



# Samoa Partnership Dialogue

**29 October 2018, Apia, Samoa**

Organized in support of the inter-regional Preparatory Meeting for the SAMOA Pathway mid-term review

## Summary

### **Introduction**

The Samoa Partnership Dialogue, organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS), in close collaboration with the co-chairs of the Steering Committee on Partnership for SIDS, Belize and Ireland, took place in Apia, Samoa, on 29 October 2018, as part of the inter-regional preparatory meeting for the SAMOA Pathway mid-term review (29 October – 1 November 2018, Apia).

The Dialogue built on three regional partnership dialogues<sup>1</sup> that were organized 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 overall objective of the Dialogue, and its preparatory meetings, is to advance the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in SIDS by increasing the capacity of stakeholders in forging new, genuine and durable multi-stakeholder partnerships, and strengthening the monitoring and review process of partnerships in SIDS.

The results of the three regional partnership dialogues demonstrated several commonalities and reaffirmed the importance of partnerships as a means for supporting sustainable development of SIDS, as part of a new and more meaningful development paradigm for SIDS.

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<sup>1</sup> Organized as part of a project by UN DESA with funding provided by Italy

The outcome of the regional dialogues, and the Samoa Partnership Dialogue, will be a *SIDS Partnership Toolbox*, which was presented to participants at the meeting for feedback. The Toolbox will include the following elements:

- an in-depth analysis of existing partnerships for SIDS;
- case studies and best practices of SIDS partnerships; and
- recommendations for strengthening the review and monitoring of SIDS partnerships.

The Samoa Partnership Dialogue was built around these themes, and provided an opportunity for discussion on the following topics:

- Implementation of partnerships for SIDS launched during SIDS Conference (2014) and The Ocean Conference (2017);
- Best practices and challenges of SIDS partnerships;
- Engaging all stakeholders in partnerships for SIDS, including the private sector; and
- Capturing outcomes of the Samoa Partnership Dialogue.

The Samoa Partnership Dialogue also included space for networking among partnership focal points and government officials, with the purpose of showcasing and discussing partnerships and innovative solutions, and exploring the potential of scaling-up existing, and launch new, partnerships in line with the priorities of SIDS.

## **Opening of the meeting**

In their opening remarks the co-chairs of the Steering Committee on Partnerships for SIDS, H.E. Ms. Lois M. Young, Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations and Mr. Mícheál Tierney, Counselor, representing H.E. Mrs. Geraldine Patricia Byrne Nason, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations, emphasized the importance of multilateral cooperation through partnerships. They discussed the path to the Samoa Partnership Dialogue, describing how ideas from the three partnership dialogues were distilled and brought forward, including by fleshing out SIDS partnership SMART criteria and proposing enhancements to the SIDS Action Platform. Genuine partnerships provide a win-win situation for all, and it is important to acknowledge accomplishments thus far, while at the same time aiming to do better with the next generation of partnerships.

Honourable Sili Epa Tuioti, Minister of Finance of the Independent State of Samoa provided the keynote address and declared the meeting officially open. He noted that international cooperation and partnerships are critical for implementation of sustainable development in SIDS. National ownership, mutual trust, transparency and accountability are important characteristics of partnerships. He emphasized the importance of quality cross-sectoral and innovative multisectoral partnerships, where different sectors and actors work together in

an integrated manner, sharing knowledge and expertise. Partnerships require a follow-up and review mechanism to gauge success of implementation. It is important to celebrate successful partnerships, acknowledge gaps, and to identify new partnerships to address gaps and needs. The Samoa Partnership Dialogue provides an opportunity to look at achievements, learn lessons, and to move forward to progress the implementation of the Samoa Pathway.

Welcome remarks were provided by Ms. Ana Birchall, Deputy Prime Minister of Romania; Mr. Francesco La Camera, Director General for Sustainable Development, Energy and Climate, Ministry of Environment, Land & Sea, Italy; Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs; and Ambassador Peter Thomson, SG's Special Envoy for the Ocean (video message).

