



Local Governance Monthly Bulletin

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Local Governance as the key to Development

Civic education campaign about the decentralization process has reached more than 1500 people in Manufahi



Photo:Thaiza Castilho, UNCDF

Armando da Silva, one of the Trainers from NGO Luta ba Futuru, explaining about the decentralization process

Hermegildo Tilman is a farmer who lives and works in the village of Holarua, in Manufahi. He is one of the people that are benefiting from the 2-day-training provided as part of the civic education module developed to reach people in remote areas and explain about the decentralization process.

"This training is giving us ideas on how to develop our village and it is something that can really benefit our entire community", stated Mr. Tilman. The training in Holarua village involved more than 30 people and was conducted at the suco chief's office. Holarua is one of the six villages of Manufahi that are currently participating in the civic education module.

Since it started in April, a total of 120 local trainers attended the training module and have been providing additional training in 42 aldeias that

has already reached over 1500 people only in Manufahi.

The module consists of providing information about the importance of an effective planning, ensure people's representation at the suco level, transparency and accountability,

decision making and working together for the village's development.

"This civic education program is important for the community living in remote areas because for us it is difficult to access information and with this program people have the opportunity to understand about

concepts like representation and transparency. Therefore we can work together with our community leaders to improve the suco", said Mr. Francisco da Silva, teacher at the Primary School of Mindelo.

The Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management (MSATM) has developed the civic education through extensive consultations and with technical support from joint UNDP-UNCDF Local Governance Support Programme (LGSP).

This training has been made possible through a grant provided by the joint UNDP-UNCDF LGSP to the NGO Concern Worldwide that has been implementing the civic education module in Lautém and Manufahi.

The civic education module has been carried out since April to explain how the decentralization process will affect the life of people living in remote areas.



Photo: João Santos, UNCDF

Population of Mindelo village watching the Tulun Malu movie developed for the civic education



Exclusive Interview:

Dr. Arcângelo Leite talks about the benefit of decentralization for the community

On 8 August 2009, Dr. Arcângelo Leite, will complete two years as the Minister of State Administration and Territorial Management.

In this edition we organized an interview with Dr. Arcângelo Leite to explain about the decentralization process and the laws on local government and municipality elections that are scheduled to be discussed in the National Parliament.

Can you explain what is the law on administrative and territorial division and how it benefits the the establishment of the municipalities?

The Administrative and Territorial division law was already approved at the National Parliament. This law provide the basis for the establishment of the municipalities because it legalizes the territorial division for the transition from districts to municipalities and the borders that already exists.



Photo:Thaiza Castilho, UNCDF

In your opinion how the local government law will benefit the people of Timor-Leste?

The local government law will benefit the people and also the Government of Timor-Leste. This law will enable people to participate in the political process and in the municipal development, through the structure that is closer to the community and there is not need for the people to travel long distances to come to Dili, they will resolve their needs at the local level. For the Government this initiative will minimize the work and will share responsibilities.

When can we expect to hold the municipal election?

The Ministry has an strategic and an annual work plan for 2009. We are conducting our activities based on these plans. Therefore, if the law is approved at the National Parliament by mid-August, we would have to hold municipal elections in the four pilot districts in the first week of December, but at the moment we are concentrating on the approval and promulgation of the local government and the municipal election laws.

How is the Ministry preparing to successfully set-up the municipalities?

Even with the pending approval of the local governance laws at the National



Photo:Thaiza Castilho, UNCDF

Parliament, the Ministry has been actively in disseminating information in the districts and sub districts about the structure of the municipalities and the municipal assembly.

The Ministry, with the support of international consultants, has been

working on the elaboration of additional laws, regulations and decree laws to ensure the well functioning of the local governments. The preparatory commission, will evaluate the real conditions, such as human resources, infrastructure, equipments and

prepare the staff for the implementation of municipalities in the four pilot districts.

"The approval of these laws is an important step for the decentralization process and towards the creation and development of the municipalities in Timor-Leste".

Dr. Arcângelo Leite



Delegation from Angola visits MSATM to share experiences on local governance

On 16 July the Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management (MSATM) received a delegation of representatives from the Government of Angola to share information and discuss mechanisms for an efficient decentralization process.

At the meeting were present the Minister of MSATM, Dr. Arcângelo Leite, all directors under the administration of the Ministry and two representatives of the Angolan Government, Dr. António Pinto, Director of Human Resources of the Ministry of Territory Administration, and the Minister Counselor of the Angolan Embassy in Singapore, Mr. Fernando Miguel.

Dr. Arcângelo expressed his gratitude for this visit and explained in details the roles and responsibilities of each of the Directorates. He also mentioned about the current stage of the

decentralization process and the set of three laws that are now under discussion in the National Parliament and the recent promulgation of the law on the suco elections. "We expect that after the approval of these laws the Ministry will effectively start to implement the municipalities in four districts of Timor-Leste in the beginning of 2010", stated the Minister.

