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Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development



Comoros

5-Year Action Plan to Fight Avoidable Blindness
2nd Generation

Why is the Need so Urgent?

The Alliance to Fight Avoidable Blindness (AFAB) is a partnership program launched by the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) in 2008, with the aim of using South-South partnerships to prevent and cure vision problems, giving people not just the gift of sight, but a path out of poverty. The first generation had a tremendous success with thousands of people having their vision restored through successful cataract surgery. This second generation (AFAB II) ramps up the scale, targeting more eye conditions, building capacity in more countries. AFAB II is led by the IsDB and the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD).

Some Alarming Eye Health Facts from Comoros



5,40% OF PEOPLE OVER 50 are affected by blindness and **14,9% LIVE WITH LOW VISION**



The **CATARACT** is the first cause of blindness



The **CATARACT SURGICAL** rate is **208 PER MILLION** inhabitants, among the lowest in Africa.



The prevalence of **DIABETIC RETINOPATHY** is **UNKNOWN**.



The Opportunity

The Government of Comoros has set up a National Program for Control of Blindness within the Ministry of Health and is taking tangible steps to expand access to eye care services across the country. However, as a low-income country, Comoros is still facing major challenges for the eye care services. Only one (1) of practicing ophthalmologists can provide surgical care. Comoros's eye health system is still not yet operating to their full potential.

National Program for Control of Blindness (PNLC) with technical and financial support from the IsDB and

ISFD - has developed an Action Plan for eye health based on the lessons learnt from the past. With our new Action Plan and the support of AFAB, we will make a significant contribution to:

- Train eye health professionals;
- Increase the reach of cataract surgical services;
- Pilot school eye health programs;
- Develop referral systems and national specialist centers to deal with glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy;
- Improve the quality of eye care service delivery;

Our vision is crystal clear: each Comorian will have access to quality comprehensive eye health services

Did you know that in Comoros there is only 1 local surgeon trained to operate on cataracts? Did you know that the cataract surgical rate is 208 per million inhabitants, among the lowest in Africa? We have high hopes, as we know that nearly 80% of the world's blindness can be prevented or easily cured. We could,

with good planning and adequate resources, improve the situation and allow access to quality eye care at national level.

Taking a System-Strengthening Approach

To stimulate a lasting change for individuals and for generations to come, we look beyond the visible symptoms and tackle the root causes of the country's fragile eye health system. Our aim to develop a comprehensive eye care, bring services to the people, train human resources for eye health and

strengthen the overall system by investing in equipment and promoting the integration of eye health within the general health system. We believe that realizing this vision requires investments in the following areas:



With your Contribution you Can:



Join an international Alliance to Fight Avoidable Blindness (AFAB)



Help Ministries of Health in the poorest countries in Africa build robust eye health systems



Enable millions of people to lead an independent life



Give people access to locally produced glasses



Help in the diagnosis of eyesight problems and stop preventable blindness before it's too late



Enable hospitals and clinics gain access to the right equipment, trained nurses and eye health personnel to give the best possible treatment



Give over a million people access to their own ophthalmologists who speak their own language

Do you think I will recover my eyesight?

THABITI HALIDI lives in Anjouan “I started getting the first symptoms of blindness from a bilateral cataract 5 years ago. My life has been turned upside down, I had to stay in the house, and I cannot even go to the mosque”.

THABITI has been advised to go to the National Program for Control of Blindness for treatment.







He was diagnosed with cataracts and had surgery in few days.

