

UNDP Timor-Leste SSRI PROJECT

News Issue #1 February 2017



Photo: Hipólito Amaral Ximenes / UNDP TL



Photo: Joanna Wong / UNDP TL



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Welcome to the first newsletter from the UNDP Timor-Leste SSRI (Strengthening the Resilience of Small Scale Rural Infrastructure) project.

Read this newsletter to learn more about the latest developments from the project and for more information, please visit SSRI Project page at: <http://www.tl.undp.org>

The UNDP Timor-Leste SSRI Project is working to strengthen the resilience of small scale rural infrastructure in the Municipalities of Ermera, Liquiça & Baucau. It is being implemented in partnership with the Ministry of State Administration (MSA) and the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Environment (MCIE).



Photo: Joanna Wong / UNDP TL

change policy. A thorough consultative process with government and non-government actors working on climate and disaster risk management has also helped to ensure that climate change has been conceptually mainstreamed into working policies and priorities across a range of sectors.

Mr. Augusto Pinto, National Climate Change Director, said this new framework policy is expected to provide guidance and help sectoral policies become more climate responsive. "As a follow-up to this policy, there will be Strategies, Action Plans and Climate Change Law that would be developed to help implementation of the sectoral working policies indicated in the Policy," he said.

SSRI supports new National Climate Change Policy

By June 2017 the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Environment (MCIE) aims to present the final draft of the first National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) for Timor-Leste to the Council of Ministers for their review and approval. The current draft is undergoing final technical review, which will be followed by legal review and approval from the government.

Since August 2016 UNDP has been providing MCIE with technical assistance and logistical support for this new climate



Photo: Joanna Wong / UNDP TL



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Irrigation scheme will boost farming in Suco Uailili

On September 9 2016, the Uailili community in Baucau launched a new project that will rehabilitate a local water source and irrigation scheme to provide improved water supply for farmers and households.

In his remarks at the event, the Minister of State Administration H.E. Dr. Dionisio Babo Soares, said the work by the SSRI Project to improve water supply in Uailili could help to boost agriculture and tourism development in the municipality. “Uailili is very beautiful and it is exciting to promote tourism here. Efforts to improve the quality and supply of clean water could help to encourage the development of tourism and local kiosks to support the local economy,” he said.

At the water source, the original irrigation channel was damaged by flooding and increased sedimentation resulting in reduced water flows. Water supply was reduced further due to leakage from a damaged concrete retaining wall. Decreasing water supply had led to conflicts between rice farmers.

The project will construct 800 meters of concrete channel and install check-gates for efficient management and control of the water at turn-outs and distribution points. It will also support the rehabilitation and protection of the water source and construction of improved washing facilities for the community. Provision would be made for animals that usually come to drink water at the source so the water will no longer be contaminated and gabions will be installed to protect water source from the risks of erosion and landslide.

Suco Hatolia benefits from new water supply system



Photo: Joanna Wong / UNDP TL

A new water supply system completed at the end of 2016 has provided clean water to the community of Hatolia in Ermera. Over 1000 people living in two neighbouring communities no longer have to rely on walking between two to three kilometres from their homes to the river to collect water. Now these communities are provided with a continuous supply of water piped to 11 public taps from a 60 cubic meters storage reservoir located some 3.5km away from the water source.

The community and stakeholders were consulted at all stages of the project. The project also involved planting trees around the water source.

Community helps to strengthen new Irrigation Project in Suco Vemasse

A successful community-based demonstration intervention to protect the newly constructed Vemasse irrigation canal by planting vetiver grass along its banks was piloted in December 2016. About 20 men and women from the community participated in this bioengineering activity to protect their new irrigation system.

Vetiver grass, with its long fibrous roots, helps to reduce soil erosion and sedimentation that is likely to block the canal. This also helps to protect the road infrastructure from the impacts of erosion. In Timor-Leste, vetiver grass is considered to be very effective because it is readily available and very easy to grow.

This activity is part of the Climate Change Adaptation Planning for Rural Infrastructure Development (CCAPRID) which supports the capacity building of communities to protect their existing infrastructure using simple but effective interventions. Community participation in protecting infrastructure helps to develop greater awareness of climate risks and strengthen local ownership.



