



# Resilient Cities Action Package (ReCAP21), Mauritania

## Resilient Cities Action Package

### Background & Relevance

Around the world, cities are fighting the pandemic against a backdrop of multiple existing shocks and stresses, and emerging vulnerabilities, while striving to put equity, economy, and climate action at the centre of their recovery approaches. As cities plan for recovery and investment in key services and infrastructure, they must also address the underlying stresses exposed by the pandemic.

Smart, green investments and interventions with resilience principles in mind can create a triple dividend: helping cities boost their economies; promote sustainability; and strengthen communities. The Resilient Cities Action Package (ReCAP21) therefore supports selected cities in Bangladesh, Rwanda and Mauritania on their way to a green and resilient recovery.

Located in Mauritania, Sebka, one of Nouakchott's most densely populated urban communes, was heavily hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, partly because of insufficient access to basic services such as water and sanitation. The pandemic revealed a general lack of organisation and coordination between the city administration and its citizens. In addition, in the arid landscape of Mauritania, there is a need for more green spaces and an increased awareness of ecological values and their social benefits.

Therefore, three measures were identified within ReCAP21: The creation of a network of "chefs de quartier" for better coordination in the event of crises (e.g. floodings), an urban greening project at one of Sebka's main roads and the construction of a biodiversity garden in an elementary school. This mix of direct Covid-response measures to long-term goals will contribute to increasing the city's resilience.

### ReCAP21 Objectives

Selected cities are better able to implement plans and measures for a resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Increase the capacity for combatting future public health threats (including primary health care, health management, public life)
- Identify priority recovery action packages (short- and medium-term planning) cross-sectorally with high resilience value
- Support the implementation of small-scale measures (with positive reciprocal effects between pandemic resilience and ecological, social, economic goals)
- Global knowledge exchange on resilient recovery in cities

### Duration

April - December 2021

### Funding

ReCAP is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) with 1 million Euro from its special fund to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic in partner countries.

### Implementing Partners

The Sector Project Cities is working with these partners to implement ReCAP21 on the ground:

- Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI)
- Resilient Cities Network (R-Cities)
- Cities Alliance
- GIZ Mauritania

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## Activities on the city level

Implementation of green recovery measures already identified in Sebkh's sustainable development plan 2020-23, (elaborated in 2020 with GIZ support).

### Urban greening

To improve the microclimate and increase the attractiveness of the community, about 150 trees of local species are to be planted along a 750m long section of one of Sebkh's main roads. The activity is being implemented by a NGO from the environmental sector that has a lot of experience with reforestation. The latter is planting the trees and will be responsible for short-term maintenance. Their job is also to sensitize local populations on the advantages of green spaces (air quality, shade, lower air temperatures) and to communicate on the project. In the long term, the municipality will take over the maintenance of the trees. If desired by the municipality, benches will be installed to create public spaces where citizens can meet and exchange.

### Biodiversity garden

A biodiversity garden of 200m<sup>2</sup> is being established in one of the biggest public primary schools of the municipality benefitting more than 370 students. It will serve as a firsthand example to show children the diversity of local agricultural plants and how to cultivate them.

## Imprint

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Sector Project Cities  
G 430 Cities  
Global and Sector Projects Department (GloBe)  
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32 and 36  
53113 Bonn  
Germany

T +49 228 44 60 - 3741  
E [felix.doehler@giz.de](mailto:felix.doehler@giz.de)  
I [www.giz.de](http://www.giz.de)

To illustrate this, smaller environmental education measures are to be organized with other primary schools of the community, so that the measures reach up to 3300 students. All necessary construction measures are being carried out by the municipality. The establishment of the garden is being implemented by a subcontractor, as in the case of tree planting. The environmental education measures will also be implemented externally in cooperation with the CorMCT project.

### Neighborhood committees

In each neighborhood of the municipality of Sebkh, a neighborhood committee with a "neighborhood president" are being designated in a participatory process through citizens. For doing so, the city administration together with GIZ Mauritania divided the municipality of around 127000 inhabitants into 50 districts and coordinated with a network of volunteers to find for each neighborhood a representative committee. The members of the committees will receive detailed instructions on their role, a briefing on disaster risk response and a small equipment to fulfill their duty. Their task is to coordinate specific needs and actions with the municipality in the event of crises (e.g. floods, third wave of Covid-19), which will allow the municipality to respond more quickly and efficiently to crisis situations.

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