

PROJECT TITLE

Support to the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, Apia, Independent State of Samoa, 2014

1. PURPOSE

In “The Future We Want” adopted at Rio+20 (A/RES/66/288), Member States called for the convening in 2014 of a third international conference on small island developing States (SIDS). Subsequently, the General Assembly adopted a modalities resolution (A/RES/67/207) outlining the objectives of the conference, as well as initial guidelines for conference preparations, and welcomed the offer of the Government of Samoa to host the Conference .

The objectives of the Conference are to (a) assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the previous SIDS conference outcomes, (b) seek a renewed political commitment to SIDS sustainable development, (c) identify new and emerging challenges and opportunities for SIDS sustainable development and ways to address them including through collaborative partnerships, and (d) identify priorities for the sustainable development of SIDS for consideration in the elaboration of the post-2015 UN development agenda. The overall theme of the Conference is “Sustainable Development of SIDS through Genuine and Durable Partnerships” and the working definition of partnerships in this regard is inclusive of North-South, public-private, SIDS-SIDS and tripartite partnerships, among others.

The proposed partnership with the SDG-F would support the participation of delegates from SIDS and other developing countries in the Conference (including key pre-Conference activities in Samoa) and its preparatory meetings, as well as the participation of civil society representatives from SIDS. While the SIDS Conference will address the challenges and opportunities of small island developing States, it is a global conference, and the issues it covers will have relevance for the sustainable development of all countries. Full participation, including not only SIDS delegates but also delegates from non-SIDS developing countries as well as civil society representatives, will ensure that the Conference is enriched by a multiplicity of perspectives. It will also raise the likelihood that the outcome is embraced and implemented by a wide array of stakeholders.

Considering particularly objective (d) above, as well as the theme of the Conference, full and robust participation in the Conference and its preparatory activities would also advance the mission of the SDG-F. The Conference will raise the profile of SIDS priority issues and will

advance the thinking around how to approach them in the SDG discussions, ultimately strengthening the framework of the post-2015 development agenda. Partnerships, including public-private partnerships, will be central to the search for solutions to SIDS challenges, echoing the SDG-F emphasis on the potential of public-private partnership. Inclusive economic growth (another SDG-F priority area), which promotes both decent work and sustainable consumption and production, is critical to SIDS and the issue features prominently both in the draft outcome document and the partnership dialogues that will run in parallel to the Conference plenary in Samoa.

By supporting participation in the Conference and its preparations, the SDG-F partnership will help ensure the success of the Conference and by extension the richness and fruitfulness of the discourse around partnerships. By advancing the conversation—and hopefully inspiring new and expanded partnerships on behalf of SIDS sustainable development—this SDG-F partnership will contribute to the ultimate fulfillment of the Fund’s mission.

As noted above, the beneficiaries of the partnership are government delegates from SIDS and other developing countries as well as representatives of SIDS-based civil society organizations. These civil society organizations are small and under-resourced, and in some cases the Samoa Conference is the first UN Conference for which they have gained accreditation. In a broader sense, the SIDS themselves are the beneficiaries of the partnership because the Conference will be more successful and yield more significant outcomes if it has full participation.

2. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The estimated total budget of the current partnership (funding participation in the Conference and its global preparations) is approximately \$3,708,213. The budget for the regional and inter-regional preparations of 2013 was \$477,762. These figures represent (1) economy class airfare, (2) daily subsistence allowance, and (3) terminal expenses for SIDS and other developing country delegates and civil society representatives from SIDS.

The partnership has mobilized contributions to defray these expenses from a range of donors, as listed below:

Argentina	\$10,000
Australia	\$250,000
Canada	\$50,000
China	\$500,000
Estonia	20,000 Euros
India	\$250,000
Ireland	100,000 euros
Italy	\$250,000

Japan	\$50,000
Netherlands	\$375,000
Norway	\$200,000
Russia	\$500,000
Switzerland	\$100,000
Turkey	\$250,000

3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Division for Sustainable Development of DESA (DESA –DSD) is serving as the Secretariat for the Conference, and the DESA Under-Secretary-General is the Conference Secretary-General. Staff members of DSD will oversee the travel arrangements of the participants nominated by their governments. In the case of civil society participants, nominations will be processed by DSD in collaboration with UN Country Teams and a Major Groups Steering Committee made up of SIDS civil society leaders.

In addition, the entire UN system is mobilizing to support the Conference’s preparations and successful execution. The Inter-Agency Consultative Group on SIDS, which consists of both UN and non-UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations, provides the platform for coordination, the exchange of information and mobilization of actions. A number of expert group meetings have been carried out to provide input into the SIDS preparatory processes in such areas as the post-2015 development agenda, oceans and marine science, disaster prevention, and emerging issues in SIDS.

DESA-DSD will communicate regularly with the SDG-F Secretariat about the level of Conference participation achieved and progress in Conference preparations.

A meeting report will be produced in addition to the official outcome document. Also, UN DESA shall, within six months of completion of this project, provide a final financial statement of account showing the use of the SDG-F contribution. The financial statement shall be certified by a United Nations official or in accordance to the United Nations financial rules and regulations. The financial statement shall be subject to internal and external auditing procedures laid down in the United Nations rules and regulations applicable. All financial accounts and statements with respect to the SDG-F contribution shall be expressed in United States dollars.

4. RESULTS

This partnership will allow government delegates and civil society representatives to participate fully in the Third International Conference on SIDS, its preparations in New York,

and the pre-Conference activities in Samoa. The pre-Conference activities include a private sector forum, an energy forum, an NGO forum, and a youth forum. Full participation in all activities will strengthen the plenary of the Conference, which aims to produce a “concise, forward-looking, action oriented” outcome document, as well as the parallel partnership dialogues, which aim both to highlight ongoing partnerships benefitting SIDS and to inspire new and expanded partnerships.

5. NEXT STEPS

DESA-DSD will send invitations to the final preparatory meeting (23-27 June) and to the Conference itself in the coming weeks, and will subsequently begin to process the travel requests.

Regarding communication and outreach, DESA-DSD maintains a Conference website where donors are featured. DESA-DSD will also issue a press release on the SDG-F partnership and support. There are also a series of high-level events related to SIDS in the run up to Samoa Conference and its follow up, including the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the Secretary-General’s Climate Change Summit, and GA69, where the SDG-F partnership can continue to be highlighted.