

MEETING

Inter-Agency Consultative Group (IACG) on Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Date: Thursday, 20 June 2019

Conference Room: S-1521

Time: 3:00pm – 5:00 pm (New York Time)

Members in attendance: UN-OHRLLS, UN DESA, UNIDS, UN Environment, UNESCAP Pacific Office, UNDP, ECLAC (Port of Spain), PIFS (Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat) UN-Habitat, UN RC/UNDP (Samoa), UNDRR, GEF, FAO, UNICEF, UNESCO, OIOS (observer)

Chair: Ms. Tishka Francis, UN-OHRLLS

Summary:

The meeting held a thematic discussion on Resilience in SIDS, discussed preparations for the Mid-term review of the SAMOA Pathway to be held on 27 September 2019. The meeting also received a briefing on the preparation for the HLPF (2019), with a focus on SIDS related events. There was special focus on SIDS partnerships as an important pillar in the implementation of the SAMOA pathway, including a call to members to register and announce partnerships for SIDS online: <https://sidspartnerships.un.org>. The meeting also heard of the SIDS national focal points meeting to take place in Praia, Cabo Verde, from 25 to 26 July 2019.

1. Opening Remarks

- **Mr Erdenebileg Sandagdorj**, Director for Policy Development, Coordination, Monitoring and Reporting Service in OHRLLS underscored the High-level Review of the SAMOA Pathway on 27 September, fast approaching, and called for further support of the Co-Chairs, Fiji and Ireland, in the intergovernmental negotiations on the Political Declaration to ensure an outcome that will generate renewed political will and commitment and mobilize further action to accelerate implementation of SAMOA Pathway over the next five years. He noted there will be several other high-level meetings during the high-level week which are equally of significance to SIDS, including the UN Climate Action Summit on the 23rd September, and underscored the importance of ascertaining what specific opportunities exist in the agendas of all the other summits to highlight SIDS progress, challenges and next steps. He noted the thematic discussion on Resilience in SIDS, as an important issue for SIDS and also highlighted the high-level political forum on sustainable development and related meetings and informed of the second meeting for the National Focal Points of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), to be held in Praia, Cabo Verde, from 25 to 26 July 2019.

- **Sai Navoti**, Chief, SIDS unit, UNDESA noted the progress made so far in the year and informed of DESA's events that were held: (1) a Global Conference to strengthen synergies between the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement (held in April in 2019 in the UN City in Copenhagen); (2) the Learning Conference on Implementing the 2030 Agenda in the Caribbean Region together with ECLAC in May in Trinidad and Tobago and (3) the Communities of Ocean Action (COAs held 30 - 31 May 2019, Incheon, Republic of Korea).

2. Thematic Discussion: Resilience in SIDS

- UNDRR made a brief presentation on the outcome of the recently concluded Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Geneva, Switzerland from 13 to 17 May 2019. The theme was “Resilience Dividend: Towards Sustainable and Inclusive Societies”. The 2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction was preceded by 2 preparatory days meetings and focused on 3 clusters of issues: (1) stocktaking of Sendai Framework Implementation; (2) Resilience investments and (3) coherence with focus on the SDGs.
- The key takeaways from the 2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction meeting:
 - Risk is complex and systemic, and can no longer be addressed hazard by hazard, generated by the interaction of complex human and natural systems, and amplified by changes in climate, risk is increasing.
 - Investing in resilience pays off. Unlocking the resilience dividend through investment in disaster risk reduction is critical to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda.
 - Countries must scale up implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster
 - The current pace and scale of action will not achieve the targets of the Sendai Framework, which in turn will jeopardize the achievement of the SDGs by 2030.
 - Achieving Sendai Framework Target E by 2020 is a critical step to building resilient and sustainable societies by 2030, in coherence with National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), NDCs and National Development
 - Risk is everyone’s business.

Discussions

- **UNDP (Samoa)** confirmed that Samoa will be represented at the SIDS National Focal Points meeting in Praia, Cabo Verde. She underscored that the Pacific will be more vocal on financing in relation to the SG report and stressed the need for an agreement on the eligibility criteria that is not income based given the vulnerability of SIDS.
- **UNDESA** pointed out that there are some challenges in terms of SENDAI framework monitor and indicated they will ask colleagues to share on the related statistics, including performance of SIDS in target E.
- **PIFS** wanted to know how the key messages are being integrated into the various SG summits. UNDRR pointed out that there are discussions at senior level on this regard. DESA also mentioned it has been considered in a number of bilateral including SG and co-chairs and chair of AOSIS with the view of how SIDS can put this into full use of these other summits. The need to fully utilize and advocate for SIDS in the events was stressed.
- **UNESCAP** noted the key messages on economic, political and capacity related to disaster risk, and wanted to establish if there is enough understanding that the human behaviour is the key factor. UNDRR responded that they may not be full understanding and noted that there is a greater call for the social sciences to contribute to this understanding. There are very limited studies to track the impacts as well on societies.
- **OHRLLS** asked how can the IACG help with coordination on the ground to integrate risk and resilience issues. UNDRR responded that there is an active group of focal points in the system and colleagues’ contribution can be beneficial. The target is close by and more

collective work is necessary including disaster risk financing, contingency instruments etc. UNDRR stressed that how we finance prevention than response is not clearly worked out.

