

## Report of the Secretary-General

### “Follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States”

UNGA73

#### PROPOSED OUTLINE

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#### QUESTIONNAIRE

Implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States survey for the SG report in 2018.

Please take time to read thoroughly, before starting the Questionnaire.

#### PART A

##### Policy, Legal, Institutional and Financial Arrangements for Implementation

1. (Organizational Arrangements) Is there a Focal Point/Unit dealing with implementation of the Samoa Pathway? If yes, where is it located within the institutional architecture of your country or institution? If no, please explain how the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway is currently coordinated?

The Small Islands and Indigenous Knowledge Section (SC/PCB/SII) (previously known as the Intersectoral Coastal Regions and Small Islands Platform – CSI) serves as the UNESCO SIDS focal point unit, to ensure consolidation, coordination and prioritization of UNESCO's activities benefitting SIDS. This section was established in 1996 by the 28th session of the UNESCO General Conference and is housed within UNESCO's Natural Sciences Sector. The SC/PCB/SII mobilizes UNESCO's house-wide contributions to the further implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the international related agendas that concern SIDS.

2. (Policy and Legislative arrangements) Is the Focal Point/Unit supported by an enabling policy and/or legal framework? If yes, please describe. If no, how is the Focal Point/Unit enabled to lead or facilitate the implementation of SAMOA Pathway. How has this affected progress on the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway in your organization at national and regional levels?

UNESCO set in place a dynamic framework to accompany the implementation of SIDS-related activities at local, national and regional levels:

- SIDS have been set as a priority group in the UNESCO's medium-term strategy (2014-2021).
- specific objectives and indicators have been designed to measure the achievements of the Organization's work for the specific group of SIDS in its programme and budget (38 C/5 and 39 C/5);
- sectoral focal points (in Education, Culture, Natural Sciences, Social and Human Sciences, Communication and Information), at Headquarters and Field Offices, have been set up to follow up on the implementation of SIDS-related activities and collaborate with the coordinating SIDS focal point unit.
- regular contacts are kept by UNESCO Secretariat with the SIDS Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNESCO and associate members;
- a comprehensive website is maintained, covering the Organisation's full range of activities on SIDS as an information sharing facility for the SIDS programme of action process,
- participation in various UN and AOSIS preparatory activities,
- initiation of a substantive review of recent and ongoing UNESCO activities relating to sustainable development in SIDS,
- progress documents have been submitted to the UNESCO governing bodies, setting out how UNESCO assist SIDS beyond Samoa 2014, defining the mainstream UNESCO activities in terms of the specific needs of SIDS and the possibilities of meaningful UNESCO action,
- contribute to the consolidated reports that the UN Secretary General prepare for consideration by the General Assembly, as the contribution of UN institutions to the implementation of the Samoa Pathway.
- Mobilization of its important worldwide networks and partners

Here are some links to these SIDS-related strategic documents and resources, as well as the successive resolutions, adopted by the Organization's governing bodies, that provide an enabling environment to address SIDS priority issues:

- ✓ [UNESCO's Medium term Strategy 2014-2021 \(37 C/4\)](#)
- ✓ [UNESCO's approved Programme and budget for 2016-2017 \(38 C/5\)](#) and for [2018-2019 \(39 C/5\)](#)
- ✓ [Decision adopted by the executive board at its 201st session](#) which requested the evaluation of the SIDS Action Plan (201 EX/Decisions pages 3-4)
- ✓ UNESCO's SIDS Action Plan (2016-2021)
  - [Finalized SIDS Action Plan and implementation strategy – main document](#) (199 EX/5 Part I A)
  - [Finalized SIDS Action Plan and implementation strategy - information document](#) (199 EX/5.INF.REV)
  - [Decision of the executive board at its 199th session](#) which adopted the SIDS Action Plan (199 EX/Decisions, 199 EX/SR.7, page 5)
- ✓ Report on the further implementation of the SIDS Action Plan:
  - [Main document](#) (201 EX/5 Part I-A)
  - [Progress towards the achievement by 38 C/5 expected results](#) (Annex)
  - [Analytical Programme Implementation Report 2014-2017 \(APIR\) – 204 EX/4 Part I](#)
- ✓ [Final draft for an updated UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change](#) 201 EX/5 Part I B
- ✓ [UNESCO's contribution to the outcome of the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(COP 22\)](#) (201 EX/5 Part I C)

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- ✓ Data in SIDS - UNESCO Institute for Statistics
  - [Report on progress by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics on a disaggregated level of data for development indicators related to SIDS](#) (202 EX/5 Part I - E)
  - [Report on preliminary progress by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics on disaggregated level of data for development indicators related to SIDS](#) (200 EX/5 Part I A)
- ✓ [Plan of action to strengthen UNESCO's cooperation: together for Haiti](#) (201 EX/34)
- ✓ [UNESCO dedicated SIDS website](#)
- ✓ [UNESCO Priority Gender Equality Action Plan \(2014-2021\)](#)
- ✓ [UNESCO's Strategy on Priority Africa \(2014-2021\)](#)
- ✓ [SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action \(S.A.M.O.A.\) Pathway](#)
- ✓ Comprehensive review of United Nations system support for SIDS:
  - [Final findings](#) (JIU/REP/2016/7)
  - [Reports by the joint inspection unit \(JIU\) of interest to UNESCO and the status of implementation of recommendations](#) (202 EX/22 - c)

3. (Financial Arrangements) Please give an indication of:

- (i) **For States** - the percentage of national budgets allocated to supporting SAMOA Pathway thematic priorities over the last fiscal year.
- (ii) **For UN system agencies, Regional institutions and international development partners** - percentage of the total budgets invested into SIDS priority areas over the last Fiscal year:

Name of Project/ Programme/Activity	Total Budget (US\$) for the 38 C/5 (2016-2017)
Enhancing island capacities to achieve sustainable development through education and the reinforcement of human and institutional capacities	US\$3924500 (5.38% of the Education sector budget)
Enhancing SIDS resilience and the sustainability of human interactions with ecological, freshwater and ocean systems;	US\$722756 (2,75% of the Natural Sciences budget)
Supporting SIDS in the management of social transformations and the promotion of social inclusion and social justice	US\$435000 (2.86% of the Social and Human sciences sector budget)
Preserving tangible and intangible cultural heritage and promoting culture for island sustainable development	US\$2460493 (12% of the Culture sector budget)
Increasing connectivity, information management and knowledge sharing	US\$337700 (2.15% of the Communication and Information sector budget)

The figures appearing in the table show UNESCO's budget for the 38 C/5 (programme and budget for 2016-2017) allocated to SIDS and divided into the 5 priority set in the UNESCO SIDS Action Plan. The figures only include activities that exclusively benefit SIDS, based on the funds allocated to field offices

covering SIDS regions (such as the Apia office covering the Pacific SIDS, as well as the Kingston Office, covering the Caribbean SIDS). This conservative approach was adopted to ensure that the numbers are reliable. There are three other categories of activities that are not reflected here, although they benefit SIDS alongside other member states: i) activities with SIDS as a major target group, ii) activities benefitting one or more SIDS amongst other Member States; and iii) global activities that benefit all Member States (including SIDS). For these reasons, the figures underestimate the Regular Programme and Extrabudgetary resources benefitting SIDS within the Organization.

In the 39 C/5 (2018-2019), percentage of budget allocated to activities benefitting SIDS increased to reach an approximate 20% (tbc) of the overall budget.

## Implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and Support to SIDS

### 4. (Work Programme Arrangements) Please give an indication of:

- (i) **For SIDS** - Does your country have a current long-term National Development Plan? If yes, to what extent has it been aligned to the SAMOA Pathway and/or the 2030 Agenda? Is this plan being implemented? If no long-term plan exists, please indicate what is being used in place of a long-term National Development Plan.
- (ii) **For UN system agencies, Regional institutions and international development partners** – what strategic documents/frameworks/policies/plans guides support for the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and/or the SDGs if any? How is it resourced and implemented? How often is it revised?

UNESCO's Strategy on SIDS has been strengthened by the development of a UNESCO SIDS Action Plan (UNESCO SIDS-AP) in response to a request from the Organization's General Conference at its 37<sup>th</sup> session (37 C/Resolution 1-V), and as a direct follow-up to the adoption of the SAMOA Pathway outcome document. The Action Plan was approved by the Executive Board at its 199<sup>th</sup> session in April 2016. It provides the framework for UNESCO's continuing action in favor of SIDS' sustainable development for the period covering 2016-2021.

The SIDS-AP contains key objectives, actions, implementation plans, performance indicators and targets within the Organization's multidisciplinary mandate in Education, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Culture, Communication and Information (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002460/246082E.pdf>). It provides an enhanced focus and more targeted delivery of activities to SIDS Member States, in line with the priorities set in the SAMOA Pathway, SDGs and the Paris Agreement.

UNESCO proactive role in mainstreaming SIDS sustainable development and translating the Samoa Pathway priorities into its core mandate was well profiled in the findings and recommendations of the "Comprehensive review of United Nations system support for small island developing States: final findings" (JIU/REP/2016/7), conducted by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) in response to General Assembly resolutions 69/288 and 70/202.

The implementation strategy of the SIDS-AP is integrated within the successive UNESCO Approved Programme and Budget for (38 C/5 for 2016-2017 and 39 C/5 for 2018-19), funded through regular programme. A specific implementation strategy was developed for the 38 C/5 (2016-2017) because there were no explicit specific SIDS targets in the approved 38C/5. The implementation strategy has been revised for the 39 C/5, approved by the UNESCO General Conference at its 39<sup>th</sup> session in November 2017. Now, as a major achievement, explicit SIDS targets are integrated in the 39 C/5 programme and budget.

The SIDS-AP benefits also from extrabudgetary funds. SIDS priorities are integrated into the Organization resource mobilization strategy to attract external funding.

In addition, the resolutions on SIDS adopted by the Executive Board encourage all Member States to provide voluntary contributions for the further implementation of the Action Plan and for a more enhanced coordination of bilateral technical cooperation and south-south collaboration.

Member States are regularly kept updated about the progress made towards the implementation of the SIDS-AP through meetings and information documents submitted to the Executive Board. For instance,

a progress report was acknowledged by UNESCO's Member States at the 201th session of the Executive Board in April 2017 (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002477/247706e.pdf>). The UNESCO Secretariat also regularly reports on the implementation of its programme and budget through the Organization's statutory reports on programme implementation (EX4).

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UNESCO is currently conducting a mid-term evaluation of the SIDS-AP, in response to its Member States who requested during the 201<sup>st</sup> session of the Executive Board in April 2016, the Director General to undertake an evaluation, at mid-term, of the implementation of the SIDS Action Plan, in order to ensure the efficiency of its implementation. The aim of this mid-term evaluation (2016-2018) is to assess what has been achieved so far, to identify successes, challenges, and opportunities as well as to extract lessons and provide recommendations for the remaining implementation period of the Action Plan (2019-2021). The evaluation, which will be elaborated by prospective bidders, will assist in decision-making and introducing improvements by making evidence based and future-oriented recommendations concerning key dimensions, including considerations in relation to criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness/impact and sustainability, as well as UN system coherence.

See further details on the list of strategic documents/frameworks/policies/plans described above in Part A 2).

5. Using the table below, please provide an overview of the work (programmes, projects, actions, etc.) that your Organization/Government is implementing or plans to implement in support of the SAMOA Pathway and/or the SDGs for the biennium 2017-2018? (Please exclude Conferences and partnerships as this is covered in a separate section).

Name of Project/ Programme/Activity	Total Budget (US\$) for the 38 C/5 (2016-2017)
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Enhancing SIDS resilience and the sustainability of human interactions with ecological, freshwater and ocean systems;	US\$722756
Supporting SIDS in the management of social transformations and the promotion of social inclusion and social justice	US\$435000
Preserving tangible and intangible cultural heritage and promoting culture for island sustainable development	US\$2460493
Increasing connectivity, information management and knowledge sharing	US\$337700

As indicated in section 3 ii) above, the figures appearing in the table show UNESCO's budget for the 38 C/5 (programme and budget for 2016-2017) allocated to SIDS and divided into the 5 priority set in the UNESCO SIDS Action Plan. The figures only include activities that exclusively benefit SIDS, based on the funds allocated to field offices covering SIDS regions (such as th Apia office covering the Pacific

SIDS, as well as the Kingston Office, covering the Caribbean SIDS). This conservative approach was adopted to ensure that the numbers are reliable. There are three other categories of activities that are not reflected here, although they benefit SIDS alongside other member states: i) activities with SIDS as a major target group, ii) activities benefitting one or more SIDS amongst other Member States; and iii) global activities that benefit all Member States (including SIDS). For these reasons, the figures underestimate the Regular Programme and Extrabudgetary resources benefitting SIDS within the Organization.

The figures for the 39 C/5 (2018-2019), to be provided to UNDESA at a later stage by UNESCO, are more comprehensive, as specific SIDS targets are included in this biennium programme and budget..

## **PART B**

1. What challenges have you encountered in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, or in supporting SIDS to implement? What solutions or potential solutions have been or can be adopted to address these challenges?
2. To what extent is your country capable of meeting the human and financial resource requirements for implementation of the SAMOA Pathway?
3. To what extent has your country been able to access international development assistance required to implement the key aspects of the Samoa Pathway?

UNESCO identified various challenges in the implementation of SIDS-related activities, here are some:

- external factor related to dramatic changes in policy contexts and crisis: A number of activities have been postponed or experiencing delays. This is the case in countries where a constant turnover of the senior government officials has led to some delays in the programme implementation.
- scarcity of funding to provide full-scale and sustainable support to SIDS
- lack of human resources.
- lack of fast-tracked procedures (administrative and financial flexibility) for rapid and more effective action,
- Ensuring that the dynamics created during advocacy and capacity-building activities are maintained, particularly given the context of limited financial and human resources.

To address the challenges linked to lack of financial and human resources, a growing mobilization of in-house expertise for technical assistance in an intersectoral way increased the cost-effectiveness of UNESCO interventions on the ground. UNESCO relies increasingly on the capacities of the Regional Bureaus and Field Offices for the direct activities with Member States.

As the regular budget is very limited, activities are implemented mainly through extra budgetary funding. UNESCO deployed many efforts to attract external funding to implement SIDS priority actions. However, graduation of some SIDS to middle income or high income levels made the exercise difficult. Categorization is an important issue that should take into account the specific vulnerability of SIDS. UNESCO is collaborating with other UN agencies to investigate possible ways forward in assessing this vulnerability through its Institute of Statistics.

Another cost-saving measure is the use of ICTs to better channel training through e-learning approaches. UNESCO reduced spending costs by supporting virtual mission travel and digital resource production.

