



## **SIDS Regional Partnership Dialogue for AIMS**

22-23 May 2018, Maritim Resort and Spa, Balaclava, Mauritius

Held in support of the SIDS Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS)

### **Summary**

#### **Background**

- The Small Island Developing States (SIDS) regional partnership dialogue for the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS) was held 22-23 May 2018 in Mauritius, as part of the SIDS Regional Preparatory Meeting for AIMS.
- The partnership dialogue is part of a capacity development project by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), designed to support the work of the SIDS Partnership Framework<sup>1</sup> and the preparatory process related to the SAMOA Pathway mid-term review<sup>2</sup>.
- The dialogue was held to support SIDS in their deliberations around partnerships in the context of the preparatory process of the SAMOA Pathway midterm review.
- The dialogue was organized by UN DESA, Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG), and presided over by H.E. Ms. Lois M. Young, Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations (UN), co-chair of the Steering Committee on Partnerships for SIDS, and H.E. Mr. Brian Flynn, Deputy Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN, representing of H.E. Ms. Geraldine Byrne Nason, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN, co-chair of the Steering Committee on Partnerships for SIDS.
- The dialogue was structured around three distinct but inter-related segments:
  1. ***Developing genuine and durable partnerships – good practices and lessons learned:*** examining various partnerships for SIDS in AIMS, how they have been developed, how the partnerships are governed, what are the leadership roles and partnership evaluation methods, and any challenges in implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sids/partnershipframework>

<sup>2</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sids/samoareview>

2. ***Identifying and addressing gaps through partnerships for SIDS:*** how to address gaps in the SAMOA Pathway priority areas and the SDGs through new genuine and durable partnerships needed for the region.
3. ***Strengthening the review and monitoring of partnerships for SIDS:*** how has the processes of the SIDS Partnership Framework related to monitoring progress of existing, and stimulate the launch of new, genuine and durable partnerships for the sustainable development of SIDS, worked, and how can it be strengthened.

### **Key messages**

- Genuine and durable partnerships for SIDS are those based on mutual collaboration, ownership, trust, respect, accountability, and transparency, and where SIDS and partners are equal.
- Ownership of partnerships needs to be country driven, with a shared vision between SIDS and partners.
- There is a need to clearly define the different *types* of partnerships for SIDS that exist; i.e. global partnerships, community driven initiatives, etc.
- Partnerships for SIDS should be aligned to national priorities, SAMOA Pathway priority areas, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and take into account long term resources.
- The importance to engage and promote the work of the partnership through regional organizations was stressed.
- It was suggested that in order to improve the monitoring and review aspect of SIDS partnerships, there is a need to develop innovative multi-stakeholder partnership engagement strategies, including the private sector, with focus on implementation, knowledge sharing, and match making on partnerships.
- Reporting of partnerships should be based on accountability, effectiveness and impact of the partnership, evaluating outcomes, learning, knowledge sharing, with value added to those reporting. Reporting should be kept light and easy to use on local, national, regional and global levels, include input from implementing partners, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders, keeping in mind there is not a one fit all approach to reporting of partnerships. There is a need to move away from “reporting”, which seems to focus on one-way communication, to exchange of knowledge.
- SIDS should strive to create an enabling environment – a set of interrelated local and national conditions that allow all stakeholders to fully engage with all sectors of society and in the national development processes in order to contribute to the national development priorities. Moreover, in carrying out their work, partnerships interact with various international, national, and local institutional frameworks. Therefore, national political and social context could in large determine their effectiveness, and by extension, their success. Also, the need for strong digital information infrastructure to enable communication among partners and beneficiaries was highlighted.

- The annual mandated *Global Multi-stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue* should focus on sharing of best practices, lessons learned, innovations, promoting partnerships across regions, and a platform for launching new partnerships in line with priorities of SIDS.
- There is a clear need to raise capacity of SIDS and stakeholders in how to develop genuine and durable partnerships, and enhance the competency in *partnering*, by developing learning material based on best practices, case studies and lessons learned from existing durable and genuine partnerships.
- The online *SIDS Action Platform*<sup>3</sup> should focus on partnership how-to learning processes, partners, library of best practices of partnerships, innovations, and knowledge sharing.
- Youth engagement should be done meaningfully and professionally, both in implementation programmes and advocacy.
- Analysis of SIDS partnerships<sup>4</sup> needs to be done systematically and regularly, with more attention to the impact partnerships have in driving sustainable development in SIDS, both individually and collectively.
- Projects on the ground needs to be stakeholder driven with strong ownership by the community.
- Data produced at the citizen level must be done through simple protocols which are acceptable at the scientific level
- The importance of strong leadership and partnership champions, as well as political support for partnerships, was stressed.

## Partnerships

- The following partnerships were featured during the dialogue:
  1. Global Wastewater Initiative
  2. SANDWATCH - a Global Observatory of Changing Environments in SIDS based on citizen science
  3. Global Island Partnership (GLISPA)
  4. Atlantic and Indian Ocean SIDS Integrated Water Resources Management Project
  5. SIDS Youth AIMS Hub
  6. Global Action Programme (GAP) on Food security and Nutrition in SIDS
  7. Ocean Industry Leadership and Collaboration for Ocean and SIDS
  8. SIDS Lighthouses Initiative

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<sup>3</sup> SIDS Action Platform: [www.sids2014.org](http://www.sids2014.org)

<sup>4</sup> Advance copy of a SIDS Partnerships Analysis was presented at the meeting:  
[https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/18577Review\\_of\\_Partnerships\\_for\\_SIDS.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/18577Review_of_Partnerships_for_SIDS.pdf)

## Outcome

- The discussions from the dialogue will guide the development of the *SIDS Partnership Toolbox*. The toolbox will include
  - in-depth analysis of SIDS partnerships, including identified gaps of partnerships and suggestions for collaboration in order to bridge those gaps.
  - tools for strengthened monitoring and reporting.
  - learning modules for how to develop genuine partnerships for SIDS, based on case studies and best practices.
  - mapping of organizations and partnerships in the various SIDS regions.



## Site visit



- On 22 May, a visit to a community driven Voluntary Marine Conservation Area (VMCA) was made. The project is implemented by Reef Conservation, and funded the GEF Small Grants Programme.
- The accelerating degradation of coral reefs worldwide has motivated multinational efforts to protect biodiversity and reduce its loss. The establishment of protected areas has been adopted as the leading tool for the effective conservation of marine resources. Setting up conservation areas both coastal and marine will reduce human-induced pressures allowing ecosystems to be more resilient to the effects of global warming and other natural threats.

- Voluntary Marine Conservation Areas (VMCAs) are selected sites in the lagoon where resource users and coastal communities agree that no extractive or destructive activities will be done. The primary objective is to help marine life and biodiversity of these VMCAs and the surrounding lagoon restore themselves. VMCAs can only be established with the support and approval of all fishermen registered at the nearest fish landing station to the chosen site.
- In Mauritius, 243 km<sup>2</sup> of lagoon enclosed by 150km of fringing reef accommodates for a thriving marine biodiversity. Following international trends, and despite existing measures, coral reefs in Mauritius are still on the decline due to limited enforcement by responsible authorities and no involvement of stakeholders in conservation efforts. In an effort to conserve coral reefs with stakeholders in the lagoons of Mauritius, Reef Conservation has been designing and developing Voluntary Marine Conservation Areas (VMCAs) since 2009.

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