



Third Preparatory Webinar for the SIDS Global Business Network Forum 2024

‘Small Islands, Big Ideas: Digitalization, Technology & Innovation in Small Island Developing States’

29 February 2023, 12-1pm (New York time)

Background

Spearheaded by the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS), the Small Island Developing States Global Business Network (SIDS-GBN) is a platform and resource-hub for the facilitation of private sector partnerships that contribute to the sustainable development of SIDS.

The SIDS-GBN arose from the Third International Conference on SIDS in 2014 when OHRLLS organized a two-day private sector forum on the sidelines of the Conference.

The establishment of the SIDS-GBN was formally recognized by the General Assembly through its resolution A/RES/71/225 which stated “Noting with appreciation the establishment of the Small Island Developing States Global Business Network to share best practices and lessons learned among business sectors in small island developing States, and its contribution to the sustainable development of small island developing States, and encouraging its coherence with the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework.”

The next SIDS-GBN Forum will take place in 2024, the same year as the fourth International Conference on SIDS. At the fourth Conference, a new Programme of Action for SIDS will be adopted to guide a new agenda for sustainable development in SIDS. Both the Conference and the Forum have preparatory processes that are running up until the events take place.

This provides a unique opportunity to review the first decade of the SIDS-GBN and set the direction for its next decade. It also allows for the GBN to feed into discussions on the new SIDS agenda. The parallel processes also make it possible for the GBN to hear from the private sector on the new SIDS agenda.

As part of the preparatory process of the SIDS-GBN Forum 2024, OHRLLS will organize a series of preparatory webinars and consultations to gather stakeholders to discuss priorities and thematic areas for the Forum.

The objectives of the meetings are to:

- Inform the private sector on the SIDS4 process and the SIDS-GBN Forum 2024 process.
- Explore with the private sector how their priorities could align with the sustainable development of SIDS in the coming decade.
- Identify stakeholders' priorities for thematic areas at the SIDS-GBN Forum 2024 and the private sector roundtable at SIDS4.
- Provide recommendations on how SIDS can better build public-private partnerships that contribute to their sustainable development and the new SIDS agenda.
- Share best practices of public-private partnerships that contribute to the sustainable development of SIDS and can be showcased at the SIDS4 Conference.

Webinar 3: 'Small Islands, Big Ideas: Digitalization, Technology & Innovation in Small Island Developing States'

In a rapidly evolving global landscape, the fusion of digitalization, innovation, and technology has emerged as the driving force behind economic growth and societal transformation. In the heart of the digital revolution lies the services sector, eCommerce, and financial technology (FinTech) which offer great economic opportunity for SIDS. In addition, technology holds a potential for these domains to empower local communities including youth and women.

The third webinar seeks to explore digitalization, innovation, and technology within SIDS. As the world becomes more interconnected and digitally dependent, SIDS are positioned to harness the power of technology and services to overcome challenges and drive sustainable development.

The webinar will explore the role of public-private partnerships in this process, focusing on the following areas:

- **Digital Services:** Digitization is changing the way we buy and sell. The session will look at how SIDS can tap into digital services such as eCommerce and FinTech and how public-private partnerships can support this process.
- **Innovation Ecosystems:** Fostering innovation is vital for progress. The webinar will explore the development of innovation ecosystems that encourage entrepreneurial spirit and technological advancements and the role of public-private partnerships.
- **Connectivity:** Connectivity offers great opportunities to empower local communities, for example by tapping into the local culture and creative industries. The session will

explore how technology can revolutionize industries and empower youths, such as young artists, via public-private partnerships.

- **Infrastructure and Affordability:** Digital infrastructure and affordability is key for businesses to go digital. The webinar will delve into the role of public-private partnerships in addressing infrastructure needs and enhancing affordability.

Programme

12.00-12.10	Opening Remarks OHRLLS
12.10-12.30	Private Sector Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms. Aishath Adnan, Co-Founder Women in Tech Maldives• Mr. Mark Pereira, Founder of Zed Labs• Bob Perpall, Executive Vice President, New Satellite Systems• Moderator: Mr. Jason Tan, First Secretary for Sustainable Development, Permanent Mission of Singapore to the United Nations in New York
12.30-12.55	Open Discussion Lead Discussant: Ashish Narayan, Programme Coordinator in the ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
12.55-13.00	Closing Remarks