

Gender Assessment

FP171: Enhancing Early Warning Systems to build greater resilience to hydro- meteorological hazards in Timor-Leste

Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste | UNEP | B.30/02/Add.03

14 September 2021



**GREEN
CLIMATE
FUND**



Gender Assessment

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION: RELEVANCE OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING FOR THE PROJECT	1
2. METHODOLOGY.....	2
3. SOCIOECONOMIC AND GENDER BASELINE IN TIMOR-LESTE	2
3.1 BACKGROUND	2
3.2 COMPOSITE INDICES.....	3
3.3 EDUCATION	4
3.4 HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.....	47
3.5 WORK AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT	5
3.6 GOVERNANCE, INFLUENCE AND DECISION MAKING	6
3.7 LAND AND ASSETS OWNERSHIP.....	6
3.8 GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	7
4. GENDER-RELATED POLITICAL, LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT IN TIMOR-LESTE	7
4.1 POLICY ENVIRONMENT AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK	7
4.2 INSTITUTIONS	8
4.3 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS.....	9
5. GENDER ROLES, GAPS AND CHALLENGES IN THE GFCS PRIORITY SECTORS	10
5.1 AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY.....	10
5.2 DISASTER RISK REDUCTION.....	10
5.3 ENERGY.....	11
5.4 HEALTH.....	12
5.5 WATER.....	12
6. GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN TIMOR-LESTE.....	13
6.1 GENDER ISSUES RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS AND RISKS.....	13
6.2 GENDER ISSUES IN ACCESSING CLIMATE INFORMATION AND EARLY WARNING SERVICES.....	13
7. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH.....	14
7.1 MAINSTREAM GENDER IN CLIMATE INFORMATION, EARLY WARNINGS AND DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT.....	15
7.2 ENSURE MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN	15
7.3 CONSIDER GENDER NORMS, BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS AND INFORMATION PREFERENCES IN DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATION...	16
7.4 TAILOR PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE ACTIONS TO THE DIFFERENTIAL NEEDS AND CAPACITIES OF VULNERABLE GROUPS	17
7.5 PROMOTE EQUITABLE POWER, DECISION-MAKING AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES	17
7.6 MINIMISE THE RISK OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	18
APPENDIX 1 – GENDER CONSULTATION WORKSHOP IN TIMOR-LESTE.....	19

Enhancing Early Warning Systems to build greater resilience to hydro-meteorological hazards in Timor-Leste

Annex 8 - Gender Assessment and Action Plan

1. Introduction: Relevance of Gender Mainstreaming for the Project

This Gender Assessment has been prepared as an input for the design of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) funding proposal by UN Environment Programme (UNEP), titled “*Enhancing Early Warning Systems to build greater resilience to hydro-meteorological hazards in Timor-Leste*”. The Project intends to enhance climate resilience and disaster preparedness capacities at national, sub-national and community level in Timor-Leste through the development of end-to-end climate and oceans services and impact-based multi-hazard early warning systems. As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), Timor-Leste is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts such as sea level rise, increasing mean temperatures and extreme climate events.¹ The vulnerability of Timor-Leste is compounded by a multitude of factors including: high exposure to natural hazards such as flooding, droughts and landslides; dependence on climate-sensitive resources for economic development; lack of human, financial and technical capacities to adapt and respond to climate impacts; as well as socioeconomic and gender inequalities.²

The Gender Development Index (GDI) is a direct measure of the gender gap in achievement of the three basic dimensions of human development: health, education and command over economic resources. Timor-Leste is in GDI Group 5, which corresponds to countries with the lowest gender equality in human development achievements.³ In 2019, Timor-Leste ranked 110th out of 117 countries on the Global Hunger Index (GHI), which indicates the prevalence of a serious level of hunger.⁴ This is reflected in a very poor nutritional status of Timorese women and children.⁵ In addition, physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence against women and girls is widespread and cuts across the country’s income, culture and class divisions.⁶ Gender equality is a cross-cutting issue, with vulnerability to climate change entrenched in existing inequalities. Addressing the pervasive gender inequality in Timor-Leste is essential to building resilience of the population and achieving sustainable development.⁷

Gender inequalities have social, economic, political and cultural implications for individuals responding to climate change. Gender is an important factor in both vulnerability and adaptation; and influences how and the extent to which women and men are affected by and respond to climate change impacts.⁸ Women are disproportionately affected by climate change due to existing inequalities and multidimensional social factors, including unequal power relations and structures, discriminatory laws and customs, and unequal access to and control of resources. Such factors influence adaptive capacity, resilience and participation in climate action.⁹

The IPCC Fifth Assessment Report highlights that women are not inherently vulnerable to climate change because of their biological sex and that focusing on this aspect can “ignore the complex, dynamic, and intersecting power relations and other structural and place-based causes of inequality.”¹⁰ Furthermore, framing women as victims reinforces their exclusion as ‘active agents’ in responding to climate change, emphasises vulnerability as their intrinsic problem, and ignores their capabilities, knowledge and relevant skills that can contribute to long-term sustainable and climate-resilient development.^{11, 12}

Without some form of gender analysis, it is unlikely that the project design process would adequately address the full range of vulnerabilities and issues present within a target population, resulting in

¹ IPCC, 2019. Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate

² See Annex 2 – Feasibility Study

³ UNDP, 2019. Briefing note for countries on the 2019 Human Development Report – Timor-Leste

⁴ Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe, 2019. Global Hunger Index 2019 – Timor-Leste

⁵ Anderson, A.B. *et al.* 2013. Food and nutrition security in Timor-Leste. CGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems.

⁶ The Equality Institute, 2016. Understanding Violence against Women and Children in Timor-Leste: Findings from the Nabilan Baseline Study

⁷ Climate & Development Network, 2016. 10 things to know: Gender equality and achieving climate goals

⁸ Global Gender and Climate Alliance, 2016. Gender and Climate Change: A Closer Look at Existing Evidence

⁹ UNFCCC, 2019. Synthesis report – Differentiated impacts of climate change on women and men; the integration of gender considerations in climate policies, plans and actions; and progress in enhancing gender balance in national climate delegations

¹⁰ IPCC, 2014. Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Part A: Global and Sectoral Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² ODI, 2011. Gender, Generations, Social Protection & Climate Change: A thematic review

interventions that produce sub-optimal outcomes, or even reinforce the challenges faced by vulnerable members of society.¹³ These vulnerabilities – such as socioeconomic status and political access; performance on health, education and livelihood indicators; access to productive assets, information and communication networks, knowledge and training opportunities, etc. – should be addressed through climate services, as they impede adaptive capacity and climate resilience. Mainstreaming gender into all stages of the Project cycle – design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – is therefore essential to maximise its outcomes and deliver transformational impact across Timor-Leste.

2. Methodology

The Gender Assessment describes the gender context, gender issues (gender equality and gender equity), and gender vulnerabilities (gender relations, access and power) relevant to the project and gender opportunities (recommendations). The Assessment is informed by the following methodological steps:

- Primary data collection including an in-country stakeholder consultation workshop, interviews and questionnaire responses. Further details are provided in Appendix 1.
- Comprehensive desk review of existing literature, draft Gender Assessment Report prepared by WMO¹⁴ and gender analysis of the Feasibility Study (Annex 2) conducted for the proposed Project.
- The literature review was conducted on climate change adaptation, climate information and early warning systems, disaster risk reduction, and hydrometeorological systems in relation to gender and the context of Timor-Leste. Literature was drawn from: research reports from international organisations (United Nations Development Programme – UNDP, United States Agency for International Development – USAID, The Asia Foundation, etc.); multilateral development banks (the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank – ADB); journals (*Climate Risk Management*, *Geography Compass*, *Women's Studies International Forum*, etc.); and grey literature (government reports, policies and plans).
- The stakeholder consultations, literature review, gender analysis of the Feasibility Study and analysis of the draft Gender Assessment Report provided useful data and information to inform the socioeconomic and gender baseline (Section 3), the political, legal and institutional environment in relation to gender priorities (Section 4), gender roles, gaps and challenges in the five Global Framework for Climate Services priority sectors (Section 5) and gender-specific climate change vulnerabilities and adaptation needs (Section 6) in Timor-Leste.
- Based on the information detailed in the previous sections, Section 6 presents gender-responsive recommendations and interventions to be incorporated within the Project to ensure that gender concerns are addressed, existing gender inequalities are not reinforced, and that greater resilience is possible for the entire population of Timor-Leste.

3. Socioeconomic and Gender Baseline in Timor-Leste

3.1 Background

Timor-Leste is one of the world's newest countries, having achieved independence in 2002 after a long history of colonialism. The country has a total population of 1.324 million¹⁵ (50.5% male and 49.5% female¹⁶), with the majority of the population living in rural areas (69.4%¹⁷). There is a significant geographical divide, with rural women and men having lower education, less employment, higher poverty, and worse living standards.¹⁸

¹³ Carr, E.R. and Thompson, M.C. *Geography Compass*, 2014. Gender and Climate Change Adaptation in Agrarian Settings: Current Thinking, New Directions, and Research Frontiers

¹⁴ The draft Gender Assessment Report was prepared by WMO to support the formulation of a funding proposal on enhancing early warning systems to build resilience to hydrometeorological hazards in the Pacific small island states, including Timor-Leste. The initial programme was not realised; however, outcomes of the stakeholder consultations are relevant to the current proposed project.

