

PRESENTATION OF CUBA FOR THE INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION AND
ADOPTION OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR SIDS NATIONAL FOCAL
POINTS
SESSION I, JULY 25TH

National Context

Nowadays, the Cuban society is in the process of updating its economic and social model of development in order to make it more efficient, to ensure the sustainability of the achievements of the Cuban Revolution and to improve living standards of our people, provide quality social services, grant gender equality and social justice, together with protecting the environment, oceans, and Earth ecosystems.

However, we have suffered for more than 60 years, the consequences of the systematic application of an economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States government. This Cold War remnant constitutes the main obstacle to the economic development of Cuba and, therefore, to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, its SDGs and the objectives of the Samoa Pathway.

Interrelation between SDGs and national framework

Within this context, the adoption of the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda constitutes a State commitment and a national priority. This statement is more evident when it is analyzed in the light of the existing alignment between the 17 SDGs and the Samoa Pathway goals with our own Cuban 2030 National Economic Development Plan.

Based on that vision of the nation, six strategic axes are defined, intimately related and systemically designed, which should articulate the proposal of economic and social development until 2030 and contribute to the achievement of the long-term purposes. Based on these objectives, general and specific objectives are defined. The six axes are as follows: effective and socialist government and social integration; productive transformation and international insertion; infrastructure; human potential, science, technology and innovation; natural resources and environment; and human development, justice and equity.

Furthermore, Cuba also implements a National State Plan for Addressing Climate Change that emphasizes the need for adaptation actions in order to face the sea level rising and the resilience in coastal settlements, in complete correspondence to UN sustainable development frameworks.

Likewise, the implementation of the Samoa Pathway has become a priority objective for the Cuban Government which responds to our singularities, circumstances and vulnerabilities as a Small Island Developing State. The particular development vision promoted by the Samoa Pathway is perfectly articulated in the National Economic Development Plan and its 6 action axes,

and it is a core element of the National State Plan for Addressing Climate Change.

The Samoa Pathway results, then, in an useful tool, which put in the hand of National Focal Points has the potential to result in a more diversified economy, more resilient and interconnected communities, the protection of our cultural heritage and a powerful and common answer of island states to address climate change and sustainable development.

Lessons Learned

In the pursue of these efforts to implement both major UN platforms for the sustainable development, the Samoa Pathway and the Agenda's 17 SDGs, a National Group for the Implementation of the Agenda was enforced in Cuba in 2017. This group integrates the Central State Ministries, the related national entities and the actors from civil society, under the direction of the Cuban Ministry of Economy and Planning.

Two main strengths of the national system have been identified as key elements to the successful implementation of the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda: the alignment of the 17 SDGs with the strategic sectors of the Cuban 2030 National Economic Development Plan and the full adaptation of the existing government administrative structures, which results in a very coordinated and coherent work between all our related institutions.

SIDS NFP Role in Cuba.

SIDS National Focal Points are already playing a crucial role in the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda fulfillment. In my country, SIDS Focal Point is part of the coordination with national institutions, civil society and the academy, in order to share a coherent strategic vision of the country and its development priorities. In our case, NFP not only participate in the dialogue, it is its duty to align development strategies with a Samoa Pathway based perspective, ensuring the congruence of the processes.

Empowering SIDS NFPs

The SIDS NFPs Terms of Reference that has been presented constitutes a valuable document that strengthens our role and capacities, evoking our common will to develop our nations while harmonizing development paradigms with our particular realities.

SIDS NFPs have a potentiality to be explored and thoroughly employed. We need to increase our capacities to identify Samoa Pathway's singular and fundamental tasks, so we can avoid the duplication of efforts. A potentiation of global partnerships is required, together with an increased level of funding and provisions of means of implementation and access to Samoa Pathway related development projects coming from international cooperation funds.

