

Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States “Charting the Course Toward Resilient Prosperity”

Interactive Dialogue 2

Enhancing critical forms of financing and aid effectiveness through collaborative partnerships: a conversation:

1.0 Purpose of Paper

Encompass dialogues on global financial reform, utilizing MVI insights, and policymaking to improve financial stability, enable debt relief, and meet SDGs, with a focus on shared partnership and private sector collaboration.

Tiem and Date: 4:00 – 6:00pm, Tuesday 28th May 2024

Title of Briefing Paper: Aid effectiveness through collaborative partnership.

2.0 Background Information on Issue

Synergies and partnerships are vital for placing SIDS along a trajectory to a more resilient and prosperous future. Over the years, effective partnerships and cooperation have been at the core of the sustainable development of SIDS, and it is essential that these partnerships are maintained, complemented and scaled up.

The theme of the Third International SIDS meeting held in Apia, Samoa in 2014 placed emphasis on ‘genuine and durable’ partnerships highlighting their value and role in supporting the sustainable development of SIDS. Nearly 300 partnerships addressing several priority themes were registered towards the 2014 conference¹.

In the outcome document²ⁱ of the third conference - the SAMOA Pathway - SIDS recognised that a variety of international cooperation and partnerships across a wide range of stakeholders are critical for their sustainable development.

Genuine and durable partnerships are essential for sustainable development since they link up diverse perspectives, resources, and expertise of multiple stakeholders. By collaborating closely, countries and organisations can address regional and global challenges and achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other international multilateral commitments in a more coordinated and effective way.

¹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sids2014>

² <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/samoapathway.html>

3.0 Current Situation and Known Regional and Global Issues

According to the SIDS Partnership Guide³, effective partnering is about leveraging and optimizing the combination of available resources. This is particularly challenging in SIDS, where a severely limited resource base and challenging pressures are the norm. Due largely to small landmass and small populations, SIDS are almost unique in the scale of the gap faced between available resources (natural, human, and financial) and the population's growing needs.

SIDS are commonly characterised by environmental and economic fragility and are among the most vulnerable countries in the world to the adverse impacts of climate change, given that they are often geographically isolated, prone to natural hazards, and are low-lying. Furthermore, development and communities tend to be concentrated along the coast and are dependent on climate sensitive sectors such as fisheries, tourism, water resources, and agriculture. Effective partnerships between these sectors are therefore essential for proactively addressing the impacts of climate change in SIDS.

Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted key economic sectors that SIDS' greatly depend upon. SIDS are continuing to recover from the pandemic at their own pace, while also faced with severe economic impacts which require ambitious government action and adequate regional and international support.⁴

4.0 Regional Progress and Actions Needed.

In the Pacific Region, The Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) brings together several regional intergovernmental agencies, which play an important role in providing regional coordination and support for Pacific Island countries and territories. They include, The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Pacific Islands Development Programme (PIDP), the South Pacific Travel Organization (SPTO), the University of the South Pacific (USP), the Pacific Aviation Safety Organisation, and the Pacific Power Association. They have entered into strategic partnerships with PSIDS members and both regional and international organisations across their core key thematic areas in line with the PSIDS needs.

The report by UNDESA in 2019 on Partnership in SIDS revealed that in the Pacific partnerships in the Pacific are broadly aligned with ocean, followed by climate change, disaster risk reduction and economic development. The ocean partnerships touch upon marine protected areas, locally managed marine areas, coral reef, mangrove conservation, environmental planning and marine spatial planning, climate resilience and ocean acidification,

³ https://partnershipaccelerator.org/library/?module=sids#sids_landscape

⁴ <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/covid-19-pandemic-towards-a-blue-recovery-in-small-island-developing-states-241271b7/>

scientific research and fisheries. Sustainable economic growth was a component of approximately of the partnerships and ranged from green and blue economies to sustainable financial services and initiatives relating to tourism, agriculture and aquaculture.

Several partnerships in the Pacific incorporate aspects of traditional knowledge and culture. Sustainable and renewable energy, energy efficiency, gender, wastewater and sanitation, health and NCDs, and sustainable transportation is also well represented. Under-represented areas include poverty, inequality, and sustainable consumption and production.

However, there is a need to address the followings that needs strengthening in the Pacific Region.

- There is less focus on topics such as poverty, equality, peace and human rights. Sustainable consumption and production, water and sanitation (particularly WASH facilities), and sustainable transportation may also require further attention. The region is still poorly connected, particularly in regard to remote islands, and there is a need to increase the cost-effectiveness and sustainability of transport and reduce the carbon emissions of the transportation sector.
- On oceans, partnerships in technology transfer for surveillance and monitoring of EEZs are needed to ensure proper implementation, including as it relates to illegal fishing and piracy, and other oceans activities.
- Pacific noted that across the region one in four people lives below the poverty line, with children being disproportionately vulnerable. Social protection only covers a certain part of the population, and urbanization and migration have come with weakened communities, leaving an increasing part of the population without adequate protection.
- Technology remains an area of priority in the region, particularly in driving progress in sustainable development.
- Regarding underrepresented partners, there is a need for meaningful private sector engagement and for building business networks and coalitions.
- Civil society has been a strong partner in the Pacific, particularly in terms of engaging with communities, and both civil society and universities have made a significant contribution to sustainable development in the region. Further engagement with these partners will be required going forward.
- Development, storage and accessing quality data and information to support decision making, including monitoring and reporting is a global challenge and while some progress in addressing this challenge has been made, these efforts need to be further strengthened, increased and expanded in the Pacific.

Much has been achieved in the last ten years in terms of forging partnerships within and amongst Pacific SIDS, and positive and encouraging results have been realised thus far, Nevertheless, Pacific SIDS (and potential partners) must not lose sight of the basic principles that

underpin and create a conducive environment for achieving durable, lasting and effective partnerships:

- Partnerships should be based on the principles of national ownership, mutual trust, transparency and accountability.
- Recognize that all stakeholders have a stake in strengthening the fabric of SIDS society.
- Respect - take the time to fully observe and understand the context. A lot of partnership activity is underway in SIDS, but non-standard approaches are needed to learn from these.
- Connect - connect to and coordinate with those already operating successfully within a context. While SIDS lead the way, non-SIDS partners are also crucial.
- Reflect - strategize and plan to respond to a specific unfulfilled need. Create adaptable, flexible and solution-focused strategy.
- Direct – implement action in ways that meet that specific need. Build or strengthen partnerships based on a clearly defined need.

Strengthening public-private partnerships allow large-scale government and regional projects, to be completed with private funding. These partnerships work well when private sector technology and innovation combine with public sector incentives to complete work.

Leveraging strategic partnership to support Pacific SIDS in strengthening their policies, procedures and decision-making processes for environmentally sustainable development and to implement priorities over the next ten years and beyond is vital towards achieving the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* as well as other key regional and international obligations and commitments.