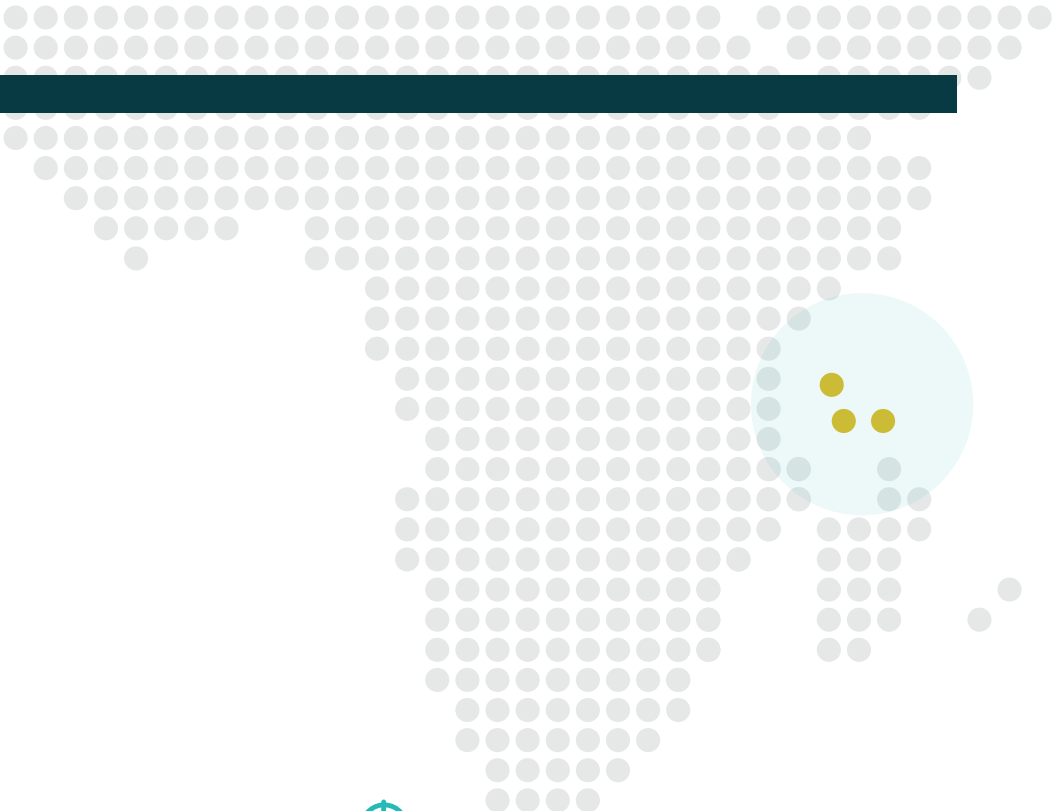
Thabiti describes how he felt after the surgery: “I am old, but I am hard worker man. Now I resumed my work as mason. Alhamdulillah now, I am independent, and I can enjoy reading Coran and go to the mosque alone”.






The Change we Are Seeking

The change we are seeking is reflected in our ambitious five-year AFAB II Action Plan, which addresses these different entry points for change within the following 5 program components:

	 COMPONENT 1 Provision of eye care services with a focus on cataract	 COMPONENT 2 Uncorrected Refractive Errors (URE) treatment	
	The change we are seeking at SERVICE PROVISION LEVEL	All people with cataracts benefit from cataract surgery.	Half of Primary school children are screened and treated for uncorrected refractive errors.
	The change we are seeking at HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT LEVEL	Additional ophthalmologists and ophthalmic technicians provide services to the population of Comoros.	Teachers have the skills to effectively screen and refer school children for refraction.
	The change we are seeking at INFRASTRUCTURE and equipment LEVEL	The tertiary hospital of Moroni is fully equipped	Teachers have basic equipment such as visual acuity charts to screen children
	The change we are seeking at LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND AWARENESS LEVEL	A National Eye Health Strategic Plan is in place.	Decision makers support provision of refractive services in schools
WHAT WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE	OVER 3,500 CATARACT SURGERIES ARE PERFORMED	4,250 CHILDREN IN NEED BENEFIT FROM GLASSES.	



