



➤ EVALUATION OF DUBAI CARES’ SUPPORT TO QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION IN COMOROS ISLANDS

FINAL REPORT

JANUARY 2015

Contents

Acronyms and abbreviations	4
Executive summary	6
Brief program description and context.....	6
Purpose and expected use of the evaluation	6
Objectives of the evaluation	6
Evaluation methodology	6
Principal findings and conclusions	7
Key recommendations	7
Lessons learned for future programs.....	8
I. Audience and use of the evaluation	10
Evaluation audience.....	10
Evaluation use.....	10
II. Evaluation approach and methodology	10
Approach.....	11
Methodology.....	12
Literature review.....	12
Sampling.....	13
Development of the data collection tools	15
Training of local consultants	17
Data collection	17
Data analysis and report writing.....	18
III. Program background and description	19
IV. Evaluation findings	21
Focus on Renovated Koranic Teaching	21
Focus on the Competency Based Approach	28
The funding equation across RKT and CBA	32
Implementation capacity of Dubai Cares potential partners in Comoros	36
V. Recommendations.....	39
Access.....	39
Quality.....	39
Sustainability.....	40
VI. Implications on the Theory of Change	42
Importance and benefits of ECD	42
ECD gaps in developing countries.....	42
Dubai Cares' vision and guiding principles.....	43

Dubai Cares' Theory of Change.....	43
VII. Immediate areas of possible support for education in Comoros	47
VIII. Annexes	48
Comparison of Dubai Cares' experience with RKS in Comoros and Aga Khan Foundation's experience in Zanzibar	48
Visual highlights	50
List of selected schools	52

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
BIEF	Engineering Bureau for Education and Training
CBA	Competency Based Approach
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EP	Primary School
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
IECD	Integrated Development of the Young Child
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MRC	Madrasa Resource Center
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
RKS	Renovated Koranic Schools
RKT	Renovated Koranic Teaching
TKS	Traditional Koranic Schools

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Synthesis of our approach	11
Figure 2: Evaluation framework.....	12
Figure 3: Comorian Education system	13
Figure 4: Geographic repartition of schools	13
Figure 5: Stakeholders interviewed and surveyed (Number)	17
Figure 6: Program description	20
Figure 7: Effectiveness of RKT in increasing access to education for disadvantaged children.....	21
Figure 8: New entrants in CP1 before, during and after Dubai Cares (Number of new entrants)	22
Figure 9: Gross Enrolment Rate in pre-elementary education before, during and after the Dubai Cares program (%)	22
Figure 10: Students in pre-elementary education by type of school before and after the Dubai Cares intervention (%)	23
Figure 11: Primary teachers saying student performance is better for children who have been to RKS (%)	24
Figure 12: Students starting primary school on time since RKT implementation (%)	24
Figure 13: Evolution of Comorian Government's ECD strategy.....	25
Figure 14: Sufficiency of tools received	25
Figure 15: RKS materials received and their timeliness.....	26
Figure 16: Replacing TKS with RKS.....	27
Figure 17: Teachers and directors who think that CBA is effective in improving quality of primary education (%)	28
Figure 18: Success rates at the end of the primary school exam, Ngazidja 2010 - 2014	29
Figure 19: Assessment of CBA on various aspects.....	29
Figure 20: Extent and type of CBA training teachers have received	30
Figure 21: Teachers utilizing the CBA tools.....	31
Figure 22: Sufficiency of CBA tools received.....	31
Figure 23: Stakeholders consulted before implementing CBA	32
Figure 24: Other funders intervening in the Comoros education system	33
Figure 25: CBA components covered under new education projects in Comoros.....	34
Figure 26: Picture of Moya 1 school compound, Ndzuani.....	50
Figure 27: Roof falling apart in Jimlime school, RKS class, Ndzuani	50
Figure 28: RKS in Mbatse, Mwali	50
Figure 29: Boys playing outside the class, Shitsangani, Ndzuani.....	51

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Representativeness of the sample by Island.....	14
Table 2: Representativeness of the sample by area (urban versus rural)	14
Table 3: Interviewees per target group	15
Table 4: Assessment of strengths and weaknesses of potential implementing partners	36

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BRIEF PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

In 2008, Dubai Cares launched a five-year program focusing on the integration and further expansion of three components identified by UNICEF Comoros and the Government of Comoros during a process of education sector reform. These components were:

- Scaling up educational reform through a Competency Based Approach (CBA)
- Reducing gender disparities and keeping girls in schools
- Increasing access to Renovated Koranic Preschools through Integrated Development of the Young Child (IECD)

The specific objectives of the program were to:

- Improve access and quality of basic education for boys and girls in all districts of Comoros, with particular emphasis on the zones with the lowest enrolment rates
- Reduce the disparity in school enrolment between girls and boys from 13 to 3 percentage points
- Improve children's developmental readiness to start primary school on time, especially among girls and vulnerable children

PURPOSE AND EXPECTED USE OF THE EVALUATION

Dubai Cares is committed to an evidence-based approach that integrates monitoring, evaluation and learning into every program. The aim of the evaluation is to provide an unbiased assessment of programmatic achievements in relation to the first and third program components in order to raise awareness of activities and approaches, and yield positive results to stakeholders.

This report serves three purposes: (i) an internal document for Dubai Cares highlighting successes and challenges faced in strengthening the education sector in Comoros from which lessons can also be derived for other countries; (ii) an advocacy document for the Government of Comoros for continued support from other development partners; and (iii) a knowledge document for public or private parties that want to better understand the education sector in Comoros.

OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation, conducted by Dalberg Global Development Advisors (Dalberg), provides an independent verification of program achievements, and derives key learnings to inform future program design and strategic direction. Focusing on the first and third project objectives, the overarching objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Provide an independent verification of the program outputs and achieved outcomes
- Derive key learnings on specific areas of interest identified by Dubai Cares and other stakeholders, notably the Government of Comoros and UNICEF Comoros

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Dalberg followed a three-step approach for this evaluation: (i) a project internal review focused on documentation, (ii) a country visit for data collection and stakeholder engagement, and (iii) the

articulation of a theory of change for the intervention. Dalberg's analysis was guided by research questions further articulated in a research plan, which determined the choice of research tools, type of data to be collected and data collection method.

Extensive stakeholder consultations took place during the evaluation with approximately 500 stakeholders engaged in the process. In total 419 questionnaires were distributed and collected from teachers and headmasters. In addition, the following provided further insights: nine one-on-one stakeholder interviews with school administrators, eight one-on-one interviews with other key stakeholders, six direct observations at schools, five interviews with implementers, and two focus groups.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Dubai Cares program has been successful in meeting its stated objectives, with ongoing opportunities to improve access, quality and sustainability. In particular:

- **Building Renovated Koranic Schools (RKS) was highly effective in increasing access to education for vulnerable groups.** The RKS component of the program was the most impactful in providing access to education to underprivileged children who would otherwise not have been in the formal education system
- Since 2008, education outcomes in Comoros have consistently risen with **higher examination results and completion and progression rates being attributed to the Dubai Cares program**
- **Early Childhood Development (ECD) globally has been known to have transformational impact on children in the long term.** The Dubai Cares Renovated Koranic Teaching (RKT) program is likely to confer similar benefits for Comorian children in coming years
- **The success of RKT in Comoros could be attributed to the fact that RKS are closely linked to primary schools** and have been formally integrated into government schools
- Despite the successes of RKT, **the program faces cultural barriers in increasing its uptake in Comoros**, with the main challenges being the perception that Traditional Koranic Schools (TKS) are better at training children on Islam than RKS, and advocacy campaigns by some religious leaders against RKS
- While well-conceived and designed, **implementation challenges are limiting the program's effectiveness.** The major challenges were insufficient training of teachers resulting in their not using materials, limited monitoring/supervision, and the shortages and delays in receiving materials
- **Future sustainability of the gains made by Dubai Cares' program in Comoros is unclear.** With no active government strategy to mobilize partners and funds for CBA and RKT inputs, and with the government struggling with basic expenses such as payroll for employees, the future funding of CBA and RKT is uncertain

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Key recommendations to ensure that the gains made by the program are not lost include dealing with challenges in three key areas: Access, Quality and Sustainability.

To increase access to RKS, community buy-in and involvement from project inception and increased funding given high demand, are essential.

Given oversubscription of the RKT model evidenced by classes that are filled beyond capacity and the Ministry of Education not being able to fill all the requests for new RKS, key recommendations to increase access to RKT in Comoros include:

- Increasing funding for expansion of the program
- Ensuring that communities and schools are consulted/involved from project inception
- Including advocacy as a critical part of program introduction in new locations

To increase quality of outputs, training and retraining of teachers needs to take place and delays and shortages of materials need to be reduced.

- Training and retraining of more teachers especially RKT teachers would be valuable since teachers are not specialized and there is high turnover
- Delays in the delivery of materials need to be reduced since many hard-to-reach areas already experience other delays and challenges at the local level

To ensure sustainability, systemic challenges in the Comorian context need to be taken into account as they have a large impact on project delivery.

While some challenges are systemic, a program such as this one needs to support functions that are not directly tied to program outcomes. In particular, to increase sustainability, support should be secured so that:

- Teachers' salaries are paid
- The project is supervised on an ongoing basis to address emerging roadblocks
- Materials are reprinted and renewed
- Island ministries of education are capacitated to take full ownership of execution of the program
- School infrastructure is upgraded
- There is continuous funding of activities

LESSONS LEARNED FOR FUTURE PROGRAMS

These lessons learned can be leveraged for any ongoing support to Comoros, but also in the design and execution of programs in countries and areas that share similar characteristics to Comoros:

- **ECD plays a transformational role in children's lives and increasing the number of children worldwide who can access it will go a long way in democratizing education** especially when partnered with sector wide initiatives that improve the quality of education on a national scale. A number of studies have shown that ECD programs not only benefit children, but also have positive effects on families and communities. ECD interventions have been known to contribute to higher school enrolment, reduced drop-out rates and grade repetition; higher nutrition and health status; improved social and emotional behaviour; and better verbal and intellectual development. In particular, good ECD programs are associated with a number of benefits later in life.¹ In Comoros, partnering RKS with nationwide education reforms in the form of CBA has the potential to be transformative given that RKS children progress to

¹ Schweinhart, L. J., Barnes, H. V., & Weikart, D. P. (1993). Significant benefits: The HighScope Perry Preschool Study through age 27. Ypsilanti, MI: HighScope Press and Schweinhart, L. J., Montie, J., Xiang, Z., Barnett, W. S., Belfield, C. R., & Nores, M. (2004). Lifetime effects: The HighScope Perry Preschool Study through age 40. Ypsilanti, MI: HighScope Press

subsequent classes that have the right factors to ensure the children get a higher quality education.

- **Finding an ally that understands the local context is pivotal in ensuring the success of the program.** UNICEF played a critical role in this program and a similar anchor partner should be considered in other locations.
- **Efficiency in the education sector is key to project success given rigidity of the school calendar.** Since school calendars are often inflexible, receiving materials at the start of the school year is extremely important – if materials are received late, the program cannot be implemented well. Project timelines during implementation should always be much earlier than needed to account for challenges that are not anticipated.
- **Engaging the local community at the beginning of the intervention is critical.** While this program's activities were in-line with identified Government of Comoros initiatives, a baseline study would have strengthened understanding of country-specific challenges and further engaged local stakeholders. This upfront buy-in helps to ensure that the program is customized to meet the needs of community leaders and parents, and they become advocates for the program.
- **Program sustainability needs to be considered during project inception.** A sustainability and exit strategy needs to be developed beforehand to ensure that program activities can be supported after the completion of any program. Part of the program funding should be used to develop and implement a sustainability strategy.

I. AUDIENCE AND USE OF THE EVALUATION

EVALUATION AUDIENCE

The findings from this document are useful both for key stakeholders such as Dubai Cares and the Government of Comoros. The report also offers insights relevant to the larger education ecosystem especially in the area of ECD. In particular the following key parties are expected to be the main audience:

- **Dubai Cares** – Dubai Cares seeks to understand the following aspects of the program – (i) Design and relevance, (ii) Efficiency in implementation, (iii) Success and effectiveness, and (iv) Sustainability. Lessons from Dubai Cares' experience in Comoros will be relevant for programs in their other countries of operation.
- **The Government of Comoros and in particular the Ministry of Education** – As the main implementer of the program in Comoros, the Ministry of Education will be able to understand how they contributed to the implementation of the program and what key factors related to them affected program impact positively or negatively. This will help them in ensuring that such issues are dealt with as best as possible for future implementation of related projects.
- **UNICEF and other partners** – UNICEF played a pivotal role in the implementation of the program in the different islands and was also the key link between Dubai Cares and the Ministry of Education in Comoros. As such they will benefit from knowing the successes and challenges of the program as they continue to play a similar role for development actors seeking to focus on education in Comoros.
- **Development partners interested in working in education in Comoros** – Certain development actors might be looking to intervene in the education in Comoros more broadly, and perhaps even on specific aspects of the program that are currently underfunded. This report will help identify such opportunities for impact.

EVALUATION USE

The assessment findings hope to contribute to learning, but also to encourage other potential partners to engage in the education in Comoros. More specifically, the report serves as an:

- **Advocacy document for the Government of Comoros for continued support from other development partners** – Though the evaluation was focused on the results of the Dubai Cares program from 2008-2012, the findings and recommendations address overarching challenges and possible recommendations to strengthen the education sector in the country.
- **Internal document for Dubai Cares highlighting successes and challenges faced in strengthening the education sector in Comoros** – As the most comprehensive report of Dubai Care's activities in Comoros, this report covers all three islands, 110 of 157 supported schools and represents both rural and urban areas. Learnings from the Comoros project can also be leveraged for other countries of operation.

A knowledge document for any public or private parties that want to better understand the education sector in Comoros – Given the scope and reach of the evaluation, including the engagement of various stakeholders – Government, NGOs, UNICEF, school directors and teachers, parents etc., this document provides insights that can be beneficial to many trying to understand the current situation of education in Comoros.

