

Executive Summary

Circular Economy Marketplace and Repair Hub: Mindelo 2025 - Sustainability and Circular Economy Day

1. Overview of the Climate Action Project (CAP):

The Circular Economy Marketplace & Repair Hub is a sustainability initiative launched in December 2024 in Mindelo, Cape Verde and is being envisioned as a permanent hub over the next five years for eco-friendly products made of upcycled or repaired materials. Initially focused on two workshops, the project expanded to also include artisan engagement, beach cleanups, repair competitions, and one grand workshop. It empowers youth artisans, students, and communities to convert waste into usable products, thereby arousing innovation in upcycling. The initiative is establishing a strong foundation for the long-term impact of the circular economy in Cape Verde through networking, community engagement, and fundraising efforts.

2. Reflection on the CAP Journey

Initial Goals: Organise two workshops —Establish a Circular Economy Hub to empower artisans and reduce waste —Promote awareness through community events focusing on sustainable practice.

Shifts in Goals: In the initial phase of the project, emphasis was on carrying out two workshop sessions for a pilot project as my CAP. However, with increasing interest by partners, and enthusiasm among the community, the project proposed a broader scope that included: Develop a localized team to ensure sustainability —Network to bring artisans together with students in exploring avenues related to upcycling and repair —Organize cleanups to collect waste materials for repurposing —Create long-term partnerships for funding and growth.

2.1 Challenges and how they were overcome

Language Barrier: Barring the big communication difficulties posed by being a non-Portuguese speaker, establishing local partnerships and getting artisans to engage with us remained a challenge. I Overcame this issue by establishing a bilingual team of 7 core members and 5 volunteer, including local citizens, to assist in translation, cultural participation, and outreach.

Cultural event challenge (Carnaval Period throughout February and March where most activities stopped in the cities): Exploited the slowness of festival activities to engage in fundraising, networking, and partnership-forming efforts, leading to new sponsorship and collaboration opportunities.

Little Initial Funding: The financial constraints were addressed by submitting proposals for two international grants, culminating in: **\$100** from Wascal Cabo Verde, UTA workshop space + **\$150**, secured one international grant of **\$4000 from Earth rising foundation**, CNAD-2nd Event Venue and In-kind support from Partners.

2.2 Project Timeline & Process

Foundation & Implementation of the Project: December 2024 - March 2025

December 2024: Project planning, team formation, and following up with potential partners.

January 2025: Awareness campaigns, recruiting artisans, and securing initial funds for the initiative.

February 2025: Field visits to OMCV & Simili and co-organised the first beach cleanup with our partner NGO Biosfera (427 kg of waste collected, images, [post](#)).

March 2025: Awareness campaigns continue and creation the project page ([link](#)); co-organised second beach cleanup with my university UTA also partner (22nd March, images link [images](#)) and engaging more artisans.

May 2025: Grand workshop event showcasing upcycled products.

2.3 Key Learnings

Community Engagement Is Essential: Local artisans and student participants have added much value to this project.

Partnerships Drive Impact: Early collaboration with academic and media partners created credibility and visibility for the project.

Challenges Can Become Opportunities: The Carnival period, initially seen as an obstacle, became a networking opportunity that led to stronger partnerships and funding prospects.

Localized Leadership Is Important: The existence of bilingual workings with local citizens brought about enhanced community engagement and sustainability.

2.4 Impact & Outcomes

Planned Outcomes: Engaged youth artisans and students in upcycling & repair culture, Collected and transformed waste into new products, Created awareness on circular economy principles through events and media campaigns.

Unexpected Outcomes: Stronger-than-expected **partnership engagement** from local institutions, Greater community interest, especially from **young women in sustainability initiatives**, Increased media exposure and public interest in sustainability practices.

2.5 Potential for Ongoing Impact

The project sets the foundation for a long-term circular economy initiative in Mindelo —Scaling to Other Communities: Replicate the initiative in other parts of Cape Verde —it creates a scalable model that can evolve into a permanent eco-marketplace —Policy Advocacy: Engage policymakers to promote circular economy regulations.

10. What I Am Most Proud Of

Raised one international grant of **\$4000**—Transforming difficulties into benefits particularly on leveraging the Carnival period for strategic partnerships —Establishing a solid, bilingual and dedicated team that has an understanding of local context and circular economy principles —Mobilizing community action through beach cleanups, social media awareness, and artisan engagement —Setting a milestone for a five-year vision in making a permanent eco-friendly market in Cape Verde.