Expert Group Meeting on the 10-year Pacific SAMOA Pathway Review

Session 3: Socio-economic development in Pacific SIDS: Regional and National Initiative

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Suva, Fiji
3.1 Key Issues and Messages

- Economic Development Opportunities
- Sustainable Development
- COVID-19
- Lack of data available
- Capacity & Technical Expertise
- Lack of Capital Resources
3.2 10 Year Perspectives (Thematic Area 1)
Thematic Area 1 – Progress analysis

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<tr>
<th>Indicator Name</th>
<th>Percentage of countries and territories</th>
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<td>4.b.1 ODA for scholarships</td>
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3.3 Gaps and Challenges

- Economic Growth & Decent Work
- Education
- Sustainable Consumption & Production
- Sustainable Transport
- Human Health
- Social Development
- Food Security & Nutrition
- Water & Sanitation
- Gender Equality
Economic Growth with Decent Work

• Limited resources, isolation and vulnerability to external shocks impede economic growth in Pacific SIDS
• Unemployment, particularly among women and young people continues to be a concern
• Average 23% youth unemployment rate in the Pacific
• Women make up 80% of small business
• Seasonal Worker Program
• Investment in Education and Training
The inception of the BPO Council of Fiji and Outsource Fiji in 2017, it has become a game-changer for the country’s economy as it employs over 8,000 Fiji citizens. This has resulted in a conducive business environment, increased foreign investment initiatives, and an educated workforce.
Decent Work

The Government of the Solomon Islands has facilitated economic growth, through public and private investments in its Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry and Tourism Industries, which has resulted in economic growth and increased employment.
3.3 Gaps and Challenges

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Education

• Improvement in school completion rate and increase in official flows of scholarships
• PICTS spend on average 14% of the national budget on Education
• PICTS have strengthened their commitments to education for sustainable development and increased support for distance learning and ICT in education platforms
• Regression and Stagnation in the Pacific SIDS is due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic resulting in many schools being closed and many students being unable to access remote learning
• Brain Drain: Qualified teachers seeking better opportunities elsewhere
• Development of National education plans has led to better outcomes.
3.3 Gaps and Challenges

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Pacific Island countries face the delicate balance of promoting economic growth while minimizing negative environmental impacts. While most countries in the region have achieved targets on electronic waste, and municipal solid waste, there is very little information on production-based SO$_2$ emissions, SO$_2$ emissions embodied in imports, production-based nitrogen emissions, nitrogen emissions embodied in imports, and figures for exports of plastic waste.
In 2018, Vanuatu became one of the first countries in the world to implement a ban on single-use plastic bags, straws, and polystyrene packaging. Other countries in the region such as Fiji, Tuvalu and Samoa have followed suit.
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Sustainable Transport

- Geographic isolation and limited infrastructure pose significant challenges to efficient and sustainable transport systems.
- Improving connectivity, investing in renewable energy-powered transportation, and enhancing logistics and supply chain networks are vital for regional integration and economic development.
- Framework for Action on Transport Services (2011-2020) which identified national and regional priorities. The framework will assist Pacific SIDS to progress in the initiatives for sustainable transport.
Sustainable Transport

As part of the goals under Fiji’s Green Growth Framework, the Fiji Roads Authority included cycle lanes in the Nakasi - Nausori corridor in 2019. Additionally, the Fiji Government has expanded its investment incentives to promote the procurement of electric vehicles and the setting up of charging stations in the country.
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- Gender Equality
3.2 10 Year Perspectives (Thematic Area 4)
Thematic Area 4 – Progress analysis

Food security & Nutrition
Water & Sanitation
Health & Non-Communicable Diseases
Gender Equality & Women’s Empowerment
Social Development
Culture & Sport
Peaceful Societies & Safe Communities

Legend:
- No data
- Insufficient data
- Regressing
- Stagnant
- Progressing
Key Facts – Pacific SIDS Progress (2014-)

1. Promote sustainable and equitable economic growth with decent work for all, sustainable consumption and production.

   - Green: 10.4%
   - Orange: 25.3%
   - Red: 64.3%

2. Act to mitigate climate change and adapt to its impacts by implementing sustainable energy and disaster risk reduction programs.

   - Green: 25.3%
   - Orange: 21.3%
   - Red: 53.4%

3. Protect the biodiversity of SIDS and care of environmental health by mitigating the impact of invasive species and animal species and by properly managing.

   - Green: 12.8%
   - Orange: 16.6%
   - Red: 70.6%

4. Improve human health and social development through food security and nutrition, improved water and sanitation, reducing the incidence of non-communicable diseases.

