



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

CONTRIBUTING TO  
**MAURITIUS STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION**

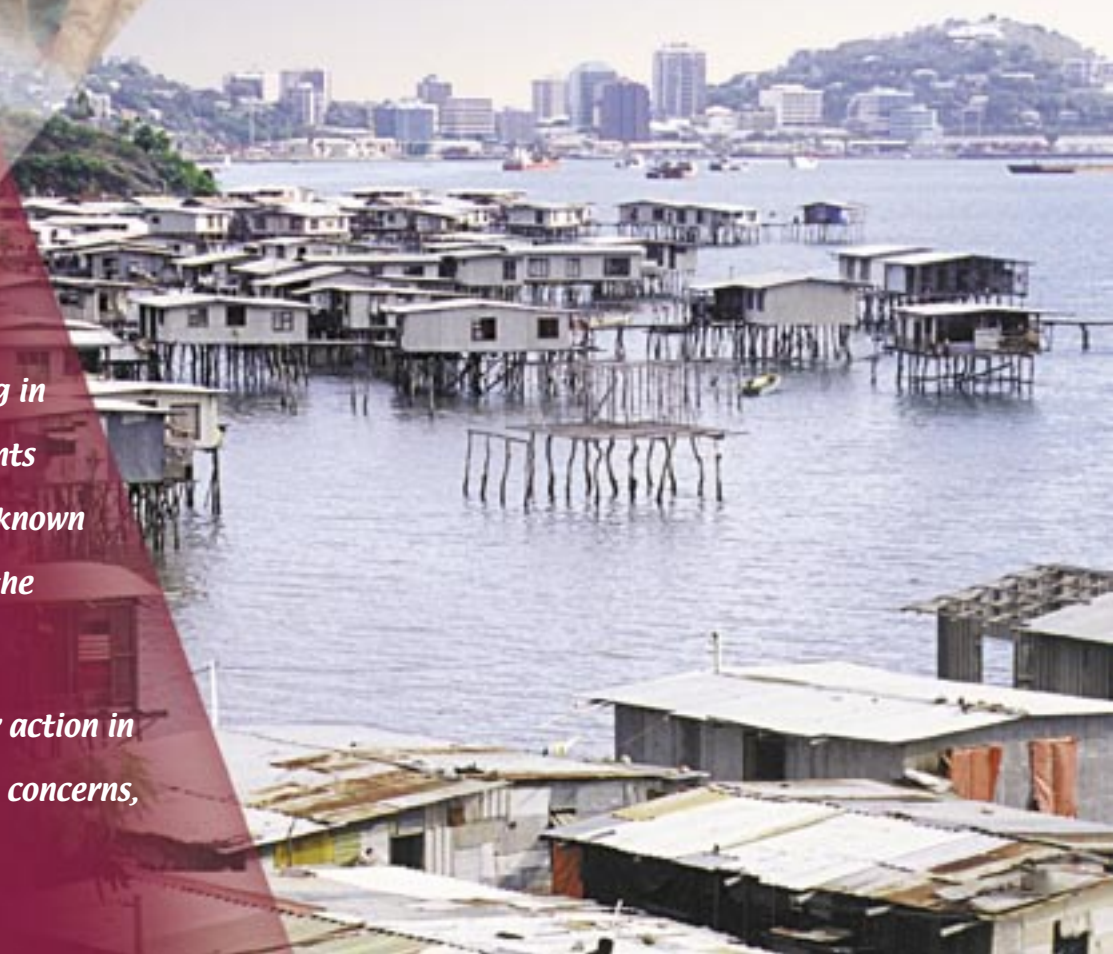
# *Sustainable living in* **Small Island Developing States**



*The Programme of Action  
for the Sustainable  
Development of Small Island  
Developing States (SIDS) was  
updated by the international  
community in 2005.*

*During an international meeting in  
Mauritius, negotiated agreements  
were encapsulated in what are known  
as the Mauritius Strategy and the  
Mauritius Declaration.*

*The Mauritius Strategy calls for action in  
many fields related to UNESCO's concerns,  
programmes and priorities.*



**I**n January 2005, a high-level United Nations meeting was held in Mauritius to review the implementation of and update the 1994 Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The Mauritius International Meeting produced two principal negotiated outputs – a political declaration and a strategy document.

