# OUR VOICES

**July 2023** 

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## Oxfam in Timor-Leste's Work on Climate Justice

Lucio Savio Climate Financing Project Manager, Oxfam in Timor-Leste

#### Greeting, friends!

In this edition, I am excited to share insights into Oxfam in Timor-Leste's (OiTL) endeavors within the Climate Justice pillar. Our approach to climate justice revolves around enhancing adaptation and resilience to climate change impacts. We advocate for the allocation of climate financing at both international and national levels to ensure adequate resources for communities, especially women and marginalized groups, who bear the brunt of the climate crisis. Furthermore, our advocacy efforts aim to bolster humanitarian responses and foster community resilience to climate-related natural disasters.

The signs of climate change are unmistakable: temperatures are soaring, rainfall patterns are disrupted, sea levels are on the rise, land erosion is escalating, river levels are fluctuating, and extreme weather events are becoming more frequent. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that the global average temperature has already surged by 1.1 degrees Celsius. The Paris Agreement underscores the critical threshold of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius to avert catastrophic consequences such as droughts, diseases, famines, ecosystem degradation, and inundated coastlines, exemplified by the plight of the Solomon Islands losing several small islands.



Against this backdrop, OiTL's global intervention strategy focuses on urging developed nations to transition towards alternative, non-fossil-based energy sources to mitigate their contributions to global warming. Additionally, we advocate for developed countries to provide climate financing as reparation for their role in climate change.

Let us collectively engage in local initiatives to adapt to climate change while amplifying our voices at the international stage. We must implore large developed nations not only to compensate for the impacts of climate change but also to undertake substantial measures to mitigate its effects within their borders. By striving towards achieving net-zero carbon emissions, as stipulated in the Paris Agreement, we can avert the catastrophic 1.5-degree warming threshold.

Photo from Keith Parsons Oxfam Australia

#### EXPLORE OITL'S RESEARCH REPORTS

Throughout 2023, Oxfam in Timor-Leste (DiTL) unveiled a series of insightful research reports covering diverse topics. These reports delved into areas such as The Role of Youth in Economic Diversification, Youth Perceptions on Economic Diversification, and Priorities for Political Parties Competing in the 2023 Election, as well as Community Experiences of the Impacts of Climate Change in Timor-Leste.

Let us delve deeper into the report detailing community experiences of climate change impacts in Timor-Leste. This report sheds light on the stark realities faced by



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communities grappling with the adverse effects of climate change, despite bearing minimal responsibility for global carbon emissions. It highlights the escalating frequency of climatic events, including erratic rainfall patterns, prolonged dry spells, and the devastating impact of storms such as Tropical Cyclone Seroja in 2021.



JOVEN SIRA NIA PAPĖL IHA DIVERSIFIKASAUN EKONOMIA: JOVEN SIRA NIA PERSEPSAUN NO PRIORIDADE SIRA BA PARTIDU POLĪTIKU IHA ELEISAUN PARLAMENTĀR 2023 LIGA BA DIVERSIFIKASAUN EKONOMIA



Furthermore, other reports focus on the pivotal role of youth in economic diversification and their perceptions and priorities concerning economic diversification within the backdrop of the 2023 election.

These reports underscore the diverse perspectives among youth regarding government initiatives aimed at enhancing youth participation in the economy.

While acknowledging the government's efforts to support youth through targeted programs, youth also recognize the need to bolster their own capacities and knowledge to sustain their economic activities effectively. These research reports serve as invaluable resources, offering comprehensive insights into pressing issues facing Timor-Leste's communities and youth. They provide a foundation for informed decision-making and policy formulation aimed at fostering inclusive and sustainable development.

#### To access these and other more recent reports, clink the following link or scan the QR Code: \_\_\_\_\_

https://oxfam.box.com/s/2fv5fj 8f4yf9dlc0ymbc2kyibdvvz48h







#### Reflect, Change, and Grow Stronger

Reflections offer a valuable opportunity to come together with partners and individuals pivotal to the success of a project. Programs like the Kōtui program, funded by the New Zealand Government, have facilitated exchanges between people from Pacific island countries and Timor-Leste, celebrating achievements and fortifying collaborative efforts for the future.

Last March, the Oxfam team in Timor-Leste proudly hosted members of the extended Oxfam family and partners from Pacific island nations such as Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and New Zealand for the Kōtui reflection program. This gathering served as a platform for shared learning and joint planning.

