

FINAL REPORT

**A TOOLKIT
FOR MONITORING AND REPORTING
ON THE
SAMOA PATHWAY**



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ABBREVIATIONS

AIS	Atlantic, Indian Ocean and South China Sea
BPoA	Barbados Plan of Action
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
Fudd	Financing for Development
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
MoV	Means of Verification
MSI	Mauritius Strategy for the further Implementation of the BPoA
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
RCOs	Resident Coordinators' Offices
SP	SAMOA Pathway
SAMOA	SIDS Accelerated Modalities for Action
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
PC	Pacific Community formerly the South Pacific Commission
UN	United Nations
UN/DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
UN/OHRLLS	UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
VNR	Voluntary National Report

A. BACKGROUND

The Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) held in September 2014 adopted the SAMOA Pathway (SP) - an integrated framework of the development aspirations and priorities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS)¹ for the period 2015-2025. The expectation was that SIDS would be able to report on progress on the priorities of the SP and, at the end of its life, be able to craft a successor document building on the gains that would have been made.

The SP was developed without a dedicated monitoring framework. The underlying assumption was that its priorities were aligned with those of other global development frameworks, such as the SENDAI Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and even the frameworks for Financing for Development framework (FfD) and the Paris Agreement. UN/DESA was however mandated to verify this assumption through General Assembly (GA) Resolution A/RES/74/217. The resolution specifically asked UN/DESA to identify “*priority areas not covered by the Sustainable Development Goals or the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, and, if any are identified, to develop forthwith targets and indicators for those priority areas.*”

The methodology utilized to carry out the mandate given by the GA, i.e., to establish alignment between the SP and the global development monitoring frameworks resulted in a ‘framework of monitoring indicators’² for the SP itself. This emergent framework is divided into two-parts.

Part I - Policy/Qualitative Assessment and Monitoring

Part I elaborates the policy priorities of the SP. Many of the policy priorities are unique to SIDS, but a few nevertheless can be found in the global frameworks, particularly the SDGs, but of course with reference to the wider global community.

Monitoring only this section of the framework will mean assessing the degree of progress made on the implementation of key policies necessary for SIDS’ development, in the decade since implementation of the SP began in 2014. Policy monitoring will largely consist of qualitative assessment and therefore Part I is referred to as the ‘qualitative framework.’ This language is maintained throughout this report and in the attachments.

Part II- Programme Implementation Results/Quantitative Monitoring

Part II of the framework, on the other hand, is focused on tracking the results of implementation of development programmes identified as priorities in the SP. This section of the framework requires quantitative data for measurement and monitoring. It is therefore referred to in this report and its attachments as the quantitative framework.

This part of the framework shares many of the priorities of the other global frameworks and indicators from these frameworks, particularly from the SDGs, were found to be useful proxies for quantitatively measuring and monitoring of the SP implementation results.

¹ [List of SIDS: Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform \(un.org\)](#)

² See the UN/DESA report of the ‘Development of a Monitoring Framework for the SAMOA Pathway’

Facilitating SIDS Reporting on the SAMOA Pathway

SIDS Member States were never able to adequately report their progress under the SP (since there was no monitoring framework of indicators to guide the process even for the high-level mid-term review held in 2019). Coupled with the absence of a framework was SIDS' known capacity challenges, particularly for data collection, analysis (including the computation of indicators) and dissemination.

SIDS are now expected use the SP monitoring framework to produce national reports that in turn will feed into sub-regional and finally an interregional report in preparation for the Fourth International Conference scheduled for 2024. Reporting at this time will take the place of an end-term evaluation of the SP.³ Further, it will serve as foundational to the preparation of the successor document to the SP - also expected to be *adopted* at the Fourth International Conference.

When combined however, the policy/qualitative and programme implementation/quantitative monitoring framework for the SP has 139 priorities, with seventy-one (71) being policy related and sixty-eight (68) programme development priorities. The size of the framework will require significant effort on the part of SIDS whose capacities for report are already limited.

The UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN/OHRLLS) has undertaken this exercise to develop a set of instruments/tools intended to simplify the reporting process for SIDS. The approach has been to use the ' Framework of Monitoring Indicators for the SAMOA Pathway' as its the starting point to avoid duplication of effort both by the UN and SIDS Member States.

The intention has been to use the assess the Framework and propose: (a) a set of core indicators for monitoring and reporting by Member States and (b) a format for preparing reports. This report shows how using the 'Framework of Monitoring Indicators for the SP' and other relevant documentation these two objectives have been achieved.

There are five (5) attachments to this report that show the steps taken in deriving a core indicator framework. *Attachments A and B* show the results of an assessment of the existing two-part Framework with proposals made for indicators to fill remaining gaps.

