Introduction

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the first United Nations global conference on Small Island Developing States in Barbados, and this year has also been declared, the International Year of Small Island Developing States. Therefore, there is a global concern and momentum towards the SIDS discussion. Small Island Developing States, comprise 39 independent Small Island states globally. They share common characteristics, to name only three:

- Small geographic area
- Dependence of the economy on a few sources of income
- Low level of resilience against natural disasters

The major important events in the total timeline of Small Island Developing States:

- 1992 – Recognition of a special group of states that share common characteristics as mentioned below, the Small Island Developing States
- 1994 – UN Global Conference on SIDS in Barbados. Result is the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA)
- 2005 – International meeting in Mauritius to discuss the BPOA. The meeting adopts the Mauritius Strategy and Mauritius Declaration
- 2014 – The third International conference on SIDS in Samoa

Why is Civil Society Organization participation important for sustainable development in SIDS?

In August 2013 there was a Caribbean Civil Society Consultative discussion in Barbados, out of which a discussion paper was published with the following highlights:

- CSOs (Civil Society Organizations) have always played a role in the development of Caribbean communities, though traditionally that role was limited mainly to community volunteer efforts. Over the past three decades, the characteristics and work of the civil society sector in the
Caribbean has evolved, particularly since, and in line with, the evolution of the global environment and development agenda.

This discussion papers identifies a number of actions intended to address key issues in the BPOA (Barbados Plan of Action) and MSI (Mauritius Strategy of Implementation). In particular, it identifies increased engagement of civil society as critical to the process.

Suriname however, did not participate at this discussion. It is important for Suriname Civil Society Organization (CSO) to contribute to regional and global discussions, so we can exchange ideas and lessons with the other SIDS. The Small Grants Programme wants to enable this discussion and support Civil Society Organizations and Community Based Organizations to play a role in the national SIDS agenda. This first SIDS discussion facilitated by SGP Suriname was intended to inform key CSOs and CBOs (Community Based Organizations) on SIDS (what is it, why the momentum) and to enable an initial discussion with the target group.

This event took place on Wednesday, August 6, 2014 with a group of key stakeholders and grantees (see appendix 1 for the list of attendees). We hope that this report can support the government’s representation in Samoa with useful input from the Civil Society Sector regarding the SIDS priority areas. A list of attendees can be found attached to this report.