



4TH INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
**Small Island
Developing States**
27-30 MAY, 2024
ST. JOHN'S, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

SIDS4 Conference Side Event

Local CSO Solutions: Empowering Women and Vulnerable Communities

May 29, 12:00 PM, Room 10

Organized by: Integrated Health Outreach (IHO)

Background on the event (one paragraph)

Integrated Health Outreach (IHO) and the SIDS4 Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Coalition organised this side event to showcase innovative approaches by the local community to address the issues of financing and aid effectiveness, and specifically how collaborative partnerships can be impactful. Held against the backdrop of pressing challenges to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in terms of climate and disaster resilient development, this event shone a spotlight on solutions that strengthen local communities, particularly women and vulnerable populations, within SIDS

Key Issues discussed (5-8 bullet points)

- The impacts of climate change in SIDS with specific reference to the example of Barbuda and Hurricane Irma in 2017, and the disproportionate impact borne by women, youth, and persons with disabilities in a disaster and after a disaster.
- The profound negative psychological impacts of traumatic events influenced by climate change, such as Hurricane Irma in 2017, have had people living in SIDS - in this example, Barbudans.

- The importance of food security, water quality, and improved accessibility to SIDS and their importance to the ABAS and future conversations regarding SIDS.
- The existence of significant data gaps which create challenges in planning effectively for the populations of SIDS and limit the effectiveness of policy in some respects. This includes the issue of data hoarding, in which data that does exist, for example within one public agency, or NGO, is not readily shared.
- The importance of having women in positions of leadership to inform and implement strategies that impact upon the status of women and girls in society, and the importance of addressing reproductive rights and GBV in SIDS.

Key recommendations for action (5-6 bullet points)

- Civil society organisations would benefit from greater funding opportunities and from capacity building initiatives which enhance the ability of civil society leaders to meet the requirements of accessing such resources. In the case of SIDS governments, where the provision of funding to civil society may not be feasible, in kind support, and other forms of facilitation would be impactful.
- In order for policy and program solutions to be most effective, there must be an opportunity for collaboration with the communities whom they are seeking to positively affect.
- Greater attention must be paid to marginalized groups in all development contexts, especially in education and disaster preparation and representatives of such communities, such as persons with disabilities, ought to be involved in shaping policy in this regard. Post-disaster mental health care for communities is also a major need for SIDS.
- Young people must be continually equipped with the knowledge necessary to change the habits and norms of today which have led to environmental degradation and climate change. Women and girls face disproportionate challenges in various SIDS country contexts and continuous attention must be paid to addressing the issues they face especially as regards post-disaster situations, safe spaces, gender-based violence, and reproductive rights.
- All stakeholders must make a greater effort to share information, data and knowledge. The lack of data in SIDS is a cause for a lack of data driven solutions to the problems SIDS face. Civil society is well positioned to gather data through the actions it leads across communities.

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