Partnerships Briefs
for Small Island Developing States

Social Development of SIDS, Health and NCDs, Youth and Women
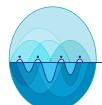
ISLAND VOICES GLOBAL CHOICES

UN Conference on Small Island Developing States

Division for Sustainable Development
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Introduction

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS Conference) will be held from 1 to 4 September 2014 in Apia, Samoa, with the overarching theme as "The sustainable development of small island developing States through genuine and durable partnerships".

The SIDS Conference will include six multi-stakeholder partnership dialogues (Partnership Dialogues) that will serve as a forum to build on existing successful partnerships as well as to launch innovative and concrete new ones, to advance the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Member States have identified six clusters of priority areas that the Partnership Dialogues will address respectively. These are: Sustainable Economic Development; Climate change & Disaster Risk management; Social development in SIDS, Health and Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), youth and women; Sustainable energy; Oceans, Seas and Biodiversity; Water and Sanitation, Food Security and Waste Management.

The SIDS 2014 Partnerships Briefs have been prepared by the Division for Sustainable Development (UN-DESA) in consultation with the UN System through the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs (ECESA Plus), with the intent to contribute to the preparations leading up to the Partnership Dialogues by:

- Reviewing key priorities related to SIDS in the selected priority area,
- Reviewing existing north-south, south-south, and triangular partnerships in the selected priority area, and
- Identifying gaps in the priority area, which could inspire renewal, build-up and scale-up of existing partnerships, and the launching of new innovative partnerships, focusing on public-private partnerships.

The current Partnership Brief will look at the priority area of "Social development in SIDS, Health and Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), youth and women", and highlights illustrative examples of existing partnerships based on information available in the SIDS 2014 Partnerships Platform (www.sids2014.org/partnerships) and as indicated through consultations with the Secretariat of the SIDS Conference.

Challenges related to Social Development of SIDS, Health and NCDs, Youth and Women in SIDS

SIDS UNDERSCORE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AS ONE of the three dimensions of sustainable development key to ensuring results are achieved for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged[1]. Small island developing states have aspirations and needs to access essential quality goods and services, such as health, education, housing, safe and nutritious food, water and sanitation, and energy.

Quality education, institutional capacities in social and human sciences, technology and innovation, promotion and preservation of culture in all its dimensions, provision of decent jobs, and access to communication and information are essential building blocks for addressing challenges of the social development of SIDS.

For example, SIDS possess a wealth of culture, which is an enabler for sustainable development. In particular, local and traditional knowledge and indigenous bio-cultural heritage recognizes the deep connections among peoples, culture, knowledge and the natural environment, and can meaningfully advance sustainable development. SIDS highlighted the need to establish cultural policies to strengthen the culture sector with main pillars on heritage and creativity. They also stressed the importance of integrating culture in sustainable development strategies and the need to strengthen the voice of SIDS on culture in sustainable development at the international level.

Challenges facing SIDS are the insufficient level of resources to support measures to safeguard the natural, tangible and intangible cultural heritage including traditional knowledge in particular through capacity building activities. SIDS are in need of strengthened regional and international cooperation in order to raise awareness of the important contribution of different forms of heritage, in particular, Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and Underwater Cultural Heritage (UCH) to the sustainable development of SIDS. More investment are needed to support the cultural industries in SIDS that are growing by capitalizing on the existing capacity of SIDS in music, performing arts and creative activities.-

Health is another critically important area of sustainable development of SIDS. Progress in the health related MDGs, including sexual and reproductive health, maternal, child and adolescent health, and improvement in health systems, has been uneven in these States[2]. Statistics show the under-five mor-

1   Outcome of the Inter-regional preparatory meeting for the Third International Conference on SIDS, Barbados (2013).

2   Five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS, (2010) A/65/115.

tality of SIDS is 32.5 deaths per 1000 births which is a relatively high average compared to middle-income and high-income countries[3].

Many SIDS also have low levels of application of modern methods of family planning[4], high teenage pregnancies, high levels of sexually transmitted infections, communicable diseases andnon-communicable diseases (NCDs).

NCDs in the Pacific SIDS region, is epidemic and becoming the major cause of premature deaths, and creating a 'human, social and economic crisis'[5]. High levels of tobacco use, unhealthy diet, excessive alcohol consumption, and physical inactivity in the region expose people to risks of high prevailing levels of NCDs[6]. Obesity, diabetes, heart diseases and other associated medical complications are becom-

ing increasingly common.

Unemployment, including trapped in low paid work, skills-work mismatches and lack of job opportunities[7], is a major concern for the youth of SIDS, especially when the States are experience a 'youth bulge'. Young people face challenges such as gender inequality, poor access to good quality education and sexual and reproductive health services especially in rural areas, and lack of political participation and in economic development. High levels of emigration of the most educated residents of SIDS continue to rise with huge ramifications on the human resource capacity of these States.

