



## **QUESTIONNAIRE**

### **Implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the MSI, BPOA for the Sustainable Development of SIDS**

**Please note that strict word limits have been established for each question. The Secretariat is unable to consider any information beyond these established word limits. In this regard, you are requested to report only on new or updated information. Information conveyed in previous surveys will not be considered. Previous surveys can be accessed at XXXX under reports.**

SIDS) are among Russia's long-standing international partners and counterparts in joint pursuit for sustainable development. Russian-backed bilateral and multilateral projects aimed at promoting social and economic progress in SIDS has been underway for decades including provisions for emergency humanitarian assistance (foodstuffs, mobile power plants, tents, Russian airmobile hospital, etc.) to Vanuatu, Haiti, Commonwealth of Dominica, Cape Verde, Comoros, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Through UNDP, a Russian funded project worth 7.5 million USD was carried out to build disaster resilience for the Pacific SIDS (Vanuatu, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Cook Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Tokelau, Federated States of Micronesia, and Fiji).

#### **PART A**

### **VULNERABILITY REDUCTION AND RESILIENCE BUILDING IN SIDS**

#### **1. Enhanced Support for a resilient Post COVID 19 Recovery in SIDS**

Vulnerability reduction and resilience building are critical issues that must be addressed by SIDS. Briefly elaborate on any resilience building interventions or strategies (proactive or preventative) that have been or are being implemented at national or regional levels that aim specifically at improving resilience in SIDS. Please include financial resources expended in this regard, if available **(750 words)**.

**Reply:** *Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are among Russia's long-standing international partners and counterparts in joint pursuit for sustainable development. Russian-backed bilateral and multilateral projects aimed at promoting social and economic progress in SIDS has been underway for decades, especially with the participation of the Republic of Cuba. During the reporting period 2022-2023, such efforts continued, including in partnership with several UN agencies and other international organizations.*

*In order to strengthen Cuba's resilience amid the illegal trade and economic blockade imposed by the USA, as well as the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2022 Hurricane "Ian", Russia sent 25 thousand tons of wheat worth 800 million rubles (approximately 11 million USD) to Havana in February 2023. Another batch of wheat amounting 19.5 thousand tons was delivered in April 2022. That same year, more than 187 tons of vitamin A and D fortified sunflower oil were also shipped to Cuba.*

*In addition, throughout the past two years Russia allocated 2 million USD to the UN World Food Programme (WFP) to provide food aid to Cuba. During the same time period, the WFP received another 5 million USD of Russian funding for conducting school feeding programmes, with Cuba being one of the two beneficiary countries.*

*To support Cuba in the field of health, Russia launched 5 flights to the Havana Airport to deliver 103 tons of medical supplies (medicines, multifunctional protective suits, syringes) from the end of December 2021 to January 2022. In response to the aftermath of Hurricane "Ian", medical modules were delivered to Cuba in 2022 as part of a Russian-funded World Health Organization (WHO) emergency medical preparedness and response project (in previous years, similar assistance was provided to Antigua and Barbuda, the Marshall Islands, Palau and Tonga).*

*In 2020-2022 the Russian voluntary contribution of 1 million USD to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) was used to implement a project aimed at strengthening capacities to increase urban resilience to disaster risks in central areas of Havana. Also, in 2016-2021 another Russian-funded UNDP project worth 7.5 million USD was carried out to build disaster resilience for the Pacific SIDS (Vanuatu, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Cook Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Tokelau, Federated States of Micronesia and Fiji).*

*The regional Russian-Cuban center for fire and rescue specialists training established with the Russian financial support in partnership with the Cuban side and the International Civil Defence Organization (ICDO) continues to operate successfully in Havana. The center provides training in the protection of territories and population from emergencies with the use of Russian educational technologies and equipment. In 2023 alone, Russia decided to allocate more than 410 million rubles (approximately 5.5 million USD) to support the center. In addition to Cuban specialists, experts from other countries of the region, including SIDS (Dominica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica), have attended the courses in the center. Dozens of Cuban specialists also receive training on fire safety in Russian higher education institutions (more than 200 people have participated in such programs in total).*