Ms. Birchall highlighted the many challenges that do not recognize boundaries, in particular climate change and food security, and that Romania has much in common with SIDS. She described Romania's desire, together with the EU, to strengthen partnerships with SIDS, and to work in favour of peace and development. Many current multilateral initiatives can provide an important step forward, including the Global Compact, the negotiations for a new treaty for marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction, and the new Ocean Conference. Romania, as part of the EU, will move forward in partnership with the United Nations and the UN General Assembly, and will be hosting an international conference on building resilience to impacts of climate change.

Mr. La Camera described how the challenge of climate change affects everyone, and the power of partnerships to make progress on this challenge. He described Italy's partnerships with Pacific SIDS on renewable energy and climate adaptation measures. Genuine and durable partnerships for SIDS are based on trust, ownership and accountability, and the beneficiaries should be the primary driver for development. The resources invested should directly benefit communities on the ground. There should be equality between partners, and mutual trust. Decisions should be made by consensus, with common goals and objectives agreed to from the beginning. Italy's partnership with the Pacific has now expired but will have follow-up in the future. Three lessons from regional dialogues include that capacity challenges need to be addressed, that engagement with the private sector needs to be undertaken, and that every partnership requires funding resources. Italy is a partner to SIDS, and Mr. La Camera highlighted the high rewards gained from partnerships.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin noted the ever-growing recognition that partnerships have great potential to bring together human and financial resources, expertise, technology and knowledge from different actors and multiply their impacts. He highlighted the work of UN DESA to support the preparatory process of the SAMOA Pathway mid-term review with generous funding from the Government of Italy and under the overall guidance of the Steering Committee. This support included three inclusive regional partnership dialogues, which resulted in the development of SIDS Partnership Criteria and Norms, and proposals for strengthening monitoring and review of partnerships for SIDS. It also included the development of the SIDS Partnership Toolbox, which includes the in-depth analysis of partnerships for SIDS, as

well as learning materials and tools related to SIDS partnerships. He pledged the continuing support of himself and his department for monitoring and reviewing existing partnerships, and promoting the launch of new, genuine and durable partnerships for SIDS.

Ambassador Thomson described the profound impacts of ocean warming and acidification, and the global effort to respond to these challenges through the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, containing within it the Ocean's goal, SDG 14. The 2030 Agenda recognizes that partnerships are critical to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. He lauded the role of the SIDS Partnership Framework and its intergovernmental Steering Committee on Partnerships for SIDS as an innovative arrangement, given that it is the only intergovernmental process within the UN tasked with monitoring and following up on multi-stakeholder partnerships. He further described the role of the thematic multi-stakeholder Communities of Ocean Action in advancing the implementation of SDG 14 as a model for maintaining multi-stakeholder interest and engagement, and as a possible inspiration for strengthening the review mechanisms around partnerships for SIDS.

## **Implementation of partnerships for SIDS launched during SIDS Conference (2014) and The Ocean Conference (2017)**

Genuine and durable partnerships for Small Island Developing States play an important role in advancing sustainable development at the subnational, national, sub-regional, regional and international levels to enhance international cooperation and action to address the unique characteristics and vulnerabilities of SIDS, and by harnessing the full potential of engagement between governments at all levels, businesses, civil society and a wide range of other stakeholders.

As part of the support to the SAMOA Pathway mid-term review preparatory process, UN DESA has conducted an in-depth analysis of partnerships for SIDS, including partnerships that were announced in the context of the SIDS Conference in 2014, the UN Ocean Conference in 2017, and other relevant partnerships. Discussions from the regional dialogues and preparatory meetings have made an important contribution to the analysis.

The presentation of the in-depth analysis of SIDS partnerships by UN DESA indicated that there had been an overall increase in SIDS partnerships since the 2014 SIDS Conference. At the same time many partnerships have now been completed. The reporting rate of partnerships is still low (34% average overall), and there is a need to strengthen review and monitoring. Information about impacts of partnerships on their beneficiaries and on sustainable development in SIDS is lacking, although the analysis was able to provide this information for selected individual partnerships.

