SIDSS4 Conference Side Event

Delivering Impact and Building Capacity – Bringing the SIDS Principles to Life

May 28th, 2024, 14:00 – 15:30, Room 8

Organized by: United Kingdom, Canada, AOSIS

Background on the event

The side event brought to life the ‘Principles for Improved Development Impact in SIDS’ and focused on a critical element: delivering tailored, sustainable, and impactful capacity support. It leveraged the findings of the OECD report ‘Improving public sector capacity-strengthening support for SIDS’ as a springboard for enhancing the sustainability and effectiveness of capacity-strengthening support in SIDS and elevated the discourse to a high-level discussion, catalyzing collaborative efforts for a brighter future for SIDS.

Welcome remarks were delivered by Rt Hon Lord Benyon, Minister of State at the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Presentations by OECD representatives Mr. Eric Bensel and Mr. Timothy Tennant provided updates on the status and implementation of the Principles and key findings from OECD research on improving public sector capacity-strengthening support for SIDS, setting the stage for a panel discussion moderated by Ms. Rebecca Fabrizi, the UK SIDS Envoy.

Panelists were Ms. Leah Gutierrez, Director General of the Pacific Department, Asian Development Bank, Ms. Tracelyn Joseph, Senior Statistician at the Statistics Division of the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance, Antigua and Barbuda, Mr. Daniel Muñoz-Smith, Caribbean Representative for the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) and Mr. Robert Rae, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations in New York, who also offered closing remarks.
Key Issues discussed

- **Coordinated capacity strengthening and country ownership**: ensuring that capacity strengthening efforts are aligned and integrated with local systems, enhancing sustainability and relevance.
- **Building local institutional capacity**: empowering local institutions to shape their own development agendas and sustain progress over the long term.
- **Addressing brain drain and engaging diasporas**: mitigating the loss of skilled professionals and leveraging external resources to support economic resilience and development.
- **Continuous training and sustainable funding**: keeping local skills updated and initiatives effective, ensuring ongoing support for capacity-strengthening efforts.
- **Regional and Development Partner collaboration**: maximizing resources and expertise, minimizing duplication of efforts, and fostering comprehensive and effective capacity strengthening initiatives.
- **Tailored capacity-strengthening initiatives**: making interventions context-specific and responsive to the unique needs and challenges faced by SIDS communities, enhancing their effectiveness and impact.
- **Collaborative learning and integrated approaches**: promoting knowledge sharing, mutual learning, and synergies among all stakeholders, leading to more holistic and resilient development outcomes.

Key recommendations for action

- **Establish coordinated capacity-strengthening mechanisms**: develop structured frameworks for coordinating capacity-strengthening efforts across different sectors and stakeholders, ensuring alignment with local priorities and ownership.
- **Invest in local institutional capacity**: allocate resources towards strengthening local institutions through training programs, mentorship initiatives and institutional support systems to enhance their effectiveness and sustainability.
- **Create brain gain initiatives**: implement programs to incentivize skilled professionals to stay or return to their home countries by offering career development opportunities and support for entrepreneurship.
- **Sustain training programs and funding streams**: establish long-term training programs for local civil servants and ensure consistent funding streams for capacity-strengthening initiatives to maintain skill levels and support ongoing development efforts.
- **Foster regional and Development Partner collaboration**: facilitate platforms for regional collaboration and partnerships between Development Partners, such as joint policy matrices, to leverage resources, share best practices, and coordinate efforts for more impactful capacity-strengthening interventions.
- **Tailor capacity-strengthening interventions to local contexts**: tap into local knowledge of on-the-ground needs and engage local communities in the design and implementation of capacity-strengthening initiatives to ensure relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability.