

Voices Unheard from the Pyrenees to Kibera – a stepping stone towards climate resilience for youth on both continents

VUPK's story and what the project has achieved over 12 months

Voices Unheard from the Pyrenees to Kibera ([VUPK](#)) is an EU-funded project which was implemented as part of the first cohort of the [AU-EU Youth Action Lab](#) Cooperation Grants, within the [Youth Action Plan](#) in EU External Action (2022-2027). The project brings together [Association Petite Graine](#) in the French Pyrenees and [Maida Community-Based Organisation](#) in Kibera, Nairobi, around a shared concern: young people living with climate risk are still too rarely heard by decision-makers.

The partnership was built on the shared experience of exclusion from decision-making. In Kibera, the community was devastated by the 2024 flood. Floods have become recurring, increased by weak drainage, poor sanitation and insecure housing, creating direct climate vulnerability. In the Pyrenees, young people face flooding risks in the town of Luchon, with the last major flood in 2013, and a severe drought in the village of Caramany which lasted between 2022 and 2025. In both contexts, VUPK aimed to document lived experiences and bring youth voices into direct contact with public and institutional actors.

Over 12 months, VUPK combined local evidence-gathering with youth consultations, writing two policy briefs ([Pyrenees](#), [Kibera](#)), workshops, advocacy meetings with decision makers, a public webinar, and a visit from Petite Graine to Maida CBO in Kenya and a 30-minute documentary.

Climate disasters are intensified by marginalisation and governance failures

Surveys with young people from these communities show that climate events are experienced first as concrete disruptions to daily life, health, housing and livelihoods. What residents most often found lacking from public authorities was anticipation, clear information and practical support.

In Kibera, respondents described floods through blocked drainage, overflowing rivers, homes invaded by water, roads rendered impassable, destruction of property, displacement and, in some cases, loss of life. Several also stressed the health consequences when floodwater mixed with sewage and drinking water, creating serious risks of disease. What they felt was most lacking was not only emergency response, but basic prevention: drains were not properly maintained, waterways

remained obstructed, early warning was weak or absent, and support for affected or displaced families remained insufficient.

The project also showed that climate vulnerability in marginalised territories is strongly linked to wider social and political conditions. In Kibera, the interview with Ibrahim Yunis, coordinator of the Nubian elders' network, highlighted the link between today's flood exposure and the long-standing land question, inherited from British rule, affecting the Nubian community. Although the community has succeeded in having its community land recognised in 2013, the urban development of Kibera remains blocked by disputes, court cases, and continued encroachment, including illegal construction. As a result, no coherent urban development can take place, and building continues in flood-prone areas, including along river lines. This has reinforced the issue of poor sanitation, increased flood risk, and strong distrust between residents and public authorities.

In the Pyrenees, the same questions revealed different climate realities but similar governance gaps. In Luchon, respondents recalled the 2013 flood as sudden and devastating, with flooded houses, damaged belongings, financial losses, and a lasting fear that returns each spring with snowmelt. What they lacked most was anticipation by public authorities, timely warning, clear communication on rising water levels, and stronger preventive infrastructure and reconstruction support. In Caramany, drought was described less as a one-off event than as a prolonged pressure shaping everyday life: families restricted water use, gardens became harder to maintain, agricultural activity put at risk, and some respondents questioned whether they could continue living and working in the territory in the long term. Here again, what respondents found most lacking was concrete action from public authorities, in particular, clearer long-term water management, more investment, support for irrigation infrastructure, and responses better adapted to local ecological realities rather than a reliance on water restrictions alone.

Youth perspectives and solutions

Across the two continents, the message from the youth is consistent: communities need practical systems that function before, during and after a climate disaster, but they also need governance arrangements that treat youth as actors in resilience rather than as passive victims.

In Kibera, respondents prioritised measures that address the everyday drivers of flood risk: better and regularly maintained drainage, more reliable waste collection, clean water, stronger emergency response, and safe shelters or fair relocation arrangements for households living in the most exposed areas. Several also stressed the need for community-based warning systems using channels that people actually use, such as SMS, social media, WhatsApp groups, local leaders and forums within Kibera. Just as important, participation was described not as a symbolic consultation exercise but as

the need for organised village-level groups, regular community forums, youth representation in planning spaces, and financial and institutional support for youth-led action. The policy brief structures these ideas in a series of recommendations. These include: the call for youth climate resilience hubs and corps supporting youth climate action in Kibera, mandate youth representation in all climate-related committees at county and ward levels, a dedicated youth climate fund, and improved early warning systems.

In Luchon, the responses pointed to a clear demand for much stronger flood anticipation and public preparedness. Young respondents called for water-level sensors, hydrological forecasting, sirens, SMS alerts, annual evacuation drills, and direct alert systems for homes located near rivers. They also proposed territorial measures such as rebuilding and reinforcing riverbanks, redesigning ditches and overflow channels, creating permeable public spaces able to absorb excess water, improving protective infrastructure in the most exposed areas, and lowering mountain lake levels preventively after winters with heavy snow. Respondents largely described a sense of exclusion and asked for regular public meetings, the creation of an independent citizens' committee on ecology and climate, and a clearer political commitment from the municipality, including a dedicated budget and programme on climate adaptation.

In Caramany, young respondents framed drought adaptation as requiring a combination of technical, agricultural and civic measures. Their proposals included rainwater collection, household and collective cisterns, local reuse of wastewater, support for drip irrigation and low-tech systems such as oyas, better maintenance of the local irrigation networks, and a shift towards more drought-resistant and regenerative agriculture. They also raised broader territorial questions, including reducing wasteful water uses, rethinking tourist pressure during the driest months, supporting farmers and winegrowers through viable transition measures, and improving public awareness of water as a shared and limited resource. In terms of participation, respondents asked for local public discussions and stronger climate and water education from an early age.

Success stories from VUPK

The first pillar of the project was research. The surveys, interviews and workshops highlighted youth perspectives that were integrated in two policy briefs, which were published on International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction on 13 October 2025, and were published by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction's research platform, [PreventionWeb](#).

Within this pillar, two workshops were organised with the communities in Kibera and Caramany to discuss the causes and consequences of climate change and make the link with the respective experiences of the communities. It followed the methodology of the [Climate Fresk](#). The Climate Fresk assembles 42 cards which, put together, show

that, at a very high level, human activities, especially fossil fuel use in industry, buildings and transport, together with industrial agricultural practices, increase greenhouse gas emissions. These emissions strengthen the natural greenhouse effect, warm the planet, and disrupt major climate systems, leading to impacts such as melting ice, rising sea levels, droughts, floods, heatwaves, and lower agricultural yields. Over time, these changes put growing pressure on ecosystems and human societies, with major risks for health, food security, conflict, and displacement.

In Luchon, the unpredictable weather leads to snowfall in winter being unpredictable, sometimes no snow at all, sometimes a lot, but if followed by a very rapid rise in temperatures, this leads the snow to melt fast. Together with heavy rain in spring, it leads to bottlenecks and rivers bursting their banks. In Caramany, it is the opposite, with climate change, less rainfall, in fact, similar levels to those seen in the Sahel region. In Kibera, the rainy season has shortened from three months to one, but rainfall has become more intense and violent. As explained by Ibrahim Yunis, Kibera used to be a forest, but it disappeared due to city expansion, with no trees to contain water, leading to heavy rains resulting in flash floods in an overcrowded informal settlement.

The second pillar of the project was conducting policy dialogues, using the findings from surveys and interviews, as well as the recommendations formulated by youth, to write a policy brief. This policy brief then served as the tool to engage with decision-makers. This resulted in meetings with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the African Union, the EU Delegation to Kenya, the EU Delegation to the African Union, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Climate Action (DG CLIMA), Kenya's President's Office, Nairobi sub-county ward representatives, and région Occitanie.

In addition, the project members met during a study visit from Petite Graine to Maida CBO in January 2026 to lead some of the policy dialogues together. During this week, a second workshop was organised with young participants from Kibera. It consisted of a session on first aid and flood preparedness covering safe rescue behaviour, CPR, household preparedness, warning signs, evacuation and the risks linked to contaminated floodwater. The second part consisted of a youth and climate policy advocacy training session with presentations from three advocacy professionals. Participants gained insights on how to best engage with state actors to defend their rights and hold decision-makers accountable.

During this visit to Kibera, the project also documented youth-led action already taking place in Kibera. During the study visit, VUPK visited local projects such as [Whispers Champion Youth Initiative](#), a community group that transformed a dumpsite in Kibera into an urban farm using vertical farming and plastic reuse. The project visited Kibera Primary School and its initiative on school gardening and composting activities. VUPK also visited [Amani Kibera](#), a local initiative that provides sewing training to give skills to young women, and helps them grow their businesses, and is also constructing a local community library.

The third pillar is partnership and network building. A key activity was the organising of an online webinar on youth-led climate advocacy with Léah Khayat from [WECE](#), Ann Makena Gitonga from the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance ([PACJA](#)), and Baliquees Salaudeen-Ibrahim from the African Youth Initiative on Climate Change ([AYICC](#)). This enabled the project to learn from other projects working on climate change and community work, and from the challenges and insights they shared.

Lessons learned from the Policy Dialogues

Kibera

First, the project met with Dr Christina Gatura, Deputy Director, Communication and Advocacy, Executive Office of the President - Minorities and Marginalised Affairs Unit ([MMAU](#)). The MMAU is placed under the authority of the President of Kenya, William Ruto. Dr Gatura stressed that the government has just adopted a draft bill to recognise and codify minorities, [the Draft Ethnic Minorities and Marginalised Communities Bill 2025](#). Today, the Nubians do not have a code, which precludes them from exercising rights such as easier access to jobs in the public service. Dr Gatura stressed that the government is working to have Nubians obtain a code by June 2026.

Dr Gatura also proposed organising, with the support of Maida CBO, a national conference for marginalised communities from Kenya, where youth from marginalised communities would come to Nairobi to discuss challenges and formulate recommendations. She also stressed the importance of creating jobs in Kibera and supporting livelihoods in order to fight against the marginalisation of youth, especially Gen Z. The government is willing to support employment projects in Kibera, notably those linked to agriculture. She also proposed the development of a targeted policy and legal framework examining the correlation between marginalised communities and the climate-environmental crisis, with Kibera as a primary case study, to be launched on [International Minorities Day 2026](#), on December 18.

The outcome of this advocacy meeting was extremely positive, as it highlighted that the project benefits from allies within the government, willing to support Nubians and youth, to work on livelihoods and tackle the climate crisis in Kibera. This meeting highlighted that the Kenyan government is taking action to ensure that minorities, such as the Nubians, see their rights recognised. Dr Gatura formulated very concrete action items such as government support to projects creating jobs, organising a conference on minorities' rights, new legislation to codify the Nubians, a policy framework to correlate marginalised groups and the climate crisis. For each of these action points, she positioned Maida CBO as a key interlocutor and trusted partner for their implementation, emphasising its role in bridging the gap between the community and

government institutions. She mentioned the need to have further meetings in the short term to build on this momentum.

Second, the project met the Delegation of the European Union to Kenya, namely Thomas Yatich, an officer who has worked on environmental programmes at the Delegation for more than 15 years. The discussion quickly highlighted the gap between EU commitments on climate adaptation, and the projects effectively implemented on the ground. The VUPK team raised questions about the discrepancy between the ambitions laid out in the Global Gateway Investment Package and the EU Delegation’s Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) for Kenya on climate resilience and preparedness, and the reality of projects being funded on the ground. Indeed, despite strong emphasis in the MIP on climate resilience, especially responses to droughts and floods, but also on slum upgrading, housing, and support for the participation of marginalised communities, the level of identified project funding does not match the amounts initially committed. [Analysis](#) shows that whilst the EU committed €147 million to the green transition in Kenya between 2021 and 2024, and €83.5 million under its “No One Left Behind” priority, VUPK only identified €30.5 million of EU funding towards 28 projects related to these priorities by the end of 2023.

Mr Yatich acknowledged that the focus of the Delegation has shifted towards trade, energy, biodiversity conservation, carbon registries, watershed programmes, drought management in northern Kenya, and support for refugee populations through ECHO-funded projects. He recognised that there is a missing link on climate adaptation, especially flood preparedness and adaptation in informal settlements such as Kibera. In response to VUPK’s concerns, he explained that part of the Delegation’s funding has been redirected to support the war effort in Ukraine. On youth participation, he referred to the EU Youth Sounding Board launched in August 2025, to which Maida CBO had been invited. When asked about concrete climate adaptation projects, Mr Yatich mainly referred to initiatives implemented by individual EU Member States, such as Germany through the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung’s work on waste collection; the FLLoCA programme supporting locally led climate adaptation projects supported by the Government of Kenya, the World Bank, and other donors. On the issue of flood preparedness, he advised the VUPK team to continue advocacy work directly with DG INTPA in Brussels in order to push for stronger prioritisation of flood adaptation and preparedness within the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2028–2035) and future MIPs.

The outcome of this advocacy meeting was mixed. While it confirmed the existence of EU-supported environmental and resilience programmes, particularly on droughts, watershed management, biodiversity conservation, and support to refugee populations, it also highlighted the absence of substantial flood preparedness and adaptation projects in areas such as Kibera, despite repeated flooding events. More broadly, the exchange reinforced VUPK’s conclusion that the EU’s ambitions on climate adaptation are not always matched by corresponding budget allocations and implementation on the ground. Nevertheless, the meeting also helped identify relevant

initiatives and actors, such as FLLoCA and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung projects, which could inform future advocacy and partnerships.

Third, the project met with representatives from the Makina Ward administration, the decentralised county structure responsible for part of Kibera. Ward representatives explained that they had tried to intervene on the drainage system, which is heavily clogged due to waste accumulation. However, improving drainage requires the evacuation of housing built directly above drainage channels, creating tensions with local residents. According to the representatives, these tensions have become so significant that some ward officials have stopped going into the slum.

They also highlighted difficult relations between the Ward and the Nubian community, explaining that some Nubian residents do not want outside intervention in their local affairs. As a result, they stressed the importance of working through trusted gatekeepers, including youth leaders, elders, and community representatives from within the Nubian community itself. One proposal discussed was the recruitment of Nubian staff in order to facilitate dialogue and reduce conflict.

The VUPK team also raised concerns regarding the location and management of waste collection points. Feedback from Kibera residents is that the four designated dumpsites are located too far from residential areas, discouraging proper waste disposal, and that waste is often left uncollected despite private contractors being hired by the county government to do so. Ward representatives contested this point, maintaining that waste collection systems exist, illustrating the gap in perception and trust between institutions and residents regarding basic public services.

On youth participation, ward representatives explained that the county government can in principle provide small grants for youth advocacy and community initiatives. They also mentioned that the sub-county uses WhatsApp groups to coordinate with NGOs and local leaders on disaster management issues, and that approximately four youth engagement events are organised each year at ward level. They referred to local participation mechanisms such as [SPEC Kibra](#), where residents can raise concerns and recommendations. Examples of ideas emerging from these consultations included creating spaces within hospitals where youth and older generations could meet and discuss mental health challenges. However, ward representatives also acknowledged major constraints to effective participation. They explained that many young people expect transport reimbursement or meals in order to attend meetings, while the Ward does not have a dedicated budget for facilitation or community mobilisation. They further noted that several planned activities had been delayed at the time of the meeting because expected funding for the first quarter had still not been received from the County level.

The outcome of the meeting was negative. The exchange revealed a profound lack of trust between parts of the Kibera community, particularly within the Nubian community, and Ward authorities on issues such as drainage management and waste collection.

On the side of the administration, authorities expressed frustration at resistance to relocation or drainage works. On the side of community members, residents repeatedly described feeling abandoned, facing inadequate waste collection services and inaccessible dumpsites. These tensions contribute directly to the deterioration of sanitary conditions on the ground. The meeting also highlighted the structural limits of youth participation mechanisms, which remain constrained by insufficient funding and weak institutional capacity for community engagement.

Fourth, the meeting with UN-Habitat with Daniel Munene, urban planning professional, focused on urban planning in Nairobi, notably in low-income neighbourhoods most vulnerable to climate disasters. Mr Munene explained that whilst UN-Habitat does not directly intervene on the ground, it provides expertise to support urban policies. He stressed the importance of reclaiming public spaces for pedestrians, making urban mobility more sustainable and making public spaces and street design more inclusive. Indeed, in Nairobi, walking accounts for 30% of mobility, while Matatus (local buses) account for 30%. He mentioned studies produced by UN-Habitat focused on low-income neighbourhoods, which are among the most vulnerable to climate-related risks and disasters in Nairobi ([Kibera](#), [Mathare](#)).

In addition, Daniel Munene shared several relevant initiatives. First, [Nairobi Placemaking Week](#), an annual event organised by UN-Habitat to promote more sustainable urban spaces through stakeholder engagement and stronger links between residents, land and urban design. Second, he mentioned the collaboration with UCL on [Tomorrow's Cities: Urban Risk in Transition](#), a participatory framework that seeks to reduce future urban disaster risks, with a particular focus on marginalised communities. Nairobi is one of its partner cities. The initiative facilitates dialogue between communities, authorities and other stakeholders in order to develop bottom-up policy options. It also provides expertise on climate hazards and develops models simulating the impacts of hazard events, including casualties, in order to help visualise risks and support discussion on how urban planning should adapt.

Third, he referred to [Kounkuey Design Initiative](#), a community development and design non-profit working in under-resourced urban areas to build public-space infrastructure. In this context, he highlighted the [3EP project](#), through which KDI, UN-Habitat and ICLEI Africa are working together to regenerate the Ngong River basin. The project aims to support communities in the nexus neighbourhoods of Kibera, Mukuru and Kayole-Soweto, home to some of the most vulnerable groups in Nairobi, in adapting to climate-related challenges within the basin.

Fourth, he highlighted the work of [Akiba Mashinani Trust](#), which works with low-income urban communities on affordable housing, water, sanitation and waste management, including support for housing, water pipelines and sanitation infrastructure in informal settlements.

Fifth, he referred to the [Kenya Informal Settlements Improvement Project \(KISIP\)](#), a Government of Kenya initiative supported by the World Bank and other partners, which focuses on slum upgrading, low-cost interventions and improving living conditions in informal settlements.

The outcome of the meeting was very positive, as it enabled the VUPK team to establish a channel of communication with an official at UN-Habitat and to access valuable information, expertise, relevant studies, and examples of projects already being implemented in Kibera and other informal settlements in Nairobi.

Fifth, the project team organised an exchange between young participants and the African Union Commission’s DRR unit, with Adama Bamba and Hewan Seife Mengesha. During the meeting, Mr Bamba presented the three pillars of the AU’s disaster risk reduction governance framework: the Africa [Programme of Action](#) for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 to 2030, the Africa Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Early Action [System](#), and the Africa Urban Resilience [Programme](#). To assess Kenya’s performance on DRR, the interlocutors referred the project team to the Africa Biennial Reports on DRR.

