



Updates on preparations for General Assembly MSI+5 High-level review meeting (24-25 September 2010)



Background

In accordance with United Nations General Assembly Resolutions 63/213 and 62/191, a high-level meeting will be convened on 24-25 September 2010 during the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly (GA) to carry out a five year review of the progress made in addressing the vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) through the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI). In preparation for this high-level event, SIDS countries have prepared national assessment reports (NARs), which fed into regional synthesis reports that were reviewed at the three SIDS regional review meetings, respectively. The regional review meetings were all undertaken in the first quarter of this year— in Vanuatu for the Pacific region in February; in Maldives for the Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean and South China Sea (AIMS) region in March; in Grenada for the Caribbean region also in March. The outcomes of these review meetings were reported by each of the Chairs to the SIDS Inter-regional meeting held on the 8th of May 2010 in New York, followed by the SIDS Day on the 10th of May during CSD-18, serving as the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the GA high-level review. The PrepCom decided to request the General Assembly to conduct further consultations with the member States to determine the procedural aspects of the high-level review to assess progress.

Please visit the sidsnet web site (http://www.sidsnet.org/msi_5/index.shtml) for further details.

National Assessment reports (NARs): 17 out of 38 countries have completed and submitted NARs to date. These are 7 out of 8 countries in the AIMS region, 5 out of 16 in the Caribbean region, and 5 out of 15 in the Pacific region. *SIDS countries who have not yet completed the NARs are encouraged to do so at the earliest possible date.*

Towards adoption of a political declaration regarding MSI+5

Informal consultations on a draft political declaration: The President of the General Assembly announced the appointment of the Permanent Representatives of Singapore and Luxemburg as the co-facilitators to lead the informal consultations of a draft political declaration on MSI+5 to be adopted at the GA high-level meeting.

A schedule for informal consultations will be determined by the co-facilitators, in consultation with the GA President, but is expected to begin in the latter half of June to conclude well in advance of the start of the 65th session of the General Assembly. The two co-facilitators intend to ensure an open and transparent process of consultations and will request inputs from all interested member States including the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and the Group of 77. Procedural aspects for the MSI+5 high-level meeting will be worked out in parallel by the GA President in consultation with concerned parties.



Background Documentation for GA MSI+5 High-level review meeting

The SIDS Unit is currently working on the following documentation, which will serve as background materials for the high-level review :

- **Revised Secretary-General’s report on “Review of Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy”** – document introduced on the SIDS Day at CSD-18 (E/CN.17/2010/9) is being updated and revised to reflect additional information and comments received from the member States, UN agencies and regional organizations. The report provides a global synthesis of the five year review of the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy given in the framework of vulnerabilities faced by SIDS.

- **Trends Report on SIDS** – As a special contribution to the GA high-level meeting on MSI+5, the SIDS Unit is preparing a Trends Report on Sustainable Development in SIDS to visually present the changing trends in SIDS with respect to Climate Change, Natural Disaster Management, Trade and Finance, Tourism, Energy, Natural Resources, Social and Demographic Development, in addition to providing a visual summary of progress made by these countries in attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Other SIDS Unit Updates

Towards a Vulnerability-Resilience Assessment Profile for SIDS

The MSI+5 review preparatory process has highlighted the urgency of continuing work to be done on effective analytical assessment of vulnerabilities and resilience profiles of SIDS that integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development. It became very clear in carrying out the MSI+5 review that there is currently no analytical framework to comprehensively assess progress in addressing vulnerabilities of SIDS through implementation of the BPOA/MSI. The Secretary-General’s report on “Review of Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy (E/CN.17/2010/9) recognises that since the early 1990s, most efforts to quantify vulnerability have focused mostly on economic and on environmental vulnerabilities, with very minimal attention on social ones. The SIDS Unit of DESA has therefore re-commenced its analytical work on vulnerability assessment that started in 1996 in response to CSD-4 (decision 4/16), which encouraged “the relevant bodies of the United Nations system to accord priority to the development of the index” called for in paragraphs 113 and 114 of the BPOA.

The SIDS Unit has started work on a framework towards a Vulnerability-Resilience Assessment Profile (VRAP) for SIDS that brings together in an integrated manner the wealth of work already carried out on vulnerability and resilience of SIDS over the last two decades*. The VRAP methodology addresses the vulnerability-resilience nexus, framed around the BPOA. It consists of an assessment of each country’s vulnerabilities and their capacity to cope with these vulnerabilities for each of the 12 thematic areas identified in the BPOA, as well as the crosscutting issues that provide interlinkages between them. The methodology has undergone peer review. The next steps will now focus on refining the criteria and indicators for assessing country ratings in both the vulnerability and coping capacity dimensions, and piloting the VRAP on a few countries, subject to availability of financial support.

University Consortium of Small Island States (UCSIS)

The SIDS Unit continues to provide support to the University Consortium of Small Island States (UCSIS) with a financial contribution by the Government of Spain. UCSIS was established at the Mauritius International Meeting in 2005, as a follow-up of the Barbados Programme of Action. Members of UCSIS include: University of West Indies, University of the South Pacific, University of Malta, University of Virgin Islands, University of Mauritius, University of Seychelles, and University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. The SIDS Unit organised a meeting of the UCSIS Programme Committee in Paris hosted by, and in collaboration with, UNESCO on 26-28 May 2010. The Programme Committee discussed the design, structure and institutional arrangements for the virtual delivery of a cross-border Masters on Sustainable Development in SIDS. The Masters programme is expected to be established and a common platform for delivery in place in the second half of 2011.

Please feel free to contact us at the SIDS Unit at any time.

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*Examples: SOPAC's Environment Vulnerability Index; Briguglio's Economic Vulnerability Index, Cutler's Vulnerability to Environmental Hazards; Turvey's Composite Vulnerability Index; ESCAP/ADB/UNDP vulnerability index proposed in *"Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in an Era of Global Uncertainty"*; UNDP's Human Development Index; the World Governance Index (WGI); and the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessments (CPIA) framework (CPIA).