

QUESTIONNAIRE

Follow-up to and implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (ABAS)

Please note that strict word limits have been established for each question. The Secretariat is unable to consider any information beyond these established word limits. You are requested to report only on new or updated information. Information conveyed in previous surveys or Secretary-Generals' reports will not be considered.

PART A - FOSTERING RESILIENT PROSPERITY IN SIDS

1. Enhanced UN System Support for achieving Resilient Prosperity in SIDS (FOR the UN system)

Using the UN implementation Matrix¹ (attached) to guide feedback, briefly elaborate on any resilience building interventions or strategies (proactive or preventative) that were/are being implemented during the reporting period at national or regional levels aimed specifically at improving resilience in SIDS. Please include indications of resource allocations, if available **(600 words)**.

Migration has long been part of the social, economic, cultural fabrics of SIDS and the complex migration profile of SIDS illustrates the deep linkages between migration and sustainable development. Well managed migration and migrants' agency and contributions must be fully harnessed to chart a course towards resilient prosperity in SIDS. As SIDS face significant challenges in accessing both development and climate finance, diaspora's economic contributions in the form of remittances and investment can be leveraged as a more sustainable, alternative source of finance. As the climate crisis, disasters and environmental degradation bring heightened risks and instances of economic and non-economic loss and damage, displacement or forced immobility, well managed migration can be built into adaptation and mitigation solutions for climate and environmental resilience, and to drive solutions to displacement in SIDS. Equally, just and balanced regular migration pathways that benefit migrants, and countries of origin and destination alike – including through enhanced labour migration between SIDS – can help navigate demographic challenges and build up the set of skills to support economic diversification needed in SIDS.

Guided by the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) – which is rooted in the 2030 Agenda – and the Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement; and leveraging its strong operational presence across the three SIDS regions – through full-fledged Missions, or projects and other forms of national stakeholders' engagement – IOM puts to practice the new ABAS vision for resilient prosperity of SIDS:

IOM contributes to build a secure future for all in SIDS by mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and by leveraging technology and innovation. In **Fiji**, for instance, IOM does so in partnership with the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) by retrofitting and building multi-purpose evacuation centers in vulnerable communities, by implementing the Risk Index for Climate Displacement (**RICD**) developed to improve understanding of potential future impacts on population movements and underpin local planning processes, and by implementing the Climate Catalytic Fund (**CCF**) that supports investments in communities facing high risk of future displacement. In the **Federated States of Micronesia** (FSM), IOM supported communities in remote/outer islands to strengthen resilience against the impact of climate change and worked closely with national and state level governments to increase disaster preparedness. In the **Maldives**, IOM is collaborating with the Microsoft **AI for Good Lab** to leverage data science and artificial intelligence to better understand internal mobility trends across the islands and identify both high-risk and safer islands in the context of climate change. In

¹ accountability framework developed to promote and monitor progress with implementation of ABAS

Papua New Guinea (PNG), IOM supported the development of over 80 Community-Based Disaster Risk Management plans across the country, significantly contributing to the resilience and preparedness of communities. In the **Caribbean**, IOM developed a virtual course on the integration of human mobility in climate action and disaster risk reduction, based on local experiences and has trained relevant stakeholders on different dimensions of environmental migration and disaster displacement. In **Mauritius**, IOM initiated a new research that explores the sustainability of integration, reintegration and planned relocation as adaptation strategies to climate change.

IOM invests in building human and institutional capacity as well as in data collection, analysis and use for context-sensitive policy making that puts SIDS on a development pathway. IOM is supporting the Government of **Tuvalu** to develop Tuvalu's first ever National Action Plan on Climate Mobility. The project "Strengthening Access to Regular Pathways for Labour Mobility in **Tonga**" aims to enhance the Government of Tonga's capacity to implement policies and assist migrants and their families in accessing regular pathways for labour mobility. In **Niue**, IOM is supporting the Planned Relocation Policy and Bridging Course (return of qualified nationals). In **PNG**, IOM has provided essential technical support by seconding a Durable Solutions Advisor to the Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs and the Resident Coordinators' Office for the development of a draft National Internally Displaced Persons Policy, which aims to protect displaced populations and reduce protracted displacement situations. In the **Caribbean**, IOM has also been working in other areas such as migration and development with a focus on improving the collection and the use of disaggregated migration data for decision-making and local development planning in addition to capacity-building to achieve safe, orderly, and regular migration. In **Comoros**, IOM continued its support to the government and relevant national stakeholders for evidence-based legislative frameworks that harness migration's potential to boost national sustainable development objectives.