The term "Kōtui" in the Maori language signifies binding or stitching together, symbolizing the spirit of dialogue and collaborative endeavoUrs between Pacific countries and Timor-Leste. The Kōtui program, operational across three Pacific island nations and Timor-Leste for three years, and set to conclude after its fifth year, receives funding from the New Zealand Government in partnership with Oxfam Aotearoa. It aims to enhance resilience, well-being, and the participation of women and marginalized groups in confronting the climate crisis. This includes empowering women and vulnerable communities to access vital resources.

The recent Kōtui reflection project, 'Te KETE ō KōTUI,' the third of its kind held in Timor-Leste, proved highly fruitful, paving the way for strategic planning in the upcoming year. Following engaging discussions, participants also indulged in cultural exchanges, exploring various historical sites in Dili and partaking in local events and cultural presentations hosted at the Oxfam centre. Noteworthy partners from Timor-Leste, including Rede ba Rai, Jurists for Advocacy, ACbit, Youth Parliament Alumni, Core Group on Transparency, and FOKUPERS, actively contributed to the reflection activity, fostering a sense of collaboration and mutual learning.



#### Women and Climate Action

Climate action doesn't necessitate holding a position of power. Elisa is effecting significant change in her community, organization, and our planet through her dedicated work for Timor-Verde (Green Timor) under the Rai Matak (Green Earth) project in the Baucau municipality.

She tirelessly advocates for a clean, healthy, and green environment, empowering communities to utilize their initiative and local knowledge to foster sustainability.

Globally, June 5th is celebrated as World Environment Day. The theme for World Environment Day 2023 is #EliminatePlastic. In Baucau, the special celebration of World Environment Day involves the launch of the Rai Matak project in Triloka suku, Baucau Vila administrative post, Baucau municipality. Mana Elisa, as the Director of Timor-Verde in Baucau, passionately describes her commitment to environmental issues in Timor-Leste through her work with Timor-Verde, which began with conserving mangroves and has expanded to include carbon farming and agroforestry, all under the Rai Matak project.

Timor-Verde, with its unique approach, emphasizes the value of plants in this celebration and conveys a message about the importance of reforestation, sustainable livelihoods, establishing agroforestry enterprises, and empowering local leaders through community initiatives.

The celebration of this significant occasion in Trikola suku brought together farmers, community members, students, and guests from government and donor agencies. The event concluded with the collective planting of trees in the fields and enjoying delicious local cuisine.

# Youth Leadership and Dedication

Lucio Savio Climate Finance Program Manager

Youth leadership has been instrumental in transforming the Youth Parliament Alumni (APFTL) into an organization dedicated to serving communities and empowering youth through project implementation and forging partnerships, including collaboration with Oxfam in Timor-Leste (OiTL).

The Youth Parliament serves as an educational platform, offering youth the opportunity to gain firsthand experience as representatives of the people, advocating for their voices at the highest levels of decision-making, such as the National Parliament.

Established by 65 youth from all administrative posts in Timor-Leste after its mandate ended in 2012, APFTL operates with the vision of 'Youth as drivers of sustainable development, civic engagement, solidarity, and pride as Timorese.' The organization remains actively engaged with other youth groups, focusing on productive sectors and fostering creativity. Moreover, APFTL collaborates with 0iTL on climate financing programs supported by the New Zealand Government, building upon previous partnerships.

In conjunction with the Kōtui project for climate financing, APFTL diligently monitors the climate fund and its reports while mobilizing youth to participate in decision-making processes related to climate change and climate financing across the nation.





## The Importance of Water Conservation for the Community

MEDIA TOUR'S STORY FOCUSED ON CONSERVING WATER SPRINGS FOR THE BENEFIT OF WOMEN AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

Water is a basic necessity, essential for meeting daily needs, including agricultural activities vital for food production. Recognizing this need, a reservoir was established in José Tacaqui's village of Lakufo'an, presenting a practical solution to address the water scarcity challenge confronting local communities.

Historically, the inhabitants of Lakufo'an village relied solely on rainwater for their agricultural activities, cultivating crops like coffee, oranges, pineapples, avocados, and betel nuts for market sale.

"As the village chief, I acknowledge the water scarcity issue plaguing our community. For years, we relied on rainwater collected from house eaves for our daily needs. However, with the discovery of three sustainable water springs, our community's livelihoods have been significantly uplifted," remarked José.

Timor-Leste Permaculture Organization (PERMATIL) embarked on extensive studies and collaborative efforts with local communities to enhance resilience during periods of drought. Through various water conservation initiatives spearheaded by PERMATIL, communities, particularly vulnerable groups, have been equipped with effective solutions.

José and the residents of Lakufo'an village continue to seek technical assistance from PERMATIL, aiming to optimize water harvesting during the rainy season for sustained usage during dry periods.



