



United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries,
Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

Action Plan

For the creation of a network of
Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) national focal points (NFPs)

June 2018

1. Background

The SAMOA Pathway, in paragraph 120, mandates the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) to ensure the mainstreaming of SAMOA Pathway and issues related to Small island developing States (SIDS) in the work of the United Nations (UN) system and enhance the coherence of SIDS issues in UN processes, including at the national, regional and global levels. The need to mainstream the SAMOA Pathway and to foster the coherence of SIDS issues at the national, regional and global levels becomes all the more important with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, which the programme of action for SIDS is an integral part of.

In implementing this mandate, OHRLLS convened a workshop on ‘Enhancing the Coherence of SIDS issues in UN processes post SAMOA Pathway and in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development’ to brainstorm and agree on ways and means to advance coherence and synergies in the implementation and follow up of the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda. Attended by representatives from member states, UN and other regional and international institutions as well as other major stakeholders, the workshop recommended, among other things, the establishment of SIDS national focal points. This recommendation also took note of OHRLLS’ experience in supporting the work on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) national focal points and suggested that this network could serve as a good template for SIDS going forward. The same recommendation also finds resonance in the Joint Inspection Unit’s report (JIU/REP/2016/3), which calls for a similar arrangement for SIDS.

Building on this recommendation, the internal audit (Report 2017/093) on the management of OHRLLS by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) requested that OHRLLS develop, by 30 June 2018, an action plan for the creation of a network of SIDS national points for submission to the Alliance of Small Island States for consideration.

The purpose of the action plan is to lay out key steps that will inform the establishment and full operationalization of the network of SIDS national focal points. These steps include: the formation of the network, its operationalization, and the mobilization of the resources needed for the funding of its activities.

2. Formation of SIDS National focal points

As the network will be composed of government representatives, it is important to reach out to all SIDS and solicit the nomination of suitable candidates. The process started in 2017, with letters sent to SIDS inviting them to designate their focal points. By the end of June 2018, a total of 16 SIDS member states have nominated their national focal points (See Annex).

OHRLLS will continue to deploy efforts—through official letters addressed to SIDS and through its ongoing advocacy activities—to ensure the designation by all 38 SIDS of their national focal points. The designated focal point will be an official who is heavily involved in the localization of the SAMOA Pathway and the SDGs as well as their national implementation, monitoring and review. He/She could be either from the ministry of planning or finance or foreign affairs or environment or any other relevant ministry. To this end, OHRLLS will continue to formally request, through the Permanent Missions of the Small Island Developing States, the nomination of national focal points. Further, the office will continue to convey, in the context of its ongoing advocacy activities, the importance of nominating focal points. Contingent upon member states uptake of NFP nominations, further sensitization and awareness campaigns will also be carried out with the view to accelerate the creation of the NFP network, including through dedicated workshops, seminars or meetings with member states. These workshops, seminars and meetings will also provide an opportunity to share and benefit from experiences of existing and fully operational NFPs such as the LDCs national focal points, which is championed by OHRLLS. The aim of such an exercise will be to further inform member states about the functions and importance of the network, therefore garnering support for the nomination of national focal points.

3. Operationalization of SIDS National focal points

After the network of national focal points is established, the challenge ahead will be one of having it up and running as well as delivering on its primary function: enhancing coherence of SIDS issues across all levels—global, regional and national. This will require carrying out a series of flagship activities. Principal among these activities are the following:

- (i) **SIDS National focal points meetings and their participation in other regional and global SIDS-related events:** There will be annual meetings of the SIDS National focal points, to be held in the margins of international or regional meetings that are closely linked to the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. Looking forward and subject to availability of resources, OHRLLS is exploring the possibility

of convening the first annual meeting of the focal points network on the margins of the Interregional meeting of the preparation of the mid-term review of the SAMOA Pathway, which will be held in the last quarter of 2018. Future meetings could be held on the margins of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) with the purpose of facilitating information and experience sharing in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda. It is also to promote increased participation of SIDS representatives to the HLPF processes. Besides its annual meetings, regional consultations could be held on an ad hoc basis on the sidelines of relevant regional meetings. SIDS national focal points could be active, if funding is available, in regional or global meetings organized by the UN secretariat on key accelerators of sustainable development, including climate change and resilience building, sustainable energy, oceans, food and nutrition security, structural transformation and graduation, public private partnerships, broadband connectivity, and statistics and data, to name a few. Attended by national focal points and experts from concerned sectoral ministries as well as representatives from other international and regional organizations, the private sector, civil society, academia, these meetings will offer a unique opportunity to: i) share experiences and best practices on mainstreaming global and regional frameworks into national development processes as well their implementation and follow up, ii) network, and iii) better understand existing means of implementation, including viable financing and business models. All in all, the broader aim of the network of SIDS national focal points is to support buy-in and ownership of SAMOA Pathway by SIDS member states and to foster coherence of SIDS issues in UN processes, including at the national, regional and global levels.

- (ii) **National coordination on the SAMOA and SDG-related matters:** Another major function of the national focal points could be to serve as an interface between the global and regional processes and national policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and review. National focal points could play an active role within the national institutional setup or similar arrangements designed to lead the integration of the SAMOA Pathway and SDGs into national priorities, policies, and development plans as well as their implementation and follow up. They could also serve as a key interlocutor to UNCT on SAMOA Pathway and SDG-related matters, including on global reporting. One of the areas where the SIDS national focal points could contribute is the operationalization of the unifying reporting framework, which OHRLLS and UNDP are working on with the view to help countries harmonize reporting on globally agreed goals, including SDGs, and programmes of action for vulnerable countries and to ease the transaction cost of complying to multiple reporting processes. Once the unifying

reporting framework is finalized, one important user of such a tool could be the SIDS national focal points.

(iii) **SIDS specific analysis and information:** National focal points could also play an important role in providing country specific analysis and information, all of which could feed in the knowledge products produced by OHRLLS. They could also contribute to wider advocacy and awareness activities carried out by OHRLLS, including through the dissemination of knowledge materials produced by the office and other relevant stakeholders.

4. Resource mobilization

Rolling out the programme of work of the SIDS national focal points will require mobilizing meaningful extra-budgetary resources, especially in the context of declining or, at best, stagnant regular-budget resources. Guided by its resource mobilization strategy, OHRLLS will deploy well-coordinated and coherent efforts to solicit, acquire, utilize as well as report and monitor extra-budgetary resources devoted to the activities of SIDS national focal points.

Annex: List of SIDS national Focal Points

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