Cost-effectiveness measures have also been undertaken through strategic partnerships and the involvement of UNESCO's networks and category 2 centers, notably in global and regional events. It is important to relay advocacy and communication through the various UNESCO partners and networks (member States, regional organizations, co-convening agencies and other global development partners, chairs, UNITWIN, centers, clubs, civil society, teacher organizations and foundations...).

UNESCO also encourages political commitments, which are crucial to provide relevant and timely strategic guidance for national implementation and monitoring.

### **PART C**

1. For the year 2017, please describe any key results achieved as a result of ongoing work being implemented by your organization/Government in the thematic areas of the SAMOA Pathway. What impact, if any, has this had at national and/or regional levels.

#### **In the area of Education and the reinforcement of human and institutional capacities (P1):**

- **Education**

UNESCO Supported its SIDS Member States to develop education systems to foster high quality and inclusive **lifelong learning** opportunities for all. UNESCO's work on a system-wide policy and planning supported Member States in closing the Education For All cycle and in preparing for mainstreaming **SDG 4 - Education** Agenda into national education sector plans and strategies. Typically, with variations across regions and countries, this support translated, first, into jointly reviewing public policies in education and analysing how the sector is responding to emerging challenges, thus identifying bottle necks as well as direct assistance for the preparation of blueprints, strategies and education plans for SDG 4 (beneficiary countries include Guinea-Bissau, Maldives, Palau). Following its mandate, UNESCO has also helped countries to ensure that their national legislation properly endorses the right to education as a fundamental right, in line with international recommendations. These major support activities have always been accompanied by sustained efforts in capacity development both of policy makers and planners in areas such as simulation models (Guinea-Bissau, Maldives, Palau), education management information systems (EMIS), and more broadly on the implications and relevance of SDG 4 for national education development, including the organization of national consultations in cooperation with UNESCO National Commissions. The development and/or customization of these planning tools and methodologies allow Ministries of Education to become more information-based in their decision-making. This is the case with institutional capacity analyses (Comoros), school report cards and the recently developed Screening Tools.

- **Education in emergencies**

UNESCO also ensured interventions in education in emergencies, with substantive interventions in Haiti, and the rest of the Caribbean.

- **Education for Sustainable Development**

With SIDS being among the countries hardest hit by climate change, UNESCO is cooperating with its SIDS Member States on the implementation of the Global Action Programme on **Education for Sustainable Development** (GAP). GAP is the follow up to the UN Decade of ESD, which was launched at the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in November 2014 in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. Based on their

strong commitment to ESD and Climate Change Education, the National Council on Climate Change and Clean Development Mechanism and the National Institute of Teachers Training of the Dominican Republic (INAFOCAM) have become Key Partners for the implementation of the Global Action Programme on ESD.

UNESCO has implemented Flagship Projects in each of the five Priority Action Areas of the GAP ( 1. advancing policies, 2. teaching teachers and educators, 3. transforming learning environments, mobilizing youth and mobilizing local communities) to scale up ESD work in for instance teacher training institutions, schools and among youth . These Flagship Projects benefitted SIDS, such for instance the strengthening of ESD in 30 schools in Cape Verde, the Dominican Republic and Haiti , several teacher education institutions, developed the capacity of around 30 youth leaders from SIDS as well as municipalities from six SIDS.

#### **In the area of environmental, ocean, freshwater and natural resources sustainability (P2):**

- **Freshwater:**

SID Member States have continued to be supported in order to improve **groundwater** governance at local, national and transboundary levels. Under the Transboundary Waters Assessment Programme (TWAP), 42 SIDS benefitted from specific assessment on groundwater.

Moreover, SIDS have benefitted from an expansion of the institutional support for drought monitoring systems, water scarcity and water quality (in Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Bahamas, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Mauritius and Cabo Verde).

UNESCO has worked closely with SIDS to promote adaptation to climate change and ensure integrated water resource management and provision of water services in the context of climate change.

SIDS MS have requested UNESCO's support to ensure water security and achieve sustainable water resource management. Multiple regional meetings have been undertaken in SIDS by the Organisation, in collaboration with national and regional partners, in the area of climate change and water in the past two years.

In the Caribbean region, the Latin America and the Caribbean International Hydrological Programme (IHP) Committee met in the Bahamas in September 2017, and concluded with a series of recommendations related to Integrated Water Resources Management and climate change. The IHP national committees from the region also offered the Caribbean countries affected by the 2017 hurricane season 'technical support, from a water security perspective, for the development of initiatives to rebuild and rehabilitate hydraulic equipment and basic infrastructure, as well as freshwater initiatives (monitoring, governance, management, and exploration alternatives)'.

In August 2017, the Pacific Ministers responsible for Meteorology recognized the importance of hydrology and hydrological services in supporting sustainable and resilient development in the Pacific, and called on UNESCO to work with other regional partners to increase support for operational hydrology. UNESCO has recently engaged in three activities in the region to identify where it might most effectively contribute to addressing these needs in partnership with other development actors:

- The Timor-Leste National Dialogue on Water Security held on 16-17 October 2017
- the IHP Conference on Water Security in the Pacific held in Fiji on 23-24 October 2017 with participation by 12 countries

- A scoping study of the water priorities and needs for 14 Pacific SIDS and the on-going activities by development partners active in the Pacific which has been carried out in 2017

The outcome documents of these three activities provide a good basis for the identification of further follow-up activities.

Availability of freshwater in the Western Indian Ocean islands is also a priority issue, because of: variable rainfall and high run-off; extreme weather events including droughts, flood and heat waves, increasing domestic, agricultural and industrial consumption; and a lack of storage capacity. Pollution from a variety of sources is contributing to restricted availability of water for human use, and is contributing to environmental degradation. Therefore, implementation of integrated water resource management strategies is a priority in the sub-region. Based on the recent fact-finding mission by UNESCO team in the region, a project proposal has been submitted to donors for funding and follow-up with targeted interventions on integrated water resources management.

- **Oceans:**

SIDS have been a priority within UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)'s programmatic activities for a number of years, with IOC actions aimed at protecting their marine biodiversity and heritage, and securing equitable access to coastal and ocean resources as essential components to achieve sustainable development. SIDS IOC Member States represent a quarter of the whole membership (total of 149 MS)

In June 2016, the IOC Executive Council adopted the IOC SIDS Action Plan in support of the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. Under each expected results and a number of SIDS targeted actions are being implemented across all IOC programmes:

**Scientific understanding of ocean and coastal processes bolstered and used by Member States to improve the management of the human relationship with the ocean**

Upgrade scientific institutions, in the fields ocean and climate system sciences, as well as in the management of natural resources, through strengthening universities and research centres and mobilizing international science cooperation via data and information sharing and the establishment and dissemination of international scientific standards.

Strengthening SIDS capacities through promotion of the participation of SIDS in the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), and ensuring access to data and information for supporting climate change adaptation and local decision measures.

Broaden awareness of ocean acidification and its impacts on SIDS and increase cooperation and collaboration in order to detect local impacts on SIDS of ocean acidification via the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON).

Progress under this 1<sup>st</sup> IOC expected result include:

- UNESCO IOC-led Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (<http://www.goa-on.org/GOA-ON.php>) (330 members from 67 countries), allows Member States, including SIDS, to improve the monitoring of Ocean Acidification and supports the observation of its impacts on marine life.
- The updated GOA-ON implementation plan, (<http://www.goa-on.org/GOA-ON.php>) including updated chemical and physical guidelines for OA observations, comprises inputs from 67 countries, including SIDS.

- A Global Oxygen Network (GO2NE) (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/ioc-oceans/sections-and-programmes/ocean-sciences/global-ocean-oxygen-network>) was established to support research with regard to deoxygenation of the ocean, and includes scientists from SIDS.
- In order to assess the impacts of climate change and global trends of phytoplankton in the ocean, more than 300 time series were analysed, divided into Arctic, North Atlantic, South Atlantic, Antarctic, Indian, South Pacific and North Pacific Oceans, for both phyto- and zooplankton, covering more than five inter-comparable marine ecosystems, including data from SIDS.
- The Global Ocean Science Report (<https://en.unesco.org/qosr>) is a knowledge resource that aims to aid Member States, including SIDS, their local and national governments, academic and research institutions as well as international organizations and donors, in making informed decisions regarding the status of ocean sciences research, investment, and productivity.
- In the area of scientific understanding of ocean and coastal processes, UNESCO IOC (<http://www.ioc-unesco.org/>) has refocused its ocean science programmes with the aim of increasing awareness and mobilizing the scientific capacities of its Member States to address the challenges defined by the SDGs, the Samoa Pathway, (<http://www.sids2014.org/>) the Sendai Framework (<http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework>) and the Paris Agreement on Climate ([http://unfccc.int/paris\\_agreement/items/9485.php](http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php)).

**Risks and impacts of tsunamis and other ocean related hazards reduced, climate change adaptation and mitigation measures taken, and policies for healthy ocean ecosystems developed and implemented by Member States**

Monitor sea level rise with both real-time applications, as in the case of tsunami early warning systems, and assisting Member States adaptation to coastal changes in the long-term through the sea level stations of the Global Sea Level Observing System (GLOSS). Mobilize efforts of ocean climate research community on developing methods for prediction and projection of future regional sea-level rise in the twenty-first century and creating corresponding scenarios to improve SIDS adaptation planning.

Further develop and coordinate the establishment of early warning systems for tsunamis and other coastal hazards and supporting the reinforcement of human and institutional capacities, in particular Tsunami Information Centres (TICS), for improving tsunami and coastal hazard preparedness, enhancing strategic partnerships and resource, and improving tsunami and coastal hazard preparedness and enhancing strategic partnerships and resources.

Strengthening SIDS capacities to monitor, forecast and prevent Ciguatera and other HAB events through offering capacity enhancement on both observation, testing and data sharing technologies and tools supporting local decision measures and HAB event mitigation.

Support the development of data-driven marine and freshwater (surface water and groundwater) assessment tools in SIDS regions to inform coastal and ocean policies.

Progress under this 2<sup>nd</sup> IOC expected result include:

- *Risks and impacts of tsunamis and other ocean-related hazards, climate change adaptation and mitigation measures, and policies for healthy ocean ecosystems were at the forefront of the IOC-*

supported activities of SIDS Member States. (<http://www.ioc-unesco.org/>) For example, IOC engaged 14 Caribbean SIDS in harmonising and standardizing tsunami early warning systems. These countries are also very active at annual CaribeWave Exercises, (<https://fr.unesco.org/node/184270>) where monitoring and warning services are tested. The same 14 Caribbean SIDS and four South-West Pacific SIDS have benefitted from regional or in-country trainings to develop or review their Tsunami Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), ([http://www.ioc-tsunami.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=featured&Itemid=93&lang=en](http://www.ioc-tsunami.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=featured&Itemid=93&lang=en)) in Cook Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. The installation of new sea-level monitoring stations in Aruba, Jamaica and Saint Lucia have contributed to enhanced sea-level monitoring capabilities in the Caribbean, for tsunamis and other coastal hazards.

### **Member States' institutional capacities reinforced and applied to protect and sustainably manage ocean and coastal resources**

Broadening the knowledge and creating capacity to protect and to manage sustainably coastal carbon ecosystems, such as mangroves, saltmarshes and seagrasses, through the Blue Carbon Initiative.

Support SIDS capacities to manage and sustainably use the oceans, seas and their marine resources through marine spatial planning, integrated coastal management and other decision support tools.

Assist SIDS in developing a global network of training centres to increase national capacity in coastal and marine knowledge and management and to facilitate transfer of marine technology, based on local needs, in particular through the IOC Ocean Teacher Global Academy programme.

Interaction targeted at SIDS, assisting them to compile and contribute data to the GOSR with the view to ensure SIDS ocean science capacity and needs are well documented and reported as a basis for targeted support and assistance

Progress under this 3<sup>rd</sup> IOC expected result include:

- o *In the area of scientific understanding of ocean and coastal processes, UNESCO IOC (<http://www.ioc-unesco.org/>) has refocused its ocean science programmes with the aim of increasing awareness and mobilizing the scientific capacities of its Member States to address the challenges defined by the SDGs, the Samoa Pathway, (<http://www.sids2014.org/>) the Sendai Framework (<http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework>) and the Paris Agreement on Climate ([http://unfccc.int/paris\\_agreement/items/9485.php](http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php)).*

### **UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development**

In December 2017, the UN General Assembly decided to proclaim the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development for the 10-year period beginning on 1 January 2021, and calls upon the IOC-UNESCO to prepare an implementation plan for the Decade in consultation with Member States, UN Bodies and relevant stakeholders.

The endorsement by the UN General Assembly of the Decade of Ocean Science implies an acknowledgement by the global community of the importance, need for and role of ocean science, data and information exchange for sustainable development, and that science can play an important role in

helping the ocean support the 2030 agenda, but also other ocean commitments with a ocean dimension, such as the SAMOA Pathway, the Paris Climate Agreement or Sendai Framework.

The overarching goal of the Decade will be to generate the scientific knowledge and underpinning infrastructure and partnerships needed for sustainable development of the ocean. As stated in the UNGA Decision, the Decade will be implemented in accordance with an Implementation Plan that will be developed during the period 2018-2020. During that period, several global and regional consultation meetings, including in SIDS regions, will be organised to identify priority areas in terms of scientific research applied to sustainable development, capacity development needs, and to catalyse the development of partnerships in support of the decade.

- **Disaster Risk Reduction, climate change**

UNESCO Helps SIDS policy-makers in deciding where to focus their risk reduction efforts and interventions based on available resources and scientific evidence.

In response to recent hurricanes, UNESCO carried out a post-disaster risk assessment of school building infrastructures in Antigua and Barbuda, using the UNESCO-VISUS Post-Disaster Assessment Methodology. In October 2017, 51 schools were assessed. The same methodology was initiated in Dominica and in 100 schools in the north of Haiti

Capacity-building has been enhanced through training of more than 40 experts from 13 countries in the Caribbean on various technical issues related to DRR for the education sector, including assessment of critical facilities infrastructure.

The result of a research undertaken in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste show how loss and damage is not only an issue for SDG 13, but has the potential to disrupt progress towards all the SDGs, including SDG2 (food security), SDG6 (water), SDG 10 (reduced inequality), SDG 15 (life on land), etc. The material produced during this collection of baseline data about loss and damage in the agriculture and tourism sectors in the selected Pacific SIDS, has been launched at the UNFCCC COP23 in November 2017. The results of the research show the need to address the impacts of climate change from a holistic perspective that is based on an improved understanding of the constraints, opportunities and ingenuities of communities in SIDS and elsewhere.

