

Government of Mozambique launches a new Swiss-funded project to support local governments in financing local resilient development in Niassa province

- With technical assistance provided by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the Embassy of Switzerland in Mozambique increases its support to decentralization and sustainable and climate-resilient development in the country through an additional US\$5 million project in Niassa Province.

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LICHINGA, Mozambique – With support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Government of Mozambique launched yesterday, 26 October, the “Support Programme to Local Governments on Financing Local Resilient Development” in Niassa Province. The US\$5 million project will make financing available for locally led development and inclusive governance in three districts of the Northern Province, reaching approx. 600,000 beneficiaries with climate adaptive services.

“Our Partners recognize that local governments are uniquely positioned to identify local needs and further promote inclusive socio-economic development”, affirmed H.E. Secretary of State for Niassa Province, Mr. Dinis Vilanculos.

“Given the limited financial resources necessary to adequately fulfill the obligations and tasks defined in the decentralization policy, the support of this project is, without a doubt, a window of opportunities and encouragement to local governments to do more and better”, he said.

The project is part of Switzerland’s comprehensive and long-term US\$ 26 million commitment to the Government and people of Mozambique in the frame of a new programme known as “decentralization for inclusive development”, which supports the Mozambican decentralization reform. It complements a ‘Good Financial Governance’ programme that aims at supporting the improvement of financial governance processes in nine municipalities, four of them in Niassa and five in Nampula Provinces. The “Good Financial Governance” Programme is co-financed and implemented by the German Development Cooperation Agency (GIZ).

“By putting the voices, knowledge and needs of communities at the heart of decentralized governance, local governments can manage climate resilient investments, based on the needs and demand of users, that is the objective of the program that Switzerland is supporting” - Director of the SDC Governance Unit in Mozambique, Mr. Jean-Mathieu Bloch.

Using UNCDF’s development finance approach and in partnership with the Ministry of State Administration and Public Service and the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the programme will enhance inclusive governance and promote local resilience by

providing capacity building and technical assistance to local governments and local consultative councils so that communities can actively participate in planning, budgeting, and other local governance processes in a gender-sensitive manner.

“Ensuring the deliverance of responsive public services; reducing inequality; and improving living conditions of people, families and communities will be only possible with the close articulation of planning and budgeting exercises between municipalities, district authorities and civil society. We want to see synergies fully exploited” said Mr. Domingos Lambo, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

In his turn, Ramon Cervera, UNCDF Representative, remembered that “Mozambique is one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change”. Over the past three years, six tropical cyclones (Desmond, Idai, Kenneth, Chalane, Eloise and Guambe) have caused human and material damage.

“This locally led development initiative will reward with capital grants to those local governments performing well in matters related to local governance, the management of public financial resources and infrastructure development investments for local adaptation”, said Mr. Ramon Cervera.

In addition to UNCDF, the program has as implementing partners the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) covering the four municipalities and the NGO United Purpose (UP), which will focus on strengthening mechanisms for dialogue and citizen participation.

The Embassy of Switzerland in Mozambique will continue to promote decentralization as a key to achieving long-term stability, inclusive development and social responsibility in support of the Government and people of Mozambique.