



## **UN Steering Committee on Partnerships for Small Island Developing States**

### **Expert level Meeting**

**6 March 2025, 10:00am – 12:00pm, CR6**

### **Summary**

#### **Introduction**

On March 6, an Expert-Level Meeting of the Steering Committee on Partnerships for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was convened by the Co-chairs of the Committee, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia and Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives, with support from UNDESA and UN-OHRLLS. The Co-chairs provided an overview of the Committee's work programme this year and the consultation process aimed at strengthening the SIDS Partnership Framework.<sup>1</sup> In the meeting, the Republic of Maldives has announced that it will host the 2026 SIDS Global Business Network Forum. DESA and OHRLLS briefed the expert members on the initial inputs received on ways to enhance both the SIDS Partnership Framework and the SIDS Global Business Network. The Co-chairs also sought additional feedback and discussed the next steps.

#### **The Work Programme** (available [here](#))

The Co-chairs noted that UNDESA will organize a SIDS Civil Society Engagement Forum on 12-13 May, serving as a consultation mechanism of stakeholders on the future of the Framework, with generous funding from Ireland. The Committee's Ambassadorial level meeting is scheduled for 30 May in the morning, with the view to endorse the final recommendations to strengthen the SIDS Partnership Framework and the SIDS Global Business Network. The recommendations will be included in the Secretary General's report on ABAS, which will inform the Second Committee consultation on the SIDS resolution at the 80<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. The Co-chairs shared plans to launch the application for the SIDS Partnerships Awards this month, with the Award ceremony taking place during the Global Multi-stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue at the end of this year. Additionally, they are considering organizing side events on the margins of the UN Ocean Conference and the HLPE, subject to funding.

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<sup>1</sup> The paragraph 37 of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) requests: "The United Nations Secretary-General, in consultation with States and through the Steering Committee on SIDS Partnerships, to present recommendations for strengthening the SIDS Partnership Framework, the SIDS Global Business Network, and its Forum".

## **Initial finding of the survey on strengthening of SIDS Partnership Framework and the SIDS Global Business Network** (Presentation material can be found [here](#))

### ***SIDS Partnership Framework***

DESA provided an overview of initial findings of submissions received by Member States. Delegations have recognized the SIDS Partnership Framework as a key mechanism to advance partnerships supporting the implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS). Many have highlighted the Framework's role in advancing multi-stakeholder collaboration as means to drive sustainable development in SIDS. Enhancing linkages between the SIDS Partnership Framework and key UN global processes is vital for ensuring that SIDS priorities are integrated into broader international discussions. Capacity-building has also been widely mentioned, with delegations noting the importance of equipping stakeholders with the knowledge, resources, and technical support needed for effective partnerships. Some have referenced the SIDS Civil Society Action Plan and Roadmap (2024-2034) as a tool for guiding civil society's contributions to implementing ABAS. Member States also underscored the need for enhancing the impact and accountability of partnerships including through monitoring and evaluation. Expanding financial opportunities through concessional and blended finance, as well as innovative financing mechanisms, were also noted. Some respondents underscored the need to strengthen reporting linkages between national partnership assessments and the global SIDS Partnership Framework. Many have noted that this would help enhance accountability, facilitate knowledge-sharing, and ensure continuous engagement.

Eleven key areas have been identified as crucial for enhancing the SIDS Partnership Framework:

1. Strengthening monitoring, evaluation & reporting: Implement real-time tracking, define partnership reporting guidelines, and monitor donor commitments to assess effectiveness and impact.
2. Strengthening linkages with UN global processes to integrate SIDS priorities: Align the SIDS Partnership Framework with the ABAS, the Pact for the Future, the Global Digital Compact and UN Ocean Conference, ECOSOC Partnership Forum.
3. Enhancing Steering Committee operations: Clarify mandates, increase meeting frequency, and focus on emerging SIDS issues for effective discussions and decision-making.
4. Expanding capacity-building and technical support for SIDS: Provide training, establish sectoral networks, and create a SIDS Incubator Platform to strengthen local implementation and scale high-potential partnerships.
5. Enhancing stakeholder engagement: Develop engagement guidelines, integrate diverse stakeholders into decision-making, and support the SIDS Civil Society Action Plan for meaningful participation.

6. Mobilizing financing & investment for SIDS: Create a SIDS Investment Platform, strengthen donor-SIDS dialogues, and use innovative financing models to attract sustainable investments.
7. Increasing awareness & outreach: Develop a targeted communication strategy to define the Framework's objectives and showcase successful partnerships via digital platforms and publications.
8. National and regional coordination & implementation: Strengthen national coordination mechanisms, enhance regional hubs for knowledge-sharing, and ensure alignment with SDGs and ABAS priorities.
9. Supporting implementation of the Multi-Dimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI): Promote partnerships to address SIDS vulnerabilities and integrate MVI into financing and policy frameworks.
10. Strengthening UN Secretariat support: Increase resources for the Secretariat, clarify roles between UN DESA and OHRLLS: DESA to lead supporting the Steering Committee and partnership coordination, and OHRLLS to focus on private sector engagement through the SIDS-GBN.
11. Strengthening the Global Multi-Stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue: Organize a standalone Global Dialogue event for visibility, foster collaboration, and engage diverse stakeholders to support SIDS.

### ***SIDS Global Business Network***

OHRLLS explained that the responses received highlighted the need for stronger collaboration between SIDS-GBN and civil society, academia, and international financial institutions. It suggests improving private sector engagement through good practice exchanges and capacity-building, especially for MSMEs. Synergies between the Partnerships Framework and SIDS-GBN should focus on mobilizing investments and knowledge sharing. There's also a call for clearer communication on private sector involvement, with regular updates on success stories. Region-specific recommendations include promoting sustainable finance awareness, collaborating with the African Development Bank for AIS SIDS, and strengthening partnerships to foster business environments and innovative blue and green economies.

Based on the inputs, OHRLLS has prepared a strategy to strengthen the SIDS-GBN and its Forum through four key objectives:

1. Positioning SIDS-GBN as a transformative platform fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships and private sector engagement.
2. Enhancing Capacity-Building & Access to Financing for members, including investment opportunities.
3. Aligning with Global Frameworks, including the ABAS, SDGs, and the SIDS Centre of Excellence.
4. Improving Communication & Accessibility to resources for the SIDS private sector.

OHRLLS shared a list of 2025 events it plans to leverage to raise awareness of the SIDS-GBN including the Asia-Pacific Business Forum, UN Ocean Conference and COP30.

### **Interactive discussion**

During the interactive discussion, member States acknowledged the inclusive nature of the consultation process, recognizing the crucial role the SIDS Partnership Framework and the SIDS Global Business Network could play in implementing the ABAS. Several suggestions were made to strengthen these initiatives, including linking them to the Center of Excellence and the monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure a coherent approach to ABAS implementation. Additionally, there was a call for greater engagement with international financial institutions to accelerate resource mobilization and for Steering Committee meetings to focus on thematic areas aligned with global UN conferences. Member states requested that recommendations for strengthening the Framework and Network be shared well in advance of the May ambassadorial meeting, which was noted by the Secretariat. There was also an inquiry about the side events planned for the UN Ocean Conference, to which DESA promised to provide further details in due course.