Dr. Antonio Pinto also talked about how the decentralization process has been functioning in his country. "It was a process that started in the



Photo: Thaiza Castilho, UNCDF

Angolan Representatives and the MSATM Minister, Dr. Arcângelo Leite

1980s and it has supported many people because it has enabled the construction of schools, water and sanitation supplies and medical centers", stated the Human Resources Director.

DNDLOT holds meeting on the Local Development Programme with eight District Officers

On 15 July the Directorate of Local Development and Territorial Management, (DNDLOT) from the MSATM held a meeting with the eight District Development Officers (DDOs) and District Finance Officers of the districts in which the Local Development Programme (LDP) is

currently being implemented. The objective of this meeting is to obtain information from the district officers about the progress implementation in 2008/09 and present the LDP planning for 2010.

Mr. Miguel de Carvalho, DNDLOT Director, led the discussion and stated, "the projects carried out by the LDP are useful in the decentralization process because this kind of cooperation needs to involve all key stakeholders in the districts. The LDP is an important step for the districts to prepare for the establishment of municipalities in 2010".

The District Officers shared information about the progress of LDP implementation in the eight pilot districts as a means to share lessons learned in order to improve the quality of the



Photo: João Santos, UNCDF

service delivery. One of the recommendations of the district officers was to provide trainings for the finance and technical staff to develop their capacity in their respective working areas. During the meeting Ms. Susanne Kuehn, Chief Technical Adviser for the joint UNCDF-UNDP Local Governance Support Programme, stressed, "The meeting is important to share ideas and experiences about the LDP and prepare for the transition from district to municipality".

The Local Development Programme has learned during these years of implementation and will be an important asset to establish the future municipalities because it has assisted the development to reach the immediate needs of the people at local level.

UNDP offers learning session on decentralization

On 16 July a learning session has held at the UNDP Conference Room to explain the decentralization process to UNDP staff.

The session was presented by Susanne Kuehn, LGSP Chief Technical Adviser, and Mike Winter, UNDP Consultant, and was attended by more than 20 people among national and international staff.

During the learning session the staff also had the chance to raise questions which were answered by Ms. Kuehn and Mr. Winter and shed light into the decentralization process and how the establishment of the municipalities can benefit the people of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Mike Winters stressed that "the purpose of a creation of a Joint National Decentralization Programme is to strengthen the capacity of the municipalities to deliver public goods and services within their respective jurisdiction, with the objective to contribute towards poverty reduction in Timor-Leste".

You can access the JNDP and LGSP presentations by clicking [here](#) and [here](#).

Photo: Thaiza Castilho, UNCDF



Thursday Learning Session about the decentralization process



MSATM and MoF host round table discussion on Municipal Public Finance Management

On 23 July the Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management (MSATM), together with the Ministry of Finance (MoF) held a round table discussion on municipalities Public Financial Management in Timor-Leste.

The event was opened by the Director of Local Development and Territorial Management (DNDLOT) of the MSATM, Mr. Miguel de Carvalho, the Vice Minister of Finance, Mr. Rui Manuel Hanjam, and UNDP Country Director, Mr. Akbar Usmani.

The consultants made a presentation, which was followed by a discussion with a wide range of stakeholders, including District Administrators, representatives from the MSATM and the MOF and selected line ministries, such as the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Infrastructure.

The team of consultants explained that local planning and public financial management processes will have to change in the context of decentralization reforms: the newly established municipalities will be directly accountable to elected municipal assemblies and only indirectly to the national government. Municipalities will be responsible for setting priorities, planning and coordinating local plans, budgeting, and budget execution, evaluation and auditing.

"It will be very important to keep the local planning process as simple as possible", stressed Mr. Abrams, while pointing out that



Round table discussion had the presence of more than 50 guests

local planning should also be participatory, allowing citizens to express their views, should respond to local priorities and be realistic in terms of budget constraints.

Mr. Savage emphasized that there is often a tendency to over-regulate local government spending, which can lead to ineffective, unworkable systems. Instead, a good municipal public financial system should focus on strengthening local oversight through municipal assemblies and citizens' involvement. The role of the state should be to manage risks and the level of regulation needs to be calibrated to the amounts actually managed by municipalities. "We all know that it is easier to control small amounts of money than large amounts", Mr. Savage said.

More than 50 people attended the discussion that took place at Hotel Timor in Dili and was organized with the support of the joint UNCDF-UNDP Local Governance Support Programme and the World Bank.

You can download the powerpoint presentation [here](#).

In our next Edition

In August:

- Local Government Law discussion at the National Parliament
- Launch of the Municipality Campaign

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Name and Quotation

Mr. Manuel Ximenes is
the District Development Officer of Manatuto



Photo: Duarte Santos, MSATM

"The Government's plan to establish the municipalities all around the country is a good and important decision because the government can respond to the needs of the population more closely. Once the government establishes the municipalities, the community in rural areas can have access to the municipal assembly and the local government can understand what are the needs of the people and act directly in the municipality itself".