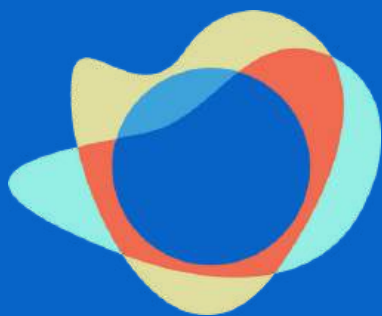




2025

SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES PARTNERSHIP BRIEF



**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Acknowledgements

This Brief presents the winners and finalists of the 2025 SIDS Partnerships Awards, highlighting innovative, genuine, and durable partnerships that advance the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS). Drawn directly from the submissions received for the Awards, these examples demonstrate practical, scalable collaboration across the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

The Brief was prepared by the Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), with thanks to all partners, Member States, UN entities, and stakeholders who contributed nominations, information, and insights throughout the Awards and consultation processes.

- sdgs.un.org/topics/small-island-developing-states/sids-partnership-framework
- sdgs.un.org/SIDSPartnershipsAwards

Disclaimer

This Brief summarizes partnership information as submitted to the Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) of UN DESA for the 2025 SIDS Partnership Awards. Reference to any specific organization, partnership, process, service, or website does not imply endorsement or recommendation by the United Nations and shall not be used for advertising or endorsement purposes.

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Foreword

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) continue to demonstrate leadership, innovation, and ambition amid complex and overlapping global challenges.

The adoption of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) marked a renewed global commitment to supporting resilient prosperity for Small Island Developing States and their communities. Delivering on this vision will require mobilizing genuine and durable partnerships that place SIDS priorities at the center of action.

The SIDS Partnership Framework has played an essential role in advancing this effort since its establishment in 2015. Through the annual Global Multi-Stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue, regional and national engagement, and the SIDS Partnership Awards, we are witnessing growing momentum in partnerships that translate aspirations into impact.



Li Junhua

Under-Secretary-General
for Economic and Social
Affairs, UN DESA

This SIDS Partnership Brief showcases the winners and finalists of the 2025 SIDS Partnership Awards and highlights innovative, scalable examples of collaboration from across the three SIDS regions.

These partnerships demonstrate what is possible when governments, civil society, the private sector, academia, and communities work together with purpose and creativity.

As we move through the decade of ABAS implementation, I encourage everyone to draw inspiration from the partnerships featured in this Brief.

Let us continue to strengthen cooperation, expand opportunities, and ensure that no island community is left behind.

Introduction

The United Nations SIDS Partnerships Awards were established by Member States in 2021 to recognize the most innovative, genuine, and durable partnerships supporting sustainable development in Small Island Developing States. The Awards form a core component of the SIDS Partnership Framework, designed to inspire excellence, strengthen visibility, and showcase solutions that can be replicated or scaled.

The present Brief introduces the **three winners and the other six finalists**, serving as a resource to inspire stronger, more impactful collaborations that advance SIDS priorities.

A strengthened SIDS Partnership Framework

Established following the Third International Conference on SIDS (2014), the SIDS Partnership Framework serves as the primary UN platform for reviewing and fostering partnerships that advance sustainable development in SIDS.

Paragraph 37 of ABAS requested the United Nations Secretary-General, in consultation with States and through the Steering Committee on SIDS Partnerships, to present recommendations for strengthening the SIDS Partnership Framework, the SIDS Global Business Network and its Forum. In response, the Secretariat has conducted an extensive, inclusive consultation process with Member States, the UN system and civil society.

In the 2025 SIDS resolution on *Follow-up to and implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity*, Member States **took note with appreciation** of the recommendations to strengthen the SIDS Partnership Framework and:

- **Reaffirmed** the important role of the SIDS Partnership Framework and its Steering Committee, in line with resolution 70/202 and ABAS.
- **Encouraged** the Steering Committee to deepen stakeholder engagement and awareness of the Framework, including exploring SIDS Partnership Champions to advocate for partnerships aligned with ABAS.
- **Encouraged** SIDS-led national and regional multi-stakeholder dialogues to identify gaps, opportunities and challenges, promote best practices and foster knowledge exchange.
- **Invited** the Steering Committee to consider ways to increase the value and impact of the Global Multi-stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue, ensuring stronger alignment with ABAS and more targeted opportunities for engagement, experience-sharing and catalysing new partnerships.
- **Requested** the Secretary-General to strengthen Secretariat support for implementing the Framework, including through sufficient resourcing.

