



**Gender  
Equality  
Forum**

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)  
25-26 May 2024 Antigua and Barbuda



## Small Island Developing States Gender Equality Forum Nelson's Dockyard National Park Antigua and Barbuda

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face unique vulnerabilities that significantly challenge the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Yet simultaneously, these small islands hold countless opportunities for resilience-building that can propel their progress and achievements.

Despite notable progress towards gender equality, SIDS face distinctive challenges that hinder gender equality and women's empowerment. Achieving gender equality in SIDS demands a strategic, gender-responsive, human-rights based and SIDS-appropriate approach that overcomes their innate obstacles and transforms their vulnerabilities into tools of resilience, innovation, and equality.

In May 2024, the international community will gather in Antigua and Barbuda to review SIDS' sustainable development progress and propose a new decade of partnerships and solutions to supercharge their path to resilient prosperity. **Therefore a 2-day Gender Equality Forum (GEF) will be held on 25 -26 May 2024 before the 4th SIDS Conference 27-30 May 2024.**

The objectives of the SIDS GEF are to:

- Share better practices and lessons learned on operationalizing the SAMOA Pathway and 2023 Agenda, to inform the way forward to ensure a gender transformative resilient future for SIDS.
- Increase networking across SIDS for women's organizations, women leaders and persons working in gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Develop and present a communique for presentation to SIDS leaders, that is also aligned to next steps for COP29, The Summit of the Future and Beijing+30.

The Forum will include ~250 women and men representing each SIDS region. Participants will include representatives from government, parliamentarians, the private sector, academia and civil society. The GEF will be participatory and inclusive, providing space for those often marginalized, such as indigenous women, youth, persons living with disabilities and older persons to contribute to solutions on critical issues that contribute to indebtedness and insecurity such as violence against women and girls, unpaid care work, inclusive access to finance and gender responsive climate resilience and disaster response.

The SIDS GEF has been designed to complement the SIDS Global Business Network Forum and the SIDS Children and Youth Action Summit, ensuring opportunities for participants in both the Forum and Summit to engage fulsomely throughout the two-day agenda. The SIDS GEF will be held at a UNESCO Heritage Site - Nelson's Dockyard National Park, run by a women-led statutory body in Antigua and Barbuda.





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## AGENDA

All times Atlantic Standard Time (GMT -4)

### THROUGHOUT THE JOURNEY:

During the Gender Equality Forum participants will have the opportunity to visit:

The Equality Village Entrepreneurial Marketplace featuring 30 women-led MSMEs from across SIDS including entrepreneurs benefiting from the Global Affairs Canada-supported Build Back Equal project. The Marketplace will be open daily on the 25- 26 May.

The SIDS Gender Equality Forum will also be supporting training for women entrepreneurs who utilize kiosks are Nelson's Dockyard and other entrepreneurs from across Antigua and Barbuda.

### Day 1: Saturday 25th May 2024

#### 08:30 – 09:00: REGISTRATION

#### 09:00 - 10:30: OPENING CEREMONY

Cultural Performance: The Story Begins

#### Welcome

- The Honourable Samantha Marshall, Minister of Social Transformation, Human Resource Development, Youth and Gender Affairs, Government of Antigua and Barbuda
- Tonni Brodber, Representative, MCO Caribbean, UN Women
- Therese Turner-Jones, Vice President of Operations (Ag.), Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)

#### Opening Reflections

- Ambassador Rabab Fatima, Under Secretary General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

#### Video Presentation

- Lau Afioga Fiame Dr. Naomi Mata'afa, Prime Minister of Samoa.

#### Round Table Discussion

- Her Excellency Hilda C. Heine, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands
- Her Excellency Sylvanie Burton, President of the Commonwealth of Dominica
- The Honourable Evelyn C. Wever-Croes, Prime Minister of Aruba and Minister of General Affairs, Integrity, Energy, Innovation and Government Organization

Moderated by: Senator Lisa Jawahir, Vice President, ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network

#### 10:30 – 11:00: COFFEE BREAK



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**11:00 - 11:05: Video Presentation**

- The Honourable Olivia Grange, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Government of Jamaica

**11:05 – 12:30: PLENARY DISCUSSION: The Missing Link**

*Guided discussion with experts on the intersectionality of Gender and SIDS to COP29, Summit of the Future and Beijing +30.*