Gender inequalities in SIDS are present in all spheres - economic, social and cultural. Low rate of participation in decision-making, limited economic opportunities, limited social protection, poor access to decent work and other productive resources such as finance, land and technology, gender wage gap, family violence and women' health are all issues of great urgency.

Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in SIDS is crucial, as it would have a transformative and multiplier effect on sustainable development.

3   UN-OHRLLS (2014). Small Island Developing States in Numbers.

4   WHO (2014) http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs351/en/.

5   Secretariat of the Pacific Community (2013) Briefing Paper on Non Communicable Disease as a Development Issue.

6   The Economic Costs of Non-Communicable Disease in the Pacific Islands (2012) Final Report: A Rapid Stocktake of the Situation in Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu.

7   UNESCO (2012) Education For All Global Monitoring Report: "Youth and Skills, Putting education to work".

Existing Partnerships

THE FOLLOWING PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES ARE brief examples of some of the existing north-south, south-south and triangular partnerships, global and SIDS-focused in nature, complementing the efforts of SIDS in the areas of Social Development, Health and Non-communicable Diseases, Youth and Women. Additional information on these initiatives, and more existing partnerships can be found on the SIDS 2014 Partnerships Platform at: www.sids2014.org/partnerships.

1. Tobacco Free Pacific 2025: is a goal that aims to accelerate tobacco control efforts in order to reach a less than 5% adult tobacco use prevalence rate. All Pacific Island Member States are committed to the TFP 2025 goal. The TFP 2025 goal is a recognized component of the Healthy Islands vision established by the Pacific Health Ministers in 1995. All Pacific Island Member States are party to WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). The articles and guidelines of the FCTC provide a framework that leads Member States toward achieving a TFP 2025.
http://www.wpro.who.int/southpacific/programmes/healthy_communities/tobacco/Tabacco-freepacific/en/

2. MOU between WHO and Oceania National Olympic Organization: The memorandum of understanding between WHO and ONOC, signed in April 2014 is intended to raise awareness of the serious health consequences of inactivity in young people; to provide recommendations on the prevention and control of NCD; and to motivate sport organizations and governments to collaborate in promoting health and sports in particular for children.
http://www.wpro.who.int/southpacific/mediacentre/releases/2014/mou-who-onoc/en/

5. Pacific Islands Mental Health Network (PIMH-Net) where WHO is secretariat to PICs and partners. Through the Pacific Island Mental Health Network (PIMHNet) most PICs have begun drafting a national mental health policy or plan. Various training initiatives are addressing human resource constraints, including a one-year post-graduate diploma in Mental Health (PGDMH), fellowship programmes on community mental health and depression provided by WHO collaborating centres.

6. Pacific Quintilateral Health Group: between WHO, SPC, World Bank, DFAT Australia and NZ Aid Program. The five party working level example in the health sector is the Pacific Health Quintilateral Meeting, which brings together these five partners to develop a shared understanding of the health issues and challenges in the Pacific region; to identify options for improving aid effectiveness in health in the region; to define roles and division of labour among agencies; and to agree a process and actions for moving towards improved effectiveness of development assistance to health.

3. Strategic Health Communication Working Group n the Pacific between SPC, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, Pacific Red Cross. A Working Group on Strategic Health Communication was formed consisting of representatives from government and civil society organization to shape and discuss strategic health communication in the Pacific.

4. SIDS Youth Network (SYN): the main purpose of the Network is to promote and facilitate knowledge sharing, collaboration, inter-regional action and friendship of young people within and between SIDS. SYN fosters partnerships between existing entities supporting the advocacy and actions of young people through national, regional and global levels of sharing and collaboration.

http://sidsyouth.org/

7. Comprehensive Sexuality Education Pacific Partnership(CSE) : of UNESCO, UNFPA and UNICEF is an age-appropriate, culturally relevant approach to teaching about sex and relationships by providing scientifically accurate, realistic, non-judgemental information. CSE is in the core of delivering UNESCO's strategy on HIV and AIDS which focus on HIV prevention, treatment, care and support for children and young people through in-school and out of school based responses. In partnership with UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO in 2009, UNESCO published the first global guidance on sexuality education. The international guide assist education, health and other relevant authorities to develop and implement school-based sexuality education materials and programmes.
http://www.unesco.org/new/en/hiv-and-aids/our-priorities-in-hiv/sexuality-education/international-technical-guidance-on-sexuality-education

8. ILO- Social Protection Floor Initiative: The floor is based on the idea that everyone should enjoy at least basic income security sufficient to live, guaranteed through transfers in cash or in kind, such as pensions for the elderly and persons with disabilities, child benefits, income support benefits and/or employment guarantees and services for the unemployed and working poor. Together, in cash and in kind transfers should ensure that everyone has access to essential goods and services, including essential health services, primary education, housing, water and sanitation.
http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowTheme.do?tid=1321.