All Samoa Pathway priority areas are addressed by partnerships, but in an uneven way. Partnerships relating to oceans, climate change and renewable energy are well represented, but there is less focus on issues such as poverty, inequality, health and NCDs, sustainable

transportation, gender considerations, water, wastewater and sanitation, and sourcing development finance for SIDS.

Going forward, there is an opportunity for a new generation of partnerships to address under-represented areas, and to learn from the experiences of completed partnerships. It will also be important to build capacity on the monitoring and review of partnerships, and to build better information flow between partnerships and the global level. This may include close collaboration with regional organizations, as well as national governments.

During the discussion, the meeting emphasized the need for an integrated approach to the implementation of the Samoa Pathway, as well as indicators for assessing progress. Available indicators that were cited include SDG indicators, national indicators, and IUCN indicators. The meeting noted the uneven impact of partnerships across the Samoa Pathway, the need to involve all stakeholders in partnerships, and emphasized the need to strengthen the review and monitoring process, particularly to better measure the quality and impact of partnerships. The need to learn from completed partnerships, and to have partnership norms was also noted.

The meeting welcomed the potential of the SIDS Action Platform, once enhanced, to become a one-stop-shop for information about partnerships and materials to build capacity on partnering. Some participants expressed concern about their limited capacities to access reliable data and indicated that SIDS need more support from UN agencies and other entities, to ensure no one is left behind. There is also a need to showcase SIDS issues and achievements in the UN system, and to provide increased funding for UN offices addressing SIDS issues.

## **Examining best practices and challenges of SIDS Partnerships**

The regional partnership dialogues have stressed the need to better understand, and define, what is meant by a durable and genuine partnership, to examine the lessons learned from successful partnerships, the challenges faced in implementation, and fostering better stakeholder engagement in partnerships.

To foster a better understanding of the elements of the SIDS Partnership Criteria and Norms, UN DESA has developed case studies on the design and development of existing partnerships for SIDS, which will form the basis of learning material, to be part of the outcome of Samoa Partnership Dialogue.

The presentation of case studies and learning material by UN DESA highlighted approaches taken by genuine and durable partnerships. Such partnerships are diverse, but have approaches that are flexible, long term, and that strengthen coordination and cooperation. They allow different partners to use their own approaches to achieve results. The advantage of the partnership approach is that many goals cannot be achieved by a single entity alone. Partners bring different perspectives and organizational structures, which can serve a

variety of purposes even in one partnership. Champions and unusual suspects can take leading roles in different aspects of a partnership.

**A genuine partnership** is led by the partners themselves and provides an environment where partners can challenge each other to take action towards a common goal. Existing systems are strengthened by the partnership.

**A durable partnership** establishes a durable concept and keeps working on it. Partners invest their own resources in the partnership. The partnership has good governance vertically (from local to national, and, in some cases, regional and global) and horizontally (involving different sectors and stakeholders).

**An effective partnership** is easy to understand, efficient, and makes use of existing practices, for example in reporting. A range of different partners are heard and taken seriously. The partnership shows results and stimulates new initiatives.

Many partnerships have limited resources. Effective coordination and financing can be a challenge to partnerships, and different and innovative financing options may need to be explored.

The panelist from the Indian Ocean Commission highlighted a number of partnerships they coordinate or are involved with at the sub-regional level, such as AIMS Youth Hub and Western Indian Island Schools. They are also involved in an inter-regional partnership with SPREP that aims to bring back successful approaches from other regions. The panelist highlighted the need for culturally appropriate approaches in partnering and stressed that coordination requires understanding and the ability to listen to the needs of countries. The least developed countries in the AIMS region require more help than countries that are more developed and have better resources.

