COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES OF DECENTRALISED DEVELOPMENT IN TIMOR-LESTE
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

DA  District Administrator
DDO  District Development Officer
DFO  District Finance Officer
BoQ  Bill of Quantities
GMF  Community Water Management Groups
KDD  Komisaun Dezenvolvimentu Distritu, or District Development Commission
KDS  Komisaun Dezenvolvimentu Subdistritu, or Subdistrict Development Commission
LGSP  Local Government Support Program
PDD  Pakote Dezenvolvimentu Desentrilizadu, or Decentralised Development Package
PDL  Programa Dezenvolvimentu Lokal, or Local Development Program
PDS  Planu Dezenvolvimentu Suku, or Suku Development Plan
PDID  Planu Dezenvolvimentu Integradu Distrital, or Integrated District Development Plan
PNDS  Planu Nasional Dezenvolvimentu Suku, or National Suku Development Plan

THE RESEARCH TEAM

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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Purpose and Methodology

This research examines communities’ experiences of two different decentralized development programs in Timor-Leste: the *Programa Dezenvolvimentu Lokal* (PDL), and the *Pakote Dezenvolvimentu Desentrilizadu* (PDD). Using these two programs as a lens for comparative analysis, the overall aim of this research is to identify and examine broader issues surrounding the implementation of decentralised development in Timorese communities, and to draw lessons for sustainable, community-level development in the future. This research also aims to make a substantive contribution to planning for the *Planu Nasional Dezenvolvimentu Suku* (PNDS), which will be introduced throughout Timorese communities from 2013.

In considering communities’ experiences of PDL and PDD, the focus of this research is to consider the various modalities of decentralized development programs (capacity, representation, planning and implementation) and cross-cutting themes (local legitimacy, effectiveness and participation). Through doing this, the intent of this study is not to undertake an evaluation of these two programs, but rather to draw broader lessons for the future. The research takes a political economy approach that is grounded in critical institutional theory, examining both formal and informal dynamics that shape communities’ experiences of project planning and implementation, and the appropriateness and sustainability of the resulting infrastructure.

While drawing on existing literature, this research is primarily based on seven weeks’ fieldwork conducted in the districts of Baucau and Bobonaro. This original research forms the centerpiece of this report. The research takes a qualitative, case-study approach, tracking eight PDD and PDL projects, and mapping decision-making dynamics, through the four stages of a project’s life-cycle: project identification and prioritization, project planning, implementation, and maintenance of facilities. These results are then comparatively analysed and gathered together according to the common themes that emerged. Research results cover a range of themes, which include issues that were raised relating to formal program structure, as well as issues of informal political dynamics at different levels of governance.

2. The Policy Context

The *Programa Dezenvolvimentu Lokal (PDL)* was introduced in 2004 through the Ministry for State Administration and Territorial Management as a pilot program to test different models for decentralization. It began in the districts of Bobonaro, Lautem, Aileu and Manatutu, and since then has been progressively rolled out to the other districts of Timor-Leste. It now operates in all 13 districts. Through this program, representative bodies have been formed at the district and subdistrict levels, whose responsibility it is to prioritise and administer small development projects. These projects are selected following a series of community consultations, in which each suku identified their particular
development needs and developed one- and five-year plans, known as the *Planu Dezenvolvimentu Suku* (PDS). In the 2012 budget, there were 17 PDL projects that were approved in Bobonaro, and 13 PDL projects that were approved in Baucau. Five PDL projects were examined for this study.

The *Pakote Dezenvolvimentu Desentrilizadu* (PDD) was introduced in 2010 by the Prime Minister’s office in order to encourage local businesses to participate in rural infrastructural development activities. This policy objective has been successfully met in the short-term, with many local contractors registering themselves and carrying out projects through this program. However, the impact of the program in encouraging local economic activity in a sustainable manner falls outside the scope of this research. The PDD process of project selection is more centralized than PDL projects, with most decision-making occurring at the national level. Once projects are selected, they are administered through a district-level commission, known as KDD, who are responsible for assessing eligible local contractors to participate in the scheme, assessing and verifying approved PDD projects, and monitoring implementation. In the 2012 budget, there were 47 PDD projects that were approved in Bobonaro, and 34 PDD projects that were approved in Baucau. There were three PDD projects that were examined for this study, which included two KiK, or community-implemented contracts.

As this research was being carried out, the Timor-Leste government was in the process of introducing the *Planu Dezenvolvimentu Integradu Distrital* (PDID), intended to integrate PDL and PDD processes. It operates through commissions at district and subdistrict levels which include representatives of the subdistrict and district administration, suku councils and decentralised line Ministries. As this research was conducted at the same time that PDID was being introduced, it was too early to assess the effectiveness of PDID. Nonetheless, many of the findings are highly relevant to the PDID.

3. Main Findings

Of the eight projects examined for this study, three projects were considered by interviewees as a ‘failure’, meaning that the resulting infrastructure could not be properly used. The other five projects were generally considered a ‘success’, in that the resulting infrastructure can be used. Nonetheless, a number of problems were also raised with these projects, which are instructive in considering the overall impact of the program and lessons for decentralized development.

**Project Identification and Prioritization.** The formal process of project identification and prioritization for PDL and PDD vary significantly, which provides a useful framework for comparing impacts of decision-making, and the tensions that emerge between navigating development priorities at different levels of governance. In comparing the two programs, there was general agreement

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1 RDTL (2012); Orsamentu Geral do Estado 2012: Distritos Livro 3, Ministerio das Finansias, pp14-18
2 RDTL (2012); Orsamentu Geral do Estado 2012: Distritos Livro 3, Ministerio das Finansias, pp 19-23
among those interviewed that the PDL processes that ensured community involvement in project identification and prioritization resulted in more sustainable outcomes that were more responsive to community needs. Nonetheless, even for those projects that were implemented through PDL, two major issues were identified. The first concerned the often weak participatory processes at *aldeia* level, in which the groups that were consulted during *suku* development planning in 2010 were often not representative of the entire *aldeia* community. This has meant that the resulting PDS (suku development plan) is not always reflective of the entire *suku*’s development needs, missing important sectors of the community. In addition, many *suku* council members could not remember the priorities identified in the PDS—indicating a potential lack of relevancy, and a need to encourage suku councils to continually return to, and update, their PDS.

The second set of issues revolved around the tension in integrating *suku*-identified priorities with the development priorities at subdistrict, district and national level. Crucially, getting higher-level approval and satisfying economies of scale involved trade-off with community participation, as attention was shifted to stakeholders outside the community. In addition, navigating the political environment at the district level in particular carried its own set of challenges, with difficulties in coordination between the District Administration and district-level line Ministries being raised by a number of actors.

**Project Planning.** Again, community consultation was emphasized by most people as fundamental to this stage of the project life-cycle in order to ensure successful implementation of both PDD and PDL projects. However, PDD policy frameworks do not emphasise this aspect of project planning—a key point of weakness that was raised by many interviewees. There were two main reasons identified for their preference for stronger community consultation. The first was the need to ensure that there were no social factors that would impede works, such as lack of community support over the use of land or the use of other natural resources. The second was more technical: the need to draw on local knowledge to ensure implementation that was cognizant of local conditions such as water flow during the wet season. There was general agreement at *suku*, subdistrict and district levels that both sets of factors were equally important in laying the groundwork for good implementation.

**Project Implementation.** In mapping the implementation of different projects, there were a number of issues that were identified at this stage of the project life-cycle. There are two main routes through which projects can be implemented: either carried out by a local contractor, or implemented by the community themselves as a KiK, or community-implemented contract. While each carried their own set of challenges, common across both was a weakness in complaints mechanisms and monitoring frameworks. In addition, there were issues in capacity in carrying out the work, for those carried out by contractors as well as those carried out by communities. An interesting tension that emerged through discussion with people at *suku* compared with district level governance concerned the relative merits of KiK projects. At the *suku* level, there was a strongly-expressed preference for communities to carry out the work, as it was thought they had better incentives to ensure high quality, more sustainable results. However, district officials pointed out the greater difficulty they had experienced in monitoring and applying sanctions to community groups: while it is
relatively easy to blacklist companies who do not perform good-quality work, it is much more difficult to sanction community KiK groups who did not carry out the project to a proper standard.

**Maintenance of Infrastructure.** Maintenance once the infrastructure was built was a key weakness that was identified by many interviewees for both PDD and PDL projects. The various reasons that were identified for this included government's unrealistic expectations of the community's economic capacity to undertake regular maintenance, disagreement over who was responsible for maintenance, and a lack of felt 'ownership' by community members of the resulting infrastructure. This lack of felt ownership has translated into a reliance, or dependency, on the state to take responsibility for maintaining the facilities that they have provided—particularly where communities feel that the infrastructure is not. However, the research team also identified a deeper set of issues, which are reflective of existing social structures in the suku. While maintenance arrangements worked on simple processes of community contribution, these often presumed a sense of community that fails to reflect the complexity of village life wherein suku communities are segmented and potentially fractured. While community contributions can be encouraged in Timorese suku, it appears that a more systematic approach is more needed than a simplistic assumption that existing understandings of community be 'scaled up' to include maintenance for government-introduced infrastructure.
B. INTRODUCTION

It has been widely recognized that economic development and political decision-making in the independent state of Timor-Leste has been highly centralized. This has had a pronounced impact on the government’s ability to respond to the needs of Timorese communities, including the need to diversify economic development beyond oil-dependent state spending, and the need to build stronger two-way relationships between the majority of Timorese citizens in the rural areas and their elected representatives in Dili.

By contrast with the centralisation of state resources and decision making at the national level, most Timorese identify primarily with their *suku* and *aldeia*.

However, limited investment at these levels of governance has resulted in a disconnect between the government and their citizens, and numerous studies have been conducted since 2000 identifying over centralization as a major reason for ongoing, high levels of poverty in the rural areas, and related problems. There have also been efforts to address these concerns. From 1999 to 2002, the World Bank implemented the Community Empowerment Program (CEP) in an effort to provide much-needed investment at the local level, and to encourage participatory development and build social capital following Indonesian occupation. However, while it was generally agreed that the first objective of investing directly in local communities was met, the participatory elements were largely lost, which resulted in uneven implementation and lack of sustainability. A major reason for this was that despite the policy intent, ‘ownership’ of the program was not successfully transferred to the communities.

Since then, in an effort to address this disconnect between the Timor-Leste government and Timorese communities, the government of Timor-Leste has also

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4 Cummins, Deborah (2010), Local Governance in Timor-Leste: The Politics of Mutual Recognition, PhD thesis, University of NSW


trialed different programs for encouraging local-level development. However, there have been a number of issues that have emerged as these local development programs have been implemented. As such, there is much to be learnt from examining Timorese communities’ experiences of decentralized development initiatives over the last few years, and their implications for encouraging sustainable development in Timorese suku the future.

This research has been conducted to investigate communities’ experiences of two different decentralized development programs: (i) the *Programa Dezenvolvimentu Lokal* (PDL), a pilot program to test different models for decentralisation implemented by the Ministry for State and Territorial Administration, and (ii) the *Pakote Dezenvolvimentu Desentrilizadu* (PDD), a program that was focused on providing incentives to local private construction companies, administrated by the National Development Agency, under the Prime Minister’s office. The broader policy intent of these schemes vary, but what they have in common is a commitment to dispersing resources and infrastructure development in rural areas. Using these two different programs as a lens for comparative analysis, this research aims to identify and examine broader issues surrounding local development initiatives in Timorese communities, and to draw some lessons for the future. As well as considering in detail the impact of selected PDL and PDD projects, the research has also captured some information on a new program which has been introduced to integrate the two: the *Planu Dezenvolvimentu Integradu Distrital* (PDID).

It is timely that this research has been conducted at this point, given the Timor-Leste government’s commitment to begin implementing a program for community-driven development, called the *Planu Nasional Dezenvolvimentu Suku* (PNDS) in 2013. As well as considering the lessons that PDL and PDD hold for local-level development programs in Timor-Leste, this report has important implications for consideration in the design of the policy framework for PNDS.
C. THE POLICY ENVIRONMENT

Decentralised development programs operate through sharing decision making powers between responsible bodies at different levels of governance, and for PDL, PDD, and now PDID\(^9\), the district level of governance is extremely important. One of the reasons for implementing PDID is that the governance environment at the district level has become a very busy space, with various decentralized development programs concurrently implemented by the Timor-Leste government through the District Administration, as well as district-level line Ministries independently implementing their own programs. Added to this are the various NGO programs that are also intended to achieve similar ends. So many programs operating simultaneously posed a challenge to coordination at the district level, making PDID an important policy initiative. In particular, fieldwork for this research demonstrated that the lack of horizontal integration has been an important issue in the relationship between the District Administration, which operates under the Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management, and the various district-level line Ministries that are each accountable to their national office. This has also been compounded by the challenges of coordinating with subdistrict and suku level actors, as well as navigating the impact of various influences from the national level.

The Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management is represented at the district level by the District Administration. This is headed by the District Administrator, who is supported by his staff which includes the District Finance Officer (DFO), District Development Officer (DDO), and various other officers responsible for planning, coordinating and assisting with development activities in the District. The District Administration took a leading role in the pilot program for decentralization, the PDL, acting as the executive branch of the Local Assembly, providing support to them in prioritizing and managing the implementation and monitoring of small infrastructural projects. The District Administration was also responsible for managing important elements of the PDD, with the District Administrator acting as the coordinator of the KDD.

