

XI. Timor Leste - UDF-TIM-07-186-3964 - *Enhancing Women's Role in Timor Leste Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Nation Building*

i. INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

a. The project

The project

was implemented in Timor Leste by Rede Feto Timor Leste from October 2008 to December 2010 and included a 3 month no cost extension. The pr i X o

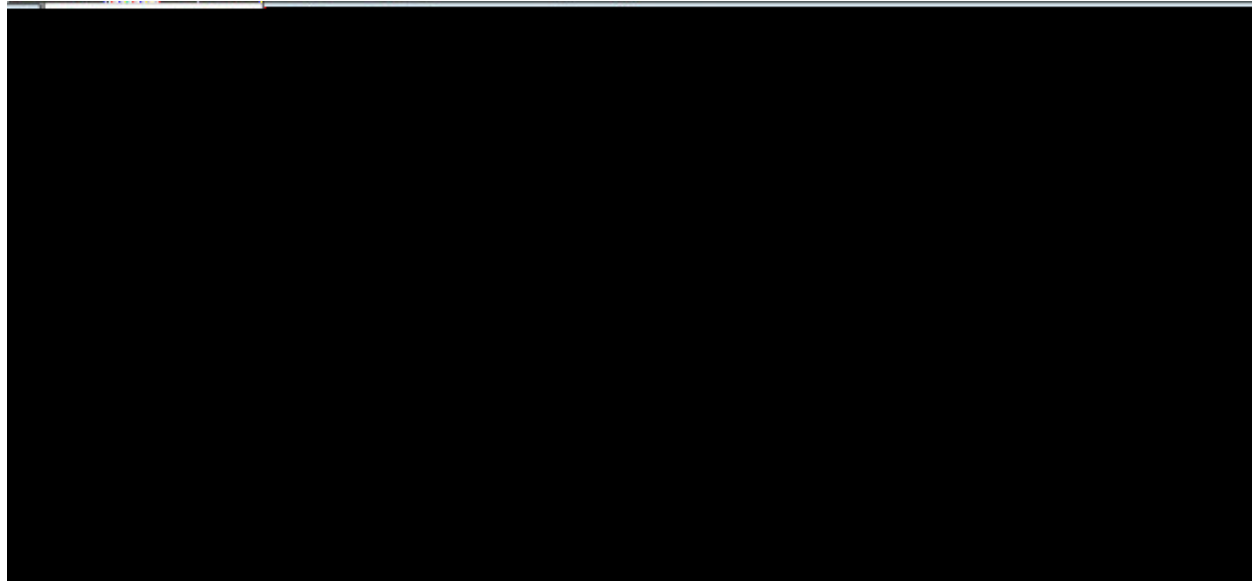
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undertaken by the evaluator to analyze the nine UNIFEM executed Round II project designs and create tailored guidelines/frameworks to ensure the success of the projects and end line evaluation undertaken by the evaluator to assess each of the nine UNIFEM executed projects in the framework of the established evaluation strategy goals.

The nine UNIFEM executed Round II projects were informed by the Mid term Assessment Reports, the Final Narrative Reports, and the Final Financial Reports. The evaluation was conducted by an international expert, and UN Women Political Participation Section managed the evaluation process. The evaluation was participatory and involved consultations with UNDEF, UN SRO/CO, UN partners and other major stakeholders.

c. Development context

Timor Leste gained independence on 20 May 2002. Prior to independence, the country was under UN administration (UN Transitional Administration of East Timor, UNTAET) for almost three years. Under UNTAET, Timor Leste made significant progress: adopted a new constitution which integrates international human rights standards, established the institutional infrastructure that constitutes the core of a democratic sovereign State and is essential for the long term development of the country and conducted seven free and fair elections. Nevertheless, the young nation faces deeply rooted challenges including chronic and extreme poverty, a high maternal mortality rate, high illiteracy, high levels of gender based violence, a lack of basic infrastructure for delivery of public services, and lack of protection mechanisms. In addition, the patriarchal nature of the Timorese society has compounded gender inequalities where women



Despite the progress in the numbers of women participating in the national and village elections, there continues to be lack of critical mass of women's participation in decision making. There is also a lack of accountability of those elected, as the links between women in leadership and their constituencies are weak. In most of the regions in Timor Leste women's participation in local governance remains weak due to their low levels of education and confidence, limited access to information, lack of awareness and opportunities to engage in discussions on women's issues and concerns, as well as limited time to participate in community activities. Additional limitations at the local level are that women play minor roles in decision making and lack organizational mechanisms to facilitate continued dialogue and realization of collective community activities. Against this background, the project views the situation as an opportunity to increase the number of women elected in political offices at local level, as councilors, and to support women's political empowerment in general.

