



## Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition • FSN Forum

### TOPIC NOTE

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[↗ www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/discussions/SIDS-poverty-climate-change](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/discussions/SIDS-poverty-climate-change)

## What story can Small Island Developing States (SIDS) tell on addressing the relationship between poverty and climate change

The [Small Island Developing States \(SIDS\)](#) share unique and particular vulnerabilities, resulting in a complex set of environmental, food security and nutrition challenges. With the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), countries have renewed their commitment to fight poverty<sup>1</sup>, hunger and malnutrition. Climate change constitutes a fundamental threat to achieving those goals and tackling climate change and climate-related events would be key for moving people out of poverty and help achieve SDG 1 (No poverty). SDG 1 pays special attention to building resilient livelihoods and helping the rural poor reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. This is critical to secure lives and livelihoods, income, and to improve food security and nutrition.

SIDS are particularly vulnerable to climate change and other external shocks. They are likely to face increased vulnerability to shocks and stresses, if their adaptive capacities and ecosystem services are eroded.

These vulnerabilities and threats have been highlighted by the [SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action \(S.A.M.O.A.\)](#) Pathway. Climate change impacts pose a threat to food systems which exacerbate high prevalence of food insecurity among the SIDS Community. In response to this, as described in Paragraph 61 of the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway, FAO has been requested to coordinate the development of [The Global Action Programme \(GAP\) on Food Security and Nutrition in SIDS](#), in close collaboration with the [United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs \(UN/DESA\)](#) and the [UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked developing countries and Small Island Developing States \(UN-OHRLS\)](#).

According to the GAP, “pro-poor growth and development policies and strategies are needed to increase the ability of poor people to take advantage of, and benefit from “the opportunities that these new instruments, such as the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway and the GAP, provide. This includes measures that target and address key sources of vulnerability and deprivation, and strengthen adaptive capabilities.”

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<sup>1</sup> Poverty is not exclusively measured in monetary terms, but it's also a social issue that encompasses individual's wellness and wellbeing, including the natural environment of the population in a given time. It can also involve problems of marginalization, powerlessness, lack of voice, and disconnection, and it's closely related to other concepts that aim to understand its causes, meanings, and consequences.

Furthermore, the GAP emphasizes the importance “that interventions, programmes, and services aimed at social and economic empowerment of communities, and at addressing food security and malnutrition in target groups, are underpinned by enabling political, institutional and social environments.” Achieving poverty eradication and food security and nutrition as a path to adapt to climate change will, according to the GAP programme, have a “multiplier effect on sustainable development.”

Learning from SIDS on how they cope with climate change related impacts in these respects, could be instrumental to not only other Small States but also to the rest of the world. Their adaptive ways and mechanisms, despite their small size in land mass, could be instrumental to other regions and countries with relation to the nexus on poverty and climate change in coastal areas.

This forum aims to get perspectives from SIDS about the connection between poverty and climate change. The results gathered here will feed into an ongoing work to support countries to address the interrelation between poverty and climate change in coastal areas, coastal communities and SIDS. It also aims to provide concrete ideas for countries on how to better approach this relationship in their climate change and development agendas, thus feeding into and improving the dialogue and exchange of expertise between SIDS as well as with non-SIDS countries, and the overall south-south cooperation.

Overall, this discussion aims to gather the approaches and strategies used in SIDS to adapt to climate change, while building resilience of the most poor and vulnerable. Particularly, its purpose is:

- a) To learn how SIDS are reducing the exposure of the poor and most vulnerable people to climate change and climate related events.
- b) To learn about pathways, tools and challenges, including recommendations for effectively building adaptive capacity to eradicate poverty and achieving food security and nutrition within the context of climate change.

To help gather these lessons, we invite you to share your experience and views by replying to the following questions:

1. Can you share examples of actions that are being undertaken to reduce poverty, food insecurity and nutrition challenges in response to climate change and climate-related events? Actions can range from informal to formal and include social protection and multisectoral policies, projects, programmes, activities, among others.
2. What lessons have been drawn from building resilience and adaptive capacity of poor and vulnerable people in the context of climate change and climate-related events?
3. What are the challenges of reducing poverty and inequalities and building the adaptive capacity of the poor and vulnerable to climate change and climate related events?
4. What should the world learn from these experiences? What are the plausible pathways and good practices you would recommend to follow when addressing poverty, food security and nutrition in the context of climate change and climate-related events?

We thank you very much in advance for your time and inputs and look forward to an engaging exchange.

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