



Thursday, 14 July, 1pm

SIDS VNR LAB

“Preparing VNR Reports in Small Island Developing States”

Organized by SIDS Unit, DSDG, DESA
(In-person only. Conference Room 11)

CONCEPT NOTE & PROGRAMME

Introduction

Data from this year’s (2022) [Secretary-General’s SDG Progress Report](#) shows that years, if not decades, of development progress have been halted or reversed. In 2020, an additional 93 million people were pushed back into extreme poverty and as many as 161 million more people faced chronic hunger compared to 2019. Global health systems were overwhelmed, and many essential health services were disrupted, posing major health threats and undermining years of progress fighting other deadly diseases. Billions of children significantly missed out on schooling and over 100 million more children fell below the minimum reading proficiency level and other areas of academic learning. Women also have been disproportionately affected by the socioeconomic fallout of the pandemic, struggling with lost jobs and increased burdens of unpaid care work¹.

The strengthening of social protection is a major contributing factor to achieving SDGs relating to poverty, food security, nutrition, health, gender equality, decent work and economic growth, reduced inequalities and peace, justice, and strong institutions. In response to the COVID-19 crisis, many countries, including SIDS, have put in place exceptional social protection measures, from extended unemployment benefits to universal transfers, with significant results. However, many of these measures have already been withdrawn even where economic growth and employment have not fully recovered, putting their beneficiaries at risk of falling into poverty².

Enhanced multilateral cooperation and partnership can play a key role in ensuring the success of all countries, particularly developing countries, in building back better from the COVID-19 pandemic while advancing the full implementation of the SDG. If the different stakeholders fail to forge the necessary partnership towards this end, the building back better process is unlikely to be successful. On the other hand, if all countries and stakeholders can see the writing on the wall and recommit to further strengthening multilateral cooperation and partnership, the success of this process would be greatly enhanced³.

HLPF 2022

The theme for the 2022 High-level Political Forum (HLPF) is **“Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”**. As the world is struggling to recover from COVID-19 amidst continuing crises, the HLPF will reflect on how recovery policies can reverse the negative impacts of the pandemic on the SDGs and move countries on to a path to realize the vision of the 2030 Agenda.

¹ See: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/29838SG_report_for_HLS_on_the_theme.pdf p.2

² Ibid see p. 6

³ Ibid see p.10

At the 2022 HLPF, 44 countries will carry out Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) of their implementation of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), including 6 SIDS, namely: **Dominica, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Jamaica*, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Tuvalu**. Jamaica is presenting its VNR for the 2nd time.

The Objective

“*VNR Labs*” will be convened once again on the margins of the 2022 HLPF, providing an informal platform for experience sharing and reflection on the Voluntary National Review process. The Labs are held under the Chatham House rule and are open to Member States, the UN system and representatives of Major Groups and other Stakeholders attending the 2022 HLPF, either virtually or in-person.

The 2022 SIDS VNR Lab (in-person) is organized by the SIDS Unit of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) with the primary objective of availing the 6 SIDS Countries presenting VNR in 2022, an additional further space to exchange their stories and experiences, especially, their VNR preparation processes, and planned future policy directions for recovery and building back better, in light of the multiple global crises presently being experienced.

The Programme

1:05pm – 1:10pm	<p>OPENING REMARK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox Acting High Representative, Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States OHRLLS.
1:10pm – 2:45pm	<p>MODERATED PANEL DISCUSSION <i>(This session will hear each of the Panelists responds to questions from the Moderator on certain aspect of their National Report or National VNR preparation process. The aim is for the SIDS VNR Countries to share their experiences, their challenges and offer lessons learnt.)</i></p> <p><u>Moderator</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Mr Satyendra Prasad Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations NEW YORK <p><u>Panel Members</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hon. Dr. Vince Henderson, Minister for Planning, Economic Development, Climate Resilience, Sustainable Development and Renewable Energy, DOMINICA • Mrs. Rochelle Whyte, Senior Technical Adviser to the Director-General Planning Institute of Jamaica, JAMAICA
2:45pm -2:55pm	<p>CLOSING REMARKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Kate Brown Executive Director, Global Island Partnership Tauranga, New Zealand