Attachment C shows that further alignment has been done with the Strategic Plans of the CARICOM and the Pacific Community (PC) Secretariats to ensure further alignment between these plans and the Framework of Monitoring Indicators, therefore avoiding any additional reporting burden by the introduction of a framework with a core set of indicators.

Attachment D shows the seventy (70) indicators selected as the core or key set of indicators that capture the essence of the broad thematic areas and their priorities. It also shows the extent to which these indicators continue to be aligned to the monitoring frameworks of the two main SIDS sub-Regions.

³ The SAMOA Pathway is scheduled to be sunset in 2024.

Guidelines on a format for reporting are given in *Attachment E*.

B. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE FRAMEWORK OF MONITORING INDICATORS FOR THE SAMOA PATHWAY: ITS ALIGNMENT WITH GLOBAL POST-2015 FRAMEWORKS, GAPS AND PROPOSALS FOR FILLING THOSE GAPS

The Framework of Monitoring Indicators for the SAMOA Pathway was prepared using the methodology of a series of matrices to perform the alignment of the Pathway's priorities with the targets and indicators of monitoring framework for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the SENDAI Monitoring Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and Financing for Development framework.

The Framework contains policy and programme development and implementation priorities. In all, there are 139 policy development and implementation priorities in the SP codified into those requiring qualitative interrogation and those requiring quantitative data collection for any type of assessment or monitoring. During the alignment process of the SP with the SDGs, SENDAI framework and the Paris Agreement the qualitative and quantitative aspect of the emerging framework became even more solidifies.

It is on this basis therefore that the framework has been divided into two parts. The quantitative and qualitative division has also served a more practical purpose in that it has made the framework more manageable both for on-going monitoring by SIDS and for reporting.

Part I of the framework is focused on the policy and programme *priorities* of the SP. Seventy-one (71)⁴ in all, this part of the framework has the SP's covers policy and programme development over a number of areas, for example: capacity building, including for the establishment and maintenance of governance and management structures; implementing programmes and projects, for example for raising awareness and communication on climate change; assessing progress to global goals, including ratification of conventions and; adopting environmentally sound policies, for example towards the management of ecosystems and marine environments.

⁴ Revised Qualitative Framework

FRAMEWORK FOR MONITORING SAMOA PATHWAY PRIORITIES

- ALIGNMENT, GAPS AND PROPOSALS

QUALITATIVE		QUANTITATIVE		TOTAL BOTH FRAMEWORKS
No. SP Priorities/Asks	71	No. SP Priorities/Asks	68	139
No. SP Priorities Aligned with Indicators ^(a)	30	No. SP Priorities Aligned with Indicators	99	...
No. of SP Priorities Not Aligned ^(b) /GAPS	41	No. of SP Priorities Not Aligned/GAPS	8	49
No. of Proposals made to fill the GAPS	50	No. of Proposals made to fill the GAPS	9	59
No. of Proposals/Indicators in Qualitative Framework	81	No. of Proposals & Indicators in the Quantitative Framework	108	189

N.B. (a) SP Priorities aligned with SDG targets, SENDAI Framework on DRR or the Paris Agreement

Interestingly, there are no policy development *priorities* under the food and nutrition, social development, education, means of implementation and technology clusters. Also, while priorities focus on policy development, research etc., thirty (30) out of the total of seventy-one (71) can be aligned with SDG targets and those also of the Paris Agreement.

Since only thirty (30) of seventy-one (71) priorities of the qualitative monitoring framework were aligned with the SDGs, several proposals have had to be made. In some cases, more than one proposal has been made for a single priority, bringing the number in the framework to fifty (50) and an overall total of proposed indicators for qualitative monitoring of SP policy development *priorities* to eighty-one (81).

Finally, reporting requirements under the other post-2015 global frameworks tend to be at the regional and global level and at higher aggregations. For example, many of the SDG indicators around qualitative *priorities* tend to focus on the total or aggregate ‘number of countries that...’ Where these indicators have been adopted for the SP and SIDS monitoring, it is proposed that cumulation/aggregation is done at the SIDS level and for SIDS regional groupings.

Part II of the framework on the other hand consist of sixty-eight (68) *Asks* or priority areas for SIDS’ development under the SP. All but eight (8) of these priorities can be aligned with the SDG targets and indicators or with those of the SENDAI framework. The close alignment between

the SP priorities and those of other global frameworks means that burden by SIDS to report on the SP is reduced.

