

Timor-Leste



**Gender and Nation Building in
TIMOR-LESTE**

COUNTRY GENDER ASSESSMENT

**Pacific Regional Department and
Regional and Sustainable Development Department
Asian Development Bank**

**East and South East Asia Regional Office
United Nations Development Fund for Women**

November 2005

© 2005 Asian Development Bank

All rights reserved. Published 2005.
Printed in the Philippines.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data Available

Publication Stock No. 100505

Asian Development Bank

ADB country gender assessment to provide background information and analysis on gender and development issues in its developing member countries

1. Asian Development Bank; 2. Gender and Development; 3. Timor-Leste.

The views expressed in this book are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Asian Development Bank or its Board of Governors or the governments they represent.

The Asian Development Bank does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this publication and accepts no responsibility for any consequence of their use.

Use of the term “country” does not imply any judgment by the authors or the Asian Development Bank as to the legal or other status of any territorial entity.

Acknowledgments

This Report is one of a series of country gender assessments and strategies prepared in conjunction with Asian Development Bank (ADB) country strategies and programs. The primary purpose of the series is to provide information on gender and development in ADB's developing member countries to assist ADB staff in country and strategy formulation as well as in project design and implementation. Preparation of this report was jointly undertaken by ADB's Pacific Regional Department (PARD) and the Regional and Sustainable Development Department (RSDD), in cooperation with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

This study was prepared by a consultant, Reihana Mohideen, in close collaboration with Francesco Tornieri, Social Development Specialist, RSDD, and Helen Baxter, Social Protection Specialist, PARD. Special thanks are given to Milena Pires, Program Coordinator of UNIFEM, for her support and assistance during the consultative process for the development of the CGA. Thanks are also due to the officials of the Republic of Timor-Leste, representatives of external agencies and international nongovernment organizations, and development experts in Timor-Leste who generously shared information, documents, perspectives, and advice on gender and development issues.* In particular, the author wishes to thank the participants at the workshop held in January 2005 in Dili with representatives of line ministries, external agencies, and international nongovernment organizations. The author is grateful to the women and men of Timor-Leste, who, despite the urgent tasks set before them and the demanding responsibilities on their shoulders, gave their time and efforts to explain their vision and describe their contributions to gender and nation building in Timor-Leste. Ferdinand C. Reclamado provided production assistance. Editing assistance was provided by Sara Medina.

It is hoped that the report will also be useful to government and nongovernmental organizations and to individuals working in the field of gender and development.

Cover photograph courtesy of the United Nations Development Programme.

* For convenience, a full list is given in Appendix 1.

Abbreviations

ADB	—	Asian Development Bank
AIDS	—	acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
BHCP	—	Basic Health Care Package
CEDAW	—	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEP	—	Community Empowerment and Social Governance Project
CFET	—	Consolidated Fund for Timor-Leste
CSO	—	civil society organization
FOKUPERS	—	Women’s Communication Forum
FRETILIN	—	Revolutionary Front for Independent Timor-Leste
GAD	—	Gender and Development
GAP	—	Gender Action Plan
GDI	—	Gender-Related Development Index
GDP	—	gross domestic product
HDI	—	Human Development Index
HDR	—	Human Development Report
HIV	—	human immunodeficiency virus
HPI	—	Human Poverty Index
ILO	—	International Labour Organization
IMF	—	International Monetary Fund
IMFTL	—	Institute of Microfinance of Timor-Leste
INAP	—	National Institute of Public Administration
IOM	—	International Organization for Migration
MDG	—	Millennium Development Goal
MICS	—	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MMR	—	maternal mortality rate
MP	—	Member of Parliament
NDP	—	National Development Plan
NGO	—	nongovernment organization
OMT	—	Organizaçao da Mulher Timor
OPE	—	Office for the Promotion of Equality
RDTL	—	Republica Democratic de Timor-Leste
REDE FETO	—	Timor-Leste’s Women Network
SAS	—	Serviço de Aguas e Sanemento (Water and Sanitation Service)
SEP	—	Small Enterprise Project
SIP	—	Sector Investment Program
SME	—	small and medium-sized enterprises
TFET	—	Trust Fund for Timor-Leste
TFR	—	total fertility rate
UNICEF	—	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNDP	—	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	—	United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM	—	United Nations Development Fund for Women

UNTAET	—	United Nations Transitional Administration in Timor-Leste
UNTL	—	National University of Timor-Leste
USAID	—	United States Agency for International Development
WASS	—	Water and Sanitation Services
WSS	—	water supply and sanitation
WHO	—	World Health Organization

Currency Equivalents

Local Currency — US dollar

NOTE

In this report, "\$" refers to US dollars.

Contents

Abbreviations.....	v
Executive Summary	xi

Chapter 1 Background

A.	Socioeconomic Context	1
1.	Transition to Independence.....	1
2.	Recent Economic Trends	1
3.	The Government’s National Development Plan (2002).....	3
4.	Poverty	4
5.	Human Resources	5
6.	Infrastructure Rehabilitation	6
7.	Global Context	9
B.	Policy Environment for Gender and Development.....	10
1.	The Constitution and the Laws	11
2.	International Commitments.....	11
3.	Gender in National Development Policies	12
4.	Office for the Promotion of Equality	12
5.	The National Parliament	17
6.	Local Government.....	17
7.	Civil Society Organizations	18
8.	Donors’ Activities	19

Chapter 2 Gender Status and Trends

A.	Gender and Poverty.....	21
1.	Gender and Income Poverty.....	23
2.	Gender and Food Security.....	31
B.	Gender and Human Resources Development.....	33
1.	Gender and Education.....	33
2.	Gender and Health	41
C.	Gender and Governance.....	47
1.	Women’s Representation at the Central Level.....	47
2.	Women’s Representation at the Decentralized Level	48
3.	Women’s Access to Justice.....	48

Chapter 3 ADB Gender Strategy and Recommendations

A.	ADB’s Current Portfolio.....	53
1.	Emergency Infrastructure Rehabilitation Projects	54
2.	Water Supply and Sanitation Rehabilitation Projects	54
3.	Microfinance Development Project	54

4.	Community Empowerment and Social Governance Program	55
5.	Capacity Building to Strengthen Public Sector Management and Governance Skills	56
6.	Lessons Learned.....	56
B.	Opportunities and Challenges for Gender Mainstreaming.....	57
C.	ADB Country Gender Strategy (2005–2008).....	59
1.	Road Improvement.....	60
2.	Water Supply and Sanitation.....	61
3.	Infrastructure-Related Capacity Development.....	62
4.	Operational Approaches.....	62

References.	63
Appendix 1. Persons Met during Gender Assessment Missions	65
Appendix 2. Development Coordination Matrix	66

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Human Development Index for Timor-Leste	5
Table 2. Access to Safe Water and Sanitation	7
Table 3. Comparison of Timor-Leste’s Human Development Index (2002).....	9
Table 4. Gender Priority Sectors in the Sector Investment Programs	14
Table 5. Targets for Income-Poverty Reduction and the MDG.....	22
Table 6. Labor Force Participation Rates	24
Table 7. Characteristics of Selected Industries	24
Table 8. Public Sector Employment	28
Table 9. Gender-Relevant Strategies, Programs/Projects, and Indicators	30
Table 10. Hunger Reduction Targets and the MDG.....	32
Table 11. Primary Education Targets and the MDG	34
Table 12. Gender Equality Targets in Education and the MDG.....	34
Table 13. Primary and Secondary School Enrollment Rates.....	35
Table 14. Tertiary Education Enrollment Rates	35
Table 15. Maternal Health Targets and the MDG	41
Table 16. Selected ADB-Administered TFET and Grant Projects (2005)	53
Table 17. Asian Development Bank Portfolio and Pipeline (2005–2008)	60

LIST OF BOXES

Box 1. The National Development Plan’s Long-Term Development Goals	3
Box 2. Objectives of the Electrification Program.....	7
Box 3. Objectives for the Transport Sector	8
Box 4. Objectives for the Communications Sector.....	9
Box 5. Decentralization	18
Box 6. Causes of Poverty Identified in the National Development Plan.....	21
Box 7. The Gender Division of Labor in a Typical Farming Household	25
Box 8. Women’s Access to Economic Opportunities.....	26

Box 9. Regional Women's Congresses: Issues for Poverty Reduction	29
Box 10. Regional Women's Congresses: Issues for Literacy	36
Box 11. Regional Women's Congresses: Issues for Health	39
Box 12. Regional Women's Congresses: Issues for Reproductive Health	43
Box 13. Regional Women's Congresses: Issues of Justice, Governance, and Culture.....	49

Executive Summary

Timor-Leste is still recovering from the destruction and trauma that have followed decades of conflict. The violence that followed the referendum results in 1999 resulted in massive destruction of infrastructure, the virtual collapse of the education and health care system, a massive loss of skilled personnel, and an almost 50% collapse in agricultural output.

Measured by both income and broader human development indicators, Timor-Leste is one of the world's poorest countries. Per capita GDP is estimated at only \$426 (2004). Forty percent of the population lives below the national poverty line of \$0.55 per day and in the rural areas the incidence of poverty rises to 46% (2001). Some 28% of women suffer from malnutrition, out of which 7% are severely malnourished and in need of treatment. Almost half the population is illiterate. Health standards are low; overall life expectancy is only 57 years (UNICEF 2003).

Despite the major poverty-related challenges facing the world's newest nation, the achievement of independence has brought with it a sense of optimism among the population, thereby accumulating great human potential. "Nation building" in Timor-Leste today offers a unique opportunity for genuine human development and progress in gender equality. Women have placed their mark on this nation-building process right from its inception, with the election of 25% women representatives to Parliament (2001). However, women continue to be particularly vulnerable to living in poverty.

Women have higher unemployment rates and lower labor force participation rates. Most women and men labor in the informal sector, but women tend to be concentrated in the lower income-generating areas of the informal workforce. Trends are also emerging of sex segregation in the paid labor force in the urban centers and a gender gap in wages. United Nations Development Programme data point to significant gender gaps in earnings: male earnings are estimated to be eight times those of females. Women's reproductive work as primary caregivers in the home is a major constraint to their income-generating activities.

The rebuilding of the education system after the destruction in 1999 is a major achievement. The improvement in primary school enrollment rates has been significant. However, high dropout rates and repetition rates are a major challenge, and indications that female students at the secondary school (senior) level are dropping out are significant. Access to education continues to be a problem for girls, who face a range of cultural and other impediments preventing them from accessing and receiving adequate quality education: the long-distance trek to school, work in the home, financial constraints, and early pregnancy. Female adult illiteracy is very high: an estimated 52% of women are literate, compared with 65% male literacy (UNICEF 2003). Adult literacy and vocational training programs have hitherto been unsuccessful in involving and sustaining women's participation.

A major health problem facing the country is the high maternal mortality rate of 800 per 100,000 births (UNICEF 2003). This is related to high fertility rates and short periods between pregnancies. The country's total fertility rate of over 7 (UNICEF 2003) is one of the highest in the world. Rates of contraception usage are low: only 8% of nonpregnant women currently married or

living together with a male partner use contraception (UNICEF 2003). Women also suffer from work hazard-related health problems such as chronic respiratory and heart diseases, due to constant exposure to fuel-based cooking fires, as well as back and spinal problems and miscarriages, due to carrying heavy loads. Mental health problems associated with the violence inflicted on women during the occupation (including rape and other forms of physical and emotional torture), as well as domestic violence, are also prevalent. Several findings point to the high prevalence of domestic violence as a major social and human rights challenge for the country.

Food insecurity is widespread as a result of low agricultural productivity exacerbated or triggered by natural disasters such as floods and drought. Women suffer disproportionately: almost one third of the female population is malnourished (UNICEF 2003). Findings point to low nutritional and food intake among women, especially between the harvesting seasons.

Tangible gains have been made, however, in the area of governance. The Government is pursuing a strategy of affirmative action for women. The 25% women Members of Parliament seated and the 25% level of women employed in the public sector, as a result of a 30% target quota for women, are the most identifiable outcomes. A target has also been set for the ongoing *suco* (village) council elections (2004–2005), ensuring at least three seats for women in *suco* councils.

Gender equality is guaranteed under the Constitution and the Government is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and has adopted the Millennium Development Goals targets and indicators in national planning. The Government has a stated commitment to mainstreaming gender in its national programs and has targeted the education, health care, justice, and police sectors as priorities. The Office for the Promotion of Equality (OPE) has been set up to assist in the coordination of this process and to advise the various ministries and departments. However, there is still a fair way to go in developing legislation and regulations that enable the implementation of gender equality goals and objectives.

The report concludes that major opportunities exist for making progress on gender equality, as do significant challenges that need to be addressed so that women and men can make full use of these opportunities and create new ones. The opportunities are provided by the fact that this is a new nation in the making, with a Government that is clearly committed to gender equality and that has set in place a policy framework conducive to advancing gender equality objectives. To consolidate and build on these openings will require a big effort on several fronts, including the following:

- Put in place enabling laws, such as the antidiscrimination and domestic violence legislation, in order to consolidate and strengthen the gains made in the area of governance.
- Conducting gender training and capacity development is critical to effectively implementing government policies and programs. Targeted training in gender analysis, combined with sector-specific guidelines and tools for gender mainstreaming in the public sector, is needed, starting with OPE's priority sectors for gender mainstreaming: education, health care, justice, and the police.

- Conduct gender training and capacity development for women representatives in Parliament and local governance bodies such as the *suco* councils.
- Develop a sex-disaggregated database to free up targeted gender-sensitive policy and program development from the lack of sex-disaggregated data. Producing such a database in the strategic ministries has also been identified as a priority by OPE.
- Increasing and sustaining girls' participation in education, especially at post-primary school levels, is a key challenge linked to tackling a range of education access issues, such as easier access to schools, school premises that are suitable for girls, gender-sensitive curriculum development, and a nationwide education campaign to highlight the importance of girls' education, aimed at encouraging parents to send their girl children to school.
- Increasing female adult literacy and skill levels can be accomplished through adult education and vocational training programs targeted at increasing and sustaining women's participation.
- Reducing maternal and child mortality rates is most urgent.
- Introduce family planning programs to reduce high fertility rates, based on raising women's and men's awareness about their sexual and reproductive health rights.
- Promote a culture of equality. Patriarchal aspects of Timorese culture continue to be a major constraint posing a clear challenge to women's empowerment. They are also potential impediments to women's and men's ability to make use of the opportunities that have been opened up in gender equality.
- Bringing about greater unity among women around a "clear strategy to move forward" is another challenge identified by women across the spectrum "Women do not support each other" is the common refrain.¹
- Poverty reduction, based on improving income poverty among women and men, is a key challenge. A key aspect of this is a deliberate strategy to increase women's labor force participation rates at higher income levels in all sectors and levels of the economy. If tangible progress, however small, is not made on this front, it could undermine the ability of women to make use of existing opportunities and create new ones.

ADB Country Gender Strategy (2005–2008)

Rebuilding the social fabric of Timor-Leste, after decades of conflict, requires continued attention to addressing the persistent gender-based discriminatory practices that critically affect the impact of post-conflict reconstruction efforts. ADB's *Policy on Gender and Development* adopts mainstreaming as a key strategy to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and as a crosscutting concern in all activities. Thus, the Timor-Leste gender and development strategy will promote gender mainstreaming in all activities and explore linked, gender-specific activities to correct gender disparities and increase women's participation in and benefit from project activities.

¹ Assessment of some critical issues facing the women's movement made by Manuela Leong Pereira, Executive Director, FOKUPERS (a women's nongovernment organization).

ADB's Timor-Leste portfolio for 2005–2008 applies this strategy across the board. The *Road Sector Improvement Project* (August 2005) aims to increase women's access to employment opportunities in road rehabilitation and maintenance; the community empowerment component will have a strong gender focus, as will skills transfer. The project will finance culturally sensitive and gender-responsive HIV/AIDS prevention. The gender design features mark ADB's first attempt to mainstream gender concerns into Timor-Leste infrastructure projects; similar initiatives will mark the *Infrastructure Capacity Development Project* (Phases I–III) (2006 et seq.).

ADB's *Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Project* (2006), in its preparatory activities, has placed a strong emphasis on participatory and gender-sensitive methodologies to identify the special needs and demands of both women and men of the community. The data thus gathered will inform project design in concrete and practical ways. Likewise, the preparatory work for the *Water and Sanitation Service Organizational Development Project* (2006) identifies gender issues in the institutional building and development of the Water and Sanitation Service (at present, no women occupy senior technical positions); redressing this imbalance should be a project target.

ADB's *Infrastructure Capacity Development Project* (Phase I) (2006) addresses one of the major challenges for poverty reduction in Timor-Leste: capacity development in governance. The project will help the OPE to further its gender mainstreaming agenda by including provisions for gender training in many aspects of governance, to strengthen infrastructure ministries ability to prioritize investment opportunities likely to benefit women.

Important approaches to integrating gender equality and women's empowerment concerns into projects include (i) gender situation analysis in the project design phase; (ii) project design to include gender-sensitive objectives, strategy focus, and outcomes; (iii) involvement of women's departments, nongovernment organizations, or networks in project design; (iv) collection of sex-disaggregated data and establishment of gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation systems; (v) consultation with women beneficiaries and others affected by project activities; (vi) inclusion of gender consultants to assist with gender-sensitive project design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation; and (vii) gender impact assessment of the project. These approaches can be brought together in a project-specific gender action plan, identifying strategies, mechanisms, and project components for addressing gender concerns.

A. Socioeconomic Context**1. Transition to Independence**

The Republic of Timor-Leste is the world's newest nation, having formally achieved independence on May 20, 2002. Right from its inception, women have demanded recognition and the opportunity to make a distinctive contribution to the nation-building process.

Timor-Leste was, and continues to be, under an extremely traditional patriarchal culture. But conflict that results in major social dislocation, while extracting at times even a disproportionate toll from women due to their special vulnerabilities, can also create opportunities for them, as traditional cultural stereotypes are shaken and undermined. During the resistance years of occupation, women were called on to play a range of roles and carry out a multiple range of tasks they had never done before. The documentation of the role played by women and the violence they suffered is now taking place (OPE 2002).

After decades of conflict and social and political instability, a new generation of young women has grown up in these changed conditions. These realities pose challenges and also provide opportunities for women to redefine their role and place in the new nation. However, as the experiences of other countries show, the pressures on women in post-conflict situations to go back and resettle in their former social roles are tremendous.

How women and men negotiate these challenges and opportunities in the unfolding nation-building process will mark the sociocultural and economic features of the newly-emerging nation.

2. Recent Economic Trends

Since 1999, the economy and social conditions in Timor-Leste have undergone major fluctuations in the conflict and post-conflict periods. The violence in 1999 had a devastating impact on the country's already fragile economy, thus further impoverishing the people.

Around 80% of schools and clinics were completely or partially destroyed, agricultural production was disrupted, and a significant proportion of the livestock was lost; electricity supplies and telephone lines were damaged. The local market systems and transport systems collapsed.

The loss of trained personnel was also significant, especially in the public sector. In the civil service, around 25% were non-Timorese and most of these were in the top positions in the administration. The education system virtually collapsed with the destruction of almost 90% of the facilities and the departure of 80% of specialized teachers and administrators.

The economy contracted abruptly: gross domestic product (GDP) declined by 38.5% and agricultural output fell by figures ranging from 35% (Food and Agriculture Organization estimates) to 48% (International Monetary Fund estimates). Inflation skyrocketed: the Consumer Price Index in Dili rose by 200% and the price of manufactured goods rose by over 500% between August and October 1999.

External support and the restoration of relative stability helped stimulate the economy, which made a strong recovery in 2000 and 2001. Production of most food crops reached pre-1999 levels. Rice production is still lower than mid-1999 levels and has been hindered by underdeveloped domestic markets, storage, processing and distribution networks—or a complete absence of them; eroded irrigation infrastructure, and the removal by the Government of production subsidies.