The PDL program began in 2004, and the PDD program began in 2010. As they each had very different processes and different budgets attached, with PDD having a much larger budget than PDL, many District Administrations struggled with managing the two programs separately. In response to the difficulties that this created, the Planu Dezenvolvimentu Intersektoral Distritu (PDID) was created to harmonise policy on local development, streamline processes and encourage greater inter-sectoral planning between different line Ministries. It also represents a substantial budget increase compared with PDL and PDD. Through the PDID, proposals are now put forward by both communities and line Ministries, and the relevant line ministry given responsibility for their projects through an MOU. The KDD continues to maintain responsibility for allocation and monitoring of projects. As discussed in the following sections, there were also (and continue to be) important functions carried out at the subdistrict and suku levels of governance,

\(^9\) While PDL and PDD are described in this section in the past tense, having been replaced by PDID, important aspects of each program continue to operate through the PDID.
with the subdistrict development commission (the Komisaun Dezenvolvimentu Subdistritu, or KDS), subdistrict administration and suku councils each playing vital roles.

As this research was conducted at the same time as PDID was being introduced to the districts, it was too early to assess the effectiveness of PDID. However, many of the lessons learnt from studying the implementation of PDL and PDD projects that are detailed through the remainder of this report are nonetheless highly relevant to PDID.

Programa Dezenvolvimentu Lokal (PDL)

The PDL program was established in 2004, with the support of UNCDF, to test different models for decentralization in Timor-Leste. The technical working group that was brought together to consider different options for decentralization involved representatives from all Ministries, and was led by the Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management. This working group carried out a Local Governance Options Study, including broad consultations that were conducted with communities across Timor-Leste on their preferred model for local development and decentralisation. On the basis of this study, it was decided to proceed with piloting two different models for bottom-up participatory planning in which suku councils were responsible for identifying priority development activities, and screening conducted by responsible commissions at subdistrict and district levels. In the first model for testing, much greater decision-making power rested with the subdistrict commission (the Komisaun Dezenvolvimentu Subdistritu, or KDS), which comprised three representatives from every suku, including one woman. In the second model, investment decisions were made by the district commission (named Assembleia Lokal, or Local Assembly), which comprised three representatives from every subdistrict, including one woman. In this second model, initial short-listing was conducted by the KDS, with investment decisions being made at the district level. Since 2007, the government has stated a preference for the model that places greater decision-making power at the district level, with investment decisions being made through the Local Assemblies. All districts that were added to the pilot since that time therefore followed this second model. As piloting proceeded, responsibilities for planning and budgeting, finance management and local procurement and contract management were progressively introduced to the KDS and Local Assemblies, together with training on how to fulfill their responsibilities.

Piloting began from 2004 in the districts of Bobonaro, Lautem, Aileu and Manatutu, followed in 2008 by more pilots in Baucau, Ainaro Manufahi and Covalima. In 2010, the program was upscaled to include all 13 districts, moving it from being a pilot program to a broad national program. At the same time, various

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12 ibid, p19
activities were conducted at the national level through UNCDF’s overarching Local Governance Support Program (LGSP), including working with Ministries to establish various policies and strategic frameworks that were required for successful decentralization, and drafting legislation for decentralisation that was put to Parliament in 2010. Legislation to implement decentralization has not yet been passed.

The PDL worked through the provision of block grants to the Local Assemblies, which were based on practical criteria including population size. This then formed the annual budget for the Local Assemblies, guiding the allocation of projects across the district for that year. The process began with identification and initial prioritization of development needs identified by the community at the suku level. Five proposals were then submitted by the suku council to the KDS, at the subdistrict level, and a second round of prioritization took place. Following this process, each KDS submitted their five preferred proposals to the Local Assembly at the district level for final prioritisation. The final list of development proposals were then sent to the national level for approval. Since 2010, this process of bottom-up identification and prioritisation has also been supported by the introduction of the Planu Dezenvolvimentu Lokal (PDS), through which each of Timor-Leste’s 442 suku councils were required to consult with their communities and create a one-year and five-year development plan for their suku.

**Pakote Dezenvolvimentu Desentrilizadu (PDD)**

The PDD program was established in 2010, at the initiative of the Prime Minister’s office, to encourage local construction companies to more actively participate in local development activities through funding small local construction projects. The budget for PDD was considerably higher than PDL, both in terms of the number of projects that could be funded in a single year, and the size of those projects. In the 2012 state budget, $52.5 million was allocated to the PDD program, as opposed to a little over $6.2 million for PDL. As well as the substantial difference in their budgets, a key difference between the two programs was that unlike PDL, communities were only involved in initial identification of PDD projects. There were no local processes for prioritization, consultation and planning required for other stages of the project life-cycle. To be eligible for consideration, a community group needed only identify a development need, put together a proposal in accordance with PDD regulations, and then submit this to higher levels of government for approval. Following this, prioritisation of proposals was conducted at the national level through the Council of Ministers, subject to parliamentary approval. On receiving approval, the final list of approved projects was then published through ‘Book Three’. Previous research conducted by The Asia Foundation in December 2011 demonstrated that as there was very little community involvement in project selection, many

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13 RDTL (2012); Orsamentu Geral do Estado 2012: Distritos Livro 3, Ministerio das Finansias
community members (including suku council members) expressed confusion over the process and their place in it.\textsuperscript{14}

Once project selections were made, the Komisaun Dezenvolvimentu Distritu (KDD) was responsible for project preparation, granting contracts to local contractors and overseeing the process. Contractors were not required to submit bids, but rather submitted their profiles to the KDD, who would evaluate and categorise local companies, assessing their eligibility to participate in the scheme and the size of projects that they could feasibly undertake. Local companies were required to submit their profile to KDD, and if they were assessed as eligible to participate in the scheme they were evaluated according to their capacity and experience in implementing projects. The proxy measures for evaluating capacity included what assets the company owned (such as computer, desk, chairs, construction tools, etc), whether or not a business was located in a separate building or was still being operated from home; whether they had paid taxes to the government; and the savings they had in the bank. To demonstrate experience, companies were required to provide details of previous projects they had implemented. Based on these criteria, companies were then given a value and classified according to three different categories. Category A applied to those companies who were eligible to manage programs up to $15,000; category B for companies who could be granted contracts between $15,001 to $75,000, and category C for more experienced, capable companies, eligible to implement projects over the value of $75,001. Other regulations also varied according to the category the company was placed in. For example, companies in category A were eligible to receive much higher advances prior to commencement of work than those in category C.

Another sub-group, the Evaluasaun, Verifikasaun, Assessmentu no Supervisaun (EVAS) group, composed of technical experts including engineers and led by the relevant line Ministry who is responsible the project, was responsible for undertaking technical verification, before commencement of implementation, and for monitoring during implementation. Principally, EVAS representatives were responsible for undertaking site visits, independent of the suku council or subdistrict administration, in order to assess the technical feasibility of the proposed projects. Part of their assessment also involved a survey of community members in the area, investigating whether there were any conflicts over the use of land or other resources required for the project, and whether people were aware of the project and supported it. On the basis of this visit, EVAS would recommend support or rejection of the project.\textsuperscript{15}

Once companies had been categorized and verification undertaken, the KDD would consider all the projects that were published for their district, debate the merits of different companies and allocate projects to the winning company. There was no tender process for the companies to go through, beyond the initial

\textsuperscript{14} The Asia Foundation (2012) \textit{Timor-Leste PPA Country Report}; DFID-PPA Year 1, May 2012

\textsuperscript{15} Focus Group Discussion suku Fatulia (Venilale, Baucau), 16 February 2012
submission of their company profile.

In the PDD program (prior to the introduction of PDID; see below) the KDD comprised the District Administrator, the District Secretary, a representative from the district-level Ministry of Infrastructure, a representative from any other relevant Ministry, representatives from the suku or aldeia in which the project was being implemented, the relevant Subdistrict Administrator, and other technical experts as required. Since PDID was introduced, the KDD now has a different composition, designed to incorporate aspects of PDD and PDL.

**Kontraktu Komunitaria (KiK)**

KiK is sub-program that began under PDL but which can also be implemented as a PDD project, directly by line Ministries. Through PDL, a manual was developed that outlined the responsibilities of KiK management teams, which can also be used by line Ministries. These community-implemented contracts are mainly granted to communities in the rural areas, in situations where the KDD is unable to find a company that is willing to implement the project. KiK guidelines are outlined in a manual that was developed by the Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management, giving specific regulations, mechanisms and procedures for implementation. Following these guidelines, a KiK group is identified by the suku council, and given responsibility for implementing the project. This group consists of at least three people: a president, a finance person, and an administrative person. It may also include more people. When a community contract is granted to a community, the KiK group takes on the legal identity of a company, and they are subject to the same financial regulations and monitoring requirements.

**Planu Dezenvolvimentu Integratu Distrital (PDID)**

The primary policy intent of the PDID is to harmonise and integrate the functioning of PDD and PDL. It is administered through the Komisaun Dezenvolvimentu Distritu (KDD) at the district level, line Ministries at the district and subdistrict level, and the Komisaun Dezenvolvimentu Subdistritu (KDS) at the subdistrict level. The KDD is responsible for planning and making decisions for the Planu Investimentu Distritu (PID), and allocating projects based on this plan. The composition for KDD has changed slightly from previous arrangements, now comprising the District Administrator as coordinator, District Secretary as deputy coordinator, directors of line Ministries at the District level, Subdistrict Administrators and three suku council member representatives elected from each KDS.

The KDS is modeled on the subdistrict commission that previously existed under the PDL, but has also changed in composition and powers. It now includes the

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16 Decree Law 18/2011, article 6

17 Interview, Semidio Laco da Costa, District Development Officer, Bobonaro, 28 May 2012
subdistrict administrator as the head of commission, heads of relevant line Ministries at the subdistrict level, and two representatives from each suku council in the subdistrict. The KSDS is responsible for prioritizing project proposals at the subdistrict level, and for providing feedback to communities on KDD activities. As well as receiving and processing proposals that have gone through the community-led identification and prioritization process, KDD and KDS now also receive proposals directly from line Ministries at subdistrict and district level.

EVAS continues to be the body that is responsible for the verification, assessment and supervision of projects that are approved through the program, working closely with relevant line Ministries. Suku councils also continue to have a role to play, consulting with communities and prioritizing suku development priorities, and supporting supervision of the implementation of projects in their suku.

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18 Subdistricts with only two suku have three representatives from each suku sitting on the KDS

19 Ministerial Diploma Nu 8/2012; Organs for Integrated District Development Planning (PDID); 4 April 2012.
D. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The central research question for this project is: what have been communities’ experiences of decentralized development initiatives in Timor-Leste? This was then broken into a number of sub-questions that focused on different stages of the project’s life-cycle. The research framework for this study is included in Appendix A of this report. In conducting this research, the research team took a qualitative, case study approach, tracking eight PDD and PDL projects with the aim of ‘mapping’ decision-making dynamics and project impacts across aldeia, suku, subdistrict and district level. The research team comprised two lead investigators, Dr Deborah Cummins and Sr Vicente Maia.

The results detailed in this report draw on seven weeks’ fieldwork conducted from February to May 2012 in two districts and five subdistricts: Baucau (subdistricts Baguia, Baucau, and Venilale), and Bobonaro (subdistricts Maliana and Cailaco). These sites were chosen to provide a spectrum of experience across a range of indicators. These included peri-urban, capture and remote suku, different political influence in the east and the west, richer and poorer areas according to the National Health and Demographic Survey, and the experiences of communities that are closer to the Indonesian border.

Eight different projects were systematically examined according to the different stages of the project life-cycle, and this fieldwork provides the centerpiece for this research. These projects were randomly selected, with the only criterion to include a sample of PDD and PDL projects. In addition to these projects, interviewees commented on a number of other projects as they made particular points around their experiences of decentralised development, and these comments and examples were also incorporated into the results of this research.

Research was conducted primarily through semi-structured interviews with community members, suku council members, officials at subdistrict and district administrative officials, and local contractors. In addition, five focus group discussions with suku councils were conducted: two in Baucau, and three in Bobonaro, and the team also attended two community meetings in order to observe planning processes. These results are augmented by many informal conversations with community members as the research team examined different projects.

The projects that were examined in this project were:

Suku Meligo (Cailaco, Bobonaro): piping water to the Agriculture centre in Meligo centre. This was a KiK project, implemented by the community rather than an independent contractor, under the PDD program.

Suku Tapo-Memo (Maliana, Bobonaro): maintenance of an old irrigation channel in aldeia. This was a KiK project, implemented by the community rather than an independent contractor, under the PDD program.

Suku Lahomea (Maliana, Bobonaro): widening and deepening of an old irrigation channel, through the PDL program.
**Suku Odomao** (Maliana, Bobonaro): two separate PDL projects rehabilitating irrigation channels in *aldeia* Raimatan, one for 230 metres and another for 240 metres.

**Suku Fatulia** (Venilale, Baucau): construction of a new road in *aldeia* Uata-Lia-Ana, under the PDL program.

**Suku Lavateri** (Baguia, Baucau): construction of a rural market to service three *sukus*: Lavateri, Defawasi and Wakalan, under the PDL program.

**Suku Tirilolo** (Baucau, Baucau): construction of new school buildings for Eskola Pre-sekondaria no. 3, under the PDD program.

Given the emphasis on fieldwork and the complications involved in such multi-dimensional research, a robust research framework was essential in providing sufficient structure to systematically gather data and analyse results, while also providing the flexibility for research themes to emerge that went beyond a simplistic program evaluation. In particular, it was essential that the research results not be ‘trapped’ into a particular program design, but rather form the basis for detailed comparative analysis. The research framework was therefore designed to track decision-making structures, dynamics and impacts across the four stages of a project’s life-cycle that are common regardless of program structure: project identification and prioritisation, project planning, implementation and maintenance of facilities. The research results in this report are also presented according to these four stages.