Proposals have been made for monitoring the eight (8) outstanding SAMOA Pathway priorities that are not aligned with any other post-2015 global development framework. However, it must be noted that more than one SDG or SENDAI Framework indicators can be used as proxies for monitoring a single SP priority, as a result there are one-hundred and eight indicators (108) associated with this quantitative aspect of the framework.

In sum, of the one hundred and thirty-nine (139) development priorities - qualitative and quantitative - of the SP, there were forty-nine (49) for which *new* proposals had to be made, since there was no alignment with the priorities or targets of any of the other global post-2015 frameworks. Since some priorities demanded that more than one proposal was necessary.

Eight (8) of these proposals require quantitative data collection. The remaining forty-one (41) require research, programme development and other forms of qualitative data collection and analysis. While the latter can be considered ‘gaps’ in the framework therefore, they do not require the rigour of quantitative data collection, indicator construction and analysis.

Attachment A shows Part 1 of the framework of Monitoring Indicators for the SP, including proposals for policy priorities that are specific to SIDS and the SAMOA Pathway. *Attachment B* shows Part II of the proposed framework for monitoring the quantitative aspects of the SAMOA Pathway, including the proposals for monitoring the eight (8) priority areas that specific to SIDS development and are not included in any other framework.

C. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE FRAMEWORK OF MONITORING INDICATORS FOR THE SAMOA PATHWAY: ITS FURTHER ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLANS OF THE SECRETARIATS OF THE CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC SIDS

The Framework of Monitoring Indicators for the SP is expected to be utilized first of all as a guiding template for SIDS to report to the Fourth International Conference and secondly, for informing the successor development framework to the SP. Following the alignment of the SP priorities to those of other post-2015 global development frameworks, further work has been undertaken to determine the extent of alignment of the framework with the Strategic Plans (SPs) of the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (formerly the South Pacific Commission (SPC)).

These entities have been providing leadership to SIDS’ development efforts by incorporating key issues of importance to their development in their SPs and both regional secretariats have asked their Member States to also reflect regional SPs goals and SDG targets in their national plans. Both regions have included sixty-five (65) of the ninety-nine (99) SDG indicators reflected in the current quantitative monitoring framework (Part II) in their SPs.

The development focus of the regions - as elaborated in their SPs - is instructive, particularly in view of efforts to develop a core set of monitoring indicators for all SIDS. Both regions have focused on economic growth, but SPC is interested in non-agricultural economic growth. Both highlight education, sustainable tourism, but the CARICOM Strategic Plan shows overwhelming interest in disaster risk reduction, food security and nutrition, water and sanitation. Health and non-communicable diseases, gender equality and women's empowerment and data and statistics are also salient in the Strategic Plans of both sub-regions. SPC however shows greater interest in issues pertaining to the Oceans and Seas.

Attachment C to this report shows the alignment of the framework of Monitoring Indicators⁵ for the SP with the SDG priorities elaborated in the SPs of the Secretariats of the Caribbean and Pacific SIDS.

D. RATIONALE FOR A CORE SET OF INDICATORS FOR REPORTING ON THE SAMOA PATHWAY

The current comprehensive framework for monitoring the SAMOA Pathway has a total of one hundred and eighty-nine proposed indicators.⁶ This framework was not in place over the lifetime of the Pathway for reporting on its priorities, including for the Interregional Meeting for SIDS on the SAMOA Pathway Midterm Review.

With the establishment of the monitoring framework has come the realization that monitoring SIDS priorities as elaborated by the SP will test their capacities for data collection and analysis including construction of relevant indicators. The framework shows that the SP's priorities are extensive and cover a wide range of policy and programme challenges to SIDS' development.

SIDS' options for reporting on the SP are limited however, as it is due to sunset in 2024 - i.e. in less than two years and a successor document is expected to be developed in preparation for the Fourth International Conference to be held in the same year. Information on the progress towards the SP's priorities is expected to be foundational to the development of this successor document.

In the absence of a comprehensive impact evaluation of the policy and programme priorities embodied by the SP, SIDS and its development partners must therefore rely on national monitoring reports to establish the extent of progress made under this guiding instrument. The challenge for SIDS is that it is unlikely that many of them will be able to provide information or data on all of these indicators.

⁵ Revised to include proposals for forty-one (41) SAMOA Pathway Priorities that require qualitative assessment and for eight (8) requiring quantitative data collection and analysis.

⁶ Eighty-one (81) qualitative indicators and one hundred and eight quantitative indicators.

It is being proposed therefore that a core set of indicators based on SIDS' priorities be selected for monitoring and reporting in preparation for the Fourth International Conference. Though significantly reduced in number, this core set should capture the extent to which SIDS continue to be economically, socially and environmentally vulnerable.