On 14 July 2005, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 59/311 on the follow-up to the International Meeting in Mauritius, calling on governments, civil society, regional bodies and international organizations to take timely actions to ensure effective implementation of the updated Programme of Action.

Three months later, in October 2005, the UNESCO General Conference adopted 33 C/Resolution 3 on 'Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS): Further Implementation', following examination of a draft resolution by all five programme commissions (Education, Social & Human Sciences and Natural Sciences, Culture, Communication & Information, and General Questions & Programme Support).

In the operative paragraphs of that resolution, the General Conference:

- Urged Member States and Associate Members to participate actively in the implementation of and the follow-up to the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy, and to mobilize UNESCO's programmes and networks in their respective countries and regions to promote further the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;
- Urged non-governmental organizations in official relations with UNESCO to work in close partnership with governments and other stakeholders in the follow-up to the Mauritius International Meeting, and to strengthen cooperation with civil society in the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy;
- Invited the Director-General to continue to mainstream the Mauritius Strategy in the Organization's activities and work programmes, while at the same time continuing to promote a holistic integrated approach to sustainable living and development in small island developing states and to nurture intersectoral cooperation with an intergenerational dimension, at the interregional level, by means of the proven platform approach.

*This brochure provides insights into UNESCO's recent activities (particularly in 2006 and early 2007) in support of the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy, with special emphasis on those carried out and supported by Field Offices. It is a sequel to a similar brochure released in September 2005. A more substantive 48-page illustrated booklet on the recent work is under preparation, for publication in mid-2007.*

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*A leading Caribbean academic speaks of the interlocking which exists between an understanding of one's culture and the possibilities of economic growth and the understanding of cultural heritage as the basis for economic growth and social development. There are now concerted efforts being made to 'mobilize the power of culture', as it is argued that no lasting development can be guaranteed in a society where popular cultural expressions are undervalued. ”*

*Dame Pearllette Louisy, Governor General of St. Lucia, moderator of the plenary panel on 'Culture' at the Mauritius International Meeting, 11 January 2005.*

## MAURITIUS STRATEGY CHAPTERS

- I Climate change and sea-level rise
- II Natural and environmental disasters
- III Management of wastes
- IV Coastal and marine resources
- V Freshwater resources
- VI Land resources
- VII Energy resources
- VIII Tourism resources
- IX Biodiversity resources
- X Transport and communication
- XI Science and technology
- XII Graduation from least developed country status
- XIII Trade: globalization and trade liberalization
- XIV Sustainable capacity development and education for sustainable development
- XV Sustainable production and consumption
- XVI National and regional enabling environments
- XVII Health
- XVIII Knowledge management and information for decision-making
- XIX Culture
- XX Implementation



**Culture and society** ~ During the high-level meeting in Mauritius in January 2005, the 'Role of culture in the sustainable development of SIDS' was the title of a UNESCO-facilitated plenary panel, which helped shape the 'Culture' chapter in the Mauritius Strategy. In contributing to the implementation of this chapter, UNESCO draws on a set of standard-setting instruments in the cultural field, to promote cultural pluralism and intercultural dialogue, to protect the world's tangible and intangible heritage, and to develop cultural enterprises. One specific initiative is an interregional expert workshop (Seychelles, April 2007) on 'Islands as Crossroads: Cultural Diversities in Small Islands', being piloted by the UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office.

Support to safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage includes projects in Cuba, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Tonga and Vanuatu. Training in language recording and documentation provides the focus of a second-phase project on 13 Melanesian languages of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The newly created Caribbean Indigenous and Endangered Languages Portal at the University of the West Indies promotes the preservation of more than 20 indigenous languages in the region.