¹⁵ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs: Population Division, 2018. *World Urbanisation Prospects: The 2018 Revision*

¹⁶ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs: Population Division, 2019. *World Population Prospects 2019*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Asian Development Bank, 2014. *Timor-Leste Country Gender Assessment*

The average annual population growth rate for 2015-2020 was 1.94%, which is the highest growth rate in South-Eastern Asia (1.05% average) and significantly higher than the average for SIDS (0.91%).¹⁹ The rapidly growing population presents great challenges, including increasing demand for food, water, sanitation, and health and education services.

In 2018, GNI per capita was reported as US\$ 2,656²⁰ and GDP was US\$ 2.581 billion, with annual growth rate at 2.8%.²¹ The percentage of the population living below the national poverty line declined from 50.4% in 2007 to 41.8% in 2014. However, considerable spatial and gender disparities exist. For example, 80% of the poor are concentrated in rural areas. In a wider socioeconomic context, 56% of men participate in paid employment compared with 27% of women.²²

3.2 Composite Indices

- ***Human Development Index (HDI)***

The HDI is a composite measure to assess long-term progress in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living. Timor-Leste's HDI value for 2018 is 0.626, which ranks it at 131 out of 189 countries. This is lower than the average HDI for the East Asia and Pacific region (0.741) and for SIDS (0.723).

The Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI) adjusts the HDI value according to inequalities in the country relating to health, education and income. The 'loss' in human development due to inequality is expressed as a percentage. In 2018, the overall loss for Timor-Leste was calculated as 28.0%, which was much greater than the global average loss of 20.2%.²³

- ***Gender Development Index (GDI)***

The GDI is defined as a ratio of the female to male HDI. The GDI measures gender inequalities in achievement of the three basic dimensions of human development: health, education and command over economic resources. The 2018 sex-disaggregated HDI values for Timor-Leste are 0.589 (female) and 0.655 (male), resulting in a GDI value of 0.899. Timor-Leste is thus in GDI Group 5, corresponding to countries with the lowest equality in HDI achievements.²⁴

- ***Gender Inequality Index (GII)***

The GII is a composite measure that reflects gender-based inequalities in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and economic activity. It can be interpreted as the "loss in human development due to inequality between female and male achievements in the three GII dimensions". Lack of relevant data precluded calculation of the GII for Timor-Leste, thus highlighting the existing data gap in this area.²⁵

- ***Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)***

The MPI identifies multiple overlapping deprivations that individuals face in their health, education and standard of living. Deprivation scores are calculated according to on health, education and living standard indicators. Based on the deprivation score thresholds, people are classified as vulnerable to multidimensional poverty, multidimensionally poor, or in severe multidimensional poverty. In Timor-Leste, 45.8% of the population are classified as multidimensionally poor and an additional 26.1% are vulnerable to multidimensional poverty. The proportion of the population living in multidimensional poverty is 15.1% higher than that of income poverty. This implies that people living above the income poverty line may still be deprived with regards to health, education and/or standard of living.²⁶

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2018. Economic Analysis – 2018 Triennial Review.

²¹ World Bank, 2018. Country Profile – Timor-Leste

²² World Bank, 2019. Timor-Leste Economic Report: Moving Beyond Uncertainty

²³ UNDP, 2019. Human Development Report 2019

²⁴ UNDP, 2019. Briefing note for countries on the 2019 Human Development Report – Timor-Leste

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

3.3 Education

Since independence, education has been a major priority for Timor-Leste.²⁷ The country has succeeded in achieving gender parity in primary and secondary school enrolment (94% for girls and 92% for boys at primary level; 34% for girls and 27% for boys at presecondary level; and 21% for girls and 17% for boys at secondary level). Low enrolment rates above primary level reflect high rates of repetition and dropout, including due to language barriers and economic reasons.²⁸

Larger gender disparities in education attendance are observed at tertiary level, although notable improvements have been made in narrowing the gap. In 2010, just 38% of people who had studied at university were female. In 2015, this figure had risen to 46.6%.²⁹ However, the overall proportion of the population with a tertiary education is low; about 8% of men aged 25 and above compared with 4% of women.³⁰

Amongst adults, women are much more likely to have missed out on schooling. 58% of women aged 25 and older have never attended school, compared with 43% of men. Traditional attitudes towards young women often require that they remain in or close to home and consider higher education a more worthwhile investment for young men. Teenage pregnancy is also a contributory factor to prematurely ending the education of young women. These disparities are reflected in differing levels of literacy. Timor-Leste has low adult literacy; 63% of men and 52% of women aged 15 years and older are literate (the global average is 89% for men and 80% for women).³¹

It should be highlighted that young women in the agricultural sector are particularly disadvantaged with regards to educational outcome. In 2015, only 6.4% of young female farmers were in school compared with 70.1% of females in the same age range who were non-farmers. Almost half (49.5%) of female farmers aged 15 years are illiterate compared with 10.7% of female non-farmers. However, illiteracy levels fall to 31.1% amongst female farmers aged 24, which suggests that women continue to learn through their own efforts or informal schooling.³²

Gender disparities in education and literacy levels result in differing capacities of women and men to understand and act upon climate information and early warnings, as well as implement climate change adaptation measures.

3.4 Health and well-being

Life expectancy at birth represents the overall mortality level of a population. In Timor-Leste, the life expectancy at birth is 67.1 years for men and 71.1 years for women, which are 3.1 and 3.6 years less than the global average for males and females respectively.³³ High maternal and infant mortality rates are a significant concern for Timor-Leste.³⁴ Sixty percent of women have reported issues with accessing healthcare services, particularly relating to maternal and child healthcare.³⁵

Traditional beliefs and limited economic opportunities encourage women to marry and reproduce at a relatively young age, resulting in high fertility rates. Combined with high fertility, lack of access to healthcare, clean water and adequate sanitation facilities increases the risk of maternal and infant deaths.³⁶ Although total fertility rate has been rapidly declining, fertility is much higher in rural areas and amongst women with no education.³⁷

Timor-Leste has made considerable progress in reducing its maternal mortality rate (MMR) from one of the highest in the world (660 per 100,000 live births in 2003³⁸) to 142 per 100,000 live births. Despite this progress, Timor-Leste's MMR is more than double that of the average for the East Asia and Pacific region

²⁷ Government of Timor-Leste, 2011. Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030

²⁸ Asian Development Bank, 2014. Timor-Leste Country Gender Assessment

²⁹ GDS, UNICEF and UNFPA, 2017. Timor-Leste Population and Housing Census 2015. Analytical Report on Education

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² GDS, UNICEF and UNFPA, 2017. Timor-Leste Population and Housing Census 2015. Analytical Report on Education

³³ World Bank DataBank, 2019. Life expectancy at birth

³⁴ Timor-Leste Ministry of Health, 2011. National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2011-2030

³⁵ CARE, 2020. Rapid Gender Analysis COVID-19 Timor-Leste

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ GDS and ICF, 2018. Timor-Leste Demographic and Health Survey Key Findings 2016

³⁸ Asian Development Bank, 2014. Timor-Leste Country Gender Assessment

(69 per 100,000 live births).³⁹ Continued effort will be required to reduce its MMR to less than 70 by 2030 (SDG target 3.1).

The infant mortality rate has decreased from 60 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2003 to 30 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2016. Under-5 mortality also declined from 83 to 41 deaths per 1,000 live births over the same period. However, significant differences are observed in child mortality rates according to location and income level. Children from the poorest households are more than twice as likely to die before their fifth birthday than those from the richest households.⁴⁰

Timor-Leste has one of the highest rates of malnutrition in the world, with 46% of under-5 year olds suffering from chronic malnutrition.⁴¹ The prevalence of stunting, wasting and underweight are slightly lower in girls (43%, 22% and 38%, respectively) compared with boys (48%, 26% and 43%, respectively). However, malnutrition is much higher amongst children in rural than urban areas. The prevalence of underweight is similar amongst women and men (27% and 26%, respectively).⁴² Malnourished pregnant women have a greater risk of obstructed labour and death from postpartum haemorrhage.⁴³

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a composite measure of the nutrition situation of the population based on four indicators: undernourishment, child wasting, child stunting and child mortality. In 2019, Timor-Leste's GHI indicated a serious level of hunger, with the country ranking 110th out of 117 countries.⁴⁴ Malnutrition and food insecurity affect both the health of individuals, as well as impede development at the national level. The impacts of climate change and population growth will further compound these issues.⁴⁵

3.5 Work and economic empowerment

In Timor-Leste, there is a highly gendered division of responsibilities with regards to work and labour, which is legitimised by traditional patriarchal values, norms and practices. Women are half as likely as men to participate in the labour force (27% of women compared with 56% of men),⁴⁶ with the largest gender gap observed in the rural population aged 30-39.⁴⁷ Women account for 43.5% of subsistence agricultural farmers but household production activities are often not counted as labour force participation.⁴⁸ Domestic work and childcare are predominantly the responsibility of women and likely constrain their engagement in the labour market.⁴⁹ Some studies suggest that women in Timor-Leste work an average of six hours more per week than men, although this is mostly domestic work that is not assigned a monetary value. Permission from their husbands to undertake paid work is often only granted if temporary arrangements are made to cover their household responsibilities.⁵⁰