Meet the 2025 Judging Panel



Mr. Emils Dombrovskis,
Third Secretary of
Permanent Mission of
Latvia, Chair of Judging
Panel



**H.E. Ms. Shiruzimath
Sameer,** Ambassador &
Deputy Permanent
Representative of the
Maldives to the United
Nations



Ms. Fiona Indu, Deputy
Permanent
Representative of the
Solomon Islands to the
United Nations



Mr. Nicholas Cox, Deputy
Permanent
Representative of
Barbados to the United
Nations



Ms. Kate Brown,
Executive Director, Global
Island Partnership



Mr. Satesh Bidaisee,
**Professor & Associate
Dean,** St. George's
University, Grenada



Winner in the Economic Category

SIDS Pooled Procurement Program

The SIDS Pooled Procurement Partnership is a collaborative initiative led by WHO/AFRO involving seven African SIDS (Cape Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritius, São Tomé & Príncipe, Seychelles). Launched after the “Seychelles Declaration” (2017), its goal is improving access to quality- assured essential medicines and health products by aggregating demand. Individually, SIDS face limited negotiating power, small volumes, and high costs. By pooling procurement through a dedicated secretariat, the partnership negotiates long-term agreements with prequalified suppliers, harmonizes medicines lists, and standardizes specifications, achieving substantial price reductions (over 50% in the first tender).

The partnership primarily benefits the populations of seven African Small Island Developing States (Cape Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritius, São Tomé & Príncipe, Seychelles). Secondary beneficiaries include Ministries of Health and procurement agencies in these countries.

- **Lead Entity:** WHO (AFRO)
- **Benefiting SIDS:** Comoros; Guinea-Bissau; Mauritius; São Tomé and Príncipe; Seychelles; Cabo Verde
- <https://caribbeanbiodiversityfund.org/our-priorities/climate-change/>
- <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/small-island-developing-states-pooled-procurement-initiative-who-african-region-declaration-actions-and-results>

The SIDS Pooled Procurement Partnership significantly improved health outcomes for beneficiaries in participating island states. By aggregating demand, the partnership achieved substantial cost savings. This made quality-assured essential medicines and supplies more affordable and accessible, directly benefiting healthcare providers and patients.



Winner in the Environment Category

Climate Change Adaptation in the Caribbean: The EbA- Facility

Aimed at supporting effective climate change adaptation measures in the marine and coastal zone of the insular Caribbean, the EbA Facility awards grants to support a wide range of EbA actions in eligible Caribbean countries and territories. These actions include restoration and rehabilitation of ecosystems, reduction of land-based stressors, other measures to reduce pressures on ecosystems, measures to reduce physical damage to ecosystems and hybrid solutions (gray-green infrastructure) relevant to the EbA approach.

The Caribbean's natural capital and people are under growing threats from climate change and unsustainable development. Increasing severity of hurricanes and storms, unregulated land clearing, sea-level rise, rising sea and air temperatures, ocean acidification, pollution, overfishing, among others, are having deleterious effects on the Caribbean Small Island Developing States.

- **Lead Entity:** Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF)
- **Benefiting SIDS:** Antigua and Barbuda; Barbados; Dominica; Dominican Republic; Grenada; Haiti; Jamaica; Cuba; Saint Lucia; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Trinidad and Tobago
- <https://caribbeanbiodiversityfund.org/our-priorities/climate-change/>

The target group of the partnership is the population of the participating SIDS, who are particularly affected by the effects of climate change. This includes in particular the population directly threatened by coastal erosion, storm surges, etc. or who live from sources of income that are significantly affected by climate change (such as fishing or tourism).

So far, 35,944 people have benefited directly from the partnership measures - at least 16,031 of them women. To date, at least 44,933 hectares of coastal ecosystems relevant to adaptation have been improved and/or better protected as part of the individual projects implemented.



Winner in the Social Category

ASTA Joint UN Programme – Elevating Indigenous Pineapple Farming

The ASTA Joint UN Programme is a multi-agency initiative supporting indigenous and tribal pineapple farmers in Suriname. Implemented by FAO, UNIDO, UNFPA, and ILO, the partnership aims to transform the livelihoods of pineapple value chain actors and position Suriname as an organic exporter by 2030. The ASTA Suriname Project addresses key SIDS challenges such as limited access to finance, climate vulnerability, and institutional gaps.

