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REPORT OF THE DIVISIONS

Report of the Situation in Madagascar*

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REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN MADAGASCAR

The KPMA meeting

After its renewal on 21st March 2001, the National Committee on Geographical Names, Komitim-Pirenena Miandraikitra ny Anarantany (K.P.M.A.), had its first meeting on 25 March 2004.

First contact

Excepted representatives of some ministry who didn't yet proceeded to a designation, the new members of the KPMA met for a first contact.

The information about the activities of the committee took an important place and provoked a great interest of the new members. They asked to be provided of the main documents (decrees, 'Blue book' of the KPMA).

They were conscientised on the extent of works to be undertaken and the necessity of an effective involvement of the stakeholders. The Ministries in late will be reminded.

Importance of names

The Chief of Staff of the Interior Ministry, who is also the Vice-president of the Committee explained that the malagasy word 'anarana' which means 'name' comes from the word 'anatra', which means 'precept' or 'morality'. He underlined the importance of the choice of a name thus because by experience, it is recognized that a name has its direct impact on the character of what it designates. He mentioned as exemple the geographical names 'Tanambao' and 'Ambohinaorina'. Both have the common meaning of 'new city'. However, the first evokes a passive term that indicates that the city has been created spontaneously and was initially deprived of any structure, whereas the second expresses the result of a purposeful action, to create a city after economic and social considerations, thus following a distinct urbanism plan.

It is necessary to note that the geographical name 'Tanambao' designates 352 different places in the country, what justifies the relevance of the explanation.

Report on the last works

The results of the last investigations on four geographical names have been communicated to the members :

G N used	G N proposed by KPMA
Brickaville	VOHIBINANY
Fort-Dauphin	TOLAÑARO or TOLAGNARO
Faux-Cap	BETANTY
Sainte Luce	MANAFIAFY

These 4 GN will be tested through maps and media later.

Planning

Dissemination

The dissemination of the 27 standardized geographical names in 2001 was identified to be the principal and the most urgent action to be undertaken.

The members expressed their concern about an obvious returning of the use of the old names. Showing a real involvement, everyone proposed his own contribution, awaiting for an eventual financial assistance.

The ministry of Justice will for example display the list of these names in the 31 courthouses that exist in the country. The Ministry of Post and Telecommunication will do the same in every post-office and the Ministry of Tourism in every hostel and lodge, ...

Gazetteers

The elaboration of gazetteer is on study. It will be sort out from the Toponymic Data Base in 100 000ème of the National Institute of cartography and Hydrography. It concerns 51 236 geographical names with coordinates and administrative class (village, town,...). intend to add some other such as historical origin. These data have been transferred on the software Access so that other informations such as historic could be added.

Toponymic guidelines

The conception of toponymic guidelines has been planned a long time ago but it doesn't never been achieved. Since a lot of new names, that are sometimes senseless, emerged recently, its diffusion becomes particularly urgent. A group of work will be formed later for the realization.

Booklets

The diffusion of booklets containing some brief information on the geographical names, the KPMA and its goal, will facilitate the conscientisation of the population. Its conception has been started , with the booklets distributed by the other committees within the UNGEGN taken as reference.

Training course

A training course is scheduled on June. It will consist on the initiation about geographical names and its relative works for the new members.

Websites

The conception of the Website has been started last year but it was never been efficient.

Documentation

The documents referring to Geographical Names are collected and centralized in the headquarter. They will be available for consultation from the month of June 2004.

In all of these actions, the problem is the same : the lack of financial assistance. To solve the problem, it was decided to draw up draft action plan first, considering the most urgent steps identified and to show it to the 2 ministry responsible and UN organization such as UNESCO.

Research for financial assistance

The crucial problem remains the same : the lack of financial assistance. It is necessary to underline that until 2002, it was the FTM that assumed the expenses needed for researches.

To solve the problem, the members decided unanimously that the first step is to develop a document project to be submitted to the concerned entities such as the 2 ministries (Vice Primature and Ministry of the Interior) and international organizations such as UNESCO for possible aids.