The reported unemployment rate is low for women and men (4.6% and 3.1% respectively);⁵¹ however, this is predominantly due to many Timorese being engaged in vulnerable or informal employment.⁵² Vulnerable employment is a notable issue in Timor-Leste; 70% of the labour force are classified as being in vulnerable employment and are therefore more likely to be affected by economic cycles and lack formal work arrangements. Vulnerable employment disproportionately affects women in rural areas; 87% of rural women compared with 54% of urban women are in vulnerable employment. However, the rate is also high amongst rural men (78% versus 37% of urban males).⁵³

Men are the main income providers in Timor-Leste, with only 24% of household income assigned to women.⁵⁴ Indeed, 80% of working women do not receive any payment for their work, which often involves

³⁹ World Bank, 2018. Country Profile – Timor-Leste

⁴⁰ GDS and ICF, 2018. Timor-Leste Demographic and Health Survey Key Findings 2016

⁴¹ Gorton, C. Future Directions International, 2018. Food and Nutrition Security in Timor-Leste: Challenges and Prospects

⁴² Government of Timor-Leste, 2016. Timor-Leste Demographic and Health Survey 2016

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe, 2019. Global Hunger Index 2019 – Timor-Leste

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Government of Timor-Leste. 2010. Timor-Leste Labor Force Survey 2010.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ The Asia Foundation, 2015. Beyond Fragility & Inequity. Women's Experiences of the Economic Dimensions of Domestic Violence in Timor-Leste

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ IRC, 2003. Traditional Justice and Gender Based Violence

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Asian Development Bank, 2014. Timor-Leste Country Gender Assessment

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

working for a family member or self-employment in agricultural activities.⁵⁵ Reliance on a man's income increases women's vulnerability to poverty, particularly in cases of abusive relationships whereby lack of income impedes bargaining power and mobility.⁵⁶

Microfinance is a promising means to enable the poor, especially rural people, to borrow small amounts of capital at reasonable interest to support income generation (e.g. buying stock or investing in machinery) and supplement consumption (e.g. pay for house repairs or education costs). Microfinance services reach around 5% of the population aged 15-64 in Timor-Leste, with more women than men benefiting due to several microfinance institutions specifically dedicated to female entrepreneurs.⁵⁷

Promoting the economic empowerment of women is essential for the realisation of women's rights, as well as for the achievement of broader development goals such as economic growth, poverty reduction and improving health, education and well-being.⁵⁸

3.6 Governance, influence and decision making

In Timor-Leste, traditional societal and cultural norms assign strict gender roles for men and women, which often leads to discriminatory practices against women.⁵⁹ At the local level, women have been largely excluded from roles of influence and decision making. In 2016 – before the *suco* (village) elections – 98% of the 442 *suco* and 2,336 *aldeia* (hamlet) chiefs were men,⁶⁰ meaning that women had almost no voice in the decisions of greatest relevance to rural women. However, in July 2016, a new law was ratified that stipulated that at least one woman had to stand in every *suco*. As a result, 319 of the 2071 candidates (15%) were women and the number of women Village Chiefs elected doubled, with many more elected as Hamlet Chiefs or women's representatives to village councils.⁶¹

Despite this progress, significant cultural shift is required in the social norms that govern decision making within the community to ensure that women's representation translates to women's participation. Lack of confidence and the perception of not being listened to limit women's participation in public planning process; and arise as a result of social norms in which women are expected to be subordinate to men, to be shy and not express their opinions.⁶²

At the national level, Timor-Leste has made significant progress towards achieving gender equality in representation. Timor-Leste has one of the highest proportions of female parliamentarians in the world, with 25 out of the 65 parliamentary seats (38%) held by women. This progress has been aided by the 2006 Law on the Election of National Parliament, which introduced a quota that requires one in every four candidates to be a woman. However, political representation does not ensure political influence. In 2012, only 18% of decision-making roles at the highest levels of government – for example, ministers, vice ministers and secretaries of state – were held by women.⁶³

3.7 Land and assets ownership

Land is one of the most fundamental productive assets in Timor-Leste, given that over 80% of its rural population is reliant on agriculture and natural resources for their livelihoods.⁶⁴ Women's rights to land are highly restricted; around 80% of land is acquired by customary law, which mostly excludes women due to existing patrilineal inheritance systems.⁶⁵ Women are also excluded from land management decision-making processes, including in matrilineal areas where women inherit land.⁶⁶ Lack of land rights

⁵⁵ USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific, 2014. Strengthening Community Resilience to Climate Induced Natural Disasters in Timor-Leste. Gender Report

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Asian Development Bank, 2014. Timor-Leste Country Gender Assessment

⁵⁸ Golla, A.M. *et al.* 2011. Understanding and Measuring Women's Economic Empowerment: Definition, Framework and Indicators

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ International Women's Development Agency, 2016. Timor-Leste doubles the number of women Village Chiefs in recent elections. Available at: <https://iwda.org.au/timor-doubles-the-number-of-women-village-chiefs-in-recent-elections/>

⁶² CARE, 2020. Rapid Gender Analysis COVID-19 Timor-Leste

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Care, 2015. Food, water, rain, risk: the uphill struggle to adapt. Final evaluation of the MAKAS project on community-based adaptation in Timor-Leste

⁶⁵ World Bank, 2009. Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook

⁶⁶ Ibid.

perpetuates gender discrimination through lack of financial security, independence and ability to improve their livelihoods.

3.8 Gender-based violence

Violence against women and girls in Timor-Leste is widespread and cuts across the country's income, culture and class divisions. Domestic violence is the most common form of violence against women in Timor-Leste, although women are also subject to non-partner rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment and trafficking.⁶⁷ More than a third (38%) of women have experienced physical violence during their adult lives;⁶⁸ and 59% of women aged 15-49 who have been in a relationship have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from a male intimate partner. Furthermore, 14% of women aged 15-49 have endured non-partner rape.⁶⁹ Of the women who have experienced abuse, less than one in four seek help and only 4% of those seeking help report the violence to the police.⁷⁰ Reluctance to report cases of abuse to the police include fear of repercussions, family pressures, economic dependence and self-blame.⁷¹

Timor-Leste adopted the Law against Domestic Violence (LADV) in 2010, which defined and criminalised domestic violence and required it to be investigated in the formal justice system.⁷² The Vulnerable Persons' Unit (VPU), a special unit of the national police force, is responsible for receiving and investigating allegations of gender-based violence.⁷³ An increasing number of domestic and sexual abuse cases have since been brought to the formal justice system. However, many domestic violence crimes continue to be addressed through customary justice. Hearings in the customary justice system are commonly conducted in public and are therefore not suitable for crimes relating to victims of domestic violence. Nevertheless, there has been an increase in overall public awareness that domestic violence is a crime requiring prosecution in the formal justice system.⁷⁴ In addition, many customary justice regulations adopted since 2010 state that domestic violence is a crime requiring investigation in the formal justice system.⁷⁵ The UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples highlights that "this points to the role that customary justice systems can play in socializing formal law and acting in favour of condemnation and prevention of such acts at the local level."⁷⁶

4. Gender-Related Political, Legal and Institutional Environment in Timor-Leste

4.1 Policy environment and legal framework

The Government of Timor-Leste is committed to the promotion of gender equality under its Constitution, which protects against discrimination based on gender (Article 16) and calls for equality between men and women in familial, political, economic, social and cultural life (Article 17).⁷⁷

Gender equality as a cross-cutting priority is also reflected in the Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030, which focuses on achieving gender equality goals through:

- Gender mainstreaming systems and mechanisms;
- Gender responsive policies and laws at national and local level;
- Strategies to raise awareness on gender disparities and issues;
- Empowerment of women through livelihood support and education programmes;
- Increased employment of women in the civil service;
- Policies, training and leadership programmes for increased participation of women in decision-making;

⁶⁷ The Equality Institute, 2016. Understanding Violence against Women and Children in Timor-Leste: Findings from the Nabilan Baseline Study

⁶⁸ GDS and ICF, 2010. Timor-Leste Demographic and Health Survey 2009-10.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ GDS and ICF, 2010. Timor-Leste Demographic and Health Survey 2009-10.

⁷¹ Asian Development Bank, 2014. Timor-Leste Country Gender Assessment

⁷² Timor-Leste SEM, 2017. National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence 2017 – 2021

⁷³ United States Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 2018. Timor-Leste 2018 Human Rights Report

⁷⁴ UNHRC, 2019. Visit to Timor-Leste – Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples

⁷⁵ Belum and The Asia Foundation, 2013. Tara Bandu: Its Role and Use in Community Conflict Prevention in Timor-Leste

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. Part II, Fundamental Rights, Duties, Freedom, and Guarantees

- Reproductive health programmes; and
- Zero tolerance policy for violence in schools and homes.⁷⁸

In June 2017, Timor-Leste also launched its second National Action Plan against Gender-based Violence (2017-2021). The Plan outlines specific actions to reduce and ultimately eradicate gender-based violence through a coordinated multi-sectoral approach, with four major pillars that include prevention, provision of services for survivors, improving access to justice, and increasing coordination, monitoring and evaluation.⁷⁹

The national gender priorities of Timor-Leste are influenced by the international commitments that the country has made through its signatory or party to international conventions and protocols.