While currently reflecting SIDS' priorities, the SP as a guiding instrument has metamorphosed from earlier elaborations and revisions that have seen priorities change in their ranking. The core set of indicators for reporting to the Fourth Conference will necessarily need to reflect not only the priorities, but also their current ranking.

Confounding the process of identifying a core set of indicators for reporting to the Fourth Conference with the current monitoring framework as the 'frame' from which the priorities will be garnered is the fact that two of the three SIDS groupings have coordinating secretariats⁷. These sub-regional bodies have developed strategic plans to which alignment by members is strongly encouraged. *Attachment C* shows the extent to which the SDG targets selected for sub-regional monitoring by CARICOM and SPC are aligned to the SP monitoring framework.

Another consideration for the selection of a core set of priorities for monitoring is the fact that almost one-third of the SP's priorities are for policy action and programme development by SIDS. The fact that the policy environment provides the context for development means that an assessment of this critical aspect of the SP's priorities will be in order.

Even further, since the crafting of the SP and the earlier guiding documents on which it has been built, there has been the COVID-19 pandemic that has had not only health implications, but also implications for economies globally and by extension SIDS's economies. Additionally, many Caribbean SIDS have suffered the environmental effects of intense hurricanes, heavy rainfall and flooding, which has brought to the fore the need for sustainability in agriculture, other infrastructure etc.

In the case of the Pacific Ocean SIDS, a sub-marine volcanic eruption in Tonga blasted unprecedented amounts of water into the stratosphere. Similar to the Caribbean, the Pacific sub-region has also suffered from its share of storms and are also under the constant threat from rising sea levels.

Finally, the selection of core priorities for reporting will be of no value if data are not available for monitoring and assessment.

Selection of a Core Set of Indicators for Reporting on the SAMOA Pathway

Historical understanding SIDS priorities and their ranking is important to the selection of a core set of indicators for monitoring and evaluation under the three main guiding frameworks since the group was recognized as needing special development treatment.

SIDS priorities were first itemized in the 1994 Barbados Plan of Action (BPoA) and then further expanded by the Mauritius Strategy (MSI) for the further Implementation of the BPoA. The

⁷ The Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM) for Caribbean SIDS and the South Pacific Commission for the Pacific SIDS.

group's priorities were further and more comprehensively articulated in the SAMOA Pathway ten (10) years later.

Barbados Plan of Action: The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro recognized SIDS as a special group of countries facing unique social economic and environmental challenges. It was noted that the remote geography for many SIDS exacerbated the high cost of import and export trade and general irregularity in international traffic volume in goods and services.

Other development factors such as small populations, high transportation costs, sensitivity to external economic shocks, fragile land and marine ecosystems, increasing susceptibility to biodiversity loss and climate change have made SIDS vulnerable to economic and environmental shocks.

Economically, SIDS have few options for development. The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) - the ocean under their control - is on average 28-times their land mass⁸. For many SIDS therefore their natural resources and livelihoods depend on ocean-based activities. Tourism and fisheries, both of which depend on the sustainability of their marine biodiversity, constitute approximately one-half of the GDP of these SIDS.

Sustainable biodiversity and their accompanying economic gains are however subject to Increasing frequency and intensity of hurricanes, cyclones and other tropical storms. In addition to altering marine life, these natural environmental occurrences also have other effects on land due to flooding that in turn destroys communications, energy and transport infrastructure, private dwellings, health facilities and schools.

Following the declaration of SIDS as a special group for development, the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA) was adopted in 1994. Underpinned by the Barbados Declaration, giving it necessary political clout, it prescribed specific priorities for action that would enable SIDS to achieve sustainable development,⁹ i.e. climate change and sea-level rise; natural and environmental disasters; management of wastes; coastal and marine resources; freshwater resources; energy resources; tourism resources; biodiversity resources; national institutions and administrative capacity; regional institutions and technical cooperation; transport and communications; science and technology; human resource development.

Mauritius Strategy: Following a review after ten (10) years of implementation of the BPoA, the Mauritius Strategy (for the further Implementation of the BPoA¹⁰ (MSI) adopted in 2005 not only recognized limitations to the implementation of the earlier Programme, but also built on and increased to nineteen (19), the number of priority areas outlined in the BPoA. New and additional priorities under the MSI are trade; sustainable production and consumption, health; knowledge management; and culture. Salient in the MSI framework also were priorities for building resilience in SIDS and graduation from least developed country status.