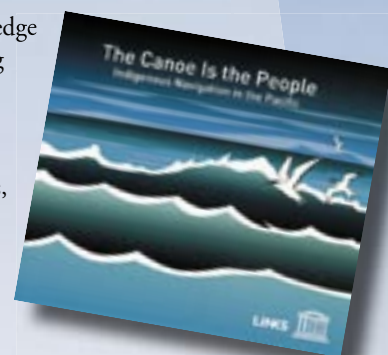
Among activities to promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, the Slave Route project entered a new phase in 2006, after external evaluation. Activities are being extended in regions that have so far received little attention (such as the Indian Ocean) and in little explored domains (such as the transfer of knowledge, know-how and techniques from Africa to the rest of the world).

For the tangible heritage, 'Outstanding Universal Value, Authenticity and Integrity in a Caribbean Context' was the focus of a World Heritage conference in Barbados in May 2006. Exploring the theme of 'indigeneity' as it applies to the 'Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage in the Pacific' was among the objectives of a regional workshop held in Tongariro National Park in New Zealand in February 2007.

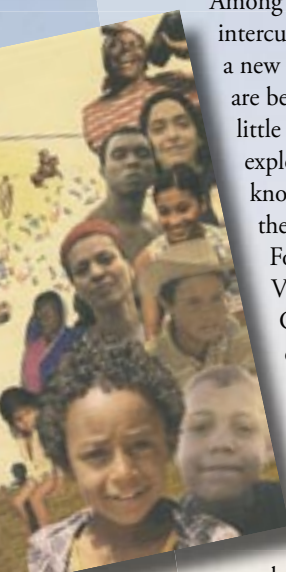
Preparatory assistance is being provided for the development of a potential transboundary site among Indian Ocean islands linked to the Slave Route. 'Underwater cultural heritage at risk' was featured by the International Council on Monuments and Sites in a special (2006) edition of the magazine 'Heritage at Risk'.

Among initiatives contributing to the Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity is a 2007-2010 project aimed at strengthening the creative industries in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States through employment and trade expansion. It is being carried out in cooperation with the UN Conference on Trade and Development and the International Labour Organization, and supported by the European Development Fund. Pilot schemes are envisaged in five countries, including Fiji and Trinidad & Tobago, following plans presented and discussed at a meeting in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) in October 2006 of the Ministers of Culture of the countries concerned.

**Local and indigenous knowledge** is central in many island cultures. Ongoing projects in the Pacific include the promotion of a model law on community-held knowledge and pilot schemes to incorporate local knowledge in school curricula in Palau, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. A CD-ROM and learning pack on exploring and sharing traditional navigational knowledge in the Pacific ('The Canoe Is the People') has been widely diffused, with a Maori version due for release in late 2007. The disc forms part of an educational package for Pacific curricula and contributes to one of the main goals of the intersectoral programme on Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS) – that of revitalizing the transmission of indigenous knowledge between elders and youth. Nearing finalization is a study on women's knowledge of nature, medicinal plants and traditional medicine in the Mascarin islands of Mauritius, Rodrigues and Réunion in the southwestern Indian Ocean.



**Mainstreaming gender** in water resources management in the Caribbean, and continuing support to femTalk community radio in the Pacific, are among actions to promote women's empowerment. Four eminent islanders (from Barbados, Cuba, Samoa and Trinidad & Tobago) figured among those highlighted in a volume on '60 Women Contributing to the 60 Years of UNESCO', released in October 2006. Under preparation is a bibliography on gender studies in the Caribbean.



Phytochemist Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, Professor of Organic Chemistry and Pro-Vice-Chancellor at the University of Mauritius, one of the five laureates of the 2007 UNESCO/L'Oréal Awards for Women in Science, presented at a ceremony at UNESCO House on 22 February.