In April 2003, Timor-Leste ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol. CEDAW was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 19 December 1979 and came into force as a treaty on 3 December 1981. The Convention requires all signatories to undertake legal obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of women.⁸⁰ The Optional Protocol establishes complaint and enquiry mechanisms for the CEDAW.⁸¹

Timor-Leste adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, including full support of SDG 5 on achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and recommitment to implementing the Beijing Platform for Action. The Brief on Gender and SDGs in Timor-Leste was published in 2018 and identifies the key issues and actions required to translate gender-responsive commitments into action.⁸²

In October 2016, Timor-Leste launched its National Action Plan for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2016-2020), which recognises the urgent need to mainstream gender into peacekeeping operations.⁸³ The Plan calls for actions to advance women's participation and leadership in decision-making and processes including defence and security sectors, peacebuilding and development.⁸⁴

Timor-Leste is a party to UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and ratified the Paris Agreement, which indicates recognition of the importance of gender equality in the UNFCCC process and in the development and implementation of gender-responsive national climate policies.⁸⁵

Furthermore, Timor-Leste is a signatory of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015- 2030), which acknowledges that climate change has a differential impact on women and states that "A gender, age, disability and cultural perspective should be integrated in all policies and practices, and women and youth leadership should be promoted."⁸⁶

4.2 Institutions

The Secretary of State for Equality and Inclusion (SEII) is the overarching national machinery for gender equality.⁸⁷ The SEII was formerly known as the Secretary of State for the Support and Socio-Economic Promotion of Women (SEM), before which was the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (SEPI).

⁷⁸ Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030

⁷⁹ UN Women. Member State commitments – Timor-Leste. Available from: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/get-involved/step-it-up/commitments/timor-leste>

⁸⁰ UN Women – Asia and the Pacific. CEDAW & Women's Human Rights. Available from: <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/focus-areas/cedaw-human-rights>

⁸¹ UN General Assembly, 1999. A/RES/54/4. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

⁸² Government of Timor-Leste, 2018. Gender and Sustainable Development in Timor-Leste

⁸³ UN Women – Asia and the Pacific, 2016. Press Release on October 20, 2016. Available from:

[https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Timor-Leste%20Officially%20Launches%20its%20National%20Action%20Plan%20for%20United%20Nations%20Security%20Council%20Resolution%201325%20\(2000\)%20on%20Women,%20Peace%20and%20Security%202016-2020%20.pdf](https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Timor-Leste%20Officially%20Launches%20its%20National%20Action%20Plan%20for%20United%20Nations%20Security%20Council%20Resolution%201325%20(2000)%20on%20Women,%20Peace%20and%20Security%202016-2020%20.pdf)

⁸⁴ Government of Timor-Leste, 2016. National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council resolution 1321 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security (2016-2020)

⁸⁵ UNFCCC. What is the connection and why is Gender and Climate Change important? Available from: <https://unfccc.int/gender>

⁸⁶ Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

⁸⁷ Timor-Leste, 2018. Human Rights Report 2018

⁸⁸ SEPI was established in 2008 as a legal agency and central government body with the objective of strengthening women's rights and gender equality.⁸⁹

The SEII coordinates with Gender Working Groups (GWGs) to ensure that gender priorities are mainstreamed into government activities. The GWGs were established in 2011 as an intersectoral cooperation and coordination mechanism to ensure that gender issues are included in national and municipal work plans, budgets and strategies.^{90, 91}

The 2019 UNDP Gender Assessment on Timor-Leste⁹² reported that SEM and the GWGs have basic competencies on gender issues but require technical support for gender mainstreaming. With regards to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction projects, SEM and GWGs have the following shortcomings:

- Lack of technical capacity for gender mainstreaming, especially in the use of gender analysis tools in combination with climate vulnerability risk assessment and in the provision of policy support for adaptation and disaster risk reduction initiatives; and
- Lack of influence within their respective institutions for consultation on project design, planning and implementation.

In 2014, Timor-Leste endorsed the Decentralisation Decree Law (no. 4/2014), which has strengthened the authority and decision-making power of sub-national administration units to assign services for their local communities.⁹³ As such, government authorities at municipal and *SUCO* level will be instrumental in supporting the implementation of gender-responsive actions targeted to the needs of their communities.

4.3 Civil society organisations

- ***Asisténsia Legál ba Feto no Labarik (ALFeLa)***

ALFeLa supports women and children in Timor-Leste to access a fair and formal justice system without discrimination through legal aid, legal education and advocacy. It is the only organisation in Timor-Leste in a position to provide legal assistance on civil law matters, including cases related to the Labour Code. In addition to advising and educating women, ALFeLa advocates for legal reform to ensure that the rights of Timorese women are prioritised; and works with politicians and law-makers to promote an enabling environment for women to seek justice.⁹⁴

- ***Fundasaun Alola (Alola Foundation)***

Fundasaun Alola is a not-for-profit non-governmental organisation that seeks to nurture women leaders and advocate for the rights of women in Timor-Leste. The Foundation was initially established to raise awareness of the widespread sexual violence against women and girls during the militia attacks of September 1999. Whilst sexual violence remains a key issue for the Foundation, its work is currently organised under four main pillars covering maternal and child health; education and literacy; advocacy; and economic development. Fundasaun Alola is the lead of the Human Trafficking Law Working Group, which focuses on ensuring resourcing to implement Timor-Leste's first ever law against human trafficking and raising awareness of its content.⁹⁵

- ***Covalima Community Centre***

⁸⁸ Government of Timor-Leste, 2018. Gender and Sustainable Development in Timor-Leste

⁸⁹ SEPI, 2014. Beijing +20 National Review – Timor-Leste

⁹⁰ UNESCAP. Gender Responsive Budgeting Timor-Leste. Available from: <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/7.%20Timor%20Leste.pdf>

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² UNDP, 2019. FP109: Safeguarding rural communities and their physical assets from climate induced disasters in Timor-Leste. Gender Assessment and Action Plan

⁹³ Government of Timor-Leste, 2014. "Pre-deconcentration policy promotes good governance". Available from: <http://timor-lesle.gov.tl/?p=10147&n=1&lang=en>

⁹⁴ International Women's Development Agency, 2020. Asisténsia Legál ba Feto no Labarik. Available at: <https://iwda.org.au/asistencia-legal-ba-feto-no-labarik/>

⁹⁵ International Women's Development Agency, 2020. The Alola Foundation. Available at: <https://iwda.org.au/the-alola-foundation/>

Covalima Community Centre (CCC) supports women's groups with a focus on strengthening livelihoods and leadership, as well as advocacy work at district level in Covalima. CCC provides women's groups with seed funding, training and support to identify and connect to markets in order to enhance their income-generation opportunities.⁹⁶

- **FOKUPERS**

FOKUPERS was established in 1997 to address gender-based violence and human rights violations against women and children in Timor-Leste. It is a community-based not-for-profit organisation whose work has expanded to include victim services, non-gender based early childhood education, advocacy and women's empowerment. The work of FOKUPERS is supported through the involvement of 31 community-based women's groups in eight municipalities and incorporates the operation of shelters, creches, legal support, training and development, economic empowerment, and community awareness raising.⁹⁷

- **Rede Feto**

Rede Feto is a network of women's organisations in Timor-Leste that aim to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through advocacy, networking and capacity building. Rede Feto was established in 2000 during the first Timor-Leste National Women's Congress and leads the Congress every four to five years, including regional consultations in all 13 municipalities. Its member organisations come from across Timor-Leste and include key players in delivering services and advocacy on key issues of concern for women – and particularly rural women. Rede Feto coordinates civil society monitoring of government implementation of the CEDAW recommendations; provides training for the Government and NGOs on gender issues; and represents women's rights and needs in many working groups and strategies.⁹⁸

5. Gender Roles, Gaps and Challenges in the GFCS Priority Sectors

5.1 Agriculture and food security

Agriculture is the main economic activity in Timor-Leste. Timorese women play an important role as cultivators, labourers and family workers. In 2018, 66% of employed women were self-employed as farmers, compared with 62% of men.⁹⁹ Despite the dominant role of agriculture in the livelihoods of Timorese people, agricultural productivity in Timor-Leste is among the lowest in the East Asia and Pacific region.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, female farmers produce on average 15% less per hectare of land compared to male farmers, with up to a 31% gap when adjusting for land size within the same sub-district. The gender gap is almost exclusively attributed to gender differences in factors of agricultural production, including women's disproportionately lower access to hired labour and farming tools, lower literacy rates, and limited involvement in cash crop production and farmers' groups.¹⁰¹

Given that subsistence agriculture is predominantly the responsibility of Timorese women,¹⁰² lower productivity of female farmers has significant implications for self-sufficiency and food security. Many households, particularly in upland regions, experience annual food shortages due to poor agricultural productivity. Resultant low levels of disposable income to offset deficits with purchased food compound the impact on household food security.¹⁰³

5.2 Disaster risk reduction

The National Disaster Management Directorate (NDMD) is responsible for providing disaster risk management coordination and technical support in Timor-Leste. It acts as the country's centre for disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities, which include collecting information, monitoring overseas developments

⁹⁶ International Women's Development Agency, 2020. Covalima Community Centre. Available at: <https://iwda.org.au/covalima-community-centre/>

⁹⁷ FOKUPERS, 2021. Forum for Timorese Women – About. Available at: <https://fokupers.org/about>

⁹⁸ International Women's Development Agency, 2020. Rede Feto. Available at: <https://iwda.org.au/rede-feto/>

⁹⁹ Timor-Leste, 2018. 2018 Census Analytical Report on Agriculture

¹⁰⁰ World Bank, 2014. World Bank Databank – Cereal yield per hectare

¹⁰¹ UN Women, 2018. Policy Brief Issue 4. Women Farmers in Timor-Leste: Bridging the Gender Gap in Agricultural Productivity

¹⁰² Asian Development Bank, 2014. Timor-Leste Country Gender Assessment

¹⁰³ Future Directions International, 2018. Strategic Analysis Paper. Food and Nutrition Security in Timor-Leste: Challenges and Prospects

and proposing development for incorporation into the national disaster risk reduction system. The NDMD is amongst others responsible for developing DRR strategies, including preparedness and response plans and assisting in district planning, and developing DRR and emergency response training programs in conjunction with relevant partners.

