

Social development in SIDS, Health and NCDs, Youth and Women

2 September, 15:00 – 18:00

- Social development is a driving force for sustainable development and calls for a social capital framework based on community trust, social justice, social inclusion, sustainable livelihoods, and safe communities with access to essential goods and services.
- Heritage and culture energize society and are forces for social cohesion. Tangible and intangible cultural heritage, including underwater cultural heritage, should be preserved and promoted for its intrinsic value as well as its potential to drive sustainable economic development.
- Many SIDS have relatively young populations. If the youth are given appropriate opportunities to contribute to their communities and lead fully productive lives, SIDS societies could reap a “demographic dividend.”
- Quality education is the key to social inclusion and mobility, empowerment of women and girls, preventing violence against women and girls, fighting disease including HIV/AIDS, safeguarding sexual and reproductive health, and addressing children’s development and nutrition. Current educational systems in SIDS train job seekers, but what is needed are job creators and entrepreneurs. In this regard, mentoring schemes and peer to peer training for young people should be expanded.
- Gender equality issues that need to be addressed such as a low rate of women participating in decision-making, gender wage gaps, and violence against women and girls.
- Non-communicable diseases are an epidemic in SIDS, especially in the Pacific but also in the Caribbean, cutting lives short and undermining all aspects of social development. Partnerships to address NCDs require whole-of-society, multi-sectoral and inter-regional approaches. Close attention needs to be given to encouraging, through awareness raising, healthy food choices, which would often involve returning to more traditional ways of eating and regulating processed foods, both domestic and imported.
- Partnerships recognized included : Pacific NCD partnerships; better nutrition against NCDs; Apia Challenge on NCDs; entrepreneurship for youth; education; women’s empowerment; health in SIDS; farmers’ night markets; marketplace women; microfinance for women; insulin for life; sex education for youth; prevention of gender-based violence; and corporate volunteerism.