The African Union highlighted the [Africa Youth Advisory Board on Disaster Risk Reduction](#) as the main continental mechanism through which youth voices can be integrated into AUC DRR processes. Mr Bamba explained that this Board is the most relevant entry point for VUPK. He stressed that the AUC cannot bypass Member States and local authorities to engage communities directly. For that reason, engagement through the Youth Advisory Board, as well as through structured youth consultation outcomes, represents the most realistic pathway. The AUC shared the contact details of the Africa Youth Advisory Board on DRR and encouraged APG and Maida CBO to follow up directly. Possible synergies were also mentioned with actors working on informal settlements and resilience, including [GIZ and Slum Dwellers International](#), particularly around resilience hubs and urban resilience approaches.

The outcome of the meeting was highly positive, as it enabled the project to better understand the AU’s work on disaster risk reduction and youth participation. It also gave the project direct access to the contact details of the Africa Youth Advisory Board on DRR, opening a concrete channel for possible follow-up engagement.

Sixth, the project held a meeting with the EU Delegation to the African Union, with Michele Rizzi, Youth Programme Manager, Yann Guegan, Technical Assistance to Support AU-EU Youth Lab Coordination Actions, and Lawrence Muli from the AU-EU coordination team. Mr Rizzi confirmed that from an EU external action perspective, priorities have partly shifted away from climate adaptation, notably due to a strong focus on the war in Ukraine. The discussion then focused on the upcoming review of the [African Youth Charter](#), adopted in 2006, at a time when climate change was not yet a prominent issue. This review was presented as a key advocacy opportunity for the project to push for stronger recognition of climate adaptation. The

AU is aligning the review with the 1 Million Next Level initiative and Agenda 2063, and the different ministries of youth, youth councils, regional economic communities and youth-led actors are expected to play a role in the consultation process.

The AU-EU Youth Lab team also shared information on the mid-term evaluation survey of the Youth Action Plan and on a forthcoming Youth Policy Dialogue with the EU Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy, Jessika Roswall, both of which could be relevant entry points for VUPK's climate-related advocacy.

The outcome of the meeting was highly positive. It enabled the project to garner useful information on upcoming policy advocacy opportunities, particularly the review of the African Youth Charter and the need to integrate climate change more clearly into it. It also provided valuable insight into the process, timeline and actors involved. In addition, the meeting enabled the project to contribute to the mid-term evaluation of the Youth Action Plan and to receive information on the upcoming Youth Policy Dialogue with Commissioner Roswall, in which VUPK will seek to participate.

Pyrenees

First, the project organised a discussion with Corine Richerol, Project Manager on climate adaptation with a focus on the Eastern Pyrenees at région Occitanie. The exchange was organised together with Amandine Defrasne, President of *Le Pari du Lac*, a community group in the village of Caramany. Together with other young people, Amandine was elected to the municipal council during the French local elections held in March 2026. The discussion helped the team better understand the overall policy framework on climate adaptation in place in région Occitanie and how water and climate adaptation related projects are being funded and implemented on the ground.

First, the discussion addressed the main strategic framework of the region. [Le Pacte Vert Occitanie](#), adopted in 2020, serves as the region's overarching strategy to make public policies more sustainable. The *Plan Eau 2023* is a more operational document aimed at improving water-resource management across the territory. The VUPK team raised the issue of limited transparency and the difficulty of accessing some of these documents online. As a follow-up, Ms Richerol shared the *Plan Eau*, which VUPK then [published](#).

Second, the discussion focused on drought adaptation in Caramany. Amandine Defrasne explained that her municipal list had been elected on a commitment to support the purchase and installation of rainwater collectors, but that subsidy pathways still needed to be identified. Possible avenues for collaboration were explored, including regional support, European funding through the European Regional Development Fund, and support from the French Water Agency. Ms Richerol indicated

that the region could assist with preparing a subsidy application and offered her support.

Third, VUPK raised the issue of renovating the village canal irrigation network. Ms Richerol indicated that such renovations could potentially be eligible for support through the region's agricultural service, given its relevance for vegetable gardens and small-scale agriculture.

