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JUSTICE SYSTEM PROGRAMME

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English Version

Electoral Justice Workshops provide training for legal professionals in Dili

On the 21-22 June 2017, UNDP's Justice Services Programme (JSP), and the Legal & Judicial Training Center hosted a one-and-a-half-day workshop on Electoral Justice for legal professionals in Dili. Approximately thirty people attended the workshop from various legal institutions such as judges from the Dili, Baucau, Suai, and Oecusse District Courts and the Court of Appeal, public defenders, representatives from the Ombudsman Office for Human Rights and Justice (PDHJ), the Anti-Corruption Commission and investigators from the Scientific Police. The workshop provided training on the leg-

islative framework of electoral procedures and election crimes in the lead up to the Parliamentary Elections next month. The programme of the workshop included: i) The constitutional principles and legal framework of electoral matters, ii) Pre-electoral proceedings, iii) Proceedings of the general elections for National Parliament, and iv) Electoral offences. The seminars also gave participants an opportunity to clarify points of confusion and to discuss legal aspects of the electoral process with other legal professionals. Participants engaged in fruitful discussions on the expected impacts of new electoral laws and how Timor-Leste's legal and regulatory bodies can work together to minimize the potential for disputes during and after the parliamentary election and campaign period.

Dr. Alvaro Maria Freitas, Judge Administrator of the Suai District Court said that he found the workshop "very informative and useful" in relation to his work, since he had not often heard such topics discussed before.

JSP's Mobile Court initiative travels to Maliana



Credit: © Athena Rogers/UNDP

On the 27-30 of June, 2017 the JSP-supported Mobile Court initiative travelled to Maliana to hear several cases. The Mobile Courts are designed to make formal justice more accessible to people living far from the major district courts which are currently only located in Dili, Baucau, Oecussi and Suai. Judges, public defenders and public prosecutors along with other legal support staff travelled from Dili and Suai to support the Mobile Court sessions in Maliana. The courts heard a number of cases which included complex, serious crimes, presided over by three judges, as well as more minor civil disputes requiring only one judge present. The mobile courts, along with other initiatives supported by JSP are improving access to justice for the people of Timor-Leste.



Credit: © Athena Rogers/UNDP

JSP hires two new Access to Justice Officers



Access to Justice Clinics (AJCs) have been piloted in the judicial districts of Baucau and Suai under the Public Defender's Office (PDO). To support the operation of the clinics, the Justice System Programme (JSP) is partnering with the Office of the Prosecutor (OPG) by supporting two national Access to Justice Officers to help design and develop Penal Code sensitization programmes for local communities. In addition to this, the OPG will support the AJCs through community outreach campaigns and the coordination of case referrals.



JSP Collaborates with the Legal and Judicial Training Center (LJTC)



This year, JSP is providing a Senior Pedagogical Adviser, Mr. Alexandre Coelho to support the work of the LJTC in the design and development of training programmes in specialized courses for judges, prosecutors, public defenders, legal clerks and others. Mr. Coelho is a senior judge from Portugal and JSP hopes that through this cooperation will strengthen the quality of the legal and judicial education provided by the LJTC.

Access to Justice Clinic Opens in Suai

On the 19th of June 2017, JSP and the Public Defender's Office (PDO) held an inauguration ceremony for the Access to Justice Clinic (AJC) in Suai, Covalima to celebrate the completion of its new office building within the premises of the PDO. The AJC will help build upon and further develop the PDO's legal expertise. Services offered include: legal information, mediation, referrals and alternative dispute resolution. "The Access to Justice Clinics are a product of a lot of planning and hard work, and the Public Defender's Office is pleased to see those efforts come to fruition today. I am thankful to everyone involved including the Ministries, UNDP and the Governments of Japan and Korea" said H.E Sergio Hornai, Public Defender General of Timor-Leste in his remarks during the ceremony. Mr. Izalde Pinto from Belun, a key civil society organization and partner of the AJCs, presented the results of their work, and a community member also shared his experience receiving the services of the AJC. After enduring a four-year-long land dispute with a neighbor, an agreement which settled the conflict was finally made last April through an AJC mediation process.