IOM works to enable safe, healthy and productive populations for inclusive societies and prosperity in SIDS. In the **Republic of Marshall Islands**, IOM has been supporting eight ports of entry (all four airports and four seaports) to scale-up adherence to International Health Regulations and improve health screenings and procedures at borders. In **Timor Leste**, 12,700 community members were reached through sessions on information management and reporting of violence against women and girls during emergencies. With funding from the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, IOM is supporting for the Australia-**Tuvalu** Falepili Union consultations to develop a comprehensive report incorporating community feedback on migration pathways and security concerns. In **Vanuatu**, IOM further supported the development of a National Labour Mobility Reintegration Strategy with the creation of a new Employment Portal to assist returnees and domestic job seekers. In **Cabo Verde**, IOM contributed to a programme that attracts diaspora investments, resources and expertise to the country, fostering economic growth, contributing to job creation and poverty alleviation. In **Mauritius** and **Seychelles**, IOM has been part to a Joint SDG that concluded in 2024 which focused on establishing an enabling environment to promote sustainable Green and Blue Economy, and that delivered a feasibility study on developing innovative financing instruments to catalyse diaspora finance towards blue and green economy projects.

2. Enhanced and Tailored Development Cooperation for SIDS (For Development Partners, IFIs and SIDS Governments)

Successful ABAS implementation will require improved, tailored development cooperation approaches and financial resources, calibrated to the specific needs, capacity constraints, and economic challenges facing SIDS. It will also require that relevant national/regional plans programme and policies are implemented. Briefly elaborate on:

- i) any planned or ongoing strategies/approaches to improve and deliver on more tailored development support to SIDS. What are the expected results from these interventions in the targeted countries Please include indications of resource allocations if available (600 words)
- ii) any planned or ongoing national programmes to develop more resilient SIDS economies. What are the expected results from these interventions. Please include indications of resource allocations if available (600 words)

PART B - COHERENT AND EFFECTIVE UN SYSTEM WIDE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES TO SIDS

Paragraph 36 of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) requests the UN Secretary-General:

“..... within his annual report to the General Assembly for the 80th Session on the implementation of the ABAS, to present proposals to ensure a coordinated, coherent and effective UN system wide capacity development approach to SIDS and to enhance the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the ABAS, including a potential single SIDS dedicated entity at the UN Secretariat.”

At the global level, the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) oversees UN efforts for sustainable development in 162 countries and territories, guiding, supporting, tracking and overseeing the coordination of development operations. The UNSDG derives its mandate from the Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, which serves as an important instrument for the monitoring and the assessment of UN development operations. The integrated nature of ABAS calls for a UN Development System that works in a coordinated and coherent manner while preserving each entity’s mandate and role and leveraging each entity’s expertise.

1. Coherent and effective UN system support to SIDS (For UN System Responses, 750 words)

- i. What challenges are encountered by UN agencies, to deliver a ‘whole-of-system response’ in addressing the needs, risks and vulnerabilities and to provide development programmes that address the underlying drivers of needs in SIDS?
 - There is often competition between UN agencies for limited funding, and a tendency to direct towards emergency response and crisis situations, and less funding for long-term resilience-building programming.
 - The UN coordination system for the Pacific, which is largely configured as a Multi Country Office, requires enhanced coordination between and among the RC’s within the Pacific region in order to have a meaningful programmatic impact at the country level.
 - Reform the HC/RC mandate to empower country level coordination and planning.
- ii. What percentage of your entity’s programming expenditures on development activities in SIDS in 2024 were allocated to joint programmes? What percentage will be allocated in 2025?
 - A complete overview of IOM’s programming expenditures on development activities in SIDS in 2024 that were allocated to joint programmes was not available at the time of this submission, but IOM can provide the two examples for Fiji and Micronesia: IOM Fiji: 30% in 2024, 28% in 2025; IOM Micronesia: 0% in 2024; 30% in 2025.
- iii. What are the lessons learned, challenges and best practices of the UNSCDF (including multi-country frameworks) and their respective Country Implementation Plans (CIPs) in promoting joint programming?
 - UN coordination in the Pacific is complex as the UN multi-country engagement in the Pacific is led by three RCs and a Joint UN Country Team linked across three regional hubs, operating regionally out of Fiji, Micronesia, and Samoa. This requires IOM strategic engagement to represent all Pillars of the Result Group (Planet, Peace, Prosperity, People) for the Pacific UNSCDF 2023-2027 and national level CIPs in the respective countries. There are five Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) under the setup of the Fiji Multi-Country Office (MCO) including Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu; four PICTs under the Samoa MCO including Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and Tokelau; and five PICTs under the Micronesia MCO, including Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru and Palau. Within the IOM Pacific Sub-region, IOM Chief of Mission for Fiji and Sub-Regional Coordinator represents IOM at Fiji MCO and Samoa MCO, and at the joint Pacific MCO