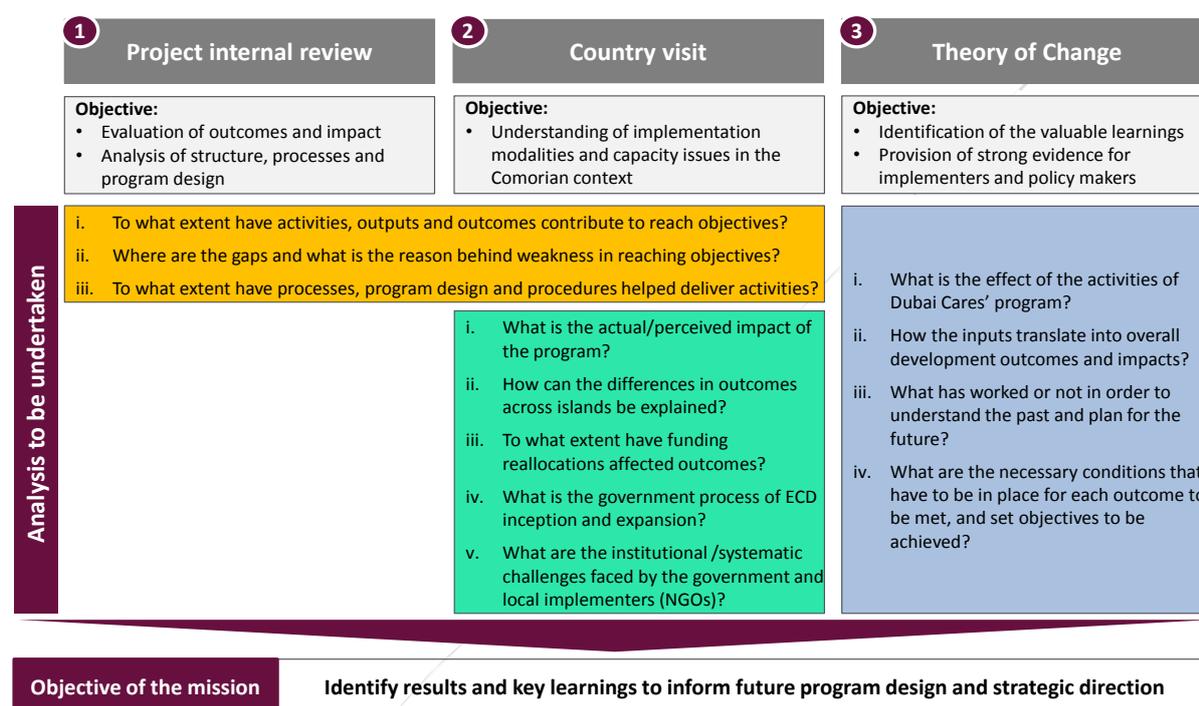
II. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

APPROACH

Dalberg followed a three-step approach for this evaluation: (i) a project internal review focused on documentation, (ii) a country visit for data collection and stakeholder engagement, and (iii) the articulation of a theory of change for the intervention. Dalberg's analysis was guided by research questions further articulated in a research plan, which determined the choice of research tools, type of data to be collected and data collection method.

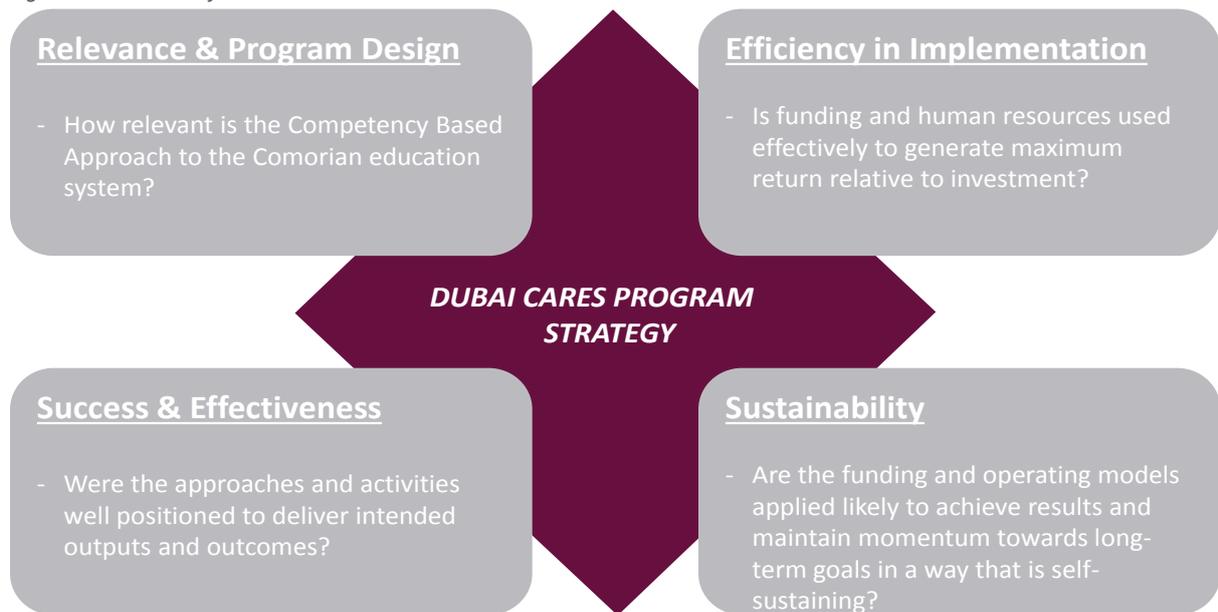
This assessment approach framed a detailed analysis of the different activities undertaken by the Dubai Cares' program in Comoros and produced outputs leading to recommendations and informing decision-making and future program design.

Figure 1: Synthesis of our approach



Each of these elements guided our research when evaluating the program, which focused on answering the questions highlighted in the figure above. Dalberg's analysis was guided by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) evaluation framework, as presented below.

Figure 2: Evaluation framework



Based on these criteria and questions, as well as research and a preliminary literature review, key hypotheses for each of the two focus components of the program were developed. The hypotheses were tested during the evaluation and the findings are reflected in this report.

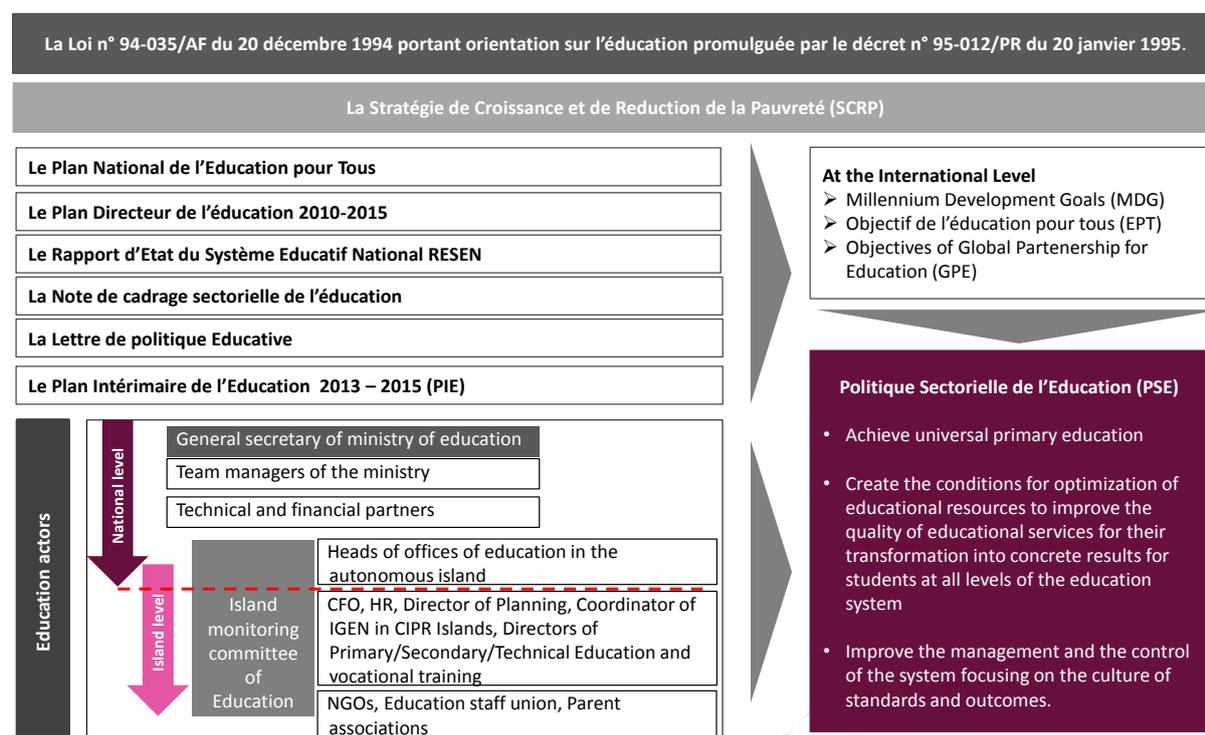
METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology included six key components that are summarized below:

Literature review

For a better understanding of the historical context of Comoros and trends in the education sector, relevant documents were collected and analysed. This literature review provided for a better understanding of the studies and projects that are implemented in the targeted Islands and identified the actors involved in project implementation. The figure below summarizes the documents reviewed.

Figure 3: Comorian Education system



Sampling

For interviews with teachers and school directors, a sampling approach was needed to select a representative sample of interviewees. Dubai Cares supported 157 schools throughout the Comoros Islands (12 in Mwali, 81 in Ngazidja and 64 in Ndzuani). These 157 schools are referred to as the original population in this sampling framework. The sample of schools where the survey was conducted is extracted from this list of 157 schools provided by UNICEF.

The sampling approach included five steps as described below:

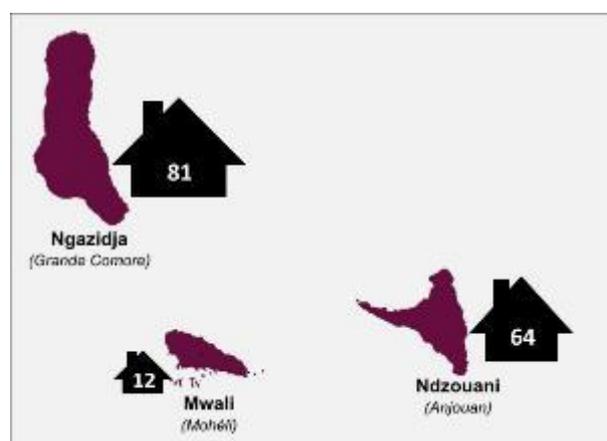
Step 1: Determination of the sample size

The sample size was determined by applying the formula below:

$$n = \frac{z^2 * p (1-p)}{e^2} = \frac{3,8416 * 0,2 (1-0,4)}{0,0025} = 369$$

$$n2 = 1 + \frac{n}{1 + \frac{n+1}{N}} = 1 + \frac{369}{1 + \frac{369+1}{157}} = 110$$

Figure 4: Geographic repartition of schools supported by the Dubai Cares program



N: Size of the original population = schools supported by the Dubai Cares program = 157 (12 in Mwali, 81 in Ngazidja and 64 in Ndzouani)
n: Sample size for a large original population
n2: Corrected sample size for a limited original population
z: Coefficient of margin = 1.96
e: Margin of error = 5% = 0.05
p: Proportion of N concerned = Proportion of schools supported by the Dubai Cares program = 157/406 = 0.4

A sample of 110 primary schools was selected among the list of 157 primary schools under the program.

Step 2: Selection of schools by Island

The island is the first criterion of representativeness. As such, the proportion of schools supported by Dubai Cares per island was the same in the selected sample.

Table 1: Representativeness of the sample by Island

	Islands							
	Mwali		Ndzouani		Ngazidja		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Supported schools	12	8%	64	41%	81	51%	157	100%
Sample	9	8%	45	41%	56	51%	110	100%

Step 3: Selection of schools in each Island by area (rural /urban)

The areas (urban versus rural) where schools are located was the second criterion of representativeness. Therefore, the proportion of schools supported by the Dubai Cares program in each Island per type of area was the same in the selected sample. This resulted in six groups of schools: (1) rural schools in Mwali, (2) urban schools in Mwali, (3) rural schools in Ndzouani, (4) urban schools in Ndzouani, (5) rural schools in Ngazidja, and (6) urban schools in Ngazidja.

Table 2: Representativeness of the sample by area (urban versus rural)

Area →	Islands					
	Mwali		Ndzouani		Ngazidja	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Supported schools overall	8 (67%)	4 (33%)	55 (86%)	9 (14%)	66 (81%)	15 (19%)
Sample	6 (67%)	3 (33%)	39 (86%)	6 (14%)	45 (81%)	11 (19%)

Step 4: Sampling of schools

The 110 schools selected from the list provided by UNICEF were categorized in the six subgroups identified above. The schools on this list were organized by island, followed by pedagogical zone. The schools were then listed randomly.

For each of the six categories, the sampling interval was calculated by applying the formula below:

$$k = \frac{M}{m}$$

K: Sampling interval

M: Number of schools supported by Dubai Cares

m: Number of schools selected in the sample

For example, the sampling interval for the rural schools in Mwali was:

$$k = \frac{8}{6} = 1$$

The sampling interval is 1 for all six categories. The list of the 110 selected schools is included in the annex.

Step 5: Selection of interviewees

In each selected school, four interviewees (1 Renovated Koranic preschool teacher, 1 CP1 teacher, 1 CP2 teacher and 1 headmaster) were randomly selected to complete the questionnaire. The focus on the Renovated Koranic preschool, CP1 and CP2 teachers is reflective of the focus of the assessment on ECD.

Table 3: Interviewees per target group

Interviewees			Targeted Schools	Questionnaires to be completed
Position	Number	Total	Total	Total
1 RKS teacher	1	4	110	440
CP1 teacher	1			
CP2 teacher	1			
School headmaster	1			

The end result is a sample of 440 (330 teachers and 110 school headmasters).

Development of the data collection tools

For each type of actor, a tool with specific questions to help us collect data was used to understand the program and its implementation. These tools were:

Interviews guides to collect both quantitative and qualitative data

- **Eight one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders:** Interviews included government representatives, beneficiary organizations, education experts and technical & financial partners to assess relevance and program design. In particular the following stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Ngazidja: National Ministry of Education, Commissioner at the Ministry of Education, General Director of Policy and Programs, UNICEF personnel, Department heads at the commissioner's office: Ngazidja's Commissioner for Education, ECD and CBA coordinators
 - Ndzuani: Commissioner at the Ministry of Education, Secretary General at the Ministry of Education, UNICEF Focal point at the Ministry of Education, Department

heads at the commissioner's office: ECD teaching and Young children program coordinators

- Mwali: Commissioner at the Ministry of Education, Secretary General at the Ministry of Education, UNICEF Focal point at the Ministry of Education, Director of primary teachers, Department heads at the commissioner's office: Young children and primary school program coordinators
- **Five interviews with implementing partners:** Interviews with implementing partners (NGOs and government services) were used to further verify and triangulate findings from internal review, on the strength of processes, procedures and structures. This informed better understanding of gaps in procedures, and factors contributing to success and failure in implementation. In particular the following stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Ngazidja: Forum for African Women Educationalists – Comoros (FAWECOM), Association of Conscious Youth of Comoros (NGO'SHAWO), Early Child Directorate of Ngazidja
 - Ndzouani: Associative Movement for Education and Equal Opportunities (MAEECHA)
 - Mwali: Federation of Actors for Economic and Social Development of Mwali island (FADESIM)
 - **Nine one-on-one stakeholder interviews (with approximately three beneficiary organizations across each of the three Islands):** These interviews provided: (i) further verification and triangulation of findings from the internal review, on the program's ability to reach objectives; (ii) insights into the key challenges met by the organization; (iii) deeper understanding of geographic differences in implementation outcomes and what factors facilitated or hindered the program to reach set objectives (considering re-allocation); (iv) further understanding of the level of ownership the beneficiary organizations have of the outcomes, the extent to which funding from Dubai Cares unlocked other funding, and the extent to which the outcomes can be expanded in the future without support from Dubai Cares; and the organization's prospects to secure funding from other donors in the near and long term future. In all schools these were conducted as a focus group including school directors, teachers, parents on the school council among other relevant parties. In particular the following stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Ngazidja: EP Ahlisounnah, EP Mitsoudje, National Union of Comorian Teachers (SNIC)
 - Ndzouani: EP Shitsangani, EP Mramani Tereni, EP Moya 1
 - Mwali: EP Miringoni, EP Djoiezi, EP Wanani

