

UNDP Brief
Sensitization Workshop on Trade Capacity Development in Comoros,
Moroni, Comoros, 21-22 March 2006

Background and objectives

The background to this initiative was a request to UNDP from the Government of the Union of Comoros to organize an inter-agency national sensitization event on trade capacity development. The request was made by the Government in the context of its efforts to reverse Comoros' relative isolation and promote integrative measures including through participation in IF. The request was formally noted by the IF Working Group (IFWG) in April 2005.

This event took the form of a two-day seminar and the agreed objectives were:

1. To inform, sensitize and engage stakeholders from government, the private sector and civil society on the positive role that trade can play in the country's development and poverty reduction efforts, focusing on specific economic sectors of interest such as agro-processing, tourism and fishing;
2. To introduce the Integrated Framework (IF) including institutional and participatory requirements essential for national ownership, without prejudice to any decision on Comoros' entry into the IF.

Participation

Some 50 participants from relevant ministries and stakeholders from the private sector and civil society from the three islands that make up the Union of Comoros attended the two-day seminar. This also facilitated inter-Union dialogue.

Besides UNDP, the seminar representatives of UNCTAD, the World Bank and WTO as well as FAO served as resource persons.

The Comoros Vice-president, the Economic Minister and the UNDP Resident Representative/UN Resident Coordinator opened the seminar and also provided concluding observations at the closing ceremony.

Outcome

The objectives of the seminar were fully achieved as demonstrated by the active involvement of participants and by the feedback that was received at the end of the seminar. This confirmed a general appreciation for the seminar. In addition, Comoros received encouragement from the presence of representatives of five agencies (UNCTAD, WTO, FAO, WB and UNDP), a rare event for an isolated country.