



Newsletter

on Peace Building and Social Cohesion

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Department of Peace Building and Social Cohesion
Ministry of Social Solidarity

Editorial



It is with great pride that we present the monthly bulletin from the Department of Peace Building and Social Cohesion from the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS) to disseminate the activities of this Department and the respective units on achieving long-term peace and stability in our country.

Recognizing that peace building and social cohesion are long-term processes, the Government of Timor-Leste decided to establish the Department of Peace Building and Social Cohesion.

Since its inception the Department has offered several training sessions on conflict resolution and mediation processes for community leaders and also facilitated local conflict prevention mechanisms - known as Tara Bandu - in Manleuana, Metinaro, Remexio, Laga and Zumalai.

Enjoy the reading!

Jacinto Rigoberto Gomes de Deus
Secretary of State for Social Assistance and Natural Disasters

Laisorulai uses traditional mediation mechanisms to sustain peace

On February 26 the people from Quelicai in Baucau witnessed a traditional Timorese ceremony that marked the end of conflict and sealed the peace among the community.

Since 2001 Quelicai has been facing violence in regards to border issues as well as political rivalry. Over the years these incidents lead to houses destroyed, people killed or displaced and a series of arrests. During 2011 many incidents related to rivalry between youth groups from six different villages in the area resulted in burned properties, three young people injured, one deceased and children afraid to walk freely to go to school.

PNTL intervened and the cases have been under investigation but the concerned parties and community leaders recognized the importance of using traditional mechanisms to prevent future conflict.

"It is important that the people here, especially the youth recognize what today's event represents - the need to respect others, our children, our neighbors and our co-workers. We need to be open to listen and overcome our differences; this is what the Tara Bandu is about", said Norberto Fernandes, Laisorulai's village Chief.

The Ministry of Social Solidarity, through the Department for Peace Building and Social Cohesion, was asked to mediate and facilitate dialogue among the

conflicting parties. These mediators come in to help resolve local disputes when they turn particularly violent, and villagers are unable to reach agreements on their own.

The event was presided by the Minister of Social Solidarity, Ms. Maria Domingas Fernandes Alves, who reminded that national elections were approaching and this was yet another reason to prevent conflict. "People need to unite so that this democratic process can take place and contribute to their livelihoods, we need to respect our differences and learn how to coexist in harmony, the government is here to support you but it is also important to remember that peace starts within our homes," she stated.

More than 1000 people from the six villages attended the event, which also had the presence of the President, José Ramos-Horta, and PNTL General Commander, Longinhos Monteiro, F-FDTL, Government, UNDP and UNMIT representatives.



President José Ramos-Horta is welcomed by the Laisorulai community

BCPR mission comes to Timor-Leste to discuss future of project's activities

From 21 to 29 of February a mission from the Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit was in Timor-Leste to review the progress of the UNDP's project to support the Department of Peace Building and Social Cohesion. One of the



BCPR mission attended the Tara Bandu ceremony in Laisorulai

targets of this mission was to analyze the bottlenecks and challenges of project implementation which started in 2010. The mission was composed by Djordje Djordjevic, Rule of Law, Justice and Security Advisor, Anita Ernstorfer, Conflict Prevention Specialist, and Yasumitsu Doken, Programme Specialist from the Asia Pacific Regional Group. One of the objectives is to support UNDP Timor-Leste in positioning its Crisis Prevention and Recovery programmes to effectively respond to the challenges that may emerge from the ongoing transition in Timor-Leste.

The mission will provide findings and recommendations to strengthen the implementation of the DPBSC's project and to consolidate UNDP's conflict prevention interventions. They will also propose ways forward to develop and sustain institutional capacities of the DPBSC and strengthen synergies between the Department and other government institutions as well as to propose programmatic adjustments to enhance project's effectiveness and identify possible areas of conflict prevention support to address potential tensions that may emerge from electoral processes.

UNDP staff attend security on elections training in Bangkok

The UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Centre, in collaboration with United States Agency for International Development (USAID) organized an Electoral Security Framework Training at the USAID Asia Regional Training Center in Bangkok. The training was held from 16 to 17 February 2012.

The objectives of this two-day training were to allow practitioners in Asian region to learn how to assess electoral security threats and design programming to address them in each home country. During the training participants engaged in group discussions, inter-active exercises, case studies and collaborative problem solving.

This training was attended by 19 representatives of USAID, UNDP and NGOs in Thailand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Afghanistan, Nepal, Albania and Bangladesh.

Masako Yokoyama, Programme Analyst and José Caetano Guterres, Project Manager, from UNDP's project to support to Department of Peace Building and Social Cohesion were invited to participate in this training.

"I found it much helpful to improve my knowledge on the electoral security. This was a new experience and I appreciated both knowledge and information from trainers and other participants", said José Caetano.

In our next Edition:

March

- Training on mediation to local community leaders
- DPBSC staff attend training on gender equality and domestic violence
- DPBSC starts anti-violence campaign together with PNTL and CNE



The Department of Peace Building and Social Cohesion from the Ministry of Social Solidarity was established in December 2010 to ensure conditions and a stable environment to support the communities to mitigate conflicts and disputes to achieve peace and harmony.



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