The primary target groups are indigenous and tribal pineapple farmers in Suriname, particularly women and youth within these communities. Secondary beneficiaries include other smallholder farmers and local agricultural institutions. The partnership benefits them by providing access to organic inputs, technical training, and climate-smart agriculture practices through the Horticulture Innovation HUB. It also improves access to finance via a Loan Collateral Facility and promotes digital inclusion through a mobile app offering market access, production guidance, and deforestation tracking.

- **Lead Entities:** FAO, UNIDO, UNFPA, ILO
- **Benefiting SIDS:** Suriname
- <https://suriname.un.org/en/252507-empowering-surinames-pineapple-industry-asta-joint-programme-elevating-pineapple-farming>

The partnership introduced a pioneering concept in Suriname with the creation of the Horticulture Innovation Hub—a first-of-its-kind, multi-stakeholder platform designed to support the entire horticultural sector, starting with pineapple and expanding beyond the project's scope and timeline.

The Hub integrates access to organic inputs, finance through a Loan Collateral Facility, technical assistance, market linkages, and digital tools in one centralized model. It is governed by a board that includes government, private sector, and indigenous community representatives, ensuring inclusive leadership and long-term sustainability.

Economic Category

2nd place

Resilient and Sustainable Islands Initiative (RESI)

RESI is a global advisory network, think tank, and knowledge hub founded in 2022 to strengthen international advocacy for SIDS and support reforms that better reflect their “special case” for sustainable development. The initiative brings together policymakers, scholars, and practitioners to frame policy challenges, generate evidence, and support SIDS positions on climate finance, debt, poverty, ocean governance, and global institutional reform.

- www.odi.org/resilient-islands

The initiative directly benefits SIDS policymakers, international partners, and researchers by supplying high-quality evidence, convening global dialogues, and strengthening capacity across regions. It has amplified SIDS voices in global debates, improved access to data and analysis, and provided new tools—such as methodologies for quantifying climate-attributable loss and damage and frameworks for capacity strengthening.

3rd place

Finance for Climate Futures: Portugal and Cabo Verde Debt for Climate Swap Agreement

In 2023, Portugal and Cabo Verde signed a debt-for-climate swap agreement, whereby a portion of Cabo Verde’s debt to Portugal is redirected to a Climate and Environmental Fund (FCA) established by the Cape Verdean government. The agreement involves a total of EUR 42.5 million of debt owed by Cabo Verde to Portugal to be converted until 2030. The partnership strengthens access to climate finance, boosts resilience to climate impacts, and supports sustainable development.

- <https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/portugal-agrees-swap-cape-verde-debt-environmental-investment-2023-01-23/>
- <https://www.iied.org/cabo-verde-portugal-agree-groundbreaking-debt-restructure>

The initiative introduces an innovative, scalable model for SIDS by transforming debt obligations into climate action. Its inclusive structure enables participation from government, civil society, the private sector, and research institutions. Portugal has already replicated the approach with São Tomé and Príncipe, demonstrating its potential for broader use among vulnerable island states.

Environment Category

2nd place

Transitioning to Low Carbon Sea Transport

The Low Carbon Sea Transport (LCST) partnership supports the Republic of the Marshall Islands in transforming its domestic maritime sector away from fossil fuel dependence. Anchored in the country's Sustainable Domestic Maritime Transport Roadmap and Rebellib 2050 Strategy, the initiative advances low-carbon shipping solutions and builds local capacity.

The partnership directly addresses SIDS challenges such as high fuel costs, geographic isolation, and vulnerability to climate change by integrating traditional maritime knowledge with modern hybrid technologies.

- <https://www.international-climate-initiative.com/en/project/low-carbon-sea-transport-17-i-306-mhl-g-low-carbon-sea-transport/>
- <https://changing-transport.org/project/low-carbon-sea-transport-marshall-islands/>

The partners benefits outer island communities that rely on sea transport for daily life and livelihoods, as well as government institutions working on climate, energy and transport policy. The project provides a practical, locally grounded model for decarbonizing sea transport in SIDS, with replication already being explored in neighboring Pacific states.

3rd place

UN-Portugal Ocean Fellowship: Capacity Program on Sustainable Ocean Governance and Blue Economy

The UN-Portugal Ocean Fellowship provides high-level officials with a tailored capacity-building program on ocean governance, marine conservation, and the sustainable blue economy. The fellowship addresses SIDS challenges such as climate vulnerability, limited technical capacity, and the need for stronger marine governance.