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 Praia ..... Chumbe ..... Eleuthera ..... Grand Cayman ..... Andros ..... Cousin

## **Natural resources and environmental issues**

make up about half of the twenty chapters of the Mauritius Strategy, reflecting the main focus of the initial Programme of Action for SIDS approved in Barbados in 1994. Herewith, some recent contributions:

**Climate change.** 'Understanding sea-level rise and variability' workshop (Paris, June 2006), organized by the World Climate Research Programme. In January 2007, hosting by UNESCO of final session of Working Group 1 of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, whose report includes updated assessments on the likely impact of global climate change on small islands.

**Coastal and marine resources.** Promoting ocean sciences in such fields as ocean carbon sequestration, coral bleaching and monitoring, land-ocean-atmosphere biochemistry, pelagic fish populations. Testing of handbook on integrated coastal and ocean management. Leadership development workshops for heads of marine institutes (e.g. at the University of the West Indies, September 2006). Cosponsorship of the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts and Islands, with the Forum's third global conference in Paris in January 2006.

**Freshwater resources.** Through the International Hydrological Programme, contributions to a broad regional partnership in the Pacific for strengthening national capacities in water resources management and monitoring. In the Caribbean, workshops in 2007 on biological monitoring of rivers and on water harvesting, and new project on coastal aquifer systems.

**Waste management.** Training programme on wastewater management in the Pacific, being implemented by a consortium of organizations including the International Centre for Water Education in Delft, Netherlands.

**Energy resources.** Caribbean biofuels workshop (September 2007).

**Biodiversity.** World Heritage National Strategy Workshops in the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Trinidad & Tobago. Caribbean regional training workshop on Marine World Heritage (St Lucia, February 2006). Workshop on biosphere reserves in the Pacific (Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, December 2006). Collaborative assessments of coral reefs, benthic fauna, harmful marine algae. Strengthened links with the Island Biodiversity Programme of the Convention on Biological Diversity (e.g. through the Global Island Partnership).

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*The technology that makes up Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System, is only as good as the commitment of the people using it to make it work over the long term and for all. ... Vulnerable communities need to be prepared for such catastrophes, especially those in areas where earthquakes occur close to the coast. I would like to congratulate the countries of the region for the impressive effort that has been made across the Indian Ocean region in such a short time. Yet, the means are still lacking in many places to get tsunami warnings to coastal populations in time. Still lacking also are public information and education programmes to teach people how to recognize the signs of an imminent tsunami and protect themselves. Equally important, is the revision and enforcement of building codes and improved urban or development planning to limit physical and economic damage from tsunamis.*”

UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura, in a statement issued on 26 December 2006, on the second anniversary of the Indian Ocean tsunami which took more than 200,000 lives and caused billions of dollars of material damage.

**Sandwatch** is a joint initiative of two UNESCO sectors (Natural Sciences and Education), with focal points provided by the Associated Schools Project Network and the Coastal Regions and Small Islands Platform. Launched in 2001 with an initial focus on the Caribbean region, the

project now involves participating groups in more than 20 island countries and territories in the Indian and Pacific Ocean regions as well as the Caribbean.

Through a long-term beach monitoring and management programme, the aim is to draw on the enthusiasm and creativity of schoolchildren, and their teachers and communities, to care for their beaches and reduce pollution.

During 2006, an interactive Sandwatch website and a newsletter ('The Sandwatcher') were launched, with a Regional Sandwatch Fair at Mayaro Government Primary School in Trinidad in November providing a springboard to showcase and expand the project approach within Trinidad & Tobago and the wider Caribbean region. And in early 2007, the UNESCO Natural Sciences newsletter 'A World of Science' carried a feature article on Sandwatch and its recent field and classroom activities. Shown here, measuring wave height, Dominican Republic.

