



FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF
LDCs/SIDS
IN THE WORK OF THE
HUMAN RIGHTS
COUNCIL

VOICES OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)

IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL:

An historical milestone of participation
by all CARICOM SIDS through the support of
the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

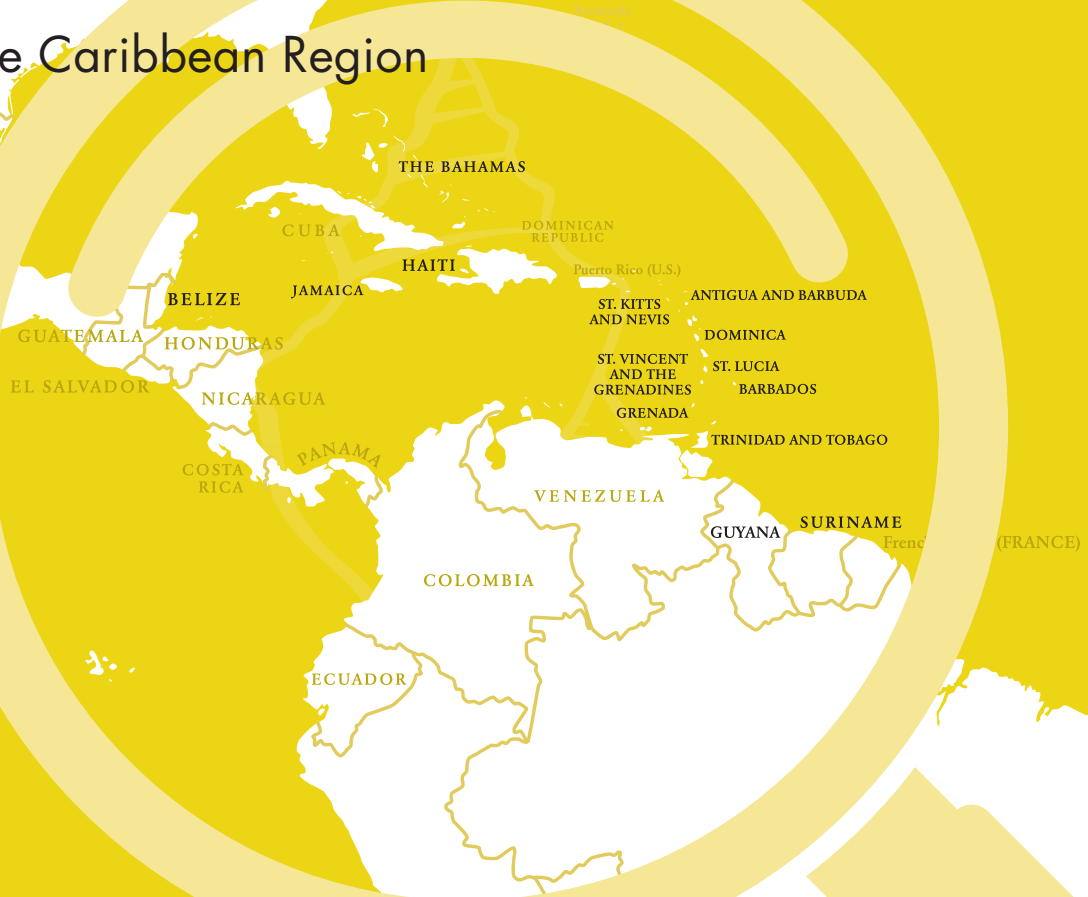


WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE COMMONWEALTH
OF THE BAHAMAS

A REGIONAL SERIES: **THE CARIBBEAN**

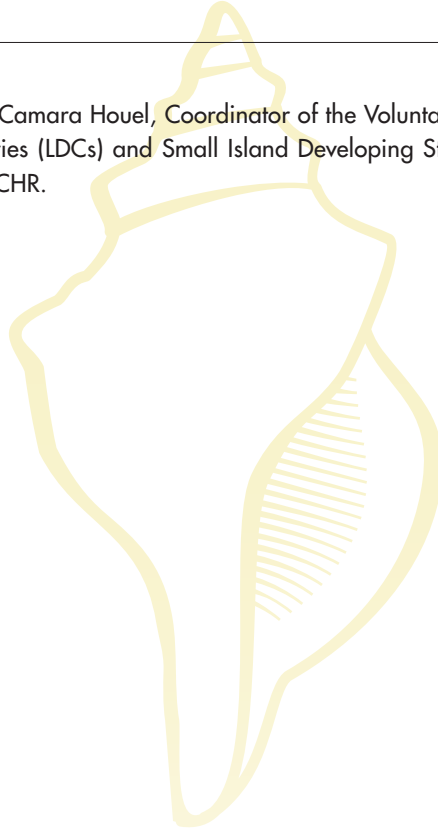


Map of the Caribbean Region



Acknowledgment

This brochure was developed by Ms. Fatou Camara Houel, Coordinator of the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the work of the Human Rights Council, Human Rights Council Branch, OHCHR.



Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

“The LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund’s activities highlighted in this brochure are concrete examples of OHCHR’s continuous efforts to build the capacity of government officials working in the field of human rights and enable their direct and informed participation in the Human Rights Council and engagement with its mechanisms.

I am proud that as a direct result of the Trust Fund’s activities and its generous supporters, for the first time ever, all 14 Member States of the Caribbean Community participated directly in the last regular sessions of the Human Rights Council, which ensured that their voices were heard in the Human Rights and Alliance of Civilizations Chamber.”

Foreword



H.E. Mr. Irwin LaRocque, Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

“ The thirty-fifth session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) coincides with an important celebratory milestone in the cooperation between the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the United Nations system, in particular the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

OHCHR administers the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the work of the Human Rights Council. The Trust Fund has enabled each of CARICOM’s 14 independent Member States to participate in the work of the HRC. This is a remarkable result given that it was accomplished between 2014 and 2017.

Most of our Member States do not have

a permanent mission in Geneva. The support provided by the Trust Fund has therefore been critical to ensuring that the voices and perspectives of all LDCs and SIDS are being heard in the HRC. To date, 18 individuals from CARICOM countries have had the opportunity to participate in the HRC – 16 women and two men. Their contributions have unquestionably increased the inclusiveness of the HRC.