The panelist from the Pacific Islands Universities Research Network discussed the efforts of the partnership to include all universities in the Pacific Islands in meaningful collaboration to share resources to train future leaders in the region. They undertake annual conferences where researchers and students can present their work. The partnership has a strong sense of ownership by all partners, making it sustainable. The partnership is durable because all partners use their own resources to finance their participation and to contribute to collaborative research. The future plans of the partnership include assisting governments by providing scientific and socio-economic data, effectively creating a one-stop-shop of data and knowledge. A regional research council monitors the quality of research.

The panelist from the Caribbean Challenge Initiative (CCI) and Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF) described the initiatives as a “partnership of partnerships”, which aims to meet and surpass the Aichi Biodiversity Target on marine protection (20% protection by 2020). The second target of the partnership is to provide sustainable financing for marine conservation through the CBF and has been created as an NGO that will continue to operate after the CCI has ended. Each participating country either has already set up, or is in the process of setting up, a national biodiversity trust fund. The partnership is broad enough to allow

countries to participate in the manner that best meets their needs. Some challenges encountered include reporting, design, and measuring progress. To ease the reporting burden, country national reports to the Convention on Biological Diversity are used by the partnership to assess progress.

The panelists offered advice to new partnerships, which included having a common understanding of what the partnership wants to achieve; with whom it wants to achieve it; and the mechanism used for communication. A partnership also needs to build the capacity and confidence of each partner, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard. Communication is a key element of successful partnerships, as is the need to maintain momentum throughout the partnership process. Both good governance and flexibility are important for partnerships, and a balance needs to be found between these aspects.

The meeting questioned whether finance is the most important issue in partnerships and concluded that this is not always the case. In some partnerships, financing comes later in the process, with all partners contributing their own resources, particularly in the beginning. In other cases, partnerships see it as important to have financing from the beginning so as not to lose momentum to delays in fundraising. There are some examples of successful private sector involvement and public-private partnerships, with the private sector funding some activities. Some partnerships have also found success in using volunteers for certain tasks.

## **Engaging all stakeholders in partnerships for SIDS, including the private sector**

The regional dialogues stressed that partnerships must be inclusive of all stakeholders, including NGOs and civil society, youth, women, and marginalized groups, for maximum buy-in from communities, ensuring no one is left behind. Partnerships should strive to be participatory, have agreed-upon objectives, shared responsibilities and undertake joint action towards a common goal, bringing together stakeholders from the design of the partnership, maintain broad ownership and maintain dialogue with all partners, including communities, throughout the lifetime of the partnership. This component of the Dialogue drew on the experiences of several panelists to better understand the ways in which stakeholder involvement could be facilitated.

The panelist from CARICOM addressed involvement of the civil society and private sector, highlighting that one-size-fits-all solutions do not work for partnerships, and that the culture and values of a region need to be considered. For best partnering strategies, certain principles need to be in place, and these include respect for all partners. Civil society needs to be given the opportunity to be heard in partnerships. Building trust is important and takes considerable work. It includes giving civil society a seat at the decision-making table. It is also important to involve indigenous peoples, and to allow civil society to participate more fully, benefit from financing, and undertake impactful activities on the ground. All

partners need to have a sense of ownership and have a responsibility to deliver on specific partnership targets or outcomes. The impact needs to be measurable on the ground.

Private sector strategies include understanding the nature of the private sector in SIDS, which includes many micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises. Working with the private sector includes collaborating with chambers of commerce and small business associations, as well as with individual businesses. In the Caribbean, the private sector has provided grants and scholarships relating to projects dealing with water. The private sector is also a partner in the GEF Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) Project, given that the private sector both relies on and impacts the LME. Activities involving private sector need to be designed for impact that is easily identifiable and measurable. Effective communication, clear objectives, a work program for all partners, and monitoring and review are key components of a true partnership.