In 2000, coffee production rose by some 40%, but most of the gain was not realized because coffee prices declined on the world market. Inflation started to decline rapidly in 2000, but the tenuous economic recovery was undermined by the withdrawal in 2002 of United Nations personnel and a large number of expatriate staff, as well as by the slowing down of reconstruction work.

Flood damage to crops following a delayed rainy season in 2002 caused a decline in agricultural production. The following year, reports of droughts in the south of the country raised concerns about food security, as the country continues to be extremely vulnerable to food security-related crises induced by extreme weather conditions of droughts and floods.

At present, 82% of the workforce is employed in agriculture, 14% in services, and 4% in industry. Agriculture contributes only 26% to the GDP, however, while the contribution of services is 56%, indicating a very low level of productivity in agriculture, with productivity in services and industry 10 times higher (Government of Timor-Leste 2004).

Production of oil and gas in the Timor Sea is already providing significant revenues, and the outlook is for these revenues to rise for the next decade before tapering off as the petroleum reserves are depleted. At present, total Timor Sea revenues in the 2004–2005 fiscal years are estimated at US\$129 million,² but the exact value of the petroleum resources is uncertain. The reserves that can be extracted from already known oil and gas fields can prove smaller or larger than originally estimated, and new fields may be discovered. The maritime boundaries between Timor-Leste and Australia are legally uncertain, and negotiations are currently underway to settle the issue. How this is resolved may affect the estimate of petroleum reserves. Petroleum prices have historically shown large fluctuations, and great uncertainty surrounds the earnings Timor-Leste will receive from the sale of oil and gas in the future.

² This amount compares with total combined sources expenditures of \$245 million (which also includes activities through the UN and other development partners), and GDP at less than \$350 million (Ministry of Planning and Finance 2004a).

3. The Government's National Development Plan (2002)

Timor-Leste's Development Strategy is described in the *National Development Plan* (NDP) and associated Road Map, adopted in 2002 (Prime Minister and Cabinet, Timor-Leste Government 2002), which define the Government's long-term development goals in terms of (i) reduction of poverty and (ii) promotion of equitable and sustainable economic growth by the year 2020. Timor-Leste's far-reaching vision is presented in Box 1.

Box 1. The National Development Plan's Long-Term Development Goals

- Timor-Leste will be a democratic country with a vibrant traditional culture and a sustainable environment;
- It will be a prosperous society with adequate food, shelter and clothing for all people;
- Communities will live in safety, with no discrimination;
- People will be literate, knowledgeable and skilled. They will be healthy, and live a long, productive life. They will actively participate in economic, social and political development, promoting social equality and national unity;
- People will no longer be isolated, because there will be good roads, transport, electricity, and communications in the towns and villages, in all regions of the country;
- Production and employment will increase in all sectors - agriculture, fisheries and forestry;
- Living standards and services will improve for all East Timorese, and income will be fairly distributed;
- Prices will be stable, and food supplies secure, based on sound management and sustainable utilization of natural resources;
- The economy and finances of the state will be managed efficiently, transparently, and will be free from corruption; and
- The state will be based on the rule of law. Government, private sector, civil society and community leaders will be fully responsible to those by whom they were chosen or elected.

Source: Prime Minister and Cabinet, Timor-Leste Government, 2002.

The Government's priority initiatives to achieve its stated long-term development goals are presented based on the following sets of priority tasks and sequencing:

1. Establishing Government capabilities, enabling legislation, and the institutions required to pursue development priorities. These are significant challenges that become unmistakably visible in each of the NDP sector strategies where the ministries and their directorates emphasize these priorities.
2. Pursuing development activities that help reduce poverty for every sector. These are very often interdependent with priorities of economic growth, through which the nation's productive capacity is strengthened to create new jobs and higher levels of earned income, and, in time, a vibrant middle class.
3. Addressing monetary, social, cultural, and structural impediments to economic growth and to the nation's efforts to reduce poverty. Many sector-specific objectives are subsequently focused on reducing or eliminating these barriers, so that progressive development programs can be achieved.

The overall structure of the Development Strategy orchestrates these high-priority development tasks, recognizing that they must be pursued concurrently. The NDP represents two phases of development. In the short term, legislation and institutional capabilities will be addressed, together with progress in infrastructure, education, and health care. In the longer term, development can accelerate on the basis of these foundations.

The Government has made good progress in implementing the NDP and Road Map by having all agencies formulate annual action plans linked to the budget process, and by the development of comprehensive sector investment programs (SIPs). The SIPs will aid government decision making by prioritizing expenditures within and across sectors, and will identify investment opportunities for both the Government and development partners. The SIP process (in keeping with the Government's past practice with the NDP) has been highly consultative, with significant partner involvement and commitment. The Government has demonstrated a strong commitment to planning and monitoring the achievement of these plans.

4. Poverty

Timor-Leste is still one of the world's poorest countries, measured by both income and the broader Human Development Index (HDI). The country had a population of less than 1 million people in 2004. Some 41% of Timor-Leste's population lives in income poverty, below the national poverty line of \$0.55 per person per day. A higher proportion of people in the rural areas are poor than in the urban centers—46% compared with 26%. Of these, the poorest groups are in households that have many children, that have small landholdings and little livestock, and that live in areas that are prone to flooding and soil erosion (UNDP 2002).

The incidence of poverty³ is around 40% of the total population, i.e., two in five people are unable to meet food and nonfood consumption requirements; 47% of children under 5 years of age are malnourished (Table 1).

Poverty rates also vary across the country. The three western districts (Oecussi, Bobonaro, and Covalima), which are home to 20% of the population, account for about 25% of the poor. In contrast, the three Eastern districts (Baucau, Lautem and Viqueque) account for about 25% of the population, but less than 20% of the poor. Trends also indicate that the highland areas are poorer than lowland areas. Inequalities are also related to the degree of urbanization: the incidence of poverty in rural areas is 20% higher than in urban areas. It is lower in Dili and Baucau, the two largest urban centers, than in other urban centers, and varies depending on the sex, age, and educational level of the household head (Government of Timor-Leste et al. 2003: 26).

The HDI measures the overall achievements in a country based on life expectancy, educational attainment, and adjusted real income. The UNDP *Human Development Report* (UNDP 2001) calculated the HDI for 162 countries, based on 1999 data. Of these countries, Norway occupied first place with an HDI of 0.939, while Sierra Leone occupied the bottom position with an

³ The incidence of poverty is the share of the population whose income or consumption is below a given poverty line, that is, the share of the population that cannot afford to buy a designated basket of goods.

HDI of 0.258. Timor-Leste, in comparison, had an HDI of 0.421. In terms of the Human Poverty Index (HPI), which measures deprivations in the three basic factors captured in the HDI, if Timor-Leste had been inserted into the calculation of HPI in 1999, it would have occupied rank number 81 out of 90 countries. In terms of the Gender-related Development Index (GDI), which measures average achievement in the three basic factors captured in the HDI adjusted to account for inequalities between men and women, Timor-Leste had a GDI of 0.347, or about 25% lower than the HDI, suggesting persisting gender-based inequalities.

Table 1. Human Development Index for Timor-Leste

Indicator	1999 (pre-independence)	2001 or beyond
Population	750,000	924,642 (2004) ^a
GDP per capita (\$PPP)	360	426 (2004) ^b
Poverty (% population below national poverty line)	29.9%	39.7 (2001) ^c
Poverty Severity Index	8.0%	4.9% (2001) ^d
Net Primary Enrollment Ratio	57 (1999-2000) ^e	75 (2000-2001) ^f
Youth Literacy (age 15-24)	79	77(2001) ^g
Infant Mortality (per 1,000 live births)	86.0	87.0 (2003) ^h
Under-5 Mortality (per 1,000 live births)	158.8	124 (2003) ⁱ
Maternal Mortality (per 100,000 live births)	420	800 (2002) ^j
Access to Safe Drinking Water (% population)	—	45% (2003) ^k

— = data not available; GDP = gross domestic product; PPP = purchasing power parity.

Notes: ^a National Directorate of Statistics 2004; ^b ADB 2005a: database; ^c World Bank et al. 2003: 25;

^d World Bank et al. 2003: 25; ^e World Bank et al 2003: 68; ^f World Bank et al. 2003: 68, ^g World Bank et al. 2003: xv;

^h UNSD-MI 2005, WDI 2005; ⁱ UNSD-MI 2005, WDI 2005; ^j MOH 2002: 4, 26; ^k MPF 2004.

Source: see Notes for data sources.

The 2004 UNDP *Human Development Report* (HDR) calculated the HDI for 177 countries, based on 2002 data. Of these countries, Timor-Leste is ranked 158th, with an HDI of 0.436, the worst performer in East Asia and the Pacific. The HPI and GDI indexes for Timor-Leste could not be calculated in the HDR (UNDP 2004), because relevant data were lacking.

5. Human Resources

a. Education

Despite the virtual collapse of the education system in 1999, by October 2000 a regular school year was opened and the former private university was reopened as a government one. School fees were temporarily suspended and school feeding programs were offered on a limited quantity basis. Combined with the optimism of the population at gaining independence, these resulted in an increase in primary school enrollment, especially among girls and the rural population. By the time of independence in 2002, educational services had been restored at all levels. A small-scale adult literacy and nonformal education program was also launched.

However, major challenges still need to be addressed. National literacy rates are a low 43%. Women (over 15 years of age) have lower literacy rates at 52%. Net primary enrollment rates are still far short of global standards. Basic laws and regulations governing education need to be developed and set in place. Quality needs to be significantly improved with a revamp in the curriculum; the provision of adequate teaching materials such as books, black boards in schools and school building facilities; teacher training; and improvement of student-teacher ratios.

The Constitution declares the official languages to be Tetum and Portuguese. However, 82% of the population speaks Tetum and 43% speaks Indonesian. Only a smattering of the population (mainly the older generation and the exiled community) speaks Portuguese and an even smaller proportion speaks English.

b. Health

The country faces a number of urgent health challenges. Eight to nine out of every 100 children die before their first birthday. Another three to four die before reaching the age of 5 years. The numbers are much higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Mortality rates are also higher for children born to less educated mothers, and for boys as opposed to girls.

Malaria, respiratory tract infection, and diarrhea are major causes of death. Only 5% of children aged 12–23 months have received a full cycle of immunizations. Acute lower respiratory tract infections, mainly pneumonia, are a principal cause of death among children under 5 years. Reproductive health is a major concern. Maternal Mortality Rates (MMRs) are around 800 per 100,000 births. Total Fertility Rates (TFRs) are among the highest in the world. The use of contraception is low (UNICEF 2003).

Lack of clean water and sanitation also contributes in a major way to health problems. Overall, about 55% of the population has no access to safe water. Almost 45% of the population has no toilet facilities. Health care service delivery is also a major challenge and access to health care services remains a problem. Existing health care facilities are still far from many communities. Most people who want to reach these facilities usually walk, as they cannot afford transport costs. On average, it takes people living in rural areas 70 minutes to reach a health center.

6. Infrastructure Rehabilitation

a. Power/Rural Electricity Restoration

Over the past 4 years, progress in restoring electricity services to consumers has been significant, particularly in Dili. However, replicating this success in the district centers is urgently needed. Estimates of the number of households with access to electricity vary. The 2001 *Poverty Assessment Survey* indicated that only about 28% of the population (about 237,000 people) had access to electricity (Ministry of Transport, Communications and Public Works 2004a).

Measures to rehabilitate and operate the community-operated power systems installed under donor emergency assistance will assist in addressing poor rural economic performance, job creation in rural areas, and improved educational opportunities (Box 2). A recent Asian Development Bank (ADB) study indicated that among the existing 35 *posto* (subdistrict) stations, only five were actually operating and distributing electricity (ADB 2005a). Some of these stations were never properly commissioned because of incomplete specifications and/or installation of equipment, but a majority stopped operating because of a lack of funds to buy fuel arising from communities' social inability to collect electricity dues from consumers using volunteers. Some installations have fewer than 200 customer connections, resulting in an average monthly cost per household that exceeds affordable levels.

Box 2. Objectives of the Electrification Program

The Government of the Republic of Timor-Leste is committed to a sustained program of electrification for the country and the Sector Investment Program reports emphasize the close linkage between electrification and rural economic growth. The recent multiagency Poverty Report on Timor-Leste (World Bank et al. 2003) estimated that providing electricity to all households in the country would reduce the incidence of poverty by 26% and increase consumption among the affected households by more than 20%.

Source: Ministry of Transportation, Communication and Public Works 2004a.

The operational level of power systems in Timor-Leste remains low. Dili currently operates for 20 hours a day. All other grids operate for more limited periods each day. Anecdotal reports describe important centers such as Baucau as being without power for most of the day, for extended periods of more than 6 months. The delivered price of power in Timor-Leste is high. It is currently estimated to be about 14 cents per kilowatt-hour. The high costs will inhibit access to power in impoverished rural communities. Access to power services has an important impact in raising the quality of life of rural women, in greater livelihood opportunities, safer living environment, and increased leisure time.

b. Water Supply/Sanitation

Unsafe water and inadequate sanitation are the primary cause of diarrhea and child malnutrition, and are one of the main causes of poor health in Timor-Leste. Lack of access to clean water has also been cited as contributing to pregnancy-related infections and high MMRs. It also contributes significantly to women's reproductive workloads. Less than half the population has access to safe water, and only a quarter has access to improved sanitation. Levels of access are low in rural areas, and although higher in urban areas, are still low by international standards: in 2003, about 55% of the population did not have access to safe water and only 27% had access to improved sanitation (Table 2). The comparable figures for low-income developing countries were 76% and 45% respectively (Ministry of Planning and Finance 2004a).

Table 2. Access to Safe Water and Sanitation

Access to water and Sanitation (%)	2001	2003	Population (000)	2001	2003
Urban Population			Urban		
Access to safe water	–	45.0	Access to safe water	–	99.3
Access to improved sanitation	–	45.0	Access to improved sanitation	–	99.3
			Without access to safe water	202.1	121.4
			Total urban population	202.1	220.7
Rural Population			Rural		
Access to safe water	44.0	45.0	Access to safe water	278.5	299.3
Access to improved sanitation	–	15.0	Access to improved sanitation	–	99.8
			Without access to safe water	354.4	365.9
			Total rural population	632.9	665.2
			Total Population	835.0	885.9

– = data not available.

Source: Ministry of Planning and Finance 2004.

c. Transportation

The transport network of Timor-Leste consists of approximately 6,000 kilometers of roads in generally poor condition. The secondary and smaller roads to *postos* (sub-districts) and *sucos* (villages) are in extremely poor condition, making many of these areas inaccessible, especially during the rainy season (Box 3). Many of the roads from villages to the nearest local markets are mere tracks, not suitable for vehicle use. In general, it is women who access the local markets

to sell their produce, and proper road access to markets has been cited as being essential to improving women's income and livelihood opportunities (Ministry of Planning and Finance 2004a).

Box 3. Objectives for the Transport Sector

The National Development Plan (NDP) outlines specific objectives for each transport sub-sector. In the area of roads, bridges, and flood control, particular focus is placed on identifying the essential road network; policy and legal/regulatory development; environmental protection; safety; national defense; preservation and sustainable maintenance; and institutional capacity.

Source: Ministry of Transportation, Communication and Public Works 2004a.

d. Communications

As with other areas, almost all the communications infrastructure of Timor-Leste was destroyed in 1999. Services have gradually been rebuilt. Public radio broadcasting has been restored with the help of several donors; community broadcasting services have been started in all districts. Television services are limited to Dili and Baucau. Postal services are being rebuilt, although the coverage of the service is very limited (Box 4).

The level of communications services in Timor-Leste is very low, even by the standards of other low-income developing countries. The average number of telephone lines per 1,000 people for low-income countries was 23 in 2000 and more than 100 for middle-income countries. In Timor-Leste, it was 8 in 1998, and while up-to-date information is not available, it is likely that the average has not changed significantly.

Box 4. Objectives for the Communications Sector

The Government's objective for the communications sector is universally available communications that bring telephone, Internet, broadcast, and postal services to communities throughout the country.

Source: Government of Timor-Leste 2002.

Only one third of the population has radios and less than 10% has TV, highlighting the difficulties facing the Government in conveying important social messages, particularly to communities living in more isolated rural and upland areas. Public broadcasting has been identified as an important avenue through which to overcome women's isolation in the rural communities and to reach out to women with important information and social messages (Ministry of Planning and Finance 2004a).

7. Global Context

How does Timor-Leste compare soon after independence with other countries that experienced comparable levels of conflict and violence? According to the UNDP's Human Development Report (UNDP 2002), Timor-Leste had one of the highest rates of human poverty in Asia (HPI of 49%), even higher than those of other countries that experienced a comparable level of conflict and/or violence, such as Cambodia (45%) and Viet Nam (29%) (Table 3).

Table 3. Comparison of Timor-Leste's Human Development Index (2002)

	HPI (%)	HDI	GDI	Female Life Expectancy at birth (years)	Female Adult Literacy (%)
Timor-Leste	49.0	.395	.351	58	34
Rwanda	—	.395	—	—	—
Sierra Leone	—	.258	—	40	—
Cambodia	45.0	.541	.534	59	58
Vietnam	29.1	.682	.680	70	91
Mozambique	48.3	.323	.309	41	28
Guinea-Bissau	49.6	.339	.308	46	18

GDI = gender-related development index; HDI = human development index; HPI = human poverty index; — = data not available.

Source: UNDP 2002.

The HDI for Timor-Leste (.395) was identical to that of the Central African state of Rwanda, which was ranked 152nd of the 162 countries for which HDI was calculated. Timor-Leste's GDP per capita was less than half that of Rwanda (\$337 compared with \$885). Timor-Leste

also had a lower education index, mainly because in 1999 the literacy rate was only 40%, compared with 66% in Rwanda.

However, this was offset by far higher female life expectancy (58 years in Timor-Leste, compared with 40 years in Rwanda). This was comparable with Cambodia (59 years) but higher by several years than that of Sierra Leone (40 years) and other low-income Portuguese-speaking African countries such as Angola and Guinea-Bissau (both 46 years), and Mozambique (41 years). On the other hand, Timor-Leste's female life expectancy was much lower than that in Vietnam (70) and other Association of Southeast Asian Nations members.

The female adult literacy rate was also moderate. It was low compared with Cambodia (58%) and Vietnam (91%), but higher than in other low-income Asian and African countries, such as Bangladesh (29%), Guinea-Bissau (18%), Mozambique (28%), Nepal (23%), Niger (8%), and Yemen (24%).

B. Policy Environment for Gender and Development

The current legal framework in Timor-Leste is complex and evolving. It is characterized by the continued application of Indonesian laws, United Nations Transitional Administration in Timor-Leste (UNTAET) legislation (regulations, directives, executive orders, and notifications promulgated between October 1999 and May 2002), and the emerging legislation approved by Parliament after May 2002. A series of enabling laws and regulations to implement the general statements of principle in the Constitution and the international treaties ratified by the Government, as well as the national sector plans, are currently under development. Several key pieces of gender-relevant legislation are at "committee stage" and are in the process of being developed or finalized, such as the Anti-Discrimination, Domestic Violence, and Divorce Laws.

In 2004, the Government adopted a strategy for affirmative action and defined set targets for women's representation in Parliament through the adoption of the Law on the Election of *suco* Chiefs and *suco* Councils (n.2/2004). It introduces the principle of affirmative action in Timor-Leste by setting quotas for women, with reserved seats for two women representatives, as well as one of the two youth representative positions, on the *suco* councils.