- Senator the Honourable Dr. Dessima Williams, President of the Senate, Grenada
- Ambassador Ilana Seid, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Palau
- Her Excellency, Dr. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, Former President of Mauritius
- **Moderated by:** Sofia Borges, Senior Vice President, the United Nations

Foundation

**12:30 – 13:30: LUNCH**

**13:30 – 15:00: PLENARY DISCUSSION: Gender Equality as an Accelerator to Revitalize SIDS Economies**

- Kerry Scott, Chief People Officer and Senior Vice President, Liberty Latin America (LLA)
- Samantha Hung, Director, Gender Equality Division, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Department (CCSD), Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- Kristina Eisele, Representative for the Southern and Eastern Caribbean, European Investment Bank (EIB)
- Mereseini Rakuita, Principal Strategic Lead, Pacific Women Lead, Pacific Community (SPC)
- Darran Newman, Advisor to the Vice President, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)

**Moderated by:** Patricia Francis, Chairperson, Trade Facilitation Task Force, Government of Jamaica and Director, Whiteshield Global Advisory Firm

**15:00 – 15:15: COFFEE BREAK**

**15:15 – 16:30: PLENARY DISCUSSION: Forging a Path to Inclusive, Sustainable & Peaceful Societies**

- Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)
- The Honourable Mona AINU'u, Minister of Natural Resources, Government of Niue
- The Honourable Justice Lisa Ramsumair Hinds, Caribbean Association of Women Judges (CAWJ)
- Mary Lou Valdez, Deputy Director, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)

**Moderated by:** Lagipoiva Cherelle Jackson, Director, Climate Journalism, Solutions Journalism





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## 16:40 – 17:00: CLOSING REFLECTIONS

- The Honourable Senator Dr. Joyelle Clarke, Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Climate Action and Constituency Empowerment, Government of St. Kitts and Nevis
- Themba Kalua, United Nations Resident Coordinator, Samoa.
- The Honourable Silveria Elfrida Jacobs, Former Prime Minister, Sint Maarten.

**Moderated by:** Nadia Manning-Thomas, Planning and Coordination Specialist, UN Women MCO Caribbean





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Day 2: Sunday 26th May 2024

08:30 – 09:45: **THE JOURNEY CONTINUES:**

**Welcome Remarks**

Delphine Serumaga, Representative, Fiji Multi-Country Office, UN Women  
Her Excellency Sonya Koppe, Australian High Commissioner, Trinidad and Tobago

**Opening Reflections**

- Alisha Todd, Director General, ParlAmericas
- The Honourable Orando Brewster, Minister of National Mobilisation, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Youth, Housing, and Informal Settlement, St Vincent and the Grenadines

**Opening Remarks**

- Amy Pope, Director General, International Office for Migration (IOM)

**High-level Conversation:**

- The Honourable V. Uduch Sengebau, Vice President and Minister of Justice, Palau
- Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director, International Trade Centre (ITC)
- Therese Turner-Jones, Vice President of Operations (Ag.), Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
- Her Excellency Dr. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, Former President of Mauritius

**Moderated by:** Professor the Most Honourable, V. Eudine Barriteau, Professor Emerita of Gender and Public Policy, University of the West Indies

**Reflections:**

- Maria-Noel Vaeza, Regional Director, UN Women for the Americas and the Caribbean

09:45 – 10:00: **COFFEE BREAK**

10:00 – 12:15: **GENDER EQUALITY FORUM TOURS**

*Participants are invited to join a tour of their choosing, to explore key gender equality and SIDS themes.*

**Boarding: 10:00 - 11:00**

**Tour 1: Revitalizing SIDS Economies**

**Lead Discussants:**

- Jan Yves Remy, Director, Shridath Ramphal Centre for International Trade Law, Policy and Services, University of the West Indies (UWI)
- The Honourable Valerie Woods, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Government of Belize
- The Honourable Cynthia Y. Forde, Deputy Speaker, House of Assembly, Government of Barbados
- Elizabeth Ovalle, President, Absoluta Teatro Foundation and Director, Women on the Stage





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Theatre Festival

Moderated by: Farmala Jacobs, Gender & Development Specialist, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)







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## ***Tour 2: Transformative Actions to Enhance Environmental and Disaster Resilience***