Fourth, Amandine Defrasne raised the issue of a planned construction project for 200 new housing units in La Tour, a neighbouring village, despite existing water scarcity. This surprised Ms Richerol, who noted that territorial planning documents, such as the Schéma de cohérence territoriale (SCoT), should normally prevent such authorisations in areas already facing hydric stress.

Fifth, the discussion addressed the need for a local water-management scheme. Such a scheme is often required to access State funding, but Caramany does not currently have one. At present, difficulties remain due to weak coordination between different levels of governance, notably the Prefect representing the State, the intercommunality to which Caramany belongs, and the municipality of Caramany itself. In particular, the intercommunality does not appear to be sharing sufficient data on water use, including agricultural consumption. This creates a major constraint, as without reliable data it is difficult to design an accurate and effective water-management scheme. Ms Richerol noted that the French Water Agency could provide support in setting up a scheme.

Sixth, the region referred to the project to connect the Rhône River to the water network in the Eastern Pyrenees as one possible response to the persistent lack of water. Work is ongoing to assess water needs and the costs of such a project, and a study is expected to be published in December 2026.

Seventh, the discussion also touched on flood risks in Luchon. This included the flood forecasting tool Vigicrues, which is expected to be extended to the whole of the French territory by 2030, including Luchon. Ms Richerol referred to the *Service de Prédiction des Crues* (SPC), noting its proactive and professional role. However, Ms Richerol underlined that flood forecasting in mountainous areas remains particularly difficult because storm events are often highly localised and therefore difficult to model. The region proposed putting the project in contact with relevant interlocutors on this issue.

The outcome of the meeting was extremely positive. It enabled direct contact to be established between the Region, in particular the project manager responsible for the Eastern Pyrenees, and young people from Caramany, some of whom are now members of the municipal council. It also laid the groundwork for a possible subsidy application concerning rainwater collectors and opened the way for further exchanges.

Second, the project organised an exchange with Vanessa Bruynooghe from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Climate Action (DG CLIMA), Unit E1 Preparedness and Adaptation, linked to the [EU Mission on Adaptation](#).

The Mission is an EU programme designed to help European regions better understand climate risks and implement adaptation solutions. The discussion focused on how existing EU adaptation tools, projects and resources could be useful for territories such as Luchon and Caramany.

First, Ms Bruynooghe shared examples of Mission-funded projects relevant to mountainous regions, notably [MountAdapt](#) and [MountResilience](#). The VUPK team raised concerns about the practical usefulness of some MountAdapt outputs, especially given the project's €5.8 million EU funding. The team noted that several resources appeared too generic, difficult to replicate locally, or linked to privately commercialised services rather than openly accessible tools for local authorities. MountResilience, on the other hand, presents interesting developments that could be replicated in Luchon and Caramany, namely work on better data and decision-making for [water resilience](#) in mountain regions. This appeared more relevant to the needs of Luchon and Caramany, especially in relation to flood prevention and climate adaptation.

Second, Ms Bruynooghe shared several EU and French resources that could help local authorities identify adaptation solutions. These included the EU Mission Adaptation [Portal](#), pointing to the projects and stories sections of the Portal, the [European Climate and Health Observatory](#), the [Covenant of Mayors](#), the French [Centre de ressources pour l'adaptation au changement climatique](#), [Mission Adaptation France](#), [Cerema](#), and the [EU Cities Portal](#).

Third, the discussion addressed the difficulty for small municipalities to navigate the many existing EU tools, portals and initiatives. Ms Bruynooghe explained that the Commission is aware of this problem and is working on a new resource, Resilience Plus, which will bring information together in a more accessible way for local authorities and communities.

Fourth, the project raised the need for better flood prediction and more locally useful climate data, especially for Luchon. Ms Bruynooghe explained that the forthcoming [European Climate Resilience and Risk Management Integrated Framework](#) should include elements on hazard visualisation, improved prediction and medium-range forecasting, including through Copernicus and ECMWF modelling. Petite Graine also recalled that it had contributed to the public consultation on this framework.