In general, the Government has attempted to pursue a consultative process in the drafting and adoption of the Constitution, the NDP, and the draft law on domestic violence. This has taken the form of qualitative surveys based on focus group discussions in the communities. Networks of women's organizations have held a series of women's congresses, which have emerged as mechanisms through which women can attempt to influence policy making and the political process. The First National Women's Congress (June 2000) was attended by around 500 delegates. It set up a national women's network *Rede Feto*, which recommended the establishment of a quota of 30% of seats for women in Parliament, thus placing the issue on the national agenda. Since then, a series of regional women's congresses have been held, culminating in the Second National Women's Congress (July 2004).

1. The Constitution and the Laws

The principles of gender equality are embedded in the Constitution of the Republic of Timor-Leste (2002). Section 17 of the Constitution (Equality between Women and Men) states that women and men shall "...have the same rights and duties in all areas of family, political, economic, social and cultural life." The Constitution also states that one of the fundamental objectives of the State shall be "...to create, promote and guarantee the effective equality of opportunities between women and men" (Section 6, Objectives of the State: j).

As part of its general principles, the Constitution also states that "all citizens are equal before the law, shall exercise the same rights and shall be subject to the same duties" (Section 16, Universality and Equality: 1). Moreover, "no one shall be discriminated against on grounds of color, race, marital status, gender, ethnic origin, language, social or economic status, political or ideological convictions, religion, education and physical or mental condition" (Section 16: 2).

2. International Commitments

Timor-Leste became the 191st member of the United Nations on 27 September 2002. On December 10, 2002, the Timor-Leste Government signed and ratified the following international treaties, which indirectly support the promotion of gender equality:⁴

- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965),
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966),
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966),
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979),
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984),
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (2000).

Timor-Leste is in the process of preparing its first report to the CEDAW Committee on its effort to meet the convention's goals and provisions.

Timor-Leste also became the 177th member of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in August 2003. Although it appears that no major ILO Convention has been ratified and/or accessed, Timor-Leste has to abide by ILO Conventions, from the very fact of membership in the Organization. In this respect, the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (86th Session, Geneva: June 1998) is quite explicit in recognizing that:

⁴ As of August 19, 2003. Cited at www.mfac.gov.tp

...all Members, even if they have not ratified the Conventions in question, have an obligation arising from the very fact of membership in the Organization to respect, promote and realize, in good faith and in accordance with the Constitution, the principles concerning the fundamental rights which are the subject of those Conventions, namely: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labor; effective abolition of child labor; and elimination of discrimination with respect to employment and occupation (ILO 1988).

3. Gender in National Development Policies

The Government of the Republic of Timor-Leste has adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as part of its national planning framework, including them in the development of the NDP. In 2002, the Government adopted some elements of a Gender Mainstreaming Policy, within the broader framework provided by the NDP. The NDP recognizes gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment as critical aspects of Timor-Leste's development strategy. Gender mainstreaming is described in government documents as "gender equality in all aspects of public management" and constitutes part of the policy framework for the public sector. The NDP makes clear commitments to gender mainstreaming in poverty reduction and four core sectors: education, health, justice and the police.

To support the objectives of the NDP and to set clear priorities for donor assistance within and across sectors (OPE 2004), the Government is developing SIPs, with the aim of articulating sector-specific policies and investment within the framework provided by the NDP and associated Road Map (Prime Minister and Cabinet, Timor-Leste Government 2002). The Government has committed itself to mainstreaming gender in the SIPs.⁵ Several of the key programs and project indicators outlined in the NDP are absent from key SIPs, such as private sector development, although gender has been integrated into small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) and micro-enterprise programs and projects.

4. Office for the Promotion of Equality

The Office for the Promotion of Equality (OPE) has been established as an advisory body reporting directly to the Prime Minister. It has the responsibility to develop appropriate strategies and methodologies to ensure coordination and cooperation, as well as advisory assistance in mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programs; to promote the increased participation of women in the development process; and to promote a gender-sensitive perspective in policy and law reform programs.

OPE's approach to mainstreaming is "the (re)organization, improvement, development and evaluation of the processes of implementation of policies, such that the perspective of gender equality is incorporated into all policies, at all levels and in all stages by all actors generally

⁵ The key sectors identified are Education and Training; Health; Housing; Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Natural Resources and Environment; Private Sector Development; Communications; Power; Transport; Water Supply and Sanitation; Public Sector Management; Local Government and Civil Society; Rights, Equality and Justice; Security, Peace Building and Reconciliation; and External Relations.

involved in policy decision making,” i.e., it places the emphasis on mainstreaming being a process, with different stages, at all levels of Government (OPE 2004). It rejects the strategy of making gender mainstreaming the sole responsibility of one department. Instead, it aims at building the capacity of different ministries to conduct gender analysis and develop their programs and policies, so that each can gradually assume the responsibility of gender mainstreaming.

Gender mainstreaming requires allocation of resources. Hence, a budget reallocation must take place to support and adapt programs and specific instruments and organize training of staff and planners on gender mainstreaming in order to assure the existence of proper human and financial resources.

Gender mainstreaming also requires an improved balance between men and women in the public sector. A target of achieving 30% of women staff in the public sector was set in 2001. At present, around 25% of the public sector staff are women. Some ministries perform better in this regard, e.g., the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (39%) and Ministry of Health (32%). However, women are underrepresented in senior positions and a gap exists between the recruitment levels of women at central and local government levels.

OPE has also recommended the development and adoption of specific policies and legislation, including antidiscriminatory legislation relating to labor markets, specific mechanisms to implement gender equality effectively (including commissions for equality or councils for protection against gender-based discrimination), legislation on domestic violence, creation of departments and/or special units within key sector ministries to deal with gender-related issues, and research and training on gender equality and carrying out gender sensitization campaigns.

a. Gender Mainstreaming in Four Priority Sectors

Gender mainstreaming is being piloted in four sectors: education, health, justice, and the police. The gender mainstreaming program will concentrate on these sectors and ministries in the medium term, with the view of piloting gender mainstreaming approaches for subsequent broader application within the Government. The program for this includes:

- adoption of the gender mainstreaming guidelines developed by OPE;
- establishment of working groups and task forces in each sector to advise on gender mainstreaming in policies and programs;
- development of gender-sensitive targets and indicators;
- impact assessment for policies, legislation, and programs;
- development of sex-disaggregated databases in sector ministries; and
- training programs for gender analysis and impact assessment.

OPE has been conducting workshops in relevant ministries and departments on gender mainstreaming. An Inter-Ministerial Working Group has been established with individual staff members identified as gender focal points in all ministries to help develop mainstreaming strategies. Training sessions have been carried out with this group to build their capacity in gender analysis and the integration of gender equality considerations in the policy-making cycle.

b. Gender Mainstreaming in Sector Investment Programs

In accordance with Timor-Leste's gender policies, gender mainstreaming of SIPs has been acknowledged as an important component in this process. In 2002, OPE organized a 5-day workshop to develop the SIPs, with the participation of gender focal points from the different ministries, OPE staff, and representatives from civil society. Due to a restricted timeframe, particular projects were chosen in priority sectors, according to priorities set forth at the National Women's Congress (Table 4).

Each of these projects was analyzed from a gender perspective, regarding their objectives, broader policy framework, gender issues that could arise during implementation, and evaluation through the definition of gender indicators. To conduct the analysis, working groups were established composed of gender focal points, OPE staff, other government officials, and civil society members from non-government organizations (NGOs) and women's organizations. Following the analysis, negotiations were conducted in some of the sectors for the integration of gender into the specific projects. As a result of this exercise, several gaps were identified in existing information, mechanisms, and skills. OPE developed general recommendations to strengthen the gender main-streaming process in

Table 4. Gender Priority Sectors in the Sector Investment Programs

(a) Education
(b) Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic healthcare package; prevention and promotion of basic healthcare package • Maternal and infant health
(c) Agriculture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of new technologies and new types of plantations; • Strengthening of extension and support services
(d) Private Sector Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism development, tourism promotion program • Business support services and institutions, domestic business promotion
(e) Water and Sanitation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural water supply and sanitation access (phase 1) • Urban water supply and sanitation
(f) Communications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media and broadcasting • Support for the Public Broadcasting Services

Source: OPE 2004.

different sectors. A meeting was organized with vice ministers and secretaries of state to present and discuss the process as well as the recommendations.

During the exercise of developing the SIPs, several limitations were identified, rendering the task challenging. The timeframe for conducting this analysis was very short and was hampered by the lack of technical skills in gender analysis of the people involved. Therefore, it was as much a training activity for participants as a gender analysis exercise. Following are the main limitations encountered:

- *Lack of Sex-Disaggregated Data.* One of the constraints in conducting a thorough gender analysis of programs and policies is the absence of sex-disaggregated data, which serve as a baseline to understand the different needs and priorities of women and men and therefore the differentiated potential impact that proposed interventions may have. It is important to note that collecting such data has to be

done using proper mechanisms, in order not to create gender-biased data and interpretations. For instance, the common practice of interviewing the head of the household may not generate correct data about the whole household, since a misperception or lack of information about the work carried out by women may result. The collection of data should be quantitative and qualitative, in order to clarify findings of statistical data.

- *Lack of Gender Analysis in Policy and Program Cycle.* In order to ensure that gender equality is integrated properly into policies and programs, it is crucial that it be integrated into the planning process from the outset. In this way it can be assured that specific activities will be designed accordingly and that there is a proper budget allocation. All the policy and program cycles should be adapted to integrate gender equality. This means that existing mechanisms should be transformed and improved to integrate a gender perspective. For example, consultation should involve equal participation by men and women. The inclusion of women in these processes must take into account their unequal position in society, and that for this reason they may not feel as comfortable as men in expressing their opinions in public. In order to address this problem, separate consultations may have to be organized.
- *Lack of Technical Skills in Gender Analysis.* Planners may be aware of the need to integrate gender into policies, but may nevertheless not have the appropriate technical knowledge required to do so effectively. The development of programs and policies must be done in an informed and efficient way, thus producing an effective equality, taking into account the real needs and realities of men and women. A noneffective integration of gender could produce, for instance, a heavier workload for women.

To address these constraints and limitations, the following steps were suggested for the short term:

- *Policy and Program development.* Apply the Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines developed by OPE in all policy and program-making processes, assuring, for example, that when programs and policies are being developed, consultation processes use appropriate methodologies to integrate men and women from the most vulnerable social groups. Develop working groups/taskforces in each sector to discuss gender implications and give advice for good practices on developing programs and policies. These groups should involve all relevant stakeholders, including civil society members.
- *Gender impact assessment.* A gender impact assessment will identify the impact of policies and programs on women and men. This procedure should be part of the evaluation process of all programs and policies, so that the feedback can provide advice and decisions about women's and men's lives and gender relations that are

not based on anecdotal evidence alone. Hence, it is important that data be collected in an accurate way to serve as a basis for analysis and impact assessment:

- ⇒ Develop gender-sensitive indicators for all programs. These should be easily measurable and realistic, and reflect the principles of the MDGs, CEDAW, and the Beijing Platform for Action from the 1995 conference;
 - ⇒ All sectors and ministries should collect sex-disaggregated data on programs, for instance assessing how many men and women are benefiting from a program and what its impact policy is. Data collection methods should be made gender-sensitive;
 - ⇒ All sectors should develop databases containing sex-disaggregated data that is systematized and easily accessible;
 - ⇒ All research conducted and questionnaires applied should contain a gender dimension.
- *Strengthening Gender Mainstreaming in the Different Sectors.* According to the gender mainstreaming policy adopted by the Government of Timor-Leste, different sectors should be responsible for developing their own programs and policies. This entails the acquisition of proper skills in gender analysis. In a first instance, it is important that all relevant staff involved in planning and decision-making processes be familiar with gender concepts as well as the methodologies through which gender is integrated into the policy cycle. It also means the development of mechanisms for analysis of legislation and policies. In order to achieve this, several activities are proposed:
 - ⇒ Develop training modules on basic gender concepts and integrate them into all the training programs of the National Institute of Public Administration (INAP);
 - ⇒ Conduct training for planners in all sectors on gender-sensitive policy making;
 - ⇒ Conduct training for officers of the Ministry of Planning and Finance (Division of Planning) on gender impact assessment, involving definition of indicators, data collection, and collation;
 - ⇒ Develop a training course for gender focal points and OPE staff together with an academic institution to deepen their knowledge on gender and development (GAD); provide an academic certification;
 - ⇒ Strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Justice to undertake gender audits and analysis of legislation; and
 - ⇒ Develop database systems in each sector that incorporate sex-disaggregated data.

Other government agencies also have a crucial role in the gender mainstreaming process. They should coordinate with OPE to receive technical assistance for the development of their programs, and OPE should be informed about relevant policy and legislation processes in advance to ensure appropriate technical assistance is allocated. Essentially, it is the responsibility of the

different government agencies to ensure the creation of appropriate conditions for gender mainstreaming, in the following ways:

- Enhance the role of gender focal points by allocating more time to these and assuring that they work in close coordination with planning and budget focal points, thus integrating gender into the planning and budgeting process.
- Develop a task force on gender, involving the main stakeholders for the development of policies and programs.
- Ensure that the Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines developed by OPE are being used in all policy- and program-making processes.
- Ensure that all significant legislative and policy initiatives are subject to gender impact assessment.

5. The National Parliament

Rebuilding the governance structures was one of the key tasks facing the UNTAET. The March 2002 Constitution established a unitary democratic state, based on the rule of law and the principle of the separation of powers. Representative organs were to be elected through direct and universal suffrage.

The role of women in nation building was placed on the agenda in the early stages of the process. The 88-seat National Parliament has a total of 22 women members, or 25%. Timor-Leste's representation of women is one of the highest in Asia. All the women candidates are representatives of political parties. The Revolutionary Front for Timor-Leste (FRETILIN), which got the largest number of votes (57%), has the largest number of women representatives; the Social Democrat Party, the Timor Democratic Union, and other parties were also able to send women representatives to Parliament. Given the limited development of the private sector and the nascent character of civil society, the role of the Government and the public sector has been key in ensuring effective governance in the early period of nation-building. Human development is contingent on the ability of the public administration to implement policies, laws, and regulations.

A big part of the fundamental legislative and policy dispositions already exist. The integration of gender equality policies in all sectors is a critical element in the Government's policy for promotion of gender equality. It is essential to guarantee that, as a Government, our commitments are not dead words. These commitments have to be translated into concrete realities in response to the specific needs of men and women, girls and boys.

—Dr. Mari Alkatiri, Prime Minister, RDTL

6. Local Governments

The capacity of local governments in the provision of social services is limited due to financial and human resource constraints. Small numbers of staff at the local administration level are involved in service provision. The capacity to manage economic and social affairs at the district and subdistrict level is also limited. As a result, basic social services at the community level continue to rely heavily on national government programs and donor-funded interventions implemented by NGOs. Decentralization is a key policy of local governance (Box 5). At present,

decentralization takes the form of the central Government transferring responsibility for the execution of central government policy to administrators at the local level.

Box 5. Decentralization

Decentralization and increased local capacities for service provision are important components of Timor-Leste's overall strategy for good governance. High priority is given to the development of local communities and to the capacities of local government to provide services for their constituents that will complement those already being provided under national programs such as health care and education. The Government intends to put in place a major program of decentralization over the medium term. The immediate priority is the successful completion of the *suco* elections, which are an important step in ensuring the legitimacy of local leaders. The other high-priority programs for local government include enactment of appropriate legislation and strengthening the capacity of national staff that are responsible for local government as well as those who are employed within local government. The Government also intends to direct donor funds to community development in a well-coordinated manner. It proposes the introduction of a Community Development Fund that will provide block grants to local constituencies for locally defined development priorities.

Source: Prime Minister and Cabinet, Timor-Leste Government 2002.

7. Civil Society Organizations

In Timor-Leste, women's regional and national congresses have developed as important civil society institutions through which to mobilize women's voices and opinions. The First National Women's Congress of June 2000, in which around 500 women from around the country participated, adopted a Platform of Action that included the following recommendations: women must participate in national institutions and in national decision-making processes, training programs to promote women's leadership and participation in political life should be conducted, campaigns to eradicate discrimination against women should be conducted as a matter of urgency, and a minimum representation of 30% for women should be reserved in all sectors of the transitional Government. The regional congresses that led up to the Second National Women's Congress (2004) identified the following key issues in relation to women's role in governance and politics: women continue to be under-represented in politics; women need political training and capacity building; corruption, collusion, and nepotism hinder women's progress; and there should be 50% representation of women in Government.

The Rede Feto Timor Lorosae (Timor-Leste Women's Network) was established in March 2000 as an umbrella organization of women and women's organizations, encompassing more than 15 organizations, mostly centered in urban areas, particularly in Dili.⁶ The main issues around

⁶ Member organizations of Rede Feto include: East Timor Women's Caucus, Grupo Feto Foinsae Timor Lorosae Organização da Mulher Timor, East Timor Women against Violence and Care for Children, Institut Sekular Maun Alin Iha Kristo; the Popular Organization of East Timorese Women; the Association of Socialist Women of Timor; East Timor Women's Forum (FOKUPERS); and the Timor Lorosae Human Rights Commission. Other national organizations addressing gender issues in a substantive manner include the Timor-Leste National NGO Forum, Program for Psychosocial Recovery and Development in Timor-Leste, East Timor Institute for Reconstruction Monitoring and Analysis, and the Foundation of Law, Human Rights, and Justice.

which Timor-Leste women are organizing include economic empowerment/income generation and skills development, public and private violence, literacy, health care, and women's representation. Women's organizations including NGOs have played a crucial role in assisting with service delivery and social mobilization campaigns around critical issues, such as domestic violence and divorce- gender awareness-raising educational activities, women's literacy and vocational training programs, and community development programs. At the same time, internal discussions and debates continue about the way forward. Some women's organizations argue that the movement needs to develop a clear and unified strategy. The lack of a clear strategy has been connected with a lack of unity in the women's movement. Women at the local level are more likely to be involved in informal politics. Many are active in promoting their rights at the village level through small community groups, many of which focus initially on livelihood issues.

8. Donors' Activities

Donors have given substantial support to policy development. ADB, for instance, was involved in the development of the Infrastructure SIP. Some 75% of the funding for 2003/2004 SIP programs comes from donors; this amount is expected to be scaled down to 60% in 2006/2007, and 20% in the longer term. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) provides support on gender issues to OPE.

Lack of job opportunities is a major social and economic concern for women and men in Timor-Leste. OPE, with the support of the Japan International Cooperation Agency, will work jointly with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Development and Environment to identify potential areas for job creation in agribusiness and fisheries. This would include craft products with potential for export to target a niche market of consumers in developed countries supportive of fair trade. Joint ventures with organizations from developed countries could be explored.

The development of a generic capacity-building module on gender awareness has been identified as essential to changing the attitudes of individuals and the institutional practices of civil servants. Discussions are ongoing between OPE and the INAP to assess the capacity development program from a gender perspective. This analysis would identify program areas that need to be addressed and develop the content of a gender awareness training module with sector-specific components. Development Cooperation Ireland would support this action by funding a gender adviser to work with the INAP.

Ireland Aid is supporting the promotion of gender equality in governance. In March 2005, a gender adviser, funded by Development Cooperation Ireland, joined the Ministry of Planning and Finance to build the capacity of the Ministry's focal points and line ministries on how to integrate gender into the line ministries' annual action plans.

For more detailed information on ongoing and planned donor-supported activities in Timor-Leste, see the Development Coordination Matrix in Appendix 2.

A. Gender and Poverty

More than two in five Timorese are living below the national poverty line of \$0.55 per capita per day (Box 6). Based on the household expenditure survey undertaken in September 2001, a national poverty line at the equivalent of \$0.55 per person per day was formulated. Around two thirds of this was allocated to food, sufficient to provide 2,100 kilocalories per day, and the rest to nonfood items including education, health care, clothing, and housing. Using this benchmark, it was estimated that about 41% of the population fell below the poverty line, with the incidence higher in the rural areas (46%) than in the urban centers (26%). The lowest poverty rate is in the urban centers of Dili and Baucau (14%).