In investigating decision-making and examining impacts, the research team focused equally on formal project stages and informal political dynamics, considering the various modalities of decentralized development programs, including capacity, representation, planning and implementation, and cross-cutting themes of local legitimacy, effectiveness and participation, accountability and sustainability. As the overall aim of this research was to examine past experiences and contribute to policy formation in the future, the results of this project tracking were then comparatively analysed and gathered together according to the themes that emerged directly through the fieldwork. Through this broad approach a number of tensions emerged, including the impact of competing ideas of political community, the impact of external interventions, the impact of the uneven distribution of power and resources locally on community planning, and issues of conflict and sustainability. In taking this approach, the purpose of this research was not to compare the two programs with a view to discovering which was ‘better’, but rather to draw lessons from the experience of both with a view to understanding these broader themes. These results are detailed throughout the remainder of this report.
E. IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITISATION

The processes of identification and prioritisation of PDL and PDD projects vary significantly from each other. For PDD projects, the formal process involves very little community involvement in identifying potential projects, with prioritisation of proposals being made outside the community. The formal process at the local level merely requires that a proposal be made by a group in the community, which is then sent to the national level for consideration. If the proposal is approved, the verification and evaluation process will begin, led by the responsible group at the district level, EVAS. In all of the PDD projects that were examined in this research, it was only at the stage when the project was actually being planned that some community members were then involved, and often not in a systematic manner. This was clear in one PDD project in Baucau, through which new school buildings were built. Even though the buildings were for the benefit of the school, the principal and school administration were not included in planning, construction or inauguration. As the school principal explained,

We didn’t know the process of this project from the beginning. We know when the Education Supervisor came to monitor the project, but they did not consider us as the owner of the school… even in the inauguration we felt that we were not involved in the party. We are supposed to be the owners of the school, but we were like guests at the party. They invited the Minister to inaugurate the school. They only involved me when they asked me to sign as the recipient of the goods. The process itself, we don’t know anything about the process.20

The lack of involvement of community members or beneficiary groups has had a direct impact on the appropriateness and sustainability of many projects. This was a major issue that was raised in previous research undertaken by The Asia Foundation21, and was also a recurrent theme during fieldwork for this project. As the subdistrict administrator of Maliana commented, giving an example of a PDD project for construction of a mini-market, “this project, all planning, Bill of Quantities and design came from the national level. But after they finished, the community did not want to use it because it was not relevant to what they needed”22.

Communities’ experience of PDD demonstrates the need to take the time at the beginning, to consult and involve community members in the development planning process. Without this important step being taken, many respondents argued, the end result is not sustainable. As the district administrator of Bobonaro explained, “if you want to serve community, you have to listen to community aspirations, not community listen to your aspirations. The District Administrator also serves the community… There should be constant feedback between government and community.”23 Because of this lack of community involvement in PDD, many respondents described the program as reflecting elite, national

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20 Interview, Luis Antonio Bonito, principal Eskola Pre-sekondaria no3, Baucau, 16 May 2012
22 Interview, Adelino Barretto, Subdistrict Administrator Bobonaro, Maliana, 24 May 2012
23 Interview, Domingos Martin, District Administrator, Bobonaro, Maliana, 9 May 2012
interests, and being particularly vulnerable to “political interests from the top”\textsuperscript{24}.

By contrast with PDD, PDL has a much greater emphasis on community participation in the process of identifying and prioritising project proposals\textsuperscript{25}. For this reason, nearly all research respondents, including district administrators, subdistrict administrators, and suku councils stated a preference for the PDL over PDD process, describing it as ‘bottom-up’ rather than ‘top-down’. An exception to this general agreement, however, was the subdistrict administrator of Baguia, who argued that the PDL process took too much time, when there were too many urgent development priorities that need to be addressed\textsuperscript{26}.

The emphasis on participatory community planning is reflective of PDL’s policy focus on decentralised governance, and has been a feature of PDL since pilots began in 2005. This emphasis has been strengthened with the adoption in 2010 of the \textit{Planu Dezenvolvimentu Suku} (PDS), in which each of Timor-Leste’s 442 suku were required to consult with their communities, and to come up with development priorities for their communities. A major strength of the PDS is that suku councils are encouraged to engage more systematically with the community when conducting development planning. Through the PDS, suku councils have come up with one-year and five-year plans, identifying development priorities through conducting community meetings in each aldeia, and then prioritizing them at the suku level. With the PDID process that combines PDL and PDD now in place, suku councils are also encouraged to reflect on and be responsive to census results, reflecting the number of beneficiaries and recognising economies of scale\textsuperscript{27}. However, there are also weaknesses in the process. The two major weaknesses identified during fieldwork concerned the often weak participatory processes at aldeia level, and the difficulty in linking community-led development with development priorities at subdistrict, district and national levels in the shortlisting/prioritization phase.

**Aldeia community involvement**

In the suku in which fieldwork was conducted, a particular weakness was the extent of community involvement in project identification at the aldeia level. While the PDS process states that development priorities forwarded from the aldeia to the suku council must be identified on the basis of community meetings in each aldeia\textsuperscript{28}, this has been unevenly implemented. For those where suku council members are active in their position, aldeia-level meetings were conducted and different proposals considered. For others, it appeared that the xefe aldeia simply wrote the list himself.

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\textsuperscript{24} This was stated many times, but was a strong focus during the Focus Group Discussion suku Fatulia (Venilale, Baucau), 16 February 2012

\textsuperscript{25} UNCDF (2010) \textit{Mid-Term Evaluation; Local Government Support Programme (LGSP) Timor-Leste}

\textsuperscript{26} Interview, Antonio Ramos, Subdistrict Administrator Baguia, 22 February 2012

\textsuperscript{27} RDTL (2012); \textit{Matadalan Elaborasaun Planu Investimentu Distrital}; Ministeriu Administrasaun Estatal no Ordamento Territoriu, p5

\textsuperscript{28} ibid
For example, in suku Tapo-Memo many community members confirmed that they had never heard of a community meeting being conducted in their suku or aldeia. As one local teacher explained, “the suku council just do personal activities, for their individual or private interests. They never conducted any meeting with the community; in fact their mandate is almost finished but since 2009 they have never once conducted a community meeting.” This is a particularly concerning issue given the suku council’s status as ‘gatekeeper’ in many communities— particularly more remote communities. When suku councils do not reflect their community interests effectively, this also blocks the opportunity for other groups to be heard by those outside the suku. As this teacher went on to explain, “if the community did the planning, then the government would not accept it. For example, we teachers, if we planned something the government would not receive it. We want to contribute our ideas in community meetings, but the suku council never involve us.” Such dynamics indicate a clear need for more effective mechanisms to monitor suku council engagement with their community, and for community members to be able to hold their elected officials to account, beyond the ballot box.

However, the issue of aldeia-level involvement was not limited to suku councils who did not ‘play by the rules’. Even in those suku where the suku council is known to be active and interested, such as suku Fatulia in Venilale, a vast majority of community members were not aware of, and did not participate in planning meetings in their aldeia. While meetings were conducted, it emerged that the participants were often not representative of the entire aldeia. For example, in aldeia Uatobono in suku Fatulia, the xefe aldeia reported that the number of community members who habitually attend meetings is generally between 20 to 40 people, out of a population of 631 people, or 130 households. On further questioning with other community members, it emerged that those who did participate tended to have privileged relationships with the xefe aldeia and/or xefe suku, leaving many parts of the aldeia unrepresented. In addition to side-lining particular sections of the aldeia, there is also an issue with ensuring women’s participation in the planning process. As a contractor in suku Tapo-Memo explained, women may attend meetings but their contributions are often ignored. As he described it, “they have a very strong voice, but it’s just the same because people don’t listen to them. We know that many community members are illiterate, but even if they have a strong voice the educated people never listen to them.” This tendency to give time to men to speak but to shut down women during meetings was also noted by the research team when they attended an aldeia-level meeting in Baguia, Baucau.

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29 Interview, Francisco Afonso, community member, suku Tapo-Memo, 27 May 2012
30 Interview, Francisco Afonso, community member, suku Tapo-Memo, 27 May 2012
31 For an in-depth description of the suku council of Fatulia, see Cummins, Deborah (2010), Local Governance in Timor-Leste: The Politics of Mutual Recognition, PhD thesis UNSW
32 Focus Group Discussion suku Fatulia (Venilale, Baucau), 16 February 2012
33 Interview, Afonso Ribeiro, Community Rural Development Officer, Venilale, 17 February 2012
34 Interview, Simplisio Lourenco, Contractor, Maliana, 24 May 2012
However, as the subdistrict administrator of Venilale commented, this lack of direct representation does not always mean that the priorities that are put forward do not reflect the *aldeia*’s interests. As he explained, “*xefe aldeia* know their people and *aldeia* better, so they write proposals based on what they know and then talk to a few people when they agree. That is their proposal, representing the community in their *aldeia*... so while it is impossible to say that it is a direct participation of the community or all households, indirectly yes, it does exist.”

The success of such an indirect system, however, is clearly dependent on the extent to which the *xefe aldeia* is aware of the needs of all sectors of the community, which in turn is dependent on the geographical and social cohesion of any single *aldeia*. As the Rural Development Officer in Venilale explained, as most of the population of his *aldeia* live close to the *xefe aldeia*, their needs tend to be recognised more. However, in the part of the *aldeia* where he lives there are only around 6 or 7 households, and the *xefe aldeia* “does not really care about us”.

However, *aldeia*-level consultations are not easy, and require significant investment of time and effort to facilitate. Often as well, community members have other concerns and would prefer to not be involved. As the subdistrict administrator of Venilale explained, in his *aldeia* in suku Bado Ho’o, it is often very difficult for the *xefe aldeia* to gather everyone for a meeting: “the people say, we chose you to do this; you can just think and decide on what is good for us. Because we just want to go to our farm, and the council should be doing what they think is right for their suku.” For this and other reasons, including pressure on the *xefe aldeia* to submit his proposal in a short period of time, and lack of resources to be able to provide small incentives like tea and coffee during the meeting, it appears to be common that the *xefe aldeia* will submit proposals that do not strictly follow the process of community consultation. This is a weakness that many local officials at subdistrict and district level are keenly aware of, as these initial consultations form the foundation for the PDS, guiding suku-level development in the future.

This experience holds important lessons for the introduction of PNDS, beginning 2013, pointing to the need to support adequate community involvement in initial planning sessions through the provision of clear guidelines for facilitating community participatory planning and/or providing some external support, and recognizing the time, effort and attention that is needed to carry out participatory community planning.

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35 Interview, Julio Tomes da Silva, Subdistrict Administrator Venilale, 17 February 2012
36 Interview, Afonso Ribeiro, Community Rural Development Officer, Venilale, 17 February 2012
37 Interview, Julio Tomes da Silva, Subdistrict Administrator Venilale, 17 February 2012
38 Interview Antonio Guterres, District Administrator Baucau, 17 May 2012; interview, Semidio Laco da Costa, District Development Officer, Bobonaro, 28 May 2012; interview, Domingos Martin, District Administrator, Bobonaro, Maliana, 9 May 2012
Ta‘es or Shortlisting: Suku level

‘Ta’es’ refers to the process of filtering coffee, and is commonly used to describe the process for shortlisting development priorities. Following identification of development priorities at the aldeia level, representatives from each aldeia together with the suku council will discuss the proposals and select the five best proposals to be forwarded to the commission at subdistrict level. While there is flexibility in how the prioritization is conducted, the most common process adopted appears to be using the paralismo (parallel) process, which involves systematically comparing each project proposal against each other proposal, until the five that receive the most support are shortlisted. The suku council can choose to make these selections by secret or direct vote, or by following a consensus model. Most suku council members who participated in focus groups discussions for this research expressed a preference for deciding by consensus. A similar process of shortlisting, following the paralismo process, is then followed by the komisaun dezenvovimentu subdistritu (subdistrict development commission, or KDS).

In the prioritization meetings, representatives for their communities explain the details and argue the merits of their proposals, in order to gain support from other council members. Once all of the proposals have been explained and argued over, shortlisting will commence, by consensus or vote. The subdistrict administrator of Venilale argues that this is a key weakness, in that people tend to vote for good speakers rather than on the more objective merits of the proposal. The flexibility of this approach also opens up the possibility of proposals being prioritized based on personal interests rather than broader community interest. However, there are also measurable criteria through which council members can assess different proposals, in order to help participants make an evidence-based decision. For example, in the suku council of Fatulia they divide their proposals into sectors and consider the primary beneficiaries—both what community ‘sector’ they represent, and the number of beneficiaries. This is then analysed according to the follow-on impact of the intervention (for example, building a road which will facilitate access to markets, or to health clinics). As the xefe suku explained, following this process people will not vote for a proposal which does not have a good explanation, based on people’s needs. Generally, research participants agreed that this shortlisting process is a good one, as it provides space for reflection and discussion of each proposal, and minimizes the possibility of the process being dominated by any single person.

