



Local Governance Monthly Bulletin

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Local Governance as the Key to Development

NEW INFORMATION AND SUGGESTION BOX IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMUNITIES

The new Information and Suggestion Boxes of the Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management (MSATM) were handed over to 13 District and 65 Sub-District Administrators, on the occasion of the consultative meeting of the District Administrators with the MSATM in Dili on 18 March 2011. The initiative was supported by the joint UNCDF-UNDP Local Governance Support Programme (LGSP). The Box, which will be placed at every District and Sub-District Office in the most visible and accessible area, will have the primary function to encourage feedback and participation at the community level, providing suggestions, proposals or complaints on topics such as the local development projects and procedures, local governance and decentralization process related activities. Moreover, the box has also been designed to facilitate the distribution of informative and civic education material produced by MSATM about local governance and decentralization, in the format of bulletins, posters, flyers, publications, Q&A and new regulations. Community members including students, civil servants, civil society members or private sector representative will now have a different and unique tool to voice their concern in a direct and practical manner.



The 13 District Administrators and the Sub-District Officers will be responsible to disseminate and receive the information contained in the boxes and to evaluate the feedback received from the community.

All the suggestions and inputs received will then be analyzed and discussed at the District Level, and every three months a Report summarizing the key proposals and complaints will be submitted to MSATM Communication Unit and to the different Directorates. The final objective is to produce a series of recommendations on how to better target and respond to the communities' needs, complaints? and queries. Recommendations will include issues related to project planning and submission and

procedures for LDP (Local Development Programme), DDP (Decentralized Development Package), the future PDID (Integrated District Development Plan) and YDP (Youth Development Programme) -which uses LDP processes and procedures-, access to information, modalities and channels of distribution, transparency and accountability of the regulations, and suggestions on the preparation of the establishment of the future municipalities.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND THE BOX? MAI PARTICIPA!

The Information and Suggestion
has been distributed in 100 locations including:

- **78** amongst District and Sub-District Offices
- **11** Ministries
- The National Parliament
- **6** Universities
- NGOs and members of civil society

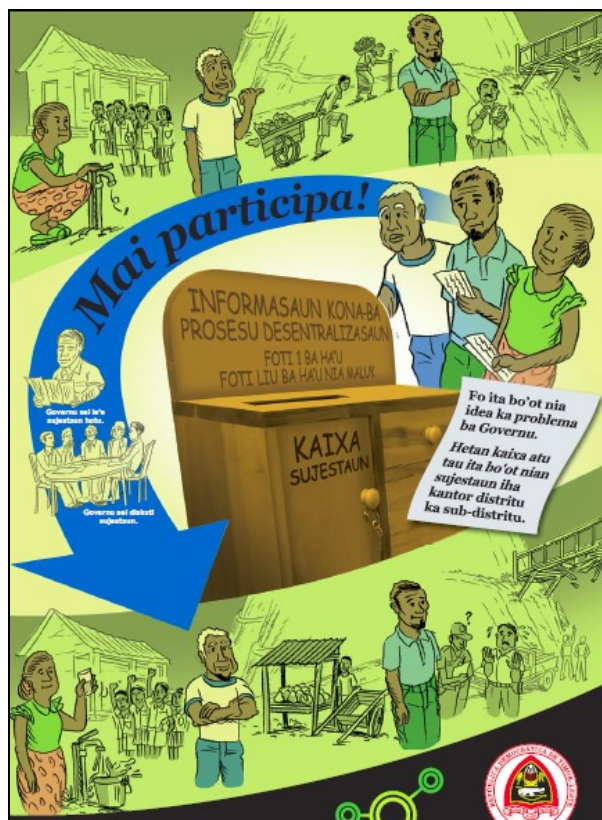
HOW INFORMATION WILL REACH YOU

On a monthly basis the **Local Development Programme** (LDP) team and **MAOET staff** will ensure the distribution of the regular MAOET-LGSP material, including the newsletter, flyers and factsheet containing relevant and practical information on the local governance, local development and decentralization process.