Box 6. Causes of Poverty Identified in the National Development Plan

The National Development Plan identifies the following causes of poverty in Timor-Leste:

- rapid population growth (estimated to be around 2.5% per year);
- lack of ownership or access to adequate productive assets, including land: for example, 24% of families own less than 0.5 hectare (ha) of agricultural land and 60% between 0.5 and 2.0 ha;
- lack of productive skills, including literacy;
- lack of remunerative employment or jobs: open unemployment is over 16% and is especially high among youth, and underemployment may be significant in the agriculture sector;
- lack of or inadequate access to social and economic services;
- lack of information about the rights and obligations of citizens (this has been improving in the last 2 years);
- political, social, and economic turmoil resulting particularly from the violence of 1999;
- discrimination, particularly against women, in the economic, social, political, and legal arenas;
- natural shocks, including drought, flood, and fire;
- unexpected death and illness, including malaria, tuberculosis, sexually transmitted infections, and HIV/AIDS;
- manmade shocks, such as revenge killings and violence, displacement and fear/ insecurity;
- social breakdown, including breakdown of marriage, family, and social support systems; and
- increases in the prices of basic necessities (e.g., food, clothing, and fuel) and services, particularly during 1999–2000, partly resulting from introduction of the US dollar.

Source: Prime Minister and Cabinet, Government of Timor-Leste 2002.

The vast majority of the poor (85%) live in rural areas. Of these, the poorest groups are in households that have small landholdings or are headed by fishermen; households with many children, or those with a large number of elderly or other dependent relatives are also most likely to be poor. The incidence of poverty is higher among households headed by those with no schooling, and it declines with the rise in the educational level of the household head.

More than one in seven households are also headed by a woman. According to the Poverty Assessment Project, poverty incidence, gaps, and severity are consistently higher for male-headed households. “Poverty is among one-third to one-half higher for male-headed households” (World Bank et al. 2003: 91). However, female-headed households are smaller than male-headed households. On average, the proportion of children in male-headed households is 20% higher than in female-headed households, and male-headed households are one-third larger than female-headed ones.

The size of households, especially the larger number of dependent children in male-headed households, could be a greater determining factor impacting on poverty levels than gender-based factors. The findings from simulations conducted in the same survey suggest that if the number of members of a household is reduced by one, the poverty incidence of the total population would decrease by 7%.

The gender-based impact would be clearer if the incidence of poverty were compared for male and female-headed households of equivalent size and if broader poverty indicators were accounted for, such as education, health care, and subjective well-being of household members. Another approach would be to compare the welfare of children living in families with only the mother alive with families in which only the father or both parents are alive. More than one in 10 children in Timor-Leste have only one or no living parent. The largest groups are fatherless children, accounting for four out of five children with only one parent.

Child poverty rates for fatherless children whose mother is living are 15% higher than for those with both parents alive. The difference for children with fathers alive and for children with both parents alive is very small. This seems to be confirmed by the findings of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) (UNICEF 2003): out of the poorest quintile of children 0–14 years old not living with both parents, more than half live with mothers only. These trends need to be investigated further.

Poverty reduction is a goal in Timor-Leste’s NDP and gender mainstreaming is a key aspect of its Development Strategy (Table 5). The NDP builds on the MDG development targets and indicators.

Table 5. Targets for Income-Poverty Reduction and the MDG

MDG #1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger Target: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of population living on less than \$1 per day.	Timor-Leste Target		Global Target
	At 2001	2015	
Indicator: Proportion of population below \$1 per day (PPP values)	20%	14%	Half of 1990 levels

Note: Targets are preliminary and indicative and are to be revised based on further in-depth analysis.

Source: RDTL and United Nations Country Team 2004.

The main elements of the Poverty Reduction Strategy comprise:

- creating an enabling environment to generate opportunities for the economic participation of the poor, improving their productivity and enhancing their incomes;
- providing and/or encouraging others to provide basic social services to the poor on affordable terms;
- providing or helping to provide security of person and property, and protection from unforeseen shocks and disasters (vulnerability), including food security at both the household and national levels; and
- empowering the poor and other vulnerable groups through popular participation in deciding upon and managing development in their *postos*, *sucos*, and *aldeias* (subvillages).

1. Gender and Income Poverty

Poverty in Timor-Leste is also related to inequality in income distribution, which can be explained in part by the low productivity of agriculture and reduced rural incomes. Although nearly three quarters (73%) of workers are employed in agriculture, they generated less than one third (around 30%) of GDP.

An additional frequently used measure of inequality is the ratio of the proportion of income captured by the richest 20% of the population to that accruing to the poorest 20%. The inequality in income distribution in Timor-Leste is considered to be low to moderate compared with that in other countries at a similar stage of development.

Findings also indicate that the gender gap in earnings in Timor-Leste is unusually high, with women's earned income estimated at only one eighth of men's (UNDP 2003: 25). Factors contributing to this gender gap include the following:

- labor force participation rate for men (80%) is double that for women (40%). Overall participation rate is 60% (Government of Timor-Leste et al. 2003: 42). However, if providing for water and fuel are included as necessary economic activities, even though they do not accrue income, then participation rates change to 77% for women and 86% for men (Alexander 2003: 2);
- women have higher unemployment rates than men in the urban centers: one in four women compared with one in seven men; and
- women's reproductive responsibility as primary caregivers is a constraint, with female labor force participation rates peaking after child-bearing age.

a. Informal Sector

Most cash income is derived from the "informal economy," employing some 93% of the rural and urban labor force (Table 6). While data on the informal sector are extremely thin, estimates place the sex-disaggregated breakdown at 60% men and 40% women. However, this is

probably an underestimation of the percentage of women employed, in the same way that much of women's income-generating work is also underestimated or simply overlooked.

This is exacerbated by problems posed by unclear definitions of what constitutes informal work (Table 7). For example, those who work for a daily wage or on short-term contracts, without proper benefits and conditions accorded under the law, are part of the informal work force. The ILO also includes in the category of informal labor "producers of goods for final use by their households," i.e., subsistence farming.

Within the informal work force are also gender stratifications. Travel around Timor soon makes it apparent that taxi drivers and minibus drivers are overwhelmingly men. Newspaper sellers and phone card sellers are also predominantly men. Vehicle repairs are done by men, while small kiosks are generally staffed by women. Fruit and vegetables are sold by both women and men and so are small handicraft items. Coffee grinding is usually done

by men. Findings suggest that women tend to be concentrated in the lower income-generating areas of the informal sector, such as handicrafts and salt-making (Box 7).

Women also face particular constraints in effectively tapping into opportunities in the informal sector. These constraints prevent women from maximizing their income and could tend to segregate them in the less profitable areas of the informal sector. Some constraints identified at the Regional Women's Congresses (2004) include lack of access to credit; low skill levels; lack of mobility, also limited by cultural factors; and time constraints due to household responsibilities. Access to credit for women is a key issue. It is raised by women in informal discussions as well as

Table 6. Labor Force Participation Rates

	1996	1999	2001
Female Labor Force Participation Rate	53.4%	52.4%	39.6%
Female-Male gap	60	60	49
Females Looking for Work	8.2	8.3	6.8
Female-Male Gap	228	213	148

Source: Preliminary UNDP data, 2004.

Table 7. Characteristics of Selected Industries

Industry	No. of Enterprises	No. of Workers	% Female Workers	Average No. of Workers per Enterprise
Furniture-making	79	592	1	7.5
Vehicle repair	57	144	4	2.5
Traditional <i>tais</i> weaving	39	331	96	8.5
Tailoring	39	208	65	5.3
Bakeries	31	77	55	2.5
Concrete blocks	24	238	1	9.9
Handicrafts	18	169	92	9.4
Photo Studios	13	35	11	2.7
Ironsmiths	8	25	0	3.1
Salt-making	6	47	68	7.8
Coffee grinding	3	20	5	6.7
Rice milling	3	16	0	5.3
Others	17	276	5	16.2
Total	337	2,178	33	6.5

Source: Ireland Aid 2002: preliminary study.

in more formal settings, such as the women's congresses. Improving access to credit for women is also a stated policy in several government documents, as well as donor reports and programs.

Experience with small loan schemes for small enterprise programs has been mixed. The largest source of funding for such programs was the World Bank's Small Enterprise Project (SEP) (World Bank 2004). Some findings point to gender biases in the program: 40% of total loans are channeled to transport services and 25% to operations in Dili. Transport service enterprises are predominantly male-dominated businesses. The project also created employment opportunities—1,326 jobs—but 72% of these were filled by men. Only 16% of the loans went to women (Ireland Aid 2002). Further gender-based evaluations of such projects are needed to draw lessons for future programs.

Box 7. The Gender Division of Labor in a Typical Farming Household

Food preparation, child care	Women
House building	Men
Land preparation	Men
Planting rice and corn	Women
Weeding	Women, men, and children
Cutting rice and corn	Women
Carrying rice and corn	Men
Threshing	Women
Growing vegetables	Women
Selling vegetables and chickens	Women
Selling rice and cattle	Men
Firewood	Women, men, and children
Tending cattle	Men and children
Tending pigs	Women and children
Tending goats	Women and children
Tending chickens	Women and children
Carrying water	Women and children

Source: UNDP 2002: 62.

However, loan schemes such as the SEP are not intended for microenterprises in the informal sector, which in the Timor-Leste context usually require far smaller loans of just \$50 to \$100. Microcredit is meant to fill such needs. Several microcredit programs are funded by donors and carried out primarily by NGOs. Anecdotal evidence again indicates that the results have been mixed. Recently attempts have been made to coordinate these initiatives and to set some standards. A study of the experience with microcredit programs in Timor-Leste is needed to evaluate the lessons.

b. Rural Areas

In the rural areas, just under 90% of all female employment and 90% all male employment is in the agricultural sector. Agriculture is predominantly subsistence farming, comprising crop and livestock activities, fisheries, and forestry. Production is on small plots of land based on unpaid family labor, basic tools, and reliance on rainwater. Women in Timor-Leste play a key role in agricultural production and sometimes take the primary responsibility for many horticulture-related activities, such as growing vegetables and tending animals. They also bear the primary burden for reproductive work in the home and community.

Gender division of labor has significant implications for the number of hours worked in a day by women and men, an aspect which is not covered in the UNDP data. The analysis needs to

go beyond a gender division of labor to include a gender division of *labor time* in order to achieve a more detailed understanding of the role and contribution of men and women and the constraints they face in production and reproduction-related activities.

A finding that emerges time and again is the serious constraints placed on women's economic and social activities, such as attending training workshops, due to their reproductive responsibilities. Women keep making the point that they just cannot find the time to attend training sessions, meetings, or even look after themselves (Box 8). This indicates that that lack of time is also an important gender issue and needs to be acknowledged as such in policy and program development. The "lack of market for products" emerges as a key issue in developing rural economies. This was also raised as a concern by women's participants at the regional women's congresses. The women described different facets of the problem based on their practical experiences. These included:

- the seasonal nature of agricultural production: markets are flooded with products during their season and then disappear out of season;
- the problem of imported products competing with local products;
- inadequate markets for fruit and eggs; and
- lack of access to information.

Issues identified as contributing to creating marketing opportunities and improving income were:

- product development through application of processing techniques;
- access to skills training to be able to create opportunities;
- access to credit to invest in such initiatives; and
- a nationally coordinated marketing system to facilitate sales of produce, regulate exports, and set prices.

Land rights are also a major issue that concerns women. Land is the main asset in rural households. Land rights are usually passed through the male line, except in the *Bunaq*-speaking ethnic communities in Bobonaro, Manufahi, and Covalima districts, which are matrilineal

Box 8. Women's Access to Economic Opportunities

Some of the constraints faced by women in accessing new economic opportunities in the rural sector have also been identified by the district women's congresses of 2004. These include:

- lack of time to make use of new opportunities;
- cultural barriers: employment in construction work, such as road works and building construction, is not considered suitable for women;
- difficulty of finding appropriate work: while jobs in the public sector and NGOs are suitable for women, these are hard to find; and
- lack of mobility: this also prevents women from having access to information including informal information networks.

Source: Regional Women's Congresses 2004.

societies.⁷ In the rest of the country women, in general, can only acquire land through marriage and do not have any property rights, other than usufructuary (use-only) relationships acquired through a male relative's right to land.

Women's right to access and own land needs to be addressed to give women equal opportunities to derive income from land. The issue of women's land rights has as yet not been directly addressed in policy discussions around the SIPs. However, land ownership laws are currently being drafted, with the input and participation of OPE.

Women seem to have some leeway to decide on matters concerning the running of the household, but how this translates into women's control over income is unclear. Some findings show that women "own" or "guard" the money at home, but they need to take decisions in "coordination" with men. How the decision is made seems to depend on the amount involved or the "economic value" of the decision (Oxfam Australia and NZAID 2003: 13).

Nonfarm employment and diversifying income sources through developing a rural nonfarm economy have been identified as key to raising living standards in rural areas. Wage earnings in the rural areas are eight times higher than those from farming. Those who are self-employed, outside agricultural production, also have earnings estimated to be three times higher than those earning incomes from agricultural production.

Two thirds of all those employed in the nonfarm sectors are men. Only one in four wage earners is a woman (Government of Timor-Leste et al. 2003: 42). This suggests an emerging gender gap in earnings in the rural areas due to the constraints placed on women's accessing these higher income-generating employment opportunities. The regional women's congresses have also identified access to wage employment as key to raising women's income. These trends need to be investigated further.

c. Urban Areas

In 2001, most jobs in urban areas, especially in Dili and Baucau, were in the service sector, which employed seven in ten workers. Only one in five jobs was in agriculture. Wholesale trade, retail, restaurants, and hotels are the largest subsectors within the service sector, employing one in three women in 2001 compared with one in five men. The service sector boom dipped in 2001 after the United Nations forces pulled out and the expatriate staff presence decreased (Government of Timor-Leste et al. 2003: 51). The figures suggest that women's employment was disproportionately affected by these events.

Hourly urban wages rates in the government and public sector, including the army, are almost one-third higher than wage rates in the private sector (which includes wholesale, retail, hotel, and restaurant service sub-sectors, where women predominate) (Table 8). Given that women

⁷ These communities have been described both as matrilineal and as being of a different ethnicity based on the distinction of language and customs. The matrilineal character of these communities, however, needs to be investigated further. While several findings point to clear matrilineal influences, the degree to which these cultures are being eroded and assimilated is unclear.

are a minority of public sector-employees, this suggests an emerging gender gap in waged or formal employment based on gender segregation of the workforce. According to some reports, private sector wages are starting to fall but civil service wages have remained steady, thus implying that the private-public wage gap is increasing, to the detriment of unskilled and semiskilled women workers.

Table 8. Public Sector Employment

Department	Total Number of People Employed	Total Number of Women Employed	Total Number of Men Employed
Education	5,770	1,657	29%
Police	913	167	18%
Health Care	881	281	32%
Civil Security	371	11	3%
Judicial Affairs	193	33	17%
Border Control	186	37	20%
Water and Sanitation	130	4	3%
Agriculture	123	12	10%
Land and Property	67	12	3%
Labor and Social Services	32	9	4%
Foreign Affairs	18	7	39%

Source: UNTAET data 2001.

d. Policy Environment

The stated goal of the NDP is to “reduce poverty in all its aspects, particularly among women and vulnerable groups.” It also acknowledges the following gender inequalities as constraints to reducing poverty: high unemployment rate, especially among women; low wages, especially for women; lack of professional skills among women; and lack of training facilities for women (Box 9). The NDP’s gender equality-based strategies, with details of programs and indicators to be implemented in order to reduce poverty and enhance security and safety nets, especially for women, can be found in Table 9.

However, several of the strategies, programs, projects, and indicators outlined in the NDP are absent from key policy and program documents, such as the Agriculture and Private Sector Development SIPs. Private sector development in agriculture, services, and industry is identified as the fastest-growing area with the largest number of economic opportunities. Therefore, mainstreaming gender in the planning of this sector is critical.

The Private Sector SIP, which has been targeted as a strategic sector for gender mainstreaming by the OPE—especially with respect to tourism and promotion of domestic business—contains no gender analysis and does not integrate gender issues in the development of these subsectors. Integrating even some of the strategies, programs, and indicators in the NDP, such as the development of businesswomen’s roles and training targeted women for more effective participation in the private sector, could go a long way toward mainstreaming gender concerns into

a key sector of the economy.⁸ The experience and lessons learned from ongoing activities are not reflected in the Private Sector SIP, indicating a gap between policy and program development and the reality on the ground. Unless such experiences are reflected and consolidated into a gender mainstreaming strategy in policies and programs, this could lead to an *ad hoc* approach in integrating gender considerations into private sector development, with gender equity downplayed or ignored.

Box 9. Regional Women's Congresses: Issues for Poverty Reduction

The Regional Women's Congresses (2004) identified the following issues as limiting women's contribution to economic growth and development and contributing to women's persisting exposure and vulnerability to poverty:

1. Management of National Resources
 - Resolving the maritime border dispute between Australia and Timor-Leste;
 - Developing a national market for local products;
 - Placing restrictions on imported products; and
 - Regulating exports.
2. Limited access to training and employment opportunities
 - Access to training and employment in administration and Government positions, business, and mass media;
 - Support from husbands and families to engage in activities outside the home;
 - Limited access to agricultural extension and training;
 - Limited access to facilities such as tractors, irrigation, and pesticides; and
 - Education of women and men on the impact of arbitrary cutting and burning.

Source: Regional Women's Congresses 2004.

Tourism has been identified as an area of great opportunities for Timor-Leste. Given that women are already a large proportion of the service sector, especially in urban areas, they are well-placed to make the most of the opportunities opened up by tourism. But paradoxically, women and especially young women are also the most vulnerable to being exploited by an increase in the tourist trade. This gender aspect of the tourist industry needs to be acknowledged and addressed in policy and program development. This requires the establishment of special programs targeting women through training, skills development, access to credit, and other special measures.

Gender equality considerations are reflected in the Agriculture SIP, but are extremely general. This is a statement of intent rather than concrete programs and projects. The priority areas targeted by OPE for gender mainstreaming—the introduction of new technologies and extension

⁸ The Ministry for Development and Environment is implementing the World Bank-funded *Small Enterprises Project*, which has attempted to address gender issues through training women entrepreneurs and targeting the participation of women in local market management committees. Courses conducted by business development centers have reported 3,592 participants since March 2004, 34% of them women. While 61% of these participants have set up businesses, the gender breakdown of this figure is unknown. The project activities also include the restructuring of market management committees to include 50% women's representation (World Bank 2004b).

services—are mentioned in very general terms, with no concrete program and project activities outlined. The Agriculture SIP relies heavily on the gender training of ministry staff in order to deliver effective services to women and men, as well as to implement the programs for the benefit of women and men. However, the capacity of the staff, thinly spread through several divisions and units and over 50% based in Dili, is also underlined as one of the main threats or uncertainties to the effective implementation of the plan. Similarly, the Forestry Sector SIP mentions the need to involve women in traditional resource management processes but does not outline any concrete program activities.

Table 9. Gender-Relevant Strategies, Programs/Projects, and Indicators

Strategies	Programs/Projects	Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of equal opportunities to obtain work • Provision of training to women in general and young women in particular in a number of skills (e.g., management, enterprise development, and information technology) at national, regional and local levels • Establishment and strengthening of businesswomen’s networks through support to private enterprises, women’s organizations, cooperatives, and groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care centers for working women • Antidiscrimination and antisexual harassment legislation • Professional training programs for women in management • Enterprise development • Information technology • Programs to establish businesswomen’s networks and women’s cooperatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of women in formal private sector • Laws against gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace enacted • Professional training programs for women • Training programs for women at <i>posto</i>, <i>suco</i>, and <i>aldeia</i> levels • Number of businesswomen’s networks established • Number of women’s cooperatives established

Note: These performance indicators are to be monitored by the relevant ministries and the OPE.