Focus group to gather qualitative insights from key stakeholders

- **Two focus groups with approximately eight participants:** Discussions focused on the relevance of the approach, but also the future role partners can play in the Comorian education system in particular with regard to ECD. In particular the following stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Ngazidja: Disciplinary commission – 7 participants
 - Ndzouani: Disciplinary commission – 9 participants

Questionnaires to gather quantitative data and inputs

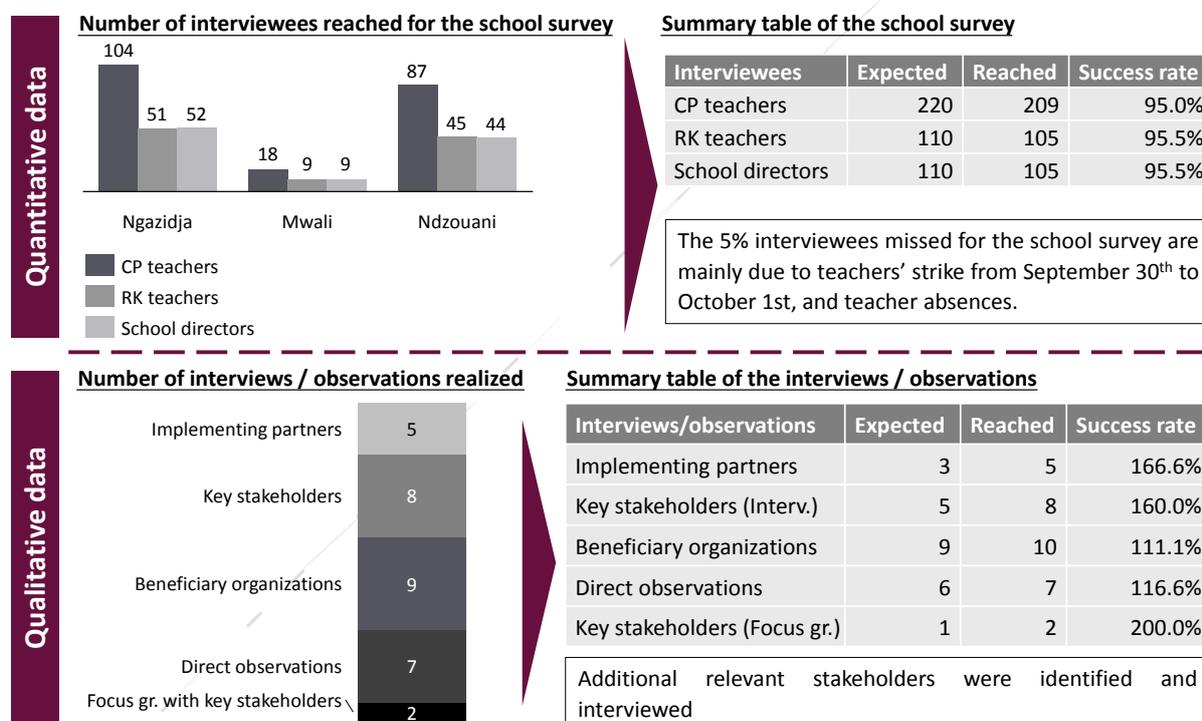
- **419² questionnaires for teachers and headmasters:** The questions were related to the relevance and program design, efficiency in implementation, success and effectiveness, and sustainability. The list of schools surveyed can be found in the annex of this report.

Direct observations of program implementation

- **Seven direct observations of program implementation (approximately two schools in each Island):** First hand differences in implementation across islands were observed:
 - Ngazidja: EP Idjinkoundzi, EP Djongoe, EP Ntsoundjini
 - Ndzouani: EP Koni Djodjo, EP Jimlime
 - Mwali: EP Fomboni, EP Mbatse

In total ~450 stakeholders were consulted during this evaluation. It is worth noting that the exact figure is much higher when one accounts for the fact that interviews at key organizations and at schools were mostly done in larger groups.

Figure 5: Stakeholders interviewed and surveyed (Number)



Training of local consultants

A half-day training session was scheduled to, first, present survey objectives and ensure understanding of the overall engagement and coach local consultants on each tool to have a correct understanding of the questions and connect the right question to the desired response.

Data collection

Data collection simultaneously took place in all three Islands, along with meetings with stakeholders from government, development partners, NGOs, and beneficiary organizations, and focus group

² The expected number was 440 but we reached 419 teachers/directors because of the national strike that occurred between September 30th and October 1st, and teacher absenteeism

discussions. For the teachers and school directors survey, firstly, questionnaires were directly distributed in each of the selected schools where survey objectives and instructions were presented to ensure understanding of the questions. Subsequently, the same team returned to each of those schools two or three days later to collect the completed questionnaires.

Data analysis and report writing

At the end of the field visit, a team of data entry operators were responsible for capturing the data. The data was then analysed according to the evaluation criteria and questions highlighted in the approach section.

III. PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION

Only 43.6% of six-year olds in Comoros (the official age for admission) are enrolled in primary education. In 2010, the dropout rate among children aged seven-eight years was 9% in the first grade, and 7.1% overall in primary school.³ 53% of children between ages three-eight years, the majority of which are girls, are out of school and constitute the most vulnerable population excluded from education.

Gender gaps exist in the Comorian education system although recent years have shown positive trends in female enrolment.⁴ In 2013, the net primary school enrolment rate countrywide was 85%, with 83% girls and 86% boys.⁵ Similarly, primary school enrolment has demonstrated progress in recent years, increasing by about 17% between 2010 and 2011, comparing favourably with increases of less than 4% in previous years. The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) increased at the primary level from 94% to 107% between 2007 and 2013⁶ and the completion rate also increased from 57% to 62% between 2009 and 2011.⁷

The Comorian education system is faced with a number of constraints. Access to school remains a challenge, with 15% of the population having no access to education. There is a significant retention problem - 25% of children who have access to schooling do not complete primary education. The situation is even more critical when considering the particularly high cost of education in the country - primary education is 28% more expensive and lower secondary education is 91% more expensive than the regional average in Africa.⁸ The high cost of education is mainly explained by small classes (Comoros' primary schools host about 30 pupils per class compared to an average of 48 in sub-Saharan Africa) and inefficient use of teachers' time.⁹ Pre-primary education was organized only in a private setting and concentrated in urban areas. As such in 2008, there were only 2,401 children receiving pre-elementary formal education in Comoros, exclusively in private schools.¹⁰

The period was also marked by a reduction of external funding, with a limited number of donors supporting the education system. The situation is highlighted in the main education statistics (2007), which depict the situation of basic education.

Since 2005, UNICEF Comoros has supported the Ministry of Education in developing the Master Plan for Education and Training for 2005-2009 and the National Plan of Action 2005-2007 for the promotion of girls' education. This framework facilitated mobilization of significant funding for the education sector (16 million Euros from the European Union). 1.2 million Euros from this funding support the integration of the Competency Based Approach (CBA) in education. CBA was officially declared a priority of the Comorian Education System Reform, focusing on the improvement of quality, effectiveness and efficiency in the management of the education system in order to increase retention and completion at the primary education cycle for 81% of the children, girls and boys, access to education, and quality of learning at all levels. One objective is to reach a 65% success rate for the Grade 6 entrance exam. The Comoros education system faces serious challenges, in achieving the

³ http://www.Unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Comoros_COAR_2010.pdf

⁴ Unicef Annual Report 2011 for Comoros

http://www.Unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Comoros_COAR_2011.pdf

⁵ Unicef, 2014, Indicators of access and participation in education in Comoros

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr1327.pdf>

⁸ The pôle de Dakar newsletter, December 2012

⁹ Unicef, Status report of the education system (Comoros), October 2012

¹⁰ UNESCO / UNICEF, 2012, State report of the Education System: Diagnosis of the Comorian education system for a new policy in the context of EFA

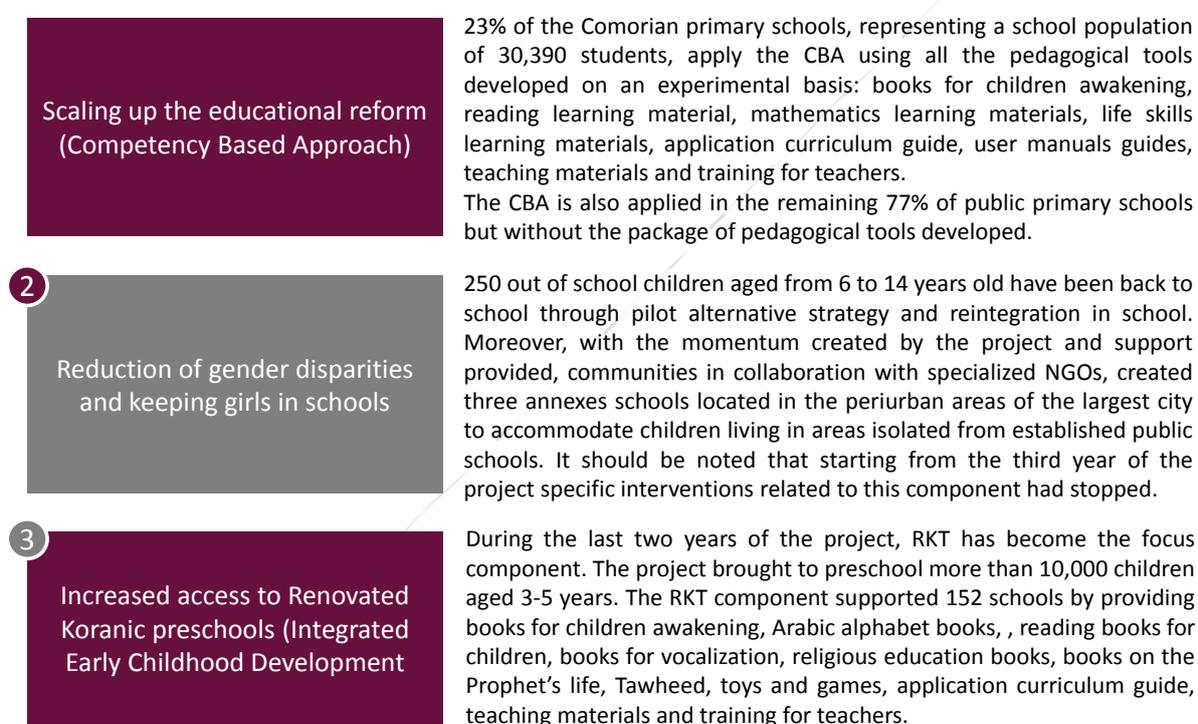
Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by 2015 particularly in reaching universal primary education promoting gender equality and empowering women. These challenges relate to access to quality basic education for all children regardless of race, religion, physical and social conditions, etc.

In light of the Comorian educational sector reforms, Dubai Cares launched in 2008 a five-year program with a total funding amount of US\$ 2.6 million, focusing on the integration and further expansion of the three components identified by UNICEF Comoros and the Government of Comoros:

- Scaling up educational reform (CBA)
- Reducing gender disparities and keeping girls in schools
- Increasing access to Renovated Koranic preschools (Integrated Early Childhood Development - IECD)

The figure below further details each program component.

Figure 6: Program description



The formulation of the project was based on national priorities with a view to support Early Childhood Development (ECD), reducing inequities in access to schooling, and improving the quality of education through the new CBA reform. The Dubai Cares program was designed to help address all these issues in order to improve the quality of education.

IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

FOCUS ON RENOVATED KORANIC TEACHING

The Renovated Koranic Teaching (RKT) model is meeting its first objective of improving access to basic education for boys and girls, particularly in zones where access was problematic. Key successes in national education outcomes which were credited to the Dubai Cares program in Comoros in particular include:

- Between 2007 and 2013, the gender gap in terms of access to primary school has been reduced from 1.13 to 1.06, and girls' gross preschool enrollment rate increased faster than boys' (+21 percentage points versus +19)
- Net access to education progressed from 73.6% to 86.1% during the same period
- The gross preschool enrollment rate increased by 12 percentage points between 2012 and 2013, largely more than the population growth rate estimated at 2.4% in 2013

"Dubai Cares played and continues to play an important role in improving access rates to primary school by targeting children aged around 3 years old in increasing access by already incorporating this younger group [that would not have been in formal schooling] into the public elementary school."

Key stakeholder – Ministry of Education

In addition, based on survey information (as shown in the figure below), RKT was believed to be effective in increasing access to education for disadvantaged children and to a slightly higher extent in the Islands of Mwali and Ndzouani, which according to 2009 data had a higher likelihood of a child not having access to school even while living near a primary school (26.5% in Ndzouani compared to 12.5% in Mwali and 9.9% in Ngazidja in 2009).¹¹

Figure 7: Effectiveness of RKT in increasing access to education for disadvantaged children



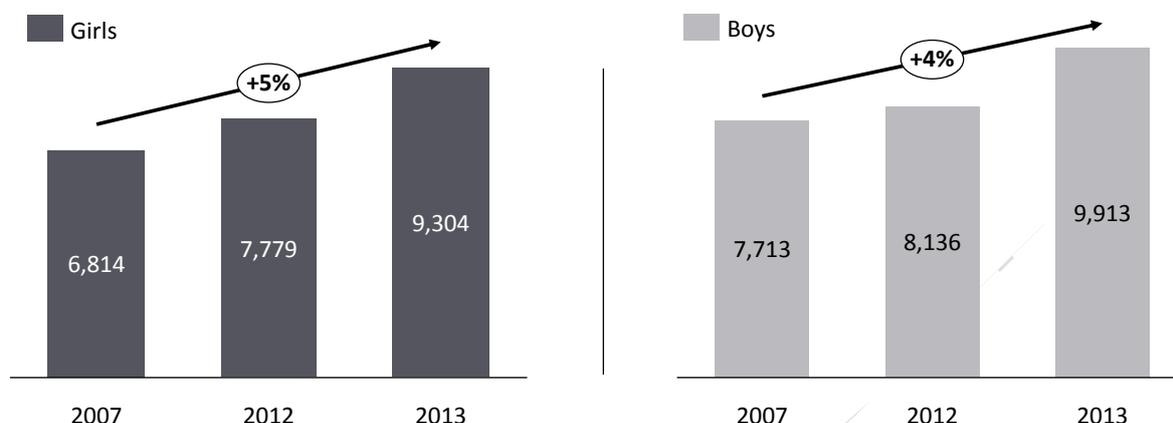
As shown below, there has been a steady increase in the number of children joining CP1 (Grade 1) since before the RKT program was put in place and beyond. Stakeholders believed that this rise can

¹¹ UNESCO / UNICEF, 2012, State report of the Education

be attributed to a large extent to the RKT program that got younger children into the formal education sector and made it easier for them to transition to CP1.