HOW INFORMATION WILL REACH US

The **District Administrators** will collect all the inputs at the District and Sub-District Level, including suggestions, proposals, general information or complaints and address them to the Ministry during the regular consultations held with the District Administrators. Key suggestions and issues will be formally included in a list of recommendations for the Minister, representing a new channel of communication and open feedback with the local communities.

COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN ON THE INFORMATION BOX KICKS-OFF



As part of the Communication Campaign on the initiative, LGSP and MAEOT produced an illustrated **poster** on the use of the Box, which aims at promoting its functions amongst young generations, families, women, civil society and general public in the Districts, Sub-Districts and Sucos. The poster will be distributed in several key public places at the local level by mid May.

INFORMATION BOX ON THE RADIO

A special edition of the programme “Dezenvolve ho Desentralizasaun” has been produced by the Community Radio Center based in Dili and was broadcast in all the 16 community radios of the country between the second and third week of April, mostly during the so called “prime-time”, from 6 to 8 pm, when civil servants and farmers use to go end their working day. The programme includes interviews with the MSATM Director General, Dr. Carlito Martins, and with some of the District Administrators who joined the meeting of 21 March, when the project was officially launched. Moreover, special appeals encouraging communities’ involvement in the project will be included in each of the monthly programme produced by LGSP and MAEOT from now until the end of the year.

The Radio Programme can also be downloaded from the MSATM website www.estatal.gov.tl/English/News/Radio.html

INTERVIEW WITH THE MSATM DIRECTOR GENERAL, MR. CARLITO MARTINS

What is the main objective of the Information and Suggestion Box?

We distributed the boxes to the 13 District and the 65 Sub-District administrators in order to encourage the communities to actively participate in the local development process. Because local development, local governance and decentralization cannot only come from the opinion leaders as the Prime Minister, the Minister or the Members of the Parliament, but they really rely on the whole community members’ involvement.. And their opinion is crucial to develop our country.

How will the Ministry and the Government benefit from the project?

The community feedback will be collected, discussed and categorized every 3 months by the central government represented by MSATM, and the main recommendations will be integrated in the National Strategic Planning framework at the end of the year.

What is the main challenge of the project?

The main difficulty will be to involve people residing in rural and very remote areas, who are not used to participate in public discussions or activities. For them, it is actually a unique opportunity to express their concerns or expectations both at the local and national levels. This is one of the main reasons for the distribution of the boxes in all the Sub-Districts. The Box is an informal channel, developed having in consideration that part of the population is less used to speak publicly and/or for those who have no time or logistical constraints to reach the capital of the District. However, the box is not intended to close opportunities for those who want to inform the institutions in a more direct way. Every one, every citizen has the right to raise concerns through a constructive and peaceful channel that he or she considers as more suitable.

LOCAL WORKSHOPS

District and Sub-Districts Administrators, as primary focal point of the project at the local level, have been encouraged to promote the main goals of the Information Box during their regular meetings with the communities, including the public sessions of the Local Assemblies, seminars, workshops and different events for the civil society.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE APPROACH MAKES THE DIFFERENCE IN MANUFAHI

Same, 1 April 2011 – The **Deputy SRSR/Resident Coordinator**, Mr. Finn **Reske-Nielsen**, visited three projects implemented by the Government with the support of the UNCDF-UNDP Joint Local Governance Support Programme (LGSP) in Same, Manufahi District, accompanying high level representatives of the international community in Timor Leste, including Norway, New Zealand, Ireland, European Union, Ausaid and other UN representatives.

*“Since 2007 through LGSP, UNDP and UNCDF in close collaboration with UNMIT have been supporting the Government of Timor Leste to establish an accountable and effective local government and Decentralization in the country, - said Mr. **Reske-Nielsen**. – I am personally impressed with the concrete impact of the projects developed in the Manufahi District, where hundreds of families now have access to water facilities, medical services and a growing market structure”.*



The MSATM Director Martins and the UN DSRSG Reske-Nielsen

After an introductory meeting with the Manufahi District Administrator, Mr. Filomeno Tilman, the group visited the **Same District Hospital**, whose rehabilitation was completed in 2009, following specific requests from various communities at that time. The project substantially improved the hygienic conditions of the structure, which is now a key reference for more than 50,000 people residing in the area, including some Sub-Districts of the Manatuto District.