UNESCO has also strengthened SIDS capacity in their efforts to adapt to long-term coastal changes (see IOC results above on Risks and impacts of tsunamis and other ocean-related hazards, climate change adaptation and mitigation measures, and policies for healthy ocean ecosystems)

- **Science Technology and Innovation**

UNESCO's GO-SPIN Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) conceptual framework was introduced to national STI authorities, experts, academics and other stakeholders in SIDS.

In the recent years, UNESCO worked with SIDS to develop and strengthen implementation of their STI policies in the AIMS, the Caribbean and the Pacific region. UNESCO provided them with technical expertise to support them in the development of guidelines for national and regional STI policies. With the support of regional organisations (Cariscience in the Caribbean and the USP in the Pacific, around 100 STI policy officers and statisticians from 21 SIDS were trained to strengthen data collection and the use of methodologies designed to support policymaking. From the Caribbean workshop, a proposal

emerged to establish a regional STI observatory in the Caribbean that could be hosted by Cariscience, if funds can be raised. Furthermore, as a result of the workshop, Jamaica has become a pilot country in the STEM and Gender Advancement (SAGA) project and will undertake a Survey of Drivers and Barriers to Careers in Science and Engineering (S&E) in the country. The expected results of the project include: baseline statistics on the drivers and barriers affecting professionals in Science and Engineering (S&E); inventory of policy instruments and framework addressing gender equality in S&E careers; recommendations on new or improved policy instruments based on international best practice.

The high-level dialogue on Science and Science Policy for the Sustainable Development Goals in the Pacific SIDS, which was organized in Apia , Samoa (March 2017), assessed the needs and opportunities for bridging the gaps between science, technology and innovation (STI) systems and policy-makers. The Apia Ministerial Communiqué on Pacific Science, Technology and Innovation, was released as outcome of the meeting.

**In the area of Supporting SIDS in the management of social transformations and the promotion of social inclusion and social justice (P3):**

• **Youth**

UNESCO has been supporting the formulation, review, and implementation of youth-related policies and legislation, with the participation of youth at different levels in Cabo Verde, Cuba, Guinea-Bissau, Timor-Leste, Haiti, and Saint Kitts and Nevis. Other youth-related activities in SIDS include a school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) initiative in Samoa, implemented through capacity-building and the development of media programmes by media students.

A youth-based research initiative in Tonga, and a network in Cabo Verde, among other countries, were conducted to put into practice the acquired knowledge and skills received during a training on innovation management and entrepreneurship development.

• **Sport/physical education/anti-doping**

In the framework of the implementation of the International Convention against Doping in Sport, (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/anti-doping/international-convention-against-doping-in-sport/>), the Bahamas, Fiji and Jamaica have implemented project in 2017 to strengthen their national and regional capacities in the fight against doping. In 2016, the Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Grenada, Guyana and Singapore have benefitted from the support of the Anti-Doping Fund (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/anti-doping/fund-for-the-elimination-of-doping-in-sport/>)

In the field of physical education, sports and anti-doping, (<https://en.unesco.org/themes/sport-and-anti-doping>) 20 out of 24 countries in the Pacific region still do not have a sport policy.

Following a workshop organized by UNESCO in 2015, UNESCO, along with the Organization of Oceanic National Olympic Committees (ONOC), (<http://onoc.org.fj/>) developed the Pacific Sport Compass initiative (<http://pacificsportscompass.org/>) that was officially endorsed by the fourth meeting of Pacific Ministers of Sport in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, in July 2015. The initiative is currently being successfully implemented in the region.

**Youth Inclusion and Empowerment: Sport for Life Initiative**

As a partnership between UNESCO and an international NGO SportImpact, Sport for Life initiative was designed to build the capacity of young women and men in Timor-Leste to become change-makers. The idea behind the initiative is simple yet powerful: sport is a proven means for positive transformation and social inclusion of young people. From playing games with the peers in a schoolyard to a serious pursuit of a sports discipline, the practice opens a unique opportunity to learn important values and to engage in teamwork and cooperation. These lessons help to shape attitudes and provide models of good conduct that last a lifetime. The Sport for Life started in 2015 as a series of workshops delivered by SportImpact with UNESCO's support in all of the 13 municipalities of Timor-Leste, empowering the youth to develop solutions to their needs and to pursue their aspirations. In the second phase of the project launched in 2016, the focus shifted from municipal to sub-municipal level. To maintain a focus on local ownership, development and sustainability, the initiative followed a gradual empowerment strategy, where over time the project was handed over to the local actors. The participants of the Youth Training Camp graduate as the facilitators to take Sport for Life to the sub-municipality level. In each sub-municipality they run the five-day workshop to build the capacity of the local youth to organize sport events, followed by a one-day multi-sport event, co-organized with workshop participants and with as many local groups and organizations as possible. The events include all members of the community, especially hundreds of kids from the nearby schools.

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#### **In the area of Preserving Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage and Promoting Culture for Island Sustainable Development (P4):**

- **Enhance capacities to safeguard marine and underwater cultural heritage** (2001 Convention, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/underwater-cultural-heritage/2001-convention/>)  
~~Three-Two~~ (Guinea-Bissau and Guyana) SIDS ratified it and two SIDS adapted their national law. The Technical Advisory Body (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/underwater-cultural-heritage/2001-convention/advisory-body/>) dispatched four technical mission, including one to assist Haiti in underwater cultural heritage preservation and management. One assistance project was undertaken in Cuba. Several SIDS participated in the meetings of the governing bodies of the Convention.
- **Preservation of movable heritage** (1970 Convention <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illegal-trafficking-of-cultural-property/1970-convention/>)  
~~Six~~ SIDS were supported in the integration of the Conventions provisions, and eight SIDS benefited from awareness-raising initiatives. Several SIDS participated in the meetings of the governing bodies of the Convention as well as in the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation.
- **Safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and traditional knowledge** (2003 Convention <https://ich.unesco.org/en/convention>).  
Six SIDS were supported in the integration of the Convention's provisions in national laws or policies. ~~Seven-Nine~~ SIDS ratified the Convention. ~~Five-Three~~ periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention at the national level were submitted by SIDS State Parties and three were examined by the committee. Moreover, human and institutional resources for intangible cultural heritage were strengthened in 13 SIDS. Several SIDS participated in the meetings of the governing bodies of the Convention.
- **Promotion of ~~living heritage~~ diversity of cultural expressions, cultural and creative industries** (2005 Convention, <http://en.unesco.org/creativity/convention>)  
~~Two-Five~~ SIDS ratified the Convention. ~~Five-Nine~~ SIDS applied for funding from the International Fund

for Cultural Diversity. ~~Three-Four~~ SIDS adopted national policies (~~Barbados, Seychelles,~~ Mauritius, ~~Barbados~~Samoa, Seychelles) that promote the diversity of cultural expressions, including cultural goods, services and activities. ~~One-Two~~ SIDS ~~was-were~~ supported to integrate the Convention into ~~their~~ national cultural policy (Samoa) ~~and status of the artist legislation (Mauritius)~~. ~~One-Two~~ SIDS submitted ~~its-their~~ quadrennial report (Cuba, ~~Saint Vincent and the Grenadines~~). Several SIDS participated in the meetings of the governing bodies of the Convention.

- **World Heritage (1972 Convention, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/convention/>)**

Several SIDS participated in the meetings of the governing bodies of the Convention.

~~One-Two~~ SIDS ratified the Convention. Four SIDS Parties developed new or revised Tentative Lists, and three SIDS submitted nomination files conforming to prescribed requirements. Eight SIDS applied to World Heritage Fund International Assistance. (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/intassistance>). ~~One-Two~~ SIDS ~~were~~ supported in the integration of the Convention's provisions in national laws or policies.

Management of culturally sensitive and responsible **sustainable tourism** was encouraged through reinforcement of staff capacity in 13 SIDS World Heritage properties, focusing on sustainable tourism in two properties. Two properties in SIDS contributed to sustainable tourism development.

One World Heritage marine (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/marine-programme/>) property in SIDS revised its management plan, and managers from six SIDS World Heritage marine properties exchanged management solutions and best practices. Two partnerships were developed in SIDS for conservation. (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/sids/>). A survey on the upstream process was launched in early 2017 in order to develop harmonized proposals for implementation of the 1972 Convention, in particular, to address the needs of SIDS.

Youth from 10 Caribbean SIDS were involved in the "World Heritage Youth Project on Marine Biodiversity and Climate Change".

#### **In the area of Increasing connectivity, information management and knowledge sharing (P5):**

- **Media Freedom, media self-regulation and professional journalism**

Activities focused on training needs of SIDS media associations. Media associations of Samoa and Tonga were supported through capacity development activities to develop journalism code of ethics to be able to produce resources on safety of journalists and on ethical reporting of gender based violence cases.

- **Memory of the World programme (MOW)**

In the Pacific SIDS, the focus has been put on Samoa, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and Fiji. These countries have been supported through consultations and training workshops on preparing nominations for the MOW Register and also to develop good recordkeeping and archiving policies. I

- **International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC)**

In 2017, many proposals from SIDS for the IPDC grant were successful, including Cuba, Curuçao, Jamaica, Guyana, Maldives, Saint Lucia, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago and Tuvalu. One grant was allocated for a regional proposal for the Caribbean region.

- **Enabling Universal Access and Preservation of Information and Knowledge.**

A web-based Open Education Resources (OER) repository for teacher training based on the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) Competency Framework for Teachers (CFT), a framework that outlines the competencies that teachers need to integrate ICTs into their professional practice, was developed. This was following by a capacity building and networking workshop for experts from three regions (Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific) to support the development of a roster of national experts for ICT CFT in September 2017 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The Congress brought together Ministers of Education and Higher Education, decision-makers responsible for human resources development, senior policy makers, expert practitioners, researchers and relevant stakeholders. Some 500 participants attended the event from over 100 UNESCO Member States, including Ministers from Barbados, Kiribati and Mauritius.

In the area of universal access to information, a major international event was organized in 2017 in Mauritius, followed by technical support for national organizations in the country.

- **E-Learning for Remote Locations**

In 2017, SIDS Member States proposed that UNESCO include in its SIDS Action Plan, an element that would allow for SIDS to access support to develop their capabilities to use e-learning as a medium of delivery to achieve the SDG goal of education for all, using its competency areas of ICTs and education. In particular, ensuring the strategic use of Open Educational Resources and Teacher Training.

It was requested that through its partner networks, UNESCO could also solicit support on behalf of SIDS to develop policy, advisory and financial platforms for the use of renewable energy in packaging a framework that would use satellite and ICTs technology to deliver education to small and isolated communities in remote locations.

UNESCO Secretariat is currently analysing the project documentation with the aim for inclusion in the SIDS Action Plan.

## **DATA/STATISTICS in SIDS**

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) is implementing regional projects to improve the quality of education statistics in the SIDS regions. For instance, the project in the Pacific has conducted data quality assessments in Samoa, Tonga, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Papua New Guinea with the aim of supporting the development and implementation of national strategies for the development of education statistics. The UIS team works closely with regional organisations such as Cariscience in the Caribbean and the Pacific Community to build capacity in the regions for the production of quality statistics, particularly in the area of Education, science and technology.

The UNESCO UIS has also been mandated by the UNESCO Executive Board to “apply to its field data for UNESCO development programmes a disaggregated level of data for development indicators relating to SIDS, in order to facilitate better understanding of the impact of the categorizations of SIDS as developed and developing, and high, middle and low income, and to more adequately reflect the specificities of SIDS, taking account of the islands’ vulnerabilities linked to limitations of size and resources, economies of scale, indebtedness, external economic shocks and natural hazard occurrences.”

In response two progress reports were submitted by UIS to the Executive Board at its 200th (September 2016) and 202th sessions (September 2017):

- o [Report on progress by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics on a disaggregated level of data for](#)

- o [development indicators related to SIDS \(202 EX/5 Part I - E\)](#)
- o [Report on preliminary progress by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics on disaggregated level of data for development indicators related to SIDS \(200 EX/5\)](#)

## **PART D**

1. Indicate the extent to which the issues and concerns of SIDS are given due consideration in conferences or similar processes organized or supported by your organization during year 2017. In your explanation, please include the purpose, frequency, size (funds, participation) of the conference.

See the list of UNESCO 2017 events that concern SIDS in ANNEX 1 at the bottom of this document.

## **PART E**

1. Have you implemented any new partnerships during the year 2017?

o **BRIDGING THE GAP: DRIVING PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GLOBAL ACTION PROGRAMME (GAP) ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ESD)**

Achievements since the beginning of the partnership include:

- ✓ In **Tonga**, a workshop to train teachers and curriculum staff on integration of ESD elements such as cultural knowledge, healthy lifestyles, sustainable livelihoods and climate change into secondary school curriculum was completed in June 2015
- ✓ **Vanuatu** was also supported in the capacity development of key secondary teachers (where curriculum integration was most relevant) to plan for and deliver Climate Change Education and Fisheries Education (14 participants, 57%female).
- ✓ In **Tuvalu**, climate change education workshops have been conducted (20 participants, 60% female and 27 participants, 70% female). These focused on teachers developing effective and creative ways to deliver lessons pertaining to climate change impacts. The second workshop gave an opportunity for new teachers to also participate. Youth were also invited to some workshop sessions as young community leaders so that the learning could be taken beyond the formal education sector.
- ✓ **Fiji** completed the development and official launch of the Resource Book on climate change and disaster risk reduction using traditional knowledge in May 2016. A total number of 140 primary schools were selected for trialing the resource book and a workshop was conducted in June for all primary level teachers in Vanua Levu island on integrating the resource book into their planning and classroom activities.
- ✓ The resource book assists teachers in teaching students about disaster risk reduction and climate change using local, traditional knowledge so that they are able to adapt and respond to changes in the environment when they face natural disasters. These resources enhance the opportunity for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction learning outcomes
- ✓ **Niue** completed the translation of their literacy and numeracy standards into Vagahau Niue in efforts to enhance transmission of indigenous language. Support was also given to the printing of journals for junior secondary levels (Y7-10) in the vernacular to increase student access to relevant written resources in Vagahau Niue. As a follow up, and to maintain momentum, in-service workshops were

conducted to reinforce important elements and values of the uniqueness of being a Niuean teacher not only towards improving teachers understanding of their culture, heritage and language, but its importance in building identity and resilience in the young people of Niue (10 participants, 90% female).

Education for Sustainable development in its broadest sense, that it is education for the SDGs, was to consider ensuring the SDGs were reflected in curricula, that the human capacity to support education was provided and that ensuring education systems had ways by and activities to find answer to dynamic issues.

The role of technology in education was discussed in many different fora. Seen as a way of improving access and participation as well as providing 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, the importance of people being supported to take advantage of technological change was stressed rather than simply providing infrastructure of making resources available online.