Figure 8: New entrants in CP1 before, during and after Dubai Cares (Number of new entrants)

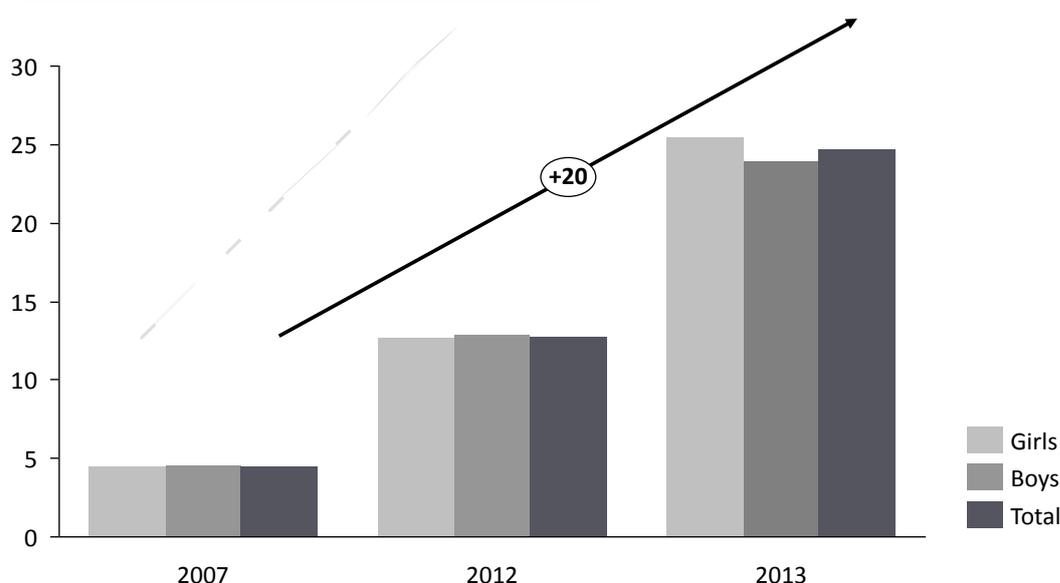
New entrants in CP1 before, during and after Dubai Cares program (Number of new entrants)



The RKT program improved access to basic education particularly for vulnerable groups. At the preschool level, the analysis of access rates below indicates that the gross enrolment rate went up from 4.4% (Girls 4.4%; Boys 4.5%) in 2007 to 14.1% (Girls 14.0%; Boys 14.2%) in 2012 and 24.6% in 2013 (Girls 25.4%; Boys 23.9%), hence a gain of about 20 points in six years and 10.5 points only in one year.

Figure 9: Gross Enrolment Rate in pre-elementary education before, during and after the Dubai Cares program (%)

Gross Enrollment Rate in pre-elementary education (%)

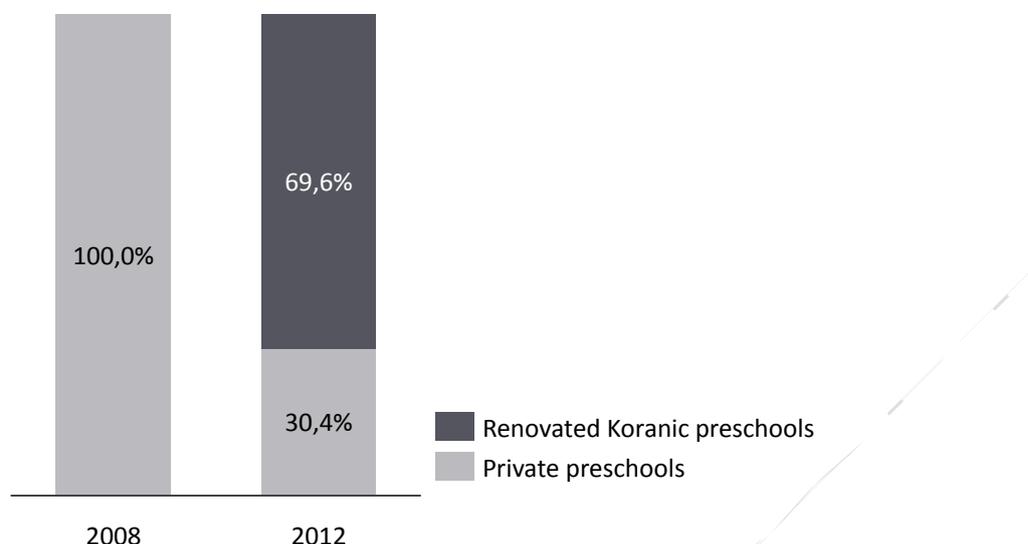


In 2008, all 2,401 children enrolled in pre-primary education were in private schools. By 2013, the RKT program had enrolled into preschool more than 10,000 children aged three-five years. In 2012, about 5,810 children were registered in RKT classes, which represented 70% of the total students in pre-

elementary education as shown in the figure below. The majority of those students belong to low-income families that were unable to enroll their children into private preschools.

Figure 10: Students in pre-elementary education by type of school before and after the Dubai Cares intervention (%)

Students in pre-elementary education by type of school (%)



Early evidence suggests that RKT improved children's readiness for and achievement in primary school. This is consistent with the impact of ECD programs in other developing countries. It is expected that in coming years, the RKT program will continue to show positive outcomes observed in ECD interventions in other developing countries.¹² The successes of other programs include:

- **Improved cognitive development and school achievement:** Children who participated in ECD interventions scored higher on average on intellectual aptitude tests than did non-participants (Examples: Jamaica's First Home Visiting Program, Colombia's Cali project and the Turkey Early Enrichment Project)
- **Higher school enrolment:** ECD programs cited significantly higher enrolment rates (in later schooling) among participating children than among non-participants (Examples: Early Childhood Care and Education in Kenya and Colombia's Promesa project)
- **Less repetition:** Children who participated in an early childhood program repeated fewer grades and made better progress through school than non-participants in similar circumstances (Examples: Alagoas and Fortaleza studies in Northeast Brazil and Argentina)
- **Fewer dropouts:** In some ECD interventions evaluation, 60% of program children reached the fourth grade, compared with only 30% of children in the comparison group (Example: Impact evaluation of the Colombia's Promesa project)

"The RKT is successful in that the CP1 teacher receives children who have a good foundation because they have gone through the RKS."

School Director

¹²http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/1996/01/01/000009265_3961219104956/Rendered/PDF/multi_page.pdf

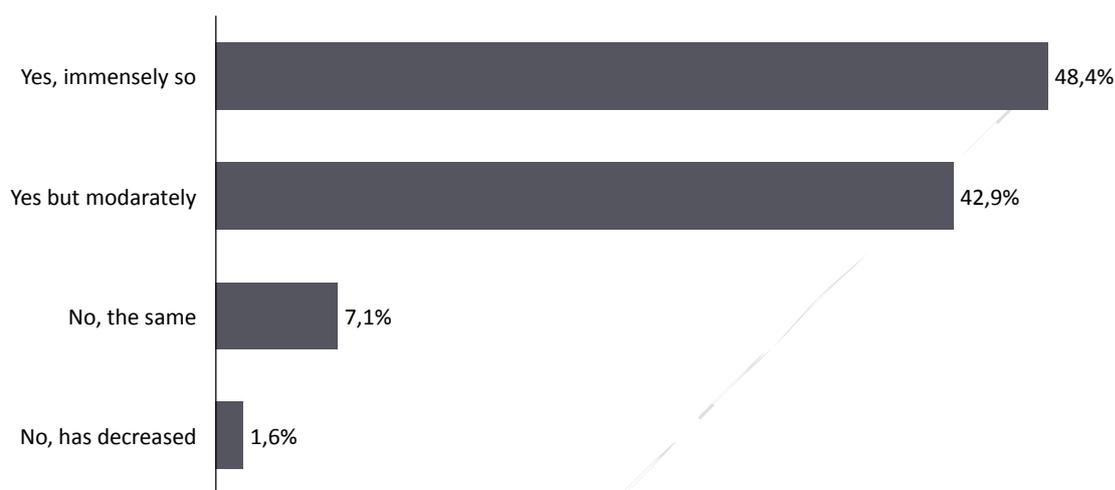
“When I speak French, children who come from RKS understand better than children who do not come from RKS.”

CP1 teacher

Findings from this evaluation also show that the majority of teachers (91%) of those surveyed believed RKS had a moderate or immense impact on improving student performance as shown below.

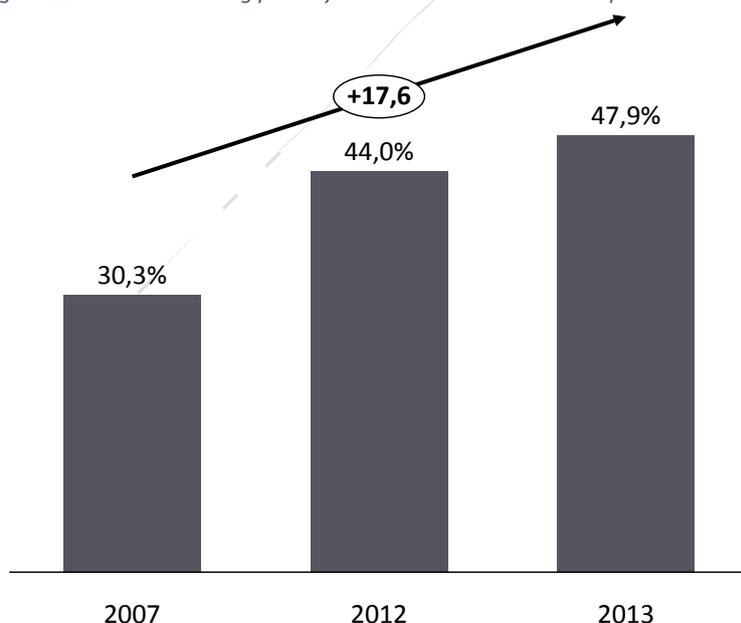
Figure 11: Primary teachers saying student performance is better for children who have been to RKS (%)

% Teachers saying student performance is better for children who have been to RKS



RKT implementation was also believed to have played a key role in increasing the number of students starting primary school in time as shown in the figure below.

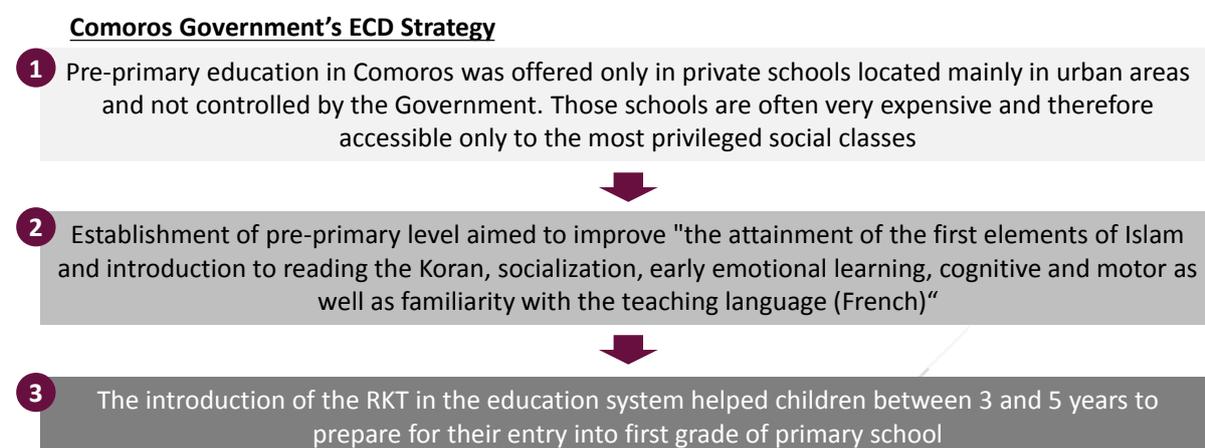
Figure 12: Students starting primary school on time since RKT implementation (%)



The success of RKT in Comoros could be attributed to the fact that Renovated Koranic preschools are closely linked to primary schools. As shown in the figure below, prior to Dubai Cares' intervention, ECD

was only available to children from wealthier families that could afford to pay for private schooling. The Comorian Government introduced pre-primary level in schools with the main skills imparted to the children being the Koran and familiarity with learning in French. In 2010, Dubai Cares introduced the RKT program that was a vast improvement on previous approaches with the core elements being Koranic education, language learning (Shikomori, French and Arabic), Mathematics and Awakening.

Figure 13: Evolution of Comorian Government's ECD strategy



The key advantages of having RKT incorporated into formal schools in Comoros is:

- Teachers in Renovated Koranic preschools are primary teachers trained in Renovated Koranic Teaching. They are able to better anticipate children's cognitive development and competences needed for early stage of primary education
- There is a logical continuity between RKT content and content of early stage of primary education. The two curricula are structured by the same experts through the same methodology for the same disciplines
- Parents are more involved in education of their children through associations and councils in primary schools where Renovated Koranic preschools are implemented
- Children are placed early in the environment of the primary school they will integrate in a few years

However, delays and shortages of materials were major obstacles. For example, 59% of the Koranic teachers interviewed felt that most of the tools received were not sufficient. A breakdown of sufficiency by tool is shown below.