- **OHRLLS** also underscored that vulnerable countries are more impacted by disasters and invited UNDRR to review the outcome documents to bring an evidence-based language for both the SAMOA Pathway and Vienna programme of action.

The chairperson invited members to further consult with UNDRR on how to mainstream Resilience issues to allow for a coherent approach on DRR, climate change, risk-informed investment, etc. in the implementation of Sendai framework, SAMOA Pathway, SDGs etc. She also encouraged members to submit topics for future thematic discussions in the IACG meetings to focal points of IACG, Mr. Themba Phakathi of OHRLLS and Ms. Eun Hee Lee of UN-DESA.

3. Update on the preparation of the Mid-term review of the SAMOA Pathway

- **DESA** reported the first round of negotiations of the outcome document for the Mid-term Review of the SAMOA pathway were completed on 4th of June and has been circulated. With the intention to complete by July, negotiations will continue in the month with schedules on 26 June (morning and afternoon) and 3rd of July. The approach adopted by the chairs is to discourage paragraph by paragraph readings but receive all inputs which they then reflect in the next version. DESA also highlighted the current document including 14 calls to the international community at large. DESA informed that the reaction so far reflects sentiments as put during the zero draft, and AOSIS have not voiced any general opposition. The original draft had some words MCO review, but there was no appetite to sustain this hence it is not included in the latest draft because it is seen as a discussion that is taking place in another forum. The draft makes a strong call on financing, calling partners and financial institutions to introduce vulnerability eligibility criteria.
- **DESA** also reminded members that the modalities for the high-level review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway decided that the High-level Review will be structured around an opening plenary meeting, followed by two multi-stakeholder round-table sessions, with time provided for an interactive dialogue and a closing plenary meeting; and be chaired by the President of the General Assembly. DESA and OHRLLS have been tasked to formulate a draft programme for consideration by the principals and will reach out to AOSIS and the SIDS constituency in due course.
- **DESA** emphasised that the idea is to give leaders space to say as much during the round table discussions. There is discussion whether the declaration can be adopted in the morning or in the afternoon. The closing address could be addressed by the secretariat, including the adoption of the agenda. DESA is looking for speakers, including crowd poolers, celebrity speakers and welcome suggestions in this regard.
- **DESA** also reiterated the high-level meetings taking place on the day including the SG's Climate Action Summit, High-level meeting on Universal Health coverage, the High-level Political Forum on sustainable development (SDG summit) and the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development.

Discussion

- **The chairperson** informed of an upcoming Abu Dhabi Climate Meeting, 30 June to 1 July, to take stock of progress across all the Action Areas of the Climate Action Summit.
- **ECLAC** informed that a synthesis report of the Caribbean- SAMOA Pathway mid-term review is being prepared.
- **UN Environment** asked that “informal contribution from the United Nations system to support coherence and a common narrative for the sustainable development-related Summits and mandated high-level meetings of high-level week 2019” be shared with members.
- **PIFS** asked if the draft outcome document has been shared with IACG members, and if Fiji will chair the opening. DESA and UN Environment advised the draft declaration can be downloaded from the PGA website. PGA will preside over the meeting of the High-level meeting, and Fiji and Ireland, will make statements as co-chairs.

4. Update on the preparation for the HLPF – SIDS related events

- The chairperson informed of the meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2019 convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, will be held from Tuesday, 9 July, to Thursday, 18 July 2019; including the three-day ministerial meeting of the forum from Tuesday, 16 July, to Thursday, 18 July 2019.
- The theme will be "**Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality**". The set of goals to be reviewed in depth is the following:
 - Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
 - Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
 - Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
 - Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
 - Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
 - Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
- DESA commended the highest number of SIDS presenting their VNRs. The formal SIDS session will take place on 10 July and will focus on social development. Many SIDS are faced with social vulnerabilities and most of which are in the upper middle income. The session will look into how policies and programmes can advance this pillar. Development finance, including climate finance, and partnerships, including new partnerships are important vehicles through which development support might be secured. Key note speakers will address various issues including education, labour, inequalities, development finance etc. A minister from Ireland will be presenting and as a small state and a newly

developed country, they will offer their experiences. Ireland has a development cooperation framework that is SIDS friendly and are a member of the EU which is a big donor to SIDS, and hence this visibility is also important. SIDS universities consortium are also included in the speakers line up.

- The chairperson mentioned the SIDS countries participating in the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) are Fiji, Guyana, Mauritius, Nauru, Palau, Saint Lucia, Timor-Leste, Tonga and Vanuatu. She encouraged members to participate in SIDS related meetings, including side events taking place during the HLPF. She also invited members who have side events taking place during the HLPF to ensure that they are included through the SIDS related events link.