Empowering teachers to be innovative and creative to meet the needs to students and help them envisage their future was also at the forefront of many discussions.

The issue of data, or lack thereof, was also raised a number of times. The importance of data was understood by all. However, the capacity of countries to respond to multiple data requests without necessarily knowing for what purpose or how the data would be used raised concerns. Multiple countries called on those agencies asking for and using data to better streamline requests.

Culture and its role in education was emphasised. This was mainly from those participants from Africa and the Pacific regions. Links between language, culture, identity, youth and education were discussed. A call for more research in this area and how it influences policy and pedagogical approaches was made.

#### **Education for Sustainable Development/Climate Change Education programmes**

- addressed curriculum review that takes holistic action for the SDGs
- considerable discussion on ESD in the TVET curriculum with a focus on skills for blue and green economies and qualifications for resilience.
- need integrated pedagogies as teaching in silos will not work
- recognise the role of culture as an entry point to much ESD
- recognise the strong positioning of ESD/GCE in meeting the needs of SDG4.7
- the importance of recognising “resilience literacy” – the set of attitudes and competencies allowing an individual and community to survive.

#### **o IMPROVING TRANSITIONS FROM SCHOOL TO WORK THROUGH ENGAGING YOUTH IN POLICY DIALOGUE**

The UNESCO Kingston Cluster Officer for the Caribbean co-hosted the Third Caribbean Conference on Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) with the School of Education of the University of West Indies (SOE/UWI) in Montego Bay, Jamaica, from the 09-12 May 2017, in collaboration with the UNESCO International Centre for Vocation Education (Bonn) and UNESCO HQs. In coordination with ILO, UNESCO Kingston organized a webinar on the of “Designing effective programmes to promote youth entrepreneurship” for the Caribbean practitioners by mobilizing expert presenters from Europe and the Caribbean who shared a number of promising practices, sub-regional and global trends. In the area of youth, UNESCO has promoted youth citizen entrepreneurship, coordination of youth networks,

provided upstream advice on youth policies, and formal participation in Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECES) policymaking on youth issues.

Specifically, in UNESCO and the Commonwealth supported for the finalization of the draft National Youth Policy in Saint Kitts and Nevis, as well as the elaboration of an Action Plan for its implementation. Following the revision made by the Federal Youth Policy Steering Committee and further technical personnel, on 28 March last, a culminating Federal Youth Policy Consultation inclusive of all stakeholders and youth-serving agencies in the Federation was held.

o **SANDWATCH:**

The UNESCO Sandwatch project has so far produced considerable results since its implementation, including; cooperation with local communities and Government officials, data collection, integration of Sandwatch in national curricula in the context on education for sustainable development, students involvement in the management of the coastal environment as well as student proposals for decision-makers on the sustainable development of coastal areas.

In 2017 the project has been expanded in additional schools in the participating countries in the Caribbean, the Pacific, and the AIMS region. In addition, a UNESCO Sandwatch regional workshop for the Caribbean was held in Trinidad in October 2017. 40 representatives from Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, Guyana, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago, learned how to enroll young people, their parents and communities, in the protection and preservation of their coastal areas, including their related waterways and wetlands through the Sandwatch MAST (Measure, Analyze, Share, Take action) methodology. The objectives were to provide participants with the necessary training and capacity-building on the necessary tools which will enable them to: i) enhance their communities' resilience in the face of climate change; ii) train school students in the scientific observation and measurement of beaches; iii) and assists school students to scientifically collect data and use the results of their scientific monitoring to manage the region's beaches, by designing and implementing small projects to improve and enhance their coastal environment.

o **SUPPORTING COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN THE PACIFIC**

The project supports Ministries of Education and other Institutions to provide quality and comprehensive approaches to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) education at primary and secondary school levels. The program will contribute to the development of future Pacific Island leaders who are sensitized to the issues of SRH and gender equality.

A UNFPA led proposal of 5 components has integrated the Family Life Education proposal jointly developed by UNESCO and UNFPA in 2014 and successfully been submitted to DFAT for funding in 2018. UNESCO will now work with UNFPA to disburse the funding of the Family Life Education component and commence the activities.

In Samoa the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC) developed a national violence-free schools policy in the late quarter of 2015 which was finalized in 2017. This policy was used as an entry point for the UNESCO Purple My School campaign highlighting stigma and discrimination against LGBTI students and ways to address this issue. Three workshops were held targeting teachers and health service providers in Upolu in the year 2015-16.

o **PROMOTING SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION THROUGH CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION IN ASIA-PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**

This partnership, which aimed to evaluate climate change related loss and damage in the Pacific, was completed in 2017. With financial support from the Government of Malaysia, UNESCO has been working with the University of the South Pacific's Pacific Centre for the Environment and Sustainable Development to better understand the processes by which communities experience loss and damage in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste.

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Through the course of the research phase of the project, communities articulated complex situations where they were impacted by a range of climate stressors. The communities were confronting these challenges with determination and intelligence. However, socio-economic marginalisation, geographic remoteness, and human impacts on the ecosystems in which they live limited the success of their coping and adaptation interventions.

The results of this project were launched at the UNFCCC CoP23 in Bonn in November 2017. The results show how loss and damage is not only an issue for SDG 13, but has the potential to disrupt progress towards all the SDGs, including SDG2 (food security), SDG6 (water), SDG 10 (reduced inequality), SDG 15 (life on land), etc. There is therefore a need to address the impacts of climate change from a holistic perspective that is based on an improved understanding of the constraints, opportunities and ingenuities of communities in SIDS.

## **PART F**

Please include any other information you may wish to share, including links and reports (page and sections specified)

Thank you.

## Annex 1

UNESCO Events related to or including SIDS undertaken in 2017		
Title of the Process/Conference	Date/location	Summary
<a href="#">Advanced training workshop on education for sustainable development for teachers and educators in Asian-Pacific Region</a>	11-15 December, 2017 China, Beijing	The main objective of the training workshop was to share best practices and empower participants and their institutions with skills to mainstream ESD at national level. It further aimed to scale up ESD implementation at all levels, formal and non-formal education. The training aimed to connect the linkages and synergies between ESD GAP and the 17 SDGs and in particular target SDG4.7 on education for sustainable development.
<a href="#">Assembly of the Latin American and Caribbean Coalition against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia</a>	29-30 November, 2017 Argentina. Córdoba	At The Assembly of the Latin American and Caribbean Coalition against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia, the draft of the "Guide: Addressing international human mobility towards the SDGs" was presented. It is a practical guide for local governments in Latin America and the Caribbean, presented by the CIPDH, UNESCO Montevideo and the Coalition.
<a href="#">Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Cities</a>	28-30 November 2017, India, New Delhi	UNESCO is promoting ESD through the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD, the official follow-up to the UN Decade of ESD. The Asia-Pacific regional workshop focused on generating and scaling up ESD action at all levels and in all areas of education, and in all sustainable development sectors. The 17 SDGs provide the wider context for the further upscaling and mainstreaming of ESD.
<a href="#">Asia-Pacific Conference on Underwater Cultural Heritage</a>	27 November – 2 December, 2017 China, Hong Kong	The Asia-Pacific Conference on Underwater Cultural Heritage took place at the Hong Kong Maritime Museum and was the third in the series of Asia-Pacific conferences, following Manila (2011) and Honolulu (2014). Under the theme " <i>The Maritime Cultural Landscapes and Seascapes of Asia-Pacific: Voyaging, Migration, Colonization, Trade, and Cross-Cultural Contacts</i> "; the Asia-Pacific Conference on Underwater Cultural Heritage (APConf) aimed to address management and protection strategies on underwater cultural heritage in Asia and the countries of the Indian and Pacific Oceans in the 21st century. The Conference facilitated regional cooperation among academic, non-governmental organizations, and governmental networks in the region, and provide a forum for discussion of technical and ethical issues related to underwater cultural heritage and underwater archaeology.
<a href="#">Statutory Meeting of the International Scientific Committee of the Slave Route Project</a>	27-29 November, 2017 Mauritius, Port Louis	The statutory meeting of the International Scientific Committee for the Slave Route Project: Resistance, Liberty, Heritage took place in Port Louis, Mauritius. This meeting was co-organized by the Ministry of Arts and Culture of the Mauritius Government in close cooperation with the Slave Route project.  The role of this advisory body was to advise UNESCO on the implementation of the project, in particular with regard to the development of educational material and programmes, research into various aspects of the slave trade and slavery and the formation of new partnerships to promote its objectives.
<a href="#">Orientation and training workshop on education sector responses to school-related gender-based Violence and early and unintended pregnancy in the Caribbean region</a>	20-22 November, 2017 Saint Lucia, Gros Islet	The workshop provided an opportunity to strengthen understanding of the issue of school-related gender-based Violence (SRGBV) in the Caribbean region and its consequences, and to review available data and existing entry points. The workshop was also intended to disseminate and build capacity in Member States to implement recommendations included in the Global Guidance on SRGBV, recently published by UNESCO and UN Women.
<a href="#">Small Island Developing States Action Day at COP23</a>	14 November, 2017 Germany, Bonn	The Action Day provided an opportunity to bring together experts, policy-makers, government officials, civil society and community representatives to engage in a transdisciplinary

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		dialogue about SIDS and climate change impacts, mitigation and adaptation. The event was focusing on the following elements: Innovative approaches to address Loss and Damage at national and local level; Strengthen communities & ecosystems resilience: Pacific RESCCUE & INTEGRÉ; Citizen science participatory production of climate change-related data to enhance community resilience, and support policy planning and decision-making; Building bridges between local & indigenous knowledge holders, scientists and policy-makers; UNESCO contribution to strengthen resilience to weather related hazards in the Caribbean.
<a href="#">IIRD Regional Seminar on Higher Education in Bioethics "Establishing common standards in Higher Education in Bioethics in Latin America and the Caribbean"</a>	2-3 November, 2017 Brazil, Brasilia	<p>The seminar aimed to establish common standards in higher education in bioethics in Latin America and the Caribbean. The coordinators of master's and PhD degrees in bioethics from 15 universities of Latin America and the Caribbean met in Brasilia, Brazil.</p> <p>The objectives of this 3rd Seminar were: The construction and promotion of high standards in higher education in bioethics and to elaborate consensuses for the LAC region; Discuss conceptual frameworks, objectives, educational methodologies and contents, as well as evaluation methodologies; Review the agreements (conclusions and recommendations) that were established at the Bogotá II Seminar (2015); To emphasize and if necessary ratify the convictions of the Letter of Intent of Lima (2013); Discuss some issues that could expand the agenda of higher education in bioethics; Reflect on the context and the situation of Higher Education in LAC where the programs of Bioethics are developed to strengthen the regional network on higher education with a plan of action involving all the actors.</p>
<a href="#">Massive Open Online Course – Inequalities in Latin America and the Caribbean: Research, Policy and Management of Social Transformations</a>	30 October – 26 November, 2017	The Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) in Spanish on "Inequalities in Latin America and the Caribbean: research, policy and management for social transformations", is a pilot edition, oriented to ten countries of the region, including one SIDS, the Dominican Republic.
<a href="#">Multi-stakeholder Consultation on Tuvalu National Culture Policy: Strategic Plan 2018-2024</a>	17-18 October, 2017 Tuvalu, Funafuti	<p>The Ministry of Home Affairs and Rural Development in Tuvalu organised a Multi-stakeholder Consultation on Tuvalu National Culture Policy: Strategic Plan 2018-2024 in Funafuti.</p> <p>Tuvalu faces several development challenges as one of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The National Strategy for Sustainable Development (2016-2020) (TK III) addresses these challenges and provides important guidelines on Tuvalu's sustainable development. With regard to the culture sector, TK III identifies the need to reinvigorate culture for sustainable development through the elaboration of a Tuvalu National Culture Policy (TNCP). Based on this, a Draft Tuvalu National Culture Policy (TNCP): Strategic Plan 2018-2024 has been developed through an extensive consultative process in 2016-2017 and policy support from UNESCO. The TNCP aims to raise a profile of the culture sector and provide a strategic direction in order to ensure a more visible and effective integration of culture into economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, within the framework of TK III.</p>
<a href="#">Upscaling ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction investments to reduce disaster risks</a>	13 October, 2017 Belgium, Brussels	This event, organized on the International Day for Disaster Reduction, aimed at showing evidence of the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of community-level, ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction (eco-DRR) and climate change adaptation solutions. Investments in ecosystem-based DRR strategies have a great potential for cost-effective avoidance of damages and casualties from disasters, while offering multiple benefits to society.