A potential issue that had been anticipated by the research team, but which does not appear to have been a major issue in practice, was the impact on the community when their proposal was eliminated through the shortlisting process. Generally, suku councils reported that there were few problems when project proposals were not granted, and it was not raised as a serious issue by community members. As the women’s representative in Fatulia explained, while many people are disappointed when their proposal does not pass the process,

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39 Interview, Julio Tomes da Silva, Subdistrict Administrator Venilale, 17 February 2012

40 Focus Group Discussion suku Fatulia (Venilale, Baucau), 16 February 2012
council members are careful in explaining that it must go through a process of prioritisation and elimination. For those proposals that are not successful, they then return to the community to explain why it did not pass\textsuperscript{41}. The xefe suku of Odomau described a similar process, stated that they go back to the community, using information from subdistrict and district levels, to explain to them why the proposals were not approved and encouraging them to vary their proposals in response to this feedback. However, commonly community members would request that the same proposals be put forward the following year, rather than returning for another round of planning with the community. As he explained, “the community would say, we already planned for 5 years—why do you have to come back to plan again?”\textsuperscript{42}. In Fatulia, the xefe suku explained that proposals that were not approved will be considered again the following year, but they will often modify it to reflect feedback at subdistrict and district levels.\textsuperscript{43}

This process of going back to the community to explain appears to be very important. In suku Tapo-Memo, where the connection between the suku council and the community is much weaker, with community members reporting there had never been a community meeting since they won office in 2009, blame is often put on the xefe suku when proposals fail. As a local contractor in Tapo-Memo explained, this is often not fair as the xefe suku must wait on decisions from the government. However, the community often gets angry with him, distrusting that he did the planning or that he put in the project proposals: “many people don’t understand, they don’t know who is to blame. So they say that the xefe suku doesn’t have a good plan... they say that the xefe suku is stupid, maybe he never gave the report to the government... but if there is no decision from the government, he is not going to spend his own money for the project. He is also just like other people, a normal community member.”\textsuperscript{44}

Nonetheless, social distributive equity was raised as an important issue in a number of suku. This tended to become a problem when projects were insufficiently funded to cover all of the suku’s need in that sector, and so difficult decisions needed to be made as to who would benefit and who would not. For example, in suku Lahomea in the district of Bobonaro, an irrigation project was funded for 450 metres, when in fact the total irrigation needs of the suku covered 5 kilometres. The unfairness of local decision-making as to who would benefit was commented on by a xefe aldeia as well as community members.\textsuperscript{45} However, as the xefe suku explained, the limited budget put him in a difficult position, and it is likely that they will continue to apply for further irrigation funding in the future.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{41} Focus Group Discussion suku Fatulia (Venilale, Baucau), 16 February 2012
\textsuperscript{42} Focus Group Discussion, suku Odomao (Maliana, Bobonaro), 29 May 2012
\textsuperscript{43} Focus Group Discussion suku Fatulia (Venilale, Baucau), 16 February 2012
\textsuperscript{44} Interview, Simplisio Lourenco, Contractor, Maliana, 24 May 2012
\textsuperscript{45} Focus Group Discussion, suku Lahomea (Maliana, Bobonaro), 10 May 2012; interviews Eduardo Gonsalves and Tito Gonsalves, community members, suku Lahomea, 10 May 2012
\textsuperscript{46} Focus Group Discussion, suku Lahomea (Maliana, Bobonaro), 10 May 2012
A further point for improvement in local development planning processes was raised by the director of local NGO, Organisasaun Haburas Moris (OHM) in Maliana. OHM was one of the local NGOs that trialed the PDS, together with the Ministry for State Administration and Territorial Management and international NGO GHM. With outside support in facilitation, those suku that had participated in the trial had gathered an impressive amount of information, which they then used to make their one and five year plans. However, most suku councils had not instituted the practice of reviewing their plans, using the information that they had gathered to systematically monitor progress and respond to new opportunities. In addition, a weakness that OHM had identified at the time is that they did not have a good understanding of planning across different sectors, and that this lack of understanding is likely to have gotten worse since the original plans were created\(^47\).

Despite these various criticisms, however, the Director agreed that the process of prioritization was a good one—but that it could be improved by ongoing monitoring of how plans are put into use as regular practice.

A larger issue that arose, however, had to do with the impact of external interventions or priorities that are imposed on the community that do not reflect community-identified needs. As the xefe suku of Fatulia commented, “sometimes the project that is approved is different from what we expect because it is sent to national level and changed. It then becomes based not on people’s needs but what the government wants. If it is up to the district, the district will come back and talk to the community… But when it is a national decision, they don’t use paralis mu system and it is not as clear. Because at national level it is more a political decision.”\(^48\)

**Ta’es or Shortlisting: Subdistrict, District and National levels**

Decentralised development programs are not intended to place all decision-making power with the community, but rather to share power more effectively between different levels of governance. While evidence from Timor-Leste and other countries indicates that community participation needs to form the foundation for the program, it is clearly important that community planning be cognisant of, and align with, development planning at subdistrict, district and national levels. It is also important that there is sufficient coordination between responsible bodies at subdistrict, district and national levels, in order to streamline responsiveness to community needs. This is a balancing act that emerged in the research as a challenge, with few signs that such balance was achieved.

*Alignment of suku priorities with higher levels of governance*

The need to align community development priorities with development planning at higher levels of governance is recognised in the framework for PDID, which

\(^47\) Interview, Rince Nipu, Director Organisasaun Haburas Moris (OHM), Maliana, 11 May 2012  
\(^48\) Focus Group Discussion suku Fatulia (Venilale, Baucau), 16 February 2012
requires that suku council proposals be reflective not only of community needs, but also of issues of economies of scale and of needs identified in the census results\(^{49}\). However, this is not always easy. The ability to do this effectively requires two important things: appropriate information on which to plan, and the capacity to plan strategically beyond the borders of the suku. As noted in UNCDF’s review of the PDL, efforts by subdistrict and district commissions have been hindered by the lack of a geographically-based Service Delivery Information System which would give the basis for good, strategic planning\(^{50}\), taking into account existing services and national development priorities. A similar point was noted by the subdistrict administrator of Venilale, who argued that before prioritisation of project proposals, there should be a survey carried out to give an evidence base for sound decision-making\(^{51}\).

The second point, regarding the capacity to effectively balance the development priorities of different levels of governance, is an interesting one. There are issues of individual capacity in making strategic decisions, but the institutional model through which decisions are being made is also extremely important. As noted in UNCDF’s review of the PDL program, the model for decision making that placed more decision-making power at the subdistrict level also translated into a lesser rate of acceptance of proposals at district level. The main reason that the research team identified was because there was often pressure to equally distribute resources between each suku which meant that they could not satisfy issues of economies of scale\(^{52}\). The research team surmised that investment decisions that are made at the subdistrict rather than district level meant that decision-makers were under more pressure to succumb to this pressure from the suku\(^{53}\). Whether or not it is ‘better’ that suku ‘desires’ for equitable distribution be ignored is questionable, however as such questions are extremely important for making responsible development decisions in post-conflict communities—even if they do not satisfy technical understandings of effective and efficient economic development\(^{54}\). However, the point that there is a tension between strategic economic development that recognise economies of scale, and community desires for participation and decision-making that reflect existing ideas of political community is worth noting.

In ‘mapping’ decision making over decentralised development projects, it is clear that those projects that require the ‘buy-in’ of more than one suku can also divert attention away from the need to be consultative and responsive to community needs. This was seen in the planning process for a mini-market in Baguia that was built through the PDL program to service the population of three suku, While

\(^{49}\) RDTL (2012); Matadalan Elaborasaun Planu Investimentu Distrital; Ministeriu Administrasaun Estatal no Ordamento Territori, pp. 10-11

\(^{50}\) LGSP mid-term evaluation, p. viii

\(^{51}\) Interview, Julio Tomes da Silva, Subdistrict Administrator Venilale, 17 February 2012

\(^{52}\) UNCDF (2010) Mid-Term Evaluation; Local Government Support Programme (LGSP) Timor-Leste, p25

\(^{53}\) ibid

\(^{54}\) See for example Rey切尔, Luc and Thania Paffenholz (2001), Peacebuilding: A Field Guide; Anderson, Mary (1999), Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace—or War
the proposal satisfied PDL criteria in having a high number of beneficiaries, the planning process and decision-making appeared to be almost entirely focussed on satisfying external criteria. This project was strongly driven by the xefe suku of Defawasi, who was also a member of the Local Assembly in Baucau and was clearly aware of PDL guidelines. As the xefe suku of Defawasi explained, he knew that if they were to get the buy-in of three suku that would benefit from the project, and if the proposal came not from him, but from the xefe suku of Lavateri, then it had a good chance of being funded by the Local Assembly. However, this focus on getting the proposal passed at the District level shifted attention away from getting community buy-in. As the previous secretary for suku Lavateri explained,

we didn’t know anything about the process. This was a political decision from the xefe suku at the national level of political leaders. I just knew that they came and did a survey, and then they started the project. When they inaugurated, they invited the district administrator and gave the key to the local leaders.

As a result of this focus on District level decision-making, there was very little community consultation, which meant that the mini-market failed to be reflective of the needs of the vendors, who prefer to not use it. As one community member explained, “I didn’t know of any consultation. We just knew when it was done, they said ‘now you can come and use this place for the market’. As the community, we have to follow… but we have reason to talk to the government about it.” There is now an ongoing wastage of state resources, as every market day the police are asked to chase the vendors to use the new facility. Once the police are gone, the vendors return to their usual place for selling goods, which is more appropriate to their needs (this case is returned to in section G of this report).

Inter-sectoral coordination at subdistrict, district and national levels

As important decisions are also made at subdistrict, district and national levels by various different actors, the issue of government responsiveness to community needs, and the capacity to coordinate between different institutions came up repeatedly during fieldwork. As described in the introduction of this report, district level development is a busy space. There is the District Administration, various line Ministries, and other interested parties, all of whom are making important development decisions, and all of whom are following different processes. While the District Administration receives all of the PDSs from the suku, line Ministries follow their own planning procedures. As the District Administrator of Bobonaro argued, because line Ministries do not take guidance from the PDS, this has meant that their planning is not sufficiently responsive to community:

55 Focus Group Discussion, suku Defawasi, (Baguia, Baucau) 22 February 2012
56 Interview, Eusebio Pereira, ex-suku secretary, suku Lavateri, 21 February 2012
57 Interview, community member, Augustino Ximenes, suku Lavateri, 21 February 2012; interview, Maria Goreti de Jesus, community member, 21 February 2012
58 Interview, Augustino Ximenes, community member, suku Lavateri, 21 February 2012
59 Interview, Mateus Pereira de Brito, xefe suku Lavateri, 21 February 2012
the problem is when they decide the project, we don’t know where the project will be implemented. This is a big problem, when the line Ministries make a plan without consultation with community… The line Ministries, Health, Agriculture, are there to serve the community, not to serve themselves… It is wrong if the Ministries say that this is ‘their’ project, ‘their’ work.62

The District Administrator of Baucau made a similar point, stating,

some projects we don’t know, we receive it but it is difficult because we didn’t plan it… This is one of the weaknesses of the lack of joint planning. We have not yet identified the location to place the infrastructure—is it to be on private land? State land? Even if it is state land, someone might live there. How can we use the land? We have to negotiate, use our force, evict people from the land.61

However, the line Ministries gave a different perspective regarding their engagement with local communities. For example, the Director for the Ministry of Education in Baucau explained that they regularly receive community information through meetings with school directors and parent-teacher associations, and on the basis of this create their strategic plans for the District62. However, he also agreed that their system is different, in that they receive proposals from schools, which they then forward to the Minister, who will often make budgetary decisions to reduce the number of proposals63. Equally, the Director for the Ministry of Agriculture in Bobonaro explained that they get much of their information through their agricultural extension officers, who he described as “a bridge to the community, to help bridge the distance from suku to district level.”64 Through these mechanisms, he argued, their proposals are equally responsive to community needs that are identified through the PDS process. However, this also depends on individual line Ministries. As the Acting Chief of Department for the Ministry of Water and Sanitation in Baucau explained, often they will receive complaints from communities when their proposals have not yet been passed which they are powerless to respond to. When this happens, they must explain to the community that at District level, they should be seen ‘like a bridge’ between community and government, with decisions being made at national level.65

Underlying these different perspectives is a struggle over who is responsible for leading development in the District. Each line Ministry is accountable to their national Ministry in Dili, and the District Administration is responsible for coordination at district level. However, much of the debate appears to hinge on different understandings of what ‘coordination’ means. While it is generally

60 Interview, Domingos Martin, District Administrator, Bobonaro, Maliana, 9 May 2012
61 Interview, Antonio Guterres, District Administrator Baucau, 16 May 2012
62 Interview, January Carvaral, Director, Ministry of Education Baucau, 15 May 2012
63 Interview, January Carvaral, Director, Ministry of Education Baucau, 15 May 2012
64 Interview, Aleixo Lai, Director Ministry Agriculture Bobonaro, 28 May 2012
65 Interview, Francisco da Costa Castro, Acting Chief of Department, Ministry of Water and Sanitation Baucau, 16 May 2012
understood that the District Administrator’s role is to coordinate, it is less clear what power is attached to this role. The District Administrator of Bobonaro explained his ‘coordination’ role as effectively leading the other Ministries: “the District Administration represents the government at the district level. If the District Administration represents the government, then all Directors in district level are required to submit their reports to the District Administrator, who will then coordinate all line Ministries at the district level. But this doesn’t happen, because of the ego of the line Ministries; they say ‘I am also at the same level’,”

By contrast, a senior engineer for the Ministry of Water and Sanitation and member of EVAS in Bobonaro appeared to understand ‘coordination’ as ‘administration’, commenting, “this is confusing. The Ministry for State Administration is not supposed to have their own plan because they just manage administration… Actually, all our plans come from community; we get our proposals from community.”