The participation of our Member States in the HRC is also linked to the region’s holistic and integrated approach to human rights, as reflected in the core values expressed in the Preamble of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, the foundation document of the Community. In 1997, our Heads of Government signed the Charter of Civil Society, which is referenced in the

Treaty’s Preamble. The Charter proclaims our commitment “to the fundamental principles of human rights and freedoms.” Indeed, Article II of the Charter is entitled “Respect for Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms.” It declares that “the States shall respect the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual without distinction as to age, colour, creed, disability, ethnicity, gender, language, place of birth or origin, political opinion, race, religion or social class but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest.”

The Strategic Plan for the Caribbean Community for the period 2015-2019, agreed to by the Heads of Government, confirms that “we have an abiding respect for human rights, the rule of law, and take



Foreword (cont...)

action to ensure social and economic justice for the people of the Community.” Respect for this core value ensures that the protection and promotion of human rights and of the rule of law are maintained as important elements in the democratic values that our Community espouses.

It is a reality that today, human rights and fundamental freedoms are under constant threat worldwide and constitute one of the most serious and urgent challenges of our times. A participatory HRC is critical to the strategic action required to counter human rights violations and to promote and protect human rights. CARICOM’s cooperation with OHCHR, through the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund is a model for an effective and action-oriented partnership that should be sustained in the interest of the promotion and protection of human rights globally.

I take this opportunity to thank and commend the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund Secretariat of the OHCHR for its excellent and effective management of the Trust Fund. I also want to commend the Trust Fund for its commitment to universal participation in the work of the HRC and its instrumental role in providing practical support to LDCs and SIDS with the above objectives in view. We note and are encouraged by the appeal for continuing donor support to the Trust Fund incorporated in HRC resolution 34/40 adopted by the HRC on 24 March 2017. Every CARICOM Member State co-sponsored this resolution, which attracted 120 co-sponsors, making it one of the most co-sponsored resolutions in the history of the HRC.

On behalf of the CARICOM, I would like to assure the donors of the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund, whose numbers have quadrupled within the last year, that our region sincerely

appreciates and values their generous support. We are gratified that other donors continue to be inspired to contribute.

This brochure, the first of its kind, is dedicated to the contribution of our region to the work of the HRC with the support of the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund. It details the active engagement of CARICOM Member States at the HRC, including through the testimonials of Trust Fund Beneficiaries, all of whom were first time participants in a regular session of the HRC.

We in the Caribbean Community are proud of our record in human rights and look forward to continuing our involvement in the work of the HRC. ”

CARICOM Member States

(In alphabetical order. Source: United Nations Blue Book Edition No. 115-116 - updated 12 May 2017)

In yellow: Member States without a permanent mission in Geneva. In blue: Member States with a permanent mission but without a residence in Geneva.



 **ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA**
(residence in London)

 **BAHAMAS**

 **BARBADOS**

 **BELIZE**
(residence in New York)

 **DOMINICA**
(without a permanent mission in Geneva)

 **GRENADA**

 **GUYANA**

 **HAITI**

 **JAMAICA**

 **MONTSERRAT***

 **SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS**
(without a permanent mission in Geneva)

 **SAINT LUCIA**
(residence in Paris)

 **SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES**
(without a permanent mission in Geneva)

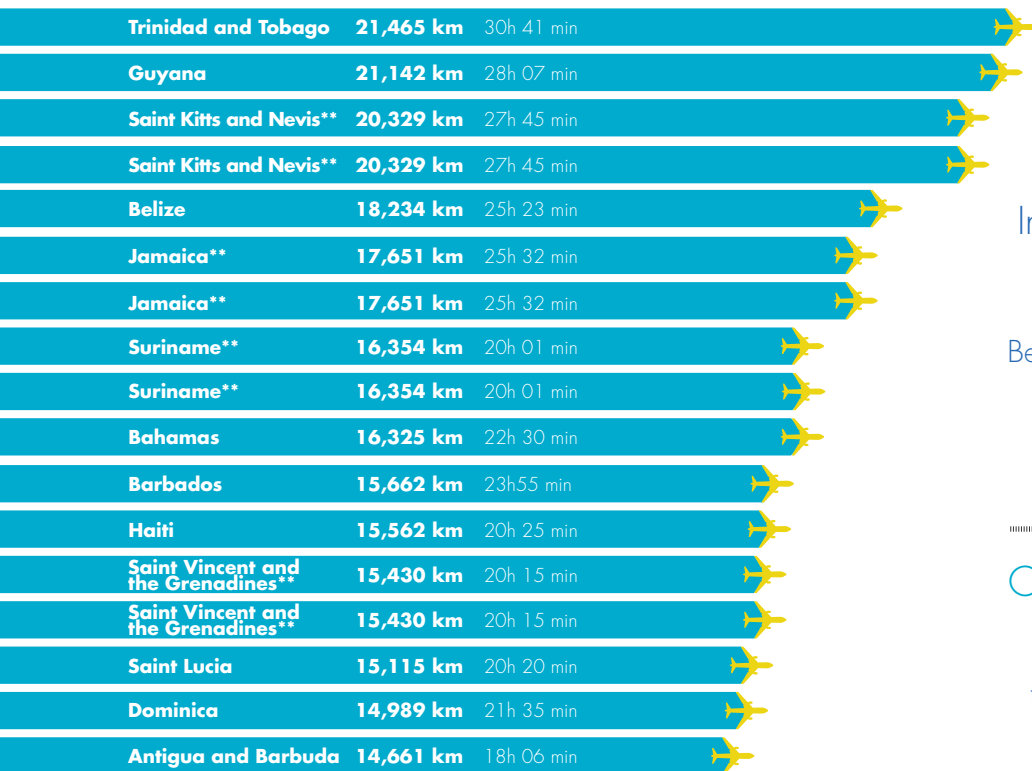
 **SURINAME**
(without a permanent mission in Geneva)

 **TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

* Montserrat is a full member of CARICOM but not a Member State of the United Nations as it is non-independent.