## Drawing on Indigenous Wisdom for Sustainable Solutions

MEDIA TOUR'S STORY FOCUSED ON CONSERVING WATER SPRINGS FOR THE BENEFIT OF WOMEN AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

Rosina Oki, a resident of Lakufo'an village, sheds light on her community's experience utilizing the reservoir, constructed with assistance from PERMATIL, to mitigate reliance on rainwater during landslides.



Water conservation practices, rooted in local knowledge, aim to address the challenges confronting communities with limited access to water within their vicinity.

Rosina Oki intimately understands the struggles associated with restricted water access, residing far from the nearest clean water source. This compels Rosina and her family to rely primarily on rainwater for their essential needs.

"In the rainy season, we collect rainwater from our eaves, channelling it into a tank for storage to meet our basic needs like drinking water and laundry. However, water scarcity remains a significant challenge for us during the dry season," Rosina explained.

In Lakufo'an village, community members engage in water conservation practices supported by PERMATIL, which offers invaluable technical assistance. This collaborative effort ensures that conserved water sustains longer, aiding villagers in conducting household activities, farming, and fulfilling other essential needs.

Rosina expresses her hope that the knowledge they have acquired will endure and be passed down to subsequent generations. This way, they can nurture the land and crops vital for their sustenance, persevering amidst the annual fluctuations in climate.

# Digital Rights for Persons with Disabilities

Zevonia Vieira

President of the Timor-Leste Association of Journalists

#### Do you what are Digital Rights?

Digital rights encompass fundamental human rights and the right to justice, enabling universal access to digital media publication and utilization of technologies like computers, telecommunications, and other electronic devices.

Key Digital Rights include:

- The right to access and utilize computers and other electronic devices
- The right to access and utilize digital content
- The right to generate and distribute digital media
- The right to privacy within the digital realm
- The right to freely express opinions using digital platforms
- The right to report inappropriate activities such as bullying, hate speech, online sexual harassment, disinformation, and misinformation
- Cybernetic laws designed to safeguard individuals' rights to securely and freely access digital platforms

In February, Oxfam in Timor-Leste (OiTL) orchestrated training sessions for a group of individuals with disabilities focusing on digital rights. The objective was to educate participants on safeguarding themselves online and asserting their rights. This initiative is a critical component of human rights advocacy, recognizing that adverse consequences of digital technology usage can impinge upon an individual's freedom of expression.



Members of the Disability Community Radio Timor-Leste (RKDTL), a radio station operated by persons with disabilities, actively engaged in this training alongside other enthusiastic participants.

The training served as a pivotal platform for advocating and campaigning for the digital rights of persons with disabilities. It underscored the significance of political leaders devising equitable solutions that do not discriminate against any individual, including those with disabilities.

This training initiative involved the collaboration of Ra'es Hadomi Timor Oan (RHTO), Disability Association Timor-Leste (ADTL), and the Core Group on Transparency (CGT), collectively striving to foster an inclusive digital landscape.

NACA

## MUSIC VIDEO 'DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND'

#### DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND LYRICS BY IZU PEREIRA

Don't leave me to lose hope, Listen to my voice, answer my voice have the capacity to access opportunities I have a right to live, a right to education, To enjoy rights as a citizen

Give me space to be included, guarantee rights with inclusive decisions, I am not poor or weak! But I am unique and strong, I am a force for this country. Together with me, look into my heart to keep hope alive, Don't leave me behind

> DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND, IT'S TIME TO LISTEN TO MY VOICE DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND, MY VOICE CALLS YOU, MY LEADER! DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND, FULFIL MY NEEDS PROPERLY, MY LEADER!

#### REFRAIN

DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND, DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND, DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND, JT'S TIME, LISTEN TO MY VOICE DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND, MY VOICE CALLS YOU, MY LEADER! DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND, FULFIL MY NEEDS, MY LEADER! DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND, TAKE AWAY THE SILENCE THAT SEWS UP MY HEART,

DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND.

#### Saving money through changes in the home

Joana Maria da Graca Gender Justice Program Officer, Oxfam in Timor-Leste

Embarking on her first endeavour working alongside fellow community members did not deter Jacinta from assuming a leadership role. With unwavering support from her husband, Jacinta embraced her role as a group leader, catalysing positive changes within her household and community.

Under the Save Money for Change (ROMANSA) program in Oecusse, spearheaded by Oxfam's esteemed partners MANEO, BIFANO, A-FFPS, and RHTO, Jacinta gained invaluable insights into moneysaving strategies and equitable familial responsibilities. These learnings yielded substantial benefits for her, her household, and her community.

