



IMPLEMENTING IWRM IN ATLANTIC AND INDIAN OCEAN SMALL ISLANDS

IWRM DEMO PROJECT IN COMOROS



THE VALUE OF CLEAN WATER

With a total area of 1 862 km², Comoros is the third-smallest nation in Africa. Over 80 percent Comorans are dependent on agriculture and fishing for their livelihoods. Staple crops are bananas, cassava, and taro, while cloves, ylang-ylang and vanilla are grown for export.

Waterborne diseases like hepatitis and typhoid fever cause sickness and sometimes death on the island of Anjouan in the Comoros. Mutsamudu is the second largest city in Comoros and home to 30 000 people, all of whom depend on the water resources of the Mutsamudu River, a catchment that is under pres-

sure from increased abstraction, pollution from solid waste and degradation owing to deforestation and poor agricultural practices. The reservoir area is surrounded by small-scale farmers whose traditional farming methods have resulted in a high degree of soil erosion from wind and rain, causing siltation and blocking of the municipality's water infrastructure and degradation of the Mutsamudu River.

Moreover, the city's water infrastructure is inadequate and unable to meet the needs of a growing population. Bacterial analysis of water samples taken from Anjouan revealed that 60% of samples were severely contaminated. There are also fears that climate change could severely constrain the future availability of water resources on Anjouan.



OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the demonstration project is to develop and implement an IWRM plan for the Mutsamudu River basin and significantly improve the management of the river catchment.

One of the ideas behind the project is that improved water quality would result in increased consumer satisfaction and this would, in turn, lead to increased water revenues for the municipality.

If these revenues could be channeled into systematic water resources management practices, improved water quality could be sustained, with tangible benefits for people and the environment.

If the principles of IWRM can be demonstrated in the Mutsamudu catchment, with tangible benefits for the health and well-being of the people of Mutsamudu and surrounds, similar interventions can be made in other catchments elsewhere in Comoros, where dependence on surface water resources is also high.

PROGRESS

A water resource assessment for the Mutsamudu River basin and a water monitoring plan have been finalized. A basin water committee is in place and watershed management plan has been developed.

The Water Analysis and Quality Control Laboratory at the University of Mutsamudu has been upgraded and refurbished.

A solid waste collection system has been established in collaboration with municipal authorities. 30 tons is collected per week.

Partnerships with the French Comorian Diaspora, with Coca Cola and with the local police force have been created. There is a strong public awareness and stakeholder engagement. National radio shows on the project are being broadcasted regularly.

Farmer have been trained on good farming practices for soil erosion control. The project supported the protection of the reservoir for portable water collection point.

The government of Comoros co-financed USD 399,009.



Scope: Regional
Countries: Cabo Verde, Maldives, São Tomé and Príncipe, Mauritius, Seychelles, Comoros
Partners: UNEP, UNDP, UNOPS
GEF grant: USD 10,670,000
Co-financing: USD 39,422,535
Project website: www.aio-iwrm.org