Time and distance required to enable the CARICOM Beneficiaries of the Trust Fund to participate in regular sessions of the Human Rights Council in Geneva (from September 2014 - June 2017)

(Ordered from longest to shortest trip to Geneva)



In total, between September 2014 to June 2017, the 18 CARICOM Beneficiary Delegates of the Trust Fund travelled:

292,683 KM

Completing **7** tours around the world to participate in regular sessions of the Human Rights Council

*Based on Carlson Wagonlit's itinerary for each of the Beneficiary Delegates, Fellows and VIPS.

**Countries that benefited twice from the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund.



from the
**Caribbean
region**



Human Rights Council
Palais des Nations
Geneva



FROM THE CARICOM UN MEMBER STATES TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL IN GENEVA



CARICOM Member States to the Human Rights Council in Geneva

In total, the recipients spent **398 hours**
(approximately **17 days**) seated in
economy class seats on various flights



ECONOMY



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
BAHAMAS
BARBADOS
BELIZE
DOMINICA
GRENADA
GUYANA
HAITI
JAMAICA
SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS
SAINT LUCIA
SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES
SURINAME
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

*This total does not include additional time spent in transit.



Facts and Figures



Beneficiaries of the Trust Fund

18 Total Beneficiaries



16



2

Delegates



13

1

Fellows



2



1



VIP



1

*First time participation
in a HRC session*



18

Based in



Capital

18

Where do the Beneficiaries of the Trust Fund work in their capitals?

	DELEGATES	FELLOWS	VIPS	TOTAL
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN/EXTERNAL AFFAIRS	 8	 3		11
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE/LEGAL AFFAIRS	 3			3
EXECUTIVE OFFICE	 1			1
OTHER MINISTRY	 2		 1	3
TOTAL	14	3	1	18

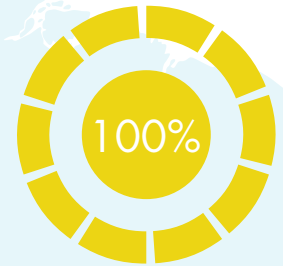


Promoting the voices of women from the CARICOM in the Human Rights Council



First-time participation of female Beneficiary Delegates of the Trust Fund from CARICOM countries in a HRC session

Implementation rate:



Galapagos Islands (ECUADOR)

Contributions of the CARICOM Member States at the first historic universal session of the HRC on the occasion of its 10th anniversary

On 13 June 2016, all 193 Member States of the United Nations, including the 16 Small Island Developing States (SIDS) without permanent representation in Geneva, participated in the Human Rights Council for the first time, on the occasion of its 10th anniversary.

The Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the work of the Human Rights Council was instrumental in securing this result by supporting the participation of 18 SIDS Beneficiary Delegates, 13 of whom were women.

Of the 18 SIDS that participated in the session, **six were Member States from CARICOM countries** (Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname). **The Beneficiary Delegates were all women who travelled to Geneva and attended a Human Rights Council session for the first time.**

The Trust Fund is also proud to have been able to support **the participation of the first visually impaired Beneficiary Delegate.**

The historic joint statement that was issued by the SIDS on the occasion of the universal session was drafted by Mrs. Jasmien Wijngaarde-LijKwan (Suriname). Mrs. Wijngaarde-LijKwan also won the prize of “best dressed female delegate” on the occasion of national dress day.



*First time
participation of all
of the 193
UN Member States*

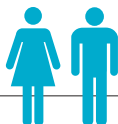




Hearing the voices of the CARICOM Beneficiaries of the Trust Fund

The opinions expressed are personal testimonials of the Beneficiaries of the Trust Fund and thus represent only the views of their authors. Functional titles are those that were used during the participation of the Beneficiaries of the Trust Fund.

Delegates



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Vanessa Moe

Crown Counsel, Office of the Attorney General,
Ministry of Legal Affairs, HRC 32 (June 2016)

“I had an amazing experience participating in the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

As a visually impaired delegate, I was able to fully participate in all sessions, including the induction training session. For the most part, the Human Rights Council is accessible for persons with visual impairment. However, some improvements need to be made to better adapt the inscription process so that it is accessible to all.

Thanks to the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund, Antigua and Barbuda was afforded the maiden opportunity to participate in this session and to be part of the historic joint statement. I gained a greater understanding of the work of the Human Rights Council in relation to both thematic and country-specific human rights issues.”



BELIZE

Orla Kantun-Coleman

Director of Cooperation and Treaty Reporting,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, HRC 32 (June 2016)

“I never would have imagined that participating in one Human Rights Council session would have enriched my professional career so much. I was really able to hone my understanding of the Human Rights Council procedures and mechanisms and it was as though I was filling in the gaps as I moved from theory to practical application.

My time at the HRC also made its work more real and it evolved from being a foreign construct to something that I could actually relate to, understand and participate in. Also, being in that environment and having other Member States approach me for Belize’s support on various resolutions helped me to better appreciate and understand the dynamics of the HRC’s work in Geneva.

My objective now is to see how best to fully integrate human rights into Belize’s national policy framework and to recognize that treaty reporting is only a means to an end. Overall, it was a truly enriching experience and surpassed my expectations of the added value that I would walk away with. It was truly a job well done in delivering technical assistance and building the capacity in human rights for LDCs/SIDS.”



DOMINICA

Shearlyn J Joseph

Foreign Service Officer II, Desk Officer Multilateral Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and CARICOM Affairs, HRC 35 (June 2017)

“I am elated and grateful for the opportunity to participate at the thirty-fifth session of the Human Rights Council and to represent my country, the Commonwealth of Dominica. My involvement will result in the full participation of the CARICOM Member States at the session,

therefore making CARICOM the first region to receive full sponsorship for its attendance.

During the session, I intend to deliver two statements on behalf of my Government, namely, “Men and boys engaging in fighting violence against women” and “SDG5 - Women Equality and Health.” This will be the highlight of my attendance.

Upon my return to the capital, I will work to be a valuable contributor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and CARICOM Affairs. This will be particularly useful as the Ministry is in the process of examining the possibility of the establishment of a national mechanism for the review and follow-up to the Universal Periodic Review.