⁸ <https://www.un.org/ohrlls/content>

⁹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>

¹⁰ A/61/277 Mauritius Strategy for the further implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action

In 2010 a five-year review carried out of the MSI noted increased vulnerability of SIDS due to climate change, the current global financial crisis, the food and fuel crisis and natural disasters that were of a hitherto unforeseen level, such as cyclones, storm surges, landslides droughts, floods. Volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunamis and oil and chemical spills. All cast under the umbrella of 'disaster risk,' the Review proposed a comprehensive approach to disaster risk reduction (DRR) and advocated for regular reviews of national and regional vulnerability due to these factors.

SAMOA Pathway: The SAMOA Pathway was adopted in 2014 immediately prior to other global development frameworks. While more detailed in its elaboration, its broad objectives are to promote sustained and sustainable inclusive and equitable economic growth with decent work for all; sustainable consumption and production and sustainable transportation; mitigate climate change and adapt to its impacts by implementing sustainable energy and disaster risk reduction programmes; protect biodiversity and care environmental health by mitigating the impact of invasive plant and animal species and by managing hazardous waste, as well as protecting oceans and seas; improving human health and social development through food security and nutrition, improve water and sanitation, reducing the incidence of non-communicable diseases and promoting gender equity and women's empowerment and; fostering partnerships among SIDS, UN Entities, development partners and others to achieve these goals.

A comparative analysis of the priorities itemized by SIDS over the twenty-year period 1994-2014 shows continuity in priorities and adjustments to the emerging issues of the time. The summary elaboration of the SAMOA Pathway appears to place less emphasis on tourism, national institutions and capacity development, science and technology, knowledge management, culture, resilience and graduation from LDC status - all of which are important to SIDS development and therefore should be in its core monitoring framework.

Emphasised at this time, on the other hand, is the concept of sustainability, which was not evident in earlier elaborations. Issues of sustainable economic growth and decent jobs, sustainable consumption and production, sustainable transportation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable energy and disaster risk reduction are all salient in this final SIDS-wide policy document.

The core set of indicators proposed for monitoring the SAMOA Pathway therefore considers all of SIDS priorities outlined in its frameworks starting with the BPoA and those subsequently subsumed under the Mauritius Strategy and the SAMOA Pathway. It however considers the special emphasis placed on sustainable economic growth and decent jobs, sustainable consumption and production, sustainable transportation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable energy and disaster risk reduction.

It is also aligned as far as possible with the regional priorities of both Caribbean and Pacific SIDS where possible but acknowledges differences in emphasis of the two SIDS sub-groupings. Finally, the proposed set of monitoring indicators takes into account the capacity of SIDS to provide data and the periodicity of its data-sources.

Proposed and shown in *Attachment D* is the core set of seventy (70) indicators for reporting on the SAMOA Pathway. These indicators as expected are weighted in favour of the salient development issues of SIDS articulated by the SAMOA Pathway. Shown also is the alignment of the core indicators with SDG and SENDAI Framework indicators and those of the Strategic Plans of the CARICOM and SPC Secretariats.

Selection of the core indicators has been from the quantitative framework. Originally comprising one-hundred and eight indicators, it now has a core set of seventy (70) indicators. To capture all the various elements of change in areas such as, sustained and sustainable economic growth, climate change, disaster risk reduction, sustainable energy, food and nutrition water and sanitation, oceans and seas and gender development issues, it was necessary to use more than one indicator. Nearly one-half of the indicators are covering these development priorities. All are also significant nationally and regionally as can be seen from the alignment with the Strategic Plans of the CARICOM and SPC groupings.

There is some over-lap however in the monitoring indicators for ‘capacity building and data and statistics’ priorities. Some rationalization will ultimately be needed.

E. REPORTING ON THE SAMOA PATHWAY

The General Assembly, at its 74th session in 2019 held a one-day review of the SAMOA Pathway where the international community had the opportunity to assess the status of its implementation. While the outcome document of this review determined that SIDS were still a special case for development, preparatory sessions grappled with assessing real progress on the framework.

As SIDS prepare to prepare their final reports in preparation for the Fourth International Conference, national and regional efforts will be focused on preparing more accurate and evidence-based reporting. National and regional guidelines for reporting will ask key evaluative questions intended to give insight into the genuine situation of SIDS progress on SAMOA Pathway priorities, particularly as they emerge from a pandemic scourged and environmentally assaulted development context.

These guidelines are for national and regional reporting by SIDS and regional organizations and entities. Reporting at these two levels are inter-related in two ways. First national reports are expected to give the relevant data and information to feed into regional reports. Secondly, there are some indicators that require a level of SIDS-wide reporting (disaggregated by SIDS sub-regions) that can only be done by a regional organization or entity.

Since the indicators are aligned to the SDGs, SENDAI and the Paris Agreement many ask for global aggregations. Where possible national reports are expected to report on these indicators by reflecting their individual situations. Regional reports will however be required to give aggregations for either their sub-region or for all SIDS.