At the municipality (formerly district) level, the District Disaster Coordinator (DDC) is responsible for disaster response decision-making, response operations and DRR, and is assisted by a District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC). At the sub-district level, the Sub-District Administrator (SDA) is responsible for emergency and DRR activities, seeking assistance from the DDC or at national level as required. Within each *SUCO* (village), the Suco Chief and village leaders (elders, traditional leaders and village councils) are responsible for emergency and DRR activities. Requests for assistance should be passed through the village head to the SDA.

The Timor-Leste Red Cross Society (Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste – CVTL) was legally recognised as an auxiliary to the Government in 2005. CVTL has 2,367 members, 164 staff, 2,858 volunteers and a network of 13 branches across all 13 municipalities in Timor-Leste. As an auxiliary to the Government, CVTL plays a key role as a first-responder in saving lives and restoring livelihoods in the event of a disaster, including in the provision of emergency water and sanitation, hygiene promotion, protection, shelter, non-food items and livelihood support. CVTL participates in national emergency planning and national and district level disaster simulation exercises. Involvement of CVTL is key for the preparedness and response capacities of national and district DMCs and to enable them to deliver a coherent and rapid response.¹⁰⁴

Integration of a gender perspective in the activities of CVTL lies in the humanitarian mandate of the Red Cross – to prevent and alleviate human suffering without discrimination. The Gender Policy of CVTL sets out its goal to ensure that “all Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste programs benefit men and women equally, according to their different needs and with the input and equal participation of men and women at all levels within the CVTL”. To achieve this goal, CVTL commits to:

- Put in place institutional procedures that ensure that the needs of boys, girls, men and women are met equitably in disaster response, vulnerability reduction and the provision of health and other services;
- Formulate measures to ensure that gender-specific vulnerabilities and capacities of men and women are systematically identified and addressed;
- Ensure that data on beneficiaries is sex-disaggregated for needs assessment and program planning and gender analysis is integrated into program design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation;
- Design strategies for capacity building in gender mainstreaming as part of the institutional development program, with special attention to staff training on gender analysis skills;
- Ensure that reporting and accountability mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in activities and results are put in place – including performance evaluations, budget allocation analysis and actions to enable the full participation of women and men on an equal and meaningful basis;
- Develop forms to analyse gender for use by all CVTL staff in ensuring male and female participation in community projects;
- Ensure that each program has a specific activity line in responding to gender issues.¹⁰⁵

5.3 Energy

Energy consumption in Timor-Leste relies on the use of imported fossil fuels, which are used for electricity generation and transportation fuel, and local biomass.¹⁰⁶ Approximately 35% of households in Timor-Leste do not have access to electricity.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, the Government has acknowledged that one fifth of

¹⁰⁴ Timor-Leste, 2019. Disaster Management Reference Handbook

¹⁰⁵ CVTL, 2017. Gender Policy

¹⁰⁶ Fraga, L.G. *et al.*, 2019. Energies. The Potential of Renewable Energy in Timor-Leste: An Assessment for Biomass

¹⁰⁷ UNDP, 2014. Promoting Sustainable Bioenergy Production from Biomass in Timor-Leste – Project Document

the population will not have access to a centralised grid in the next 20 years, due to them being located in sparsely populated mountainous areas that are difficult to access and connect.¹⁰⁸ Poor access to affordable, reliable power limits economic growth in urban areas and contributes to poverty and low livingstandards in rural areas.¹⁰⁹

Wood biomass is mainly used for household heating and cooking purposes. It is estimated to account for up to 90% of the energy needs of Timor-Leste's population.¹¹⁰ The collection of fuel wood has a time cost – an average of 3.7 hours per person over 10 years of age per week – which reduces the time available for income-generating activities and home-based education. The burning of wood biomass has negative health impacts due to the release of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and is environmentally unsustainable.¹¹¹ Households rely on candles and polluting kerosene lamps for lighting.¹¹² The high and fluctuating price of candles and kerosene is a significant burden on household income and is prohibitively expensive for the very poorest families, meaning that many have no light source after dark.¹¹³ Reliance on these energy sources has gender implications, given that most household activities are carried out by women and children.¹¹⁴

Lack of access to electricity and reliance on fuel wood has significant impacts for affected families in Timor-Leste, including:

- Night-time hours are unavailable for activities such as school homework, fishing net repair, and general income generation;
- Female household members spend up to two days a week sourcing fuel wood;
- Deforested hillsides increase vulnerability to landslides and cause general land degradation;
- Increased risk of respiratory illness and general ill health due to exposure to wood smoke;
- High and variable cost and availability of kerosene and purchased wood is a major financial burden for low-income families and increases the risk of food insecurity; and
- Access to communications and information is reduced.¹¹⁵

5.4 Health

A detailed assessment of health and well-being in Timor-Leste is provided in section 3.4.

5.5 Water

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) is a national priority in Timor-Leste.¹¹⁶ Lack of access to clean water and sanitation facilities remains a significant health risk, particularly in rural areas. 75% of rural households have limited or no access to proper sanitation facilities and over 40% rely on improved water sources, such as unprotected well or spring water. Using water from these sources increases the risk of transmission of water-borne diseases.¹¹⁷

Gender is a major factor in WASH; it is predominantly women who collect and use water and provide healthcare and hygiene for the household. Almost 40% of the population lives at least 30 minutes away from their nearest water source, and women spend around three hours collecting water on a daily basis.¹¹⁸ Since 2010, around 780 community water management groups – *grupu maneja fasilidadade* – have been set up in *aldeias* (hamlets), of which approximately one third of the members are women. Data from a clean water and sanitation initiative (BESIK¹¹⁹) indicates that for those *aldeias* with a higher representation

¹⁰⁸ Keevers, L., 2020. International Social Work. Working together to reduce energy poverty in Timor-Leste with environmentally sustainable community-based economic development: A transnational developmental social work approach

¹⁰⁹ ADB, 2010. Country Partnership Strategy: Timor-Leste 2010 – 2015. Sector Assessment: Energy

¹¹⁰ Fraga, L.G. *et al.*, 2019. Energies. The Potential of Renewable Energy in Timor-Leste: An Assessment for Biomass

¹¹¹ ADB, 2010. Country Partnership Strategy: Timor-Leste 2010 – 2015. Sector Assessment: Energy

¹¹² Keevers, L., 2020. International Social Work. Working together to reduce energy poverty in Timor-Leste with environmentally sustainable community-based economic development: A transnational developmental social work approach

¹¹³ UNDP, 2014. Promoting Sustainable Bioenergy Production from Biomass in Timor-Leste – Project Document

¹¹⁴ ADB, 2010. Country Partnership Strategy: Timor-Leste 2010 – 2015. Sector Assessment: Energy

¹¹⁵ UNDP, 2014. Promoting Sustainable Bioenergy Production from Biomass in Timor-Leste – Project Document

¹¹⁶ CARE, 2014. Water for Women Project, Timor-Leste – Gender and Power Analysis Report

¹¹⁷ Asian Development Bank, 2014. Timor-Leste Country Gender Assessment

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Timor-Leste Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Program (BESIK). Phase II Design Document available from: <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/timor-lestes-rural-water-supply-and-sanitation-program-besik-phase-ii-design-document.aspx>

of women in the groups, water is more likely to be continually available in closer proximity to households.¹²⁰ Challenges to improve household-level WASH include low awareness among family members of sound WASH practices, gendered division of labour, and lack of income to construct toilets and purchase soap.¹²¹

6. Gender and Climate Change in Timor-Leste

6.1 Gender issues related to climate change impacts and risks

Climate change and related disasters have a differential impact on women and men due to the prevalence of gender inequalities that affect the ability of individuals and communities to adapt and respond to climate impacts.¹²² In a stakeholder consultation workshop conducted by WMO in November 2017,¹²³ the following climate-related events were identified as priority hazards in Timor-Leste:

- **Floods**

Loss of lives and properties are key concerns expressed by workshop participants. NGO representatives who work closely with communities highlighted that women and girls are amongst the most vulnerable groups during a flood event. Lack of strength or agility may reduce their ability to quickly remove themselves from danger zones. Furthermore, women, youths and children often do not own mobile phones and only listen to the radio in the evenings. Consequently, they may not have the means to hear warnings. As homemakers, women are vulnerable to losing a lot of their valuable home contents from floods and they have little to no established access to financial resources for quick rehabilitation.

- **Drought**

Timor-Leste frequently suffers from the impacts of extreme and extended drought.¹²⁴ In 2015, the El Niño phenomenon caused severe drought in Timor-Leste, affecting around 400,000 people.¹²⁵ The Humanitarian Partnership Agreement (HPA) assessment on the 2015 drought found that women were disproportionately affected by the effects of the drought, with 87% of women reporting suffering from the long dry season compared to 57% of men. This is particularly in relation to their household roles and responsibilities, as well as their work in farming and natural resource management.¹²⁶ Inconsistent or anecdotal trigger information can be costly advice for farmers. More reliable early warnings should be available for farmers in specific regions in a user-friendly format for illiterate farmers in rural areas.