I would like to express my gratitude to the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund for this opportunity and look forward to continued collaboration between the Trust Fund and the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica.”



GRENADA

Kasandra Roxie Hutchinson

Foreign Service Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
HRC 30 (September 2015)

“I must admit (...) that when I walked past security into Room XX and sat behind my country’s nameplate, it was indeed a proud moment because I knew that I was about to be further enlightened and my perspective on the work of the HRC was about to change.

I believe that drafting and delivering a statement on behalf of Grenada under agenda item 6 at the general debate may have been my greatest achievement. I believe that this was the first time that Grenada delivered a statement during the general debate.”



GUYANA

Tamara M. Evelyn Khan

Legal Adviser and Technical Coordinator,
Governance Office, Office of the Prime Minister and
First Vice President, HRC 32 (June 2016)

“The opportunity to participate in the thirty-second regular session of the Human Rights Council and engage in its work was invaluable from any vantage point.

Of particular note and value was the alignment/collaboration of the LDCs/SIDS to forge one common voice on the issue of realizing the right to development in the particular context of these Member States. The Trust Fund was certainly the unifying agent and catalyst for this sounding of one voice; both in its spirit and intention.

The authentic opportunity for wider networking with stronger, more developed countries is also significant and a direct result of the efforts of the HRC and the Trust Fund. Learning from other Member States, both developed and

developing, allows for enormous growth.

To give every State a voice in the global arena and facilitate the sharing of ideas, problems and solutions are among the highest ideals of the Council. The realization of these ideals by way of the Trust Fund is a significant victory and there is no question that Guyana and its fellow LDCs/SIDS will stand taller and remain more informed because of it.”



JAMAICA

Nardia Patricia Andrews

Legal Officer, Ministry of Justice, HRC 30

(September 2015)

“My greatest achievement during my participation in this programme was working closely with my permanent mission in Geneva and assisting in the preparation and presentation of a statement related to the adoption of Jamaica’s Universal Periodic Review recommendations during the final week

of the thirtieth session of the Human Rights Council.

As a result of my involvement in the Trust Fund programme, and due to my attendance and participation in the session of the Human Rights Council, I am now able to fully support the Ministry of Justice in Jamaica in its pre-establishment phase of the national human rights institution (NHRI). I am a key person in the Ministry with responsibility for establishing a NHRI in Jamaica and I have been tasked with assisting in its establishment.”



JAMAICA

Shae-Alicia Lewis

Foreign Service Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, HRC 34 (March 2017)

“My participation in the pre-session induction programme and in the thirty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council, courtesy of the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund, was a very rewarding

professional and personal experience. First, the induction programme, along with the e-Learning course, provided a very useful and comprehensive overview of the work of the Human Rights Council.

Second, participation in the thirty-fourth session of the Council was enriching and significantly contributed to my professional development. I am sincerely grateful for the opportunity to have experienced a session of the Human Rights Council in person and to have observed the dynamics between Member States and between Member States and non-governmental organizations. This immersion enabled me to better appreciate the complexity of the work of the Council and, by extension, of the global human rights agenda.

Nonetheless, My participation in the thirty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council was not only for my benefit. There is no doubt that Jamaica as a whole benefited from the support I was able to provide to my permanent mission in the analysis of resolutions, consultations with the capital, the monitoring of resolutions, the drafting of interventions, reporting and follow-up.

I was proud to have been designated by my fellow Beneficiary Delegates to speak on their behalf on the occasion of the launch of the Trust Fund's brochure commemorating its fifth anniversary.

My presence in Geneva also enabled my country to successfully juggle its participation in the substantive work of the Council with its coordination of human rights matters for the Latin American and Caribbean Group. For a small country with a small permanent mission, having reinforcement during a session of the Council, with its multitude of simultaneous activities, is quite valuable.

Going forward, I expect that the knowledge I gained through this experience will better equip me to support my country's participation in future sessions of the Human Rights Council, particularly given my improved understanding of timelines, thematic areas and Member State policy positions. My experience will also serve to enhance the soundness of policy advice on the multilateral human rights discourse that I may be required to provide to my Ministry and other government ministries, departments and

agencies. For this reason, I consider that the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund is a valuable capacity-building tool for Small Island Developing States like Jamaica.”



SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

Thouvya France

Foreign Service Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Aviation, Delegate, HRC 31 (March 2016)

“It has been a tremendous learning experience! My presence at the session and ability to actively participate will undoubtedly leave a void at the future sessions as we will be unable to attend. On my return to the capital, however, I intend to continue closely following the issues and maintaining some level of involvement at the sessions. This will ensure that Saint Kitts and Nevis maintains an ongoing, vested interest in the Human Rights Council and its work.”



SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

Dorn Henry

Acting Supervisor, Department of Probation,
Government of Anguilla Public Service, HRC 32
(June 2016)

“As I reflect thoroughly on my experience at the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council, I can truly say that it was a remarkable journey; one that will bring about positive change for me, both personally and professionally.

My time in the induction course and at the HRC32 session was indeed a steep learning curve and also taught me that I love to learn. This fact was reaffirmed for me after undergoing two days of accelerated learning regarding the multilateral human rights system, followed by focused practical training related to the working methods of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms while also learning how to overcome jetlag. Having the experience of

sitting through and participating in the general debates and interactive dialogues taught me to see both sides of an issue, think critically, speak confidently and differentiate a strong argument from strong rhetoric.

On an intellectual level, HRC32 exposed me to a wide variety of human rights discourses, issues and resources that I would otherwise never have considered. I also developed quite a few diplomatic skills that I will seek to strengthen in the near future.”



SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Jasmine Veronica Hull

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Mobilisation,
Social Development, HRC 32 (June 2016)

“My journey began with the induction course which served as a forerunner of what was to come in the next three weeks. The information imparted was very useful, even though it was a lot to process in a short space of time.

For me, participation in the proceedings of the

Human Rights Council was both a rewarding and humbling experience. Although the agenda was very long and complex, the insight I gained from the induction course assisted me in remaining focused throughout the proceedings.