### **Lead Discussants:**

- Beiateiti Taira, Climate Action Officer, Kiribati Red Cross Society
- Gina Bonne, Focal Point, Indian Ocean Commission
- Teea Tira, Climate Finance & Resilience, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
- Ayesha Constable, Technical Director, Global Fund for Women
- Nehali Anupriya, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

**Moderated by:** Fine Arnold, Secretary General, Cook Islands Red Cross Society

## ***Tour 3: Inclusive, Peaceful Societies, and Safe Communities***

### **Lead Discussants:**

- The Honourable Kirk Humphrey, Minister of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs, Government of Barbados
- Senator The Honourable Gloria Thomas, Minister for Social & Community Development, Housing and Gender Affairs
- Sharon Bhagwan Rolls, Gender Liaison to Global Partnership for Armed Conflict (GPPAC), International Steering Group, Pacific Region
- Alma Perez, Regional Advisor, Women, Peace and Security, Regional Office, Americas and the Caribbean, UN Women

**Moderated by:** Folade Motuta, Executive Director, Women's Institute for Alternative Development

*15-minute interval: grab a coffee and join the next tour of your choosing*

## **BOARDING: 11:15 - 12:15**

## ***Tour 4: Strengthening Institutional Capacity***

### **Lead Discussants:**

- Halim Brizan, Director of Statistics, Government of Grenada
- Dr. Cona Husbands, GBV Specialist, Government of the Republic of Guyana
- Sione Fo'i'akau Lolohea, Government Statistician, Tonga Statistics Department, Government of Tonga

**Moderated by:** Alison Culpin, Statistics Advisor (Social Statistics), Pacific Community (SPC)



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### **Tour 5: Inclusive Health Solutions**

#### **Lead Discussants:**

- Dr. Asa Radix, Senior Director, Callen-Lorde Community Health Centre
- Kobe Smith, Acting Executive Director, Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association
- Ronald Greenway, Representative of Persons with Disabilities
- Dr. Karen Polson, Climate Change and Health Advisor, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)

**Moderated by:** Mereseini Rakuita, Principal Strategic Lead (Pacific Women Lead), Pacific Community (SPC)

### **Tour 6: Innovative Financing for Gender Equality**

#### **Lead Discussants:**

- Anita Nayar, Chief, UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service, The Rockefeller Foundation
- The Honourable Tinee Furbert, Minister of Youth, Social Development and Seniors, Government of Bermuda
- Dave Munroe, Deputy Managing Director, Bahamas Development Bank (BDB)
- Lisa Harding, Head (Ag.), Private Sector Division, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
- Samantha Hung, Director, Gender Equality Division, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Department (CCSD), Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- Ronke-Amoni Ogunsulire, Regional Manager for the Caribbean, International Finance Cooperation (IFC)

**Moderated by:** Darran Newman, Advisor to the Vice-President of Operations, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)

**12:15 – 13:15: LUNCH**

### **13:15 – 14:15: ISLANDS OF PEACE PLENARY DISCUSSION**

#### *Round Table Discussion on the Importance of Women's Roles in Peaceful Transitions*

- Sharon Bhagwan Rolls, Gender Liaison to Global Partnership for Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) International Steering Group, Pacific Region
- Carine Jocelyn, Founder, Haitian Women's Collective
- Prof. Corin Bailey, Professor and Director of the Center for Criminal Justice and Security, University of the West Indies (UWI)
- Marie Goretti Nduwayo, Representative, Haiti Country Office, UN Women

**Moderator:** The Honourable Samantha Marshall, Minister of Social Transformation, Human Resource Development, Youth and Gender Affairs, Government of Antigua and Barbuda







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## 14:30 – 15:30: ISLAND HOPPING

*Participants are invited to join conversations with key stakeholders playing a role in SIDS and Gender Equality.*

*'The Engine Room' (Strengthening Institutions):* An interactive discussion on National Gender Machineries in SIDS

*'It takes a village':* An interactive discussion with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

**'Multiplication':** The role of regional efforts for achieving impact at scale

*'Transformative Leadership':* The role of leaders across sectors in making SIDS inclusive

## 15:30- 16:00: PRESENTATION OF COMMUNIQUE AND CALL TO ACTION

- Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, Deputy Executive Director, Normative Support, UN System Coordination and Programme Results, UN Women
- Nathalia Kanem, Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

**Moderated By:** Meghan Theobalds, Policy Advisor, Equality Fund

