



Steering Committee on Partnerships for SIDS
Ambassadorial level Meeting
Trusteeship Council Chamber, UNHQ in New York
Thursday 11 April 2024, 10am
Summary

The Ambassadorial meeting of the Steering Committee on partnerships for SIDS was held on Thursday, 11th of April 2024, from 10:00am at UNHQ in New York. The purpose of this meeting was to take stock of the work of the Steering Committee over the past year and to review the work programme for 2024 and expected outputs, including the SIDS Partnerships Awards. The meeting also discussed how the SIDS Partnership Framework could be strengthened under the new SIDS' programme of action.

Opening

In her opening remarks, H.E. Ms. Ilana Victorya Seid, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Palau to the United Nations (co-chair) emphasised the significance of the current year, highlighting the fourth International Conference on SIDS (SIDS4) scheduled in May 2024. She underscored the pivotal role of partnerships for successful delivery of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) to address SIDS-specific challenges. Stressing the importance of trusted, durable, inclusive, and dynamic multi-stakeholder partnerships for successful implementation, she outlined two key outputs aimed at supporting the SIDS4 preparation: (i) recommendations for strengthening of the SIDS Partnership Framework, and (ii) assessment of partnership development requirements, including identification of essential actors and resources necessary to scale up partnerships for SIDS.

H.E. Mr. Fergal Mythen, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations (co-chair) noted the need to reflect how the Steering Committee functions and how it could support the implementation of the ABAS. He underscored that the Global Multi-Stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue, scheduled to take place just after SIDS4, will be crucial in bridging the

outcomes of SIDS4 and the 2030 Agenda and identifying synergies, while also recognizing that the new SIDS4 framework charts a future which goes beyond 2030.

Mr. Li Junhua, Under-Secretary-General, UNDESA, noted that the Framework has evolved into a comprehensive platform, serving as a forum for reviewing and facilitating knowledge exchange among multi-stakeholders partnerships for SIDS. In reinvigorating the SIDS Partnership Framework, Mr. Li suggested considering ways to engage a broader spectrum of stakeholders, create an enabling environment, enhance capacities in partnering, and facilitate resource mobilization. As a contribution to strengthening of the SIDS Partnership Framework, the USG said that UNDESA has developed a set of preliminary ideas to enhance it for its next decade of action for SIDS.

Ms. Rabab Fatima, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) highlighted the need of establishing robust and multi-stakeholder partnerships at all levels – national, regional and global to ensure full implementation of the ABAS and make SIDS4 transformational for SIDS. OHRLLS will organize the Global Business Network Forum 2024 ahead of SIDS4, providing a unique opportunity to bring together governments, businesses, and other stakeholders to share best practices and develop recommendations for public-private collaboration for the new SIDS agenda.

Review of achievements in 2023

During the presentation on the achievements in 2023 related to partnerships for SIDS, Mr. Sai Navoti, Chief of SIDS Unit, UNDESA outlined activities that were undertaken in 2023:

- a high-level side event at ECOSOC Partnership Forum on [‘Addressing the challenges of climate-induced human mobility in SIDS through effective partnerships, in a context of recovery from COVID-19’](#);
- UNDESA’s training to individuals from diverse backgrounds across Asia-Pacific nations to serve as Partnership Accelerators, facilitating collaboration and partnership building for Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
- Steering Committee’s [expert](#) and [ambassadorial](#) level meetings that began discussing the future of the SIDS Partnership Framework;

- [The Global Multi-Stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue](#) which included the Partnerships Awards ceremony held on the margins of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;
- [Regional and inter-regional preparatory meetings](#) for SIDS4 that discussed partnerships for SIDS in each of the three SIDS regions;
- [Steering Committee meeting](#) at ambassadorial level at the end of year, during which former co-chairs presented a [summary of discussions on partnerships](#) from the preparatory meetings and facilitated a formal handover to the present co-chairs.

Ms. Tishka Francis, Head, SIDS sub-programme, UNOHRLLS, presented the preparatory process for SIDS Global Business Network (SIDS-GBN) Forum 2024 which has involved webinars, consultations and the development of knowledge products on Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME) Financing in SIDS as well as Public-Private-Community Partnerships in for sustainable and inclusive tourism in SIDS. These efforts will inform the agenda of the Forum and set the direction for the next decade of the SIDS-GBN. As part of the preparatory process, an advisory group has been set up to provide guidance throughout the process. The Forum will explore key themes such as blue-green growth, community empowerment, the fostering of an enabling business environment, as well as financing and investment. These sessions will result in concrete recommendations on how to strengthen private sector engagement in the ABAS, which will be featured at the SIDS4 Private Sector Roundtable, bringing the voice of the private sector into the SIDS4. Participants will have the opportunity to network with leaders and experts from various sectors, showcase partnerships achievements and insights, and learn from best practices and success stories from around the world.