My greatest achievement was being able to deliver a statement during the general debate as well as forging new relationships that will be forever remembered.

I am very grateful to the donors of the Trust Fund and to the Human Rights Council for enabling my participation in the work of the Council and in ensuring that all Member States were present on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Council.”



SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Jinelle Adams

Foreign Service Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Trade and Regional Integration, Delegate, HRC 31
(March 2016)

“I had the opportunity to establish new connections on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, while also fortifying existing relationships with like-minded States and allies. Considering that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines does not have a permanent mission in Geneva, these connections will hopefully serve as a source of useful information regarding what is happening at the HRC and allow my country to participate, albeit from a distance, in the HRC.”



SURINAME

Jasmien Wijngaarde-Lijkwan

Senior Desk Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
HRC 32 (June 2016)

“The induction course was a two-day intense course on all issues related to agenda items 1 to 10 that we would come across during the Human Rights Council sessions. It was very helpful. National dress day was the most fun that I’d had in ages. I love cultural activities and this magnificent day was a way to express our cultures. On top of that, Suriname and Montenegro jointly won the prize for “best dressed female delegate” which was icing on the cake.

The interaction with other representatives was very fruitful. The countries all wanted to know who the ‘new face’ was and who the person was that was sitting in the ‘always empty’ chair. I even had to ‘fight’ for my chair on the first day.

Since I love writing statements, my Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposed that I draft a joint statement on agenda item 6 on behalf of the SIDS, taking into account our obligations, reports and commitments and our need for technical assistance as small countries.

Besides the work and learning tools, there was an exchange of views among us which required us to confront our different cultures. It gave us insights about each other’s work, beliefs, experiences, countries and islands and of course, our individuality. We made friends but also created a family through SIDS and I will cherish that always.”



SURINAME

Armilia Tojosemito

Legal Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, HRC 27
(September 2014)

“It was one of my dreams to experience the international consultative and decision-making

processes in the human rights field. In 2014, my dream came true when I was able to participate in the work of the Human Rights Council.

Addressing the session of the Human Rights Council on behalf of my country on issues related to water and sanitation was a milestone in my life. I consider this experience to be one of my greatest achievements because the voice of my country, one of the LDCs/SIDS, has been heard.

In reporting for the follow-up of the Universal Periodic Review recommendations for Suriname, my assistance in the preparation and development of the report was essential. That experience in the Human Rights Council led to an additional request for my assistance with the coordination of our periodic report to the Human Rights Committee, which subsequently resulted in my participation as a member of the delegation to present the periodic report of Suriname to the Human Rights Committee in 2015.

In closing, I wish to mention that the creation of the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund is a way to

provide representatives of the LDCs/SIDS with an opportunity to improve their capacity by participating in the work of the Human Rights Council, especially for Member States without representation in Geneva.”



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Ian Rampersad

Director of International Law and Human Rights,
Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs,
HRC 34 (March 2017)

“On my arrival in Geneva, it was straight to work. I was immediately taken to my mission to meet with my colleagues and I received an initial briefing on my role as a delegate representing Trinidad and Tobago at the Human Rights Council.

Over the next two days, I participated in an induction course created by the Trust Fund Secretariat. The induction course provided a good, holistic briefing on how the Human Rights

Council operates in practice and how different groups of stakeholders may be involved in the process.

I had an opportunity to observe the constructive dialogue process when a representative of one of the Small Island Developing States¹ engaged with the Committee of Experts for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. During the Council session, I met with various special procedures and learned more about their work when they undertake a country visit. This was extremely helpful as it placed me in a better position to advise my Government about which special procedures we should invite to visit Trinidad and Tobago.

Beneficiary Delegates of the Trust Fund were given the opportunity to attend various social events that were hosted by some of the permanent missions. These functions allowed for professional networking which may be beneficial for Trinidad and Tobago in the future. Other side events that were hosted by NGOs or even preliminary debates on resolutions, which were later brought before the Council, proved

to be very positive learning experiences for me.

On a personal note, the opportunity to work within my area of expertise, particularly in such a different environment and on an international scale, was exceptional. This experience has significantly changed my perspective on human rights reporting. I now have such a clear view of the international impact that reporting can have for a Small Island Developing State; like my own country. This fresh outlook will have a trickle-down effect and ultimately benefit me professionally as well as my country.”

¹ A delegate of the Federated States of Micronesia was also a Beneficiary of the Trust Fund at the time of his participation.

Fellows



BAHAMAS

Kerry Bonamy

Foreign Service Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration, 2015 Fellowship Programme (September - November)

“The first concrete action that is easily identifiable is that any matter that references human rights in the course of my work is immediately prioritized; particularly work emanating from our permanent missions in Geneva and New York. The human rights element is constantly at the forefront of my mind when considering policies, procedures and as a result, it is re-shaping the discussions and conversations. The re-structuring and re-shaping of the discussions and conversations will in turn lead to the review and amendment of policies, procedures and approaches. While this may not be considered as a concrete action, this change in approach is monumental in that it requires the application of a human rights-based approach to begin and concretize action.”



BARBADOS

Ricardo Kellman

Foreign Service Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, 2014 Fellowship Programme (September - November)

“As a result of the training I received as a Fellow of the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund, I improved my job performance through the acquisition of new skills and the confidence to engage on human rights matters. This was probably due, in part, to the effectiveness of the training delivered in Geneva. The decision to have participants onsite must be commended as it provided opportunities for the development of both our cognitive and interpersonal skills.”



SAINT-LUCIA

Bynta Ernest

Foreign Service Officer, Ministry of External Affairs, International Trade and Civil Aviation, 2015 Fellowship Programme (September - November)

“My final fellowship research paper aimed at identifying areas in the work of the Human Rights Council that are directly linked to Saint Lucia's national priority areas. Making this link is an important first step in changing the culture of how human rights are perceived in Saint Lucia. Human rights must be viewed in terms of how they can contribute to our development.

I have been charged with assisting in the formulation of the Ministry's Communications Strategy. Within the Strategy, I included references to international conventions, treaties and declarations which are the basis for Saint Lucia's international human rights obligations.”