 COMPONENT 3 Glaucoma services	 COMPONENT 4 Diabetic Retinopathy (DR) treatment	 COMPONENT 5 Capacity development as a cross-cutting aspect
<p>More Comorians people have access to specialized glaucoma care.</p>	<p>Screening and treatment of diabetic retinopathy is improved for all people living with diabetes</p>	<p>The overall eye health system is stronger as a result of better training for eye health workers</p> <p>A National Eye Health strategic plan is in place providing strategic direction</p>
<p>3 ophthalmologists are trained as glaucoma specialists. and other eye health workers are trained in glaucoma diagnosis, basic treatment and referral.</p>	<p>2 ophthalmologists are trained as Diabetic Retinopathy specialists</p>	
<p>The tertiary hospital of Moroni is equipped to provide quality treatment services for glaucoma</p>	<p>The tertiary hospital of Moroni is equipped to provide quality treatment services for Diabetic Retinopathy</p>	
<p>A glaucoma reference care unit is adequately set up and ensure it keeps running.</p>	<p>A Diabetic Retinopathy reference care unit is adequately set up and ensure it keeps running.</p>	
<p>A REFERENCE UNIT FOR GLAUCOMA TREATMENT IS IN PLACE.</p>	<p>A REFERENCE UNIT FOR DIABETIC RETINOPATHY TREATMENT IS IN PLACE</p>	<p>THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR EYE HEALTH INTERVENTIONS IS STRENGTHENED.</p>

We Invest our Experience, Expertise and Resources to

1. *Improve the quality of provided services;*
2. *Build up human resources;*
3. *Provide the necessary supporting infrastructure, and*
4. *Foster leadership and governance structures.*



How we will Deliver the AFAB II Objectives

To achieve the changes, we have planned and increase the impact over time, we have a clear strategy and a clear plan to translate our vision into lived reality.



COMPONENT 1

Provision of comprehensive eye health services with a focus on cataracts

ALL PEOPLE WITH CATARACTS BENEFIT FROM CATARACT SURGERY.

- Perform 3,500 cataract surgeries at health facilities and mobile outreach.
- Train at least 3 medical doctors to specialize in ophthalmology.
- Train at least 16 additional ophthalmic technicians.
- Provide training for 3 ophthalmologists in cataract surgery.

REQUIRED BUDGET: USD 586,346.-



COMPONENT 2

Uncorrected Refractive Errors (URE) treatment

HALF OF CHILDREN PRIMARY SCHOOL WILL BE SCREENED

- Screen 85,000 children attending primary schools for refractive errors.
- Provide glasses to 4,250 children in need.
- Train 200 teachers in visual screening and referral techniques.
- Set up at least 2 optical shops.
- Train at least 4 opticians.

REQUIRED BUDGET: USD 287,116.-



COMPONENT 3

Glaucoma services

PEOPLE WITH GLAUCOMA HAVE ACCESS TO SPECIALIZED TREATMENT

- Train 2 glaucoma subspecialists.
- Train 3 ophthalmologists in basic glaucoma management.
- Equip the national hospital El Maâroutf with necessary equipment for glaucoma treatment.

REQUIRED BUDGET: USD 249,599.-



COMPONENT 4

Diabetic Retinopathy (DR) treatment

SCREENING AND TREATMENT OF DIABETIC RETINOPATHY IS IMPROVED FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DIABETE

- Equip the national hospital El Maâroutf with necessary equipment for Diabetic Retinopathy treatment.
- Train 2 Diabetic Retinopathy subspecialists.

REQUIRED BUDGET: USD 168,103.-



COMPONENT 5

Cross-cutting capacity building

A NATIONAL EYE HEALTH STRATEGIC PLAN AND COMMITTEE ARE IN PLACE PROVIDING STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- Finalize the strategic plan to fight avoidable blindness.
- Set up a technical eye health committee.
- Train 1 ophthalmologist and 2 health agents in eye health management.
- Develop a human resources plan.

