

UN-Habitat Management Response to the Mid-Term Project Evaluation

Report of the “Building Urban Climate Resilience in South-Eastern Africa” project (2023/2)



INTRODUCTION

UN-Habitat Management is pleased to give its management response to the independent mid-term evaluation report of the project "Building Urban Climate Resilience in South-Eastern Africa". The Management agrees with the evaluation results and thanks the independent evaluation consultant, Mr. Mutizwa Mukute, for his balanced assessment and reporting.

The Management presents its response in the form of a general response to the issues raised in the report and specific management responses to each of the recommendations in the attached Action Plan. In general, the report offers a comprehensive review of the project, highlighting areas of strength and weaknesses as well as challenges in monitoring, communication, and project visibility, which can sometimes curtail the project's management capacity during the delivery of the project. It also notes that the project's structures, strategies and activities are still valid within each component of the project and across them. UN-Habitat agrees that the multi-level management structures are generally efficient but have been constrained by inadequate personnel for monitoring, knowledge management, and communication, understaffed government departments, and inadequate budgeting.

The report further lists several critical gaps in implementing the project, such as under-budgeting and increased costs of project inputs, inadequate human resources and government bureaucracy, limiting funding conditions, minimal monitoring and visibility structures and activities and inequitable participation of women. The gaps are detailed throughout the report and a set of recommendations were formulated, of which the management accepts 6 recommendations (and partially accepts Recommendation #5) and commits to their implementation as detailed in the action plan below.

It's worth noting that good practices and lessons generated throughout the project implementation and summarized in this evaluation report will be considered by UN-Habitat for further programming to improve future delivery of similar programmes and projects.

Recommendation	Management Response	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Responsible Unit(s)	Status of implementation	Comments on progress
<p><u>Recommendation 1:</u></p> <p>Raise additional resources for completing urban resilience interventions constrained by budgets.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map relevant donors in each country and across countries for funding similar activities Clearly identify the project's funding gaps for ongoing activities and for scaling-up/ sustainability purposes Prepare complementary proposals including urban resilience interventions that supplement the project's activities Explore synergies with other UN agencies or active NGOs for partnerships 	<p>June 2024</p>	<p>Project Supervision Team (PST) in collaboration with Oxfam Italia and DiMSUR</p>	<p>In-progress</p>	<p>This recommendation is well received by UN-Habitat as the importance of raising additional funding already emerged during year 2 of implementation. To that end, UN-Habitat has started to explore additional financing in all the four countries through complementary projects. A joint initiative was undertaken by UN-Habitat, Oxfam Italia, and DiMSUR by activating a Resource Mobilisation Committee to develop and implement a fundraising strategy to leverage the ongoing and well-functioning partnership. Donor mapping is ongoing and the plan is to have a first draft of the strategy by the next Project Supervision Team meeting while regular resource mobilization meetings are currently being conducted.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 2:</u></p> <p>Increase information flow between components 1 and 2 for coherence, synergy, and impact creation</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the actual implementation and the relevance of the coordination meetings plan developed at project inception, especially on the country level coordination meetings that are supposed to happen quarterly. Introduce additional coordination regular meetings to allow for more real-time flow of information between the national and city levels as needed Leverage the upcoming regional workshop and PSC meeting to organise a session for the project's partners on how to enhance coordination with a special focus on the exchange of information between component 1 and 2. 	<p>September 2023</p>	<p>Project Supervision Team (PST), National Project Coordination Teams (NPCTs), City Project Teams (CPTs) in coordination with Oxfam Italia and DiMSUR</p>	<p>Not started</p>	<p>Besides Comoros – where both the national- and local-level project teams are based in the same city – in the other three countries they are based in different cities, which represents a challenge when it comes to participation in the project's coordination meetings. Nevertheless, the need for a better exchange of information and coordination of activities between component 1 and 2 is well noted. UN-Habitat organises bimonthly general meetings with representatives of all Executing Entities and their teams for overall coordination/ updates and will increase efforts towards ensuring that the coordination meeting plan defined at the project inception is implemented effectively or if any improvement is needed.</p>