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## **Natural hazards, environmental disasters**

Recent and ongoing work includes contributing to the Hyogo Framework for Action (adopted in Kobe, Japan, in 2005), and in particular advocating for a shift in emphasis from relief and emergency response to preventive measures and increased preparedness and education of potentially affected populations. An example is a project in Vanuatu on volcano hazard management, piloted by the UNESCO Office in Apia, with an overview prepared for the July-August 2007 issue of the quarterly bulletin 'A World of Science'.

Considerable progress has been made through the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) in working towards an operational Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System, with four meetings of an intergovernmental coordination group (most recently in February-March 2007), the setting up of a network of national tsunami information centres, and improvement of the seismographic network and deep-seabed sensors.

Progress has also been made in planning early-warning systems for tsunamis and other ocean-related hazards, for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions and for the North-eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Connected Seas. May 2006 saw the first tsunami-related 'Exercise Pacific Wave 06'.

Information materials include a special issue of the journal 'Earthquake Spectra' (June 2006), which provides a detailed account of the great Sumatran earthquakes and Indian Ocean tsunamis of December 2004 and March 2005. The TsunamiTeacher Information and Resource Kit has been developed by the IOC and its International Tsunami Information Centre to help communicating tsunami risk to the public. The UNESCO-Kingston Office and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency have issued a revised version of the 'Disaster Information Kit for the Caribbean Media' as well as earthquake-preparedness booklets for schools and teachers.

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Tarawa  
Majuro  
Vanua Lava  
Timor-Leste  
Niufo'ou  
São Tomé  
Fakaofu  
Antigua  
Trinidad

**Media matters** ~ The International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) is an important catalyst for media development in many Small Island Developing States – reflected in the impact of support (totalling US\$4 million) that has been made available since the early 1980s to about 100 national projects in SIDS (including nearly \$0.5 million in 2004-2005 to 19 projects). Strengthening freedom of expression in the Dominican Republic, and reinforcing community broadcasting at atoll media centres in the Maldives, are among new projects approved in 2006.

In addition, a number of regional projects involve the participation of SIDS, as well as regional bodies such as the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development and the Caribbean Media Corporation. Examples include a project in the Caribbean on ethical practices, journalism training and management of freedom of the press. One scheme involving Pacific Island countries is that on training in low-cost digital TV studio facilities. Television companies in Comoros, Mauritius and the Seychelles are taking part in a project on the supply and installation of production and post-production equipment, being implemented by the Mauritius-based International Council of French-Speaking Radio and Television Companies.

Looking forward, at its forthcoming 2007 session, the IPDC Bureau will consider proposals for 19 new projects in 15 SIDS, in fields ranging from the reinforcement of community radios to the training of media professionals and the setting up of an audio-visual training centre at a national university.

Among other activities for encouraging community empowerment and addressing the digital divide, Community Multimedia Centres (CMCs) combine community broadcasting with internet and related technologies. Pilot projects include a regional initiative in the Caribbean, where the aim is to transform existing community radio stations into CMCs, complete with PCs and a combination of fax, telephone, e-mail and internet services. Initial participants include radio stations in Barbados, Cuba, Jamaica, and Trinidad & Tobago, with new facilities being established on such islands as Bequia in St Vincent & the Grenadines.

In Haiti, one IPDC-supported project seeks to improve the access to information of rural poor. In the Pacific, the People First Network Project (Pfnnet) in the Solomon Islands supports peace building and poverty reduction through an improved access to information and increased communication capacity in rural areas. Media law reform in Cape Verde is among other ongoing projects.

**Electronic discussion forums** are one of the opportunities opened up by new technologies that would appear particularly suited for enabling islanders to relate experiences and discuss approaches to shared concerns. In collaboration with Scotland On Line, every two weeks, Small Islands Voice (SIV) links up around 50,000 resident islanders, diaspora and others interested in small-island affairs, in a moderated discussion on issues spanning environment, development, society, economy and culture. Issues addressed in recent discussions have included commercial whaling, energy needs and sources, biotechnology and future food supplies, and the motors and beneficiaries of tourism development ('Tourism: For Whose Benefit?'). 'Disposing of garbage in my island' is a recent topic raised in the associated SIV Youth Discussion Forum.