Source: Prime Minister and Cabinet, Government of Timor-Leste 2002.

Women’s high unemployment rates are recognized as a major constraint in the NDP, though this aspect is not consistently reflected in the NDP indicators or in the SIPs. It contains no reference to addressing the gender gaps in employment, especially the low female participation rate in the labor force. Instead, the projected estimates for employment creation until 2015 are based on major gender discrepancies in participation rates, with women maintaining about half the participation rate of men for the next decade and more. In 2015, it is anticipated that women will keep their participation rate in both farm and nonfarm work at around 52%, compared with men’s rates of 93%. Low female participation rates need to be acknowledged and identified as a key policy issue to be integrated into programming and planning.

e. Challenges and MDG Targets

Employment is a basic route out of poverty for most Timorese. However, prospects for short-term and even medium-term wage employment in the public sector or in the modern private

sector are grim. Economic growth, especially in agriculture, can have a strong impact on lifting out of poverty the population living just below the poverty line. But economic growth needs to be targeted to the poor and marginalized sectors, including women, to achieve equity in income distribution. The NDP assumes an annual growth rate of close to 6% in the agricultural sector. However, the challenge is to sustain these growth rates. High population growth could also offset any poverty reduction effect of rapid economic growth (RDTL and UN Country Team 2004: 18).

These trends pose a special challenge to increasing women's labor force participation rates, especially at higher income levels, in all sectors and levels of the economy. This requires women to be strategically positioned to make the most of the opportunities provided by increased investments, especially in the private sector. This will require:

- special attention to raising skill levels, especially through vocational training;
- access to credit, especially microcredit and credit for SMEs;
- training to access nontraditional sectors in the labor market (i.e., infrastructure development); and
- private investments in agriculture encouraged or targeted at sectors that will benefit women (i.e., export development in commodities grown by women, such as vanilla; food processing for local and export markets; and extension services targeting women).

MDG Targets. Given the weak economic growth anticipated in the next 2 years and the increase in the size of the labor market, national projections estimate that this will result in a steady increase in the number of people living in poverty in the medium term. However, with a stronger performance in the economy expected beyond 2006, the incidence of poverty is expected to decline. While government sources indicate that Timor-Leste has reasonable expectations of achieving its MDG target of reducing income poverty to 20% by 2015, the findings of the United Nations Country Team are more guarded.⁹ Even if the Government targets are met, the absolute number of people living in poverty will still be high, estimated at around 250,000 in 2015 (Government of Timor-Leste 2004).

2. Gender and Food Security

a. Consumption and Malnutrition

Food insecurity is widespread and improving food security is a major concern. Assessments of food adequacy suggest that 9 in 10 persons experience some degree of food shortage at some point during the year (Table 10). Food shortages are aligned with the harvest cycles, greatest between November and February, after the rice harvest and just before the maize harvest. The underlying causes of food insecurity include low yields of staple crops, vulnerability to unfavorable seasonal and natural disasters, lack of cash incomes to purchase food during periods of shortfall, post-harvest losses, and low distributional capacity.

⁹ A growth rate of 6% in the agricultural sector is the minimum essential to reduce the share of people living below the national poverty line below 30%. Achieving and sustaining this 6% growth may be unrealistic. (RDTL and United Nations Country Team 2004: 18).

Table 10. Hunger Reduction Targets and the MDG

MDG #1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger Target: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.	Timor-Leste Indicators		Global Target
	2001	2015	
Indicator: Prevalence of underweight children (under 5 years of age)	45%	31%	Half of 1990 levels

Source: RDTL and United Nations Country Team 2004.

The common coping mechanisms are to consume less food and to alter the quality and variety of food consumed, such as substituting corn for rice. Another coping mechanism that is ignored is that women forgo food in favor of children and their families. Starting from childhood, especially in the rural areas, girls are often given less food than boys, and women only eat after men have eaten. These practices increase women's exposure to food insecurity. Food aid from the Government, NGOs, or the international community was virtually irrelevant, with only one in 100 persons benefiting from such relief (World Bank et al. 2003: 98).

Some 28% of women suffer from malnutrition, of whom 7% are severely malnourished and in need of treatment. According to the MICSs (2002), 26% of women in Timor-Leste suffer from Chronic Energy Deficiency, having a Body Mass Index of less than 18.5.¹⁰ Malnutrition levels among women in the highland areas and the Western region are higher than in other parts of the country. Women exhibit no marked differences in malnutrition levels between major urban centers and rural areas. The greater reliance on nonagricultural earnings allowed households in Dili and Baucau to keep consumption constant at adequate levels throughout the year. The high levels of stunting of children less than 5 years of age are another indication of poor maternal nutrition: some 47% of children under 5 are malnourished. Stunting increases rapidly for ages 1 and 2, and peaks at ages 3 and 5, where close to 60% of children are stunted, with some 30–35% severely stunted (UNICEF 2003: 51).

b. Policy Environment

The Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries SIP (2004), defines national programs to improve food security as being based on the following policy framework:

- Reduce vulnerability to food shortages and improve the quality of food among vulnerable households.
- Develop a market-oriented agricultural system aimed at increasing productivity.
- Build the capacity of staff for improved policy analysis and planning, as well as regulatory oversight.

¹⁰ Chronic Energy Deficiency is defined as a “steady state” where an individual is in energy balance, i.e., the energy intake equals the energy expenditure, despite the low body weight and low body energy stores. Thus, by never growing to a normal size or having experienced one or more stages of energy deficiency, the individual has arrived at a reduced body weight with possibly limited physical activity, which has allowed the energy demand of a lower basal metabolic rate and reduced amounts of activity to balance the lower intake.

- Improve the capacity of staff to deliver services to farm households, increase staff at the local level, and strengthen coordination with NGOs and ongoing donor programs.

Programs also emphasize the need for rapid-impact, low-cost technologies, such as locally tested varieties of maize and rice that are higher-yielding than traditional varieties, as well as simple domestic storage silos to reduce post-harvest losses of maize and rice.

However, women's horticultural activities can and do contribute to raising the quantity and quality of food consumption. Women take primary responsibility for household food preparation and consumption. Improved gardening and livestock practices that diversify crops and animal products can lead to higher nutritional levels within the household, especially for undernourished children and women of reproductive age. Income from garden produce is also easier for women to control and the income is generally used for household consumption, thus increasing food variety and quality. But these factors are not acknowledged in policy development. Therefore, policy and programs do not contain strategies targeted at women food producers.

c. Challenges and MDG Targets

Women, who play a key role in household food production, preparation, and consumption, are paradoxically also the most vulnerable to food insecurity. Strategies to reduce food insecurity need to both recognize women's and girls' special vulnerabilities and integrate the potentially significant role that women can play in achieving food security. A gender-blind approach can seriously distort the process of making the most of existing opportunities and effective low-cost interventions targeted at women food producers.

MDG Targets. Reports estimate that the overall prospects for ensuring food security for the population are good. Timor-Leste has adequate land, water, and other resources, as well as appropriate climate conditions, to produce enough food to meet the growing requirements of its population. However, findings also show that food production remains constrained by inadequate policies and lack of information on existing resources, and that clear strategies are required to address these issues.

B. Gender and Human Resources Development

1. Gender and Education

a. Education

While it is generally acknowledged that gender-based disparities in enrollment rates are not significant at the primary (6 grades, 7–12-year-olds) and lower secondary school levels (3 grades, 13–15-year-olds), this is only part of the picture.¹¹ The success in enrollment rates at primary school levels is undermined by high repetition and drop-out rates.

¹¹ Upper secondary, 3 years, 16–18-year-olds. The normative age range and follows the Indonesian system.

Many children who register do not attend school. In some schools up to 20% show up for some classes and rarely attend subsequently. The World Bank estimates that 20–25% of students repeat and about 10% drop out for each grade in primary education and junior secondary education (Tables 11 and 12). If this persists, “it is likely that only 47% of those who enter Grade 1 will eventually complete Grade 6, while 53% would drop out” (World Bank 2003: 6). On average, these school dropouts would complete 4 years of schooling after some repetition. The skills acquired by these children would be very low, as they are not in school long enough to master basic literacy and numeracy skills and the few skills they pick up would tend to “evaporate.” Over-age or late starters are also a problem; this is attributed to the rising share of enrollment of rural and female children aged 13–15 years, as indicated in the significant differences between the gross and net enrollment rates.

Table 11. Primary Education Targets and the MDG

MDG #2. Achieve Universal Primary Education. Target 3. Ensure that by 2015, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.	Timor-Leste Targets		Global Target
	2001	2015	
Indicator: Net enrollment ratio in primary education	73%	100%	100%
Indicator: Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5	47%	—	100%
Indicator: Literacy rate of 15–24-year-olds	50%	100%	100%

— = data not available.

Source: RDTL and United Nations Country Team 2004.

Table 12. Gender Equality Targets in Education and the MDG

MDG #3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women. Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.	Timor-Leste Targets		Global Target
	2001	2015	
Indicator: Ratio of girls to boys in			
Primary	91%	—	100%
Junior Secondary	128%	—	100%
Senior Secondary	58%	100%	100%
Tertiary		100%	
Indicator: Ratio of literate female to male 15–24-year-olds	96%	100%	100%

— = data not available.

Source: RDTL and United Nations Country Team 2004.

The reduction in the net enrollment levels between primary school and secondary school of some 50% also suggests that large numbers of students drop out before secondary school (Table 13). Even if the gender gap ratio is high, this does not necessarily equate with increasing levels of women’s empowerment if the overall levels of enrollment are low.

Therefore, it is still important and necessary to track enrollment levels for girls and boys, as well as tracking enrollment levels in the rural areas as compared with those in urban centers. For example, the large drop in the gender gap ratio between junior secondary and senior secondary, from 128% to 58%, accompanied by a 50% drop in net enrollment levels, suggests that a higher proportion of girl students is dropping out of school at this level.¹²

Overall, senior secondary education has lower dropout and repetition rates, as students who move up to that level are more persistent.

They also tend to come from wealthier families that do not rely on the student's labor for family support. Girls at this level have lower repetition and drop-out rates and higher promotion rates across the board.

No reliable figures track tertiary level enrollments (Table 14), but 2001 figures from the University of Timor-Leste again indicate that very few students make it through to the university level and that enrollment showed marked gender gaps as well as consistent and significant gender gaps in the various courses.

Table 13. Primary and Secondary School Enrollment Rates

	1999	2001	2003
School enrollment			
Net primary enrollment	51	67	75
Net secondary enrollment	27	21	26
Gross primary enrollment	89	113	117
Gross secondary enrollment	34	21	26
Literacy			
Youth literacy (15–24 years)			
Adult literacy (15 years and older)	79	77	—
Gender	48	48	—
Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary school (%)	83	97	—
Ratio of young literate females to males (%)	97	96	—

— = data not available.

Source: World Bank 2002.

Table 14. Tertiary Education Enrollment Rates

Age	Total f/m population	No. (%) of f/m population enrolled	No. (%) female population enrolled	No. (%) male population enrolled
20–29	114,192	6,086 (5.3)	1,636 (2.9)	4,450 (7.7)

f/m = female/male.

Source: UNTAET, 2001 data.

High repetition and dropout rates are closely related to poor quality and low levels of student achievement. A study of students' achievements in selected primary grades conducted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport in 2003 revealed very low achievement scores, with girls generally scoring lower than boys. This could be related to girls' responsibility for household tasks leaving them with less time to study. This suggests that specific interventions are necessary for improving girls' achievement in school.

¹² According to United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) participants at the Country Gender Assessment workshop in Dili (January 2005), preliminary findings from UNICEF research indicate that girls' drop-out rates are higher starting as early as the primary school (Grade 1) levels onward. These trends need to be carefully monitored.

Women are also underrepresented in the teaching profession. At primary and secondary school levels, only 29% of the teachers are women. Some 42% the female teacher population is concentrated in Dili. In the initial recruitment of volunteers in the emergency phase, many women were not selected. Some of the problems identified by female teachers as constraints for women's participation in the teaching profession included women's inability to move to other districts for work due to family responsibilities (Ireland Aid 2002: 14). It should be noted, however, that the attitude towards girls' education varies, even markedly, between rural areas and urban centers; urban families are more accepting of the need to educate girls (Oxfam-GB 2004: 24).

In communities where some matrilineal customs remain, such as the Bunak- and Kamnasan-speaking groupings in Suai and Maliana, "they said that since the girls stayed with the family even after they are married, they like sending girls to school more than the boys."

b. Literacy, Vocational, and Adult Education

Gender differences are substantial in adult literacy rates (15 years and over); only 52% of women are literate compared with 65% of men. The gender gap is widest for poor women and nonpoor men: literacy by wealth quintile ranges from 40% for women in the poorest quintile up to 90% for men in the richest quintile (UNICEF 2002: 32). In some areas, the female illiteracy rates are much higher. In Oecussi, women's literacy rates drop as low as 30%. Issues for Literacy raised during the Regional Women's Congresses are presented in Box 10.

Box 10. Regional Women's Congresses: Issues for Literacy

A key finding is the very low participation rates of women in the adult literacy program:

- In the government literacy program, out of the 5,310 classes conducted by the Division of Non-Formal Education, 70% of the participants were men, except in Dili where the numbers were equal. Women participants in Dili were 35–40 years old and managed to attend classes because relatives from the district took care of the house while they were out.
- In the United Nations Children's Fund Women's literacy project, the key problem was *sustaining* women's participation. Out of 2,582 participants, 30% dropped out and 40% did not pass the test. Older participants had a very high failure and dropout rate. Women's ability to participate is not a question of individual choice, but is strongly influenced by cultural norms and values governing their everyday lives, which hinder their participation.

"Continued on next page"

“Box...—Continued”

Obstacles to women’s participation include the following:

- Women’s limited mobility outside the home: women’s role is primarily in the home and leaving the house has to be carefully negotiated with the husband.
- Lack of confidence: women are not encouraged to speak out and articulate their views because “a woman who talks too much is no good.”
- The traditional notion is that women are less capable than men.
- Lack of interest from women: “I am too old already.”
- Women see marriage as a way out of poverty.
- Women’s workload in the house means they have to carefully negotiate with their husbands the responsibilities for household chores: “If I don’t cook, my husband will hit me.”
- Women’s labor: it is hard to get women to participate during planting and harvesting periods.
- When women do attend, they are more reluctant to take an active role in mixed groups.
- Language issues: due to restricted mobility, women are less likely to pick up a second language.

Source: Regional Women’s Congresses 2004.

Low levels of education are also a major barrier to women’s socioeconomic advancement. For example, among adults aged 35–44 years (prime ages for workforce participation), a significant 87% of women have less than a full primary school education (compared with 67% of men). These women’s poor skill levels severely limit the employment and income-generating opportunities available to them.

Based on conservative annual labor force growth rate estimates of 15,500 new entrants per year, 5,000 of these entrants will have little or no formal education for some time to come. Many others will have no more than primary education (Government of Timor-Leste 2004). This underlies the importance of vocational and adult education. According to the participants in the regional women’s congresses, a national literacy program is needed for women of all ages, as are incentives to increase the participation of girls and women in primary, secondary, and tertiary schooling.

Men travel to outside districts and urban centers more frequently and are therefore more likely to pick up a second language and practice it in the course of their regular activities. In areas where Tetum is not the mother tongue, men were able to speak Tetum because of their transactions in Dili and other centers. Women’s access to information comes mainly from their husbands and friends in the immediate community.

Targeted interventions are necessary, with gender-sensitive literacy and vocational training programs designed with the express purpose of encouraging and sustaining women’s participation.

c. Policy Environment

A strong political commitment to gender equality in education is reflected at various policy levels. The NDP has clear policy statements on “mainstreaming gender concerns” in all education programs, monitoring and using gender-sensitive indicators, advocating and promoting equal rights for men and women in accessing education, and increasing women’s access to information about education provisions. The strategies include a nationwide campaign on the importance of girls’ participation in primary education and on reforming the curriculum to eliminate gender stereotypes. Indicators are also outlined with regard to gender ratios at all levels of education and the collection of sex-disaggregated data to monitor gender ratios on school enrollment and dropout rates. The NDP policies and strategies are strongly reflected in the SIP, along with programs that will help improve the girls’ access to education. The general programs on formal education also aim to aid girls’ access to education facilities. These include extra primary schools in targeted *postos* and *sucos* and improving the quality of education at a targeted 20% of primary schools.

Specific gender equality programs include educational campaigns based on social mobilization strategies to change traditional views that constrain girls’ education, review of curriculum and textbooks aimed at promoting the role and position of women in society, review of school locations to address parents’ concerns about the safety of girls who have to travel long distances to attend schools, and recruitment of more women teachers to address the gender imbalance toward males in overall school administration.

However, the lack of adequate sex-disaggregated data can impede the targeted development of policy that aims to address gender equality issues. For instance, some findings suggest higher dropout rates for girls at secondary school level, but these are tentative and even anecdotal.

Information on girls’ participation in the various courses at the tertiary level is virtually nonexistent. Collecting comprehensive data that can feed into the information system is essential for effective and targeted policy development, as well as systematically addressing and monitoring gender equality at all levels of the education system. Laws and regulations also need to be further developed.

In Baucau, a woman said “I only talk once.” In Same, three women managed to speak out [in] trembling voices... It is not enough to get women to attend literacy and other activities outside the home. They should also be patiently encouraged to articulate their views, an act that is a cultural break from the notion that “a woman who talks too much is no good.

—Oxfam-GB, 2004

Vocational and adult education targeted at women will be critical to improving women’s employment levels and achieving poverty reduction. While the political and policy commitment to develop a viable national vocational and adult literacy and education program is clear, including a program to assess national skills and vocational training requirements, the development of national policies in this area targeted at women, especially women of working age (15 and over) who have not been able to attend school or who have only received a primary school education and who are, thus, illiterate, is still needed. Issues for Health raised during the Regional Women’s Congresses are presented in Box 11.

Box 11. Regional Women's Congresses: Issues for Health

The 2004 Regional Women's Congresses identified the promotion of women's health and access to health care services as a key priority in their empowerment. Issues raised at the Regional Women's Congresses include the following.

1. General health care facilities are lacking. Steps needed:
 - More clinics and hospitals should be located within reach of villages.
 - Adequate medical supplies should be available.
 - The quality of service in hospitals should be improved.
 - The numbers of doctors, nurses, and midwives should be increased.
 - The number of ambulances should be increased.
 - Knowledge about traditional medicines and treatments should be increased.
2. Awareness about reproductive health is inadequate. Steps needed:
 - Educate men about the problems of high fertility.
 - Increase community awareness about family planning, breast feeding, reproductive health, and women's general health needs throughout the life cycle.
 - Reduce maternal mortality by addressing the following factors: lack of care and attention by husbands, lack of information, lack of easy access to hospitals, early pregnancy, and early marriage.
3. Basic food and water needs are not met. Steps needed:
 - Make clean water easily available and accessible.
 - Improve the nutrition of pregnant mothers and children
4. Women are at risk for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Steps needed:
 - Raise men's awareness about the impact of prostitution and polygamy on the spread of STIs.
 - Protect young people from HIV/AIDS.
 - Improve treatment for STIs.
5. Issues pertaining to women's mental health are not adequately addressed
 - Services for mentally ill women are needed, including laws protecting the children of mentally ill parents.
6. Men's domination within the household results in persisting violence and hindrance to women's development.

Source: Regional Women's Congresses 2004.