Voices of Permanent Representatives of
CARICOM Member States
based in Geneva

BAHAMAS

H.E. Ms. Rhoda M. Jackson, Permanent Representative of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas to the United Nations Office at Geneva

“ The Voluntary Trust Fund is an indispensable vehicle of partnership and cooperation. We thank the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for joining hands with the Bahamas and fellow Member States of the Caribbean Community in order to open the doors of the Council to the full participation and engagement of representatives of each CARICOM Member State in the work of the Council. This is a most significant milestone. For CARICOM, in general, and the Bahamas, in particular, the results achieved by the Trust Fund have been remarkable. The Beneficiary Delegate from the Bahamas

continues to lend her support from the capital to the permanent mission as we continue to advance national efforts related to the promotion and protection of human rights. We reaffirm our gratitude to the Fund and to the contributing countries for their generosity. It is our firm belief that supporting the universality of participation in the Council’s work by countries from all regions of the world, including through the Trust Fund, is in keeping with the true spirit of ‘leaving no one behind’ and is creating an important legacy of which the Council can be proud. ”

BARBADOS

H.E. Mr. Bentley DeVere Gibbs, Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations Office at Geneva

“ Barbados recognizes and supports the important work of the Human Rights Council, particularly at a time when human rights seem to be under attack in many parts of the global community. The strength and legitimacy of the Council rest in its universalization, both in terms of the accountability and participation of Member States. In this regard,

we laud the efforts of the Council, through the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund, in providing a mechanism that allows the participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States who, due to capacity constraints, might not otherwise have the opportunity to participate in the work of the Council.

Following Dominica's participation in the thirty-fifth session of the Human Rights Council in June 2017, all members of the Caribbean Community would have benefited from the Fund, either through its Fellowship Programme, or from funding for participation in the regular sessions

GUYANA

H.E. Dr. John Ronald Deep Ford, Permanent Representative of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana to the United Nations Office at Geneva

“Guyana has benefited from and greatly appreciates the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund as a valuable tool in providing opportunities to those Member States which would otherwise not participate in the work of the Human Rights Council.

Guyana is a multicultural, multi-ethnic society that continues to place the promotion and protection of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights among its highest priorities. The recognition that “all men are born free and equal in dignity and rights” remains a central guiding principle of our governance structure.

For developing countries such as ours, which until October 2016 had no permanent representation in Geneva, the opportunity to participate in the work of the Human Rights Council is crucial to our efforts to promote wider understanding and capacity-building

of the Council. This is a significant achievement and underscores the region's commitment, actualized through the Fund's support, for greater participation, promotion and engagement in the advancement of human rights at both the national and global level. ”

related to human rights.

In a world where migrants are on the move in far greater numbers than at any time since the Second World War, attention to the protection of human rights in the prevention of ethnic and religious conflict, and the work of the Human Rights Council in general, is increasingly important.

Guyana was honoured to cosponsor the resolution Promoting the Trust Fund adopted in the thirty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council last February and we look forward to working with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and all Member States as the Trust Fund continues its invaluable work of developing the institutional and human capacity of LDCs and SIDS. ”

HAITI

H.E. Mr. Pierre-André Dunbar, Permanent Representative of Haiti to the United Nations Office at Geneva

“The Trust Fund is a positive initiative of the Human Rights Council. On the strength of its positive experience, Haiti commends the Human Rights Council for this initiative and at the same time encourages donor countries to continue to give more support to the Fund since it has

enabled delegations such as those of the Caribbean States to have more effective and efficient participation in the regular sessions of the Council.”

JAMAICA

H.E. Mr. Wayne McCook, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations Office at Geneva

“Invaluable. A concrete illustration of how modest, targeted funding can produce great ripple effects. Thanks to the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund, Jamaica has been able to send two officials to sessions of the Human Rights Council in 2015 and 2017, respectively. The officers were able to participate actively in discussions and negotiations of the Council

and to gain precious insights into the workings of the Council and the Geneva human rights machinery. These experiences have enhanced their ability to provide support to the permanent mission in subsequent sessions of the Council and in treaty body reviews.”

SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

H.E. Mr. Steven Goldstein, Honorary Consul of Saint Kitts and Nevis for Switzerland

“I would like to thank the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and in particular the Secretariat of the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund, for allowing two female officials of the country that I represent

to participate in 2016 in the thirty-first and thirty-second sessions of the Human Rights Council. This was the first time that Beneficiary Delegates from the capital were able to attend an entire session of the HRC,

which exposed them to a wide variety of human rights issues. The Secretariat of the Trust Fund played a critical role to ensure that they were well prepared before the session through a well-designed and in-depth induction course.

We hope that there will be continued and increasing support from Member States that are in a position to contribute to the Trust Fund, which is now recognized as a unique mechanism to build the

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

H.E. Mr. Garvin Pettier, Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Permanent Mission of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations Office at Geneva

“The Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the work of the Human Rights Council (HRC) has provided much-needed support for States with limited staff or without physical representation in Geneva. It is a welcome initiative in an atmosphere where support to developing countries has appeared to wane over the last few years.

Through this platform, the Director of the International Law and Human Rights Unit in the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal

capacity of government officials of the LDCs and SIDS. It is imperative for a country such as ours to ensure that the remarkable and effective work of the Trust Fund continues. This is the reason why, along with a record number of UN Member States, Saint Kitts and Nevis has proudly supported resolution 34/40 which gives the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund a strengthened mandate. This is one of the Council's best success stories. ”

Affairs was able to participate in the thirty-fourth regular session of the Human Rights Council. I am quite optimistic that the understanding gained regarding the process, as well as the intersectoral nature of the issues addressed in the HRC, will lend themselves to improvements in overall support and responsiveness so that the views and realities of SIDS in our region are adequately reflected in the plethora of debates as well as in reports prepared pursuant to the various mandates.

The e-Learning tool on the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms has also been particularly useful as it has served as a rudimentary

but fundamental primer on the evolution from the Commission on Human Rights to the HRC, the rules and functioning of the HRC and the gamut of human rights mechanisms and special procedures. I recommend those following human rights issues to avail themselves of this valuable, educational tool.