REQUIRED BUDGET: USD 133,744.-

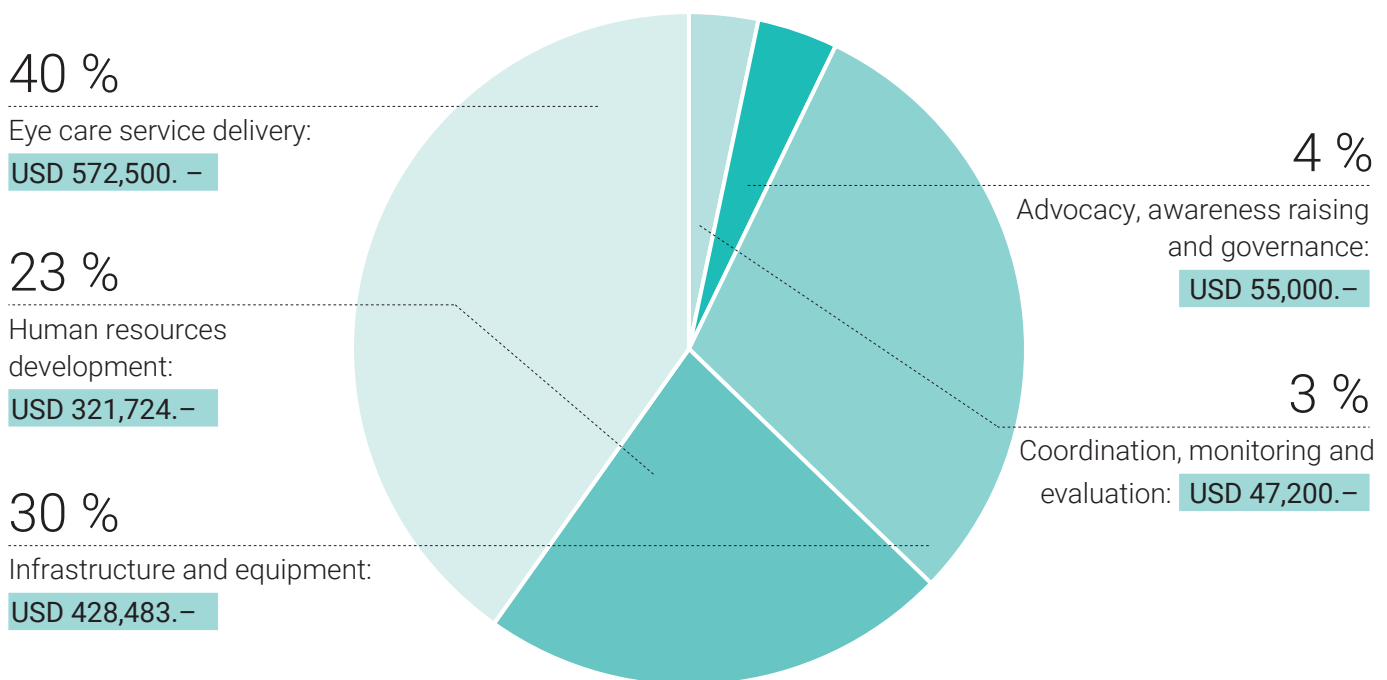
Joining Forces

WE BELIEVE IN PARTNERSHIPS. TOGETHER WE MAKE CHANGE

With the Comorian Government in the driving seat, we are joining forces to expand coverage and quality of eye health services across the country.

Our partners include national ministries, the civil society and community structures, international non-governmental organizations, technical and financial partners, all working together to effectively deliver change.

Total Budget Breakdown



Budget required for Comoros: **USD 1,424,907.-**

The Government of Comoros Commits at least USD 200,000.- to Fund:

- Salaries for ophthalmologists;
- Salaries for eye health technicians;
- Advocacy and awareness raising.

It is an ambitious plan. However, the results will not just be eye-opening, they will be life-changing.

Our Wider Impact

Your support to this Action Plan will directly contribute to our vision that each Comorian shall have access to comprehensive quality eye health services. We therefore invite you to provide the gift of sight to thousands of people. You can help them see a clear path out of poverty. In addition, as part of the second

generation of the Alliance to Fight Avoidable Blindness, the advantage is immense. Through stimulating South-South partnerships, the 13 AFAB II member countries will also benefit, laying the foundations for strong and sustainable eye health services across the African continent.

OUR VISION + YOUR INVESTMENT = **A BRIGHTER FUTURE**





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