

# Timor-Leste

For 27 years, The Asia Foundation has worked alongside civil society, community, and government partners in Timor-Leste. The Foundation is currently focused on strengthening governance and policy, ending violence against women, developing inclusive tourism, and promoting peace and justice.



## WORKING TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

The Nabilan (Ending Violence Against Women) Program is implemented by The Asia Foundation with the goal of helping women and children live free from violence and enjoy their rights. Nabilan contributes to this goal by ensuring women and children who experience violence have access to quality and inclusive services. The program also supports individuals, communities, and institutions to take action to reduce violence against women and children.

Between January 2015 and December 2018, Nabilan Program partners provided 31,857 unique services to women and children, including referrals, legal assistance, medical examination, temporary and long-term shelter, counseling, life-skills training, and reintegration support.

The Nabilan Program, an 8-year partnership between the Governments of Australia and Timor-Leste, is grounded in the fundamental principles of women's and children's rights, and the equality of women and men. Nabilan believes violence against women and children is preventable. The program works collaboratively with individuals, communities, civil society, and the government toward long-term change, through two main pillars: services and social norms change. The program and its activities are informed by groundbreaking research conducted on the prevalence and perpetration of violence against women and children in Timor-Leste. Nabilan is an Australian Aid initiative and works collaboratively with the Timor-Leste

Government's Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion, the Secretary of State for Equality and Inclusion, and civil society organizations. Nabilan is also engaging in participatory work at the community level to develop and test new approaches to improve prevention and access to support.

## INCLUSIVE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Developing Timor-Leste's tourism sector is a key focus for diversifying the nation's oil-dependent economy. While Timor-Leste has much to offer visitors, building a tourism sector in Asia's newest nation is not without challenges, with barriers being overcome through concerted action and partnerships between government, private sector, and civil society stakeholders.

Since launching the country's first *Survey of Travelers to Timor-Leste* in 2014, The Asia Foundation has supported informed tourism development through its Tourism Development Program. The program builds on extensive research, strategies, policies, structures, and relationships developed with the Timor-Leste Government, donors, and the private sector in previous years. With generous support from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the program currently focuses on providing support to Timor-Leste's Ministry of Tourism and key industry bodies, as well as implementing projects in destination development and food and coffee tourism. The program is committed to facilitating and contributing to indicators outlined in Timor-Leste's 2030 tourism policy goals.



### TIMOR-LESTE

The Asia Foundation has been programming in Timor-Leste since 1992 and established an office in Dili in 2000.

Since 2009, The Asia Foundation has partnered with the *Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste* to implement community policing.

The Asia Foundation supports the active participation of women in all aspects of Timor-Leste's development.

## SUPPORTING GOOD PUBLIC POLICY

As a young, democratic nation, Timor-Leste's future depends on its capacity to develop strong systems for good public policy generation and implementation. The Asia Foundation supports effective public policy by implementing evidence-based research projects, offering training and mentoring programs, and creating spaces to facilitate meaningful collaboration between civil society, the private sector, political parties, and government actors.

Since 2014, the Foundation's work in public policy development has been through its Australian Government funded Support for Good Public Policy and subsequent *Lideransa Emergente Apoio Política* (Emerging Leaders Supporting Public Policy) programs. The program includes implementation of:

- The Policy Leaders Group, helping to build a network of influential policy reformers to leverage key individuals in shaping public policy. Through regular meetings, workshops, and conferences, group members share experiences and knowledge, and use their collective power to address key policy issues.
- The annual *Tatoli! Public Opinion Poll*, providing vital information to policy makers on community perceptions toward government, services, and their own priorities.
- Mentoring programs such as the Research Fellowship and Policy Fellowship, building the capacities of individuals and organizations in research, policy advocacy, and leadership.

## STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE

The Asia Foundation works to improve public service delivery through greater government accountability. Since 2012, the Foundation has successfully implemented a number of social auditing programs supporting local NGOs and civil society to advocate to government for more effective and appropriately resourced public services. From 2016 to 2018 the Foundation collaborated with NGO Forum Timor-Leste, with funding by the European Union, on a social audit project supporting citizens to evaluate public sector policy and implementation against the government's stated objectives and commitments, using

concrete evidence collected in a participatory and inclusive manner. The Foundation supports the development and refinement of rigorous tools and guidelines for data collection and citizen engagement, provides financial and technical support to NGOs to implement social audit projects nationwide, and works to ensure that the findings are followed up and taken into account in policymaking, collaborating closely with the Social Audit Unit in Timor-Leste's Office of the Prime Minister.

## FOSTERING LASTING PEACE, SAFETY, AND SECURITY

The Asia Foundation's experience working alongside the *Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste* (PNTL) since 2009 shows community security can be greatly improved by fostering effective police-community partnerships and cooperation. Through 10 years of support from the Foundation, the ethos, principles and practices of community policing have become widespread and increasingly valued within communities. The *2018 Community-Police Perceptions Survey* found safety and security in Timor-Leste have continued to improve, reinforced by high levels of trust, confidence, appreciation for the PNTL, and the increasing community orientation of their work. For example, the survey found most of the general population (83%), the majority of community leaders (93%), and police (95%) say citizens and police are working together to address security problems at the local level.

The Foundation has supported development of a Timorese model of community policing covering the entire country, and embedded into legal and policy frameworks such as the Preamble to the PNTL Organic Law, PNTL's Strategic Plan, and *suku* (village) law. Community policing is facilitated through municipality security councils and community policing councils across the country. Each of Timor-Leste's 452 *suku* also has a dedicated community police officer (*ofisial polisia suku*) deployed to work with the community to prevent and respond to crimes.

The Foundation supports the PNTL to strengthen adoption of the Timorese model of community policing through the Community Policing Support Program (CPSP). CPSP, which runs from 2016-2020, is implemented on behalf of the New Zealand Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade, and in partnership with the New Zealand Police.

*The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Headquartered in San Francisco, The Asia Foundation works through a network of offices in 18 Asian countries and in Washington, DC. Working with public and private partners, the Foundation receives funding from a diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals.*



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