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<p><a href="#">Sandwatch: A combined citizen science approach to climate change adaptation and education for sustainable development</a></p>	<p>2-5 October, 2017 Trinidad and Tobago, Port of Spain</p>	<p>The training workshop discussed the role of citizen science in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and provided training on the Sandwatch methodology on coastal monitoring. Some goals of the workshop were: • To enhance the knowledge base and develop capacity to respond to environmental change, shoreline and beach change, climate change and sustainable development among school, youth and community groups in the Caribbean. • To stimulate the use of the online database for data entry and analysis of observations and measurements of shoreline and beach changes. • To provide participants with the skills to set up Sandwatch activities and link new schools into the existing Sandwatch network. • To engage curriculum developers in integrating Sandwatch in the national curricula, particularly in the context of education for sustainable development.</p>
<p><a href="#">Overcoming Divides: Achieving the SDGs in Africa</a></p>	<p>27-30 September, 2017 Mauritius, Balaclava</p>	<p>The high-level celebration event took place in Balaclava, Mauritius and was focusing on Universal Access to Information and Knowledge, International Cooperation on InfoEthics Achieving SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Good Institutions, and International Cooperation on Education and Digital Inclusion to "Leave no one behind".</p>
<p><a href="#">Creative activities and regeneration of territories: which potentials for cultural and environmental activities in Small Island Developing States</a></p>	<p>19 September, 2017 France, Paris</p>	<p>The objective of this seminar was to create a forum for exchange and dialogue between actors from different backgrounds in order to put forward concrete proposals for the further implementation of the UNESCO SIDS Action Plan and to assist in the definition of social, economic and environmental policies for these vulnerable countries.</p> <p>During the seminar, the reflection group, consisting of SIDS representatives, policy makers and members of civil societies (NGOs, academics, artists, etc.) in cooperation with UNESCO, addressed the following themes: Cultural and creative industries (CCI) to support the Sustainable Development Programme 2030 : the case of SIDS; Sustainable tourism in the sites of World Heritage «Enhancing the best practices of the tourism sector in terms of contribution to the creative economy»; Environmental issues in SIDS; The effects of new technologies</p>
<p><a href="#">Pacific Heritage Workshop</a></p>	<p>30 August – 1 September, 2017 Palau, Koror</p>	<p>The Pacific Heritage Workshop brought together government officials in charge of heritage safeguarding in member states and territories in the Pacific, regional intergovernmental organisations and regional NGOs, Category II Centres in Asia and observers. The objectives of this Workshop were to provide an opportunity to enhance the capacity of stakeholders through sharing information on progress in the Pacific World Heritage Action Plan 2016 - 2020 and to gain a better understanding of the Hague Convention and the Underwater Cultural Heritage Convention, promoting an integrated approach to the safeguarding of land-based and underwater heritage in the Pacific.</p>
<p><a href="#">Third Regional Seminar of Bioethics National Committees of Latin America and the Caribbean</a></p>	<p>9-10 August, 2017 Uruguay, Montevideo</p>	<p>The main goal of the event was the exchange of good practices for the creation, operation and strengthening of NBCs. The aim was to consolidate a common space for identification of the main needs and difficulties of existing NBCs and seek opportunities for mutual cooperation within the framework of the Latin American and the Caribbean Network of NBCs created in 2013.</p>
<p><a href="#">Capacity-Building Workshop on the Implementation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Convention and Community-based ICH Inventorying</a></p>	<p>24-29 July, 2017 Tuvalu, Funafuti</p>	<p>The Capacity Building Workshop on the Implementation of the ICH Convention and Community-based ICH Inventorying took place in Funafuti, Tuvalu. Over the years, the Tuvalu government and the people of Tuvalu have actively engaged in the safeguarding of its Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) for community well-being and sustainable development. This has been done under the Culture Programme of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Rural Development in particular through the participation of the Tuvalu delegation in the Festival of Pacific Arts, held every four years in one of the Pacific islands since 1972. The Tuvalu government accepted the UNESCO</p>

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		Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in May 2017. It is now urgent for Tuvalu as a state party to build the capacity to start implementing the ICH Convention at the national level.
<a href="#">Strengthening Science-Policy-Society for Sustainability and Biodiversity Conservation in ASEAN and Asia Pacific Region</a>	19-21 June, 2017, Philippines, Manila	The Regional Workshop entitled, <i>Strengthening Science-Policy-Society interface for Sustainability and Biodiversity Conservation in ASEAN and Asia Pacific Region</i> , was the final activity of two projects, in order to showcase the achievement from both projects. The first day aimed at showcasing sustainability and biodiversity in ASEAN through UNESCO Designated Sites and ASEAN Heritage Parks, policy recommendations from SHARP sustainability science demonstration projects, and science-policy-society integration for ASEAN countries. The second day brought the discussions to a broader context for Asia Pacific, with a broader focus on the implementation for water related issues on UNESCO sites. The third day of workshop was used to produce recommendations for a Policy Guidelines paper for enhancing environmental sustainability in UNESCO Sites and ASEAN Heritage Parks (a policy paper on science-policy-society interface).
<a href="#">3<sup>rd</sup> Regional Ethics Teacher Training Course in Trinidad and Tobago</a>	13-16 June, 2017 Trinidad and Tobago, Port of Spain	The purpose of the third Regional Ethics Teacher Training Course was to enable expert teachers by giving them methodological tools in bioethics education (deliberative method, problematizing methodology, use of cases, problem-based learning etc.) and offer them special strategies such as TICs and art at different levels. The course also included introductory items on the disciplinary bioethics paradigm and educational contents, such as the human rights approach, and social and environmental issues.
<a href="#">UNESCO Memory of the World Workshop: Promoting South East Asia's Audio Visual Heritage</a>	7-8 June, 2017 Singapore, Singapore	<p>The workshop aimed to share information about the Memory of the World (MoW) programme with stakeholders from Southeast Asia, and to support them in identifying potential moving images, sound recordings and other audio-visual works for potential inscription on MoW registers.</p> <p>Southeast Asia is home to a rich audio-visual heritage closely tied to regional and national identities, history and cultures. But there is a lack of representation of this heritage on national, regional and international Memory of the World (MoW) registers. The workshop aimed to address this challenge by sharing information about MoW with stakeholders from the region, and to support them in identifying potential moving images, sound recordings and other audio-visual works for potential inscription on MoW registers.</p>
<a href="#">Pacific Regional Consultation for the 2<sup>nd</sup> World OER Congress</a>	29-30 May, 2017 New Zealand, Auckland	The objectives of the Regional Consultations are to: Identify the current status vis-à-vis the recommendations made at the 1st World OER Congress among key stakeholders namely governments, policy makers, the OER community and the wider education community; Initiate discussions among the key stakeholders regarding the identified challenges to mainstreaming OER as highlighted in the outcome report of the OER Road Map meeting; Build awareness among key stakeholders about the objectives of the 2nd World OER Congress and make recommendations for consideration; Encourage more governments to commit to the adoption of open licensing policies for teaching and learning materials developed with public funds.
<a href="#">Regional Workshop on Strengthening and Standardizing Coordinating Mechanisms for Tsunami Warning in Central America from the 8 to 9 May 2017</a>	8 May, 2017 Costa Rica, San José	<p>This Workshop aimed to share national experiences about the Standard Operative Procedures formulation and to share strategic aspects related to the Regional Protocol proposal for tsunami early warning.</p> <p>This workshop aimed on one hand to increase coordination dynamics between the organisms whose role is related to the Tsunamis early warnings from a regional perspective. On the</p>

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		other hand, it aimed to share experiences and progress carried out in the Operative Standard Procedures as well as technical, methodological and strategic aspects related to the Regional Protocol for Tsunami warning.
<a href="#">Regional Meeting: Learning to Live Sustainably in Cities in Latin America and the Caribbean</a>	26-28 April, 2017 Argentina, Villa Maria	The meeting was a joint effort of Villa Maria and UNESCO (including the UNESCO Global Action Programme on ESD, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean). Delegates from 40 municipalities in Latin America and the Caribbean convened to share knowledge and build capacities related to the learning city approach. Participants explored ways to enhance education and lifelong learning in their respective cities and promote Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at the local level.
<a href="#">Presentation of the Water Information Network System at the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development</a>	25 April, 2017 Mexico, Ciudad de Mexico	The Water Information Network System (IHP-WINS) was designed by UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme to assist Member States in monitoring and implementing the Sustainable Development Goal to "ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all" (SDG6). It will be presented by UNESCO and IMTA-IINGEN-UNAM during the Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Countries on Sustainable Development.  The Water Information Network System is an open source and open access platform that combines geolocalized data. It was developed by UNESCO-IHP to serve as a global reference in the design and support of operations, management, and decision support functions for sound water resources governance.
<a href="#">Training for media students on school related gender based violence</a>	21 April, 2017 Samoa, Apia	UNESCO Apia was organizing an information session for Media and Journalism students of the National University of Samoa on school-related gender based violence (SRGBV). This activity is part of UNESCO's support to the Media and Journalism Programme in which students are supported to produce media series about the issue of SRGBV in Samoa.  The was training focusing on: (i) key concepts about gender, violence and school related gender based violence; (ii) the role of the media in addressing SRGBV; and (iii) guidelines and ethics in gender based violence reporting.
<a href="#">Technical Follow-up Meeting to the Regional Ministerial Meeting in Buenos Aires: Regional Roadmap for the Implementation of Education 2030 in Latin America and the Caribbean</a>	6-7 April, 2017 Chile, Santiago	OREALC/UNESCO Santiago was organizing a meeting with a technical group of representatives of Latin American and Caribbean countries and education partners to work on the drafting of roadmap for the implementation of SDG 4 – Education 2030. It was establishing direction, key initiatives and a timeline specific to the context and priorities of the region, presenting short-term actions and milestones between 2017 and 2019 and suggesting policies and strategies to be undertaken at the regional and national levels both by countries and by partners.
<a href="#">Indigenous knowledge in Latin America. Experiences and opportunities for an education policy with an intercultural approach in the Education 2030 Agenda</a>	5 April, 2017 Chile, Santiago	This meeting was gathering specialists from various ministries of education in the region to review experiences on the inclusion of concepts of indigenous knowledge in the implementation of education policies. The following elements were discussed during the meeting: • Educational situation of indigenous peoples in several countries in the region; review of the programs and initiatives that the education ministries are carrying out and their relation with the knowledge of the native peoples; • Policies aimed at strengthening the bilingual intercultural approach of the educational models in force in the region, within the framework of the new educational goals established by the Education 2030 Agenda; • Teacher and teaching policies, recognition of traditional educators and traditional education models (or that transmit knowledge), their insertion within the cultures of indigenous peoples; • Inclusive, quality education to reduce inequality between indigenous and non-indigenous students, with special

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		emphasis on student learning.
<a href="#">Pacific Dialogue on Science and Science Policy</a>	29-30 March, 2017 Samoa, Apia	This high-level meeting will enable dialogue aiming to assess the needs and options for bridging the gaps between science, technology and innovation (ST&I) systems and policy-makers in the Pacific SIDS, within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals and UNESCO's SIDS Action Plan. It provided an opportunity for dialogue amongst Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) and an opportunity to consider the Pacific Regional Science, Technology and Innovation Roadmap developed by Pace-Net + consortium. The event was build on existing practices and initiatives in the region, for instance, the ST&I policy initiatives in Tonga, Papua-New Guinea and others.
<a href="#">1<sup>st</sup> MOST Forum of Ministers of Social Development for the Asia-Pacific Region</a>	20-23 March, 2017 Malaysia, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur	The 1st MOST Forum of Ministers of Social Development for the Asia-Pacific Region will focus on the theme "Building Inclusive Societies in Asia-Pacific" including the following sub-themes : ageing; women; and social innovation. Its main objective was to share knowledge, expertise and experience on developing and implementing innovative, evidence-based, effective public policies and to establish relevant, credible, and actionable agendas for translating rigorous social science knowledge into policy action within the theme of the Forum.
<a href="#">XXXVII Meeting of National Coordinators of the Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education</a>	14-16 March, 2017 Costa Rica, San Jose	The objectives of this meeting were to review the progress of the actions conducted by the technical coordination of LLECE and to agree upon the laboratory's upcoming initiatives, specifically those related to the Fourth Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (ERCE).
<a href="#">Capacity Building Workshop on Developing Nominations to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Lists in Fiji</a>	20-24 February, 2017 Fiji, Suva	This Workshop aimed at providing government officials, Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) bearers and practitioners, NGO representatives, academics, and community leaders in Fiji with the opportunity to learn how to develop nomination files for inscription in the ICH Lists established by the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Through lectures, field visit, group exercise and discussions, the participants obtained knowledge and skills necessary for developing nomination files for the Representative List of the ICH of Humanity and the List of ICH in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.
<a href="#">Launch of the Portuguese version of the 3rd Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE III) in Latin America and the Caribbean</a>	15 February, 2017 Brazil, Brasilia	The launch of the third Global Report on Adult Learning and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean took place in Brasilia, Brazil, during a seminar, which launched the Portuguese version of the report and presented Adult Learning and Education (ALE) in the world, in the LAC region and in Brazil.  The GRALE III Report draws on monitoring surveys completed by 139 UNESCO Member States to develop a differentiated picture of the global state of ALE. It evaluates countries' progress in fulfilling the commitments they made in the Belém Framework for Action, which was adopted at the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFITEA VI) in 2009.
<a href="#">University seminars for the Fight Against Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property and promotion of its restitution in Central America</a>	13-28 February, 2017 Costa Rica, San Jose	In the framework of the project to strengthen national capacities in the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property and promotion of its restitution in Central America and Dominican Republic, the seminars which took place in February 2017, in at least one university of each beneficiary country of the project. The aim is to involve youth population in this issue.  The urgent need for Latin American and Caribbean countries to adopt a regional position towards the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property is explicitly mentioned in the Final Declaration of the Third Meeting of the Ministers of

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		Culture of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, which took place in La Habana, Cuba on 18th and 19th of September 2015.
<a href="#">Inventorying the Cultural and Natural Heritage of Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines</a>	8-13 February, 2017 Grenada, Carriacou	Capacity-building activity to assist Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the development of inventories of cultural and natural heritage in Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The activity focused on inventorying the natural and cultural heritage of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada through the Grenadines Island group, in line with the 1972 World Heritage Convention.
<a href="#">Second Project Report Meeting on the Quality Education for All: Math and Science Curriculum Revision Project</a>	1-2 February, 2017 Timor-Leste, Dili	UNESCO Jakarta hosted a 2-day meeting to report the project activities and coordination works to support the Timor-Leste Science and Mathematics curriculum revision for the third cycle, Basic Education (Junior High School).
<a href="#">Public engagement in science and technology in Latin America and the Caribbean – RedPop experience</a>	27 January, 2017 France, Paris	Mrs Massarani was exceptionally visiting UNESCO to present her work and experience with RedPop on science communication and public engagement in science and technology in Latin America and the Caribbean to the Natural Sciences Sector.
<a href="#">Meeting of the International Scientific Committee of Volume IX of the General History of Africa</a>	23-28 January, 2017 Cuba, Havana	The International Scientific Committee of Volume IX of the General History of Africa held its fifth meeting in Havana, Cuba. The main objective of the meeting was to assess the progress of the work, review and validate the latest papers submitted by the authors and discuss the modalities for finalizing the volume by the end of 2017.