   - Green: 16.6%
   - Orange: 21.3%
   - Red: 62.1%

5. Fostering partnership among SIDS, UN Agencies, development partners and others to achieve these goals.

   - Green: 21.3%
   - Orange: 25.3%
   - Red: 53.4%
Pacific Island countries face challenges related to food security, including limited arable land, vulnerability to climate change impacts on agriculture, and dependence on food imports.

American Samoa, Cook Is, Fiji, French Polynesia, FSM, Kiribati, Marshall Is, Nauru, New Caledonia, Palau, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Is, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu registered at least one regression on at least one indicator in the Food Security and Nutrition cluster.
3.3 Gaps and Challenges

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- Water & Sanitation
- Gender Equality
• Pacific SIDS the indicators on water and sanitation shows stagnation with development report noting 50% of the Pacific population living without access to basic drinking water facilities and 66% without access to basic sanitation

• Access to safe and clean water, as well as adequate sanitation facilities, remains a pressing challenge for many Pacific Island communities and the strengthening of WASH facilities and practices is therefore an important aspect for building resilience.
Kiribati, for instance heavily relies on its underground water for domestic consumption. Saltwater intrusion and rising sea levels pose a significant challenge to freshwater sources in Kiribati.

The Kiribati Government and its development partners are working together to address these issues, through initiatives including the promotion of rainwater harvesting systems, improving water storage and distribution infrastructure, and implementing wastewater management solutions.
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Health & Non-Communicable Diseases

• The high prevalence of NCDs in the Pacific SIDS remains a serious public health problem.
• The Pacific SIDS have supported, and continue to support, measures to address the problem of NCDs including
  - Promote healthy eating
  - Encourage physical activity
  - Tackling tobacco use
  - Reduce alcohol use
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Positive progress has been made in the indicators for Gender Equality indicators.

The development of the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration in 2012 has contributed to the positive development of gender equality issues. However, there are many other challenges that women face in the Pacific SIDS.
Gender Equality

The Government has implemented free education and other targeted policy measures which have increased primary and secondary school enrollment rates and improved gender parity with more girls starting and remaining in school. As a result, Solomon Islands continues to maintain high levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy, scoring higher than the regional proficiency average for years four and six.
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Social Development

• Addressing social issues, such as poverty, inequality, and social exclusion, is crucial for inclusive development.

• In the Pacific region, only FSM has met the target for percentage of population with access to at least one source of social protection benefit.
The Government of PNG has put in place the District Development Authority Act (2014) to manage the Service Improvement Programme to ensure that development priorities consider the needs of remote and isolated rural populations and the marginalized and most vulnerable groups in society.
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Pacific priorities – Next 10 years

- Sustainable Development
- Knowledge Sharing & Capacity Building
- Strengthening Implementation & Monitoring
- Addressing emerging issues
Mainstreaming Sustainable Development

• Pacific SIDS to address gaps and challenges identified from the previous VNRs and incorporate best best practices
• Establish committee with representatives from government departments, NGOs, Civil Societies, the Private Sector and Community Leaders to monitor and evaluate reporting requirements
• Explore opportunities in the Blue Economy, considering the economic potential and environmental sustainability
3.4 Pacific Priorities

- Sustainable Development
- Knowledge Sharing & Capacity Building
- Strengthening Implementation & Monitoring
- Addressing emerging issues
Strengthening Implementation & Monitoring

- Strengthening implementation mechanisms and monitoring frameworks to ensure the effective delivery of policies and programs. This includes establishing clear targets and indicators, enhancing accountability mechanisms, and regularly evaluating progress to identify gaps and areas for improvement.
3.4 Pacific Priorities

Sustainable Development

Knowledge Sharing & Capacity Building

Strengthening Implementation & Monitoring

Addressing emerging issues
Knowledge Sharing & Capacity Building

• Promote knowledge sharing and capacity building. This is crucial to enhance understanding, awareness, and skills related to sustainable development.

• Supporting research, education, training, and knowledge exchange platforms can empower individuals, organizations, and communities to contribute effectively to sustainable development efforts.
3.4 Pacific Priorities

- Sustainable Development
- Knowledge Sharing & Capacity Building
- Strengthening Implementation & Monitoring
- Addressing emerging issues
Addressing Emerging Issues

• Address emerging challenges and evolving priorities. This includes tackling emerging issues such as climate change, digital transformation, biodiversity loss, circular economy, just transition, mental health, and social inequalities.

• Flexibility, adaptability, and innovation are key in responding to these emerging challenges and identifying sustainable solutions.