- <https://oceanozulfoundation.org/initiatives/portugal-ocean-fellowship/>

Early feedback shows that the program is already improving participants' ability to contribute to national ocean policies and international negotiations. It also supports peer learning and long-term collaboration through an alumni network.

Social Category

2nd place

Norway-Pacific Ocean-Climate Scholarship Programme (N-POC)

The Norway-Pacific Ocean-Climate (N-POC) Scholarship Programme is a university partnership for PhD education between the University of the South Pacific and the University of Bergen, funded by Norway. It provides 19 fully funded PhD scholarships for candidates from independent Pacific Island States, jointly supervised by both universities and focused on the ocean-climate nexus and sustainable development.

- <https://www.uib.no/en/n-poc>
- <https://oceandecade.org/actions/norway-pacific-ocean-climate-scholarship-programme/>

N-POC builds a Pacific cohort of Pacific scholars, with particular attention to gender balance, cultural diversity and regional representation, and a strong emphasis on Pacific indigenous and local knowledge.

The programme addresses structural barriers faced by SIDS in accessing advanced education and producing homegrown research by offering fully funded PhDs within the region, recruiting experienced public servants and diplomats, and training scholars in high-impact outreach and multilateral diplomacy.

3rd place

Typhoon Wutip Reconstruction Project (TWRP) Partnership for Resilience and Recovery in the Federated States of Micronesia

The Typhoon Wutip Reconstruction Project is a whole-of-society partnership that supported climate-resilient recovery in outer islands of Chuuk, Pohnpei and Yap after Typhoon Wutip. Implemented by IOM with support from the United States and in close collaboration with national and state authorities, it focused on “building back better” in line with the Sendai Framework, ABAS and the SDGs.

- <https://roasiapacific.iom.int/news/significant-progress-made-typhoon-wutip-reconstruction-chuuk>
- <https://youtu.be/sjVCNG62Cd0?feature=shared>

The partnership addressed core SIDS vulnerabilities—geographic isolation, damage to basic services, and limited implementation capacity—through localized planning, skills development and inclusive decision-making, including gender-sensitive roles for women.

Conclusion

The partnerships featured in the 2025 SIDS Partnership Brief highlight the collective strength of governments, regional bodies, communities, academia, and international organizations to drive meaningful progress under ABAS. Across the nine Award winners and finalists, several lessons emerge.

First, SIDS-led and context-specific solutions consistently deliver stronger, more durable results. Whether through climate-resilient housing in Micronesia, pooled procurement of essential medicines in African SIDS, or community-driven agricultural models in Suriname, approaches tailored to local realities—social, environmental, economic, and cultural—prove most impactful.

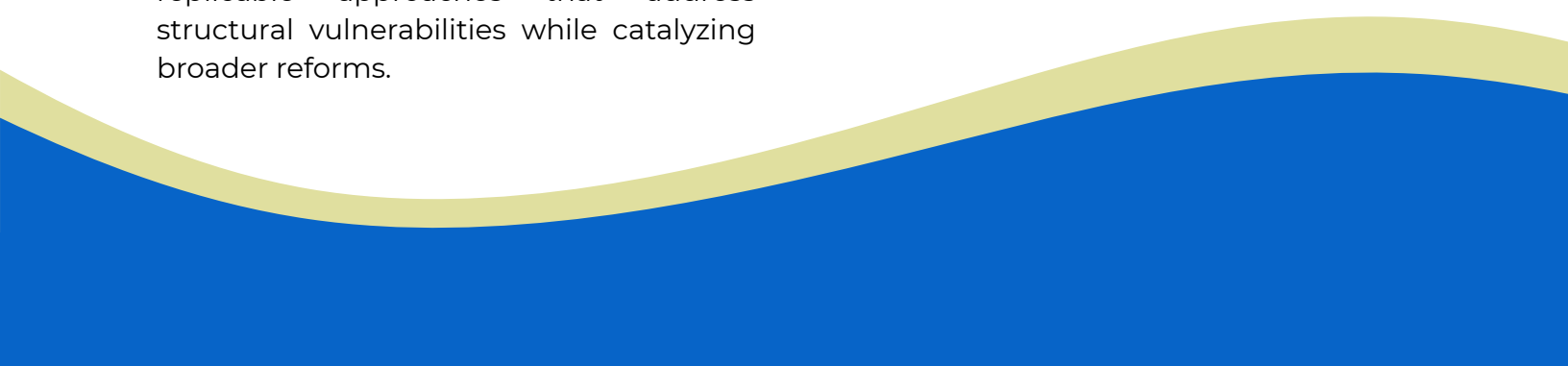
Second, capacity-building is central to long-term resilience. Initiatives such as N-POC and the UN-Portugal Ocean Fellowship demonstrate how investments in human capital strengthen national institutions, enhance policy leadership, and expand SIDS' participation in global processes.