Photos: Hipolito Amaral Ximenes/ UNDP TL

Timor-Leste and Lao PDR exchange experience on climate resilience

A delegation comprised of representatives from the Government of Timor-Leste and UNDP visited Lao PDR on February 6-10, 2017 to exchange experiences on the planning and implementation of climate resilient rural infrastructure. This visit provided an opportunity to share key lessons learned on how the countries that are both benefitting from the GEF (Global Environment Facility) are adapting and responding to challenges due to the impacts of climate change. The Lao PDR LDCF2 project facilitated visits to project sites in the Sekong and Saravane Provinces to meet with district officials and beneficiaries and observe directly the projects implemented.

While the LDCF2 project has similar components as the SSRI project, it focuses on strengthening local governance system in delivering rural infrastructure projects that are resilient to climate change. An important lesson learned from this project that is relevant to Timor-Leste is the active involvement and participation of local government at the provincial and district levels and good inter-ministerial collaboration.

Mr. Miguel Pereira de Carvalho, Director General of Urban Management of MSA in Timor-Leste said, “When it comes to the central government, they are very collaborative, particularly these two important Ministries, Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment as well as the Ministry of Home Affairs of Lao PDR.”

From his observation, he mentioned that Lao PDR manages to mainstream the climate change issues into the governance system at both the central and local government levels. “When they build a project, they think about not only planning to get this project done, but also what are the impacts caused by the climate change issues on the project,” he said.



Photo: UNDP LAO PDR

The Timor-Leste team met UNDP Lao PDR. Ms. Kaarina Immonen (third from left), UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Lao PDR highlighted the benefits of exchanging best practices from Timor-Leste and Lao PDR in the spirit of setting up new avenues of South-South cooperation.



Photo: UNDP LAO PDR

The Lao PDR and Timor-Leste team visited the road improvement and bridge construction project in Keb Pheung Village in Longngam District.

It was very useful to learn how greater local ownership was created in Lao PDR by directly involving communities in the construction process, and how to ensure the sustainability of investments in new infrastructure, according to the Project Manager for the UNDP SSRI Project, Mr. Devindranauth Bissoon.

The team of seven participants included the Director General for Urban Management; Presidents of Baucau and Ermera Municipal Authorities; Administrator of Liquiça Municipality; National Director and Head of Finance and Administration of DGOU, MSA and the Project Manager of the UNDP SSRI project.

Construction of Darulete-Dato road helps farmers



Photo: Nelson Pereira Vicente / UNDP TL

A new road rehabilitation project in Darulete-Dato is being constructed through a collaborative approach between MSA/UNDP SSRI Project and the Ministry of Public Works/International Labour Organization (ILO) R4D programme.

Prior to this intervention, the narrow road has been severely affected by erosion and landslides causing serious access problems for many farmers who need to get their produce to markets. In addition to improving market access for products such as coffee, the new road will improve community access to healthcare, schools and employment opportunities, especially for young people.

While continuous rainfall poses severe challenge to the infrastructure, in order to deal with these challenges due to the steep slopes in the location, various materials and design approaches are used to strengthen the road including concrete surfacing for the sections of the road prone to erosion and failure during extreme rainfall. Soil bioengineering interventions are implemented for slope stabilization and protection to complement the hard engineering structures and making them more sustainable and climate resilient. Local NGOs are engaged to support the implementation of bio-engineering and watershed management activities in the area.



Photo: Feisberta Moniz da Silva / UNDP TL

Climate resilience training helps communities in Baucau



Photo: Manuel Francisco Barbosa / CC BY-SA 4.0

Through its Climate Change Adaptation Planning for Rural Infrastructure Development (CCAPRID) activity the SSRI Project has been training Baucau communities on the use of planning approaches to increase the climate resilience of new infrastructure. Training for village leaders is also helping them to learn how to develop effective plans and designs for protecting existing infrastructure that is also affected by climate risk.

This initiative has been undertaken in several villages sucos) including: Makalako, Uaigae, Vemassi Tasi, Ossoala, Buruma and Lakoliu. Many of these rural communities depend largely on agriculture and this training has also helped to highlight the importance of planning to help reduce potential impacts of climate change on community livelihoods.

The bottom-up planning process helps to address specific needs that have been identified by the affected community rather than at the municipality level. This process also stimulates wider participation and involvement of community members and creates a sense of ownership at the community level when their project proposals are approved and implemented.

Women have been encouraged to participate in all the events and during presentations and focus group discussions. They have also been directly involved in collecting data using GPS devices and in undertaking soil-bioengineering demonstration activities in their communities.

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Design and Layout: Joanna Ho Yan Wong

