



Mainstreaming Sustainable Development Goals into Higher Education Institutions in Small Island Developing States

30 October 2018, Apia, Samoa

Side event organized in support of the inter-regional Preparatory Meeting for the SAMOA
Pathway mid-term review

Concept note and programme

Concept

In support of the SAMOA Pathway mid-term review, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), has organized regional partnership dialogues in the margins of the regional SAMOA pathway mid-term review preparatory meetings in Mauritius, Tonga and Belize, with the participation of relevant SIDS stakeholders. The regional dialogues stressed that further involvement of academia can improve the scientific, including social science, basis of partnerships, as well in relation to their design and monitoring aspects.

Higher education institutions can support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Small Island Developing States by inspiring future generations of learners to have the skills, mindsets and attitudes to truly transform organizations and societies, and by teaching sustainable development across all disciplines of study, supporting innovative research, and embodying sustainable campus practices and local sustainability efforts.

For the implementation of the SDGs to have the greatest impact, they have to be interwoven and mainstreamed into national policies, plans and strategies. This notion also applies to programmes, curricula, and strategies of Higher education institutions (HEIs), which act as hubs for innovation and critical thinking, nurturing each generation of leaders, policy makers, entrepreneurs, scientists, researchers, and educators. HEIs also play a crucial role in fostering better understanding about the SDGs and their interconnectedness; all key elements of making progress towards implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In the three years that have passed since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, in September 2015, there has been some progress among HEIs in mainstreaming SDGs into existing programmes, providing an interdisciplinary learning environment related to sustainable development, and the

development of new programmes with focus on sustainable development, and the SDGs. There is, however, a need to provide further guidance, capacity development, and knowledge transfer on this area to those HEIs that do not have this expertise and are eager to acquire it.

The side event will explore current trends of integrating the SDGs into higher education institutions in Small Island Developing States, and options for scaling up efforts.

Programme

06.00 – 06.10 PM	Opening remarks – Mr. Ola Goransson, Partnerships Coordinator and focal point for the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), Division for Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DES)
06.10 – 06.40 PM	Interactive panel dialogue <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderated by Professor Edvard Hviding, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen <p><u>Panelists</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Jito Vanualailai, Pacific Islands Universities Research Network• Mr. Kalim Shah, University of Delaware• Chalapan Kaluwin, University of Papua New Guinea
06.40 – 07.00 PM	Open discussion