[Endorsement of the work programme of 2024 and the new logo of the Awards](#)

The co-chairs presented the [work programme of 2024](#) and the new logo of [the UN SIDS Partnerships Awards](#), which were endorsed by the Committee.

[Partnerships in the new Programme of Action for SIDS](#)

Mr. Ola Göransson, UNDESA, presented [preliminary strategies](#) to strengthen the SIDS Partnership Framework in the next decade of action, which have been formulated thorough

consultations and analyses. He noted that the Framework's future strategy could be guided by a theory of change that encompasses six key areas: (i) Awareness and advocacy; (ii) inclusivity and strong stakeholder engagement; (iii) policy and enabling environment, (iv) capacity development, knowledge sharing and best practices; (v) mechanisms for catalyzing collaborations, and (vi) UN effectiveness and support structures. Looking ahead, he suggested that the SIDS Partnership Framework could be renamed as the SIDS Partnership Framework for Action to underscore its renewed commitment on actionable outcomes and impactful partnerships for SIDS. Mr. Göransson emphasized that 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 (draft proposal can be found [here](#)).

Interventions

During the general discussion, many delegations underscored the importance of building multi-stakeholder partnerships in implementing the new programme of action for SIDS, the ABAS, and the need for SIDS Partnership Framework to be strengthened to facilitate the partnerships. **Maldives** noted the completion of the negotiations for the SIDS4 outcome document, highlighting that partnerships remain most important vehicle to achieving the outcome document in the next 10 years with the SIDS Partnership Framework serving as an important link between SIDS and their partners. **Portugal** expressed encouragement by the richness of the preliminary strategies for strengthening the Framework and expressed hopes to continue the discussion at the SIDS4 side event and beyond. **Australia** also commended the preliminary proposal to strengthen the Framework, noting its potential role in proactively identifying new and innovative partnerships with the private sector, philanthropies and international civil society organizations, and brokering these partnerships for the implementation of the ABAS; **Nauru** reaffirmed the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships in the implementation of the ABAS and suggested that the Framework could encourage reporting from the local-level partnerships on the progress of the implementation. A clarification was sought on the monitoring and reporting back from the SIDS partnerships for the Steering Committee. The co-chair (Palau) concurred the importance of monitoring of the SIDS partnerships and noted that the Committee could

discuss on how the Framework could fulfill such role, whether through the Centre of Excellence or a dedicated website. Ambassador Seid recognized the gap between the discourse at the global level and the implementation at the national level, and suggested that the Framework could play a role in bridging this gap and encouraging reporting from the ground to the global level.

Delegations also shared their concrete commitments to supporting SIDS through multi-stakeholder partnerships, capacity building, and sustainable development initiatives. **Germany** noted their technical and financial support for SIDS, with commitments to support in areas of climate adaptation and resilience through sustainable energy projects; **Malta** highlighted their capacity building efforts for SIDS including the scholarships provided to SIDS, and expressed their intention to organize a side event on Climate Vulnerability and Resilience Index at SIDS4; **Australia** supports SIDS in areas of climate, water and sanitation, education and social inclusion including empowerment of women and girls; **Japan** expressed their continued commitment to building strong partnerships with SIDS, including through Pacific Islands Leaders Forum; **Denmark** noted their support to the SIDS Global Business Network and announced plans to organize a workshop in the Bahamas for CARICOM countries in May, to provide practical advice and training on how to identify locations of baselines by using the latest space technologies and how to delineate the outer limits of maritime zones; and **Interpol** noted the Project Blue Pacific aimed at enhancing information sharing on international crime among Pacific Islands, and announced its intention to launch the Small Island Lighthouse Programme to strengthen SIDS' capacity for environmental security and the protection of natural resources, while enhancing protection against crimes such as piracy, illegal fishing, waste pollution, and maritime import security.

Closing

In his closing, Ambassador Mythen underscored how the UN system and member States engage with and address the sustainable development of SIDS have evolved over the last ten years, emphasizing the increasing value placed on partnerships. He expressed his hope that this Committee could serve as a platform for sharing experiences and best practices, weaving together lessons and approaches across all three dimensions of sustainable development. Ambassador Seid highlighted the importance of inclusivity and proper structuring in

ensuring successful partnerships, stressing that this process begins with dialogues. She emphasized the need for including youth, local traditional voices such as indigenous peoples, and women. On strengthening of the SIDS Partnership Framework, Ambassador Seid suggested considering how the Framework can play a role in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the ABAS, and creating incentives for partnerships to report back to the global level, like the SIDS Partnerships Awards.