In **Maniku**, Suco of Letefoho, the group had the chance to interact with some of the beneficiaries of a **Water Supply Project** completed in 2010. Before the project, women and children had no access to water and needed to go to nearest river, which is at a 2 hours walk. Now, they don't spend more than 10 minutes.

In all the projects, the LGSP provides technical support to the District Assembly in terms of local planning, prioritization of proposals and assistance throughout the project implementation phase. The **Local Development Programme (LDP)** was introduced in Timor Leste in 2004 by UNCDF and UNDP in partnership with the Government and with the key contribution of the Government of Ireland as main donor.



*“A concrete, well resourced and vibrant local governance is crucial for a balanced rural development. - said **Mr. Eoghan Walsh**, Head of Mission of **Irish Aid**- Irish Aid has been supporting decentralization and local governance in Timor Leste since their very early stages and we intend to continue our support in future as part of our Country Strategy for Timor Leste for 2010-2013”.*

In **Same** the Local Development Programme (LDP) supported the rehabilitation of two buildings of a **local market** in 2008 and 2009. After the inauguration of the market, community members, mostly women, were able to sell their local products throughout the year, whereas before the commercial activity was heavily affected by the road conditions and lack of transportation during the long rainy season.



*“When there was no market I used to sell my squash and cassava in my own house, with just a few friends buying – explained **Domingas**, one of the many **women working every day in the market** – But now my income has more than doubled and I can buy books for the kids”.*



In Brief

Activities in May:

- Finalization of the procurement process for the 2011 LDP projects
- Submission of priority proposals to the SDDC (Sub-District Development Commissions)



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Support provided by
Local Government Support Programme
and



Ministry of State Administration
and Territorial Management
has a website!



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Under the LDP, communities are able to identify their practical needs and priorities through a participatory local planning mechanism, in areas such as health care, education and small infrastructure. The LDP also supports capacity development at the local level through the provision of block grants to local assemblies, enabling them to develop management skills through an integrated approach of *learning by doing* in issues such as budgeting, procurement, monitoring and evaluation. “The strong engagement of local communities is the key for successful rural development – said **Ali Gillies**, Head of Mission of **AusAID** - “The local governance projects that we have visited today are great examples of how a bottom-up participatory process in identifying needs and priorities can make a big difference for the beneficiaries”.

“With the increased focus that the Government of Timor Leste now gives to local governance and rural development, - said **Hans Peter Christophersen**, Head of Mission of the Royal **Norwegian Embassy** Section - we were very pleased to observe the

significance of the impact of LGSP, partly supported by Norway, to the local communities in Manufahi. The visits to the Same market, District Administration Office, District Hospital and Water Supply Project were excellent examples of projects adding a lot of value to the communities”.

In 2011 the Ministry for State Administration and Territorial Management allocated US\$ 3.5 million for the Local Development Fund (LDF). The budget will cover the implementation of small scale development projects mostly in the area of infrastructure, education and health care services, in all the 13 Districts of the country. Out of the total budget, US\$ 183,000 has been allocated to Manufahi.

“No development will be viable or sustainable without the valuable participation of the communities in all the different steps of the project implementation, – states **Carlito Martins, MSATM Director General** – and it is through and on behalf of the communities that the Government has strongly endorsed the Local Governance Support Programme principles and objectives”.



DISTRICT PROFILE: MANUFAHI

Manufahi is one of the 13 Governmental and Administrative Divisions in East Timor. Administratively, the District is divided into four sub-districts, Same, Alas, Fatuberliu and Turiscai. The total number of villages is 29 with 128 sub villages. Manufahi is mountainous in the north with extensive coastal plains to the south that are suitable for wet rice cultivation. It has perennial rivers. It is a

rural agricultural district where small farmers practice traditional agriculture, generally growing non-irrigated rice, corn, cassava, beans and tubers. Coffee is grown in the north, and coconuts in the south.

Area: 1,324.91 sq. km - 9.07% of East Timor with a total population of **48,894** (Census 2010)

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN MANUFAHI : SOME FIGURES

- The Local Development Programme in Manufahi officially started in 2008
- Local Development Fund Allocation in 2010: USD 205,335 / 3,053,465 for Timor Leste