**Young people at work** ~ In the Caribbean, the YouthPath (Youth Poverty Alleviation through Tourism and Heritage) initiative now includes on-the-ground projects in eight SIDS, with updates on progress given in an electronic newsletter (launched in February 2007) and a 'lessons-learned manual' under preparation. Education for Sustainable Development was the main focus for the Organization's contributions to the Pacific Youth Festival in Tahiti in July 2006, which brought together over 1,000 young people from all parts of the Pacific.

Through the 'Youth Visioning for Island Living' partnership with the Lighthouse Foundation, young people articulate how they want their islands to develop in the future and how they plan to make this happen. During 2006, ten on-the-ground projects were completed, and a further 15 projects started. In the first 2007 issue of the initiative's electronic newsletter, plans for three recently launched projects are flagged (in the Marshall Islands, Mauritius and San Andrés). Featured are accounts of three ongoing field projects: on fish-farming in Kolgpng (Papua New Guinea), on promoting the traditional fire-knife dance in Samoa, and on environmental awareness-raising in Haiti.

**Addressing HIV/AIDS** ~ Within the joint United Nations initiative UNAIDS, the Organization plays a lead role in the Global Initiative on Education and HIV/AIDS and the Inter-Agency Task Team on Education, which are considered to be key mechanisms for approaching universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support. In the Caribbean, the Kingston Office has focused on achieving consensus among governments and other stakeholders, developing a blueprint for the region on how the educational sector should respond to the pandemic, establishing partnerships for action in this field, and building capacity in Member States. The HIV/AIDS Clearinghouse website provides access to Caribbean-related resources and facilitates sharing of information on key events in the region and internationally. Among regular sources of information are quarterly reports to the United Nations HIV/AIDS groups in the Caribbean and other partners. Jointly with the International Labour Organization, a framework was published in 2006 for addressing the disease as a workplace issue in education institutions. Promoting arts- and theatre-based approaches to prevention and care include a regional seminar in Cuba in May 2007, organized by the Regional Office for Culture in Havana.

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'On the Spot' radio team in Tonga. As part of a Youth Visioning for Island Living project, local communities have been informed about the Millennium Development Goals and how to achieve them.



**Building capacities** ~ The UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development was formally launched in early 2005, with UNESCO (as lead agency) and a suite of partners and collaborators working together to put into action the International Implementation Scheme for the Decade. Consultations in Jamaica, Mauritius and Samoa have led to elaboration of regional implementation strategies and frameworks for collaboration. In 2006, the University of the South Pacific was endorsed as a Centre of Excellence for Education for Sustainable Development by the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO. A new five-year (2006-2010) project was launched to enhance education-based capacity building for sustainable development in Pacific Island Countries.

With basic education an overall priority in the Organization's programmes, Field Offices play a crucial role in mobilizing resources for Education For All (EFA), including regional workshops on such topics as education reporting for journalists (Nadi, Fiji) and inclusive education (Apia, Samoa). Fields of technical support include the training of trainers for the university in Comoros, community learning centres in the Maldives, evaluation of educational reform in Seychelles, functional literacy for women working at home in Sao Tome & Principe, and encouragement for learning science and technology in Timor Leste.



'Early Childhood Care and Education' is the theme of the 2007 EFA Global Monitoring Report, with case studies from Jamaica and Papua New Guinea among those featured in the October 2006 issue of the UNESCO Courier. In Papua New Guinea (a country with over 800 languages), pre-primary school classes provide children with two years of basic education in their mother tongue.

Country-based projects in technical and vocational education include revision of Bahrain's commercial education curriculum and integrating skills development in education for all in Samoa. A project has been relaunched for promoting integrated distance education in five Caribbean universities. At the higher education level, support is being provided to the University Consortium of Small Island States, through a cooperative programme with the University of the West Indies (as Secretariat to the Consortium).