While this ‘struggle for turf’ at the district level was commented on by many respondents, they also emphasised that they do manage to coordinate with each other reasonably effectively. This, however, can be undermined by different Ministerial priorities at the national level. At the most basic level, some respondents commented on the tendency of national representatives to come to a community and “favour militants that belong to the same political party, by giving them a project… this is a real problem with election-time”. Local and district level governance is very vulnerable to national influences, and such instances in which projects are granted without attention to due process can have long-term implications, undermining local trust in the structures of decision-making. In addition, there are issues of national-level coordination, or lack of coordination. As the District Administrator of Bobonaro commented,

“In KDD we work according to the law and have good coordination, so there is not a problem. But to do research, you should ask those at the top: do they have a good relationship or not? I am always worried about this, do different national Ministers want to work together or not? … At the top, they say they are good. In fact, they are really bad. There is no coordination.”

Effectively integrating the different plans that are coming from different ministerial sources, encouraging inter-sectoral planning that takes into account land and environmental issues and ensures accountability, and working across different levels of governance are the main reasons that the new PDID framework was introduced. However, in this context where line Ministries are primary accountable to the Ministry in Dili, and District Administrations are responsible for coordinating development in the district, it is still too early to evaluate how effectively this new structure will be in cutting through these district-level politics.

66 Interview, Domingos Martin, District Administrator, Bobonaro, Maliana, 9 May 2012
67 Interview, Bendito Soares, Engineer, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Bobonaro, 22 May 2012
68 Interview, Salamao da Cruz, President Suku Association, Bobonaro, 8 May 2012
69 Interview, Domingos Martin, District Administrator, Bobonaro, Maliana, 9 May 2012
As well as these very challenging governance dynamics, another point that was raised in both Bobonaro and Baucau was the impact of personal and political interests affecting decision-making, popularly referred to as KKN\(^70\). While it is expected that decisions will be made in accordance with community needs, contextualised in broader development priorities, the reality is that there will always be individuals who seek to work the system for their own benefit. As the President of the Suku Association in Bobonaro explained, the major route that he has identified through which individuals could exercise their influence for their own gain was when members of KDD allocated projects to different companies. While community plans themselves were generally not shifted, “if the verification team verify a company document and this company has the same colour\(^71\), they will help this company to get a high score.”\(^72\) Similar comments were also made by a local contractor in Maliana who stated, “everything is based on this process. But sometimes there is something wrong in the body of the commission; there can be political influences, corruption, in the commission.”\(^73\) In Baucau, the Director for Education made similar comments, while he emphasised that the process was generally good, he stated that one or two KDD members “have a tendency to give the project to companies that are not the right company, for their own gain.”\(^74\)

It can be seen why this is the preferred route for those seeking to practice KKN at the district level. The decision-making processes in the KDD are very flexible when evaluating companies, and in granting contracts to companies that are in the same category. As the District of Administrator explained, “we have to negotiate when there are companies that have the same score, we negotiate, we decide by consensus. But the commission already knows who can do the work…”\(^75\). While this flexibility may facilitate decision-making in the KDD, and it is no doubt true that most commission members will already know the contractor, such a simple process also makes it a clear site for individual members to work the system for their own gain.

\(^{70}\) KKN: korupsaun, kolusaun no nepitismu, or corruption, collusion and nepotism
\(^{71}\) 'Kor’, or colour, refers to political or family connections
\(^{72}\) Interview Salamao da Cruz, President Suku Association, Bobonaro, May 8 2012
\(^{73}\) Interview Arlindo de Fatima, contractor, Maliana, 22 May 2012
\(^{74}\) Interview, January Carvaral, Director Ministry of Education, Baucau, 15 May 2012
\(^{75}\) Interview, Domingos Martin, District Administrator, Bobonaro, Maliana, 9 May 2012
F. PROJECT PLANNING

Once a proposal has been approved, the next stage is to plan the implementation of the project. Across all interviews, the need for community consultation was emphasized as fundamental for successful implementation. As the xefe suku of Lahomea argued, “the problems arise when they do not do consultation. They are supposed to come and do a survey, ask people... so we do not just want to criticise the government; we want to say what is good, and what is bad. We want to improve the country. When the money is finished, what do you do? Don’t blame the company, the problem is the government”\(^{76}\).

The two main reasons for consultation in the planning process that were cited for this sentiment both came back to sustainability: first, the need to draw on local knowledge to ensure that the project is well-implemented, and second the need for the infrastructure to be responsive to people’s needs.

The need to draw on local knowledge when designing the project was raised a number of times throughout both Baucau and Bobonaro, and projects identified where this had not been carried out, resulting in project failure. One such example was the construction of a water tank in suku Uma-Ana-Ulo, Venilale, a PDD project. As the subdistrict administrator of Venilale explained, because the engineer who was responsible for the design was unaware of water flow during the rainy season, and failed to consult with locals on this issue, the tank was not properly constructed to cope with water pressure. This has rendered the tank unusable. As he went on to explain, if those who are doing the technical assessment and planning for the project fail to draw on local knowledge, this is not just a social failure but is also a technical failure\(^{77}\).

Local knowledge is also important for other aspects of the planning and design process. The cost of implementation, the distance and potential impediments for implementation are also issues that those in the community are more aware of than external stakeholders. As the District Administrator of Bobonaro commented, "sometimes at high level, the government decides on a project but they don’t know the distance. For example, Bobonaro, Maliana, Lolotoe, they give the same budget for projects but this doesn’t recognise the different locations. This is why the planning should come from the community, because they know their area. Local technicians should understand the distance. If we do the calculation, estimate the budget for the project without confirming location and distance, this will be a problem in implementation."\(^{78}\)

Another way in which consultation is important is making sure that the project will be responsive to community needs. Even if projects are technically well-implemented, if communities do not use the resulting infrastructure the project

\(^{76}\) Interview, Lucio Americo, xefe suku Lahomea (Maliana, Bobonaro), 9 May 2012

\(^{77}\) Interview, Julio Tomes da Silva, Subdistrict Administrator Venilale, 17 February 2012

\(^{78}\) Interview, Domingos Martins, District Administrator Bobonaro, 9 May 2012
cannot be considered a success. This was the case with the construction of a mini-market in suku Lavateri, subdistrict Baguia, built to service three different suku. The mini-market was a PDL project, intended to provide a new place for vendors to sell their goods, and moving them off the road where the market had been previously situated. While respondents explained that the building was technically sound, the market itself had been located in the wrong place and was difficult for customers to access. The hill was too steep and people would sometimes fall trying to get to the market, so vendors continued to sell from the road. The marketplace had been in place for approximately six months when the research team visited, and vendors and community members reported that every market day the police came and forced vendors to move off the road and sell from the mini-market. However, as soon as the police left, the vendors would move back to the road\textsuperscript{79}. This questionable use of police resources continues to add to the cost of this project failure.

Another point at which a project can fail because of lack of proper consultation is when disputes over land or other natural resources arise during implementation. As one community member in suku Tapo-Memo, Maliana, explained, in 2010 there had been a project to drill water, but it had stalled because of ‘impediments’ from customary authorities\textsuperscript{80}. These impediments may be for a variety of reasons, including lack of agreement on the use of land or other resources, or conflict because the contractor is not using local labourers, or other reasons. As the Subdistrict Administrator of Maliana explained, one way that they have attempted to avoid these issues is to meet with the suku council and community before implementation, to explain the project and the role of the council and avoid misunderstandings. Based on this discussion, they will then sign an agreement which forms the legal basis for project implementation. Often, there is a requirement in the agreement that all workers must be from the suku or aldeia where the project is being implemented, with the contractor only allowed to bring in technical experts.\textsuperscript{81} A similar approach was described by the suku council of Fatulia. As the xefe suku explained,

\begin{quote}
if we want to open a road but it goes through people’s land if there are trees or mangoes, we have to chop it down. This is why we must start with consensus, otherwise people will blame us. This is the first step for the xefe aldeia to do with the community before the project starts, before they make their proposal\textsuperscript{82}.
\end{quote}

Similar points were also raised by an engineer in the Ministry of Water and Sanitation in Bobonaro. As he commented, “we have to look at the technical side, but we must also look at the social side. We must make sure that everyone has access. If we only provide to one small group without considering the social side, they might destroy the facilities once it is finished”\textsuperscript{83}. This consultation can take

\begin{footnotesize}
\bibitem{79}
Interview, community member, Augustino Ximenes, suku Laviteri, 21 February 2012; interview, Maria Goreti de Jesus, community member, suku Laviteri, 21 February 2012
\bibitem{80}
Interview, Salvador Moniz Paicheco, community member suku Tapo-Memo, 24 May 2012
\bibitem{81}
Interview, Adelino Barretto, Subdistrict Administrator Bobonaro, Maliana, 24 May 2012
\bibitem{82}
Focus Group Discussion suku Fatulia (Venilale, Baucau), 16 February 2012
\bibitem{83}
Interview, Bendito Soares, Engineer, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Bobonaro, 22 May 2012
\end{footnotesize}
time, but in ensuring sustainability it is necessary. As the xefe suku of Fatulia explained, in comparing PDD and PDL:

PDD is fast but then it doesn’t function well because people are not ready to use it. For example, we have an irrigation channel funded through PDD but it was not a success because they did not have a good plan… PDD is a plan through a computer… They can implement immediately but people can’t use it. PDL is slow but it is based on people’s needs and they use it because the people feel it is through their own planning.⁸⁴

Because consultation in the planning process is so important, the verification guidelines for PDL and PDD (and now PDID) require those who are doing the technical assessment to also question community members on whether they are aware of, and support the implementation of the project. If disagreement over the use of land or other resources arises during this process, then the project is disqualified.⁸⁵

However, while the need for proper community involvement at this point of the project cycle was emphasised by almost every research respondent, this does not mean that communities should be totally leading this process. As an engineer in the Ministry of Water and Sanitation in Bobonaro commented, they often encounter more technical problems with project proposals that are put together by the community compared with government proposals because community members do not understand the technical implications. He gave the example of a recent water-piping project; while the community knew they had a water spring and knew that they needed water, they did not have the technical knowledge around how much water flow was necessary for the piping to work. As he went on to explain, situations like this can then mean that the engineers need to find a new way of implementing it, but this then has budget implications, which means that the entire project needs to be revisited and revised by the responsible decision-makers.⁸⁶

However, one of the issues that the engineers in the Ministry of Water and Sanitation face is that they are too far removed from many suku. Because they are only based at the district level, and there are not enough engineers to go around, it is difficult to give timely assistance. As he explained, if it is during the rainy season and they need to monitor a water supply project in Atabae and another in Bobonaro they may arrive too late: “If the project is in the countryside, how can we travel if they need our technical assistance urgently? But then we get there and the project is already half-done. This is the main problem. Problems are limited staff, and limited facilities.”⁸⁷ To him, the best alternative is to have engineers at the subdistrict level:

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⁸⁴ Focus Group Discussion suku Fatulia (Venilale, Baucau), 16 February 2012
⁸⁵ Interview, Domingos Martin, District Administrator, Bobonaro, Maliana, 9 May 2012; interview Antonio Guterres, District Administrator Baucau, 17 May 2012
⁸⁶ Interview, Bendito Soares, Engineer, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Bobonaro, 22 May 2012
⁸⁷ Interview, Bendito Soares, Engineer, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Bobonaro, 22 May 2012
the government should think about in the future, in 2013, implementing PNDS, they have to recruit people who have an engineering background at the subdistrict level to support the suku. They should have enough people who can go around the different suku. We have a problem that there are many engineers graduated from university but don’t want to work with the government because the salary is too low, so they prefer private jobs. But maybe they could train high school graduates, who might not have the technical background, but who can help the community.\textsuperscript{88}

\textsuperscript{88} Interview, Bendito Soares, Engineer, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Bobonaro, 22 May 2012
G. IMPLEMENTATION

Of the eight projects examined in this research, there were three projects that respondents considered to be a ‘failure’, meaning that the resulting infrastructure could not be properly used. These were: (i) the construction of school buildings in Baucau that did not have water supply, which meant that the children could not use the toilets—a major health issue; (ii) the construction of a rural market in Baguia that vendors had to be forced by the police to use; and (iii) a water piping project in Cailaco in which there were allegations of misuse of power and corruption, with the resulting infrastructure deemed technically unsound. While the first two project failures were reflective of poor consultation and planning (discussed in the previous section), problems in the third project in Cailaco spanned across all stages of the project life-cycle, including implementation.

For PDD and PDL programs, there are two major routes through which projects can be implemented. Either the project will be contracted out to a local company, which is the most common route. Or the community can themselves implement the project as a KiK, or community-implemented contract. As the District Development Officer in Bobonaro explained, projects are classified as KiK when a project is approved, but when the KDD is unable to find a contractor who is willing to implement it. The main reasons for this are either because the budget is too small, or the community is too remote.89

The KiK implementing group can take different forms. In suku Odomau, the xefe suku is the supervisor and there are four implementers from the suku council: one youth representative, one women’s representative, one elder and one xefe aldeia.90 By contrast, the KiK group in suku Tapo-Memo comprised five people which included a mixture of suku council and community members. The xefe suku was the ‘testimonia’ or supervisor, and the president and finance person were drawn from the community. As they explained, this approach made the most sense as the KiK president had been responsible for irrigation in the suku since Indonesian times, and had experience in organising the community for upkeep of irrigation channels.91 The third KiK group in suku Meligo comprised two people who were both community members—a finance person and the president.92 According to the xefe suku of Meligo and the Local Development Officer in subdistrict Cailaco, however, this KiK project had been tainted by external interventions by a key government official.93 While suku council had selected five members for the KiK team according to KiK guidelines, this was overruled by the government official who selected the people he preferred, who

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89 Interview, Semidio Laco da Costa, District Development Officer, Bobonaro, 28 May 2012
90 Focus Group Discussion, suku Odomao (Maliana, Bobonaro), 29 May 2012
91 Focus Group Discussion, suku Tapo-Memo (Maliana, Bobonaro), 25 May 2012
92 It is possible that there were more KiK members on the formal structure. Because this project involved alleged misuse of power, the xefe suku did not know many of the details.
93 Interview Januariu Mota, xefe suku Meligo, 30 May 2012; interview, Luis Soares Gonsalves, Local Governance Officer, subdistrict Cailaco, 30 May 2012
according to the *xefe suku*, “people who can easily lie, and who are easy to influence to do the wrong thing.”