Trinidad and Tobago is also pleased to have been among the co-sponsors of HRC resolution 34/40 entitled "Promoting the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in the work

of the Human Rights Council", which was adopted without a vote on 24 March 2017. With this resolution, it is hoped that the activities of the Trust Fund will receive greater exposure and support and as we move forward, continue to meet the training and capacity-building obligations of its constituents.

Trinidad and Tobago wishes to extend its heartfelt appreciation to the Secretariat for its management of the Trust Fund and the donors who have and continue to support the Trust Fund. ”

Other high-level voices



COMMONWEALTH

The Right Honourable Patricia Scotland QC, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth

“ I extend my warmest congratulations to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on the occasion of celebrating their full participation in the work of the Human Rights Council.

This is an historic milestone made possible through OHCHR’s Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund which has supported our Member States, particularly the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), to enhance their effective participation in the work of the Human Rights Council.

I am pleased that of the 18 grants made to the region by the Trust Fund, 16 were for women. This has significantly increased the participation of women from the Caribbean in the work of the

Human Rights Council.

Several Commonwealth Member States from the Caribbean region were also able to participate at the Human Rights Council as a result of technical and logistical support provided by the Commonwealth Small States Office in Geneva. Such assistance would not have been possible without the close collaboration with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and his Office.

I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our continuing commitment to the strengthening of this valuable strategic partnership for the benefit of all Commonwealth citizens and the promotion and protection of all of their human rights. ”

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

H.E. Sir Louis Straker, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

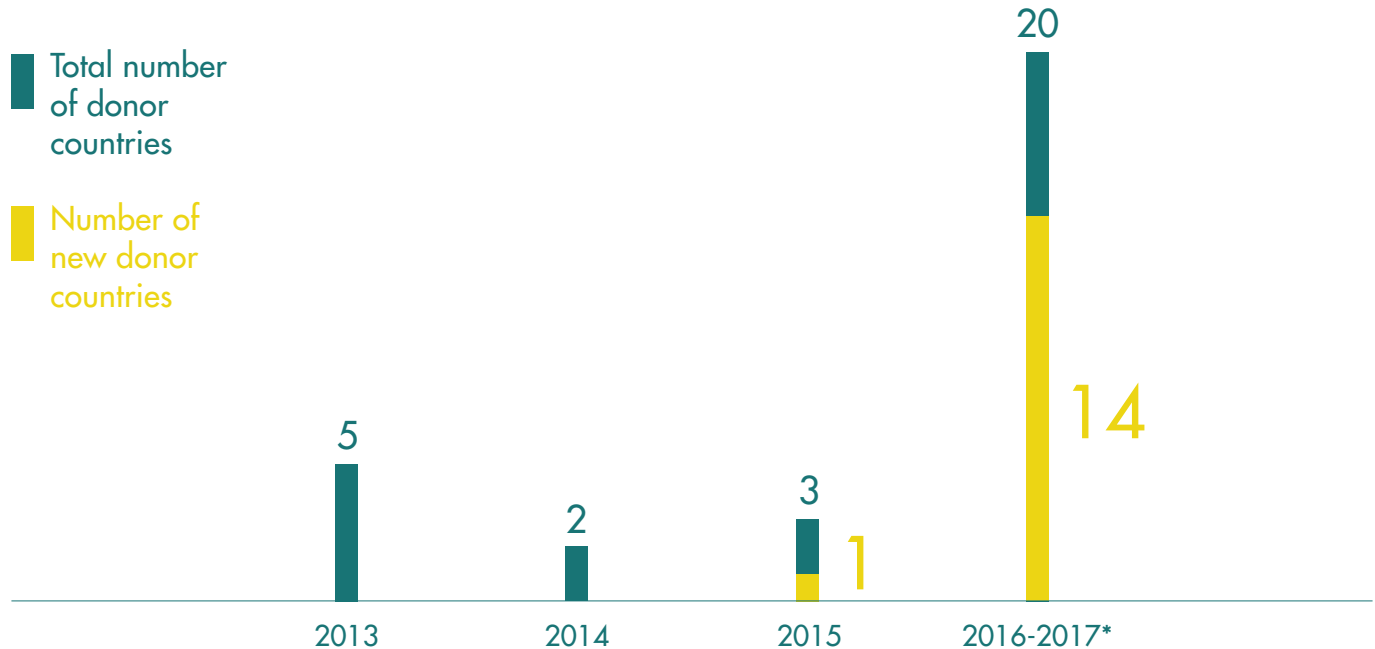
“ The universal and indivisible character of human rights implies that no country, no matter its economic or military prowess, can singularly ensure the adequate protection, promotion and respect

for human rights of all individuals. Thus, the involvement of LDCs/SIDS in the work of the Human Rights Council is vital. ”



Figures that speak for themselves: A Trust Fund that has admirably increased its donor base

From 2015 to 2017, the number of donor countries to the Trust Fund has increased from 3 to 20. During the same period, 15 new Member States decided to support the Fund's programme.



* 2016-2017: From 1 January 2016 - 3 May 2017

The LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund of the OHCHR thanks its donor countries that are committed to ensuring universal participation at every session of the Human Rights Council

List of the donor countries to the Trust Fund (in alphabetical order)



- | | |
|---|--|
|  Australia |  Pakistan |
|  France |  Republic of Korea |
|  Georgia |  Saudi Arabia |
|  Germany |  Singapore |
|  India |  Spain |
|  Ireland |  Switzerland* |
|  Italy |  Turkey |
|  Kuwait |  United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland |
|  Morocco |  Wallonia-Brussels Federation |
|  Netherlands | |

* Switzerland provided a contribution to support the participation of LDCs/SIDS Beneficiary Delegates in the HRC 10th anniversary session, however the contribution was reported by another Trust Fund that supported activities related to the 10th anniversary of the HRC.



The mandate of the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund

Established by **resolution 19/26 of 23 March 2012**, the Trust Fund became operational in January 2014. Its main objective is to support activities designed to enhance the institutional and human capacity of LDCs and SIDS, including by enabling their Beneficiary Delegates (in particular those without a permanent mission in Geneva) to more fully participate in the work of the Human Rights Council.