ii. PROJECT STRATEGY

a. Project approach and strategy

About Rede Feto

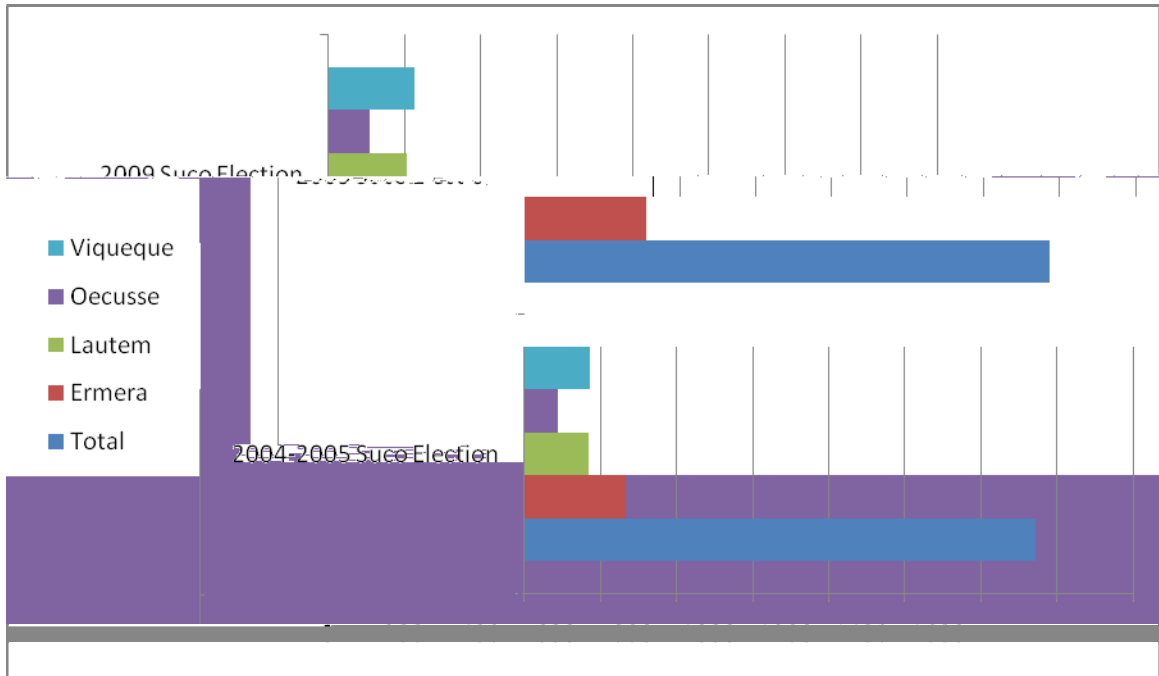
The implementing Agency, Rede Feto, is an umbrella organization encompassing 18 women's organization. Its main mission is to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Rede Feto's goal is to work against gender discrimination, to promote women's political and economic rights, and to encourage women's active participation in the post conflict building, reconstruction, and development in Timor Leste. Rede Feto has convened three national women's congresses and partners with an extensive network of NGOs/CSOs. The implementing agency has collaborated successfully with the national gender equality machinery in Timor Leste the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (SEPI).

Convening a meeting on women's political participation, Rede Feto



Strategies:

b. Logical framework



b. Effectiveness

TABLE 1: Female Suco Council Candidates in 4 target districts

		Ermera	Lautem	Oecusse	Viqueque	Total 4 target districts	% change 2004 05 to 2009
						239	39%
						394	
						29	48%
						15	
						89	66%
						30	
						0	100%
						11	
Total	2004 05	361	163	170	165	906	34%
	2009	483	235	260	260	1238	
% Change 2004 05 to 2009		25%	38%	67%	12%	34%	

Increasing the number of women elected in suco councils

In comparison to the local election in 2004 2005, the number of elected women in 2009 increased as follows: Ermera district by 16%, Lautem 18%, Oecusse 18%, and Viqueque 24%. Nationwide, the number of elected women for the same period has increased by on

						138		438	
						139	2%	441	1%
						2		7	
						3	33%	10	30%
						8		22	
						17	53%	37	41%
						0		2	

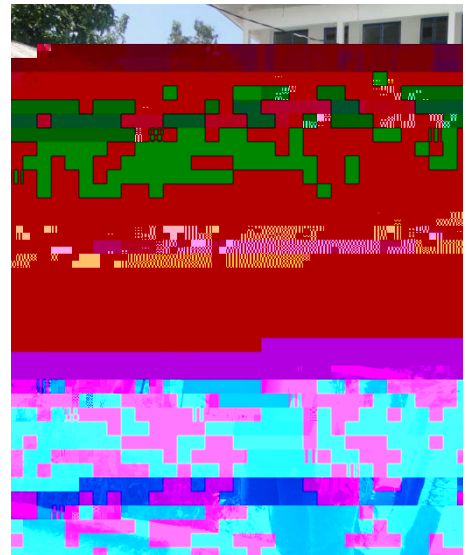
culture and the traditions of each society. Nevertheless, the initial observations of the implementing agency show that the elected women in the suco councils are fulfilling their commitments in accordance with the law and expectations of the community. Elected women are supporting victims of domestic violence, encouraging women in the community to attend family planning discussions, or trainings on agriculture, providing mediation of minor cases, assisting with information on health's programme on immunization and identifying community women's needs.

Adoption of gender sensitive local development plans

Despite the fact that a number of proposals for local development plans have been submitted and approved by Assistance to Suco Administration (DNAATS), they have not yet been finalized. Among the programs approved by DNAATS there are gender sensitive proposals on sanitation, nutrition, sports, and training which are the result of a consultative process between suco council members and their constituencies.

Accountability for adoption of local development plans

Monthly community meetings were held to discuss topics of local relevance and the implementation of the local development plans. The elected women in the suco council demonstrated confidence and capacity to fulfill their commitments to their constituents and represent the issues of the local communities



There are several challenges which have impacted the project im

both UNDEF's and UN Women's mandates. The main project activities related to increasing the number of women in the local suco (village) councils is a step forward in the enhancing of women's leadership and has an impact on the policy making at local level. Similarly, the awareness raising and capacity building activities implemented clearly reflect its commitment to the principles of gender equality and democratic development. The lessons learned\ will be applicable to similar programs which will be envisioned in Timor Leste and other countries in the region.

iv. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The project

, has contributed to strengthening women's political participation at the local level in Timor Leste. By increasing the number of women in the local suco councils the project has created conditions for introduction and implementation of gender sensitive policies and programs at local level and has raised awareness about the role of women's leadership in the process of democratization in the local governments of Timor Leste. The challenges and lessons learned indicate the need to pursue efforts to mainstream gender equality and good governance in policy making in Timor Leste.