Figure 14: Sufficiency of tools received

EVALUATION OF DUBAI CARES' SUPPORT TO QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION IN COMOROS ISLANDS

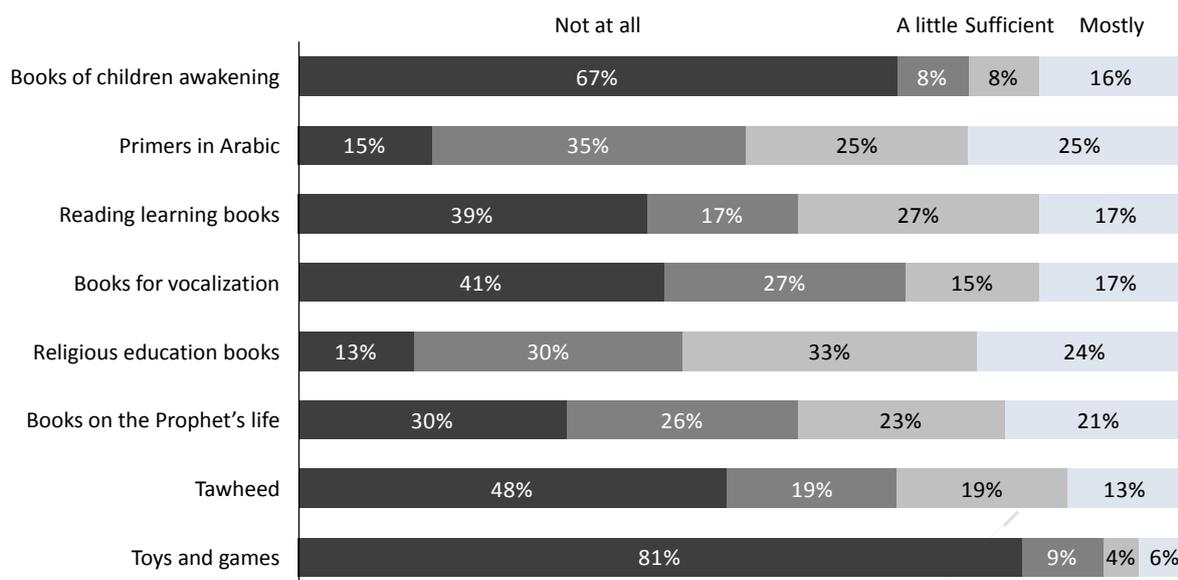
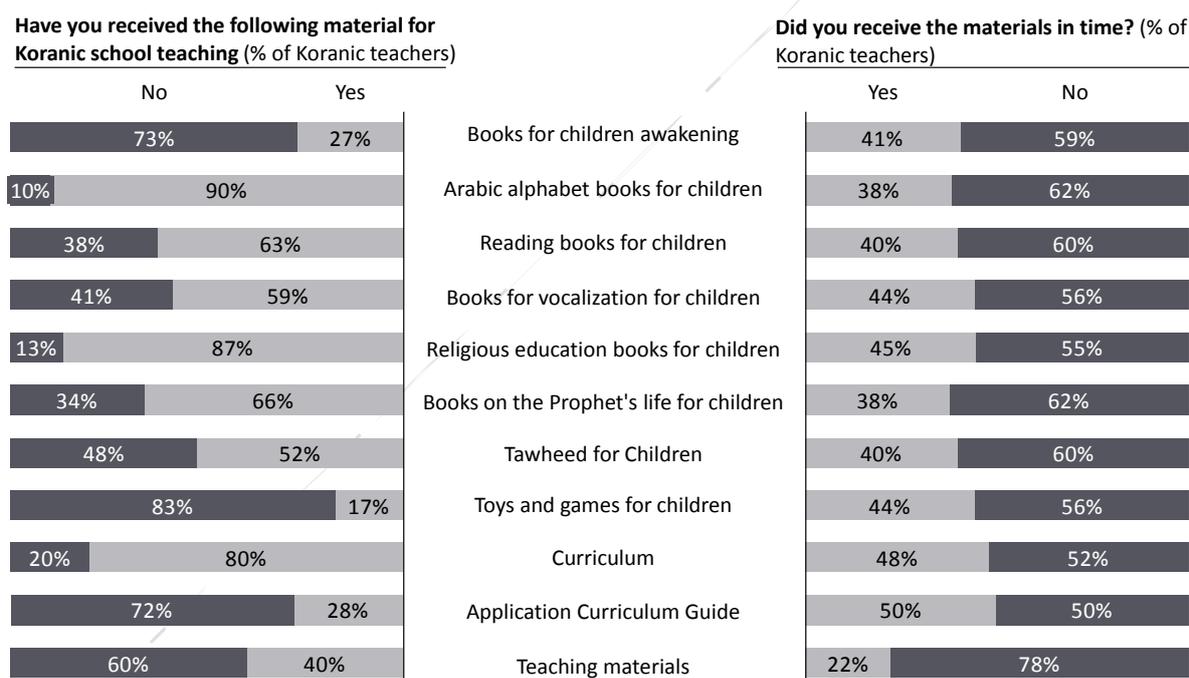


Figure 15: RKS materials received and their timeliness



The insufficiency of and delay on receiving tools for RKT were caused by the following key factors:

- A demand that far exceeds supply. Most RKS are beyond full capacity and the Government has not been able to accept additional applications for new RKS to be built
- The Ministry of Education did not have sufficient resources for the printing and renewing of tools provided during the early stage of the programme
- There were delays on funds transfer between Dubai Cares and UNICEF that resulted in further delays on procurement and distribution of tools to RKS. This led to most tools being received at an advanced stage of the academic year instead of the start.

Going forward, the RKT program will face a number of cultural barriers as it continues to increase its uptake in Comoros with less than half (43%) of teachers and school directors surveyed feeling that RKS could replace TKS in the future as shown below.

Figure 16: Replacing TKS with RKS

Do you think the RKT can replace traditional Koranic schools in the long term
(Koranic teachers and school directors)



Key challenges identified in increasing the uptake of RKT in the long term are:

- Parents prefer TKS
- Many children combine the two systems (RKS in the morning and TKS in the evening)
- Advocacy campaigns by religious leaders who are against RKT
- Time is limited in RKS while children go twice a day to TKS
- RKS is just for a period of 2-3 years and children must leave at the age of 6, while they have the option to continue with the traditional Koranic school

Some challenges mostly tied to parent and community perception were the beliefs that:

- In TKS children are better trained in Islam than in RKS
- TKS are part of the Comorian culture and identity. This leads to them being considered more socially accepted than RKS that might be seen as a foreign program.

“Even now there are traditional Koranic teachers who say that RKT was diluted by integrating it into primary schools. There are among them conservatives who say that the Koran should not be mixed with learning French. This debate continues with people who vehemently oppose the RKT as currently integrated in primary schools.”

Key stakeholder

The switch to RKT caused misunderstanding among several actors. The initial objective of the program was to build 60 Renovated Koranic preschools. There was however a shortage of funds due to the high costs of construction in Comoros. It was thus decided to renovate about 200 classrooms in primary schools, instead of building 60 new preschools. This change from Renovated Koranic Schools to Renovated Koranic Teaching was not positively received by populations because:

- 60 communities had been identified to host these preschools and planning was ongoing
- Traditional Koranic teachers thought that their schools would be renovated
- The Government expected a more significant increase in capacity at the pre-primary level

“When it was announced that schools would be renovated instead of built, it created challenges since the construction of new schools was the expectation.”

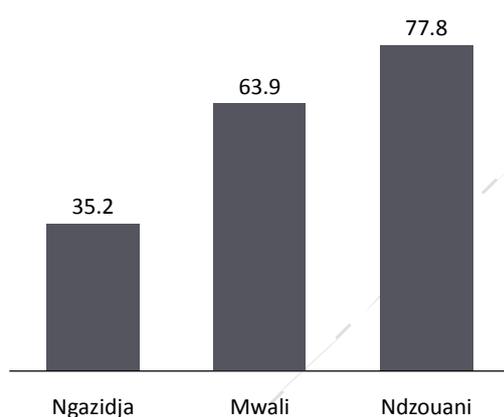
Key stakeholder

FOCUS ON THE COMPETENCY BASED APPROACH

Education outcomes in Comoros have consistently risen with various stakeholders crediting the Dubai Cares CBA program to a great extent. Prior to program inception, quality was identified as a key challenge in the Comorian education system. Some key statistics highlighting this challenge include the fact that there was a very low percentage of students mastering basic Mathematics and French in 2009, particularly in Mwali (French 4%; Mathematics 0.6%) and Ndzouani (French 3.1%; Mathematics 2%). This is based on the PASEC results in 2010.¹³

Figure 17: Teachers and directors who think that CBA is effective in improving quality of primary education (%)

Teachers and directors thinking that CBA is effective in improving quality of primary education (%)



Key successes of the Dubai Cares CBA project include:

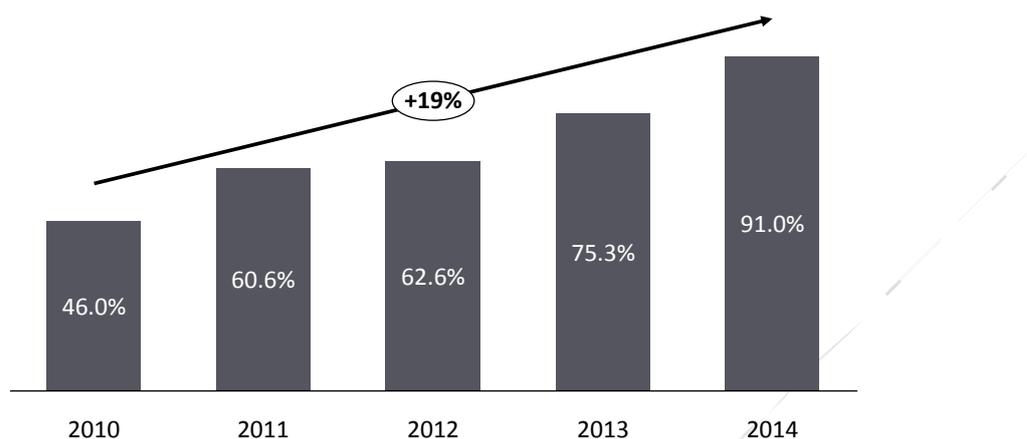
- Ease of children understanding teaching based on CBA principles – This is because the program is better designed than prior systems and designed specifically to improve teaching methods and increase student understanding of the materials and content
- Higher examination results as a result of CBA – This is both as a result of a better examination evaluation system that was put in place as part of CBA, as well as a better understanding of the teaching by students based on the tools and materials of CBA
- Higher progression rates for children, e.g. in Mwali completion rates went from 55% to 68% from before CBA implementation in 2008 to 2014. With a better understanding of material and higher examination results, more children are progressing from one grade to the next

¹³ The Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Educatifs de la CONFEMEN (PASEC) provides supports and guidance to the education systems of several Francophone member countries, including Comoros.

- Better teacher progression in relation to the curriculum given use of consistent materials – The use of consistent materials enables the teachers to make better progress in the curriculum
- Increased consistency in children of the same level across different schools and islands given that CBA ensures uniform tools are used across areas
- Easier assessment of children on the same level given increased uniformity in skills acquired and materials used

Figure 18: Success rates at the end of the primary school exam, Ngazidja 2010 - 2014

Success rates at the examination of end of primary school in Ngazidja 2010-2014



Source: PASEC 2010, triangulation of data from different sources including document review and desktop research

According to the stakeholders, these positive results at the end of the primary school exam, particularly in 2014, are due to the change in the student evaluation method, as triggered by the CBA program. Examiners have adopted the criteria-based evaluation used through the CBA.

“Recently, we saw improvements in students’ achievement with good results at the examination of end of primary school. These good results are due to the fact that we have drawn attention to the problems of evaluating students. These problems were solved by the Dubai Cares programme that helped to popularize criteria-based evaluation.”

Key stakeholder

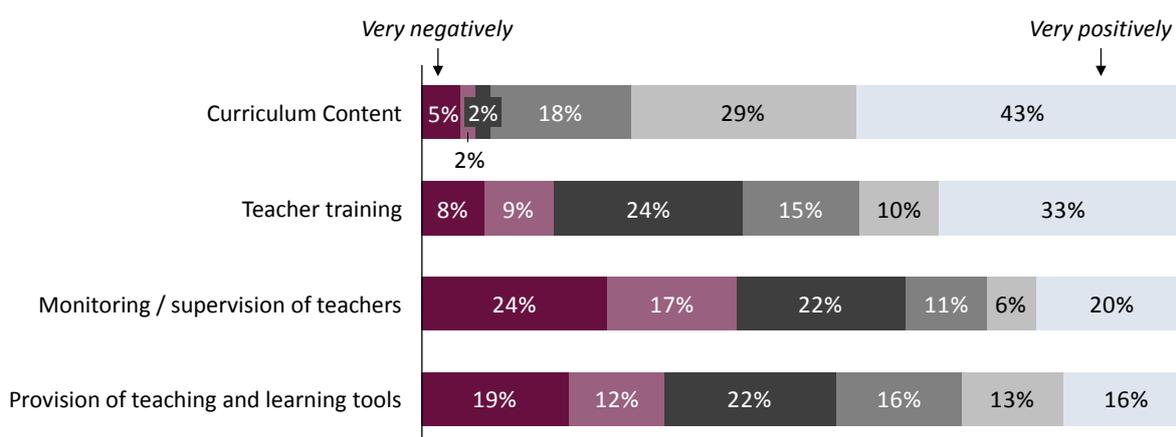
“There were assessments of student achievement before the implementation of the CBA, which were used as a baseline - national examinations are used to judge the effectiveness of programs. The CBA approach has been identified as an approach that better improves the education outcomes of students. We find that there is an improvement; there is a change in the ratings. The evaluation method is based on the skills acquired by students. Those who passed were 40% in 2011 and 2012/2013 the figure has grown to 68%. It would require a comparative analysis to better understand the factors that were the basis for the observed progression.”

Ndzouani Commissioner at the island Ministry of Education

The CBA program initiated by the European Union and with the continued support of Dubai Cares, is largely credited for these positive results. **CBA was generally considered to be well conceived; however the scaling up of the program faced several implementation challenges.**

Figure 19: Assessment of CBA on various aspects

How do you assess the competency-based approach based on the following points? (% of primary teachers)



72% of respondents viewed the CBA program positively in terms of curriculum content versus 58% in terms of teacher training, 45% in terms of provision of teaching and learning tools and 37% only in terms of monitoring / supervision of teachers. These statistics suggest room for improvement in the implementation of the CBA program.

“We are supposed to work with tools that we do not get in most cases. Also there are not enough textbooks in Mathematics, French and Awakening for students. This is what is hampering our progress at the moment because if a student does not have a manual he/she cannot work well. The Competency Based Approach is a good method, but there are not enough tools for its implementation.”

School Director

Key challenges identified in scaling up CBA were the lack of teacher training / monitoring / supervision and shortages and delays in receiving materials with 33% of the CP teachers still not using the CBA tools with lack of training being the main reason cited, as shown in the figure below.

“Teacher supervisors are not really trained well on CBA. The teacher who implements CBA daily in the classroom eventually exceeds the competence of the pedagogic supervisor. The supervisors are not adequately trained to monitor teachers.”

Key stakeholder

“There are no books for children, in addition to inadequate training and lack of mastery of the concept of the CBA by teachers and supervisors.”