- **Landslides**

High resolution satellite and Google Earth images recorded 773 landslides in Timor-Leste, in a natural hazard risk assessment conducted by RMSI in 2015.¹²⁷ Susceptibility to landslides is influenced by heavy rainfall, poor land use practices, geology and lithology. Women, elderly people, children and people with disabilities often spend most of the day at home and may be more exposed to the impacts of a landslide for any *SUCO*. Thus, gender, age and disability are social factors that influence a community's level of exposure to landslide. There is no known education awareness to address the issue. Lack of gender-specific education for communities to reduce gender-related landslide risks can cost lives.

6.2 Gender issues in accessing climate information and early warning services

The key gender issues identified by the analysis in relation to access to climate information and early warning services are summarised below:

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ CARE, 2014. Water for Women Project, Timor-Leste – Gender and Power Analysis Report

¹²² International Union for Conservation of Nature, 2015. Issues Brief – Strengthening climate action by promoting gender equality

¹²³ WMO Stakeholder Consultation Workshop in Dili – 23 November 2017. Further details are provided in Annex G1.

¹²⁴ Timor-Leste, 2019. Disaster Management Reference Handbook

¹²⁵ Reliefweb, 2017. Timor-Leste: Country Profile. Available from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/timor-leste/timor-leste-country-profile>

¹²⁶ Human Partnership Agreement (HPA), 2016. HPA Agency Assessment on El Niño Impacts in Timor-Leste

¹²⁷ RMSI, 2015. Building Climate and Disaster Resilience in Communities along Dili-Ainaro and Linked Road Corridors Project. Component 1: Natural Hazard Risk Assessment. Synthesis Report

- Social, economic, cultural, political and institutional factors contribute to men and women having differential access to climate information and early warning services.

Climate services are effectively unavailable in Timor-Leste and there is no systematic early warning system for hydrometeorological hazards.¹²⁸ Traditional knowledge is used by men to monitor disaster risks such as flooding. Women are often secondary actors and receivers of information because men have the cultural authority to receive and pass messages to community members. Lower income levels and lack of purchasing power also limit the ability of women to purchase communications assets used to disseminate climate and early warning information. Therefore, women must rely on men to communicate early warning messages to each household, via person-to-person contact.¹²⁹

- Discriminatory cultural and social norms may limit women's control and right to use and safeguard assets and resources against climate change impacts.

Women's rights to own land are highly restricted and traditional gender roles mean that they are also excluded from decision making regarding land management.¹³⁰ Women also report that they do not take disaster risk reduction actions until they receive the early warning message from men.¹³¹

- Access to climate information and early warnings within each gender group differs according to age, socioeconomic factors, geographic location and disability.

Early warnings do not reach remote, rural communities due to absent or inadequate observations and communications infrastructure; lack of technical and organisation systems to transmit and receive information; and lack of capacity of information providers to communicate information tailored to end-user needs, such as people with low levels of education or people with a disability.¹³²

- Women and men have different information requirements due to gender-based divisions of labour, roles, responsibilities, mobility and socio-cultural norms.

In Timor-Leste, rural women and men often share productive agricultural workload, but domestic and reproductive work is entirely the responsibility of women. Differing perceptions of climate risk reflects gender-based divisions of labour and responsibilities; women are more concerned about impacts on health, education and access to markets, whereas men are more concerned about damage to property and loss of livestock.¹³³ For climate and early warning information to be useful, it must be communicated in an actionable format targeted to the priority needs of the end-user.

- Women and men have different capacities to understand and use climate and early warning information.

Lower literacy levels of women in Timor-Leste limit their ability to read and understand climate and early warning information.¹³⁴ Lack of translation into local languages, overly technical presentation of information and absence of straightforward, practical advice further present barriers to effective communication.

7. Recommendations for a Gender Transformative Approach

Climate information and early warning services have significant potential to reduce risk and vulnerability and build resilience. However, there is a risk that existing gender inequalities will be reinforced if information products and services fail to understand and effectively target the varying needs of different gender groups. This Assessment identifies not only gender-sensitive but gender-responsive and transformative actions to support a paradigm shift in climate information, early warnings and disaster riskmanagement in Timor-Leste. Such actions will increase the effectiveness of Project interventions, whilst

¹²⁸ See Annex 2 – Feasibility Study

¹²⁹ See Annex G1 – Gender Consultation Workshop in Timor-Leste

¹³⁰ World Bank, 2009. Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ USAID, 2014. Strengthening Community Resilience to Climate Induced Natural Disasters in Timor-Leste: Gender Report

¹³⁴ Asian Development Bank, 2014. Timor-Leste Country Gender Assessment

simultaneously providing an entry point or opportunity to advance or demonstrate gender equality in action. The use of “gender-sensitive”, “gender-responsive” and “gender-transformative” terminology in this Assessment and the following Gender Action Plan are based on definitions provided by the World Health Organization (WHO)¹³⁵ and The John Hopkins University,¹³⁶ which are as follows:

- **Gender-sensitive** programming refers to programmes where gender norms, roles and inequalities have been considered and awareness of these issues has been raised, although appropriate actions may not necessarily have been taken.
- **Gender-responsive** programming refers to programmes where gender norms, roles and inequalities have been considered, and measures have been taken to actively address them. Such programmes go beyond raising sensitivity and awareness and actually do something about gender inequalities.
- **Gender-transformative** programming refers to programmes where gender norms, roles and inequalities have been considered, and measures have been taken to actively challenge them, promote positions of social and political influence for women in communities, and address power inequities between persons of different genders. Such programmes go beyond gender-responsive action by transforming unequal power relations and the structures and norms that uphold them.¹³⁷

The recommended actions that will be undertaken in the Project are outlined in the following sections.

7.1 Mainstream gender in climate information, early warnings and disaster risk management

The first step in delivering gender transformative outcomes is the acknowledgement that gender is an integral consideration in disaster risk management, climate resilience building and adaptation. This requires consideration of the probable impacts of gender norms, gender stereotypes and cis-normative assumptions, which can simultaneously lead to marginalisation of women and gender minorities, and identification of the ways in which existing vulnerabilities could interact with proposed interventions.

Throughout Project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, proactive effort is required to reach out to, partner with, and listen to the voices of marginalised groups. In addition, it is essential to recognise that women and gender minorities are not equally and uniformly vulnerable. As such, an intersectional approach is critical to ensure that the interaction of gender with other socially excluding factors is addressed. Such factors could include inequalities constructed on the basis of age, ethnicity, health, disability, marital status and sexuality, as well as lack of political rights or social recognition.¹³⁸

7.2 Ensure meaningful participation of women

Participation is a human right and a core element of rights-based approaches to addressing discrimination and marginalisation. The Project will support full and equal participation of women and gender minorities, both as an essential factor in protecting women’s rights as well as ensuring effective and sustainable climate action.¹³⁹ Recognising that participation alone does not guarantee gender equality, the Project will promote *meaningful* participation of women – in which women are present in decision-making fora *and* have the agency and voice to effect change¹⁴⁰ – from local to national level. Meaningful participation of women with respect to decision-making in the Project is elaborated under section 7.5.

Capacity building is a critical enabling factor for meaningful participation and is central to women’s empowerment. This will be supported by targeted information and knowledge products, services and training – with training and workshops scheduled to accommodate limitations to women’s mobility, and work and household responsibilities. Whilst the Project places particular emphasis on capacity building at the community level, meaningful participation of women will be concurrently targeted at district and

¹³⁵ WHO, 2009. Integrating Gender into HIV/AIDS Programmes in the Health Sector: Tool to Improve Responsiveness to Women’s Needs

¹³⁶ The John Hopkins University Health Communication Capacity Collaborative, 2014. Gender Transformative Approach – An HC3 Research Primer. Available at: <https://www.healthcommcapacity.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Gender-Transformative-Approaches-An-HC3-Research-Primer.pdf>

¹³⁷ CARE USA, 2015. Measuring gender-transformative change. A review of literature and promising practices

¹³⁸ Brown, S. *et al.* 2019. Practical Action. Gender Transformative Early Warning Systems: Experiences from Nepal and Peru

¹³⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2019. Analytical study on gender-responsive climate action for the full and effective enjoyment of the rights of women. A/HRC/41/26

¹⁴⁰ Mary Robinson Foundation, 2015. Women’s Participation. An Enabler of Climate Justice

national levels – for example, in sector mainstreaming activities and development of the National Framework for Climate Services. This approach is designed to broaden the gender-responsive impact of the Project and create an enabling environment for gender mainstreaming that goes beyond the localised nature of community-based interventions.

Participatory approaches should also be promoted in order to encourage transformative change in gender dynamics, in recognition that existing gender inequalities cannot be resolved solely by responding to the differential needs of women and men.¹⁴¹ Working collaboratively with men as well as women will be critical in this respect. For example, engaging men and traditional power holders in vulnerability and risk assessments will facilitate improved understanding of the structural inequalities and power dynamics that influence climate vulnerability. In the longer term, this will increase the likelihood that power holders will support an enabling environment for marginalised groups to voice their needs and priorities.¹⁴² Women and men will be encouraged to equally participate and be actively engaged in the development and implementation of community-based early warning systems and disaster risk reduction. Other intersectionalities such as age, ability and socio-economic group should also be considered.