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News linked to SIDS		
Title of the Process/Conference	Date/location	Summary
<a href="#">Biosphere reserves of Ibero-America and the Caribbean adopt Action Plan for 2018-2015</a>	14/05/2018	The main objective of the IberoMAB Action Plan was the adaptation of the Lima Action Plan for the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (2016-2025) to the reality of the Ibero-American and Caribbean biosphere reserves. The document is a guide that serves as a basis for initiatives, actions and projects that will be carried out in IberoMAB biosphere reserves in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
<a href="#">IPDC supports 49 new media development projects</a>	07/05/2018	The approved projects cover 35 countries and include six regional ventures, including seven projects in Latin America and the Caribbean. The successful project proposals cover areas such as building resilience among Caribbean journalists in the age of climate change. Most of the projects approved are transformative, providing local media stakeholders with new skills that impact not only on their professional capacities but also on the capacity of the communities they serve to access information and make informed decisions.
<a href="#">Fostering gender-sensitive journalism and media across the world</a>	07/05/2018	The UniTWIN Network for Gender, Media and ICTs brought together 19 universities to promote gender equality in and through media on a global scale through research, education and participation. The Network is uniquely placed to develop a truly intercultural and globally relevant curriculum, co-operating among countries and regions to bring together research and effective education. The Project responds to an urgent need identified by UNESCO and the Network, to equip a new generation of media practitioners and journalists with gender-sensitive skills, so that gender equality can improve both in their workplaces and in the content, they produce.
<a href="#">Community Resilience Nurtured by Intangible Cultural Heritage</a>	06/05/2018	Vanuatu was chosen as a venue for the Capacity Building Workshop on the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and Community Resilience in the light of the fact that its diverse ICH has been exposed to natural disasters and climate threats. The participants learned the mechanisms for the implementation of the ICH Convention at the national level, in particular, the Community-based ICH Inventorying (CBI) methodology.
<a href="#">Opening of South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Centre</a>	04/05/2018	The South China Sea region now has its own dedicated Tsunami Advisory Centre, established in Beijing. The South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Centre serves as a warning system for nine countries, including one SIDS, Singapore.
<a href="#">The Culture of Testing: Sociocultural Impacts on Learning in Asia and the Pacific</a>	11/04/2018	In many countries in Asia and the Pacific, high-stakes examinations are the means for controlling access to better schools, higher education and greater life opportunities. This study, following on from UNESCO's 2015 Rethinking Education, and within the SDG4-Education 2030 backdrop, examines the social and cultural values of the quality of education.
<a href="#">Three women-led projects in biosphere reserves receive "Terres de Femmes" International prize</a>	11/04/2018	Estrela Matilde of the Principe Island Biosphere Reserve in Sao Tome and Principe, was distinguished for the participatory waste management models whose objective is to promote women's entrepreneurship on the island, notably through jewelry making through the recycling of glass, to offer original and ecological products to tourists
<a href="#">UNESCO Open Data and Science Hackathon at FOSSASIA 2018 Summit in Singapore</a>	10/04/2018	92 participants from open source community across Asia joined on 24 and 25 March the UNESCO Open Data and Science Hackathon at the FOSSASIA Summit(link is external) that took place at the Life Long Learning Institute in Singapore, within the

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		framework of UNESCO's YouthMobile Initiative.
<a href="#">Education and Disability: Analysis of Data from 49 Countries</a>	28/03/2018	In-depth analysis confirms that persons with disabilities are less likely to ever start or complete education and acquire basic literacy skills
<a href="#">New UNESCO Chair for Gender and Vulnerability in Disaster Risk Reduction</a>	10/04/2018	The first UNESCO Chair for Gender and Vulnerability in Disaster Risk Reduction at Kobe University (Japan) was launched on 06 April 2018. This new Chair will help raise awareness on the importance of building disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies and programs that are both gender sensitive and inclusive.
<a href="#">Biosphere Reserves of Spain and Sao Tome and Principe sign a twinning agreement to share experiences in nature conservation and sustainable development</a>	05/04/2018	The biosphere reserves of Mariñas Coruñesas and Terras do Mandeo (Spain) and the Island of Príncipe (Sao Tome and Principe) signed a twinning agreement on Monday, 2 April 2018, in Pazo de Mariñán, Spain, to share experiences about nature conservation and sustainable development
<a href="#">The Asia Pacific Festival of Artists with Disabilities successfully celebrated extraordinary talents</a>	30/03/2018	The events within the True Colours Festival of Artists with Disabilities provided an opportunity to raise awareness around persons with disabilities in socio-cultural terms and to change negative impressions, stereotypes and discrimination towards artists with disabilities. Festival activities were targeted at leading people towards a better understanding of different disabilities, creating contact points where perceptions could change, and giving to disability-related organizations the opportunity for access to a wider audience.
<a href="#">Biodiversity and nature's contributions continue dangerous decline</a>	23/03/2018	The result of three years of work, the four regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services cover the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Africa, as well as Europe and Central Asia – the entire planet except the poles and the open oceans. The assessment reports were approved by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), in Medellín, Colombia, at the 6th session of its Plenary. IPBES has 129 State Members and four UN Institutional Partners: UNESCO, UNEP, FAO and UNDP.
<a href="#">IFAP and MOW Programmes Knowledge Society Policies and Legal Frameworks discussed in the Caribbean</a>	23/03/2018	The workshop was held on 19 and 20 March 2018 for countries and territories in the Eastern Caribbean. Several concrete aspects related to the implementation of this recommendation were also discussed by the 36 delegates from Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Grenada, Sint Maarten, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines who had gathered in Prospect, SVG to map the way forward for IFAP and MOW, two of UNESCO's Communication and Information Sector's flagship programmes in the Caribbean.
<a href="#">World Water Day 2018 - Access to Safe Water: Nature-Based Solutions for Tackling Water Challenges in the Pacific</a>	22/03/2018	Nature-based solutions can play an important role in improving the supply and quality of water and reducing the impact of natural disasters, according to the 2018 edition of the United Nations World Water Development Report. The study was presented by Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, and Gilbert Houngbo, Chair of UN-Water, at the 8th World Water Forum in Brasilia (Brazil).
<a href="#">Kingdom of Netherlands supports community preparedness and tsunami awareness in the Caribbean</a>	22/03/2018	In 2017, the Caribbean Tsunami Information Centre (CTIC) of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) made considerable progress to improve early warning systems, public awareness and preparedness in the region thanks to a €30,000 contribution from the Kingdom of Netherlands.
<a href="#">OASIIS Biennial Report 2018 – The value of social entrepreneurship toward sustainable development in UNESCO's World Network of Biosphere Reserves</a>	21/03/2018	The first OASIIS Biennial Report has been published 2 years after the online platform was launched in Lima, Peru at the 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves. OASIIS (Opening Access to Sustainable Independent Income Streams) is a collective asset for the MAB Programme, and for social entrepreneurs living within them. OASIIS aims to evidence and grow the impact of social entrepreneurs towards sustainable development by collecting novel data and connecting social entrepreneurs with opportunities across the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBRs).
<a href="#">Planting a seed for the future: Self-Regulation of the Media in Timor-Leste</a>	16/03/2018	The project will see systematic capacity building for the members of the press council, the secretariat and for the journalism students in Timor-Leste through South-South/North-South collaborations. There will also be awareness-raising activities and additional

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		training opportunities for journalists located in both the capital and provinces on professional standards and ethical journalism.
<a href="#">Caribbean Tests Tsunami Alert System</a>	13/03/2018	<p>Countries bordering the Caribbean held an exercise aiming to assess and update their tsunami preparedness.</p> <p>Known as Caribe Wave 18, the exercise tested the early warning systems established for tsunami and other coastal hazards in the region since 2005 under the aegis of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. It will also allow for an assessment of warning systems put in place by regional actors in charge of managing emergencies in the region.</p>
<a href="#">UNESCO joins the celebration of artists with disabilities in Asia-Pacific</a>	09/03/2018	<p>The True Colours Festival is the first time ever performing arts festival of music, dance and arts in the Asia-Pacific region, aiming to highlight the outstanding talents of artists with disabilities and to promote the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities in society. This event brings the opportunity to raise awareness about their talents and change the negative impressions, stereotypes and discrimination towards artists with disabilities.</p> <p>In this framework, the Artists Open Dialogue will foster the exchange of opinions on appropriate measures for the promotion of artists with disabilities with a range of different stakeholders such as representatives of governments, civil society, academics, industries, and last but not least artists with disabilities. This discussion will focus on the current situation of socio-cultural rights for persons with disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region and worldwide; the policies, strategies and programmes; and the improvements needed to ensure participation of artists with disabilities and promotion of their art in society.</p>
<a href="#">Latin American education assessment specialists prepare the first pilot of the regional ERCE study in the Dominican Republic</a>	22/02/2018	The pilot study application of the Fourth Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (ERCE) will be conducted for the northern part of the continent in May 2018 in Cuba, Mexico and the Dominican Republic. To ensure its success, teams from these three countries and a delegation from Bolivia are participating in a workshop in Santo Domingo that will expand upon data capture and verification procedures and train participants to use the software that will be used to gather and process this important information.
<a href="#">International Training Course on Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage 2018</a>	23/02/2018	The Institute of Disaster Mitigation for Urban Cultural Heritage, Ritsumeikan University Kyoto, Japan, is organizing the 13th International Training Course on Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage in Japan from 29 August to 19 September 2018. Cultural heritage is increasingly exposed to disasters caused by natural and human induced hazards.
<a href="#">Response times key to reducing tsunami deaths</a>	14/02/2018	More needs to be done to reduce response times to tsunami alerts and to improve wave height measurement if progress is to be made on reducing mortality from tsunamis, an international gathering of experts declared.
<a href="#">Building urban resilience through integrated water management and disaster risk reduction</a>	14/02/2018	<p>If planned and managed well, cities will become the main tool for sustainable development, the setting of its greatest challenges and opportunities. In order to share successful and replicable experiences, UNESCO organized an event focusing on "Building Urban Resilience" during the 9th World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.</p> <p>The discussion was articulated around concrete examples of initiatives and management practices that strengthened cities' capacity to provide basic services, particularly managing water to ensure access to freshwater, sanitation and drainage, and the resilience of their built environment from natural hazards. By bringing together mayors, academics, researchers, city-level practitioners, international experts and representatives of civil society, the aim was to examine the feasibility of replicating and scaling up these good practices and to disseminate them widely.</p>
<a href="#">UNESCO reviews tsunami warning systems</a>	08/02/2018	UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) held an international symposium from 12 to 14 February to take stock of lessons learned concerning tsunami preparedness over the past 13 years, and challenges ahead. The first meeting on the

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		subject took place in March 2005, following the deadly Indian Ocean Tsunami of December 2004.
<a href="#">Defining a capacity development plan in Haiti</a>	29/01/2018	A workshop on how to strengthen the role of Haiti's ten Departmental Directorates of Education (DDE) in planning and managing the country's education system took place from 1-2 February 2018 in Ennery, Haiti.
<a href="#">Working meeting between the Director-General and Members of the Bureau of the Asia-Pacific Group of UNESCO (ASPAC)</a>	11/01/2018	UNESCO Director-General, Audrey Azoulay, met with the members of the Asia-Pacific Group of UNESCO (ASPAC) on 9 January 2018, to exchange views on issues of common interest, including the reform of the Organization.  The Director-General underlined the importance of dialogue with the representatives of the electoral groups, and took the opportunity to reiterate her commitment to working closely with Member States to take forward UNESCO's mission.
<a href="#">UNESCO and SWAN advocate for a Gender and Media Protocol in South Asia</a>	20/12/2017	The Annual General Meeting was accompanied with a special session involving the SWAN Gender and Media Group who presented secondary researches on gender and media from nine countries in in South Asia.
<a href="#">Promoting the right to education and SDG4 in Haiti</a>	21/12/2017	UNESCO organised a national workshop in Haiti to promote the right to education on 11 December 2017. Organised in the framework of the Capacity Development for Education Programme (CapED), the workshop aimed to raise awareness among participants on the importance of the right to education in the context of the new Education 2030 Agenda and the implementation of appropriate legislative reforms.
<a href="#">Working meeting of the Director-General with the members of the Latin America and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)</a>	15/12/2017	GRULAC, organized in work teams concerning UNESCO's different fields of competence, wishes to strengthen the Organization's cooperation with the region. The strengthening of field offices and of the UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) was discussed. GRULAC expressed concern about the region's middle-income countries that encounter difficulties accessing certain funding programmes.  GRULAC stated that it was actively working on the issue of governance and the implementation of the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (Paris, 14 November 1970). Other topics of interest to the region were also mentioned, such as water, climate change, the Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB) the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC). In addition, the extreme vulnerability of small island developing States (SIDS) and of the Central America Isthmus in the face of climate change and natural disasters was mentioned.
<a href="#">School grant policies in four francophone countries</a>	08/12/2017	The UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO), with support from the Global Partnership for Education, has just published a new comparative synthesis on how school grant policies are unfolding in four francophone countries, including one SIDS, Haiti.
<a href="#">Republic of Mauritius to host next meeting of the Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage</a>	09/12/2017	On 9 December 2017, it was decided that the next annual meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage will take place from 26 November to 1st December 2018 in Port-Louis (Republic of Mauritius).
<a href="#">Twelve more elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity</a>	07/12/2017	The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, meeting in Jeju until 9 December, inscribed 12 new elements on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, including one in SIDS. Mauritius - Sega tambour of Rodrigues Island. Sega Tambour of Rodrigues Island is a vibrant performance of music, song and dance performed all over Rodrigues Island. With its origins in defiance and resilience, it is an important means of conflict resolution that fosters socialization and consolidates bonds. Recognised as a symbol of the history of the Rodriguan community, Sega Tambour is safeguarded through the efforts of numerous groups established since the 1970s. Knowledge and skills are transmitted through imitation and observation, and through apprenticeship with

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		experienced craftspeople.
<a href="#">Nine elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity</a>	06/12/2017	The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed nine new elements on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, including one in SIDS. Cuba – Punto. Punto is the poetry and music of Cuban agricultural workers, consisting of a tune or melody over which a person sings an improvised or learned stanza, based on a rhyming scheme. Punto is an essential element of Cuban cultural heritage that promotes dialogue and expresses the identity of the communities concerned. Knowledge and skills are transmitted primarily through imitation and via a teaching programme involving workshops delivered by bearers and practitioners of the element in Houses of Culture across the country.
<a href="#">Ocean Literacy for All, a manual for change in a changing blue planet</a>	01/12/2017	At the invitation of UNESCO and its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, high-level world experts gathered on 4-5 December 2017 in Venice, Italy, to define a roadmap to advance ocean literacy at a global scale. At this occasion, UNESCO will release "Ocean Literacy for All. A toolkit", a publication highlighting ocean literacy activities around the world and bringing together experiences from a variety of stakeholders who promote ocean literacy as a major tool for sustainable development in classrooms, boardrooms and governmental institutions.
<a href="#">Empowering African researchers to address local challenges</a>	01/12/2017	The third UNESCO-Merck Africa Research Summit brought together government representatives and researchers from across Africa to contribute to building capacity in the African research community. This third edition focused on "the role of scientific research in responding to cancer and vaccines development - two emerging challenges in Africa".
<a href="#">An Ocean Pathway towards sustainable development</a>	16/11/2017	Two years after the historic signature of the Paris Agreement, the first international climate agreement to recognize the essential role of the ocean as chief climate regulator, the ocean continues to make headway to the center stage of global climate politics. Mounting challenges such as increasing CO2 and decrease in oxygen levels nevertheless pose grave threats to ocean health and, in turn, human wellbeing. The ocean community gathered at COP23 in Bonn, Germany, to review the progress of international efforts, and reflect on the role of science in identifying and implementing effective ocean-based solutions to climate change. Among the key outputs from the summit, the Fiji-led Ocean Pathway Partnership launched on 16 November 2017 proposed to enhance funding opportunities to support ocean health and the maintenance of critical ocean ecosystems, and encourages the insertion of ocean-based action into countries' Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Agreement.
<a href="#">Poor performance by youth from Latin American countries in an international study plants challenges in civic and citizenship education</a>	15/11/2017	Half the students from Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and the Dominican Republic display no specific knowledge or understanding about civic and citizen institutions, systems and concepts. These are the conclusions at the regional level of the IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS 2016). The five countries had the lowest scores among the 24 education systems analysed. The data and the challenges that it represents for the region were addressed during the on-line transmission of a regional event to discuss the study, held on 8 November 2017 by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) in collaboration with the Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC/UNESCO Santiago).
<a href="#">Twelve new members elected to World Heritage Committee</a>	14/11/2017	During the session, the General Assembly elected twelve new members to the World Heritage Committee, including one SIDS, Saint Kitts and Nevis.
<a href="#">Addendum to UNESCO Strategy Reinforces Protection of Culture and Heritage from Natural Disasters</a>	14/11/2017	On 14 November, 2017 the 39th session of the UNESCO General Conference adopted an Addendum to its Strategy for the Reinforcement of the UNESCO's action for the Protection of Culture and the Promotion of Cultural Pluralism in the Event of Armed