The chairperson highlighted the following events taking place during the HLPF:

- 10 July, 1.15-2.45 pm, ECLAC/DESA/CARICOM – Reducing Vulnerabilities and Resilience Building for Sustainable Development (S-1527)
- 15 July, 6.30-8.00 pm, Fiji Side event on Climate Change and Security Interlinkages in LDCs LLDCs and SIDS (TCC)
- 17 July, 1.15-2.30 pm, Saint Lucia’s High-Level Side Event: Scaling Up Energy Transition in SIDS (CR F)

FAO announced they are convening the “The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019” during the HLPF and PIFS will upload their side event to be held on 17 July 2019.

5. SIDS Partnerships

- OHRLLS gave briefing on SIDS Partnerships. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/202 and in accordance with paragraph 101 of the SAMOA Pathway, the SIDS Partnership Framework was established to:
 - monitor and ensure the full implementation of pledges and commitments through partnerships for small island developing States;
 - to promote the effective and efficient follow-up to the existing partnerships, in particular new partnerships launched at the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, and
 - to encourage new, genuine and durable partnerships for the sustainable development of small island developing States.
- The Framework, formally established in December 2015, consists of (1) a member-states driven Steering Committee, currently chaired by Belize and Ireland, (2) the organization of an action-oriented, results-focused annual Global Multi-stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue, (3) a partnership reporting process, (4) encouragement to organize regional and 5) national partnership dialogues.
- The Fourth SIDS Global Multi-stakeholder Dialogue will be held on 10 July, from 3 – 6 PM in Conference Room 1, organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) in consultation with the Steering Committee on Partnerships for SIDS, co-

chaired by Belize and Ireland. This annual dialogue is a key element of the SIDS Partnership Framework. The programme includes (1) SIDS Partnership Showcase, (2) presentation of the SIDS Partnership Toolbox and the final in-depth analysis of SIDS Partnerships and (3) Session on fostering effective partnerships for addressing gaps and priority areas of the SAMOA Pathway.

- **SIDS Partnership webinars:** OHRLLS also informed that in the lead-up to the Global Partnership Dialogue in June and the high-level review in September, DESA and OHRLLS in consultations with the co-chairs of the Steering Committee are organizing a series of multi-stakeholder partnership webinars. The aim of the webinars is to raise awareness of the SAMOA Pathway and SDG processes at global level, how to engage in them, and inform the private sector, academic community, philanthropic organizations and other key sectors about partnerships possibilities including in small island developing States to create a better world.
- **OHRLLS** stressed the areas where increased partnerships are required to promote sustainable development in SIDS:
 - climate change, disaster risk reduction and resilience building;
 - enhance access to finance;
 - poverty eradication, equality and social inclusion, gender and disability;
 - water and sanitation, and sustainable management of waste including chemical and hazardous waste;
 - sustainable transport and improved connectivity;
 - renewable energy and access to affordable energy
 - Health, non-communicable diseases (NCDs), food security and nutrition; and
 - Sustainable management, conservation and restoration of island and ocean ecosystems

Registration of SIDS partnerships: All IACG members are encouraged to register and announce new partnerships for SIDS which, should be registered in the dedicated online registry at <https://sidspartnerships.un.org/> and follow the SIDS Partnership Criteria and Norms.

Discussion

- **PIFS** wanted to establish if the partnerships reporting template was sent to all focal points. OHRLLS responded that the template is always available online. It is also shared to an email list with some 9000 members which may include some members of the group. A note of caution was raised that some countries do not visit the websites, and unless one sends a specific email, and it was suggested it will be good to send to SDG focal points.

6. SIDS National focal points meeting

- OHRLLS informed is organizing the second meeting for the National Focal Points of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), scheduled to take place in Praia, Cabo Verde, from 25 to 26 July 2019. The meeting will be held under the overarching theme of

“Implementation of the SAMOA Pathway in coherence with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs”.

- The meeting will discuss and share experiences and relevant strategies on pertinent SIDS related issues including how to localize the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and SDGs. Thematic sessions are designed to address SIDS pertinent issues including building resilience, access to finance, and information and communications technology (ICT) in SIDS. A special session will be devoted on the preparations for a tool kit for a harmonized approach for monitoring and reporting on the SAMOA Pathway, as a response to the critical statistical capacity constraint in SIDS in the monitoring and review of the SAMOA Pathway and 2030 agenda. OHRLLS has commissioned a consultancy to support this effort. OHRLLS will provide materials on the toolkit a week in advance.

7. Any Other Business

- **ECLAC** announced “I am a Youth of a Small Island” international competition is being organised by ECLAC, DESA, ESCAP and other UN Partners. The idea emanates from the mid-term review of the SAMOA Pathway which indicated many lacks an understanding of the SAMOA Pathway. A concept and rules of the competition are being finalized and the competition will run for one month, from 15 August to be ready for MTR.
- **DESA** informed Ireland invited SIDS ambassadors, with a view to showcase Ireland's Strategy for Partnership with Small Island Developing States. The meeting was also attended by both DESA and OHRLLS.
- **OHRLLS** also informed of the Island Voices Journalism campaign which will aim to bring successful applicants who will be funded to participate at the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway.
- Links to the events were requested to be shared.