"I lead our ROMANSA group in the Oe-Nunu community, comprising nineteen members, including fourteen women and five men. Each week, we convene to engage in our money-saving activities. As a leader, I ensure cohesion within the group and foster an environment of mutual trust," shared Jacinta.

In tandem with her involvement in ROMANSA, Jacinta's husband, Tomás, actively participates in the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) initiated in 2022. "GALS introduced us to captivating concepts like the Ai-hun Balansu (Balance Tree) and Jornada ba Vizaun (Journey to the Vision). Ai-Hun Balansu teaches us the importance of equitable distribution of household responsibilities, with men and women sharing the workload. I am delighted that in our family, we support each other in tasks like cooking and childcare, enabling each of us to engage in other pursuits. GALS and ROMANSA offer transformative opportunities to enhance our family's well-being, instigate behavioural shifts, and facilitate savings for our future," affirmed Jacinta.





# The role of media in social inclusion

Resilience Program Manager, Oxfam in Timor-Leste

A recent radio discussion on natural disaster preparedness tailored for people with disabilities shed light on the importance of inclusive approaches, paving the way for secure and comprehensive disaster preparedness and mitigation strategies to ensure the inclusion of all individuals.

In April, Oxfam in Timor-Leste had the honor of hosting esteemed guests at the Oxfam Resource Centre in Dili, including His Excellency the Secretary of State for Social Communication Merício Juvenal dos Reis "Akara," Human Rights Ombudsman Virgilio da Silva Guterres, President of the Civil Protection Authority Ismael da Costa Babo, President of the Press Council of Timor-Leste Otélio Ote,



Jacqueline Herbert from the Australian Embassy in Timor-Leste, and Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) international development correspondent Aaron Kearney.

Collaborating with the #RadioLiberdade team, media representatives, and disability rights organizations, Oxfam in Timor-Leste launched the tenth series of radio talk-shows focusing on disaster preparedness and #DisasterREADY, specifically tailored for visually impaired individuals. Given that people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters, it is imperative to ensure their active participation in information dissemination and preparedness efforts.

These radio talk-shows, produced by #RadioLiberdade with technical assistance from Australia's #ABC-International Development, were moderated by individuals with disabilities themselves. The recordings will be distributed to community radio stations across Timor-Leste, amplifying crucial disaster readiness messages to diverse communities.

This initiative, part of the Disaster READY project funded by the Australian Government, aligns with Oxfam's vision of empowering vulnerable communities in Timor-Leste, including women, girls, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups, to effectively prepare for and withstand natural disasters and climate change impacts.

# Building Resilience with Community Action Plans

Paulo da Silva Neves Disaster READY Program Officer

Community Action Plans, or #CAPs, serve as vital tools for communities to proactively identify and spearhead actions that enhance their resilience to natural disasters occurring within their regions.

Domingos and his community in Oeneno village, Bobometo suku, situated in the Oecusse special zone, have diligently crafted their Community Action Plan, seamlessly integrating it with activities under the ROMANSA project.



ROMANSA focuses on empowering women and individuals with disabilities, ensuring their needs are incorporated into disaster risk reduction plans and activities.

"Our Community Action Plan, or #CAP, is a collaborative effort where we collectively identify pressing issues requiring swift responses and take proactive measures to mitigate disaster risks. We collaborate closely with the ROMANSA group, comprising women, men, and individuals with disabilities, actively engaged in the Suku and Village Disaster Management Committees," explained Domingos.

Under the #CAP, various initiatives have been implemented, including tree planting in landslide-prone areas and adopting water trapping techniques to preserve water springs. Furthermore, the #CAP delineates high-risk zones vulnerable to floods and landslides, alongside areas less susceptible to such disasters. Additionally, communities collaboratively identify and leverage existing resources within the suku and village, which are subsequently managed to support community livelihoods. This dual approach not only enhances community resilience against natural disasters but also fosters sustainable livelihoods.



#### Celebrating Women's Achievements on International Women's Day

Carlos Correia Rai Matak Program Officer

In commemoration of International Women's Day, farmers and the Rai Matak project team, comprising farmers, Oxfam in Timor-Leste (OiTL), the #WithOneSeed Foundation, and the Rai Matak Foundation, congregated in Metinaro for a fruitful gathering. This event served as an occasion for participants to share their leadership experiences, personal narratives, and engage in food processing activities alongside the Corner Store Network Timor-Leste.