The panelist from the Polynesian Voyaging Society/ Promise to Pae'aina described their work to bring together individuals and organizations from all sectors to a collective effort to achieve real improvements in protecting and caring for Hawai'i's unique environment. Today there are more than 60 organizations involved, including community organizations, canoe clubs, NGOs and others. The five conditions for Collective Impact were applied, and included a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support organizations. The lessons learned from the partnership include the need for shared values and mutual respect, but also self interest in that all partners should get something out of the partnership. The lessons also include the need to build on existing efforts rather than to reinvent the wheel. The partners meet on a regular basis, developing goals, indicators and metrics on how to measure progress towards the goals. All organizations involved provided resources, either in kind or financial, to the partnership.

The panelist from the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization (PIPSO) discussed the roles that the private sector can play in a partnership, including as a funder, implementing partner (for example in a public-private partnership), and as an investor. He recognised the SIDS Global Business Network (SIDS-GBN) provides a useful platform for strengthening partnerships involving the private sectors in SIDS. Private sector needs a defined role in a partnership and prefers to participate in a process that works towards a specific outcome, and that provides them with a benefit in the end. Private sector is an important part of society and can be a key partner in delivering solutions for societal issues such as NCDs, transport, access to education and health. For example, airlines, transport agencies and shipping are partners in improving services for people in communities. There is an increasing focus on marginalized people in private sector development. The private sector can also provide lessons learned on accountability and prefers to engage in a partnership that is time-bound and results-based, and where all partners have a responsibility to a particular outcome. It is best to engage directly with private sector entities in a partnership, rather than go through an intermediary.

The panelist from the SIDS University and Research Institutions Network discussed the need for an umbrella organization to coordinate efforts across many regions. He indicated that in academia the discussion revolved around the legitimacy of partnerships, with legitimate partnerships being a measure of how genuine a partnership is, its quality and its longevity. It is easier to bring together partners that are alike, and more difficult to bring together those that are distant. The quality rather than quantity of partnerships matters, but whether long-term large partnerships are better than short-term small ones may depend on the situation, and there is no need to always have the same partners or partnership methods. The most vulnerable time for a partnership is when new partners are introduced. The viability of partnership goes down as positions, role and power of new partners are negotiated, and most of the time recovers again. When working with the private sector, it is important to carefully select the private sector partner and to manage the fragility of the situation when they are introduced. Partnership champions should be brought in early. Working with chambers of commerce or other business associations (aggregates) is also a good idea, keeping in mind that the private sector is generally interested in short-term outcomes.

During the discussion, the meeting debated government involvement in partnerships, concluding that this may depend on the nature of the partnership and its goals. On private sector involvement, a potential role for the UN Global Compact in the Samoa Pathway was proposed. The meeting noted that not all private sector involvement was positive for environmental outcomes, and that sometimes a choice needed to be made between protecting the environment and safeguarding jobs.

## **Capturing outcomes of the Samoa Partnership Dialogue**

The outcomes from the Samoa Partnership Dialogue will feed into the outcome of the mid-term review of the SAMOA Pathway. These outcomes include the development of SIDS Partnership Criteria and Norms, which were developed by the co-chairs of the Steering Committee on Partnership for SIDS, Belize and Ireland, stemming from discussions from the regional partnership dialogues. The SIDS Partnership Criteria and Norms articulate what constitutes a genuine and durable partnership for SIDS, through outlining elements of the SMART criteria – a partnership that is SIDS Specific, Measurable & Monitorable, Achievable & Accountable, Resource-based on Results-focused with Timelines for implementation & transparency by all.

In 2018, member states called upon (A/RES/72/217) UN DESA and OHRLLS to enhance the necessary analytical and advocacy support for the work of the Steering Committee, and, in particular, to ensure an annual action-oriented, results-focused Global Multi-Stakeholder Small Island Developing States Partnership Dialogue. Based on the consultations from the regional partnership dialogues, which also emphasized the need to strengthen the monitoring and review process of SIDS partnerships, a set of proposals for strengthening the monitoring and review of partnerships for SIDS will be presented for feedback by participants, and form part of the outcomes. These proposals include linking with existing

national and regional processes and frameworks, and the development of a regional partnership reporting template, with the purpose of assessing progress, best practices, innovations, challenges and gaps from partnerships for SIDS, and to stimulate the launch of new, genuine and durable partnerships on an annual basis.