UNCT, which IOM Micronesia's Chief of Mission also attends. IOM is custodian of two indicators under Planet Pillar Outcome 1 (Sub-outcome 2: Enhanced climate change adaptation and resilience) and Peace Outcome 4 (sub-outcome 3: Strengthen multi-level governance, institutions and processes). IOM is co-chairing the Planet Pillar Result Group and chairs the Operations Management Team (OMT) for the Fiji MCO.

- There is a significant challenge in the UN multi-country office functioning. There are dedicated "results theme groups" for the 4 Pillars (Planet, Peace, Prosperity, People) that span across the entire Pacific region. However, these groups rarely meet and are somewhat ineffective at enabling coordination or collaboration due to different agencies having different activities in different countries at different times, as well as different agencies represented by staff in different countries.
 - The Pacific region has 1 UNSDCF and 14 national Country Implementation Plans (CIPs). This involves a significant workload for participating UN agencies as well as the small Resident Coordinator offices that are expected to produce this output for multiple countries. It is difficult to engage in this cumbersome and time consuming process.
- iv. What improvements would you recommend to enhance the UN's system-wide approach to capacity development in SIDS?
- More awareness and capacity building training sessions about the UN's system-wide approach is needed.
 - The current coordination system does not give any real opportunity for country level planning and coordination. The regional level coordination is cumbersome and process driven, hence experiencing chronic poor participation. Priorities for country and regional level are vague and partnerships with regional actors not systematically pursued. It is advised to reform the coordination system to put stronger emphasis on country level planning and coordination. This was also agreed in the last UNCT, but it remains not pursued.
 - The current structure does not guide clear engagement at the country level and it's not clear from the IOM's country mission structure what IOM can leverage to enhance national engagement. Targeted discussions and brainstorming sessions on the best ways to leverage this for IOM country missions and proposed entry points would be useful and productive to advance country engagement.
 - More funding opportunities for joint programmes focused on capacity building will be effective in encouraging and incentivising UN entities to work together in this area. The existing UN mechanisms on SIDS such as the IACG on SIDS should work more proactively with the donor countries (both traditional and emerging/non-traditional) to create and promote such funding opportunities.
- v. How can the UN better partner with regional development stakeholders e.g. CARICOM Secretariat, SPC, PIF, SPREP etc to improve programme delivery, improve coherence and avoid duplication
- All UN activities should align with the strategy of the regional bodies, such as the PIF's 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, by understanding their priorities and needs and providing relevant UN technical thematic expertise.
 - Providing funding support for advisory or key personnel secondment to regional bodies will enhance their engagement and commitment to partner with the UN.
 - IOM has experience in practical and productive partnerships with a number of Pacific regional bodies and this is a key component of IOM's development assistance delivery in the Pacific. For example, IOM is working collaboratively with the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat through the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security (PCCMHS) program, including supporting the development of the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility and subsequent support to its Implementation Plan and delivery. Furthermore, IOM is working with the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat on the development of Pacific Regional Labour Mobility Principles (PRLMP). IOM is partnering with the Pacific Immigration Development Community

(PIDC) to develop the Reporting and Information Sharing Platform (RISP), a web-based information sharing platform where information on regular migration flows are periodically shared and accessible to all participating countries under PIDC's coordination. Furthermore, IOM regularly works in close collaboration with the Pacer Plus Implementation Unit (PPIU) and just concluded a multi-year joint programme with the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA).