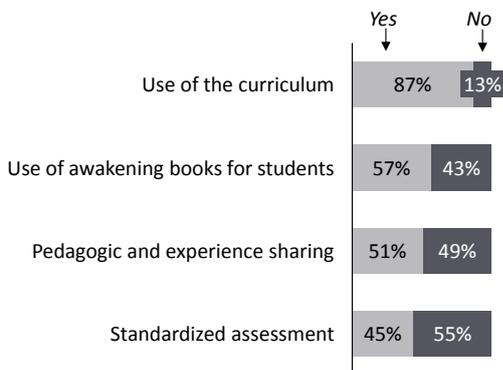
Primary teacher

Figure 20: Extent and type of CBA training teachers have received

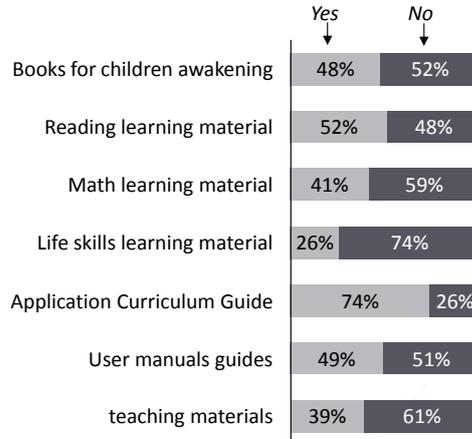
Have you been trained to implement the CBA in your classroom? (Number of primary teachers)



What training have you received (% of primary teachers)



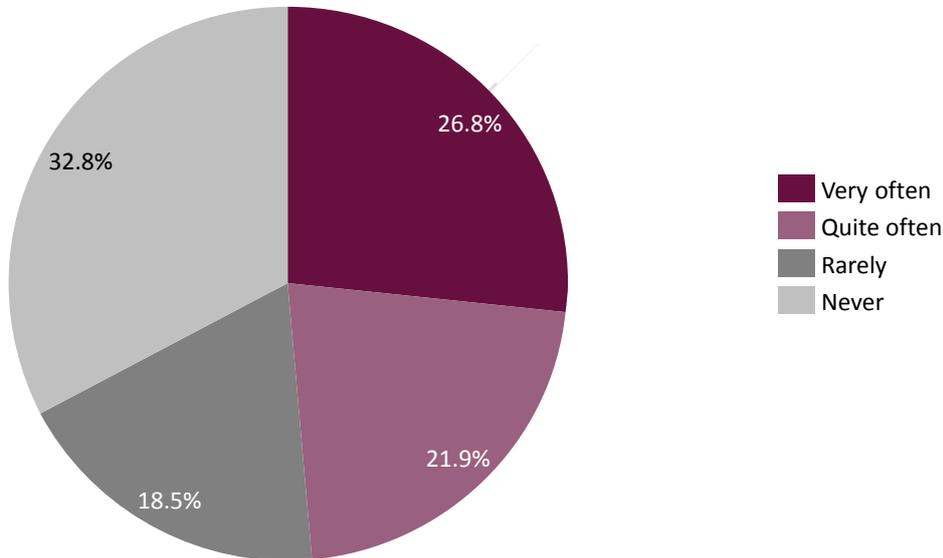
Did you receive the materials in time? (% of primary directors and teachers)



Only 42% of respondents received most materials, and he majority of them were not received in time

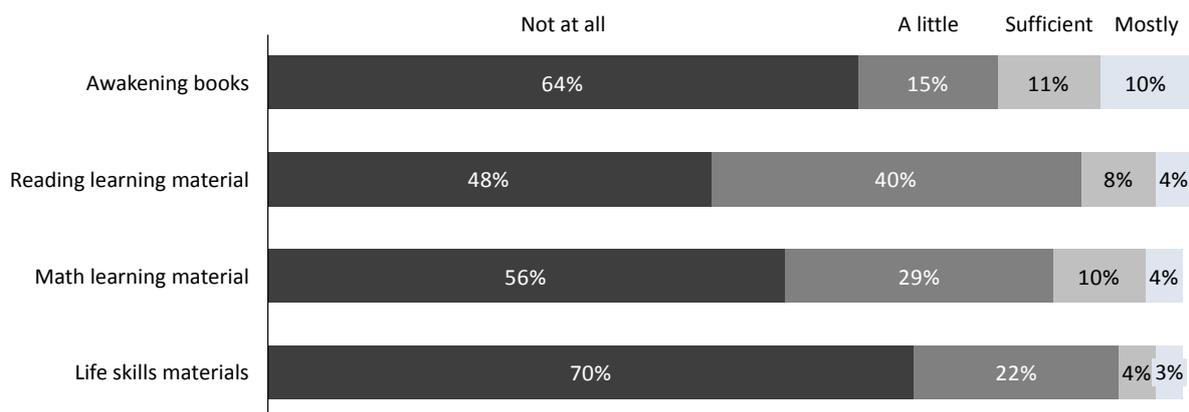
51% of interviewed teachers rarely or never use the CBA materials provided because 29% of them have not been trained to implement the CBA. Only 42% of respondents received most CBA materials, and the majority of them were not received in time.

Figure 21: Teachers utilizing the CBA tools



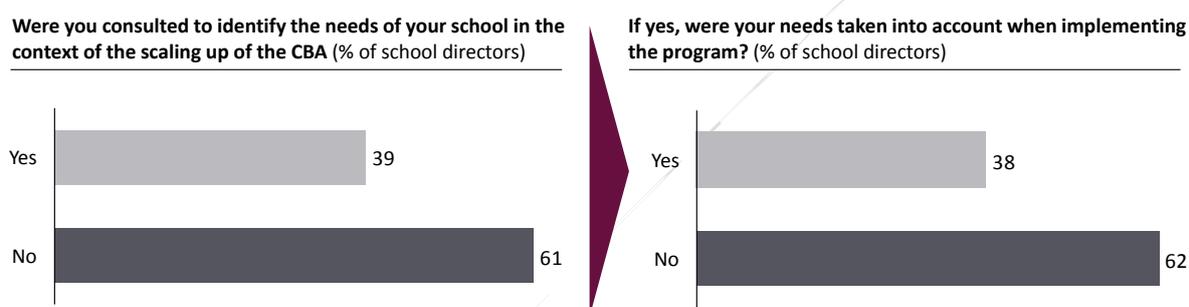
78% of respondents felt that most of the tools received were not enough. A breakdown of the sufficiency of each tool is shown below.

Figure 22: Sufficiency of CBA tools received



Further, 61% of schools surveyed had not been consulted before starting the CBA as shown below. This type of local consultation will be valuable in understanding and addressing more localized needs and in ensuring there is more buy-in and ownership of programs.

Figure 23: Stakeholders consulted before implementing CBA



THE FUNDING EQUATION ACROSS RKT AND CBA

With no clear fundraising strategy in place by the Comorian government, the future of the RKT and CBA programs is unclear.

- The Comorian government has still not implemented a strong and active strategy to mobilize partners and funds to ensure funding of CBA and RKT inputs
- There are ongoing interventions in the education sector but they are in small scale and poorly integrated. These interventions are unable to fund all components of the CBA and RKT
- There are other more pressing needs and crises that make the support from technical and financial partners oriented to sectors other than education. For example, salaries of Comorian public employees have not been paid for four months
- Major donors, that often compete for more impact, could be tempted to direct their projects to larger countries

"We cannot say there is really a partnership strategy but the government is making efforts to attract donors. They approached many other donors such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia, private foundations working in the construction of classrooms, but it's a bit scattered, there is no fundraising strategy"

Key stakeholder

In summary, the Dubai Cares program has been successful in meeting its stated objectives and the positive results highlighted above can be attributed to funding from Dubai Cares. The limited number of partners engaged in funding interventions in Comoros' education sector placed Dubai Cares as a central pillar of the education sector reform. Further, the Dubai Cares program had the largest geographic footprint to be able to affect broader change.

Figure 24: Other funders intervening in the Comoros education system

Funder	Project	Grant amount	Objectives	Duration
Global Partnership for Education (GPE)	Support to implement the national education plan	USD4.6 million	(i) Increase access to basic education, with a focus on vulnerable children including children with disabilities; (ii) Improve the quality of education by providing textbooks and learning materials; (iii) Strengthen the monitoring and management of the education sector.	2013-2016
European Union (UE)	Strengthening of Piloting and Supervision of Education in Comoros (PREPEC)	USD5 million	Improve the quality of education by strengthening (i) the information and communication system, (ii) control and management, (iii) learning conditions and leadership training system.	2014-2018
French Agency for Development (AFD)	Support to French language in Comoros (AFC)	USD1.3 million	Sustainably improve teachers' mastery and professional practice of French language at all levels of the education system in Comoros.	2013-2015
Educate A Child –EAC (Qatar)	Formal education for out of school children in the Comoros (OOSC)	USD3.3 million	Equitable access to quality formal education by 2017 for 20,000 out of school children from disadvantaged communities	2014-2017

As shown in the figure above, since the end of the Dubai Cares program, there has been no large-scale intervention in the Comoros education system.

"Funding from Dubai Cares ended in 2012. Funding for the CBA ended even earlier in 2011 when the program shifted its focus to the RKT and we completely stopped printing CBA tools. So since 2011-2012, there has been no project to accompany us in the scaling up of the CBA and RKT."

Key stakeholder

The few current programs were launched in 2013 and 2014, with most of them being effective from the 2014-2015 school-year only.

As shown in the figure below, while some of the CBA components are partially covered under the programs listed above, half of the CBA components are not being addressed. For those components that are included in current programs, it is still not clear to what extent they are being covered. This

lack of clarity is due to the limited availability of program information in the public domain, which also speaks to the need for better coordination.

Figure 25: CBA components covered under new education projects in Comoros

Project activities under Dubai Cares' CBA component	Partially covered by new projects- which ones?
<p>a. Institutional capacity building and management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up a coordination mechanism between implementing partners and the Ministries of Education • Providing technical assistance for the implementation of reforms • Building capacity for the implementation of the national education policy <p>b. Efficiency and quality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing learning and teaching materials • Providing school supply materials to <i>all</i> students and teachers • Working with teachers and decentralised authorities to provide support and training in areas such as participatory teaching methodologies, gender-friendly classrooms and school management • Setting up communities of practice between teachers from different villages • Supporting the local education authorities in their pedagogical activities and in monitoring of school performance throughout the year • Building capacity for the implementation of the national education policy • Supporting teacher training and ongoing support and supervision • Supporting school councils • Raising awareness of students, parents and communities to increase the demand for quality education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • No • Yes – GPE, PREPEC • Yes - GPE • No • Yes - PREPEC • No • No • Yes – GPE, PREPEC • Yes – PREPEC, AFC • No • Yes – EAC

Sources:

http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mauritius/eu_comoros/development_cooperation/education/index_en.htm; <http://www.globalpartnership.org/country/comoros>; <http://educateachild.org/our-partners-projects/projects/formal-education-out-school-children-comoros>

The education system can however benefit from continued support to improve access, quality and sustainability:

- **Building RKS was highly effective in increasing access to education for vulnerable groups** with the Dubai Cares RKS project being most impactful in providing access to education to a young and mostly underprivileged group of children that would otherwise not have been in the formal education system
- In addition, since 2008, education outcomes in Comoros have consistently risen with **higher examination results and completion/progression rates being credited to the Dubai Cares program**
- **ECD globally has been known to have transformational impact in the long term** on children who access it, and the Dubai Cares' RKT program is likely to confer similar benefits for Comorian children in coming years
- In the Comorian context, **the success of RKT could be attributed to the fact that RKS are closely linked to primary schools** and have been formally integrated into government schools
- While well-conceived and designed, **implementation challenges are limiting its effectiveness**. The major challenges were insufficient training of teachers resulting in their not using materials, limited monitoring/supervision, and the shortages and delays in receiving materials. Key examples include:
 - Renovated Koranic teachers are not specialized, they are primary teachers that have received basic training on RKT methods and components

- There is a significant number of teachers that have not been initially trained, while there is no ongoing training for renovated Koranic teachers
- There is a significant turnover of initially trained Renovated Koranic teachers due to political affiliation (teachers aligned to ruling political party are moved to urban areas)
- Most RKS only have one teacher and the teacher does not have a helper as a helper's salary would not be covered by the Government. In many cases these teachers are teaching classes with too many students for them to handle alone given the high demand
- Despite the successes of RKT, **the program faces a number of cultural barriers in increasing its uptake in Comoros**, with the main challenges being the perception that TKS are better in training children on Islam than RKS and advocacy campaigns by some religious leaders against RKS
- **Future sustainability of the gains made by Dubai Cares' program in Comoros is unclear.** With no active government strategy to mobilize partners and funds for CBA and RKT inputs, and with the government struggling with basic expenses such as payroll for employees, the future funding of CBA and RKT is uncertain. Key examples include:
 - The Ministry of Education did not have sufficient resources for the printing and renewing of tools provided during the early stage of the program
 - The Ndzhouani education ministry offices had no power during all three visits in the course of one week to the offices
 - Teachers have not been paid salaries in close to 3 months and their morale is low. A fair number of surveys had to be collected from farms and homes as teachers were on strike and were not in class teaching
 - Supervision of the program is difficult given supervisors are not well equipped/well-funded to visit schools that in many cases are very far and remote. It took 4 hours to drive to one particular school in Ndzhouani on rough terrain and an additional half hour walk. Fortunately the team was able to find one teacher in school that day

IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY OF POTENTIAL PARTNERS IN COMOROS

The table below presents the strengths and weaknesses of key types of implementation partners, specific to the Comoros context.

Table 4: Assessment of strengths and weaknesses of potential implementing partners

Implementing partners	Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Government and government agencies (e.g. national and Island ministries of education)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep knowledge of the local context and issues faced by each of the subsectors of the education system as highlighted in the Comorian 2013-2015 Interim Education Plan, which is the main current education planning document in the country, developed by the ministry of education in collaboration with Island ministries of education and other partners • Ability to leverage knowledge built over time, due to low turnover of technical staff of the ministries of education. For example, heads of ECD and primary education departments contributed to build recent sector strategies, worked with all education sector partners (European Union, Agence Française de Développement, Global Partnership for Education, Unicef, Dubai Cares, Educate a Child, UNESCO, etc.) • Track-record of relations with different partners since the government is involved in all programs in the education sector, at least at the design phase. This positioning also provides for a broader view of who is doing what, and the ability to quickly identify gaps and learnings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of a strategy to mobilize partners and funds that creates challenges for the continuity and sustainability of programs. For most education projects implemented in Comoros, initiatives come from development partners and not from the government • Inability to organize and integrate ongoing interventions in the education sector due to small-scale education projects in Comoros that often cause duplication and the inability to measure program impact particularly in Mwali and Ndzuani • Lack of quality technical and human resources, and logistics to implement and supervise projects. Several key ministry technical staff are close to retirement and there is no effort made to ensure their succession. Also, offices do not have enough computers and printers, with other basic infrastructure lacking • Lack of motivation of agents to be fully involved in program implementation and monitoring. For example, most of the agents of the ECD and planning departments are trainees that do not receive salaries / compensation while they have a workload equivalent to that of regular employees • Instability of the social, economic and political landscape that leads to recurrent strikes, turnovers, and corruption, due to the inability of the government to pay salaries. At the time of this evaluation, the government had not paid salaries for four months from July to October 2014, to the point where some staff could no longer afford to pay for their transport to get to work • Delays in program delivery due to long and complex procedures, exacerbated by fragmented ministerial jurisdiction. The most relevant example is the management of RKT by the ministry of Islamic affairs while ECD is under the

Implementing partners	Strengths	Weaknesses
		<p>ministry of education, creating overlapping interventions and confusion in identifying different programs' input</p>
<p>Global development institutions (e.g. Unicef)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong network of local partners that are implementers to fill the gap in terms of field presence, allowing for a focus on management and monitoring of interventions. For the Dubai Cares program, Unicef contracted FAWE-Com to execute the gender component and Ngo'Shawo community mobilization for the RKT • Stronger transparency in fund management and M&E that makes required data available during impact evaluation specifically for results attribution, by tracking ongoing results and expenses during and after project implementation • Deep connections with the government and civil society that allowed Unicef to be able to identify the best partner for each program component • Broader understanding of the education sector and the ability to leverage best practices from other programs and countries. For example, Unicef's technical staff includes a Competency Based Approach (CBA) specialist, an ECD specialist, an architect specializing in construction of classrooms suitable for children, etc. Also, Unicef contracted with the Engineering Bureau for Education and Training (BIEF) to develop the curriculum and the application guides for both RKT and CBA under Dubai Cares' funding • Understanding of cross-sector aspects of ECD that can lead to more impact of education programs. Unicef developed an integrated approach to ECD including health, nutrition, gender, and psychological dimensions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of presence on the field that leads Unicef to rely on other partners (e.g. national NGOs / associations) for program implementation. This situation occurred on the Dubai Cares' project where Ngo'Shawo, AREDS and FAWE-Com were used as subcontractors to implement many of the interventions • Complexity of procedures (particularly for fund mobilization) that often creates delay in program delivering due to the shortness of the school year and the fact that all Unicef's partners have to contract with Unicef headquarter in USA
<p>International / regional NGOs (e.g. FAWE-Com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong communication and advocacy capabilities to support community mobilization and program dissemination efforts • Ability to leverage international partners to secure complementary support and additional funds for program extension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding sources due to budget restrictions leading to call for volunteers who do not necessarily have the required skills and / or level of commitment • Thematic focus (e.g. gender, handicap...) that can hamper an integrated approach to interventions. For example, through the Dubai Cares'

Implementing partners	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep knowledge of regional / global trends in education to identify issues and subsectors to mobilize partners and funders 	<p>program, FAWE-Com implemented only the gender component</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of field presence due to reduced human resources limiting ability to cover all interventions of a large-scale project, particularly when the timeline is short
<p>National NGOs and associations (e.g. Ngo'Shawo, AREDS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep knowledge of the local context that make national NGOs and associations partners of choice for program implementation. As they intervene in diverse sectors of development such as human rights, youth, education, environment, citizenship, gender, health... they are in a position to have a clear view of populations' needs and rapidly identify the types of interventions that could address those needs and optimal implementation approaches • Mission-driven approach that makes national NGOs and associations able to create strong relationship with communities / leaders / beneficiaries and convince them of the benefits of programs. For example, Ngo'Shawo succeeded in convincing hostile communities to accept and support the RKT program, particularly in Mwali 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be in conflict with the government, due to their involvement in protests. This can create a lack of support from government stakeholders for programs implemented by national NGOs and associations. For example some members of Ngo'Shawo have been recently arrested during protests against the government • Low capabilities to engage other partners due to the fact that Comorian NGOs and associations are not yet able to develop their networks out of the country. For example, Ngo'Shawo's budget is mainly based on membership dues and minor support from the diaspora • Poor technical and human resources that prevents national NGOs and associations from being involved in all stages of a project and get a clear view of what is expected. Through the Dubai Cares program, Ngo'Shawo and AREDES have been closely trained by Unicef and the government to get a clear sense of the scope and details of their missions as implementers

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Key recommendations to ensure that the gains made by the program are not lost include dealing with challenges in three key areas: Access, Quality and Sustainability.