UN DESA presented elements of the SIDS Partnership Toolbox, which is being developed to support the outcomes of the regional dialogues, and the Samoa Partnership Dialogue. The Toolbox, which will be available in print and online, will include the in-depth analysis of existing partnerships for SIDS, online learning material based on case studies and best practices of SIDS partnerships, and tools for assisting in the monitoring and review of partnerships for SIDS. The meeting also discussed the possibility of including a discussion forum in the Toolbox, which would allow users to post results, ask questions, and continue discussion on specific topics.

## **SIDS Partnership Networking Exchange**

The Samoa Partnership Dialogue included some space for networking among partnership focal points and government officials, for showcasing and discussing partnerships and innovative solutions, and further exploring the potential of scaling-up existing, and launching new, partnerships in line with the priorities of SIDS.

The participating partnerships included the Island Resilience Partnership, SIDS University and Research Institutions Network, Pacific Islands Universities Research Network, International Decade of Ocean Science, Sandwatch - A Global Observatory of Changing Environments in SIDS, ICT4SIDS Partnership, and Beyond the Stars (BTS).

### **Island Resilience Partnership - Facilitated by Mr. Marty Martinez, Island Resilience Partnership**

- The Island Resilience Partnership is a public-private partnership designed to support communities on the front lines of climate change by accelerating their transition toward renewable energy and resilient infrastructure – at no-cost to governments and island stakeholders. The partnership utilizes predictive analytics, mapping technology, and a competitive marketplace to design, develop, and deploy distributed energy resources to help islands achieve climate mitigation and climate adaptation goals.
- The partnership is looking to scale up its activities, seeking collaborations with all SIDS interested in transforming its national energy infrastructure.

### **SIDS University and Research Institutions Network - Facilitated by Mr. Kalim Shah, University of Delaware**

- The University of Delaware, along with university partners from across all SIDS regions, is launching the SIDS University and Research Institutions Network, with

the overall objective to mobilize resources and coordinate research efforts to advance the SAMOA Pathway.

- The Strategic Plan for the Network will include mechanisms to create proactive and empowered research partnerships geared directly towards providing a sound scientific knowledge, data and evidence base that supports the progress of countries towards the goals of the Samoa Pathway and the SDGs, by promoting responsive and relevant science, technology, research and innovation to support and underpin sound policy, management and SIDS governance decisions.
- The networking session will provide an opportunity for SIDS and others to provide ideas and input to future research activities of the Network. Interested parties are invited to join the Network, which is open to universities and governments from Small Island Developing States.

#### **Pacific Islands Universities Research Network - Facilitated by Mr. Jito Vanualailai, University of South Pacific**

- The Pacific Islands Universities Research Network (PIURN) is a consortium of all universities in the Pacific Islands Countries established in 2012 to enable closer and meaningful collaboration among researchers in the consortium, with the view to identify and address, via Research, Development & Innovation, priority social, and economic development, and environmental challenges for the Pacific Island Countries (PICS). PIURN conducts fundamental and applied research and is currently focused on 4 broad areas that address the Samoa Pathway priorities: (1) Food Security & Nutrition, and Health & Non-Communicable Diseases; (2) Climate Change & Biodiversity, including Land Degradation; (3) Capacity Building, and Data & Statistics; and (4) Social Development, Gender Equality & Education.
- The Network is therefore in a strong position to help develop research-based proposals in these areas, seek funding for the proposed projects from international funding organizations and carry out research and development for the successful projects.