Administered by the Human Rights Council Branch of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Trust Fund provides funding for the following activities:

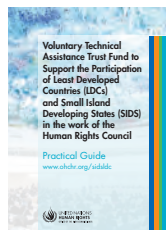
Participation of government officials in a regular session of the HRC

Fellowship programme (3 months)

Targeted training courses, including e-learning

Induction training sessions

For additional information, please consult:



On 24 March 2017, the Human Rights Council adopted **resolution 34/40**, without a vote, entitled “Promoting the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in the work of the Human Rights Council.”

Resolution 34/40 was co-sponsored by 120 countries rendering it the second most sponsored resolution since the establishment of the Human Rights Council in 2006.

The resolution recognizes:

- The continued achievements of the Trust Fund since its operationalization in 2014, and in particular its contribution to the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Human Rights Council at its thirty-second session in June 2016. For the first time, universal participation of the United Nations Member States was achieved;
- The creation and provision of an e-learning tool, in the working languages of the UN, providing initial training and information on the rules, functioning and customary practices of the Council and its mechanisms; and
- The efforts made by the Secretariat of the Trust Fund to conduct its work in different working languages of the United Nations.

In the same resolution, the HRC provides that the Trust Fund will:

Conduct at least one briefing a year in New York on the outcomes of the regular and special sessions of the Human Rights Council

Conduct workshops in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and the Caribbean, before the tenth anniversary of the Trust Fund

Request the OHCHR to prepare a report in which the Office evaluates the activities of the Trust Fund for presentation to the HRC49



Since it became operational in 2014, the Trust Fund has supported:

77

from

57

(25 LDCs & 24 SIDS
8 LDCs/SIDS)

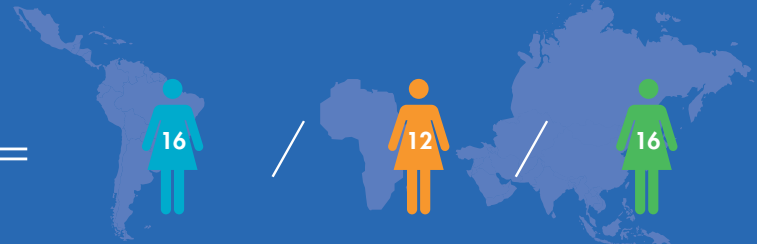
Beneficiaries
of the Trust
Fund

UN Member States

Thanks to the support of an increasing number of donor countries.



=



from the Caribbean &
Latin America region

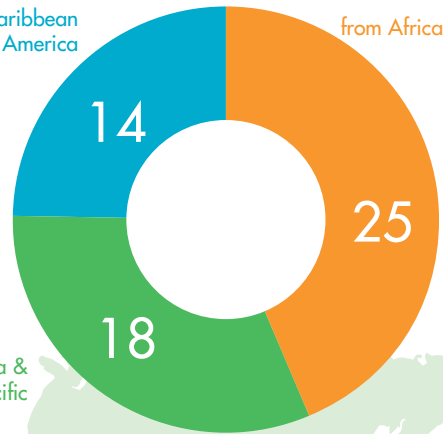
from the
African region

from Asia & the
Pacific region

Did you know that



57
Member States



77
Beneficiaries of the Trust Fund

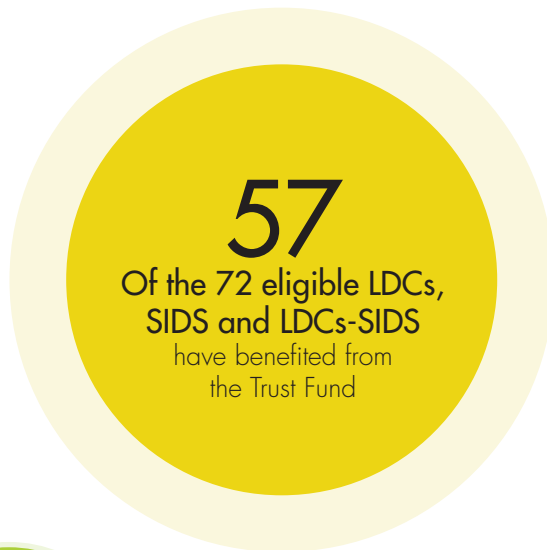




The LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund: A Human Rights Council success story

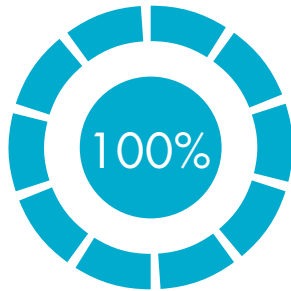
(as of 1 June 2017)

Since it became operational in 2014:

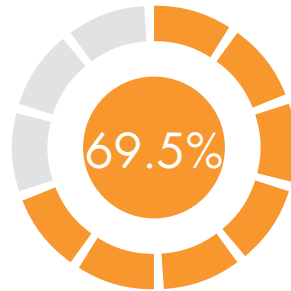


Implementation rates of the Trust Fund

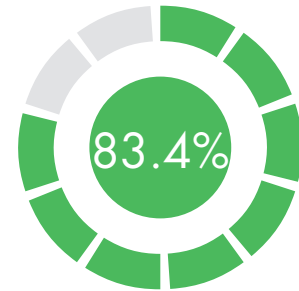
(as of 1 June 2017)



of LDCs/SIDS
from the **Caribbean
& Latin America**
region have
benefited from the
Trust Fund



of the **African
LDCs/SIDS**
have benefited from
the Trust Fund



of the
LDCs/SIDS from
Asia & the Pacific
have benefited from
the Trust Fund



Our Goal

**Ensuring universal participation at every session
of the Human Rights Council**

Join the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund success story!

Secretariat of the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in the work of the Human Rights Council
Human Rights Council Branch | Human Rights Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division
Palais Wilson | 52 rue des Pâquis | CH-1201 Geneva - Switzerland
www.ohchr.org/sidsldc

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