



Photo: UNDP/Ayumi Kimura

CORE-TL | COVID-RESILIENT ELECTIONS IN TIMOR-LESTE



“ We should respect one another because we are all equal, have the same right to participate in elections.”

Flora Amaral Madeira, *Inclusive Elections* workshop participant, Los Palos



Photo: UNDP/Martiano Redondo

Inclusive Elections for First-Time Voters April-June 2022

For the upcoming parliamentary, municipal, and suco-level elections, the UNDP Covid-Resilient Elections in Timor-Leste (CORE-TL) project and the NGO Belun conducted the Inclusive Elections workshops from April to June in nine municipalities: Ainaro, Bobonaro, Baucau, Covalima, Ermera, Lautem, Manufahi, Viqueque, and RAEOA.

The activity targeted youth, especially first-time voters, to deepen their understanding of the importance of encouraging underrepresented people in elections, such as women, people with disabilities, and LGBTQI+, to vote for ensuring to “Leave No One Behind.”

In cooperation with local authorities, civil society organizations, and academia, the Inclusive Election workshops were successfully carried out with the participation of 257 youth (145 Women, 112 Men, 10 PwD, 14 LGBTQI+).

“We consider youth as key actors to establish peace in Timor-Leste, especially through the election process. Everyone should be included for democracy, taking an initiative to support the country and establish a better future,” appointed the gender activist and NGO Belun trainer, Maria Fatima Sara.

With the financial support of the Government of Japan, the UNDP CORE-TL project strives to ensure informed, safe and inclusive elections.

Inclusive Elections Workshops Participation

257 participants

145 women **112** men

10 PwD **14** LGBTQI+

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Women’s leadership and participation in the Elections 2021-2025

“We know the roles of a community leader but don’t know how to be a good leader.” These are the words of Nela, a Timorese female leader who serves as a community affair coordinator in Metinaro, Dili.

Nela is part of the 473 emerging leaders in the country who participated in the capacity development initiative implemented by UN Women and the UNDP CORE-TL project in collaboration with Ba Futuru to strengthen women’s participation and representation in politics.

These activities, attended by 250 women and 223 men in eight municipalities, included a series of 16 workshops, where through dialogues and learning sessions, the participants increased their awareness of equal rights of women and men as voters and candidates in elections and learned a transformative attitude to address existing social and cultural norms and gender biases that undermine the involvement of female leaders in decision-making roles.

“This training provided me with skills and knowledge on how to work and perform as a good leader in the community,” added Nela after participating in the three-day workshop, which is based on the *Strengthen Leadership and Women’s Participation in Elections in 2021-2025 National Strategy*.

Furthermore, Lucia da Costa Soares, a workshop participant in Dili, commented, “women need to empower ourselves, and I need to be confident in myself. Women can participate in political life. If men can do it, why can’t I?” After the training, Lucia is determined to run for the next election as the Chief of the Aldeia *Helmet*, her home community.

On the other hand, these activities reached around 240 people through four theater performances that promoted key messages on equal rights of women and men in political participation.

Through this initiative financially supported by the Government of Japan, the UNDP CORE-TL project strives to ensure inclusive and gender-equal elections while contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals principle of *Leaving No One Behind*.



Photo: UNDP/Yuichi Ishida

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Photo: Ba Futuru

473 emerging leaders in Timor-Leste increased their knowledge on women’s participation and representation in politics.

People with Visual Impairments in Oecusse access to voting information

The UNDP CORE-TL project in collaboration with the *Halibur Difisiensia Matan Timor-Leste Association (AHDMTL)* conducted a Braille Letter Training for voters with visual impairments in the Special Administrative Region Oecusse-Ambeno (RAEOA) to comply with their right to access voting information.

For two weeks, 35 participants (18 women and 17 men) were trained to read and write in the Braille system to strengthen their abilities to learn and promote political participation in elections.

The CORE-TL project has trained a total of 152 people with visual impairments and 273 PwD across the country.



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