#### **International Decade of Ocean Science - Facilitated by Ms. Serena Heckler, Natural Sciences Programme Specialist, UNESCO Office for the Pacific States**

- On December 2017, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed\* the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. The Decade will strengthen the international cooperation (mobilizing partnerships and leveraging investment) needed to develop the scientific research and innovative technologies that can connect ocean science with the needs of society. It will provide a common framework to ensure that ocean science can fully support countries in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, contributing not only to SDG 14 but also to all SDGs.

- More coordinated and consolidated observations will also contribute to the SAMOA Pathway (and other UN processes protecting the ocean and its resources). The Decade will also improve the scientific knowledge base through capacity development and transfer of marine technology to Small Island Developing States.
- The Decade will require the engagement of many different stakeholders to create new partnerships and applications, including the ocean science and technology community, governments and policy makers, businesses and industries as well as civil society and NGOs.

\* Prior to this proclamation, the International Decade proposal was registered by Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) as a voluntary commitment to the UN Conference to support the implementation of SDG 14 and as a SIDS Partnership (#SIDS ACTION15527).

**Sandwatch: A Global Observatory of Changing Environments in SIDS - Facilitated by Ms. Gail Townsend, and Ms. Serena Heckler, UNESCO**

- Sandwatch is an activity-oriented program, initiated by UNESCO, which has been operational since 2001. Children, youth and adults work together to monitor, design and implement practical activities and projects to address issues facing their beach environment and build resilience to climate change. The key objectives of the partnership are: (a) to expand and enhance the Sandwatch International Database to become a community-based observatory of changing coastal environments; (b) to use new technologies to expand networking between islands to share information and solutions relating to coastal issues; (c) to develop Sandwatch as a citizen science initiative that engages schools and communities through beach enhancement and improvement activities.
- Sandwatch is an example of education for sustainable development and contributes to implementation of the SAMOA Pathway (esp. paras 44.a, 44.c); and SDG targets 4.7 (education for sustainable development) and 13.3 (Improve education on climate change). It has been implemented in over 15 SIDS in the three SIDS regions, especially the Caribbean, and it has been introduced in many others, through regional and national training of trainers.
- Work to scale up the database continues, and SIDS continue to express interest in integrating the Sandwatch tool into their ESD and community coastal management plans. Partners are sought to step up engagement in all SIDS, especially in the Pacific and AIMS. Partners include: research institutes, education and other relevant ministries (environment, natural resources, fisheries, etc.), schools, universities, community groups, etc.

- Sandwatch is also involved in a Citizen Science Global Partnership and a working group on citizen science and SDGs, to assess how citizen science data can serve in SDGs monitoring.

#### **ICT4SIDS Partnership - Facilitated by Mr. Amjad Umar, Harrisburg University**

- The ICT4SIDS Partnership is focusing on Smart Collaborating Hubs and a Smart Global Village for Rapid and Massive Implementation of the Samoa Pathway, the SDGs, the Sendai Framework, and the Urban Agenda.
- Over 50 Smart Collaborating Hubs in over 15 countries have been deployed so far. In 2019, the partnership plans to implement a Smart Global Village with more than 200 Smart Hubs, spanning more than 50 countries, collaboratively supporting health, education, public safety, public welfare, food & agriculture, entrepreneurship, energy, e-commerce for cottage industries, e-government and other vital services needed by the underserved populations.
- To rapidly scale-up the work in the coming 3-5 years, Free Pilot Projects are being offered to interested SIDS.

#### **Beyond the Stars (BTS) - Facilitated by Tash Tan, Beyond the Stars**

- Beyond the Stars (BTS) is a world-first health intervention and education program that uses storytelling and innovative technology to combat non-communicable diseases, combining storytelling mediums, play-based learning, health research, regional agendas and school curriculum to inspire long-term behavior change in children across the Pacific Islands. Through this experience, every child is empowered to decide their own future, and the future of people around them.
- BTS uses Virtual Reality to introduce the narrative in first-person. In it, each child becomes the hero of the story as they project their agency throughout the story world, and then the real world.
- The initiative is looking to expand the initiative to interested Small Island Developing States.

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