7.3 Consider gender norms, behaviour patterns and information preferences in dissemination and communication

Gender differences affect the processing and dissemination of coherent climate information and risk warnings to the general population. Early warnings that lack a gender perspective can exacerbate the negative impacts of a disaster.¹⁴³ For example, women and marginalised groups may not receive hazard warnings because their behavioural patterns and communication preferences have not been accounted for, or because warnings have not been directly targeted due to assumed equal access to the public space.¹⁴⁴ The following actions will be undertaken as relevant to enhance gender responsiveness in dissemination and communication:

- Ensure that relevant frameworks and climate information products, services and tools are simplified and made available in Tetum / other local languages;
- Develop a gender-responsive communications strategy to ensure the dissemination of understandable and actionable climate information tailored to the needs of women and men across different ages, abilities, geographies and socioeconomic groups;
- Educate women and men on how warnings will be disseminated, which sources are reliable and how to respond to different types of hazard once an early warning message is received;
- Engage with *suco* (village) leaders as key contacts to ensure the communication of climate and early warning information to their communities;
- Include women's groups and networks as communication channels to disseminate climate and risk management information and enhance their learning capacity;
- Identify strategies to utilise and integrate traditional knowledge of vulnerable women and men into early warning systems.

The above recommendations identify local information channels and traditional knowledge as valuable means to improve communication at the community level. Local information channels can extend the reach of early warning systems (EWS) to facilitate that information is received at the last mile. Integrating traditional knowledge into scientific forecasts can be a highly effective way to engage with vulnerable groups and build trust between climate service providers and end users. The IPCC AR5 Report highlights that the integration of indigenous, local and traditional knowledge systems and practices with contemporary practices increases the effectiveness of adaptation.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ CARE, 2015. Gender dynamics in a changing climate: how gender and adaptive capacity affect resilience

¹⁴² ODI, 2016. Disasters and violence against women and girls. Can disasters shake social norms and power relations?

¹⁴³ UNISDR, UNDP and IUCN, 2009. Making Disaster Risk Reduction Gender-Sensitive. Policy and Practical Guidelines

¹⁴⁴ Brown, S. *et al.* 2019. Practical Action. Gender Transformative Early Warning Systems: Experiences from Nepal and Peru

¹⁴⁵ IPCC, 2014. Climate Change 2014. Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Summary for Policymakers

7.4 Tailor preparedness and response actions to the differential needs and capacities of vulnerable groups

Women are too often categorised merely as victims, which overlooks the fact that women can be powerful agents of change.¹⁴⁶ Whilst gender inequalities may increase women's vulnerability to disasters, it should be recognised that women have different but valuable knowledge, skills, experience and coping mechanisms that can be instrumental in addressing or managing climate-related risks.¹⁴⁷ The Project will identify and integrate these unique capacities of women and gender minorities into disaster risk management approaches. For example:

- Develop public awareness and education campaigns tailored to the specific needs and concerns of different gender groups;
- Include gender differentiated variables in hazard and risk maps and use these to develop disaster preparedness and response plans;
- Analyse gender-differentiated responses to previous disasters and incorporate gender-sensitive lessons learned into future capacity building strategies;
- Engage with women's groups to co-develop and implement capacity building interventions;
- Implement a community-based early warning system (EWS) in parallel with a top-down EWS to reinforce the value of traditional knowledge and as a back-up system to an automated EWS;
- Ensure that Forecast-based Financing actions are gender-responsive and that women and men have equal access to FbF resources.

7.5 Promote equitable power, decision-making and access to resources

Equitable decision-making at all levels supports the development of adaptive capacity and climate resilience that benefits entire communities. Evidence shows that women's inclusion in positions of leadership results in improved outcomes and actions that are responsive both to women's needs and to those of the wider community.¹⁴⁸ Active engagement of women and marginalised individuals in disaster risk management can facilitate transformative empowerment and create "safe spaces" where vulnerable groups have the agency to define their own need and determine potential solutions.¹⁴⁹ Such approaches are critical to enable more inclusive and gender-responsive disaster risk management.

In order to fully support women's empowerment in decision-making processes, targeted resources, knowledge products and training should be provided, particularly at the local level. In addition, the Project should promote interventions that enhance women's resilience and strengthen their access to the following livelihood assets:¹⁵⁰

- *Human capital* – Provide education and training of women to increase their employability and participation in salaried and non-vulnerable employment.
- *Social capital* – Create and strengthen local women's networks and groups and promote equal representation in local organisations and community meetings.
- *Natural capital* – Promote access to and ownership of land, and active engagement in decision making for natural resource management.
- *Physical capital* – Ensure equal access to information, transport and communication assets.
- *Financial capital* – Promote women's livelihoods through securing access to water, irrigation and agricultural production.

¹⁴⁶ UNISDR, UNDP and IUCN, 2009. Making Disaster Risk Reduction Gender-Sensitive. Policy and Practical Guidelines

¹⁴⁷ Brown, S. *et al.* 2019. Practical Action. Gender Transformative Early Warning Systems: Experiences from Nepal and Peru

¹⁴⁸ Mary Robinson Foundation, 2015. Women's Participation. An Enabler of Climate Justice

¹⁴⁹ Brown, S. *et al.* 2019. Practical Action. Gender Transformative Early Warning Systems: Experiences from Nepal and Peru

¹⁵⁰ DFID, 1999. Sustainable Livelihood Framework

7.6 Minimise the risk of Gender-Based Violence

The risk of increasing gender-based violence (GBV) can be minimised through adopting a gender-sensitive and responsive approach to the development of early warning systems (EWS). Based on awareness and understanding of the specific ways in which gender relates to EWS in Timor-Leste and the differential impacts of EWS on gender groups, the Project should ensure that disaster preparedness, response and contingency planning proactively consider gender and respond to the specific needs, concerns and capabilities of different gender groups.¹⁵¹ Where possible, the Project should consult with local GBV service providers and protection services in the development of EWS and related awareness raising initiatives.

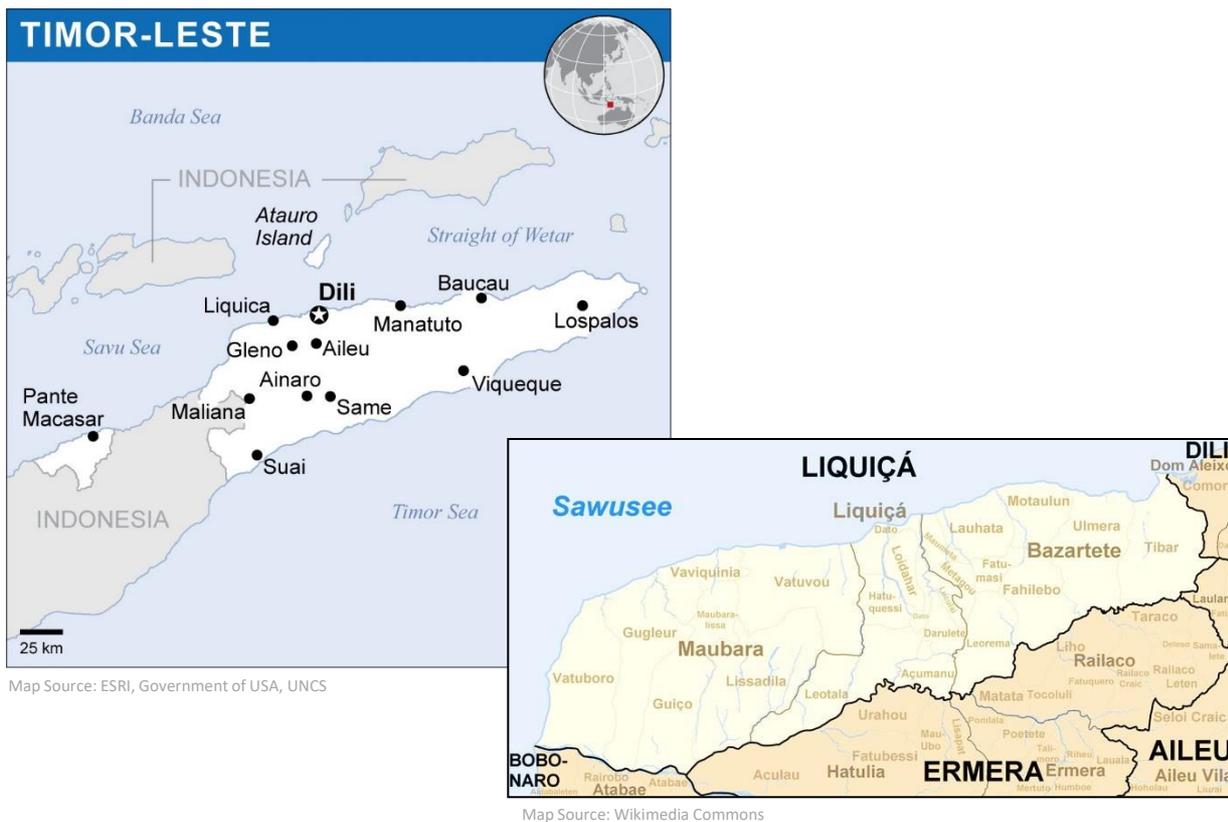
The Project should follow Good Practices as defined by the EU-funded Global Crisis response Support Programme.¹⁵² For the four key elements of EWS this implies:

- 1) **Risk Knowledge:** Risk assessments should include core questions on what gender-related factors contribute to specific groups of women, men, girls and boys being at greater risk during different types of crises.
- 2) **Monitoring and Warning Service:** The Project should assess which specific gender groups have access to which types of observational information and how each group can be leveraged for this information to help monitor for early warning signs of impending crises.
- 3) **Dissemination and Communication:** Gender and age differences related to communication of warnings should be assessed and a strategy developed that takes these into account.
- 4) **Preparedness and Response Capabilities:** Women and children should be considered as potential change agents rather than just as vulnerable groups. Project planning should take this factor into account and women at the community level should be engaged with to identify what factors need to be addressed to ensure their priority needs are also taken care of during different types of crisis and in the post-crisis recovery period.