The defining feature of KiK is that they are to be managed and implemented by the community. However, in this KiK project which involved the piping of water to the Agricultural Centre in Cailaco, the subdistrict Local Governance Officer and the *xefe suku* of Meligo described a series of events that were contrary to the regulations of KiK. According to them, the interventions by this government official effectively meant that the financial and other management was being handled from outside the *suku*. This included the appointment of the KiK group, managing banking arrangements, buying of materials, selection of workers for the project, and subverting regulations that required *xefe suku* sign-off. As the *xefe suku* explained,

> this money was used to buy materials, but did not involve anyone from KiK. We know that to get the rest of the money, it should have been signed by members of KiK. But we know the KiK members did not sign, but they still got the second tranche of funding... I realised that they did wrong, one of their faults was when they brought documents and asked me to sign. I signed for the first tranche, but under that document there was a separate document for the second tranche... I did not sign this document.

However, he explained that he had recently heard that this second tranche of funding had already been released. In addition, when the *xefe suku* asked to view the Bill of Quantities (BoQ) to cross-check that all the money was accounted for, these documents were not released to him. Because of all of these problems, the Local Governance Officer explained that it was not KiK at all: “this project is like a curtain at the door; when people come, they can see the curtain, they can say this was implemented by KiK. But the people who hold the money are not KiK.”

When the research team raised this issue with the Director of the Ministry involved, and the District Development Officer in Bobonaro, both confirmed that the practices of the said government official were clearly against the KiK regulations. Both said they would investigate this case further.

Nonetheless, this case reveals a weakness in current monitoring arrangements. When questioned on the number of monitoring trips that are required by regulation, the Director of the ministry involved explained, “we can’t count the actual number of monitoring trips.” Rather, he explained that because there is regular contact through their officers, when they visit the community they can also

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94 Interview Januariu Mota, *xefe suku* Meligo, 30 May 2012

95 Interview Januariu Mota, *xefe suku* Meligo, 30 May 2012

96 Interview Januariu Mota, *xefe suku* Meligo, 30 May 2012

97 Interview, Luis Soares Gonsalves, Local Governance Officer, subdistrict Cailaco, 30 May 2012

98 Interview, Aleixo Lai, Director Ministry Agriculture Bobonaro, 28 May 2012; Interview, Semidio Laco da Costa, District Development Officer, Bobonaro, 28 May 2012

99 Interview, Aleixo Lai, Director Ministry Agriculture Bobonaro, 28 May 2012
monitor the project at the same time. This, combined with a lack of clear understanding of complaints mechanisms, and the intimidating process of needing an open, written complaint, has meant that this case was not brought to official attention. This issue is returned to later in this section.

Aside from this case, most local leaders expressed a preference for the KiK model over those implemented by contractors. Mainly people explained that community groups had greater incentives to ensure the project is implemented properly. As the xefe suku of Odomau argued, while the contractor is naturally seeking to make a profit from the project, the KiK group is primarily interested in the project filling community needs. As he explained it, “if the community does it, but the quality is no good, they have to blame themselves.” Nonetheless, the implementation of KiK has also been quite uneven, and there were a number of instances of project failure that were raised by officials in both Bobonaro and Baucau.

For projects that are implemented by contractors, implementation failure is often blamed on them wanting to increase their profit margins, or because of inexperience and lack of capacity. However, conversations with contractors gave a different perspective. For example, one local contractor who had recently been sanctioned for failing to complete a water-piping project explained that the fault lay in the initial project design—which was carried out by the engineering team for the Ministry of Water and Sanitation. As he explained it, when the contract was signed, he had not yet viewed the Bill of Quantities (BoQ), and it emerged later that the Ministry had miscalculated the cost of materials. When he pointed this out to the Ministry officials, they acknowledged that there was an error in calculation that meant the budget was insufficient—however, they refused to review the budget to compensate for this mistake. Another local contractor confirmed that this is normal practice; that the BoQ is rarely released before contracts are signed. In another case, a local contractor claimed that a decision by the Ministry to tighten the budget by reducing the quantity of cement to be used has meant that the basketball court that he built is already falling apart since it was built the year before.

While previous research has also identified issues around contractors’ technical capacity, as well as their desire to increase profit margins by cutting corners, these cases cited above also point to systemic failures in the administering program. While many different models for decision-making can be adopted which allow good implementation of projects, a

100 Focus Group Discussion, suku Odomao (Maliana, Bobonaro), 29 May 2012
101 Focus Group Discussion, suku Odomao (Maliana, Bobonaro), 29 May 2012
102 Interview, Antonio Guterres, District Administrator Baucau, 16 May 2012; interview, Semidio Laco da Costa, District Development Officer, Bobonaro, 28 May 2012
103 Interview, Arlindo de Fatima, contractor, Maliana, 22 May 2012
104 Interview, Jose da Cruz, contractor, Maliana, 22 May 2012
105 Interview, Simplisio Lourenco, contractor, Maliana, 24 May 2012
guiding factor needs to be linking the assumption of risk with the responsibility for decision-making. If these two aspects of project implementation are de-linked, the incentive to ensure that projects are carefully designed is diminished.

Another issue is the system for approving project budgets at the national level. When decisions are made nationally to either increase or decrease the budget, according to their own criteria, this means that the project design must be revised, and the quality of the project potentially compromised. As the District Administrator of Bobonaro explained, the distance of many suku from the centre has a direct impact on many aspects of the project implementation and cost, however many decision-makers in Dili are often not aware of these issues. As a result, project budgets may do not reflect these basic realities.107

Aside from technical or budgetary failure, there is also a social dimension to implementation of projects in Timorese communities. One interesting point that was raised by the xefe suku of Odomau concerned engagement with leaders at the local level. As he saw it, it was essential that the suku council was adequately engaged with, “otherwise, I could as xefe suku organise the community to boycott the entire process”108. This was also a dynamic which was noted during the World Bank’s Community Empowerment Program in 2000 to 2002109. Because the CEP local councils that were responsible for planning and implementing local development projects were not adequately linked with the xefe suku, this often resulted in tension and sometimes impeded or stopped works.

There are also other issues which if not recognised can result in local-level conflict that will impede or stop works. This generally revolves around the use of local resources (including labour). The actual benefit that a project brings to the suku once implemented provides only one aspect of the value that is accorded to it by the community. As unemployment is a serious issue across Timor-Leste, another important aspect of the project is who does the work in installing the infrastructure. Throughout various interviews and focus group discussions, local leaders and community members generally agreed that when a company implements a project that requires unskilled labour, that the labourers should be drawn from the local community.

Another potential source of conflict and project failure comes from a lack of engagement with traditional authorities, as construction activities might disturb sacred sites. As the Director of the Ministry for Water and Sanitation in Baucau explained, in the past they had experienced a number of project failures because traditional leaders had stopped construction. In order to address this, two years ago they changed their system in order to engage more closely with traditional leaders at both the planning and implementation phase. Now, prior to commencement of works an agreement is always signed by the land owners, lia-

107 Interview, Adelino Barretto, Subdistrict Administrator Bobonaro, Maliana, 24 May 2012
108 Focus Group Discussion, suku Odomao (Maliana, Bobonaro), 29 May 2012
na'in and other important local leaders, and facilitators continue to engage with them during implementation.\footnote{Interview, Francisco da Costa Castro, Acting Chief of Department, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Baucau, 16 May 2012}

A final source of conflict concerns the use of natural resources. As the xefe suku of Odomau explained, he habitually monitors projects that impact on his suku—even including those where he has no formal responsibility because they are not for the direct benefit of his community\footnote{Focus Group Discussion, suku Odomao (Maliana, Bobonaro), 29 May 2012}. This is in order to fulfil his other duties to the community as suku chief. He gave the example of a recent project where water pipes passed through a section of the suku land. As this project was being implemented, he took it on himself to undertake regular monitoring, speaking regularly with community members to ensure that he was aware of emerging problems around construction workers using their land, or if people’s property such as coconut trees was being destroyed to make way for the new infrastructure.\footnote{Focus Group Discussion, suku Odomao (Maliana, Bobonaro), 29 May 2012}

**Monitoring**

Most local leaders who were interviewed for this research confirmed that they saw it as their responsibility to conduct the day-to-day monitoring of projects during implementation. This applied equally to the PDL program, in which suku councils were given a formal oversight function, and the PDD program, in which they were not officially recognised as monitoring authorities. Much of the reason for this was because, as stated above, even where they were not technically responsible for monitoring of projects, it was an extension of other duties that suku council members hold—in particular, the responsibility to deal with local level conflicts. In addition, there is a general sense that because the infrastructure is for the community, the implementation should necessarily involve them. As the xefe aldeia of Genu Ha’a, from suku Lahomea explained,

> this is the community’s money, and the company have to manage the project well. When the budget is approved by Parliament, the money for is for community, so the company needs to implement on behalf of the community. Our responsibility is to look after the projects that are going on in our suku. We protest if the quality is no good… As xefe aldeia I have responsibility to monitor this project.\footnote{Focus Group Discussion, suku Lahomea (Maliana, Bobonaro), 10 May 2012}

However, while it is generally agreed that local leaders should exercise this role, the capacity of the suku council to perform this function is dependent on the program framework within which they are operating. As discussed previously, because most decision-making was very centralised in the PDD framework, there was limited capacity for suku councils to effectively monitor construction. As one xefe suku put it, “who is the contractor going to listen to—me, or the people who
hold the money?" As he went on to explain, it is clear in the legal mandate of the suku council that “we do not have the right to impede any government decision.” This has been interpreted by some contractors as meaning that suku councils are effectively powerless, so there has been no incentive for implementing companies to coordinate properly with local leaders. The President of the Suku Association in Baucau made a similar point in discussing a PDL project that had been implemented in his suku in 2008/2009. While the PDL framework gives final sign-off responsibility to the xefe suku, when he refused to sign off on work that he saw as sub-standard he was criticised by the District Administrator who told him he was acting outside of his powers. As he commented, however, “I said if I’m not allowed to do that, then show me what I am supposed to do in the field… That is the role of local leaders, to supervise activities in the suku, but these are the pressures that do not allow me to do this properly. For me, if it is not allowed because of hierarchy that is fine, but the company needs to do its work properly.” While it was generally understood that sanctioning powers rested with KDD at the district level, these cases underline the need for suku councils to be recognised in policy frameworks as responsible for local-level monitoring, if they are to have any power in day-to-day interactions with contractors.

In the new PDID framework, xefe suku are included as members of the KDD with the specific mandate to monitor projects that are being implemented in their suku. However, there have also been some problems in transitioning to the new framework. The President of the Suku Association in Bobonaro stated there had been a number of cases in district Bobonaro, including one in subdistrict Bobonaro, one in subdistrict Balibo and one in subdistrict Maliana, where the relevant xefe suku was not aware that a project was being implemented in his suku. This has obviously impeded their ability to fill their monitoring function effectively. As the President explained, this failure to include the xefe suku would have been more understandable in the more remote areas, however the suku in Maliana was close to the centre. As his colleagues have complained to him about this issue, he has been consistently raising this as an issue to be addressed in the KDD.

Complaints Mechanisms

Suku council understanding of complaint mechanisms when they needed to take a case forward was uneven. In some, such as suku Fatulia or suku Odomau, the council members were very aware of who they needed to go to if they had a

114 Focus Group Discussion suku Fatulia (Venilale, Baucau), 16 February 2012
115 Focus Group Discussion suku Fatulia (Venilale, Baucau), 16 February 2012
116 Interview, Manuel Soares Guterres, President Suku Association Baucau, 17 February 2012
117 Interview, Manuel Soares Guterres, President Suku Association Baucau, 17 February 2012
118 Interview, Salamao da Cruz, President Suku Association, Bobonaro, 8 May 2012
119 Interview, Salamao da Cruz, President Suku Association, Bobonaro, 8 May 2012
complaint, including the official need for a written rather than verbal complaint. However, it appeared that other local leaders either were less aware of, or less willing to take up, the complaint mechanisms that were open to them. In suku Meligo, Cailaco, in which the xefe suku and Local Governance Officer alleged misuse of power and potentially corrupt practices, they had not taken the case to the KDD. There were a few reasons for this. First, the xefe suku did not appear to understand that these interventions were outside the program regulations, instead saying that it was a systemic failure: “this is why we recommend that if you give money to us, you don’t only put our names and then implement it yourselves. You need to give responsibility to implement and monitor to the community. In the meantime, giving the opportunity to the community means you can also educate them to manage their own projects.”

The second reason was that they were unclear on who they should bring the case to. As the Local Governance Officer explained,

I don’t know the system. This is why when they came to complain about the issue, I said I didn’t know how to complain. Do we go to PDHJ? To the police? To CAC? This is the character of people; when they are really angry, they say ‘no, I have to report this’. But then they calm down and say ‘no, now I am afraid to report it’. And they don’t know the way to report. We don’t know when they formed the KiK, did they also provide a small regulation to regulate this program?