For Governments

- vi. How would you assess the current level of coordination among UN agencies in supporting capacity development for SIDS at the national, regional and global levels? What challenges do you believe hinder effective coordination among UN entities in providing support to SIDS? What mechanisms would you suggest to improve the coordination, coherence and effectiveness of UN support for SIDS? (600 words)

2. Interagency Mechanisms for improved coherence

Under the chairmanship of the UN Secretary-General, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) provides broad guidance, coordination and strategic direction for the UN system in the areas under the responsibility of Executive Heads. Focus is placed on inter-agency priorities and initiatives while ensuring that the independent mandates of organizations are maintained. One particular focus of the CEB is system-wide coordination and policy coherence in the programme areas. The CEB has to date created three inter-agency mechanisms to increase coherence across the United Nations system in addressing urgent development challenges. These are UN-Water, UN-Oceans and UN-Energy.

- vii. As there is no single entity in the United Nations system that has sole responsibility for SIDS, do you see value creating a UN-SIDS to serve as the primary agent for promoting system-wide collaboration on SIDS issues, and to promote coherence in the UN system's multi-disciplinary response to SIDS? (500 words)

While IOM sees value in creating a single entity for UN-SIDS in terms of promoting solidarity and collaboration across SIDS, IOM offers caution for the following reasons:

- Creation of a single UN-SIDS entity may increase risks of duplication and overlap of workstreams between the new grouping and the existing platforms or groups, especially on issues that are cross cutting, for example MVI, which is most relevant for SIDS but also applicable for other countries/regions.
- It will also add burden on human resource capacity of member UN entities, particularly those focal points who are already attending and participating in the existing mechanisms (e.g. IACG on SIDS, IATF on M&E framework for ABAS) and likely will be expected to take part in coordination meetings and processes for a UN-SIDS, unless these coordination mechanisms are streamlined and has a dedicated focal point to facilitate UN system-wide inputs on SIDS related agenda or issues.
- Whilst the discussions on UN80 reform are continuing, any such set up should be considered against this backdrop. Considering the cost and resources required for creating a new entity, the idea seems to counter the objective of the UN80 initiative, which aims to improve operational efficiency and agility of the UN system.
- The mandates and roles of UN-OHRLS and DESA SIDS unit must be clarified and delineated per member states endorsement. The configuration of these two separate units must also take into account the link with country programming including monitoring and evaluation for efficiencies gains.
- There is also the need to examine the role of UN South-South Cooperation as it also serves SIDS member states interest, and how this support can be leveraged into a proposed UN SIDS single entity.

- The SIDS single entity, if established, should be the main coordinating mechanism on all SIDS related issues that feed into the different UN interagency working groups with support from agencies, funds and programmes.

Executive Committee of Economic and Social Affairs Plus (ECESA Plus)

Coordination of UN System actions for the implementation of politically agreed documents e.g. ABAS takes place through the Executive Committee on Economic and Social (ECESA Plus). Its over fifty members have developed a matrix for the follow up to ABAS, focusing on mandates specifically directed at the United Nations system as well as on areas where the UN system is already engaged through its programmatic work. The UN Implementation Matrix, which is being continuously updated, serves as an accountability framework and as a working tool to promote and monitor progress. ECESA Plus meets regularly to *inter alia* SIDS related matters and is convened by the Under Secretary General of DESA.

- viii How can ECESA Plus be used to more effectively harness UN agency contributions and to amplify systemic synergies?) (500 words)
- While recognizing the implementation matrix as one of the key tools to track the progress of the ABAS implementation, it is critical to ensure that the impact and outcome of programmatic operations and actions by the UN on the ground per thematic areas are sufficiently captured through the ABAS monitoring and evaluation framework and its regular review exercises, regardless of the entities listed as responsible (lead) in the matrix.
 - It is recommended that the ECESA Plus be used as a platform to provide a comprehensive, holistic review covering both the implementation matrix and the monitoring and evaluation framework, and consider recalibration of those tools as necessary, in conjunction with the existing inter-agency mechanisms such as IACG on SIDS and IATF on ABAS M&E.

3. HLPF

- ix. How should the HLPF SIDS session be structured to effectively monitor progress to scale up implementation of the SDGs while at the same time driving implementation of ABAS? What role should the monitoring and evaluation framework of ABAS play in this? (250 words)
- The HLPF SIDS session should provide opportunities for examining and discussing the aspects of the ABAS that are not necessarily or fully captured in the ABAS M&E framework, as the indicators and targets for the latter have been carefully selected in the effort to avoid excessive reporting burden on SIDS. For example, the ABAS refers to some key human mobility aspects that are interlinked to sustainable development and attainment of the Agenda 2030 for SIDS, such as displacement and planned relocation, but the M&E framework may not track targets and indicators that are directly related to them.