

**REPORT OF THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH EVENT AND INCEPTION WORKSHOP OF THE PROJECT
"BUILDING URBAN CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN SOUTH-EASTERN AFRICA"
Union of Comoros**

1. Background and objectives

Comoros is one of the four beneficiary countries of the regional project "Building Urban Climate Resilience in South-Eastern Africa".

This project aims to strengthen urban resilience in four countries in the South-East African region, including Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and the Union of the Comoros. It includes a mix of infrastructure projects at the city level and capacity building at the national level. Four cities with different types of vulnerabilities have been selected in these countries to implement climate adaptation projects following a participatory resilience planning process. At the level of the Union of the Comoros, project interventions will focus on improving drainage in the northern district of Moroni La Coulée and Medina, improving solid waste management, and establishing a flood early warning system.

Building on the practical implementation of the project at the city level, best practices and guidelines will be derived to create the conditions for replication in other cities at the national level. This national-level component will include elements of training and capacity-building for central and local authorities to begin laying the foundation for building urban climate resilience.

This project also aims to foster the sharing of experiences between countries and cross-fertilization by establishing a knowledge platform on urban resilience issues that can be disseminated in the sub-region through the Centre for Disaster Risk Management, Sustainability and Urban Resilience (DiMSUR).

The project inception workshop provided an opportunity to bring together all project stakeholders, review the project work plan and partnerships. It has been attended by representatives of the four national governments, local government representatives from the four beneficiary cities, representatives of implementing and partner organizations, as well as representatives of the United Nations system and development partners.

1.1. Official launch objectives

- To officially launch the first UN-Habitat multi-country Adaptation Fund project " Building Urban Climate Resilience in South-Eastern Africa ".
- Discuss the multifaceted challenges and opportunities for building resilience using the examples of Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and the Union of the Comoros.
- Building a community of practice to support successful implementation and replication of the project.

1.2. Objectives of the Project Steering Committee / DiMSUR Executive Committee / Project Launch Workshops

- To bring together the main partners and stakeholders involved at the municipal, national and regional levels in this project.
- To exchange information on project plans in each city and country and to establish a mechanism for sharing information and best practices at the regional level.

- Prepare a joint work plan and implementation strategy for the first year, taking into account ongoing complementary initiatives, relevant policies/ strategies and stakeholder engagement (to be approved by the Steering Committee).
- Discuss and agree on strategies related to knowledge management, communications and awareness raising, as well as environmental and social, gender and youth protection measures.

2. The event in Moroni

2.1. Launching Ceremony: Monday, June 23rd at 10:00 a.m.

- It was honoured by the presence of:
- Mr. Mohamed Daoudou: Minister of the Interior, Decentralization and Territorial Administration in charge of Relations with Institutions
- Ms. Sitti Farouta Mhoudine: Governor of Ngazidja Island
- Mr. Daniel Ali Bandar: Secretary General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Environment, Land Use Planning, Urban Planning, Land Transport, in charge of Land Affairs.



All the participants, gathered in the conference room of the Hotel Retaj, followed the different opening speeches on Interprefy, according to the established program of the event.

The Minister of the Interior made his speech at the launch of the project, followed by the intervention of the Governor of the island of Ngazidja, answering the question on the involvement of local communities, more specifically, the neighbourhood associations for climate resilience in Moroni.

At the end of the launching ceremony, the Minister of the Interior answered the various questions of the journalists present at the event and stressed the importance of this project at the level of the city and at the level of the country in general.

His interview was followed by that of the Director General of Civil Security, the national implementing partner of the project.



View of the Retaj Hotel conference room

2.2. Working group in Comoros: Monday, June 23rd at 2:00 p.m.

The group work took place in the afternoon, in accordance with the project launch programme. The participants appointed Mr. Tackfine Ahmed, Director of Civil Security to chair the session and Ms. Abi as rapporteur.

The session started with a presentation by the National Project Manager, Mr. Hamidi Soulé who gave an update on the project components with the planned activities and the institutional organization for its implementation.

At the end of this presentation, discussions took place on the various activities planned on the project, and in particular on:

- the possibility of redundancies with certain activities planned in other projects, in particular the World Bank's Kenneth Project;
- the choice of project intervention sites;
- the role to be played by OXFAM in building the capacity of the Municipality;
- the need to collaborate with the various technical departments, given the diversity of areas that will be affected by the project activities, including the environment, planning and disaster risk management.

Some answers and clarifications have been made, in particular:

- To explain the participatory process that led to the choice of activities and intervention sites (by CityRAP);
- the need to work closely with the state's technical departments to optimize results;
- and especially the fact that this project must be a catalyst for other neighbourhoods or sites.

Finally, discussions focused on the composition of the municipal project team to make it more representative.

It was thus agreed that this team should include, in addition to the composition already planned, members of neighbourhood associations, community leaders or neighbourhood chiefs and at least one representative of the national assembly.

The audience requested that another meeting be specifically organized to discuss the annual work plan.

2.3. Project Steering Committee / DIMSUR Executive Board meeting: Wednesday, 24th June at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting of the steering committee was chaired by the Director of Civil Security, the designated authority of the Comoros, who will chair the meeting until 2021. A word of welcome and introduction was delivered by Director Tackfine on this occasion.



Group picture of inception workshop participants

In accordance with the agenda established for this meeting, the discussions focused on:

- Validation of the Steering Committee's Terms of Reference (ToRs);
- Overview of Project Governance Framework;
- Overview of the Work Plan 2020-21, the implementation strategy and monitoring framework: discussions focused on the recruitment plan in order to strengthen the functioning of the institution, but also on academic activities. On this point, most of the countries expressed interest in seeing their universities integrated into these activities; this is the case of Comoros, Mozambique and Malawi.
- Activities at the municipal level: the Secretary General of the Municipality of Moroni gave a general overview of the activities planned in his town within the framework of the project, its expectations and its ambitions for the project, as well as the measures taken to facilitate the installation of OXFAM at the level of Moroni municipality.
- Implementation at the national level: DIMSUR will have to play an important role in this implementation, relying on the partner institutions in each respective country.
- Regional coordination and information sharing: discussions were held on ongoing regional initiatives in Southern Africa on resilience to urban climate change, including the possibility of expanding these activities to other countries with an interest. This would complement and enrich the planned activities.

At the end of this meeting, the project's NPM had granted an interview to the Hayba FM journalist, which was broadcast on the WEB. This intervention was an opportunity to present the context of the project and to explain the different components and planned activities. The NPM also took this opportunity to present DIMSUR and to underline the essential role that this institution should play in the activities of this project.

2.4. Operationalisation of the project and next steps: Wednesday, 24th June at 2:00 p.m.

During this session, a tour of the four countries was made to report in plenary on the working group sessions that had taken place in the respective countries benefiting from the project.

For Comoros, the report of the group discussions was presented by Ms. Abi Abdallah Youssof Nadjah, technician at the DGSC.

Finally, discussions were held on the organization that should be set up at both local and national levels to facilitate the launching of project activities in a more efficient manner.

3. Conclusion

The project "Building Urban Climate Resilience in South-Eastern Africa" was launched in Comoros under the high patronage of the Minister of the Interior with the participation of the various technical departments involved in the field.

The discussions and exchanges that took place during this launching workshop were an illustration of the involvement and willingness of the national party to take ownership of the project.

Prospects were envisaged for a more efficient implementation of the project and for it to be a catalyst for other regions of the country.