Finally, reporting on the SAMOA Pathway priorities is on two tracks. There are the policy and programmatic priorities largely requiring qualitative assessment and others that lend themselves to tracking of results with quantitative data.

Reports are therefore structured so that under each of the thirty (30) broad thematic areas, there is an assessment of progress toward the policy priorities identified in the SP as necessary context for other development project activity. Then there is reporting on a core set of indicators that have been identified as key pointers of progress in the corresponding thematic areas.

As an alternative approach, the United Nations/OHRLLS may prefer to have a separate SIDS-wide assessment of the policy and programmatic priorities. In any case, national reports do have to provide the context or rationale for progress - or lack thereof and will of necessity address policy priorities.

The reporting guidelines given in *Attachment E* mimic the steps taken when conducting an evaluation exercise. Several evaluative questions are posed. Their answers will facilitate an assessment of the level and direction of progress over the ten-year period of implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

While responses to the set of evaluative questions given in the guidelines will assist in national and regional reporting and in standardizing the reports, it is also important that reports show what results mean. This means that where the level and direction of trends may be noted, reports should pinpoint events that may have led to movement in that indicator and what the results may mean for future development action.

National level analyses will facilitate regional reporting and ultimately SIDS-wide aggregation and reporting. While there are specific regional indicators, regional reports may of necessity cover all the thirty (30) thematic areas of the SP. Regional report with the widest possible reach will also increase their utility as input into the SP's successor framework.

G. VALIDATION OF THE CORE SET OF MONITORING INDICATORS

Consultations with SIDS Member States have been integral to the development of the framework at every stage. Initial consultations were to get feedback on how to measure SP priorities that had no counterpart indicators in other post 2015 global frameworks, i.e., measurement gaps in the framework.

There were only eight (8) such gaps in the quantitative framework, but many more in the qualitative framework since the latter contained more policy priorities unique to SIDS. During the consultative meeting, while Member States expressed appreciation for the fact that there was finally a monitoring framework for the SP, they expressed the need for more time to consider and validate the proposals made to fill even the gaps in the quantitative aspect of the framework.

During the more recent further assessment of the framework, there was an expansion of the number of proposals for consideration by Member States as proposals were made for the forty-

one (41) priorities of the policy aspect of the framework in addition to the eight (8) original gaps from the quantitative part of it.

At the time of the assessment also it was determined that given the capacity of Member States for monitoring and the general known paucity of data, the number of quantitative indicators should be reduced. A core set of seventy (70) indicators was {note this is the correct verb} therefore extracted from the quantitative part of the framework for monitoring and reporting to the Fourth Conference in 2024.

In the case of the policy framework however, the priorities articulated therein were determined to be contextual to the specific development circumstances of SIDS under the SP and therefore would/should be retained. The proposal therefore for monitoring and reporting to the Fourth Conference would be a framework that consists of eighty-one (81) policy/qualitative priorities and seventy (70) results of implementation/quantitative priorities.

The proposal of a final SP report consisting of eighty-one (81) policy/qualitative priorities and seventy (70) programme implementation results for quantitative reporting was further put to SIDS Member States for their approval/validation.

Present from the Caribbean and Pacific sub-regions at the validation meeting were: Aruba, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Cook Islands and, the Pacific Island Forum.(N.B. not complete list).

Present from the Africa, Indian Ocean and South China Sea sub-region were: Comoros Islands, Seychelles, Mauritius (N.B. not complete list).

SIDS Member States' Views
on the
Core Set of Indicators
for
Reporting on the SAMOA Pathway

- “Welcomed the core set of indicators (referring to the reduced number of indicators in the quantitative framework), but there are continuing structural issues that will constrain reporting even on the smaller set of indicators. There hasn’t been much progress on the development of indicators on the environment...and therefore reporting for this cluster might be difficult.”
- “Data are available, but reporting will still be a challenge, given the sheer number of indicators and the fact that some of the indicators will be produced for the first time.”
- “The practicalities of reporting must be taken into consideration, such as structural issues, capacity challenges. Reporting for the SP will add to the national reporting burden as there is already in place a national sustainable development agenda that has 72 indicators for reporting.”
- “There are data, but for reporting there needs to be collaboration with national custodian agencies and specific UN entities (indicating the need for support for preparing the SP report)”
- “Able to report on indicators.”
- “Data are available from regular surveys, censuses and administrative processes for more than 70 percent of the SDGs. For some indicators however proxies will be utilized.”

Summary and Other Issues Raised During Validation Meetings

In sum, the overarching concerns of Member States during the validation meetings reflected a paucity of data, challenges surrounding the capacity to prepare reports and ‘structural issues.’”