Options for setting up an Institute for Small Island States in the Bahamas is another proposal under discussion.

Recent work of UNESCO's Institutes and Centres of Education includes a distance education course on managing university-enterprise relationships in the Caribbean, under the aegis of the International Institute for Educational Planning.

**UNESCO's Participation Programme** is designed to provide direct assistance to initiatives undertaken by Member States and Associate Members, in line with priorities determined by the countries themselves. The funds available for individual projects are modest in international terms (up to a maximum of US\$26,000 for national project requests, with about six projects per country in each biennium). But such levels of support can prove especially useful and important in small countries. During the 2004-2005 biennium, over US\$3.7 million was made available to more than 200 projects in SIDS. Within the provisions of the 2006-2007 Participation Programme, as of early 2007, 113 projects (totalling US\$2.0 million) in 28 SIDS and UNESCO Associate Members in oceanic regions have been approved, touching on many of the concerns addressed in the Mauritius Strategy.

#### SAMPLING OF PROJECTS UNDERWAY IN SIDS IN 2006-2007

- Antigua & Barbuda.** Upgrading of All Saints Community Learning Centre
- Aruba.** 'Getting rich through education' project
- Bahrain.** Reform strategy for secondary education
- Barbados.** Database development for the Flora of the Eastern Caribbean project
- Cook Islands.** Sandwatch national learners conference
- Cuba.** Digitalization of library of literature and languages institute
- Cyprus.** Euro-Mediterranean Youth Forum
- Dominica.** Advanced training programme in educational planning and management
- Dominican Republic.** Relations between social sciences and political decision-making
- Grenada.** Accessing on-line literacy studies
- Haiti.** Preservation of Haitian traditional music and dance
- Jamaica.** Exhibition on Jamaican Slave experience
- Maldives.** Equipment for water quality monitoring and surveying
- Malta.** Publication of 19th century watercolours
- Marshall Islands.** Training in indigenous navigation
- Netherlands Antilles.** Saba school radio
- Niue.** Protection of intellectual property rights
- Palau.** Phytosociological assessment of mangroves on Bareldaos Island
- Papua New Guinea.** Emergency assistance to flood victims of Wau-Bulolo, Morobe Province
- St Kitts & Nevis.** Bicentenary of end of slave trade in British West Indies
- St Lucia.** Joint Schools Science Fair and Industry Exhibition
- St Vincent & the Grenadines.** Modern languages laboratory
- Tokelau.** Pandana plantation for weaving materials
- Tonga.** Contributing to UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
- Trinidad & Tobago.** Teacher training for empowerment with emotional coping skills
- Tuvalu.** Computer lab equipment for Fetuvalu secondary school
- Vanuatu.** Upgrading newsroom computer service of Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Service

#### Further information

- UNESCO Implementing Programme of Action for SIDS. Website. <http://www.unesco.org/en/sids>
- 'Sustainable Living - The Island Way'. DVD. 25 minutes. 2006. <http://www.unesco.org/csi/smis/siv/pub/SIV2DVDflyer2.pdf>
- 'Embarking on Mauritius Strategy Implementation'. 6-page brochure. September 2005. <http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/msibroch.htm>
- 'Island Agenda 2004+: Coping with change and sustaining diversities in small islands'. 48-page booklet. October 2004. <http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/mim.htm>
- 'Island Agenda: An overview of UNESCO's work on island environments, territories and societies'. 131-page review. March 1994. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001012/101276eb.pdf>

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The digital version of this brochure with numerous hotlinks can be viewed at: <http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/msibroch2007.htm>

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#### Front cover:

Portrait of islander from the tsunami-ravaged village of Kolhuvaariyaafushi, on the southwestern Mulaku Atoll, Maldives.

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Housing divide, Port Moresby District, Papua New Guinea.

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