ACCESS

To increase access to RKS, community buy-in and involvement from project inception are critical, as well as increased funding to address high demand.

Given oversubscription of RKT evidenced by classes that are filled beyond capacity and the Ministry of Education not being able to fill all the requests for new RKS, key recommendations to increase access to RKT in Comoros include:

- **Increasing funding for expansion of the program.** For each RKS, significant inputs are required in the form of infrastructure, furniture, teaching and learning materials. The future success of the program is at risk if key inputs cannot be funded.
- **Ensuring that communities and schools are consulted/involved from project inception.** Despite the program being oversubscribed there are still children whose parents will not send them to RKS given the strong advocacy campaigns by some religious leaders. If such community members are consulted early on they are likely to have more ownership of the program and better understand it as an improvement of TKS rather than viewing it as a competing program.
- **Including advocacy as a critical part of the program's introduction into future geographies.** While government support is an important factor for program success, being able to convince the public of the benefits of a program to them is key in education interventions such as RKS that touch on a community's identity, culture and religion.

QUALITY

To increase quality of outputs, training and retraining of teachers needs to take place and delays and shortages of materials should be reduced.

- **Training and retraining of more teachers needs to be conducted** given they are mostly not specialized and there is high turnover. **If there is limited funding for the program, the focus should be on teacher development and retention because they often have the largest impact on learning outcomes.**
- **Delays need to be avoided for future programs** as much as possible as they are multiplied even further when working across islands with many hard to reach areas and further compounded by other delays and challenges at the local level. Delays in procurement and distribution of RKS and CBA tools resulted in tools being received well into the academic year and not being used in several cases.

“According to teachers, the duration of trainings on CBA methods was short. The second point is that we do not have sufficient space for the proper storage of pedagogic tools. Also there are no billboards for the illustrations in classrooms while it is a very important tool.”

Implementing partner

SUSTAINABILITY

Integrate solutions to address the systemic challenges in the Comorian context as they have a huge impact on program delivery.

While some challenges are systemic, a program such as this one will have to support functions that might not be directly tied to program outcomes: In particular to increase sustainability, funding needs to help ensure that:

- **Teacher salaries are paid.** With teachers not having been paid their salaries for over three months and going on strike, the program is at risk given teachers are the main implementers nationwide of the program.
- **The project benefits from ongoing supervision.** Supervision of the program is difficult given supervisors are not well equipped or well-funded to visit schools that in many cases are very far and remote. Pedagogical supervisors and directors need to be empowered to facilitate and implement key activities relevant for such projects. Such support includes but is not limited to logistical support to ensure supervisors can get to the different schools periodically.
- **Materials are reprinted and renewed.** The Ministry of Education did not have sufficient resources for the printing and renewing of tools provided during the early stage of the program. If a program is able to provide materials initially, but a few years later there are no new materials for newer students and teachers, it is highly likely that schools will not be able to implement the program. It was also mentioned as a key need for disciplinary commissions to be well trained to make future editions of textbooks that are currently being used as part of CBA program.
- **Island ministries of education are equipped to adequately engage in program implementation.** The Ndzouani Ministry of Education offices had no power during all three visits in the course of one week to the offices. Capacity and resource constraints identified in the different islands need to be addressed to ensure program activities are carried out adequately.
- **School infrastructure is safe for children.** The physical design of buildings and landscaping needs to be safe. During the field visits, some schools were found to be dangerous for the young age group in RKS. **While excessive spending on infrastructure is not necessary because it does not have a demonstrated effect on outcomes, it is important to create a safe environment for children.**
- **Ongoing funding for the program is secured.** The program does not benefit from a fundraising strategy for CBA and RKT inputs, e.g., materials, training, and infrastructure. This is a direct threat to the sustainability of such a program. In addition to outreach to traditional donors and other private foundations, innovate financing mechanisms should be considered such as social impact bonds.

“We cannot say there is really a partnership strategy but the government is making efforts to attract donors. They approached many other donors such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia, private foundations working in the construction of classrooms, but it's a bit scattered, there is no fundraising strategy.”

Key stakeholder

“From 2011 we have completely switched to the RKT and we completely stopped printing the CBA tools. So from 2011 until now there has been no project to support us in the scaling of the CBA. It is now that we have begun to focus on textbooks with GPE (Global Partnership for Education) project but they are unable to print all the tools and textbooks for all students and all teachers. ”

Key stakeholder

VI. IMPLICATIONS ON THE THEORY OF CHANGE

This section provides guidance on considerations going forward for interventions in Early Childhood Development (ECD) in developing or low-income countries. Given the context mentioned above as well as the analysis from this evaluation, Dubai Cares has achieved results that have an impact on the improvement of quality and access to basic education in particular for vulnerable groups. These achievements informed the formulation of a Theory of Change to continue to increase impact on ECD throughout the developing world.

IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF ECD

Early childhood is the most effective and cost-efficient way to ensure that all children develop their full potential. The returns on investment in ECD are substantial and ECD interventions and programs can improve children's cognitive, social and emotional development and school readiness.

The 2011 Lancet Series on ECD calculated the economic effect of preschool enrolment – just one component of a comprehensive ECD agenda – on reducing the schooling gap showing a benefit of USD\$10.6 billion by increasing preschool enrolment to 25% in all low-income and middle-income countries, and USD\$33.7 billion by increasing preschool enrolment to 50%, with a benefit-to-cost ratio from 6.4 to 17.6 – one of the best returns on investment.¹⁴

Unless governments and developing partners allocate more resources to quality ECD programs in low-income countries, economic disparities and inequity will continue to increase. According to the Thematic Consultation on Education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda, investment in young children must be a cornerstone of national government policies, development cooperation, global frameworks and responsible business practices.

ECD GAPS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Children in the poorest households are less likely than children in the richest households to attend early childhood education programs. In 2012, less than 50%¹⁵ of children aged three-five were attending early childhood education programs in a majority of developing countries or areas. 57% of young children in developing countries have no access to preschool – 83% in Sub-Saharan Africa and 78% in the Arab region.¹⁶ In 28 developing countries assessed by UNICEF in 2012, less than half of children are developmentally on track in literacy-numeracy. In addition to health, nutrition and protection issues faced by children in developing countries, the statistics above show clearly the existing gap in terms of ECD policies and initiatives in developing countries and particularly for poorest people.

There are multiple root causes for these gaps, ranging from lack of financial and human resources, poor understanding of the importance of ECD, economic crises, competing budgetary needs, and resistance among stakeholders to change the traditional approach to administering and delivering comprehensive services for children and families. A large proportion of families are also unaware of the benefits of high-quality ECD services, or face socioeconomic barriers such as cultural attitudes and inability to pay fees, which prevent them from enrolling their children in ECD programs.

¹⁴ Engle P.L., Fernald L.C., Alderman H, Behrman J, O'Gara C, Yousafzai A, de Mello M.C., Hidrobo M, Ulkuer N, Ertem I, Iltus S; Global Child Development Steering Group. Strategies for reducing inequalities and improving developmental outcomes for young children in low-income and middle-income countries. *The Lancet*. 2011 Oct 8; 378(9799):1339-5.

¹⁵ Unicef, MICS4

¹⁶ The Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development, *The Importance of Early Childhood Development to Education*, 2013

DUBAI CARES' VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES¹⁷

Dubai Cares envisions breaking the cycle of poverty by ensuring all children have access to quality primary education. Dubai Cares affirms and promotes seven fundamental principles:

- Leading global efforts in ensuring children's access to quality primary education in developing countries regardless of their gender, ethnicity or religion
- Recognizing education as the best long-term solution to global poverty
- Being comprehensive in scope, the philanthropic organization's primary education programs integrate four key components: School Infrastructure; School Health & Nutrition; Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) in Schools; and Quality of Education.
- Approaching programs with an innovative entrepreneurial spirit
- Actively engaging with international aid and development agencies to implement comprehensive development programs that promote an integrated approach towards education and ensure long-term and sustainable impact
- Mobilizing the UAE's corporate, business and social communities toward proactive global citizenship

Working towards achieving, by 2015, the United Nations Millennium Development (UN MDG) Goals 2 and 3 of guaranteeing universal primary education and promoting gender equality, respectively. Dubai Cares is also helping forge a global partnership for development, as indicated by UN MDG 8. Dubai Cares strongly believes that "education is not only an essential right of every child, but also an irrevocable asset. Education is a critical factor in every child's physical and intellectual development, and is one of the most effective tools to break the cycle of poverty. To uphold this belief, Dubai Cares delivers integrated evidence-based primary education programs through strategic partnerships, benefiting millions of children around the world. To date, Dubai Cares is reaching 10 million children in 35 developing countries, far exceeding their initial target of 1 million children".

DUBAI CARES' THEORY OF CHANGE

Dubai Cares' vision for ECD through education programs is guided by two principles:

- **Equity** in education has two dimensions. The first is fairness, which implies ensuring that personal and social circumstances – for example gender, socio-economic status or ethnic origin – should not be an obstacle to achieve educational potential. The second is inclusion, which implies ensuring a basic minimum standard of education for all – for example, that everyone should be able to read, write and do simple arithmetic. The two dimensions are closely intertwined; tackling school failure helps to overcome the effects of social deprivation which often causes school failure¹⁸.
- **Quality** in education rests on five pillars: (i) learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities; (ii) environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities; (iii) content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy and numeracy, and knowledge of key topics relating to gender, health, nutrition, etc.; (iv) processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities; (v) outcomes

¹⁷ <http://www.dubaicarees.ae/>

¹⁸ *No More Failures: Ten Steps to Equity in Education*, OECD (2007)

that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

To reach quality and equity standards described below, and more generally for the successful development and implementation of ECD policies in developing countries a number of pre-conditions need to be met:

- Detailed assessment of local needs, capacities and circumstances to get a sense of actors, systems and mechanisms on which to rely
- Involvement of representatives from relevant ministries / sectors / organizations early on and throughout the planning process
- Investment in building and supporting subnational and local governance structures
- Early investment in capacity building of key decision makers and stakeholders to establish a team with joint vision
- Establishment of the core team with common goals and objectives, clear coordination and communication chain, strong leadership
- Well-developed monitoring systems in place to track programs achievements and impact

To create these pre-conditions, funding partners should consider the following actions:

- Technical assistance and investment in developing the capacity of policy makers and implementers to develop ECD policies and implementation plans that include costing and partnership strategies
- A clear and constant strategy of communication and information before, during and after implementation
- ECD M&E systems with a core set of ECD indicators that could be tracked (at local, national, regional, and if possible at global levels)
- Involvement of the most marginalized children and their families
- A SWOT analysis of different ECD policy approach to assess the potential impact of different implementation models, according to particularities of implementation contexts

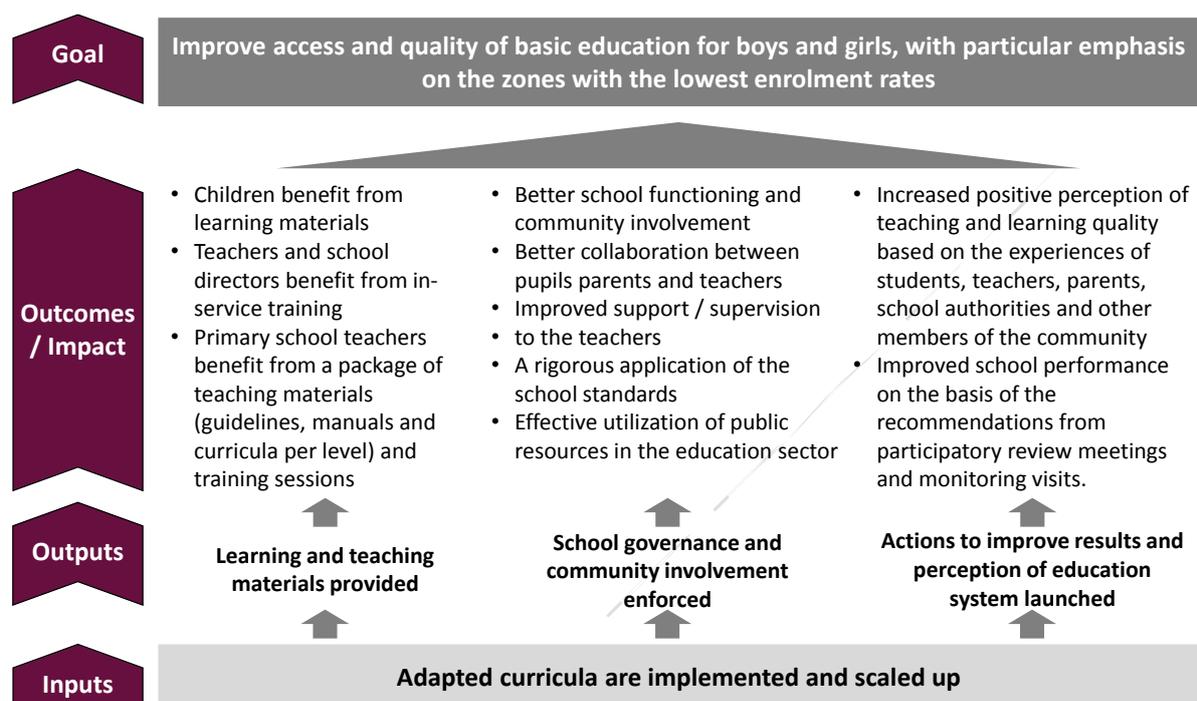
In addition to implementing the actions above for creating pre-conditions for successful ECD initiatives, interventions in developing countries could be approached through a theory of change that could demonstrate the translation of inputs into overall development impacts via a number of primary channels defined by a linked set of outputs and outcomes for both primary and pre-primary educations, taking in account both the equity and quality axes.

