
- **Introduce incentives like modest seed funding** to encourage greater participation and support sustainability.

Access to guidance and tools

- Establish an **online platform where stakeholders can access resources, best practices, guidance on partnering, tools, and case studies** related to SIDS development priorities and partnerships.
- Advocate for the development of an **annual publication on SIDS partnerships**, offering an in-depth overview of noteworthy partnerships, success stories, challenges encountered, lessons learned, and emerging trends in SIDS collaborations.

Mechanisms for Catalyzing Collaborations

Encourage and support partnership platforms

Partnership platforms serve as crucial mechanisms to engage a variety of stakeholders in developing and implementing partnerships.

The Framework could support and provide guidance to SIDS specific partnership platforms by:

- **Facilitating Partnership Identification and Brokering:** The Framework can support the creation of platforms and catalytic mechanisms for identifying, brokering, and facilitating partnerships. These platforms can serve as centralized hubs where stakeholders can connect, share information, and explore collaboration opportunities. By providing a space for matchmaking and networking, these platforms can help bridge gaps between potential partners and facilitate the formation of partnerships.
- **Guide Alignment with SIDS4:** Ensure partnership platforms align strategically with SIDS4 priorities.
- **Identify Priority Areas:** Focus on key sectors like renewable energy and disaster risk reduction to address pressing issues in SIDS.
- **Mobilize Resources:** Provide methodologies and tools for effective resource mobilization, including funding sources and proposal crafting.

UN Effectiveness and Support Structures

Steering Committee Effectiveness

Another challenge is the lack of clarity surrounding the objective of the Steering Committee meetings within the SIDS Partnership Framework. Participants may struggle to understand the purpose which can hinder their ability to effectively engage with the Committee and Framework over time and contribute meaningfully.

It could be considered to:

- Clearly *define and communicate the objectives, frequency, outcomes, and expected outputs* of Committee meetings.

This clarity helps delegations understand the purpose of the discussion and prevents them from becoming fatigued or disengaged from the topic.

Division of labor and delineation of responsibilities on partnerships in the UN Secretariat

Another challenge lies in the division of labor and delineation of responsibilities on partnerships in the UN Secretariat. This lack of clarity can lead to inefficiencies, overlaps, and gaps in the management and coordination of the SIDS partnership agenda.

Stakeholders and delegations may struggle to understand the respective roles and responsibilities in the UN Secretariat, resulting in confusion and hindered progress around partnerships for SIDS.

- Considering UN DESA's mandate and role on intergovernmental support and capacity building for partnerships and stakeholder engagement, and OHRLLS's mandate and role on advocacy and private sector engagement, further **delineation of Secretariat support around SIDS partnerships** could enhance coordination and effectiveness.

Strengthen the UN Secretariat

The coordination and implementation of the SIDS Partnership Framework activities has involved collaboration between UN DESA and OHRLLS, with UN DESA assuming the lead role and bearing the majority of operational responsibilities.

Presently, there are **no dedicated fixed posts within UN DESA** (including additional tasks related to the Awards since 2021) specifically allocated to the SIDS Partnership Framework. This lack of dedicated resources has impeded the effective fulfillment of this mandate over the past decade.

Expanding the team would enhance the UN's capacity to offer specialized, comprehensive support tailored to the unique needs of SIDS. Such support is crucial for facilitating effective partnerships, mobilizing resources, and ensuring that the distinct challenges and opportunities of SIDS are adequately addressed in sustainable development endeavors.