AIS Member States also raised the issue of the absence of a coordination mechanism in that sub-region, like that of the CARICOM Secretariat and the SPC for the Caribbean and Pacific SIDS respectively. This comment also reflected an indirect request for assistance from AIS Member States for the preparation of their reports.

It was further recommended that the report writing process for the SP should be like the format adopted for the preparation of the VNRs on the SDGs.

Follow-up to the Validation Process

As a follow-up to the validation meetings, Member States were also asked to indicate in writing on which of the seventy (70) indicators from the quantitative framework they were able to report. Five (5) countries responded and three (3) were selected and summarized showing the priority clusters for which countries were ‘most likely’ ‘least likely’ and ‘unsure’ of being able to report.

Responses were mixed and showed differences between the sub-regions. These sample results cannot be taken as representative of the sub-regions from which they are drawn however as there were only five (5) responding countries. For the purposes of this exercise therefore, the results from one country from each SIDS sub-region are presented as illustrative of the responses on the availability of data/indicators. They are therefore referred to as ‘examples’ rather than ‘sample results’ from the respective sub-regions.

ILLUSTRATION A: CARIBBEAN EXAMPLE

PRIORITY CLUSTERS 'MOST LIKELY' TO BE REPORTED	
Sustained and Sustainable Economic Development	
Sustainable Tourism	Gender Equality etc.
Sustainable Energy	Social Development
Water and Sanitation	Culture and Sport
Sustainable Transport	Education
Health and NCD	Forests
PRIORITY CLUSTERS 'LEAST LIKELY' TO BE REPORTED	
Climate Change	Desertification
Disaster Risk Reduction	Invasive Alien Species
Promoting Peaceful Societies etc.	
Biodiversity	
PRIORITY CLUSTERS 'UNSURE' WHETHER CAN FULLY REPORT	
Oceans and Seas	
Food Security and Nutrition	
Management of Chemicals & Waste etc (proxies might be available)	

ILLUSTRATION B: PACIFIC EXAMPLE

PRIORITY CLUSTERS 'MOST LIKELY' TO BE REPORTED	
Sustained & Sustainable Economic Development	Gender Equality etc.
Sustainable Tourism	Social Development
Water & Sanitation	Education
Management of Chemicals & Hazardous Waste	Biodiversity
Health and Non-Communicable Diseases	Invasive Alien Species
PRIORITY CLUSTERS 'LEAST LIKELY' TO BE REPORTED	
Climate Change	
Disaster Risk Reduction (some aspects)	
Food Security & Nutrition (some aspects)	
PRIORITY CLUSTERS 'UNSURE' WHETHER CAN FULLY REPORT	
Promoting Peaceful Societies etc.	
Forests	
Trade	

ILLUSTRATION C: AFRICA, INDIAN OCEAN AND SOUTH CHINA SEA (AIS) EXAMPLE

PRIORITY CLUSTERS 'MOST LIKELY' TO BE REPORTED	
Sustainable Tourism	Health & NCD
Climate Change (some aspects)	Invasive Alien Species
Sustainable Energy	Trade
Disaster Risk Reduction	
Oceans & Seas	
Water & Sanitation	
PRIORITY CLUSTERS 'LEAST LIKELY' TO BE REPORTED	
Food Security & Nutrition (some aspects)	
Sustainable Transport	
Desertification	
PRIORITY CLUSTERS 'UNSURE' WHETHER CAN FULLY REPORT	
Sustained & Sustainable Development	Education
Management of Chemical Waste	Biodiversity
Gender Equality etc.	Forests
Promoting Peaceful Societies etc	

G. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this exercise was to aid in simplifying the reporting obligations for SIDS under the SP by proposing a set of tools that can be easily utilized by Member States. Identified therefore have been (a) a reduced or core set of indicators for reporting and (b) a format for national reports.

The process of determining the core indicator framework however meant consulting with Member States to get their views on the feasibility of the proposed indicators and the format for reporting. Overall, the prospect of assistance for reporting on the SP seemed appealing to Member States and they believed that with assistance reports can be completed. The issue of the timeframe for producing reports however seemed a little more daunting.

More than that, Member States with almost one voice expressed concern at being able to secure information for the policy/qualitative assessment and moreso be able to provide the data and information for the quantitative framework. The latter concern has prompted a recommendation all on its own for this report.

There are therefore two (2) categories of recommendations. The first comprises the recommendation on the components of the toolkit for reporting. The second is the recommendation on data and capacity issues that have beset SIDS and that is becoming more critical with their increasing reporting obligations.