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		<p>Conflict, concerning emergencies associated with disasters caused by natural and human-induced hazards.</p> <p>In doing so, a significant step was taken to reinforce the protection of culture and cultural heritage in emergencies resulting from natural disasters. The Addendum sets the path for the Organization's work through two key objectives: on the one hand, strengthening Member States' ability to prevent, mitigate and recover the loss of cultural heritage and diversity as a result of disasters caused by natural and human-induced hazards; and on the other hand, incorporating the consideration for culture into the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) sector and humanitarian action related to disasters by engaging with the relevant stakeholders outside the cultural domain. These objectives are aligned with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) 2015-2030 and articulated around its four Priority Areas of Action.</p>
<a href="#">New online portal promotes tsunami awareness and education in the Caribbean</a>	11/11/2017	<p>The Caribbean and neighboring regions got a brand new online portal aimed at promoting greater awareness and understanding of tsunamis and other coastal hazards.</p> <p>The portal developed by the Caribbean Tsunami Information Center (CTIC) to support its initiatives will ensure that all persons in vulnerable coastal communities are prepared and respond appropriately and in a timely manner to a tsunami or another coastal hazard. The overall objective is to inform communities and citizens in order to save lives and mitigate socio-economic impacts of destructive ocean hazards.</p>
<a href="#">Developing regional capacity for ocean acidification observations in the Western Indian Ocean in support of the Sustainable Development Goal 14</a>	03/11/2017	<p>Little is actually known about ocean acidification in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO), as long-term observations and relevant experiments have not been carried out. This means that countries in the WIO region are not able to report towards target 14.3 of Sustainable Development 14, which asks to "minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification".</p> <p>The Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) Ocean Acidification Workshop therefore provided the platform for a range of stakeholders, including scientists and policymakers, to discuss how to improve knowledge on the current and expected impacts of reduced pH on marine life in the region.</p>
<a href="#">The Dominican Republic welcomes first-ever most comprehensive report on media development</a>	02/11/2017	<p>The report, Análisis del Desarrollo Mediático en República Dominicana (Assessment of Media Development in the Dominican Republic), is the result of a study conducted using UNESCO's Media Development Indicators (MDIs), a flagship initiative of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). It examines the current media environment in five main areas: legal and regulatory framework; pluralism and diversity; the role of the media as a platform for democratic discourse; professional training and technical infrastructure to support independent and pluralistic media.</p>
<a href="#">Dealing with tsunamis in the Caribbean – practical workshops</a>	02/11/2017	<p>Alongside its partners, the UNESCO-IOC Caribbean Tsunami Information Center (CTIC) organized the second workshop of a training series to ensure that national officials can take the necessary action to save lives and property in the case of a tsunami in the Caribbean and neighboring regions.</p>
<a href="#">UNESCO Bangkok Announces 2017 Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation</a>	01/11/2017	<p>The revitalization of the working class "Blue House Cluster" in Hong Kong, China, has received the Award of Excellence in this year's UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation. Sixteen projects from six countries, including one SIDS – Singapore – were recognized in this year's Heritage Awards by an international panel of conservation experts.</p>
<a href="#">64 cities join the UNESCO Creative Cities Network</a>	31/10/2017	<p>64 cities from 44 countries have been designated as UNESCO Creative Cities. They join a Network at the frontline of UNESCO's efforts to foster innovation and creativity as key drivers for a more sustainable and inclusive urban development – Praia (Cabo Verde) – Music.</p>
<a href="#">South-East Asian countries prepare for national policy dialogues on lifelong learning</a>	30/10/2017	<p>Experts from nine South-East Asian countries came together in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, from 5 to 6 October 2017, to discuss the advancement of a lifelong learning agenda in the region. Towards a Lifelong Learning Agenda in Southeast Asia is the vision set out by</p>

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		<p>the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Lifelong Learning (SEAMEO CELL) as part of a three-year project run in cooperation with the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL).</p> <p>The project has just entered its second phase. A major component of this phase will be to facilitate national policy dialogue and exchange. The expert meeting was organized in anticipation of national policy dialogue on lifelong learning in participating countries, including one SIDS, namely: Timor-Leste, Singapore</p>
<a href="#">Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 14: The Ocean We Need for the Future We Want</a>	30/10/2017	<p>Entitled "Achieving Sustainable Development 14: The Ocean We Need for the Future We Want", this Side Event provided an opportunity to exchange on the nature, scope and modalities of developing and implementing the UN Decade of Ocean Science as a key contribution to the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14.</p>
<a href="#">First UNESCO Space Science Medals awarded to four prominent scientists and space practitioners</a>	27/10/2017	<p>This Medal aimed to support UNESCO's broader work in capacity building in the basic sciences and science education, in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will enable and encourage male and female scientists to serve as role models and to pass their skills and know-how to younger generations.</p>
<a href="#">Experiencing a world of media and information literacy reggae-style in Jamaica</a>	27/10/2017	<p>From all over the world, "singers" came to the small island state of Jamaica on 25 October 2017 - with close to 200 representatives from over 40 countries. They gathered in music for a chorus that has been sung for several decades, but now with a faster tempo given the growing urgency of action.</p>
<a href="#">Towards a world without walls: regional network meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean on global citizenship education</a>	23/10/2017	<p>The main objective of this meeting, known as "Toward a world without walls: regional meeting for global citizenship education in SDG 4 - Agenda E2030," was to deepen understanding of this subject and build upon the progress made in the first Regional Workshop: Orientation and Capacity Building on Global Citizenship for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in September 2015 in Santiago, Chile.</p>
<a href="#">The National Parks Board of Singapore to receive UNESCO Sultan Qaboos Prize for Environmental Preservation</a>	24/10/2017	<p>The National Parks Board of Singapore was named as the laureate of the 2017 UNESCO Sultan Qaboos Prize for Environmental Preservation. The prize-giving ceremony will be held in Jordan on 7 November as a side event of the World Science Forum that will take place there from 7 to 11 November.</p>
<a href="#">UNESCO and the Netherlands to support self-regulation of the media in Timor-Leste</a>	20/10/2017	<p>A professional and resilient media including the press is vital to a well-functioning democracy. Self-regulation of the media, where the media is regulated by peers and guided by a code of ethics, is one of the ways to ensure journalism maintain high professionalism yet flexible enough to adapt to the changing media landscape.</p>
<a href="#">Training youth in Latin America and Caribbean to be key players in sustainability education</a>	11/10/2017	<p>A youth-oriented workshop on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) for Latin American and the Caribbean region took place from 26 to 28 September in Brasilia, Brazil, with the support of the UNESCO Brasilia Office. The gathering brought together 44 young leaders from 13 countries, including 4 SIDS: Barbados, Santa Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.</p>
<a href="#">YouthMobile organizes a workshop on MIT App Inventor in Mauritius</a>	06/10/2017	<p>Adopting an unusual format, the training targeted mixed groups of teachers and students, enabling teachers particularly to observe both the enthusiasm and rapidity of their pupils. The training was an opportunity to complement the efforts that Mauritius schools and voluntary trainers deployed to participate in the 2017 Africa Code Week, an initiative of SAP with the participation of UNESCO YouthMobile.</p>
<a href="#">High-level events in Mauritius celebrate International Day for the Universal Access to Information</a>	28/09/2017	<p>UNESCO's International Day for the Universal Access to Information was commemorated in Balaclava, Mauritius, through a high-level series of workshops and round tables addressing themes ranging from Cyberlaws to Information Ethics to Open Educational Resources and Digital Inclusion, YouthMobile App development, software preservation and the role of space technology and S.M.A.R.T strategies to support African countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.</p>
<a href="#">New State of Digital Report in Asia Pacific Released</a>	28/09/2017	<p>In the Asia-Pacific region, the new report showed that there is a healthy growth in digital connectivity. According to the report, there</p>

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		is an eight percent increase in regional Internet penetration rate compared to previous year, to reach 47 percent in the region. This represents approximately 1.94 billion Internet users. Encouragingly, more than 140 million people came online for the first time in Asia Pacific region since 2016 with Indonesia alone accounting for 45 million of these new users.
<a href="#">Developing capacities for a stronger education system in Haiti</a>	27/09/2017	In Haiti, the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) and the European Union have launched the project "Analyzing and strengthening the management and planning of Haiti's education system." This project is structured around three main components: 1) An analysis of individual and institutional capacities to guide future capacity-building interventions in the planning and managing of the education system; 2) The development of a strategic plan for capacity building, which will be a direct contribution to the country's future educational plan; 3) The development of professional capacities for MENFP staff so that the Ministry can depend on these planners to manage the planning and management of the education system.
<a href="#">A Caribbean strategy to cope with climate change</a>	20/09/2017	Caricom has mandated the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre to mainstream climate change adaptation strategies into the sustainable development agendas of Caricom states and to help them switch to renewable and cleaner energy sources and reduce their vulnerability to the impact of a changing climate. The Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre has produced an implementation plan for 2011–2021 and undertaken a number of assessments. This work has been supported by the region's specialists, who have produced models for climate change and mitigation processes in Caribbean states and who play a major advisory role to the divisions in ministries responsible for climate change, such as Jamaica's appropriately expanded Ministry of Water, Land, Environment and Climate Change.
<a href="#">Cuba issues postage stamps commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of relations between Cuba and UNESCO</a>	04/09/2017	Two commemorative postage stamps were presented on 29 August at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Havana as part of the celebrations honouring the 70th Anniversary of the Caribbean nation's entry to the Organization and the founding of the Cuban National Commission for UNESCO (CNCU). The 70th anniversary of relations with UNESCO and the creation of the CNCU, have been the subject of celebrations in Cuba throughout the year of 2017.
<a href="#">UNESCO Internet Universality Indicators consulted at the 8<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum</a>	09/08/2017	The Bangkok consultation event brought multi-stakeholders and experts from the Asia Pacific region to contribute to prioritizing issues within the five categories indicators along the Internet Universality R.O.A.M principles, namely on human Rights, Openness, Accessibility, Multistakeholder participation, as well as concerning Crosscutting issues.
<a href="#">UNESCO Dakar co-facilitated the Asia-Pacific Capacity Development Workshop on Education Planning for SDG4</a>	08/08/2017	The objective of the Workshop, which was jointly organized by the Government of Malaysia, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Asia and the Pacific, and UNICEF East Asia & Pacific, was to develop the capacity of key education planners of 16 countries in the Asia-Pacific region in result-oriented planning and management, which also benefitted one participating country from West Africa: The Gambia. The participants reflected specifically on the implications of the SDG4-Education 2030 targets and commitments on education planning. It was also an opportunity to discuss the challenges faced by countries to integrate SDG4 into national planning.
<a href="#">Protecting mangrove ecosystems in Pacific Island States</a>	26/07/2017	UNESCO Office for the Pacific States works with Biosphere Reserves in the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau to protect mangrove ecosystems. For instance, the Utwe Biosphere Reserve, in the Federated States of Micronesia, is a large bay that moves inland through a small network of mangrove passageways. Acknowledging that mangroves play an important role as a buffer between the land and the sea, Utwe Biosphere Reserve's management plan includes action items to protect and restore the mangrove ecosystem and sustainably manage the ten mangrove species found in the Biosphere Reserve.

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<a href="#">Cuba's biosphere reserves present key results of biodiversity and climate change management and issue commemorative stamps</a>	07/07/2017	The project aimed to conserve diversity in these protected areas through the incorporation of agricultural biodiversity into the management of these territories. COBARB has worked in recent years to preserve the traditions of those living in difficult-to-access high mountains areas, as well as to improve the quality of life of families and communities.
<a href="#">Global Citizenship Education in Asia-Pacific: Diverse Interpretations in a Dynamic Region</a>	03/07/2017	Asia-Pacific learners face an increasingly interconnected – yet highly fragmented – world, one where multiculturalism is vibrant, while nationalistic fervor is often stoked to destructive ends, and where only urgent action for to address the complex issues of today can ensure a sustainable and peaceful tomorrow. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development offers a transformative vision of how we can overcome these challenges, with education playing a crucial role in preparing learners to be proactive agents for change.
<a href="#">3<sup>rd</sup> Asia-Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 Mainstreaming SDG 4.7</a>	04/07/2017 – 07/07/2017	At the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Asia-Pacific Meeting, regional recommendations were developed on: mainstreaming elements of SDG 4.7 at all levels; monitoring of and reporting on the target; regional level support to member states; and strategic partnership development around 4.7. The Regional Network of SDG4 National Coordinators met on 6 July and 7 to endorse the recommendations. SDG4 national coordinators also reviewed the regional roadmap for Education 2030, which outlines the key SDG4 milestones and priorities for the region.
<a href="#">A transformative target: SDG 4.7's challenges and promise in Asia-Pacific</a>	01/07/2017	In November 2016, SDG4 National Coordinators working at education ministries throughout the region identified SDG 4.7 as a one of the priority areas on which they sought clarifications on key concepts as well as technical support in mainstreaming its core principles. Some of the challenges that have been identified include:  Priorities for SDG 4.7 differ among countries: whether to stress the moral aspects of SDG 4.7; ensuring there isn't an overemphasis on the cognitive; navigating tensions between local and global, etc.
<a href="#">Panama City to Host Second Edition of the Open Science Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean</a>	26/06/2017	Panama City was proud to host the second edition of the Open Forum CILAC, which was the principal regional platform to discuss how to design and implement effective scientific policies in line with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.
<a href="#">Caribbean countries boost their planning, monitoring and assessment capacities for meeting global education targets</a>	21/06/2017	Delegates from Caribbean nations met in Barbados at the "Regional Technical Workshop on Planning, Monitoring and Assessing the Sustainable Development Goals: Education Goals".
<a href="#">Savaia Lefaga – Samoa's first tsunami ready community</a>	20/06/2017	Savaia village, on the southern coast of Upolu, Samoa was recognized by the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) as Samoa's first Tsunami Ready community.
<a href="#">Fighting homophobia and transphobia in Cuban schools</a>	20/06/2017	UNESCO was invited to Cuba to celebrate the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. Cuba recognizes the leading role that the organization plays in supporting efforts of countries to prevent and address violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.
<a href="#">23 new sites added to UNESCO's World Network of Biosphere Reserves</a>	14/06/2017	23 new sites added to UNESCO's World Network of Biosphere Reserves, including La Selle - Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (Dominican Republic/Haiti).  This biosphere reserve includes the reserves of La Selle in Haiti, designated in 2012, and Jaragua-Bahoruco in the Dominican Republic, designated in 2002. These two reserves represent ecological corridors divided by a political and administrative frontier. Bringing them together should allow better management of the environment.
<a href="#">Cuba and UNESCO conduct National Education Assessment</a>	13/06/2017	Over 6,500 students from 368 primary schools participated in a national education assessment led by the Ministry of Education of Cuba and UNESCO's Regional Bureau of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean. The assessment was conducted on May 11 and 12, 2017 and was implemented with the technical assistance of the Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education (LLECE).
<a href="#">IOC-UNESCO launches first-ever Global Ocean Science Report and</a>	09/06/2017	The <i>Global Ocean Science Report: The Current Status of Ocean Science around the World</i> was presented for the very first time