¹⁵¹ Brown, S. *et al.* 2019. Practical Action. Gender Transformative Early Warning Systems: Experiences from Nepal and Peru

¹⁵² Global Crisis Response Support Programme. (2017). Good Practices for Gender in Early Warning Systems

Appendix 1 – Gender Consultation Workshop in Timor-Leste¹⁸⁹



23 November 2017

Preparatory mission to the Liquiçá Municipality

A field mission was conducted in the municipality of Liquiçá to prepare the community-based gender consultation. This municipality was chosen based on its variety in landscapes from coastal to upland areas. Common climate-related disasters in the municipality include flooding, landslides and droughts.

M. Terencio Fernandes Moniz (Director of the National Directorate for Meteorology and Geophysics), Mr Marçal Gusmao (National Consultant) and Ms Zelia A. Maria (National Directorate for Climate Change) took part in the mission to discuss organisation of the planned gender consultation. The field survey identified two villages from the Liquiçá municipality – Luculai (upland area with potential landslide hazard) and Ulmera (coastal area with flooding hazard). Meetings with the heads of Luculai village and Ulmera village are shown in the photographs on the following page.

24 November 2017

Gender consultation workshop in the Ulmera village

The group comprised Mrs Kristina (Gender Specialist), Mrs Zelia A. Maria (National Directorate for Climate Change) and Mr Leonito Gonzalves dos Santos (Ministry of Environment) and an Interpreter. Unfortunately, due to the road condition and transportation issues, the proposed consultations in Luculaivillage were cancelled.

Additional bilateral meetings were organised with Ms Isabel Pereira (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit – GIZ) and Mr Lorenzo Xavier (FAO).

¹⁸⁹ Based on the draft Gender Assessment Report prepared by WMO to support the formulation of a funding proposal on enhancing early warning systems to build resilience to hydrometeorological hazards in the Pacific small island states, including Timor-Leste. The initial programme was not realised; however, outcomes of the stakeholder consultations are relevant to the current proposed project.



Background

Ulmera village is located near the coast and is 30 minutes by truck from the capital Dili. The village is situated on swampy, waterlogged ground that is highly vulnerable to flooding from the nearby river. During wet season, the village is always waterlogged. Most of the houses are made from local materials with thatched roofs. There is a central meeting place with concrete flooring and copper roofing. The village population is estimated to be around 200 and is Catholic by religion. The village *SUCO* is led by a male.

A number of women were initially present for the question and answer session but left to attend another women's meeting. Therefore, mostly men were left in the meeting towards the end of the session. The question and answer session explored questions on:

- Who does what?
- Who has what?
- Who decides?
- Who benefits?

Who does what?

The community men and women consider themselves more as farmers than fisherfolk, although some fishing activities are also carried out. Division of labour is distinct between men and women. Men do most of the initial preparation for establishment of a farm or garden. For example, men do the vegetation clearance, burning the bush, mounding and preparing the area for planting, as well as the actual planning of fruit trees and vegetables. Meanwhile, women do the weeding, harvesting and marketing of surplus produce. Men are involved in the husbandry of animals such as pigs, buffalo, sheep, goats and chickens.

Some of the animals are used for the dowry and so are considered of higher value than the farm or garden produce. Overall, men and women in Ulmera are engaged only in the informal sector. There are no teachers or nurses in the community. Men engage in farming, fishing and woodcutting, and women in sewing and arts and craft. Men spend at least 11 hours a day outdoors doing farm work, fishing, community work or other outdoor activities. Women spend at least 12 hours a day carrying out domestic work including cooking, cleaning the house, caring for children, and unpaid care or community work.

Flooding is considered a major hazard in the area, although drought and strong winds are also a cause of concern for the community. During high rainfall, men watch the riverbanks to monitor the water level. Based on experience and traditional knowledge, men trigger flood warning if the rain has continued falling for more than two hours and the water level has risen above a certain marker on the riverbank. Men subsequently mobilise other men to message the women in each household to raise the alarm of potential flooding. Women do not take action until men relay the message and will wait for the message to come from the men before they start mobilising movement of household content to higher ground. The men physically relay the message to households. The message must be short and precise: to move to higher ground and remove valuable contents only. There are no sirens, bells or whistles used. Once the message is received by women, the women collect all valuable household items, including paper documents, and move them to safer ground. Women specifically move valuable items only during flood warnings. After the flood, women ensure that the house is properly cleaned so as to avoid health problems for members of the household. These measures have been practised by the community since it experienced two episodes of floods that resulted in the death of children due to drowning.

Disseminating messages alone does not fully protect the community. The men in the village have also constructed stone walls to divert water from the village. The work to construct stone walls also includes youths. These measures save human lives, but they are often not enough to save livestock, which are valuable possessions to the community both economically and traditionally.

There is no government-led early warning system for floods in the village. Current weather information is acquired through TV, for those who have access to one. Radios are better than TV because they are cheaper. However, the quality of radios is not good so the repair of radios can be costly over time for villagers. Men, women and youths consider SMS warnings not to be useful for their community as most people do not own a mobile phone and it is expensive to purchase credit for the phones. Women think that radios are good, but it is best if messages are relayed through the *SUCO* and are received via person-person contact. The women's groups in the community do church activities and community work, but the groups have no role in disseminating weather-related warnings to their members.

When asked, the community expresses that if they received early warning for flooding from the Government, they recommend that it be done one or two days ahead so that they have sufficient time to save their animals. Men indicated that TV is the preferred way to receive early warning messages. However, given that not everyone has access to a TV, radio is the best option. Women consider that TV is the best option but feel that *SUCO* leaders should also be used to inform the community as not all households have TVs or radio. The youths feel that SMS may have its advantages but very few people own or have access to mobile phones and are able to meet the need for continuous purchase of credit. Therefore, the use of TV and radio is still the better option to receive early warning messages.

Apart from the traditional early warning practice, there is no other early warning plan for the community. The traditional response practice reduces loss of lives and valuable household content, but it does not save the lives of valuable animals such as pigs, buffalo, sheep and goats. The community could save more assets, household content and avoid loss of lives by avoiding settlement in the area. However, it is inconceivable to move because the land is traditionally owned and passed from one generation to another. Therefore, it is important for the tribe to ensure continuous occupation and not desert the land for the benefit of future generations.

Who has what?

Men raise livestock, which fetch more money than handmade crafts and vegetables that women have a gender role (collecting and harvesting) in to earn money. Men therefore have access to more cash than women. Based on information provided in the meeting, more boys attend secondary school than girls. Land tenure is customary and is passed from generation to generation through the men as leaders. Men

also have access to traditional knowledge about the land and resources on the land. Women do not have rights over the land or the productive resources of the land.

A household can earn an average of USD 100 – USD 150 per week. The household mostly spends money on cultural obligations such as on dowry and funerals. The community is a subsistence community and so produce their own food for consumption. Healthcare services are free, and people do not spend money to go on holiday.

Few men, women and youths have access to mobile phones. Some households have access to TV and radios, and very few read the newspaper. The most preferred media for men is radio, for women is TV and for youths is mobile phones. Youths are quick to point out that although mobile phones are a good communication device, it is expensive to own one.

No training has been provided to the community in early warning systems or disaster risk reduction. They have no access to services at municipality level, including early warning systems. The community would like to have relevant disaster preparation training provided to them to improve their knowledge and understanding of threats and to avoid associated risks.

Who decides?

Men decide on household resources, assets and finances. Women have limited direct influence in decision making, although in community women's groups they are very active and have the space to make decisions for the association. Neither men nor women belong to a weather warning organisation or network in the community or outside of the community.

Who benefits?

The following needs with regards to climate impacts were expressed by men, women, young people and people with a disability.

Men:

- More lead time (two days) to save livestock;
- Improve the stone wall to divert water from the community;
- Access to radios for early warnings; and
- Access to relevant training.

Women:

- At least two days lead time to save household content;
- Receive messages through TV;
- Ensure that *suco* leaders take part in relaying early warning messages to the community; and
- Access to relevant training.

Young people:

- Access to radio for information; and
- Access to relevant training in preparedness for better responses.

People with a disability:

- More lead time to save lives;
- Person-to-person contact; and
- Relevant training for people with a disability.

Conclusion

For an effective early warning system for flooding, both men and women consider saving lives as their primary goal. Secondary to that, men consider saving livestock as important; and women consider saving valuable household content during floods and ensuring the health of household members after floods as also important. Both men and women also consider it very important to help people in the community with a disability. Men consider the training of young boys in preparedness for flood events is also important. No specific mention was made for the preparedness of young girls, although it is clear that girls would be

more vulnerable in floods than boys. Furthermore, for an effective early warning system for floods in the area, both men and women consider an early warning system with a lead time of at least two days would be better to meet their specific needs. Training is also considered essential for men, women, youths and people with a disability, based on their specific needs, priorities and perceived benefits. Use of *suco* leaders as champions is also considered important by women, who also value person-person contact in information dissemination.