Despite the policy commitment to expand the existing government adult literacy and nonformal education programs targeted at young mothers and illiterate youth, research findings show that government-supported programs have not been very successful in achieving adequate levels of women's participation and in sustaining their participation. These programs have to be assessed. Lessons drawn from these and other existing programs should be integrated into policy

and program development to address this challenge. Lack of adequate funding is likely to undermine programs targeted at addressing gender inequalities in education.

d. Challenges and MDG Targets

To consolidate and build on some of the achievements in increased girls' enrollment at primary school level and to sustain the girls' participation right through to higher secondary school level is a key challenge facing Timor-Leste. This requires addressing several access-related issues, such as the following:

- Improve gender-sensitive quality service delivery: schools in communities, including remote communities that are easily accessible to girls; target curricula to encourage girls' participation; build school buildings that include girls' toilets; train teachers to be gender-sensitive, including a higher percentage of women teachers.
- Address cultural constraints that inhibit families from supporting girls' education through to the higher levels, e.g., education campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of girls' education, greater involvement of parents in the activities of the school.
- Ease financial constraints on families and maybe even use material incentives to encourage girls' participation: no high fees; basic textbooks to be subsidized; subsidized milk or meals.

Improving women's literacy, education, and training is a major challenge. Increasing women's skill levels, through effective and relevant vocational training programs targeted at increasing and sustaining women's participation, is critical to ensuring that women can benefit from economic opportunities, thus reducing poverty. This will require innovative strategies aimed at going to where women live and work and reaching out to them, in order to maximize their participation. This could involve using mobile literacy brigades and teams of girl students and other educators and trainers, going into communities to reach out to the women.

MDG Targets. The Government's policies and programs are aligned toward the MDG education targets, but investment programs targeted on girls' education and women's literacy are needed. This requires accurate sex-disaggregated data and information to better inform government policy and programs to achieve the targets set for girls' education and women's literacy. Gender-sensitive monitoring systems are also needed to track progress made on meeting MDG education targets.

2. Gender and Health

a. Health (Maternal and Infant Mortality)

High MMRs at 800 per 100,000 births are a major health problem, posing significant risks to the health and lives of women and children.¹³ This is related to extremely high fertility rates and short periods between pregnancies, which pose severe risks, especially to very young and older women. Timor-Leste's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of more than 7.0 is one of the highest in the world.¹⁴ This number also indicates a fairly dramatic increase since 1997, when the TFR was 4.4. Age-specific birth rates are highest for women between 20 and 34 years of age who have over a 30% chance of bearing a child each year. The birth interval over much of this age range is less than 3 years (UNICEF 2003: 71). Maternal Health Targets and MDG are summarized in Table 15.

Table 15. Maternal Health Targets and the MDG

MDG #5. Improve Maternal Health Target: Reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters between 1990 and 2015.	Timor-Leste Targets		Global Target
	2001	2015	
Indicator: Maternal mortality ratio (proportion per 100,000 lives births)	420–800	252	Reduce by 75% from 1990 levels
Indicator: Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	24%–38%	60%	100%

Source: UNICEF 2003.

b. Reproductive Health

High fertility rates are also associated with very limited access to contraceptives: only 8% of nonpregnant women currently married or living with a male partner practice contraception. Among those of prime reproductive age (20–34 years), only 9% are protected. Ninety percent of contraceptive use is in the form of shots and pills. Condom usage is almost nonexistent. Contraceptive use is higher in Dili (albeit still low) and in districts closer to Indonesia, such as Covalima and Oecussi. There are also indications of retrogression in contraceptive use since 1999. Female education, especially at secondary school level, tends to be associated with a greater receptivity to controlling numbers as well as spacing births.

High fertility rates are a threat to women's basic right to control and plan their reproductive behavior and to the effectiveness of their productive role in society. They are also associated with high levels of child and female malnutrition. While high levels of poverty and low levels of education are generally associated with high fertility rates, a specific driving factor in Timor-Leste is the cultural-religious resistance to medical means of birth control.

¹³ WHO estimates the MMR to be as high as 800 per 100,000 births (UNICEF 2003). Data from Health Sector SIP, UNDP estimates place it at 420 based on 1999 figures.

¹⁴ MICS data using two different methods of calculation arrive at estimates of 7.4 and 7.6 (UNICEF 2003).

Only 43% of women giving birth in 2001–2002 had access to prenatal care from skilled medical personnel. Women's access to prenatal care differs significantly within the country; estimates range from 54% in the urban areas to 39% in the rural areas, to even 30% in the highland areas. Delivery assistance estimates are much lower: only 24% of women had access to skilled care (doctor, nurse/midwife, or auxiliary nurse/midwife) at birth, and in highland areas only 12% of women had such care.

In the highland and rural areas it is reported that large numbers of women give birth on their own, without even a relative or neighbor in attendance. Neonatal tetanus is a major cause of neonatal death, caused primarily by unsanitary conditions during childbirth. In 2001–2002, only 41% of those giving birth were protected against neonatal tetanus. The situation is much better in the urban centers, especially Dili, where 65–70% of women get skilled prenatal care, but the system starts to break down rapidly outside the urban centers (UNICEF 2002: 76). Issues for Reproductive Health raised during the Regional Women's Congresses are presented in Box 12.

c. HIV/AIDS

Timor-Leste presents several of the high-risk conditions for the spread of HIV/AIDS: pre-independence violence, population displacement, and the destruction of social infrastructure. Other high-risk factors that contribute to women's greater exposure to the risks and impact of HIV/AIDS include high prevalence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs); domestic violence; limited literacy and education levels; and cultural constraints in discussing issues of sex, gender, sexual identity and sexuality and in promoting changes in gender relations through behavior change. Although accurate data on HIV prevalence are not available, recent surveys jointly carried out by the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization (WHO) estimate HIV in Timor-Leste at 0.64% of the population (UNICEF 2003).

Some of the challenges and opportunities in developing an effective national response to HIV/AIDS in East Timor are unique. The general perception is that HIV prevalence is currently low in East Timor and that other public priorities require urgent attention. However, it may be because HIV surveillance facilities in Timor-Leste are nonexistent that such complacency has set in. Regional Women's Congresses have consistently raised concerns about HIV/AIDS in relation to sexual violence against women. In Timor-Leste, only 16% of women aged 15–49 have even heard of HIV/AIDS. This is lower than the overall level of knowledge in Indonesia (51% in 1997) and in other countries in Asia: 92% in the Philippines, 94% in Mongolia, 33% in India. Only 2% of women in the same age group could identify major misconceptions about the disease, i.e., that it was spread through supernatural means or mosquito bites. Just under 10% of the women surveyed, and 56% of the women who had heard of the disease, knew that it could be transmitted from mother to child.

Box 12. Regional Women's Congresses: Issues for Reproductive Health

During the 2004 Regional Women's Congresses, special emphasis was put on reproductive health as a key priority area of intervention in women's empowerment. Issues raised at the Regional Women's Congresses include the following:

- Women's health issues and reproductive health are never given proper attention.
- The community has to be educated about women's reproductive health problems and the "inadvisability of having more children when a woman has reproductive health problems."
- More information and education is needed about family planning, breast feeding, the reproductive system and its functioning, and women's health needs throughout their life cycle.
- Maternal mortality needs to be addressed to include the lack of attention by husbands, the lack of information, lack of access to hospitals and clinics, early marriages, lack of proper nutrition for women, and lack of access to clean water.

The poor state of women's reproductive health in Timor-Leste is significantly a reflection of women's lowly status in society. Some of the following cultural traditions have also been identified as impediments to addressing women's reproductive health problems:

- Women are less likely to seek and receive treatment unless they are seriously ill.
- Women and men believe strongly that reproduction is a woman's duty.
- It is believed that men who use condoms are considered to be untrustworthy.
- It is believed that young people should not use contraceptives, as it will encourage promiscuity.
- It is believed that contraceptive usage can cause diseases for women.
- The increasing population of Timor-Leste is seen as a positive trend: Indonesian attempts at family planning and birth control were viewed with suspicion as a form of enforced population control for political aims.
- Large families are viewed as being prosperous and small families are viewed as a sign of poverty. Larger families are also important for kinship ties.
- Women, while welcoming greater spacing between pregnancies, did not have the same attitude to fewer children.

Source: Regional Women's Congresses 2004.

Ignorance about the disease was matched by a high prevalence of discriminatory attitudes: 47% of women who had heard about HIV/AIDS indicated that they would not favor a teacher who had the disease continuing to teach and 59% said they would not buy food from a person with HIV/AIDS. Clearly, in Timor-Leste as elsewhere, raising the knowledge levels about HIV/AIDS is a key prevention strategy (UNICEF 2002).

d. Health and Occupational Hazards

During the Regional Women's Congresses, a number of "work hazards" were identified as being important health concerns for women. These include indoor air pollution from fuel-based cooking fires, which is responsible for women's high levels of chronic respiratory and heart diseases; it also contributes to acute respiratory infections in infants under 5 years of age. Burns associated with cooking were prevalent among women. Water-related diseases were also a concern,

as women spend many hours working in water, washing, carrying water, and farming. Carrying heavy loads over long distances from childhood onward results in back and spinal problems and poor pelvic bone development. This may also lead to pregnancy-related complications and miscarriages. Women also identified heavy workloads as leading to excessive tiredness and other health problems.

e. Violence Against Women

Women's organizations identify domestic violence as a health hazard for women. They point to physical injuries, disabilities, and sometimes even death, as well as mental problems, related to extreme and systematic violence against women in the home.

Strong evidence shows that action against domestic violence inflicted on women is urgently needed. An International Rescue Committee study on the prevalence of gender-based violence in Timor-Leste (IRC 2003) found that 51% of women consulted in the last 12 months felt unsafe in their relationship with their husband and that 25% of women had experienced violence from an intimate partner. Women who married young were at greater risk of being subjected to intimidation and control by their spouses. Over 60% of the women surveyed were 10–21 years of age, indicating that early marriage may put women at greater risk. In 2002, United Nations police reported that 67% of incidents reported to the Vulnerable Persons Unit concerned domestic violence.

f. Mental Health

Post-traumatic stress disorders and other psychiatric disorders, such as depression, anxiety, and paranoid psychosis, are also prevalent among women. Around 96.6% of the population has experienced at least one such traumatic event. Gender-specific violence, which includes rape and sexual harassment related to torture during occupation, has contributed to trauma in the female population. According to the Program for Psychosocial Recovery and Development in Timor-Leste, a local NGO working on mental health issues, 56% of their patients suffering from mental illnesses are women (Ireland Aid 2002: 11).

g. Gender Bias in Access to Health

Gender relations affect the degree to which women can access and control resources pertaining to their health needs. Findings show that women's heavy workloads prevent them from finding the opportunities to seek health care until they get seriously ill. Women also lack the means and the ability to travel to clinics and hospitals if these facilities are not close by, as they might need their husbands' permission to do so. Normal schedules of the clinics and hospitals may not be convenient for women's needs.

Data showed that only 43% of women giving birth in 2001–2002 had access to prenatal care from skilled medical personnel. Women's access to prenatal care also differs around the country, with estimates ranging from 54% in the urban areas to 39% in the rural areas, to as low as 30% in the highland areas.

When female health workers are not available, treatment by males may not be appropriate. Some health problems associated with “aches and pains” can be so prevalent that they are accepted as normal and therefore not treated. Women’s low confidence and lack of information and knowledge mean they are less able to discuss and find remedies for their health problems. This includes fear or shame at discussing intimate health issues, as well as ignorance about their own bodies.

Women also fear being diagnosed with stigmatized diseases (such as tuberculosis), as their chances of marriage could be affected. Women also identify the lack of mental health facilities and lack of woman-friendly health care facilities and personnel to deal with sexual violence or domestic violence issues as problems. Some women also pointed out that men may get more attention than women and be offered greater options in the public health system, especially when resources are scarce.

h. Policy Environment

Maternal and child mortality issues are addressed as components in the *Basic Health Care Package* (BHCP) in the Health Sector SIP, a group of health care services delivered by the Ministry of Health at the district level. The maternal and child health care programs include the improvement of the quality, access, and utilization of prenatal and postnatal/newborn care services, the training of midwives in prenatal and postnatal care, and the strengthening of community-based health promotion, all of which could contribute significantly to reducing maternal and child mortality.

Delivery services will be decentralized and programs to reconstruct and rehabilitate community-based health centers and strengthen primary to secondary referral systems will be instituted, which could contribute to improved access. One of the poverty reduction indicators in the NDP refers to improved access to health services, stipulating that the walking time to the nearest health clinic, estimated at 70 minutes, should be reduced.

The BHCP outlines a minimum program necessary to improve maternal and child health, as well as the population’s overall health situation. Funding is still a key issue: 18% of the funding for the BHCP (in the amount of \$1.5 million) has been proposed for maternal and child health services programs over the next 4 years.

Women’s health care issues in national policy focus primarily on women’s childbearing and child-rearing roles, while reproductive health care focuses narrowly on service delivery around prenatal and postnatal care. The health care sector SIP does not acknowledge the need for choice-based family planning programs based on education and information provisions, or the need for community education campaigns on reproductive health information as a part of service delivery.

This is admittedly a culturally sensitive issue and a policy dilemma, as high MMRs cannot be effectively addressed in a framework that does not acknowledge a woman’s reproductive health, including safe and accessible methods of modern contraception.

i. Challenges and MDG targets

Adequate funding for health care programs is a key challenge. Undermining the health care program, due to such factors such as inadequate funding, could have extremely negative consequences for the most vulnerable—women and children.

Women's reproductive health must be improved, through raising awareness among women and men about women's reproductive health and choices. High female mortality rates are also a major constraint on women's ability to participate fully in the socioeconomic life of the country, thus reducing the economic and social capital of society overall. High fertility rates are also an economic burden on the state, not only due to high population growth rates, but also due to the negative effects on the well-being of the next generation of children, who also suffer health problems and whose overall development is impeded. Today's lack of adequate attention to child-rearing at home and to a child's education, for instance, can become the economic impediment of a poorly skilled labor force in the future.

Gender-sensitive service delivery strategies and programs are central to improving women's health care and meeting the population's overall health care needs. Capacity development and training of health care personnel in gender-sensitive service delivery and education and information campaigns to raise the health awareness of women are key components of such a strategy.

MDG Targets. Given the shortened time period available for Timor-Leste to meet the MDG maternal health targets, the tentative goal is to reduce MMRs by 15% by 2005, 40% by 2010, and by more than 50% from the baseline by 2015. The national goal is to increase the proportion of attended births by 20% by 2005, 40% by 2010, and 50% from the baseline by 2015. Currently available findings estimate that the prospects for achieving maternal health MDG goals for 2015 are good. However, this will require sustained institutionalization of the Government's health program. The low levels of contraceptive prevalence also pose a challenge to achieving these goals.

The national goal is to curtail HIV/AIDS prevalence and to reduce it. However, this will require research into possible entry points and analysis of gender-sensitive vulnerabilities of population groups to enable targeted interventions based on information dissemination, awareness-raising, and behavioral changes in the population.

The national goals are to reduce malaria morbidity and mortality by 50% by 2015 and to have 60% of the population taking effective malaria prevention and treatment measures. The goal is to also reduce the mortality of tuberculosis cases by 90% and to have 90% of detected new cases of tuberculosis treated using Directly Observed Treatment Short-Course (DOTS). Findings show that if the tuberculosis program continues implementing the DOTS treatment, the 2015 targets may be reached.

The tentative national targets for child mortality are to reduce infant mortality by 20% by 2005, 30% by 2010, and 40% from the baseline by 2015. The national goal for immunization is to achieve 80% coverage by 2005 and achieve and maintain 90% coverage by 2015. The national targets have been assessed to be realizable if current child immunization efforts continue, along with the wider implementation of community-based health care and nutrition activities, as well as effective implementation of the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses program (RDTL and United Nations Country Team 2004: 30).

C. Gender and Governance

1. Women's Representation at the Central Level

Timor-Leste, with 25% representation of women in Parliament, has one of the highest women's representation levels in Asia (the highest being Vietnam at 27.3%) and compares well with global standards. However, representation is only one aspect of the picture, albeit an important one. For example, it is well understood today that women in positions of power are not guaranteed to make decisions that benefit all women, or that women representatives can exert real influence in decision-making structures and processes. Democracy, including and especially in relation to gender equality, has to be practiced. Timor-Leste is starting to learn some valuable lessons in this respect in its early years of nation building.

Democracy is not something that is not taught, but practiced.

—Xanana Gusmão, President, Republic of Timor-Leste

Women Members of Parliament (MPs) have been unable to unite on a number of gender equality issues, including the 30% quota for women in Parliament. They were also unable to unite around divorce laws and even on setting up a Women's Commission as a standing Parliamentary Commission. Hitherto, they have taken no initiatives in introducing bills on gender equality-related issues. OPE is conducting capacity development and training sessions with women MPs to prepare them for the discussion on the law on domestic violence.

For me the position is hard. On one side I am representative for Dili district. On the other side I am a candidate for FRETILIN. Lastly I am a woman candidate. So it is hard [in relation to] one's loyalty. Is it to the community, the party, or to women?"

—Cipriana da Costa Pereira, FRETILIN MP

Neither do women MPs caucus in Parliament. This is primarily a result of their political party alignments. Attempts by the OPE and women's NGOs to set up a caucus of women MPs have failed.

The women MPs as a group have no mechanisms of consultation with the women's and civil society organizations. Complaints have also been heard that when meetings and workshops are organized, women MPs do not participate in these activities. Some women MPs also have the view that if women want to participate in the political system, they should do it through political parties. Women's organizations are seen as being in opposition to the Government and deemed

unacceptable. In an attempt to strengthen collaboration, some women's NGOs have adopted a strategy of encouraging women MPs to become members of their organizations, so that they can assist the women's organizations with their lobbying activities.¹⁵

2. Women's Representation at the Decentralized Level

a. Empowering Women in Local Government Structures

The *suco* elections to be carried out in 2004–2005 are another key opportunity to build on the gains made in Parliament and to extend them to the community level. The Law on the Election of *suco* Chiefs and *suco* Councils (n.2/2004) ensures that seats for at least three women (two for women and one for a female youth representative) are reserved within the *suco* councils. This is an extremely significant step in strengthening women's participation in local governance and starting the process of empowering women within local communities.

It is all about empowerment, especially [the empowerment of] women.

—Ana Pessoa, Minister for State Administration

So far, elections have been held in the Oecussi and Bobonaro districts.¹⁶ A woman *suco* chief was elected in a *posto* in Bobonaro and two women *aldeia* (subvillage) heads were elected in the Balibo subdistrict. These women belong to the Bunaq-speaking ethnic minorities in Bobonaro, which have been described as retaining some matrilineal traditions.

According to UNIFEM staff, the gender training given to men and women in relation to the elections is also an important contributing factor in enabling women to participate fully. A gender analysis of the lessons from this initial phase of the *suco* elections and their incorporation into the election campaigns in the remaining districts will be important, so that women and men can make the most of these opportunities in governance, based on community empowerment.

3. Women's Access to Justice

a. The Justice System and Traditional Culture

A nonpatriarchal system of justice is critical for good governance and human development. In Timor-Leste, traditional jurisdictions coexist with the formal justice system. How these systems of justice deal with gender-based violence is one indication of the role of the justice system in strengthening gender equality in governance (Box 13). Timor-Leste's NDP also stipulates the need to develop the legal means to fight violence and other crimes perpetrated against women. Several findings show that both systems contain patriarchal biases when dealing with gender-based violence and that there is a long way to go to achieve these NDP objectives.

¹⁵ The NGO FOKUPERS now has six members who are MPs; two are on the NGO's board.

¹⁶ District elections will be held in four phases covering the remaining districts throughout 2005.