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<a href="#">calls for a Decade of Ocean Science at The Ocean Conference</a>		<p>during a side event on "Building Knowledge for Sustainable Development" hosted in collaboration by UNESCO's IOC and the Governments of Norway, Maldives and Samoa.</p> <p>To be published every five years, the inaugural Report also serves as an instrument to assess progress in the accomplishment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 on the conservation and use of the oceans, seas and marine resources. An Executive Summary is available online.</p>
<a href="#">Regional Consultation on Youth, Peace and Security: voices of youth in Latin America and the Caribbean</a>	07/06/2017	The Regional Consultation gathered the voices of the peace-building youth in Latin America and the Caribbean, represented by 64 young people selected. The purpose has been to support the implementation of Resolution 2250 in the region and as a contribution to the Progress Study in accordance with the mandate established in the Resolution.
<a href="#">TVET at the core of Sustainable Regional Development agenda in the Caribbean</a>	30/05/2017	The Third International Conference on TVET in the Caribbean aimed to provide a forum for sharing innovative practices from a diverse set of stakeholders in the Caribbean including governments, academia, industry and development partners. The Caribbean TVET sector is geared towards countering diverse challenges that include a shortage of skilled workforce, skills mismatch in the labor markets, high youth unemployment, emigration of skilled labor, and climate and environmental vulnerability.
<a href="#">UNESCO-SEAMEO Asia-Pacific Regional Seminar on Subregional Cooperation for Achieving SDG 4 (Education 2030), 29-31 May, Bangkok, Thailand</a>	26/05/2017	This seminar aimed at capacitating senior officials of the subregional organizations to gain more knowledge and understanding of the roles of the subregional organizations in bridging regional and subregional commitments on SDG4-Education 2030. This activity is part of UNESCO-Malaysia Funds-in-Trust Project on "Strengthening National Capacity for Sector Wide Planning to Achieve SDG4 in Asia-Pacific Through South-South Cooperation".
<a href="#">UNESCO and Mexico's INEE brings together specialists on educational assessment from 19 Latin American and Caribbean countries</a>	24/05/2017	<p>The event was a further step in implementing ERCE, and was supported by representatives of the national technical teams of the countries comprising the Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education (LLECE), an agency coordinated by the Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC/UNESCO Santiago). LLECE is a regional project that brings together the principal agencies for education assessment in the region and has been entrusted, through its actions, to follow-up and monitor the commitments made within the framework of the Education 2030 Agenda.</p> <p>The objective of this fourth study was to produce valid and reliable information that can assess, understand and compare the learning achievements and factors associated with this performance in primary education students in the region.</p>
<a href="#">Western Pacific ocean research at the forefront of UN Ocean Conference commitments</a>	12/05/2017	<p>To address pressing challenges, such as ocean acidification, it is imperative to fill knowledge gaps and to foster marine research capacity and technology transfer in the Western Pacific and its adjacent regions. In response to this call, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, its Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC) and their partners have announced two important commitments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and strengthen the regional research and monitoring network to assess the impacts of ocean acidification on coral reef ecosystems in the Western Pacific and its adjacent regions.</li> <li>2. Develop research capacity and transfer of marine technology through the IOC Regional Network of Training and Research Centers in the Western Pacific and its adjacent regions.</li> </ol>
<a href="#">Higher education key for achieving SDGs in East Africa and the Indian Ocean</a>	03/05/2017	<p>The conference on Higher Education, Policy and Research entitled "Quality and Future Challenges for East Africa and the Indian Ocean" hails higher education as the necessary backbone for achieving the commitments Sustainable Development Goals in the Region.</p> <p>At the conference, the ratification of the Addis Ababa Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States was a top priority of the agenda. Ministries of higher education and</p>

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		research from the thirteen countries of the Eastern Africa Region, were represented, including three SIDS; Comoros, Mauritius, Seychelles.
<a href="#">Learning to live sustainably: UNESCO holds a meeting in Argentina with 40 municipalities from across Latin America and the Caribbean</a>	27/04/2017	Under the title "Learning to live sustainably in cities", the meeting brought together delegates from 40 municipalities from Latin America and the Caribbean to share knowledge and develop skills in order to involve citizens in decisions that affect them directly, especially in the area of education. The Regional Workshop on Learning Cities was contributing to the implementation of the concept of Learning Cities in Latin America and the Caribbean, leading to better understanding of the key role of lifelong learning in addressing social, cultural, economic and environmental challenges in metropolises. The workshop was producing guidelines to help cities in the region to progress as learning cities through exchanges of significant experiences and effective practices with network cities, and with experts in the fields of lifelong learning.
<a href="#">Conference on Higher Education, Policy and Research: Quality and Future Challenges for East Africa and the Indian Ocean</a>	27/04/2017	This regional event covering the thirteen countries of UNESCO in Eastern Africa, including three SIDS, namely Comoros, Mauritius and Seychelles. It focused on information and communication technology in education, climate change, peace and security and its contribution to Higher Education.
<a href="#">Fiji welcomes cooperation with UNESCO for next UN Climate Change Conference</a>	12/04/2017	The Prime Minister of Fiji, Mr Voreqe Bainimarama, welcomed UNESCO's support to this year's UN Climate Change Conference (COP 23), during a meeting with UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, Ms Flavia Schlegel, on 11 April 2017. At the meeting, the Prime Minister sought cooperation with UNESCO on raising public awareness on mitigating and adapting to climate change and promoting healthy eco-systems.
<a href="#">Lifelong learning: Featuring the Caribbean</a>	11/04/2017	Lifelong learning should be made 'a necessity and not an option' – that was the verdict of participants at the CONFINTEA VI Sub-Regional Follow-up Meeting for the Caribbean. In response and to support Caribbean states' efforts to promote youth and adult learning policies and practices, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) is presenting a series of 'Caribbean Features'.
<a href="#">Regional Meeting: Learning to Live Sustainably in Cities in Latin America and the Caribbean</a>	13/04/2017	Delegates from 40 municipalities in Latin America and the Caribbean convened to share knowledge and build capacities related to the learning city approach. Participants explored ways to enhance education and lifelong learning in their respective cities and promote Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at the local level.
<a href="#">Strong commitment for science as a pillar of sustainable development in Pacific Island States</a>	05/04/2017	The high-level dialogue was organized in Apia, Samoa, to assess the needs and opportunities for bridging the gaps between science, technology and innovation (STI) systems and policy-makers. The ministers who participated in the Dialogue have pledged to support the development of a relevant STI framework and national policies that address issues in science education, science advice, traditional scientific knowledge systems and capacities in all STI areas. They attempted to identify the best ways to take forward the dialogue towards action in future for the realization of the SDGs and simultaneously strengthen the dialogue within and outside the Pacific SIDS.
<a href="#">Science for SIDS: Pacific Dialogue on Science and Science Policy for the SDGs</a>	29/03/2017	This high-level ministerial meeting, organized in cooperation with the Government of Samoa and the International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA), aimed to assess the needs and opportunities for bridging the gaps between science, technology and innovation (STI) systems and policy-makers in the Pacific SIDS, within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals and UNESCO's SIDS Action Plan.  The participants discussed the Pacific Regional Science, Technology and Innovation Roadmap developed by the Pacific-Europe Network for Science, Technology and Innovation (PACE-Net Plus), exchanged on the existing practices and STI policy initiatives in the region and shared information on the status of STI in their countries. The meeting also provided an opportunity for dialogue amongst Pacific Island Countries and Territories and with the international community about the specific needs for science and STI advice to contribute to evidence based policy-making.

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<a href="#">Half a million people take part in CARIBE WAVE 17 tsunami drill</a>	28/03/2017	<p>The CARIBE WAVE 17 exercise successfully tested recently developed tsunami products and helped disseminate these products within the participating countries, rendering affected populations more ready to respond to a tsunami.</p> <p>*Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, France (Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Barthelemy, St. Martin), Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Netherlands (Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius), Nicaragua, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom (Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Montserrat and Turks and Caicos), United States (Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands) and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).</p>
<a href="#">Building Resilient Communities and Tsunami Warning Systems in Central America</a>	27/03/2017	The main goal of the activity was to strengthen the Tsunami Early Warning System by validating their coordination protocols and by standardizing their tsunami alert procedures.
<a href="#">Pacific islands embracing greater regionalism to accompany rapid change</a>	24/03/2017	
<a href="#">Spotlight in Asia-Pacific on policy innovations to tackle the challenges of ageing and gender inequality</a>	24/03/2017	The First Asia-Pacific MOST Forum of Ministers of Social Development marked an important milestone in the efforts of governments across the Asia-Pacific region to promote inclusive social development, with particular attention to the issues confronted by the elderly and women. The Forum also showcased substantive collaboration between UN agencies, with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and other UN entities making a valuable contribution.
<a href="#">Youth Newsroom Makes #Case4Space for Asia-Pacific youth</a>	20/03/2017	Twelve Asia-Pacific youth passionate about journalism and its potential to give voice to the marginalized gathered in Bangkok late last year to report on the "Youth at the Heart of the 2030 Agenda: The Case For Space" Regional Roundtable.
<a href="#">Asia-Pacific countries use social innovation to face ageing population and gender inequality</a>	17/03/2017	This Forum highlighted cutting-edge social innovations that have proven effective in addressing the challenges of ageing population and related gender inequality.
<a href="#">IDB and UNESCO: It is urgent to address deficiencies in school infrastructure to promote education quality in Latin America and the Caribbean</a>	09/03/2017	A significant number of the region's students, especially those from lower income families and located in rural areas, do not have ensured access to schools with basic infrastructure resources.
<a href="#">Caribbean tests tsunami warning system</a>	13/03/2017	A tsunami early warning exercise took place in the countries bordering the Caribbean Sea on 21 March to assess and update their reactivity. The exercise tested the Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions established in 2005 under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO).
<a href="#">Assessment of learnings in Latin America and the Caribbean: Costa Rica receives experts responsible for preparing the regional ERCE report</a>	13/03/2017	<p>A national event that brings together specialists to assess learnings, together with Costa Rican civil society, was held in conjunction with the 37th Meeting of National Coordinators of the Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education (LLECE) in San José between March 14 and 16, 2017.</p> <p>This reflection on the use of assessments to improve education forms part of the LLECE work, including the planning process for the next Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (ERCE), an international assessment coordinated by OREALC/UNESCO Santiago, and includes the participation of Costa Rica and 18 other countries in the region.</p>
<a href="#">Boosting artists' status in Mauritius: designing a new law</a>	23/02/2017	Mauritius, with the support of UNESCO, has launched an initiative to design a new law to professionalize the status of artists in Mauritius. Defining their professional status, improving their economic and social working conditions - including through preferential treatment measures - and recognizing their role in the

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		sustainable development of the island were at the heart of discussions held from 2 to 16 February 2017.
<a href="#">Seychelles hosts the first biennial international conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), convening 18 countries</a>	10/02/2017	Proving the importance of ECCE, 18 countries comprising 350 regional and international delegates and local policy makers, educators, caregivers, non-governmental and civil society organisations attended to share experiences and promote peer learning.
<a href="#">Pacific rim countries to test their tsunami warning system</a>	09/02/2017	Countries bordering on the Pacific Ocean were testing their capacity to handle a major tsunami in an exercise from 15 to 17 February, held to identify possible shortcomings in the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System, established under the auspices of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC).
<a href="#">The Buenos Aires Declaration enshrines agreements on educational priorities for Latin America and the Caribbean with a view to 2030</a>	02/02/2017	Aware of the fact that inequality is the greatest challenge for socioeconomic development in the region, the Ministers of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean stated in their declaration that the Education 2030 Agenda shall contribute to eliminating poverty, reducing inequalities and caring for the environment, through inclusive, quality education and lifelong learning.  The authorities agreed on the necessary regional coordination mechanisms to achieve the educational goals. They recognized the urgent need to carry out further changes, which would entail a new outlook on education, learning, teaching, policies and actions in the region.
<a href="#">Vanuatu: the Prime Minister explores the challenges of development</a>	26/01/2017	Priority to education, tourism development and resilience to climate change: these were the themes explored at the meeting of the UNESCO Director-General, Irina Bokova, with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu, Charlot Salwai Tabismasmas, on 25 January 2017.
<a href="#">"We should all know that education unites us": the Minister of Education of Argentina opened the Latin American and Caribbean meeting on the new Education 2030 Agenda</a>	24/01/2017	The ministers, deputy ministers, representatives of multilateral organizations and civil society were convened by UNESCO and the Ministry of Education and Sports of Argentina to a meeting in Buenos Aires, on 24 and 25 January 2017, with a view to achieving a common vision for education 2030, and thus drawing up strategies and policies that can help countries meet the goals of the Education 2030 Agenda. Consensus reached will be summarized in the Buenos Aires Declaration to be agreed upon and disseminated on Wednesday, 25 January.
<a href="#">Ministers of Education from Latin America and the Caribbean to discuss the future of education in the region in the lead up to 2030.</a>	21/01/2017	Ministers and representatives from regional and international organizations and civil society came together to define a shared vision of education for the region in the lead up to 2030 and to discuss strategies and policies that can advance the achievement of the goals these countries have set for themselves.