Third, innovative financing and partnership models are unlocking new pathways for sustainable development. From debt-for-climate swaps to multi-stakeholder innovation hubs and hybrid maritime technologies, SIDS are charting replicable approaches that address structural vulnerabilities while catalyzing broader reforms.

Finally, the Brief reinforces that inclusive partnerships—grounded in trust, co-creation, and shared ownership—deliver the strongest outcomes. Community working groups, alumni networks, multi-stakeholder governance bodies, and cross-regional academic collaborations show the value of engaging those closest to the challenges and solutions.

As SIDS move through the first decade of ABAS implementation, these partnerships offer practical evidence of what works and inspiration for what is possible.

Strengthening visibility, learning from proven approaches, and deepening collaboration will be essential to ensure that no island community is left behind.

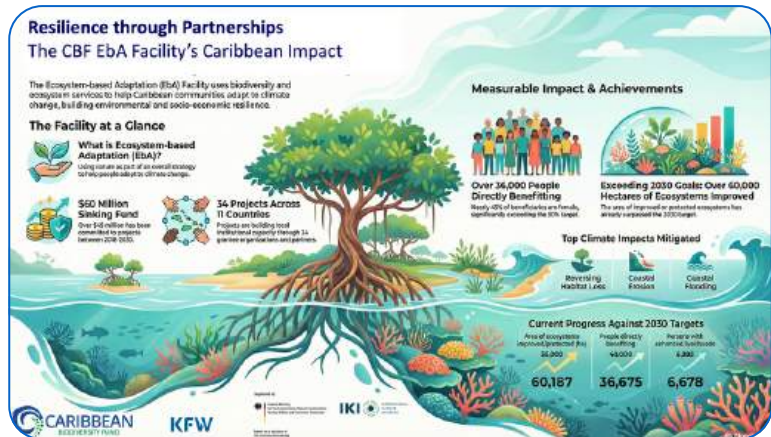


Partnerships in pictures

Climate Change Adaptation in the Caribbean - The EbA-Facility

Infographic

Photo credit: Climate Change Adaptation in the Caribbean - The EbA-Facility



Partnerships in pictures

Transitioning to Low Carbon Sea Transport

Official Handover Ceremony of the SV Juren Ae to the Marshallese government, together with RMI President Dr. Heine.

Photo credit: GIZ LCST / Chewy Lin



Excursion to the SV Juren Ae together with the Secretary-General of the IMO, Arsenio Dominguez.

Photo credit: GIZ LCST / Chewy Lin



Drone footage from the Canoes in the Marshall Islands' (WAM) Training Center and the GIZ-supported, newly built dock.

Photo credit: GIZ LCST



Partnerships in pictures

Typhoon Wutip Reconstruction Project (TWRP) Partnership for Resilience and Recovery in the Federated States of Micronesia

Joint assessment visit by DECEM, USAID, CDEOC and IOM in Udot, Chuuk Lagoon.

Photo credit: IOM 2024, Haimanot Abebe



IOM engineer provides guidance to CWG member at a site in Polle Island, Chuuk Lagoon.

Photo credit: IOM 2021, Lee Perez



Local skiff helps transport materials from IOM barge to Polle Island in Chuuk Lagoon.

Photo credit: IOM 2021, Lee Perez



Partnerships in pictures

Norway-Pacific Ocean-Climate Scholarship Programme (N-POC)

Photo credits: Edvard Hviding – University of Bergen

The University of the South Pacific, Suva campus



N-POC PhD candidates in Bergen Norway, with University of Bergen and Bergen Summer Research School staff



N-POC gathering at the University of the South Pacific, with PhD candidates, representatives of both university partners, and Norwegian diplomats



Partnerships in pictures

Norway-Pacific Ocean-Climate Scholarship Programme (N-POC)

Photo credits: Edvard Hviding – University of Bergen

N-POC PhD candidates in Oslo, Norway, by the Royal Palace



N-POC candidates at the University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji



N-POC PhD candidates in New York, at the United Nations





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