**COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMME DOCUMENT FOR TIMOR-LESTE (2021-2025)**

*Second regular session 2020*

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| **Comments by Australia**  | **Response by the UNDP Country Office**  |
| * In general, Australia looks forward to working collaboratively with UNDP in areas of ending violence against women and children and decentralisation, in support of Government of Timor-Leste priorities and programs.
 | * UNDP in Timor-Leste looks forward to working with Australia in these areas.
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| * Paragraph 20 refers to UNDP supporting communities and government authorities to scale up community driven design, implementation and monitoring of climate-resilient infrastructure. We suggest more specific engagement with the PNDS Secretariat (Programa Nasionál Dezenvolvimentu Suku, or National Program for Village Development), which is an existing Government of Timor-Leste program achieving the same outcomes. Systems strengthening can improve sustainability of the program.
 | * One of the key partners for implementing this work is the Ministry of State Administration (MSA) which oversees the PNDS Secretariat and the Integrated Municipal Development Planning process (PDIM).Both will be engaged in the process of implementation of the project that focuses on scaling up community driven design, implementation and monitoring of climate-resilient infrastructures. The work of this project is captured under CPD outputs 2.2. and 2.3 and the stakeholders and partners listed for these outputs include MSA, in addition to the Secretariat of State for Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery, and Secretary of State for Civil Protection. All of these entities are key partners for this initiative funded by the Green Climate Fund.
* This project benefits from significant Government co-financing. All work, especially related to climate-resilient infrastructure, will be done in close coordination with PDIM and PNDS Secretariat. The project will support system strengthening by working with key partners on guidelines and policies for climate-resilient infrastructures.
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| * Outcome 3, Indicator 6.2.3, Column 4. The Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia) and the PNDS Secretariat are suggested stakeholders. The Partisipa program under the Australian Government, working through the PNDS Secretariat, also seeks to construct community driven, climate-resilient infrastructure units.
 | * The Ministry of State Administration (MSA) is be a key partner in the work UNDP will be doing in this area and will be leading the coordination, particularly within its own ministry, to ensure there is complementarity between these projects. A key focus area is to strengthen the capacity of MSA and the local authorities in climate-proofing rural infrastructure, and therefore PNDS Secretariat and other relevant divisions in the MSA will be engaged during implementation. While constrained by the word count limitation, we have now reflected DFAT and the PNDS Secretariat in the partner column.
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| **Comments by New Zealand** | **Response by the UNDP Country Office** |
| * ***In Summary:*** The priorities are relevant for Timor-Leste, but the plan is big and ambitious with a large number of agencies, which may result in implementation challenges. The principles are appropriate, so the process for implementation and monitoring outcomes will be key to ensuring the participation of key stakeholders at local and national levels.
 | * Each project will involve key national counterparts and other stakeholders including donors. UNDP engages the stakeholders through the project board that is the governing body for each project as well as through representation in project events, joint monitoring visits, and consultations during implementation. Given the nature of the project, stakeholders at national, sub-national and community levels are engaged in the project implementation. These modalities are expected to enable the coordinated participation of stakeholders at various levels.
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| * Coordination with UN agencies and donors is outlined but less so for other implementing agencies. It would be useful to clarify all key expected implementing agents, to avoid potential duplication.
 | * All expected implementing agencies are mentioned in the Results and Resources Framework table under the column “Major Partners/partnerships” for each output. The UNDP CPD is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), which further describes partnership aspects and the roles and responsibilities of individual agencies . UNDP’s CPD elaborates on UNDP’s strengths and value-added as part of the UN Country Team.
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| * Local ownership is critical for success, and we encourage UNDP to strengthen even further the process for consultation with affected parties, particularly youth and women’s network or groups.
 | * UNDP indeed engages with local stakeholders, including youth and women’s groups, through its ongoing initiatives, many of which will be continued under the new CPD cycle. UNDP also engages with stakeholders including youth and women’s groups during the formulation of new projects and this will be actively pursued.
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| * Poverty and climate change challenges are rightly noted throughout the document; we encourage more specific mention of the high rate of malnutrition that is a key result of the poverty and climate change challenges on Timorese.
 | * Malnutrition was identified as one of the development challenges in Timor-Leste by the Common Country Analysis (CCA) that informed the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), which has provided the larger programmatic framing for the CPD formulation. UNICEF, WFP and other agencies work directly on malnutrition issues as per the agreed division of labour among the UN agencies. UNDP’s contribution to addressing malnutrition is indirect through poverty reduction programmes, employment programmes and resilience programmes.
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| * Disengaged youth challenges are also rightly mentioned, but perhaps the document could also refer to the challenges Timorese children face in their education experience before the age of 15, which are a key reason why over 20% of 15-24 year olds are not in any formal education/training/employment. Vocational training/decent work opportunities for youth need to be complemented by improvements in a child’s school education experience to ensure less Timorese fall into the disengaged youth group in future years.
* The resilience component is useful but it would be helpful if it could also address the issues of (i) systems strengthening (not only M&E and innovations) and (ii) maintenance, which we know is a problem.
 | * We agree with the need to complement vocational training and decent work opportunities for youth with improvements in school education. UNDP’s engagement in improving education is limited, as sister agencies such as UNICEF and UNESCO are directly engaged in this area. In our work on improving youth employability, UNDP will look at school-to-work transition initiatives and will coordinate closely with UN sister agencies in this regard.
* The work on strengthening resilience will build capacities of the relevant government agencies (e.g. Ministry of State Administration and the relevant divisions and units within it, as well as the Municipalities, Secretariat of State for civil protection) in climate proofing rural infrastructure through the development of systems. The issue of maintenance is integrated into the design of the climate resilient infrastructure: the provision of community maintenance group for each infrastructure is included in the project, and their capacity will be built by the project for maintenance. Maintenance costs are covered from the Government’s cost-sharing portion.

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| * Under risk management, we think it would be helpful if UNDP could consider (i) how it can advocate for the government to allocate sufficient resources to cover agencies’ operational budgets as well as staff salaries, to ensure that they can operate effectively; and (ii) the risk that key government agencies are unable to utilise even the limited funding they are allocated due to ineffective systems.
 | * Regarding point i): Since Timor-Leste is still an LDC in addition to being a SIDS, all core operating expenditures are covered through UNDP’s core contributions. In MIC/upper-MIC settings, UNDP covers staff salaries and other expenses. UNDP receives regular annual Government Contribution to Local Office Costs (GLOC) contributions from Timor-Leste to cover local operating costs.
* Regarding point ii): UNDP embeds intensive capacity development support into all its projects and programming, and provides direct implementation support to all nationally implemented projects.
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