During this celebration, heartfelt appreciation was extended to the diligent farmers and dedicated women's teams for their remarkable contributions to the successful implementation of the Rai Matak project over the course of three years across Baucau, Covalima, Lautem, and Likisá municipalities.

Collaborating with the Corner Store Network Timor-Leste, male and female team members from the Rai Matak project delved into the intricacies of processing local foods. This included learning techniques for preserving and enhancing flavors, such as salted tomatoes and chilies, as well as crafting teas from an assortment of plants like moringa, turmeric, mint, lemongrass, among others. The gathering was adorned with a delightful array of local cuisines and beverages generously provided by farmers collaborating with the Corner Store Network.

Congratulations to all women in Timor-Leste, and congratulations to Rai Matak!



## OiTL took part in the 2023 FONGTIL futsal cup

To strengthen partnerships and take part in initiatives with partners, OiTL's team of women and men enthusiastically participated in the #FONGTIL2023 Futsal Cup, with the theme "Strengthening flourishing partnerships and healthy friendships through sporting activities."

EGathering alongside numerous national and international civil society organizations, the OiTL teams were present for the cup's opening ceremony, a refreshing departure from their demanding work routines.

According to Maun Jorge Moniz, the coach of both OiTL teams, the event provided an invaluable opportunity to connect with fellow professionals working in different sectors. Despite facing challenges such as energy depletion before the conclusion of matches, the camaraderie and sense of community prevailed, fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and collaboration.

Mana Mize, captain of the women's team, echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the team's collective enthusiasm and bravery in participating in the tournament. For them, the joy of friendly competition transcended individual performance levels, underscoring the importance of unity and sportsmanship.

Zeka Nunes, a player on the OiTL team, highlighted the tournament's multifaceted benefits, including the strengthening of relationships with other NGOs, the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, and the enhancement of the OiTL team's cohesion. Scoring a goal was not only a sporting achievement but also a testament to the team's commitment to collaboration and excellence. Go,OiTL team :]



# Tentative Event Calendar

July-December 2023

- Monitoring and reflection with partners every three months – All Women and Land project partners – July
- Launch and presentation of research results
   Impacts of Losses and Damages for Land Rights
   All Women and Land project partners August
- Workshop on Land Network Strategic Plan -August
- Training on Land Law (Special Regime for Definition of Ownership of Immovable Property) for partners and members of Land Network – September
- Training on Strategy and Advocacy All Women and Land project partners - September
- Gold Standard Audit for Rai Matak program in Baucau, Covalima and Likisá - HMI, NETIL, CCC and Timor-Verde – July
- TreeO2 training for all Rai Matak partners, organized by HMI August
- Tree02 training and tree tagging for all Rai Matak partners - September
- ROMANSA activity in Baucau, Covalima, Lautem and Likisá for Rai Matak program - HMI, NETIL, Timor-Verde and CCC - September
- GALS training for partners and communities from Atauro, Covalima and Likisá - September

- Reflection Workshop project and partners every six months, Women and Land Project October
- National Seminar about case study on Climate Financing Project - CGT, APFTL, October
- DRR training in Dili and Oecusse with all partners, RHTO - October
- Training for Community-Based Disaster Ready Management (CBDRM) for all DRP Project partners
   November
- Audience with government officials to present the results of research, CEDAW report, and to introduce the Women and Land Rights project to new government officials - November
- Farmer payments under Rai Matak project in Baucau, Covalima and Likisá – NETIL, Timor-Verde and CCC - October
- Launch of Report on Unpaid Care Work by the Hakbi'it program - October
- Launch of the Rai Matak Foundation November
- Annual reflection on Rai Matak November

## Acronyms

AHP : Australian Humanitarian Partnership
CEDAW: Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CRPD : Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CBRN-TL : Community Based Rehabilitation Network Timor Leste
DRP : Disaster READY Program
DFAT : Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

EhD : Ema ho Defisiensia

EU : European Union

FONGTIL : Forum ONG Timor-Leste

GALS : Gender Action Learning System

GfD : Governance for Development

HMI : Ho Musan ida

KSI : Kdadalak Sulimutuk Institute (KSI)

MFAT : Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

NETIL : Nova Esperanca Timor-Leste

OiTL : Oxfam in Timor-Leste/Oxfam iha Timor-Leste

OTB : Open the Books

OSS : Organizasaun Sosiedade Sivil

RAEOA : Rejiaun Administrativa Espesial Oe-Cusse Ambeno

RbR : Rede ba Rai

RHTO : Ra'es Hadomi Timor-Oan

SRA : Sentru Rekursu & Advokasia

ZEESM : Zonas Especiais de Economia Social de Mercado de Timor-Leste

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