The third reason which was not given, but which was implied by the xefe suku’s clearly nervous demeanour, was that they were afraid to openly report the problem. While such nervousness is normal, it also indicates a need to revise complaint mechanisms to make them more approachable for people, and to strengthen existing external monitoring arrangements. This is particularly important for the majority of community members who cannot write, and so cannot formally lodge a written complaint. As the District Development Officer in Bobonaro commented, “when there are problems with KiK, people never come to the District Administration to make a formal complaint. It’s much better to go and walk and talk with the community to find out how things are.” This, however, requires a greater capacity and willingness of line Ministries to do this work.

While this case involved abuse of power at the district level, there have also been problems of mismanagement of KiK projects by local leaders. However, as the District Development Officer of Bobonaro explained, it is extremely difficult to provide oversight of community groups. As he explained,

The problem with us is when dealing with the community, it is difficult for us to apply the regulations. If it is a company, it is easy for us, we can blacklist them. Or we can just stop, and remind them in the future that we will not work with that company any more. But because this is community, even if we sign a contract with them as implementer, some of them are very stubborn. So I might say that the implementation of KiK is not 100% good… There are some projects that are not completed for sede

120 Interview Januariu Mota, xefe suku Meligo, 30 May 2012
121 Interview, Luis Soares Gonsalves, Local Governance Officer, subdistrict Cailaco, 30 May 2012
122 Interview, Semidio Laco da Costa, District Development Officer, Bobonaro, 28 May 2012
aldeias, but it is difficult for the District Administration to take the decision because they are a community.\(^{123}\)

It is for this reason that the District Development Officer sees KiK as the ‘last alternative’ for implementing projects, only to be used when they are unable to find a company who is interested in implementing—either because of distance or poor roads, or when the funding is too small. However, these same issues that make a project undesirable to local contractors also make it very difficult to monitor. As he went on to explain, “It is easy to monitor the project that is implemented by KiK that is close to the centre. It is difficult for us to control KiK projects that are far away from the centre. When we are unable to monitor the project in those isolated areas, they might also misuse the money.”\(^{124}\)

\(^{123}\) Interview, Semidio Laco da Costa, District Development Officer, Bobonaro, 28 May 2012

\(^{124}\) Interview, Semidio Laco da Costa, District Development Officer, Bobonaro, 28 May 2012
H. MAINTENANCE

Once the infrastructure has been built, there needs to be a system in place to maintain it, to manage security and to do small repairs. However, in nearly all of the projects that the research team studied, there were no such clear systems in place. There were two exceptions: (i) a new road in suku Fatulia, Venilale, which had actually been started by the community before it became a PDL project (and therefore had a fair amount of support in the beneficiaries in that aldeia, and strong support from the xefe suku); and new school buildings in suku Tirilolo, Baucau, as it is normal practice for the teaching staff to take on maintenance responsibilities. This example, however, is not a perfect example of maintenance as the school is unable to pay for security at night, which means in practice that the rooms are still not being used properly.125

In the other projects examined in this research, maintenance was a major issue that was raised by numerous officials in Baucau and Bobonaro. This has applied to both PDD and PDL projects and has meant that there has been limited sustainability to development efforts. As the District Development Officer in Bobonaro explained, “when the project ends, we hand over to the community, and we see after one year the project is getting bad. Even the groups that were already established, they could not sustain the management. When we are there to guide them, they still exist. But when we leave, the group also disbands.”126 According to the District Administrator of Bobonaro, much of this comes back to a lack of understanding of people’s lived reality in many villages: “Re PDD and PDL, we expect the maintenance will be undertaken by the community, but we have to look at the community’s economic capacity to do this. Because they have no money. If the wind destroys it, they can’t fix it.”127 For this reason the District Development Officer in Bobonaro stated that projects that related to sectors, such as agriculture, health or education, could be better maintained than other projects—as these line Ministries are able to take on some responsibility for supporting maintenance.

While it is true that this policy failure can be addressed by line Ministries taking on responsibility for maintenance, there are also other deeper issues to be engaged with. Fieldwork indicates that the difficulty in nurturing community contributions to development goes beyond economic capacity to other social issues. This is particularly pertinent to PNDS, to be implemented from 2013, in which communities will be responsible for various development activities in their suku—potentially also including maintenance. While various policy documents state that certain facilities can be managed by the beneficiaries128, the reality is that there is a major disconnect between government expectations, suku council expectations, and community expectations as to who will be responsible for

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125 Interview, Luis Antonio Bonito, principal Eskola Pre-sekondaria no3, Baucau, 16 May 2012
126 Interview, Semidio Laco da Costa, District Development Officer, Bobonaro, 28 May 2012
127 Interview, Domingos Martins, District Administrator Bobonaro, 9 May 2012
128 See for example RDTL (2012); Matadalan Elaborasaun Planu Investimentu Distrital; Ministeriu Administrasaun Estatal no Ordamento Territori, pp 38-39
maintenance of facilities, once the project has been implemented. Commonly, government officials will consider it the community’s responsibility, and discussions with the vast majority of suku council members also reflected this position. However, community members often do not agree, and in some cases it appears that they have not been made aware of the government or suku council expectations that they be responsible for maintenance.

The District Administrator of Baucau suggests that much of the issue comes back to having a sense of ‘ownership’ in the process, and in the final product. As he explained, “currently, there is no sense of ownership. To make people feel that this is for them, one approach is to give the opportunity to xefe suku to manage. Because, based on Law 3/2009, all government facilities must be overseen by the xefe suku: roads, buildings, everything that is state property… But the suku council don’t inform the community that it is their responsibility to look after the infrastructure. There is no communication between suku council and the community.”

This perspective was also reflected in discussions with suku councils over the issue of maintenance. For example, during discussions with the suku council of Lahomea, they were clear that the responsibility for maintenance rested with the community. As the xefe aldeia, in whose community the channel had been built explained, “in relation to community leadership responsibility to the facilities provided, if there is small damage, is the responsibility of farmers that get the benefit. When the project is finished and handed over, the facility no longer belongs to the company. It is the responsibility of the project beneficiaries, not the company.” However, on further questioning it emerged that they had not established a clear system to ensure community contributions to the maintenance of the new facility. As the xefe suku explained,

> the suku council does not collect money from farmers who are using water from this irrigation; it is the responsibility of all the users to pay attention such as cleaning the water channel. There is no schedule for cleaning, but when the rainy season comes everyone is called to clean as preparation… this is already a traditional custom… because there is no other option to get water for their farm, they have obligation to contribute. For those who do not have money their contribution might be working, while those who contribute money might do less work.

When asked what happens when people say that they don’t want to contribute, the general response was simply that “they can’t.” However, when cross-checking with community members, the beneficiaries clearly had a different point of view. As one farmer stated regarding the irrigation channel, “this should be the government’s responsibility. They put it there, so they should look after it

129 Interview, Antonio Guterres, District Administrator Baucau, 16 May 2012
130 Focus Group Discussion, suku Lahomea (Maliana, Bobonaro), 10 May 2012
131 Focus Group Discussion, suku Lahomea (Maliana, Bobonaro), 10 May 2012
132 Focus Group Discussion, suku Lahomea (Maliana, Bobonaro), 10 May 2012
shouldn’t they? We have no money, if we did it on our own, then sure, it’s out responsibility. But they put it in, so it’s their responsibility.”

Similarly, community members of suku Lavateri noted that there were no procedures that had been put in place to care for the rural market that had been built to service three different suku. While it was generally thought that suku councils of Lavateri and Defawasi would be jointly responsible for the market’s upkeep, this has not happened in practice. This is further complicated by the fact that maintenance was also seen as a commercial opportunity by the land owner who gave his land for the market to be built. While the land itself was a gift, there was an expectation that he and his family would be paid to provide security and general maintenance. However, since there is no clear source of funding put aside to pay people to provide regular care, there is no-one who will provide the labour.

The question of maintenance also reflects a rising level of dependency in many Timorese communities. Many research participants commented that while in Indonesian occupation it was normal for community members to contribute their services to looking after community facilities, this has changed since independence. Since UNTAET times, the precedent has been set for paying community members a daily wage for the upkeep of local roads or other facilities, commonly referred to as ‘the $2 program”, referring to the daily wage that is granted for participation in the scheme. Initially intended as much-needed employment-generating schemes, programs such as these have also had the unintended impact of reducing people’s sense of communal responsibility. Every xefe suku and other government official who was interviewed in this research stated that this precedent is now extremely difficult to shift. As the xefe suku of Lavateri commented, “people now are very clever. If we ask them to clean, they will ask for $2. So if we ask them to work, managing the market, we must pay for it. Otherwise, they will say no.”

While local leaders and government officials frequently lamented this attitude in communities, discussions with community members also revealed that for them, it comes back to questions of distributive equity and a sense of fairness in local decision-making. As one community member in suku Odomao cynicall noted, “when there is a project, if you have a relationship with the leaders, all of your family members will work. But if you have no relationship with the leaders, you don’t get work because they prioritise their family first… even if you’re angry or mad you can’t do anything…” Similar comments were also made by a group of women in suku Tapo-Memo: “when there is money, they only invite their families. When there is no money, they inform everyone to work.” This was also raised

133 Interviews Eduardo Gonsalves and Tito Gonsalves, community members, suku Lahomea, 10 May 2012
134 Interview, Eusebio Pereira, community member, suku Lavateri, 21 February 2012
135 Interview, Eusebio Pereira, community member, suku Lavateri, 21 February 2012
136 Interview, Mateus Pereira de Brito, xefe suku Lavateri, 21 February 2012
137 Interview, Filipe Soares community member, suku Odomao, 31 May 2012
138 Interview with five women community members, aldeia Cibololo, suku Tapo-Memo, 27 May 2012
as a major issue by community members in suku Fatulia, who stated “we community can’t complain… You should create a regulation to not allow people to do this, otherwise the suku council only give opportunity to their families and let the poor people stay poor”.139

Issues of distributive equity in Timorese suku are extremely difficult to navigate, as basic social structures that place family relationships at the centre are still at the core of village political economy. As a result, the tendency to place family first is not limited to suku council members, but rather applies across most of village life, and is reflective of the segmented and sometimes fractured social structure of a Timorese suku.140 As a system of community contribution of labour and other goods presumes a certain level of trust and sense of communal responsibility, this feature of village life tends to work against simplistic systems of community contributions that work on traditional obligations with a presumption that this can be scaled up to the suku community. Because many suku have struggled in nurturing a sense of communal responsibility, employment-generating programs that give a daily wage seems to have become the norm in many suku.

Nonetheless, it is not impossible to institute a system of community contributions. The Ministry of Water and Sanitation has introduced a system of community management of water systems across Timor-Leste, with varying levels of success. The local water management groups that are created through this program, called GMF, are responsible for facilitating community consultations prior to implementation, and for regularly collecting community contributions for water management in the suku once a project has been implemented. Officials from line Ministries in both Bobonaro and Baucau reported that there are many communities that this system is going well. However, as the official in Bobonaro commented, this is uneven:

some suku contribute monthly, some it is difficult to get contributions. When the GMF members ask for money, they don’t want to give, so they give up asking. Sometimes they stop with $100. Other suku, like in Cailaco, they have had very good performance. Their contribution started before the water supply was provided. Now they have very high contributions. All their contributions, they save in the bank rather than keeping in the house. Now their contribution is over $1000.141

There is a similar system for irrigation management in Maliana. Through JICA, there is an irrigation management association which manages the main irrigation channel. If there is a problem with that water source, they call xefe suku and council members to discuss the problem, and decide how to fix it. The association has set up a standard of $5 contribution from each farmer to make this system sustainable.142

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139 Interview, Gaspar Guterres, community member, suku Fatulia, 15 February 2012; interview, Agida Esperanca Ximenes, community member, suku Fatulia, 15 February 2012
140 See for example Cummins, Deborah (2010), Local Governance in Timor-Leste: The Politics of Mutual Recognition, PhD thesis UNSW
141 Interview, Bendito Soares, Engineer, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Bobonaro, 22 May 2012
142 Focus Group Discussion, suku Odomao (Maliana, Bobonaro), 29 May 2012
However, in discussing the sharing of power and responsibility between community groups and government, it must also be acknowledged that there is a shadow side to community management of facilities. As the Acting Chief of Department in the Ministry of Water and Sanitation in Baucau explained, infrastructure can be ‘captured’ by these groups, to the detriment of other sections of the community. For example in suku Lamegua, Baucau, there is an ongoing issue with a water system that was built during Indonesian times, which serviced only one part of the suku. Now, when their neighbours ask to extend the system to their own houses as there is no other water source, they are told they must pay the community managing group for access. Ministry officials have had to mediate this issue many times, and “slowly, slowly worked at this problem”. As he explained, it has been important that the community recognise that the Ministry is the right institution to mediate this issue, as without Ministerial intervention it was likely to result in local conflict and fighting. This example underlines that even if there is what appears to be an effective managing group for local infrastructure, there must also be strong monitoring and complaint mechanisms to ensure that the community groups play by the rules.

143 Interview, Francisco da Costa Castro, Acting Chief of Department, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Baucau 16 May 2012
I. CONCLUSION

This report has examined communities’ experiences of two decentralized development programs, PDD and PDL, in order to draw out some broad lessons for pursuing local-level development in Timor-Leste. While some of the issues raised in this report are common from one country to the next, there are also many issues that are specific to the Timorese political, economic and social context. As such, there is much to be gained by examining the implementation of development programs from the perspective of communities themselves. Some of the issues that were raised related to the formal program structure, others to informal political dynamics at district, subdistrict and suku level as programs were implemented. As is discussed throughout this report, both sets of issues hold important implications for the sustainability of development interventions that are appropriate to community needs. As such, both sets of issues are important for considering paths forward for encouraging local-level development in the future. It is hoped that this research can assist in planning efforts for future policy development.