A range of partners and actors are implementing programs to improve access and quality of education for vulnerable children and their families. As research continues to demonstrate the relationship between ECD and long-term socioeconomic indicators of positive growth and development, many efforts are focusing on children aged three-eight. But in developing countries high costs of pre-primary education render it accessible only to the richest families. That is the reason why Dubai Cares found a way to create connections between pre-primary and primary education that is successful in improving both access and quality.

As one of the key successes of the Comorian experience is the fact that Renovated Koranic preschools are implemented in primary schools, a link will be always found between pre-primary and primary education contents and objectives to better ensure the continuity of school programs from one level to another, and then to maintain enrolled children at school for years. For this, programs should

facilitate collaboration between early childhood and elementary teachers; create and sustain mechanisms for cross-sector collaboration that include an intentional focus on linking early childhood and primary education; foster relationships among and between families and teachers setting over early childhood and elementary frameworks; engage reforms and initiatives focused on creating, sustaining, and scaling up those links; ensure that early childhood and elementary settings intentionally foster smooth and effective transitions through their physical design or use of space, curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and community engagement practices.

At the primary education level:



At the pre-primary education level:



In summary, when implementing new programs, one can build on the five following elements:

1. **Context:** Improve the political context that surrounds the program to produce the policy and funding changes needed to create and sustain the program
2. **Components:** Implement high-performance programs / contents and services to produce results for children and their families
3. **Linkages:** Create strong and active connexions across system levels that further improve results for children and their families
4. **Facilities:** Build / renovate high quality facilities to reach end-beneficiaries' needs
5. **Scale up:** Ensure a comprehensive system is available to as many people as possible, that can survive partners' retirement

VII. IMMEDIATE AREAS OF POSSIBLE SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION IN COMOROS

As Dubai Cares has continued discussions with other potential funders for potential support to the education sector in Comoros, below are some discrete areas in which interventions can take place:

- **Direct budgetary support:** With the Comorian government struggling with basic requirements such as paying teachers' salaries or providing reliable power to the different islands, there are several opportunities for other funders to support the budgets of the Ministry of Education or other relevant ministries.
- **Technical assistance to the Government and the Ministry of Education in particular:** Due to low capacity and related challenges, the Comorian government has not put in place a fundraising strategy for CBA and RKT inputs, e.g., for materials, training, and infrastructure. Technical assistance in the form usually used by JICA – long term secondments of relevant individuals to Government ministries would be highly valuable. An individual or two working at the Ministry of Education and focusing on partnership building, proposal writing, etc. would be useful.
- **Training:** With a shortage of teachers trained in RKT and the need to retrain existing teachers given the growing demand for RKT, this is an important area for potential support
- **Production and renewal of tools and materials:** The Ministry of Education has continually struggled to print sufficient resources for both the CBA and RKT programs. There are opportunities for potential funders to contribute to this aspect.
- **Expansion of the RKT program and all its components to new schools:** With increasing demand for RKT, new RKS need to be set up to reach even more children. For each RKS significant inputs are required in the form of infrastructure, furniture, teaching and learning materials
- **Addition of new components to the RKT program for a holistic approach to ECD:** Certain components could be added to the RKT program to ensure the physical, emotional and psychological well-being of children. Such components include provision of free meals to children, literacy and childcare training for parents, community events focusing on awareness against violence at home and child labor, etc.
- **Supervision and monitoring:** Supervision of the program is difficult given supervisors are not well equipped or well-funded to visit schools that in many cases are very far and remote. Direct support can be offered for the logistical components of the program.

VIII. ANNEXES

COMPARISON OF DUBAI CARES' EXPERIENCE WITH RKS IN COMOROS AND AGA KHAN FOUNDATION'S EXPERIENCE IN ZANZIBAR

Considering that Zanzibar and Comoros have a very similar profile - Islands nations with a rich history and unique cultures (Islamic, African, Arabic and Indian), there is an opportunity for cross-learning from Dubai Cares' experience in Comoros and Aga Khan Foundation's (AKF) experience in Zanzibar in respect to RKS.

While the two programs are similar in terms of using customized materials that integrate basic education with religious education and teaching in local languages (Swahili in Zanzibar and Shikomori in Comoros), there are some key differences between the two.

- **In terms of project origination AKF's activities in Zanzibar started as a result of strong local community interest in broadening education**¹⁹. As such once the project began there was less resistance from religious leaders as was seen in Comoros. During the establishment of AKF's Madrasa program in Mombasa, Kenya in 1989, community and religious leaders in Zanzibar heard about the program and expressed interest in visiting and replicating it in Zanzibar, which has a 95% Muslim population²⁰. AKF did however face some resistance from religious leaders when setting up in Mombasa given that this was the first time such a program was being ran in the area. Subsequent locations – including Zanzibar though there was less resistance as word had spread from Mombasa about the positive effect the program was having on children. As such, the resistance that RKT has faced in some parts of Comoros can be expected to decrease as the program's success spreads.
- **In addition, significant preparatory work took place before AKF started its program in Zanzibar and other locations in East Africa**²¹. The key objective of a **first preparatory phase** was to increase community ownership of the preschools. This included community sensitization and mobilization from assessing community needs, to selecting a School Management Committee, registering the school with the relevant ministry, enrolling children, recruiting teachers and developing school infrastructure. In the **second phase** the Community Development Officer, the Community Resource Team (made up of the appointed head teacher, a second recognised lead teacher and a local person trained to be the Community Mobiliser) and Parent Support groups were formed to support the preschools. Once the schools had met a set of criteria in the contract regarding community involvement, teaching and learning environment and management, they moved to the **third stage**, "post-graduation", where they continued to receive ongoing support and training to ensure sustainability.
- **Madrasa Resource Centers (MRCs) ensure sustainability by providing ongoing support to the preschools.** MRC's mandate includes empowering and supporting communities to initiate and own community based ECD centres, and develop training methodologies, teaching programs and manuals. Effectively the MRCs serve as a hub supporting the different preschools. In Zanzibar, MRC activities have included mobilizing parents for the construction and operation of schools, and training community members as RKT teachers.

¹⁹ http://www.akdn.org/publications/case_study_zanzibar_education.pdf

²⁰ The Madrasa Early Childhood Programme: 25 Years of Experience, AKF 2008

²¹ http://blogs.tc.columbia.edu/transitions/files/2010/09/61.East-Africa-Madrasa-Program_profile.pdf

- **Koranic preschools are community owned and managed in AKF's Madrasa program versus directly integrated into schools as in the Dubai Cares-supported program in Comoros.** The AKF model also establishes linkages between preschool and primary school teachers to ease children's transition. These include joint transition workshops for preschool and primary school teachers. At these workshops, teams of teachers discuss early transition issues and develop plans to be implemented in their respective programs. As such, even though the program is outside of the formal education system, it is closely linked for easier transition.
- **Teachers used by AKF are trained from the local community as opposed to teachers in the Comoros RKT program who are regular teachers that are trained on RKT. Training of these teachers is also much longer than that for teachers under the Comoros program.** The training, which typically lasts two years under the AKF Madrasa program, includes classroom practice, development of teaching aids from locally available materials and administrative skills such as record keeping, management and planning. Training takes place both at the Madrasa Resource Centres and on site. Training in the program is not only limited to teachers, but also extended to include modules for the school committee members.
- **AKF has been able to attract additional funders to the Madrasa programme by incorporating aspects such as health and nutrition, parenting, and HIV/AIDS, into the Madrasa model.** Such funders include USAID, CIDA, the European Union, World Bank and The Bernard Van Leer Foundation. Through these partnerships, AKF has been able to increase financial sustainability of the MRC's and further engage the communities by incorporating support in broader development needs.
- **Despite not being formally integrated into the formal education system in Zanzibar, AKF's success is leading to Ministerial changes that could see two years of preschool being formally included in the education cycle.** While specifics in terms of implementation remain to be finalized, this progress offers the MRC in Zanzibar new opportunities to engage with government and influence education policy.

VISUAL HIGHLIGHTS

Figure 26: Picture of Moya 1 school compound, Ndzouani



Figure 27: Roof falling apart in Jimlime school, RKS class, Ndzouani



Figure 28: RKS in Mbatse, Mwali



Figure 29: Boys playing outside the class, Shitsangani, Ndzouani



LIST OF SELECTED SCHOOLS

#	School	Island	Type	Pedagogical Zone
1	Mde	Ngazidja	Rural	BAMBAO
2	Ikoni 1	Ngazidja	Urban	BAMBAO
3	Vouvouni	Ngazidja	Rural	BAMBAO
4	Nioumadzaha	Ngazidja	Rural	BAMBAO
5	Mkazi	Ngazidja	Rural	BAMBAO
6	Mvouni	Ngazidja	Rural	BAMBAO
7	Moindzaza Mboini	Ngazidja	Rural	BAMBAO
8	Application	Ngazidja	Urban	MORONI
9	Djomani	Ngazidja	Urban	MORONI
10	Mboueni	Ngazidja	Rural	MORONI
11	Coulee 1	Ngazidja	Urban	MORONI
12	Coule 2	Ngazidja	Urban	MORONI
13	Ahal Souhna	Ngazidja	Urban	MORONI
14	ENOUMECO	Ngazidja	Rural	MORONI
15	Itsinkoundi	Ngazidja	Rural	WASHI DIMANI
16	Koimbani	Ngazidja	Urban	WASHI DIMANI
17	Ntsorale	Ngazidja	Rural	WASHI DIMANI
18	Mboude	Ngazidja	Rural	WASHI DIMANI
19	Idjinkoundzi	Ngazidja	Rural	WASHI DIMANI
20	Vanadjou	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA1
21	Sambabodoni	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA1
22	Sambakouni	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA1
23	Dimadjou	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA1
24	Batsa	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA1
25	Ntsoudjini	Ngazidja	Urban	ITSANDRA1
26	Hatsambou	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA1
27	Itsandra Mdjini	Ngazidja	Urban	ITSANDRA1
28	Bandamadji	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA1
29	Dzahani 2	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA1
30	Tsidje	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA1
31	Hahaya	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA1
32	Mbangani	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA1
33	Salimani	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA2
34	Mitsoudje	Ngazidja	Urban	ITSANDRA2
35	Singani	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA2
36	Mdjoiezi	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA2
37	Djoumoichongo	Ngazidja	Rural	ITSANDRA2
38	Mitsamihouli Dima	Ngazidja	Urban	MITSAMIHULI
39	Dzaoudze	Ngazidja	Rural	MITSAMIHULI

EVALUATION OF DUBAI CARES' SUPPORT TO QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION IN COMOROS ISLANDS

#	School	Island	Type	Pedagogical Zone
40	Ntsadjeni	Ngazidja	Rural	MITSAMIHULI
41	Bangoikouni	Ngazidja	Rural	MITSAMIHULI
42	Ouella	Ngazidja	Rural	MITSAMIHULI
43	Ivoini	Ngazidja	Rural	MITSAMIHULI
44	Menboidjou	Ngazidja	Rural	MITSAMIHULI
45	Ouzio	Ngazidja	Rural	MITSAMIHULI
46	Batsa	Ngazidja	Rural	MBOUDE
47	Djomani	Ngazidja	Rural	MBOUDE
48	Douniani	Ngazidja	Rural	MBOUDE
49	Mandza	Ngazidja	Rural	MBOUDE
50	Maoueni	Ngazidja	Rural	MBOUDE
51	Ivembeni	Ngazidja	Rural	MBOUDE
52	Djongwe	Ngazidja	Rural	MBOUDE
53	Helendje	Ngazidja	Rural	HAMAHAME
54	Chezani	Ngazidja	Rural	HAMAHAME
55	Nioumamilima	Ngazidja	Rural	HAMAHAME
56	Heroumbili	Ngazidja	Rural	HAMAHAME
57	Shitsangani	Ndzouani	Urban	MUTSAMUDU
58	Hampanganga	Ndzouani	Urban	MUTSAMUDU
59	Wemani	Ndzouani	Urban	MUTSAMUDU
60	Misiri Mnyambaju	Ndzouani	Urban	MUTSAMUDU
61	Shirokomba	Ndzouani	Rural	MUTSAMUDU
62	Shirundani 1	Ndzouani	Urban	DOMONI
63	Fukuju 1	Ndzouani	Urban	DOMONI
64	Hadjoho	Ndzouani	Rural	DOMONI
65	Koni ngani	Ndzouani	Rural	DOMONI
66	Jimlime	Ndzouani	Rural	DOMONI
67	Magnassini	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
68	Bandrkouni	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
69	Mremani	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
70	Ongojou	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
71	Comoni	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
72	Mrijou	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
73	Kiyo	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
74	Sandampoini	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
75	Mramani Tereni	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
76	Mnadzichoumw	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
77	Hamchako	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
78	Adda	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
79	Nyamboimr	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE
80	Dziani	Ndzouani	Rural	NUYMAKELE

EVALUATION OF DUBAI CARES' SUPPORT TO QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION IN COMOROS ISLANDS

#	School	Island	Type	Pedagogical Zone
81	Msirojou	Ndzouani	Rural	WANI
82	Mugujou	Ndzouani	Rural	WANI
83	Patsy	Ndzouani	Rural	WANI
84	Koki	Ndzouani	Rural	WANI
85	Barakani	Ndzouani	Rural	WANI
86	Bazimini 1	Ndzouani	Rural	WANI
87	Bazimini 2	Ndzouani	Rural	WANI
88	Nyantranga	Ndzouani	Rural	WANI
89	Vouani	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
90	Moya 1	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
91	Pomoni	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
92	Nindri	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
93	Lingoni	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
94	Dzindri	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
95	Boungueni	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
96	Mbibodjou	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
97	Bimbini	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
98	Kavani	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
99	Marahare	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
100	Mirongani	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
101	Dar-Salama	Ndzouani	Rural	SIMA
102	Djoiezi	Mwali	Urban	DEWA MWAMBAO
103	Fomboni Salamani	Mwali	Urban	DEWA MWAMBAO
104	Fomboni Centre	Mwali	Urban	DEWA MWAMBAO
105	Mbatsé	Mwali	Rural	DEWA MWAMBAO
106	Hoani	Mwali	Rural	DEWA MWAMBAO
107	Barakani	Mwali	Rural	DJANDRO MLEDJELE
108	Miringoni	Mwali	Rural	DJANDRO MLEDJELE
109	Ndrondroni	Mwali	Rural	DJANDRO MLEDJELE
110	Wanani	Mwali	Rural	DJANDRO MLEDJELE