



Gender Equality Forum

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



## Small Island Development States (SIDS) 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 Antigua and Barbuda in May 2024, the international community will gather 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 will be held on 25 -26 May 2024 before the 4th SIDS Conference 27-30 May 2024 in Antigua and Barbuda.**

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 ~150 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 Expo featuring 15 women-led MSMEs from across SIDS including entrepreneurs benefiting from the Global Affairs Canada-supported Build Back Equal project. The Expo will be open daily on the 25- 26<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 am -5:00 p.m.

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

### Day 1: Saturday 25th May 2024

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. **REGISTRATION:**

9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. **OPENING CEREMONY:**

Cultural Performance: The Story Begins

Welcome

Remarks:

Round Table Discussion:

10:30 a.m. – 11.00 a.m. **COFFEE BREAK**

11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. **PLENARY AND DISCUSSION: The Missing Link**

12:30 – 13:30 **LUNCH**

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





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15:00 – 15:15 **COFFEE BREAK**

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

16:30 – 16:40 **TRANSITION TO MAIN PLENARY**

16:40 – 17:00 **CLOSING REFLECTIONS**





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Day 2: Sunday 26th May 2024

8:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. **THE JOURNEY CONTINUES:**

Welcome

Opening Reflections:

High-level Conversation:

9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. **COFFEE BREAK**

10:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. **JOURNEY THROUGH THE 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 am- 11:00 am**

***Tour 1: Revitalizing SIDS Economies***

***Tour 2: Transformative Actions to enhance Environmental and Disaster Resilience***

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

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

**BOARDING: 11:15 AM- 12:15 PM**

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

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

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

**12:15 – 13:15 LUNCH**

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





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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. Engagement with multilaterals on SIDS-centric development initiatives.

*'It takes a village':* An interactive discussion with CSOs on multiple roles they have played and will need to continue to play in SIDS and gender equality.

*'Whose business is it?':* Straight talk with business leaders on the role of business and economic empowerment in SIDS

*'Transformative Leadership':* 'The role of Parliaments in making SIDS inclusive spaces.

## 15:30- 16:00 PRESENTATION OF COMMUNIQUE

## 16:15- 17:00 CLOSING COMMITMENTS & CALL TO ACTION

Cultural Performance