9. Censuses: several SIDS are undertaking censuses to get a better understanding of essential characteristics of their populations, including the changes in the size, age structure and location of the population. The collaboration in this area can be further strengthened to include the analysis and use of population data for planning, including efforts to identify vulnerable populations, minimize their exposure to environmental threats, and strengthen their resilience to shocks. Supporting countries in the collection, analysis and dissemination of data for development is a critical component of UNFPA's mandate. Today, with major demographic shifts occurring and attention focused on meeting international development goals, the availability of accurate and timely data is more important than ever.
http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/datafordevelopment.

10. WIPO Re:Search: is a consortium formed in 2011 through the efforts of several of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and BIO Ventures for Global Health through which public and private sector organizations around the world share valuable intellectual property and expertise with the global health research community. The aim is to promote the development of new drugs, vaccines, and diagnostics in the fight against neglected tropical diseases, malaria, and tuberculosis.
http://www.wipo.int/research/en/.

11. UNAIDS: is a collaborative partnership co-owned by 11 UN entities, and was established in 1994 with the objective of coordination of the United Nations activities related to HIV/AIDS epidemic. UNAIDS promote partnerships among and between many sectors and partners from governments and civil societies.
http://www.unaids.org/en/.

12. Every Woman Every Child: a global movement launched by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon during the United Nations Millennium Development Goals Summit in September 2010, with the aim to save the lives of 16 million women and children by 2015. A unique global movement that mobilizes and intensifies international and national action by governments, multilaterals, the private sector and civil society to address the major health challenges facing women and children around the world. The movement puts into action the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, which presents a roadmap on how to enhance financing, strengthen policy and improve service on the ground for the most vulnerable women and children.
http://everywomaneverychild.org

Suggested opportunities for Partnerships

Opportunities for partnerships in this priority area may include, but not limited to:

- Promoting a 'whole-of-government' approach in which health is at the centre of all policies to promote healthier options and to prevent premature morbidity and mortality from NCDs, including protecting SIDS from the negative impacts of bilateral and global trade and global trade and other agreements;

- Non-communicable diseases – a critical issue in the Pacific where obesity and diabetes rates are staggering;

- Infant and child mortality – remains a serious issue in a number of SIDS countries and linked with malnutrition, stunting and other health issues later in life;

- Strengthening systems for systematic collection, dissemination and use of gender and age-disaggregated data on socio-economic status of women and men and on population dynamics, and integration into development planning, as well as enhancing the knowledge of SIDS to better understand and meet the needs of their populations;

- Social protection - strengthening social infrastructures and delivery of social services and enhancing social protection and inclusion for all including people living with disabilities, the aging and those living in poverty ensuring women and girls access to better quality essential health services, including primary health care for maternal, child and adolescent health, sexual and reproductive health, health education including comprehensive sexuality education and on prevention of non-communicable diseases;

- Making education more relevant – develop regional and national policies and school curricula that integrate Education for Sustainable Development   and help individuals make informed decisions on their lifestyles and to adapt to sustainable development challenges such as climate change and disasters through education. UNESCO can support such efforts through its Global Action programme on Education for Sustainable Development programme.

- Youth employment and entrepreneurship – unemployment remains an issue for young people in all three regions. Strengthening links between government, development partners and the private sector is a sensible way to approach making more progress in this area to improve labour market access and secure quality jobs for young people. This is one of the pillars under the Pacific Youth Development Framework.

- Out of school youth – continuing problem linked also to rising youth crime and violence. Programs to address this need to make links between community organisations, government and development partners. UNESCO Apia is planning a partnership meeting on this topic in late 2014 / early 2015 with the objective to sign up partners, develop an action plan and seek funding to implement. This is one of the pillars under the Pacific Youth Development Framework.

- Ending violence against women and girls by ensuring women's full equal and effective participation and leadership at all levels of decision making in the public and private sectors, and engaging fully men and boys, including community leaders, as strategic partners and allies in the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence in and outside the family;

- Involving women in building resilience, in particular in the areas of science and technology, including development of critical information to support risk-based decision making critical to climate change adaptation and disaster risk management, and in the design, negotiation and implementation of clean energy choices that have the potential to improve health and well-being;

- expanding decent and productive job and entrepreneurship opportunities in all areas of economic activities, including guaranteed equal access to and control over productive resources such as land, properties, finance, technology and inheritance rights for women.

- By creating an enabling environment for enterprise development and growth as well as enhancing linkages between the private sector and training institutions in order to align the skills of young people to human resource needs of the private sector and to create economic opportunities as a viable alternative to emigration.

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