Detailed throughout this report are issues that have arisen at different stages of the project life-cycle. These include weakened community participation in planning and implementation, weak information systems to assist with strategic planning, difficulties in integrating development priorities at different levels of governance, weak complaints mechanisms and unevenly implemented monitoring mechanisms, and weak systems for maintenance once the infrastructure has been built. A final point that was outside the scope of this research, but which also holds important implications for sustainability in local-level development, is the current emphasis on infrastructural development. While it is undoubtedly the case that infrastructure is needed in many communities, there is also a danger in development being narrowly interpreted as ‘projects’—effectively excluding other types of development, including human development. As well as the various issues that were raised through this research, there is also a growing need to address this larger issue, and incorporate broader human development approaches to interventions in Timorese communities.
APPENDIX A: RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Central research question: what have been community experiences of decentralized development initiatives (key programs of focus: PDD and PDL)?

RATIONALE

The RDTL Government is currently implementing two different versions of decentralized development initiatives: PDD and PDL. There are marked differences between the two programs, but they also share the characteristic that while communities are involved in project identification, the other steps are decided at subdistrict and district levels. The focus of this research is to consider the various modalities of decentralized development programs (capacity, representation, planning and implementation) and cross-cutting themes (local legitimacy, effectiveness and participation).

In order for the research to not be ‘trapped’ in a particular program design, and to also contribute to the development of PNDS, we will track decision-making dynamics and impacts across the four stages of a project (which are common across all project designs): project identification, selection, implementation and management. At each step, the research team will ask: what is the process, and how participatory is it? Who are the key decision-makers? What is the impact and decision-making power across different aldeia? What local resources and what external resources are used? What is the impact on communal conflict/cohesion? How is conflict managed? How are decision-makers made accountable back to the community? Is there a capture of resources intended for community benefit (who is it, how do they capture resources, and what are the results?) Are there informal networks outside the program structure that have influence on decision-making, and what are the results?

Through using the four project stages, the objective is to gather information on the impact of competing ideas of political community, the impact of external interventions, the impact of the uneven distribution of power & resources locally on community planning. A key outcome is to gather lessons learnt and generate practical recommendations that can contribute to both the decentralization and PNDS debate.

APPROACH

This is qualitative research, taking a comparative, case study approach across two districts. The aim is to ‘map’ the decision-making dynamics and project impacts from aldeia to district level, across both formal project stages and informal political dynamics. Given this broad scope, the approach must by nature be flexible and iterative—with previous results building on new questions and lines of enquiry. However, to ensure research structure, through semi-structured interviews and FGDs with community members, suku councils, subdistrict and district administrative officials, and other important community members, the following questions will be addressed, from different perspectives:
At the suku/community level:

Participation:
- What were the formal processes of the project in the four stages of project design & implementation?
- What was the actual involvement of different sectors of the community in the four stages of project design & implementation? Disaggregated by aldeia, women, young people, any other?
- What has been the involvement of the different members of konsellu suku in the four stages of project design & implementation?

Leadership & accountability:
- Who were the most influential people in each of the four stages of project design & implementation?
- Do community members and/or local leaders feel that these people adequately explained the project?
- Do community members and/or local leaders feel that these people adequately consulted them on their views and needs: when implementing the project? In the use of local resources (including labour)?
- What are the complaint mechanisms for the project?

Effectiveness, capacity, sustainability:
- Do community members and/or local leaders feel the project been a success? Why/why not? (disaggregated by aldeia, women, young people, any other?)
- What criteria of success do community members use in considering projects in the community? Do different sectors of the community (across aldeia, gender, povo/local leader) place greater emphasis on different criteria?
- (If this has not already been raised in issues of success – do community members feel the project has been responsive to their needs?)
- If the project is not a success, what do community members and/or local leaders feel would be needed to make it a success?
- Who is responsible for managing the infrastructure now? Will this be an ongoing arrangement? What is needed for ongoing management, and has that been provided for?
- Who owns the facility now? Do different sectors of the community have good access to the facility?

External influences and impact on community:
- What external resources (labour/materials) were used in implementing the project? How do community members and local leaders feel about this?
- What has been the result of the project?
- What has been the impact of the project contributed on community members’ trust in their local leaders?
- What has been the impact of the project contributed on community members’ trust in their government?
- Has there been a change in community conflict/cohesion because of this project? How, and why?
At the subdistrict and district levels:

Once the community’s identified needs enter the subdistrict level, it has entered the formal program. The focus will therefore shift from community dynamics, to project stages.

Project identification

- Please explain the process of project identification in the suku (to cross-check with community members/local leaders’ explanations).
- Was this process adequate? How could it be improved?
- Please explain the process of project prioritisation in the suku (to cross-check with community members/local leaders’ explanations).
- Which projects were approved by the subdistrict/district team? Which projects were not approved by the subdistrict/district team? Why? How was this explained? Did the ‘losing’ suku understand this explanation?
- Was this subdistrict/district prioritization process adequate? How could it be improved?
- From the subdistrict/district office’s perspective, is the suku the right political community to focus infrastructural projects? Why/why not? Does this change with different projects?
- In the past, have suku ever coordinated their planning for projects that are bigger than a single suku? What was the process? Was it effective? Why/why not?

Project prioritization

- What was the process of prioritisation of projects at the subdistrict/district level?
- Who was on the committee? Who was most important person on the committee in deciding the project priorities? Does this change with different projects? Why?
- What interests needed to be balanced in prioritizing projects? What criteria were used for prioritizing? Was the committee effective in balancing these interests?
- Are there other people who are not on the committee, but who are important in making the project a success? How were their interests included in the process?

Also to cross check:

- What was the process of prioritisation of projects at the different levels? Who was most important in deciding the project priorities? Whose interests needed to be balanced? Were the relevant leaders effective in balancing these interests?

Project planning

- Who was involved in making the decisions over how the project was to be implemented? (And from which ‘level’ of governance)
- Who was the most important person in deciding how the project was to be implemented? (And from which ‘level’ of governance)
- Were there people outside the formal program structure who were important in making the project a success? How were their interests accommodated?

**Project implementation**

- Was the project a success (and what are their criteria for success)? If not, what was needed to make the project a success?
- What was the impact of the project on the community? (eg. Did it bring community together, or did it contribute to conflict? Or both?)
- Did they draw on local knowledge & experience in implementing the project? If yes, how? Did this contribute to the project’s effectiveness (end result)? Did this contribute to the project’s legitimacy in the community (process)?
- What were the complaint mechanisms available to people affected by the project?

**Project management**

- Who owns the facility now? Do different sectors of the community have good access to the facility?
- Who is responsible for managing the facility now?
- Are there ongoing resources required for maintenance of the facility? How will these be paid for?
- Is the project sustainable, in the respondent’s opinion? (Why/why not? What is needed to make it sustainable?)

**By the end of the research, we also hope to be able to detail some of the ‘games’ that occur as programs are integrated into politics, including:**

- How well is the program integrated with other district government activities, and/or national government activities? Are these mutually supportive, or sometimes conflicting priorities? (provide examples)
- Have there been influences on identification, prioritization, implementation or management from people outside the formal program structure? (eg. political party members, government ministry officials, important businessmen)
- What has been the impact of influences from those outside the formal program structure? (provide examples)
# APPENDIX B: RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

## BAUCAU

### IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

#### Subdistrict Venilale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tomas de Sousa</td>
<td>Xefe aldeia, Uata-Lia-Ana</td>
<td>15 February 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaspar Guterres</td>
<td>Community member, Fatulia</td>
<td>15 February 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agida Esperenga Ximenes</td>
<td>Community member, <em>suku</em> Fatulia</td>
<td>15 February 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manuel Soares Guterres</td>
<td>President, Suku Association Baucau</td>
<td>17 February 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afonso Ribeiro</td>
<td>Community Rural Development Officer, Venilale</td>
<td>17 February 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Julio Tome da Silva</td>
<td>Subdistrict Administrator, Venilale</td>
<td>17 February 2012</td>
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#### Subdistrict Baguia

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mateus Pereira de Brito</td>
<td>Xefe suku, Lavateri</td>
<td>21 February 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eusebio Pereira</td>
<td>Ex-suku secretary, Lavateri</td>
<td>21 February 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Augustino Ximenes</td>
<td>Community member, Lavateri</td>
<td>21 February 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maria Goreti de Jesus</td>
<td>Community member, Lavateri</td>
<td>21 February 2012</td>
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<td>Venansio das Neves</td>
<td>Youth representative, Somalari</td>
<td>21 February 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antonio Ramos</td>
<td>Subdistrict administrator, Baguia</td>
<td>22 February 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paulino Sarmento Quinto</td>
<td>Community Development Officer, Baguia</td>
<td>23 February 2012</td>
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#### Subdistrict Baucau

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marcelino Neto</td>
<td>Finance Director, District Administration</td>
<td>15 May 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January Carvalar</td>
<td>Director, Ministry of Education</td>
<td>15 May 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luis Antonio Bonito</td>
<td>Principal, pre-secondary school no. 3</td>
<td>16 May 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francisco da Costa Castro</td>
<td>Acting Chief of Department, Ministry of Water and Sanitation</td>
<td>16 May 2012</td>
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FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Suku Fatulia (Venilale, Baucau) 16 February 2012

Constancio Jose de Rego  Xefe suku
Felix de Castro        Xefe aldeia
Maria Pereira         Women's representative
Joanico de Sousa      Youth representative
Hermenia dos Reis      Women's representative
Alberto Lourenco      Xefe aldeia
Manuel Lopes          Elder
Jerimeas Alberto Pereira Lia-na’in
Virgilio Soares       Xefe aldeia
Francisco Ximenes Pereira Xefe aldeia
Juscelina Ximenes     Youth representative
Domingos Manuel       Suku secretary

Suku Defawasi (Bagua, Baucau) 21 February 2012

Antonio Gonjaga Guterres  Xefe suku
Anteiro Teles            Elder
Antonio Alberto Guterres  Lia-na’in
Amaro Joaquim Guterres   Youth representative
Crispina Manual Guterres Youth representative
Madalena Pereira Guterres Women’s representative
Brigida Lourenco         Women’s representative
Mariano Ximenes          Xefe aldeia
Caetano Guterres         Xefe aldeia
Jose Manuel              Xefe aldeia
Inacio da Costa          Suku secretary
Noqucira Guterres        Reserve xefe suku
BOBONARO

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Subdistrict Maliana

Salamao da Cruz  President, Suku Association Bobonaro  8 May 2012
Lucio Americo  Xefe suku, Lahomea  9 May 2012
Domingos Martins  District Administrator, Bobonaro  9 May 2012
Eduardo Gonsalves  Community member, Ramaskora, suku Lahomea  10 May 2012
Tito Gonsalves  Community member, Ramaskora, suku Lahomea  10 May 2012
Rince Nipu  Director, Organisasaun Haburas Moris  11 May 2012
Benedito Soares  Engineer, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Bobonaro  22 May 2012
Arlindo de Fatima  Contractor  22 May 2012
Salvadore Moniz Paicheco  Community member, suku Tapo-Memo  24 May 2012
Adelino Barretto  Subdistrict Administrator, Maliana  24 May 2012
Simplisio Lourenco  Contractor  24 May 2012
Francisco Afonso  Community member, suku Tapo-Memo  27 May 2012
Delfina Gomes  Community member, suku Tapo-Memo  27 May 2012
Aleixo Lai  Director, Ministry of Agriculture, Bobonaro  28 May 2012
Semidio Laco da Costa  District Development Officer, Bobonaro  28 May 2012
Filipe Soares  Community member, suku Odomao  31 May 2012
Fernando Moniz Bere  Community member, suku Odomao  31 May 2012
Filipe Soares  Community member, suku Odomao  31 May 2012

Subdistrict Cailaco

Luis Soares Gonsalves  Local Governance Officer, Cailaco  30 May 2012
Januariu Mota  Xefe suku, Meligo  31 May 2012
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Suku Lahomea (Maliana, Bobonaro) 10 May 2012

Juliana de Fatima Youth representative
Francisco Goliveia Youth representative
Salvador de Araujo Xefe aldeia
Sabino Lourencio Xavier Xefe aldeia
Lucio Americo Xefe suku
Felicidade Women's representative
Bendito Ilil Xefe aldeia
Arnaldo Costa Xefe aldeia
Dalia Lemos Suku secretary

Suku Tapo-Memo (Maliana, Bobonaro) 25 May 2012

Veronica Dau Mau Women's representative
Joao Teles Xefe aldeia
Raul Bareto President, KiK
Antonio da Silva Elder
Americo da Amaral Xefe aldeia
Eusebio dos Santos Lia-na’in
Mario Lopes Homai Suku secretary

Suku Odomao (Maliana, Bobonaro) 29 May 2012

Adriano Mali Tito Xefe aldeia
Juliao M.P. Paul Xefe aldeia
Venancia da Cruz Suku secretary
Januario B.M. Fatima Xefe aldeia
Diogo Martins Youth representative
Ines de Jesus Women's representative
Salomao da Cruz Xefe suku
Judi Valentin Moniz Women's representative
Martino de Fatima	Elder
Nuno da Cruz	Xefe aldeia
Fernando Oliveira	Xefe aldeia
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