Fifth, Petite Graine raised the issue that young people and local communities in Caramany and Luchon do not always feel heard by national authorities or by the EU. The team asked how the Commission consults vulnerable populations in the context of climate adaptation. Ms Bruynoooghe indicated that this question was outside her direct remit.

Sixth, the discussion also covered the barriers preventing EU-funded knowledge from reaching local level, including language barriers, the complexity of EU platforms, and the very vertical nature of public administration in France. Ms Bruynoooghe mentioned the role of ENC and Cerema in helping relay technical knowledge to local authorities.

The outcome of the meeting was very positive. It enabled VUPK to share direct feedback on the accessibility and practical value of EU-funded adaptation projects, to highlight its contribution to the consultation on the European Climate Resilience Framework, and to identify useful resources and possible entry points for connecting Luchon and Caramany with existing EU adaptation tools and networks.

Project's contribution to SDGs

SDG 13 – Climate Action

VUPK documented how floods and drought affect young people and local communities in Kibera, Luchon and Caramany. The project turned these findings into practical recommendations on early warning, flood preparedness, drainage, water management and youth participation in climate decisions.

In Kibera, the project also included a workshop on flood preparedness, first aid and climate advocacy, linking climate action to practical community safety.

SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities

VUPK focused on the local conditions that increase climate vulnerability. In Kibera, this included blocked drainage, waste accumulation, poor sanitation, unsafe housing and construction in flood-prone areas. In the Pyrenees, it included flood preparedness in Luchon, drought pressure in Caramany, water restrictions and weak public communication.

Through field visits, questionnaires and advocacy meetings, the project brought these issues to actors working on resilience, governance and adaptation.

SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation

Water and sanitation were central to the project. In Kibera, flood risk was closely linked to blocked drainage, sewage contamination, waste accumulation and weak basic services. Youth testimonies showed how floods directly affect health, safety and daily life.

In the Pyrenees, the project documented drought pressure, water restrictions and concerns about local water management. It also collected proposals on rainwater harvesting, wastewater reuse, irrigation efficiency and better water planning.

SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

VUPK contributed to SDG 16 by strengthening dialogue between marginalised urban communities and political institutions at local, national, and international levels. The project focused on ensuring that youth and community voices from Kibera were not only documented but actively brought into governance spaces where decisions affecting them are made.

Through structured engagements, storytelling, and advocacy processes, the project connected community realities in Kibera with key institutional actors, including the Executive Office of the President of Kenya (Marginalised and Minority Affairs Unit), county administrators in Kibera, the European Union Delegation to Kenya, and UN-Habitat.

The project specifically contributed to:

- Inclusive decision-making (Target 16.7) by creating direct engagement between marginalised youth and governance institutions, ensuring that community perspectives were included in policy-relevant conversations at multiple levels.
- Accountable and responsive institutions (Target 16.6) by presenting lived experiences of urban inequality, service gaps, and exclusion directly to institutional actors responsible for urban governance and social inclusion.
- Access to information and civic voice (Target 16.10) by amplifying marginalised narratives through storytelling, community dialogue, and media engagement, ensuring that youth perspectives were visible in public discourse.

Overall, VUPK positioned Kibera and Pyrenees-based youth not only as beneficiaries of policy but as active contributors to governance dialogue and institutional reflection on urban inequality and inclusion.

SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals

VUPK was built on a partnership between Association Petite Graine in France and Maida CBO in Kenya. Together, they carried out research, workshops, advocacy and communication work linking local youth concerns to wider policy discussions.

The project engaged with actors including the EU Delegation to Kenya, the EU Delegation to the African Union, the African Union Commission DRR Unit, région Occitanie, UN-Habitat, county-level actors in Kibera, WECF, PACJA and AYICC.

These exchanges did not solve the structural problems identified by the project. They did, however, create visibility, contacts and follow-up opportunities for future cooperation.