

A SIDS Special Event

“Building Capacities of Public Institutions in Small Island Developing States to implement the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

Organized by the Permanent Mission of Singapore to the United Nations and the Permanent Mission of Belize to the United Nations in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

**New York, 12 April 2019, 1:15 to 2.45 p.m.
UN Secretariat, Room S-1522FC**

Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and good governance at all levels and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions (A/RES/70/1, para. 35). Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda specifically calls for effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

The implementation of all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) depend critically on capable public institutions and effective and inclusive service delivery. Institutions need new capacities to provide integrated support to SDG implementation and to leave no one behind. Many countries are already quite advanced in setting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in motion. Good practices, lessons and challenges are already emerging.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) remain a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities. Many SIDS share common challenges for sustainable development, including their general small size, geographical isolation, vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change, and high dependence on volatile international trade as well as biodiversity loss.¹ A strong public sector with enhanced institutional capacity is necessary for overcoming these challenges.

In general, SIDS have limited public administration capacity in terms of government effectiveness, regulatory quality and transparency. This is largely attributed to the population size and the geographical characteristics of smallness, isolation, and remoteness. The SIDS also have limited access to specialized knowledge and skills required to establish and operate civil service bureaucracies efficiently as well as effectively.²

Moreover, the remoteness of SIDS is often associated with weak control of central government, and people in SIDS are more inclined to rely on informal processes than formal structures and

1 UNDESA. Trends in Sustainable Development: Small Island Developing States (SIDS), 2010.

2 UNDP Global Center for Public Excellence. Small, So Simple? Complexity in Small Island Developing States. 2014

processes. In this context, SIDS tend to use highly decentralized systems to implement sustainable development.³ They depend on local governments and traditional, informal local governance in formulating and implementing the SDG-related plans and policies, when formal governance and accountability systems are not effective.

The SDGs and the commitments contained in the Paris Climate Change Agreement, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and other agreements made at the UN, which are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, provide a roadmap for action.

The SAMOA Pathway of September 2014 is the key intergovernmental agreement serving as the blueprint for addressing SIDS continuing sustainable development challenges. The SAMOA Pathway established 18 areas for action, including water and sanitation, health, energy, sustainable transport, social development and monitoring, among others closely linked to challenges faced by SIDS.

The SAMOA Pathway calls inter alia for enhanced international cooperation, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, and especially cooperation among SIDS themselves⁴. To this end, the Government of Singapore, through its Permanent Mission to the United Nations has graciously co-hosted with UN DESA, the annual SIDS Special Event, providing a platform to representatives of SIDS at UN Headquarters in New York to share their experiences and initiatives. The aim of this Special Event is to assist SIDS in the implementation of national policy commitments made in the Samoa Pathway, the 2030 Agenda and other internationally agreed agendas and to fulfil their vision of self-reliance.

In 2019, the Permanent Mission of Singapore to the United Nations and the Permanent Mission of Belize to the United Nations, in collaboration with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government and the Division for Sustainable Development Goals (SIDS Unit), is co-organizing a SIDS Special Event on “Building Capacities of Public Institutions in Small Island Developing States to implement the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

Objective

This Special Event will be held on **Friday 12 April 2019**, at the margins of the 18th Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA). Panelists will share their knowledge and experience on the design and implementation of initiatives supporting SIDS and address key questions. Presentations will be followed by interactive discussions among the participants.

³ UNODC. *Procurement and Corruption in Small Island Developing States: Challenges and Emerging Practices*. December 2016

⁴ A/RES/69/15 para.99

Key Questions to be Addressed

- What new governance and public administration capacities are needed in SIDS to implement the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda?
- What progress has been made and what are the current challenges faced by SIDS in building effective, inclusive and accountable public institutions for implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda?
- What innovative practices in service delivery are taking place in SIDS to ensure that the sustainable development goals are realized?

Targeted Audience

The Event aims to bring together representatives of SIDS from Permanent Missions in New York at both the Ambassadorial and working level.

Agenda

Time	
12.30pm	<i>Light luncheon served outside room S-1522FC</i>
1.15-1.30pm	<p><i>Moderator: Mr. Sainivalati Navoti, Chief, SIDS Unit, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UN DESA</i></p> <p>Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, UN DESA • H.E. Burhan Gafoor, Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations • H.E. Janine Felson, Deputy Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations
1.30 – 2.10pm	<p>Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambassador Odo Tevi, Permanent Representative of Vanuatu to the United Nations • Ambassador M. Sheila G. Carey, Permanent Representative of Bahamas to the United Nations <p>Presentations (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Adriana Alberti, Chief, Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit, • Mr. Chae Gun Chung, Head, UN Project Office on Governance, DPIDG, UN DESA <p>Presentations (5 Minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Anya Thomas, SIDS Unit, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UN DESA

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Tishka Francis, SIDS Unit, the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS)
2.10 – 2.40pm	Questions & Answers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Facilitated by the Moderator</i>
2.40 – 2.45 pm	Closing Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H.E. Burhan Gafoor, Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations H.E. Janine Felson, Deputy Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations

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