						This recommendation is also linked to recommendation 1 as the project does not have enough funds for regular missions of national and local representatives for monitoring and coordination purposes. So, efforts will be made in terms of resource mobilization to contribute to this as well.
<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p>Make Components 2 (Tools and guidelines development and training delivery at the national level) contribute towards lesson learning and good practice</p>	Accepted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a mechanism to systematically increase the drawn lessons learned from component 2 and integrate them with the ones from other components. Introduce additional coordination regular meetings to allow for more real-time flow of information between the national and city levels as needed Leverage the upcoming regional workshop and PSC meeting to organise a session for the project's partners on how to enhance coordination with a special focus on the exchange of information between component 1 and 2. 	September 2024	Project Supervision Team (PST), National Project Coordination Teams (NPCTs), in coordination with Oxfam Italia and DiMSUR	Not started	<p>This recommendation is well noted. UN-Habitat is continuously in the process of capturing the lessons learned from all the activities for better future programming and implementation. That said, special focus will be given to further balancing feedback from all components to contribute effectively to the knowledge management and exchange between countries/ cities.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4:</p> <p>Establish mechanisms and processes for increasing project visibility at all levels</p>	Accepted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce and publish more web stories, photos, and videos of on-going activities on each of the project levels Include a specific session on project's visibility and communications into the programme for the upcoming regional workshop. 	September 2024	Project Supervision Team (PST), National Project Coordination Teams (NPCTs), City Project Teams (CPTs) in coordination with Oxfam Italia and DiMSUR	Not started	<p>Visibility and communications have indeed been a weak spot of the project since the beginning, mainly because of the absence of a dedicated budget, which makes this recommendation as well linked to recommendation 1. UN-Habitat and the other partners have put extra efforts in producing communications material mainly leveraging existing internal capacities through the drafting of leaflets/ brochures, articles, newsletters, social media posts, also promoting the project at conferences and similar events. Of course, more needs to be done and both UN-Habitat and Oxfam are already increasing their efforts making sure to properly cover the main success stories – such as the operationalization of the safe-haven and drainage in Morondava during Cyclone Cheneso in January 2023, and the relief provided by the evacuation centres</p>

						<p>and drainage in Zomba and the EWS in Chokwe when Cyclone Freddy hit Malawi and Mozambique in March 2023. DiMSUR has also started the process for the enhancement of its website for knowledge sharing and dissemination purposes. Additionally, UN-Habitat is starting to work on an internal social media strategy for the overall urban resilience portfolio in the region which will also increase the visibility of the Adaptation Fund project.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5:</p> <p>Revise the M & E framework to factor in project experiences</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing the need for revising the M&E framework and its practical impact on the implementation of the remaining activities of the project If deemed necessary, UN-Habitat will do so in line with the provisions in the Annex 7 of the AF Operational Policies and Guidelines 	<p>September 2023</p>	<p>Project Steering Committee (PSC), Project Supervision Team (PST)</p>	<p>Not started</p>	<p>The recommendation is partially accepted; the part on how to streamline project's assumptions and indicators is well noted; however, an overall revision of the M&E framework will be assessed and only accepted if deemed necessary. This is because, any revisions to the project outcomes, activities or associated indicators or targets – including introductions, modifications, and deletions – would only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and will entail a full technical review of the revised fully developed and approved project document. Such amendments will require an approval process as per Annex 7 of the Adaptation Fund Operational Policies and Guidelines.</p> <p>In order to avoid such delays, UN-Habitat will do its best to adopt alternative measures for a more streamlined and effective monitoring, using other tools such as the PPR which is a useful instrument, especially in regard to the gender sensitiveness of activities which was indicated as one of the major issues related to the M&E framework in the mid-term evaluation.</p> <p>That said, project experiences will continue to be captured including details on project progress, achievements and remarks.</p>

Recommendation 6:

Inform the Adaptation Fund about the constraints of its funding conditions

Accepted

UN-Habitat will continue to inform the Adaptation Fund about current/ future delays in activities of the project through the PPRs

June 2024

Project Supervision Team (PST)

In-progress

UN-Habitat communicated the challenges – as well as mitigation measures – related to budget constraints to the Adaptation Fund at each Project Performance Report and will continue to do so with the next PPR to be submitted at the end of the third year of implementation in June 2023.

Recommendation 7:

Seek approval for a no-cost project extension

Accepted

UN-Habitat will seek a blanket no-cost extension either in line with the latest Decision B.40/69 on 'Temporary measures taken as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic' or through the general provisions of the AF for project extension. UN-Habitat will seek a blanket no-cost extension either in line with the latest Decision B.40/69 on 'Temporary measures taken as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic' or through the general provisions of the AF for project extension.

April 2023

Project Supervision Team (PST)

Implemented

On 27 April 2023, the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat approved a 12-month no-cost extension request submitted by UN-Habitat, extending the project until 22 October 2024.

THANK YOU



UN-HABITAT