Box 13. Regional Women's Congresses: Issues of Justice, Governance, and Culture

During the 2004 Regional Women's Congresses emphasis was put on justice, governance, and culture as priority areas for women's empowerment. Issues raised at the Regional Women's Congresses include the following:

1. Address issues relating to the period of occupation.
 - The Government needs to acknowledge the role and sacrifice women have made for independence.
 - Victims of human rights violations need reparations.
 - The Government must give widows and orphans special attention.
2. Develop laws and the legal system.
 - Laws are need on women's rights to land, domestic violence, polygamy, prostitution, and pornography.
 - Existing laws are not properly implemented or enforced.
3. Services for women victims are inadequate.
 - The Vulnerable Persons Unit of the police force lacks understanding of gender issues.
 - Rape victims get unsatisfactory treatment and results from the justice system.
 - Lawyers lack training in domestic violence issues and women cannot afford their services.
4. Women need to be involved in governance and society.
 - Women continue to be underrepresented in politics and need political training.
 - The Government should comprise 50% women.
 - Corruption, collusion, and nepotism hinder women's progress.
5. The patriarchal aspects of Timorese culture have a negative impact on women.
 - Men refuse to sanction women as village chiefs or working in the police or the army.
 - Due to "psychological obstacles," women lack the courage to run for positions such as village chief.
 - Violence against women is justified through reference to the dowry system, which men claim implies their "ownership" of women.
 - Men abandon their wives or engage in polygamy with impunity.
 - Traditional "justice" is insensitive to women's reality and gives "priority" to men.

Source: Regional Women's Congresses 2004.

Findings point to the following biases in the traditional system of justice:

- Women's participation in traditional justice hearings is minimal and often superficial.
- The rulings are often based on the cultural beliefs and biases of the justice administrator and the cultural bias of women's status in society: in several instances women are blamed for causing the violence to occur in the first place.

- Local justice has little power to enforce rulings: even if blame is placed on the accused, the woman can never be guaranteed that the compensation decided upon will be given to her or that the violence will stop.
- Separation from a violent partner is not an option in the local justice system.
- International standards based on women's rights are not given adequate consideration in local justice proceedings.
- Women do not have the traditional "power" as regards decision making in traditional justice systems.

Accessing the formal justice system is also a problem for women. The following findings are reported:

- Women have no guarantee that police officers will take their cases seriously. Women return home from police stations believing that the violence they have experienced is not "serious" enough to be dealt with by the police.
- Women often withdraw their complaints because of the way in which the police handle their cases.
- Cases move very slowly through the system.
- Women have no adequate access to information regarding their legal rights and formal legal mechanisms.

Relations between the two justice systems are strained and cause much frustration, especially for women who are caught in the interface and are frustrated and confused about the role of the police and the formal justice system.

b. Policy Environment

The NDP's policies on gender empowerment include gender equality in all aspects of public administration, facilitating access to justice for women, and developing the legal means to fight against violence and other crimes perpetrated against women, ensuring equal opportunities for women in recruitment and promotion, and providing training in technical and leadership skills.

The following key indicators and accomplishments in the promotion of gender equality have also been adopted: legislation to protect women from violence; targets for the participation of women in the public service, Parliament, rural councils, defense and security forces, and diplomatic service; and creation of mechanisms to help decrease school dropout rates for girls.

The Justice Sector SIP also has policy recommendations to improve access to justice for women in matters of gender-based violence, provide additional support for the Office of the Prosecutor General to process rape and domestic violence cases, and provide assistance to victims and guidelines on how to deal with domestic violence cases, including training for prosecutors.

However, up to now no legislation on domestic violence has been passed. According to senior government officials, the original draft legislation was a badly conceived legal document and had to be reworked, thus contributing to the delay. The (draft) law proposal, which has been

brought into line with the recently adopted Penal Code (2005), awaits endorsement from the Council of Ministers before being submitted to Parliament for approval (ADB 2005a). Despite the lack of a law on domestic violence, the Government issued a decree in March 2004 defining the competencies and responsibilities of *suco* chiefs (in time for the *suco* elections), which includes community education about domestic violence and support for the victims of domestic violence (Ana Maria Pessoa, personal communication).

As a part of its commitments to CEDAW, the Government is in the process of establishing a reporting process, by carrying out a gender and law audit to analyze gaps in legislation on the CEDAW provisions and international human rights standards.

c. Challenges and MDG Targets

A key challenge is the development and adoption of context-specific laws enabling the implementation of the general pronouncements in the Constitution and international treaties. Of utmost urgency is the adoption of the Domestic Violence and Anti-Discrimination Laws.

The need for detailed regulations to assist the implementation of government policy and programs has also been identified as a priority in several of the SIPs. This requires accurate information to inform policy and programs, thus making the development of a gender-sensitive database in gender-relevant sectors and ministries an important aspect of effective governance.

How to utilize and maximize the opportunity of having a strong representation of women in Parliament and other political and administrative structures, so that it benefits women in general, has emerged as an important issue. This now includes the training and capacity development of women *suco* council representatives to consolidate gains made in the *suco* elections. Following are some specific issues that have emerged:

- increase the capacity of women Parliamentarians to develop their understanding of gender issues;
- develop mechanisms of collaboration and consultation between women MPs and women's organizations, civil society organizations, and men and women community members;
- develop and enhance collaboration among women members of Parliament; and
- effectively address the challenges faced by women members of Parliament of "divided loyalties" for the parties they represent, their electorates, and women in general.

If the Government's gender mainstreaming strategy is to be effectively implemented in its programs, targeted sector-specific gender training in strategic sector-ministries and local governments is another major challenge that must be addressed. This gender training needs to be systematic, which requires its being integrated as a key component into a standardized training system to support the development of a professional and effective gender-sensitive civil service and local government administration system.

MDG Targets. Findings show that prospects are strong for making progress on gender empowerment. However, this will also require developing and strengthening implementation and monitoring mechanisms, as well as effective modalities to ensure enforcement.

Chapter 3 ADB Gender Strategy and Recommendations

A. ADB's Current Portfolio

ADB's initial program of assistance involved a quick-impact, grant-funded emergency response, mostly focusing on the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure—roads, energy, water supply and sanitation (WSS) systems—funded under the Trust Fund for Timor-Leste (TFET).¹⁷ In response to post-emergency development needs and constraints, ADB has been increasingly expanding its support to include macroeconomic management, as well as policy dialogue and capacity development initiatives. This chapter provides an overview of the extent to which gender has been mainstreamed in ADB-administered TFET and grant-funded projects, which are presented below and summarized in Table 16.

Table 16. Selected ADB-Administered TFET and Grant Projects (2005)

Title/ Closing date	Source of Funding	Approval Date
1. Infrastructure Rehabilitation		
• Emergency Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project Ph I (2004)	TFET	April 2004
• Emergency Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project Ph II (2006)	TFET	May 2005
2. Water Supply and Sanitation		
• Water Supply & Sanitation Rehabilitation Project Ph I (2003)	TFET	July 2000
• Water Supply & Sanitation Rehabilitation Project Ph II (2004)	TFET	July 2001
3. Microfinance		
• Microfinance Development Project (2004)	TFET	December 2000
4. Governance		
• Community Empowerment & Social Governance Project (2000)	ADB/ TA	February 2000
5. Capacity Building		
• Capacity Building to Strengthen Public Sector Management & ADB TA Governance Skills (2004)	ADB/ TA	December 2003

ADB = Asian Development Bank; TA = technical assistance; TFET = Trust Fund for Timor-Leste.

Source: ADB project documents.

¹⁷ TFET was established by the World Bank's Board of Governors following the December 1999 Tokyo Donors' Meeting. The multidonor TFET provides grants for economic reconstruction and development activities in Timor-Leste that are prepared and supervised by the World Bank and ADB. The World Bank is the trustee. ADB manages TFET projects aiming to rehabilitate roads, ports, water utilities, telecommunications, and power; the World Bank is in charge of TFET projects in the sectors of health care, education, agriculture, private sector development, and economic capacity building. The World Bank and ADB work together in community development projects, including microfinance. TFET is funded by Australia, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom, United States, the European Commission, and the World Bank.

1. Emergency Infrastructure Rehabilitation Projects

The Emergency Infrastructure Rehabilitation projects provided significant benefits to local communities. The TFET-funded road reconstruction projects reduced the isolation of communities and improved transportation access; rural electricity restoration benefited about 5,000 households and up to 250,000 people in rural areas; WSS projects benefited 15,000–20,000 people in Dili. The social development impact of emergency infrastructure rehabilitation projects resulted in three main outputs: (i) employment generation in local communities (estimated at 300,000 person-days, especially in the rural areas); (ii) community mobilization for reconstruction and maintenance; and (iii) training and capacity building in the public sector. However, no gender strategy was developed for any of the three major infrastructure projects and gender was not mainstreamed in the infrastructure program objectives or performance targets/indicators. As sex-disaggregated data were not collected, the gender-based impact of these infrastructure projects could not be adequately assessed (ADB 2004a).

2. Water Supply and Sanitation Rehabilitation Projects

The Water Supply and Sanitation Rehabilitation projects were short-term recovery initiatives for the rehabilitation of 16 critical WSS installations. The contracted international and national NGOs were required to ensure the participation of women in project implementation. Following are the findings of the audit report assessing the project:

- Women are the primary users but are not members of the water users' committees.
- Women staff of national NGOs did not take part in field work.
- National NGOs have much to learn about GAD issues.
- No efforts were made to find effective modalities to involve women as project actors and beneficiaries.
- The design of some public tanks and tap stands was not gender-sensitive, e.g., they did not provide an adequate area for women to wash clothes, so women had to carry the water to the house instead of washing clothes at the water source.

The report concludes: “the anticipated empowerment benefits for women did not eventuate from the water supply projects” (ADB 2004b). The assessment also pointed to other constraints that impeded project implementation, such as an insufficient understanding of the sociocultural context, which led to the adoption of inappropriate community management models, as well as weak institutional arrangements and capacity to manage community-based water supply systems.

3. Microfinance Development Project

The 8th Progress Report on the Microfinance Development Project (ADB 2004a) makes no reference to gender issues in the description of the project objectives and/or impact evaluation. Notwithstanding the lack of gender design features, the availability of sex-disaggregated data in the project progress reports provides an opportunity to assess the extent to which women benefited from the project activities.

With respect to the loan portfolio, women made up 58% of overall borrowers by number of total loans and 37% by amount of loans disbursed, with amounts varying between 68% by number and 42% by amount in Gleno and 33% by number and 26% by amount in Maliana. Data from the Institute of Microfinance of Timor-Leste (IMFTL) show that 53% of the total amount of loan disbursements was for payroll loan products, based on automatic payroll deductions from public servants, with 21% of these loans going to women in Dili, 27% in Gleno and 13% in Maliana.¹⁸ Women are also underrepresented in the business loan products: 35% of the loans in Dili, 16% in Gleno, and 50% in Maliana. However, the number of woman recipients of the market vendor loan products exceeds that of male borrowers, with 50% of the market vendor loans going to women in Dili, 57% in Gleno, and 68% in Maliana.

A gender analysis of the loan portfolio shows persistent gender biases in client identification and reflects deep-rooted discrimination among staff and communities-at-large vis-à-vis certain vulnerable groups, which include widows. In terms of staff capacity, key managers of the IMFTL were unaware that ADB had a Gender Policy. Recently recruited staff had no understanding of gender issues and explained the aims of microfinance purely in technical terms. Training modules for staff had no gender training component.

4. Community Empowerment and Social Governance Program

The Community Empowerment and Social Governance Project (CEP) was initiated in February 2000 to mobilize local communities in infrastructure reconstruction and to lay the basis for participatory local governance.¹⁹ CEP structures were set up in 65 *postos* and 418 *sucos* across Timor-Leste. It required a 50% representation by women in the CEP structures. A project of this nature, in a traditional society with a high degree of illiteracy, was considered to be a great challenge.

The various evaluations of the project provide valuable lessons for women's empowerment in local governance. An independent review conducted in October–November 2003 found that in 328 of the first village councils elected in 2000, only two had appointed women as council leaders and the number of active council members had been declining, with the participation of women decreasing more than that of the men. At the subdistrict level, close to 33% of the council members dropped out, a vast majority being women.

Factors discouraging women from participating were, not unexpectedly, related to their being constrained in their traditional social roles:

¹⁸ The Institute of Microfinance of Timor-Leste (IMFTL) report explains that a substantial number of the payroll loans go toward house repairs and refurbishing instead of microenterprise income-generating projects. It is described as a survival portfolio, which tapped into a specific post-conflict reconstruction market and at the same time helped finance the operations of the IMFTL. The report explains that civil servants who fall into this category are still “relatively poor.” However, in the context of Timor-Leste, civil servants are one of the highest categories of income earners.

¹⁹ The project was initially funded by the ADB and then jointly managed with the World Bank.

- Men and not women are supposed to represent their village.
- Women are not expected to voice their opinions when men are making decisions, a view shared by both men and women, although some women reported that they were not given a chance to participate, as men dominated the meetings.
- Time constraints due to women’s heavy domestic time burden impeded participation.
- High illiteracy levels among women limited their participation.
- Lack of mobility, with women not being able to travel alone if unaccompanied or without their husbands, impeded participation.

5. Capacity Building to Strengthen Public Sector Management and Governance Skills

ADB has assisted in several capacity development programs in the public sector, contributing to the development of administrative skills in local government. A feature of the project on Capacity Building to Strengthen Public Sector Management and Governance Skills is the “mobile training teams,” involving local trainers delivering and managing training courses for local authorities. Some 15% of the total training courses conducted so far have been led and managed by the mobile teams. Each has at least one woman trainer (of a total of five), with a total of 20% women trainers on these teams. The training modules do not contain any gender-specific features, but women’s participation and contribution are profiled in the course activities to help advocate the need for women’s participation. The course is gender-sensitive to the extent that the trainers have integrated gender-sensitive examples, as well as gender-sensitive language, into the modules. This provides a strong basis for integrating specific gender-awareness training modules into the course, as well as key gender-equity messages in course components: problem solving, working with others, use of quantitative methods, leading and managing organizations and teams, developing and managing projects, and managing local development.

6. Lessons Learned

The lack of project-specific gender mainstreaming strategies within ADB-administered TFET and grant projects in Timor-Leste resulted in limited impact in gender equality and women’s empowerment, even in projects with greater potential to correct gender disparities or significantly mainstream gender concerns. This was particularly the case for the: Water Supply and Sanitation Rehabilitation Project, as well as the Microfinance Development grant projects.

In these projects, the stated objective of promoting women’s participation and benefits in project activities was not consistently reflected in the project framework matrices, through the development of gender-specific targets and performance indicators. As a result, monitoring and evaluation of the gender impact of the project was not possible, and project progress reports did not provide any insight into the gender impact of project activities.

The need to strengthen staff capacity and the capacity of NGOs and other partners involved in project activities also emerged as another important consideration. This finding was particularly applicable to NGO partners in the Water Supply and Sanitation Rehabilitation project and

Microfinance Development grant projects. Project staff and partners involved in project implementation require gender training in order to ensure that gender equality considerations in project objectives are met.

The project on Capacity Building to Develop Public Sector Governance contains some latent but valuable lessons in good practice, i.e., that decentralized activities and approaches lead to greater participation by women. The mobile training team model, where public-sector training courses are carried out in the field with the use of local trainers, helped increase women's participation as trainers and trainees. This model could be adapted to community-based vocational training targeting women, as well as to gender training and capacity development initiatives targeting local government staff.

The need to collect sex-disaggregated baseline data and integrate them into project performance and monitoring systems is essential to assess the project's impact on gender equality. Within the Microfinance Development Project, the IMFTL activities collected sex-disaggregated data; some gender evaluation of the project was made possible. The infrastructure projects, however, did not contain any sex-disaggregated data, although data were extensively and routinely collected as part of project monitoring activities. This is again an example of a missed opportunity for drawing useful and practical lessons on gender equality considerations in infrastructure projects.

B. Opportunities and Challenges for Gender Mainstreaming

Perhaps the greatest opportunity to advance gender equality in Timor-Leste is presented by the fact that this is a new nation in the making, with an optimism and commitment among its people that is one of its most valuable assets. Its Government has demonstrated political commitment to gender equality and has put in place a policy framework that provides an enabling environment to advance women's empowerment. In a short period of time since independence (2002), significant progress has occurred in the sphere of governance, especially in women's political representation at the central level, which has taken many other countries most of the last century to achieve.

Internationally, Timor-Leste and its efforts in nation building enjoy much support and solidarity. This support is also reflected within the international women's networks, organizations, and institutions, as well as individual specialists who continue to be a source of knowledge and experience that the Government and civil society continue to draw from.

In Timor-Leste, one of the key challenges is to consolidate and build on some of the critical gender-relevant policy achievements made so far. In the area of governance, where some of the most tangible gains have been made, it will require the enactment of laws and regulations to enable the implementation of the policy frameworks which have been put in place, with emphasis on ensuring women's greater representation within decision-making processes and structures at the local level (*posto, suco, and aldeia*), in line with ongoing trends at the central level. Antidiscrimination and domestic violence legislation needs to be in place as a matter of urgency.

Capacity development is a critical aspect of a successful gender mainstreaming strategy. Targeted training in gender analysis, combined with sector-specific guidelines and tools for gender mainstreaming in the public sector, is needed, starting with the priority sectors identified by OPE, which include education, health care, justice, and the police.

Patriarchal aspects of Timorese culture continue to be a major constraint that poses great challenges to women's empowerment and contributes to perpetuating women's limited access to basic social services and productive resources. It also constitutes a potential impediment to the ability of women and men to make full use of the opportunities provided for gender equality.

In education, a key challenge is to sustain girls' participation from primary school to senior secondary school and beyond. This will require adequate funding to address several access issues as well as community awareness campaigns on the importance of educating girl children. Tackling the problem of female adult literacy (15 years and over) through women's sustained participation in adult literacy and vocational training programs is key to enabling women to make the most of new opportunities that arise in the medium term. The mobile training team model that ADB used in its CEP project could be adapted to reach out to women in the communities and improve their access to and participation in training programs. Education policy targeted at improving girls' and women's education also requires sector-specific data and information. Developing a sex-disaggregated database is a necessary component of gender-sensitive policy development and program design.

Reducing MMRs and TFRs is a critical issue, impacting on women's lives and the welfare of communities. It also has important economic and social implications for nation building. Putting in place choice-based family planning programs aimed at improving women's sexual and reproductive health is needed to address this challenge. As cultural constraints cannot be overcome easily in the short term, it will require a medium-term and even long-term strategy based on raising the awareness of women and men about sexual and reproductive health issues and choices. The increasing threat of HIV/AIDS and other STIs will also need to be tackled in a culturally sensitive way.

Women and girl children are especially vulnerable to food insecurity, resulting in high levels of malnutrition. However, since women are also responsible for household food preparation and since women's horticultural activities can and do contribute to improving the quality and quantity of food consumption, they also hold some of the solutions to improving food security, especially in the short term. This requires food security strategies based on understanding women's significant role as food producers and programs aimed at strengthening women's role and impact in improving nutrition and food security in their communities.

The main challenge to achieving gender equality, however, is reducing income poverty. This includes addressing income differentials that contribute to gender inequity and therefore, overall socioeconomic inequity. Any existing trends in income gender gaps need to be tackled as a matter of priority. In the medium and long term, this requires a deliberate strategy to increase women's labor force participation rates at higher income levels, in all sectors and levels of the economy.

It is widely acknowledged and proven that community-based approaches are the most effective in tackling poverty reduction and promoting gender equality. Nation building in Timor-Leste provides ADB with a unique opportunity to promote and implement such “bottom-up” gender equality and poverty reduction strategies in its interventions, ranging from microcredit programs to infrastructure development.

Development of rural infrastructure is an essential precondition to achieving poverty reduction and gender equality by improving women’s income-generating opportunities and access to basic services. Infrastructure development projects that include targeted community consultation and participation, as well as specific activities to involve women, would be the most effective in poverty reduction. The consultation of women needs to be included in the initial context analysis, consistently reflected in the project design features, and monitored during project implementation.

Access to cheap credit has been identified as a key to improving women’s income and poverty reduction. Women-centered microcredit programs should be prioritized as an important component of poverty-reduction programs in Timor-Leste. Achieving gender equality goals in poverty reduction requires an enabling policy environment. Gender-sensitive macroeconomic policy development and implementation will contribute significantly to effective poverty reduction. Interventions that build capacity in gender-sensitive macroeconomic policy development are strongly recommended.