Recommendation 1: A Toolkit for Reporting on the SAMOA Pathway

UN/OHRLLS is working in collaboration with other UN entities and national governments to ensure that Member States can prepare comprehensive reports for presentation at the *Fourth Conference on SIDS to be held in 2024*. The national reports are also expected to serve as input for sub-regional and then a final inter-regional report and ultimately inform the successor document to the SP.

As part of its responsibility for advocacy on behalf of SIDS and in the spirit of collaboration, UN/OHRLLS has embraced the recently developed 'Framework of Monitoring Indicators for the SAMOA Pathway' and has developed a toolkit to guide Member States not only through their reporting obligations under the SP, but also for continuous monitoring of national development frameworks, (sub-)regional strategic plans, e.g. in the case of CARICOM and SPC SIDS, etc.

Instrument for Qualitative Policy Assessment

On the other hand, it is recommended that since policies in place for the context for programme development that the full set of policy priorities should be included in any instrument used to assess and report on development progress. This action will serve the purpose of both determining progress under the SP and helping set direction of the successor framework.

The instrument to be included in the toolkit for policy assessment and reporting is shown as *Attachment A* to this report.

Instrument for Quantitative Results Monitoring of a Core Set of Indicators

The toolkit considers SIDS' capacities for data collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination and is designed to first of all suggest a reduced/core number of quantitative/data-driven indicators for monitoring. These core indicators are however selected

from the larger framework and are also, to the extent possible, aligned with monitoring indicators from sub-regional strategic plans.

Since the core set of indicators suggested for monitoring have been culled from the larger framework whose indicators in turn are aligned with either SDG monitoring framework of indicators or from the SENDAI Framework, no separate meta-data have been provided. It is expected that Member States will utilize the original meta-data sheets prepared under the original frameworks.

In preparing national reports, Member States will however be asked to indicate their Means of Verification (MoV) for the data used in constructing their indicators. This is important because data sources may vary and the absence of a clear indication of data sources the validity of the data and in turn the indicators that they underpin will be compromised.

This instrument to be used for quantitative analysis is shown as *Attachment D* to this report.

Proposed National Reporting Format

The toolkit also proposes a format for reporting by Member States. The reporting format attempts to bring the reports as closer as possible to an evaluation of the success/failure of the SP. It first links the policy/qualitative priorities with relevant result/quantitative priorities. Secondly, it proposes a set of evaluative questions whose answers are expected to show progress/lack thereof under the various development priorities of the SP.

The instrument provided as a guide or format for the report is shown as *Attachment E* to this report.

Recommendation 2: Addressing Data and Capacity Challenges

Despite the fact that several tools/instruments have been developed and other guidance and assistance will be given to SIDS to aid in the reporting process for the SP, it is unlikely that all or even the majority of SIDS will be able to prepare comprehensive national reports on progress under the SP. Also, since the SP monitoring framework is aligned to other regional strategic plans and global frameworks it is also reasonable to conclude that Member States will be unable to also report on those frameworks comprehensively.

The illustrative examples above showing the likelihood of comprehensive reporting by SIDS is a signal to UN/OHRLLS on the magnitude of the task ahead of the Member States if they are to consistently be able to report progress on global, regional or even national plans. As the UN Entity dedicated to advocacy on behalf of SIDS, UN/OHRLLS may wish to consider the expressed wish of this constituency for assistance in preparing their national reports on the SP.

This assistance should however be considered the first step in advocating for and mobilizing relevant human and other resources to build the institutional and human capacities of Member States in reporting on the SP.

UN/OHRLLS should however - based on this exercise - secure partnerships with other UN Entities and Development Partners to give foundational assistance in developing national systems together with relevant legislative frameworks that will ensure reporting relationships between and among national custodian agencies for data and themselves and national statistics offices.

H. TOOLKIT

The proposed instruments/tools for assessing, tracking and reporting national progress on the SP can be assembled into a toolkit for SIDS Member States. The toolkit will comprise the following:

- 1) A framework of a set of seventy-one indicators for assessing progress on policy development by SIDS under the SP. *(Also Attachment A to this report)*
- 2) A framework of a core set of seventy (70) indicators that will track/monitor results of development programmes implemented under the SP. *(Also Attachment D to this report)*
- 3) A format for reporting on development priorities that links the policy advancement with programme results. *(Also Attachment E to this report)*

The final tool in the toolkit is not for national reporting, but for action by UN/OHRLLS and other UN entities and Development Partners. It is a recommendation for comprehensive support for SIDS in developing their national data systems for reporting not only for the SP and its successor, but also for global, regional and national reporting.

It is recommended that UN/OHRLLS spearheads the drafting of a proposal to meet these objectives.