*Over the past 30 years, Russia has also provided emergency humanitarian assistance (foodstuffs, mobile power plants, tents, Russian airmobile hospital, etc.) to such SIDS as Vanuatu, Haiti, Commonwealth of Dominica, Cape Verde, Comoros, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.*

## **2. Enhanced and Tailored Development Cooperation for SIDS**

Improved, tailored development co-operation approaches, calibrated to the specific needs, capacity constraints, and economic challenges facing SIDS are necessary if SIDS are to effectively recover from the COVID Pandemic. Briefly elaborate on any planned or ongoing strategies/approaches to improve and deliver on more tailored development support to SIDS. What are the expected results from these interventions in the targeted countries. Please include indications of resource allocations if available **(850 words)**

**Reply:** *In terms of effective COVID-19 recovery and tailored development approaches for SIDS, another Russian-funded UNDP project could be mentioned which aims to expand quality job opportunities for youth in Guantanamo (Cuba) in key economic sectors by strengthening productive capacities, education, and training and vocational guidance (project activities worth 1.5 million USD are planned for 2020-2023). In the same Cuban province UNDP with the Russian financial support is also implementing a project to promote the revitalization of employment in livestock production chain in the post-COVID-19 recovery phase (total budget amounts to 1.5 million USD for 2021-2023). Earlier, in 2016-2021, Russian assistance worth 2 million USD supported a project of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to help enhance the manufacturing of agrochemical and agricultural machinery in Cuba with respect to technology and entrepreneurship.*

*As part of the debt-for-development swap partnership with Russia, part of the Cuban external debt in the volume of 352 million USD was disbursed in 2022.*

*A bilateral project is also currently underway providing for a donation to the Cuban side of thousands of Russian-made LED lamps for street lighting.*

## **PART B**

### **IDENTIFYING POLICY PRIORITIES IN SIDS FOR THE NEW AGENDA**

**The SAMOA Pathway contains a number of action areas which require policy formulation, programmes or projects to implemented at national, sub regional and/or regional levels. While SIDS have made a fair amount of progress with actioning these over the last decade, a number of gaps remain. As the international community prepares for the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on SIDS, what are the key priority policies, programes and projects that are needed to further advance the SIDS development agenda and why? (750 words)**

**Reply:** *In the run-up to the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on SIDS (Antigua and Barbuda, 2024), it is crucial to promote their own productive potential and scale up opportunities for their equal and full involvement in global economic processes in accordance with national priorities of SIDS. Their access to commodity markets needs to be enhanced through improving trade and ensuring*

*uninterrupted supply of basic resources, such as food and fuels, establishing reliable transport infrastructure, deploying information and communication technologies, etc. In particular, the following priority areas for the sustainable development of this group of countries could be highlighted:*

- *addressing the negative impact of climate change, natural disasters and risks associated with the rising sea level;*
- *maintaining marine biosphere sustainability;*
- *combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing;*
- *promoting agriculture development, food security and improved nutrition, including by organizing stable supply, sustainable use and management of fertilizers for enhancing agrisector efficiency, as well as arranging shipments of critical foodstuffs;*
- *modernization and technical improvement of local industry facilities, including food processing and canning of agricultural and fish products;*
- *enhancing access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy, including through assistance in the exploration and development of domestic resources or/and arranging supplies from abroad, promotion of renewable energy sources, application of advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technologies, improving energy efficiency;*
- *ensuring universal health coverage (UHC) with a special emphasis on primary health care (PHC), controlling non-communicable diseases, countering the spread of infectious diseases (including through immunization), protecting maternal, new-born and infant health, providing medicines and modern equipment to hospitals and medical centers;*
- *strengthening national human resources through scaling up vocational secondary and higher education;*
- *fostering sustainable post-COVID-19 recovery and sustained economic growth.*
- *addressing high external debt burden of SIDS.*