C. ADB Country Gender Strategy (2005–2008)

Despite the gains made by Timorese women since independence, Timor-Leste is still recovering from decades of conflict, which triggered massive destruction of social infrastructure, loss of skilled personnel, collapse in agricultural output and widespread food insecurity. The violence and trauma that followed the referendum results in 1999 critically affected women’s already limited access to basic social services and productive resources. Rebuilding the social infrastructure and the social fabric of Timor-Leste requires constant attention to addressing persistent gender-based discriminatory practices that critically affect the impact of post-emergency rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts.

ADB’s *Policy on Gender and Development* (ADB 2003) adopts mainstreaming as a key strategy for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women to ensure that gender issues are addressed in all ADB activities. Gender is a crosscutting concern affecting all aspects of ADB’s operations, including macroeconomic and sector work, lending, and technical assistance programs. ADB’s *Poverty Reduction Strategy* (ADB 2004b) also identifies gender equality as a thematic and crosscutting concern.

Applying these ADB frameworks, the Timor-Leste GAD strategy will promote *gender mainstreaming* in all activities—based on the opportunities provided by ADB’s portfolio of activities 2005–2007 (see Table 17)—and selectively explore linked, *gender-specific activities* to address the persisting structural constraints that women face. Specific components will be designed and incorporated into projects to correct gender disparities and to increase women’s participation in and benefit from project activities. Studies of gender-related issues can also be carried out through

technical assistance projects that advance understanding of the nature of gender disparities and how they might be addressed; policy dialogue can reinforce ADB's commitment to promoting gender equality.

Table 17. Asian Development Bank Portfolio and Pipeline (2005–2008)

2005	2006
Lending products: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road Sector Improvement Project 	Lending products: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Project Non lending products: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure Capacity Development, Phase I: (Transport) Water and Sanitation Service Organization Development
2007	2008
Non lending products: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure Capacity Development, Phase II 	Nonlending products: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure Capacity Development, Phase III Road Sector Improvement, Phase II

Source: ADB 2005b.

1. Road Improvement

The recently approved *Road Sector Improvement Project* (August 2005) recognizes women's traditional exclusion from infrastructure-related employment opportunities and their limited involvement in decision-making processes and structures related to road rehabilitation and maintenance. In this context, the project aims at increasing women's access to employment opportunities provided during road rehabilitation and maintenance. The Ministry of Public Works, through the project management unit, will encourage civil works contractors to increase the percentage of women workers to 30% of wage laborers (including at least 75% of bioengineering activities). In addition, the community empowerment component will have a strong gender focus and support a broad range of initiatives, such as the participatory and gender-inclusive identification and selection of rural feeder roads to be rehabilitated under the project; skills transfer to women in bioengineering, agroforestry, and agricultural extension, combined with literacy, food nutrition, reproductive health care, HIV/AIDS prevention, and the design of sustainable modalities to ensure gender-inclusive maintenance of rehabilitated feeder roads.

In light of the potential impact of road rehabilitation on HIV/AIDS, the project will finance culturally sensitive and gender-responsive HIV/AIDS prevention and target high-risk groups, including women, local construction workers, and long-distance drivers in the campsites and corridors of influence along the project roads. These initiatives, to be funded under the Community Empowerment component, will complement government-led initiatives for HIV/AIDS prevention, be implemented in consultation with the Ministry of Health, and be consistent with the National Strategic Plan for a Comprehensive and Multisector Response to HIV/AIDS and STIs (2002–2005).

The gender design features included in the *Road Sector Improvement Project* mark ADB's first attempt to mainstream gender concerns within the design of infrastructure-related projects in Timor-Leste. These and other relevant gender design features should be integrated into the design

of other infrastructure (mostly road and WSS) initiatives, included in ADB's portfolio of assistance 2006–2008, which includes the *Infrastructure Capacity Development Project* (Phases I–III). During project identification, adequate social and gender analysis should be carried out to identify women's impediments to accessing basic social services (health care, education, water, and sanitation) and market and employment opportunities. A risk assessment of women's vulnerabilities to resettlement, human trafficking, and STIs (including HIV/AIDS), should be undertaken. The preparation of infrastructure-related projects should ensure (i) integration of women's needs and constraints, (ii) women's involvement in the prioritization and design of infrastructure projects, and (iii) the establishment of adequate modalities for women's effective participation in infrastructure-related decision-making processes and structures. The adoption of women's employment targets could be considered within the proposed infrastructure projects. Vocational training and skills transfer to women in maintenance and management of road and WSS-related infrastructure should be included in project design.

2. Water Supply and Sanitation

The Concept Paper for the *Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Project* (ADB 2004b: Appendix 2, Table A2.1) includes GAD as a thematic area and states that the project will comply with the gender equality provisions of ADB's Water Policy. The technical assistance for preparing the project also places a strong emphasis on participatory methodologies for the social assessment, with consultants working closely with local communities, NGOs, Dili district-level administration, officials of the Water and Sanitation Service/*Serviço de Águas e Saneamento* (WASS/SAS), and development partners. These gender-sensitive approaches provide real opportunities to mainstream gender equality considerations into the project.

Gender-sensitive participatory methodologies, developed as a result of lessons learned in water projects in Timor-Leste, should be used to identify the special needs and demands of both female and male community members. Baseline surveys and analysis should be gender sensitive and attempts should be made to establish sex-disaggregated baseline data. These should then inform project design in concrete and practical ways. NGOs and other organizations carrying out the surveys, analysis, and consultations with the communities require experience in and/or training in gender issues and the gender-sensitive tools and methodologies used. Women's organizations should be identified and integrated into the early stages of project design. The OPE should also be tapped as a resource to assist gender-sensitive project development.

Community Development and GAD specialist services should be used to assist in the design of surveys and analysis and with training and orientation activities. The gender-sensitive baseline surveys and analysis will be used to develop a project-specific gender strategy and action plan (GAP). The GAP should include gender targets and indicators to monitor the gender impact of the project and facilitate and encourage women's involvement and/or tangible benefits to women.

The concept paper for the *Water Supply Service Organizational Development Project* (ADB 2004b: Appendix 3) identifies gender issues in institution building and development of WASS/SAS. At present, no women occupy senior technical positions in WSS/SAS. The technical

assistance organizational development support should have as one of its targets redressing this gender imbalance in WASS/SAS.

3. Infrastructure-Related Capacity Development

Capacity development in governance is one of the major challenges for poverty reduction in Timor-Leste. Governance has been identified as one of the thematic areas in the *Infrastructure Capacity Development Project* (Phase I). A critical aspect of OPE's gender strategy is to ensure the mainstreaming of gender concerns within the Infrastructure SIPs. In this perspective, the project provides an opportunity to support OPE in further advancing its gender mainstreaming agenda, by including specific provisions for gender training in policy development, programming and budgeting, service delivery, monitoring, and evaluation. This approach will contribute to strengthening infrastructure ministries' ability to prioritize investment opportunities likely to generate more visible benefits to and impacts on women.

4. Operational Approaches

Some important approaches to integrating gender equality and women's empowerment concerns into projects would include the following steps:

- Gender situation analysis in the project design phase, including an assessment of the social and gender impact, benefits, and risks, and the establishment of a sex-disaggregated baseline at the start of the project.
- Project design to include gender-sensitive objectives, strategic focus, and outcomes, along with gender-sensitive performance targets and indicators for women's participation, consultation, and empowerment. These targets and indicators will be integrated into, as well as monitored and evaluated in, all phases of the project cycle.
- Involvement of women's departments and women's NGOs and/or networks in project design.
- Collection of sex-disaggregated data and establishment of gender-sensitive project performance monitoring and evaluation systems.
- Consultation with women beneficiaries and those affected or potentially affected by project activities.
- Promotion of policy development and capacity development in gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Inclusion of gender consultants, preferably domestic, to assist with gender-sensitive project design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Gender impact assessment of the project.

These proposed approaches can be brought together in a project-specific GAP, identifying strategies, mechanisms, and project components for addressing gender concerns; and reports generated on how women are to be involved in the design, implementation, and monitoring process. Budget provision for these components or design features must also be highlighted in the plan.

References

- ADB (Asian Development Bank). 2003. *Gender and Development*. Manila.
- . 2004a. *Timor-Leste: Eighth Progress Report, ADB TFET Projects*. Report on the Timor-Leste and Development Partners Meeting, 17–19 May. Manila.
- . 2004b. *Water Supply and Sanitation Rehabilitation I and II Projects Draft Project Performance Audit Report*. Dili.
- . 2004c. *Poverty Reduction Strategy*. Manila.
- . 2005a. *Timor-Leste: Country Strategy and Program Update*. Manila.
- . 2005b. *Country Strategy and Program 2006–2008*. Draft. Manila.
- Alexander, Patricia. 2003. *Searching for Gender in Timor-Leste, Data and Texts*. Mimeo. Dili.
- Government of Timor-Leste. 2004. *Sectoral Investment Programs—Education and Training; Health Care; Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Natural Resources and Environment; Private Sector Development; Communications; Power; Transportation; Water Supply and Sanitation; Public Sector Management; Local Government and Civil Society; Rights, Equality and Justice; Security, Peace building and Reconciliation; External Relations*. Second Draft. Dili.
- , and Oxfam. 2004. *Study on Lessons Learned in Implementing Community Level Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Projects in Timor-Leste*. Final Report. Dili.
- Government of Timor-Leste, ADB, JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), and UNMISSET (United Nations Mission of Support for Timor-Leste). 2003. *Timor-Leste, Poverty in a New Nation: Analysis for Action*. Dili.
- ILO (International Labour Organization). 1988. *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*. 86th Session. Geneva.
- Ireland Aid. 2002. *Situation Analysis: 2002*. Research commissioned by the Gender Affairs Unit, Office for the Promotion of Equality. Dili.
- Ministry of Finance and Planning. 2004a. *Establishing a Petroleum Fund for Timor-Leste*. Dili.
- . 2004b. *Overview of Sector Investment Programs. Volume II. Sectoral Priorities, Programs and Expenditures*. Dili: Division of Planning.
- Ministry of Transport, Communications and Public Works. 2004. *Priorities and Proposed Sector Investment Program (SIPs)*. Second Draft. Dili.
- Ministry of Transport, Communication and Public Works. 2004. *Power Sector, Priorities and Proposed Sector Investment Program*. Dili.
- MOH (Ministry of Health). 2002. *HIV/AIDS Summary Report*. Dili.

- OPE (Office for the Promotion of Equality). 2002. *Written with Blood*. Dili: Prime Minister's Office, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.
- . 2004. *Engendering of the SIPs within the Context of the Gender Mainstreaming Policy of the Government of the RDTL*. Dili: Prime Minister's Office, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.
- Oxfam Australia, and NZAID (New Zealand Agency for International Development). 2003. *Underlying Causes of Gender Inequity in Covalima, Timor-Leste*. Final Report. Dili.
- Oxfam-GB (Great Britain). 2004. *Obstacles to the Effective Participation of Women in Adult Education Programs*. Draft 2. Dili.
- Pessoa, Ana Maria. Minister of State Administration. 2005. Personal interview. January.
- RDTL (Republica Democratica de Timor-Leste) and United Nations Country Team. 2004. *Timor-Leste, Millenium Development Goals Report*. Dili.
- UNDP. 2001. *Human Development Report*. New York.
- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). 2002. *Timor-Leste Human Development Report 2002: Ukun Rasik A'an, The Way Ahead*. Dili.
- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). 2003. *UNDP Timor-Leste: Program Package Document for Sustainable Human Development*. Dili.
- UNDP. 2004. *Human Development Report*. New York.
- UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund). 2003. *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), Timor-Leste 2002*. Dili.
- UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women). 2002. *Progress of the World's Women 2002*. New York.
- UNTL (National University of Timor-Leste). 2001. *Enrollment Rates*. Dili.
- World Bank. 2002. *World Bank Development Indicators*. Washington, DC.
- . 2003. *Timor-Leste Education: The Way Forward*. A Summary Report from the World Bank. Dili.
- . 2004. *Aide-Mémoire, Second Small Enterprise Project*. Supervision mission, October 25–November 5. Dili.
- . ADB (Asian Development Bank), UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), Ministry of Planning and Finance. 2003. *Poverty Assessment Project: Poverty in a New Nation: Analysis for Action*. Dili.

Appendix 1. Persons Met during Gender Assessment Missions

1. Amarnath Hinduja, Resident Representative, ADB
2. Valter Galvan, Chief Technical Advisor, ADB
3. Carmeneza dos Santos Monteiro Branco, Program Officer, AusAID
4. Cynthia Burton, Counselor, AusAID
5. Alan Smith, Executive Director, Community Water Supply and Sanitation Project (CWSSP)
6. Maria Olandina Isabel Caero Alves, Director, East Timor Women against Violence and Care for Children (ETWAVE)
7. Manuela Leong Pereira, Executive Director, Communication Forum for Women from the East (FOKUPERS)
8. Joaquim Freitas, Executive Director, East Timor National NGO Forum (FONGTIL)
9. Cipriana da Costa Pereira, Member of Parliament, Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (FRETILIN)
10. Anibal Ferreira, Internal Auditor, Institute of Microfinance of Timor-Leste (IMFTL)
11. Ferje de sa Vila Nova, staff member, IMFTL (Gleno Branch)
12. Norbaiti Rahmat, consultant, IMFTL
13. Sergio do Espirito Santo, General Manager, IMFTL
14. Carol Hannon, Charge d' Affaires, Embassy of Ireland
15. Ana Maria Pessoa, Minister, Ministry of State Administration
16. Lenita Florinda, Consultant, Ministry of Planning and Finance
17. Obidio de Jesus Amaral, Engineer, Ministry for Transport, Communication and Public Works (MTCPW)
18. Maria da Paixão da Costa, Member of Parliament, Organização da Mulher Timor (OMT) Democratic Party (PD)
19. Maria Domingas F. Alves, Advisor to the Prime Minister, Office for the Promotion of Women (OPE)
20. Sara Negrão, Advisor, OPE
21. Sebastiana da Costa Pereira, OXFAM Community Aid Abroad (CAA)
22. Indio X. da Costa, Director, NGO Probem Foundation
23. Nuno Rodriguez, Sahe Institute for Liberation
24. Maria Do Seu, Director, Timor Aid
25. Jose Adriano Gusmao, Director, Tuba Rai Metin (TURAME)
26. Janne Niemi, Program Officer, UNDP
27. Milena Pires, UNIFEM
28. Maria Isabel Ximenes, Project Management Specialist, USAID
29. Elisabeth Huybens, Country Manager, World Bank
30. Rui Hanjan, Social Development Officer, World Bank

Appendix 2. Development Coordination Matrix

Sector/Thematic/Area	ADB Strategy/Activities	Other Development Partners' Ongoing Strategy/Activities
A. Agriculture and Natural Resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture Rehabilitation III (TFET) • Reduction of Post Harvest Losses (Japan) • Natural Resource Development (New Zealand) • Support to Implement Agriculture in the NDP (FAO) • Improvement of Coffee Quality and Diversification (Japan) • Emergency Repairs of Irrigation Facilities (Japan) • Food Security Program (Germany) • Agromechanics and Rice Production (Spain) • Support for Coffee Industry (USAID) • Collaborative Agricultural Research Support Project (USAID)
B. Education		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamental School Quality Program (TFET) • English Language Teaching (Australia) • Education Project (EU) • Early Childhood Education (New Zealand) • Short-term Training Program (Korea) • Scholarship Program for Teachers (Japan) • Human Resources for Development (United Kingdom) • Program for Developing Education (Sweden) • Basic Education I (UNICEF) • Community Education I (UNICEF)
C. Energy	<p>Ongoing Power Sector Development (Master) Plan, \$400,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petroleum Technical Assistance (TFET) • Energy and Environment (Norway) • Capacity Building for Petroleum (Norway)
D. Finance	<p>Ongoing Microfinance Info Technology Systems Development, \$150,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microfinance Development Project (TFET) • Preparation of Commercial laws on companies, contract and bankruptcy (TA—USAID, World Bank) • Community Assistance (Australia) • Recovery Employment and Stability Program (Japan) • Community Activation Program in Ainaro and Manatuto (Japan)

Sector/Thematic/Area	ADB Strategy/Activities	Other Development Partners' Ongoing Strategy/Activities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program for Banking and Financial Services (Sweden) • Social and Community Development (New Zealand)
E. Health, Nutrition and Social Protection		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Sector Rehab. II (TFET) • Health Governing Bodies; Health Tech. and Pharmaceuticals; Communicable Disease Control (WHO) • HIV/AIDS I; Integrated Early Childhood I (UNICEF) • National Mental Health; National Oral Health Program (Australia) • HIV/AIDS Program II (USAID) • Rural Community Water and Environment Health (Canada) • Health Sector Rehabilitation III (EU) • Expansion of Primary Health Care (Japan)
F. Industry and Trade		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Enterprises II (TFET) • Tourism Assistance (Thailand)
G. Law, Economic Management and Public Policy	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Policies and Strategies for Development Planning, \$950,000 <p>Programmed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity Building in the Ministry of Planning and Finance to Monitor the National Development Plan, \$150,000 <p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity Building and Governance for Sector Management, US\$1 million • Capacity Building to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating/Refinement of Annual Action Plans with supporting training activities (UNDP, World Bank, UNICEF) • Preparation of Revised Budget and Financial Management Law (IMF) • Preparation of Administrative Directive on Dvpt. Project appraisal, tracking and monitoring procedures (AusAID, World Bank and UNDP) • Strengthening the Capacity for Poverty Analysis (World Bank) • Economic Institutions Capacity Building (TFET) • ASYCUDA Project; National Dev Plan Implementation (UNDP) • Economic and Technical Cooperation II (PRC) • Cap. Bldg. for Public Sector (Finland) • Volunteer Services Abroad I (New Zealand) • Program for Village Based Economic Recovery (Japan) • Training for Development and Capacity Building; Technical Services Assistance (Australia) • Economic and Investment Advisory Assistance (United States) • NGO Capacity Building (Australia) • Preparation of Foreign Investment Law (USAID/World Bank) • Preparation of law on land; Democracy and Governance Program (USAID)

Sector/Thematic/Area	ADB Strategy/Activities	Other Development Partners' Ongoing Strategy/Activities
	Develop Public Sector Management and Governance, \$688,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity Building to Strengthen Public Sector and Governance, \$550,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government and Public Administration Capacity Building (Canada) • Local Governance and Development Program (Finland) • Special Fund for Government and Civil Society (Indonesia) • Local Government and Dvpt.; Capacity Bldg for Government (Ireland)
H. Transport and Communications	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Sector Improvement, \$500,000 • Postal Services Development, \$250,000 • Emergency Infrastructure Rehabilitation • Projects, Phases I and II (TFET) Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure Ministries Capacity Building, \$250,000 • Preparation of an Infrastructure Sector Development Program, Program, \$500,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet Network for Development (UNDP) • Ferry Services (Germany) • Regional Information Systems (EU)
I. Water Supply, Sanitation, and Water Management	Integrated Water Resources Management, \$600,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Community Water and Communal Health (Canada) • Water and Sanitation Mgt (Germany) • Supplying Clean Water to Villages (Japan) • Community Water Supply and Sanitation (Australia)

AusAID = Australian Agency for International Development; AYSCUDA = Automated system for customs data; EU = European Union; FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization; HIV/AIDS = human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome; NDP = National Development Plan; NGO = nongovernment organization; PRC = People's Republic of China; TA = technical assistance; TFET = Trust Fund for Timor-Leste; UNDP = United Nations Development Programme; UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund; USAID = United States Agency for International Development; WHO = World Health Organization.

Source: ADB 2004b.

