

# BUILDING SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS WITH THE ILO TOGETHER, TO CHANGE A MILLION LIVES IN TIMOR-LESTE



International  
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## SOCIAL PROTECTION AS PART OF NATION BUILDING

The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste emerged from a period of conflict and civil unrest to become the world's newest nation in 2002. Today, around one third of the population still lives below the national poverty line, more than half the children suffer from malnutrition and there are significant challenges related with education, health care and human resources.

Despite these difficulties, Timor-Leste has been following expansionist fiscal policies since 2005 utilizing its rich mineral resources. It has invested in infrastructure and social transfers and thereby, supported economic and human development.

The Government considers social protection as a crucial facilitator for social peace and cohesion. Social security and social assistance are a right under the Constitution.

## NEED TO EXPAND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Social protection programmes in Timor-Leste include:

- Universal social pension for older persons and people with disabilities
- Programme Bolsa da Mãe (a conditional cash transfer for vulnerable families with children)
- School Feeding programme
- Rural public works programme
- Social assistance programmes for vulnerable groups
- Disaster relief programme
- Free universal public health care system

The creation of a unified social security scheme for the public and private sectors was approved by the Parliament in September 2016.

Despite the progress so far, Timorese people do not have adequate coverage. There is no integrated and coherent approach to social protection, as reflected by the lack of a strategic framework on social protection.



To overcome this challenge, an Assessment-based National Dialogue (ABND) process is being conducted in the country under the technical leadership of the ILO and in collaboration with UN agencies. The ABND will support the development of a national social protection strategy, based on the concept of a social protection floor (SPF).

Furthermore, operational and administrative challenges in Timor-Leste are significant. There is a lack of qualified staff, infrastructure and standardized procedures, hampering the efficiency and effectiveness of the system. To overcome this challenge, a National Social Security Institute is to be created. The institute will be in charge of all contributory and non-contributory programmes and will play a significant role in the national social protection system in the years to come.

## CONSTITUTION OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE (ARTICLE 56)

- (i) Every citizen is entitled to social assistance and security in accordance with the law;
- (ii) the State shall promote, in accordance with its national resources, the establishment of a social security system;
- (iii) the State shall support and supervise the activity and functioning of institutions of social solidarity and other non-profit institutions of recognized public interest, in accordance with the law.



### FROM RIGHT TO REALITY WITH YOUR SUPPORT

The declaration of the Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) that took place in Dili, Timor-Leste in April 2015 underlined the importance of implementing SPFs as part of the development of comprehensive social protection systems.

With your support, we can accelerate the process to make the SPF a reality for the people of Timor-Leste. You can support the advancement of the national social protection system through:<sup>1</sup>

- Review selected programmes and procedures, following the goals of the National Social Protection Strategy, including capacity building, technical assistance to design specific schemes and piloting new interventions.

US\$ 800,000 for 3 years

- Support the development of the National Social Security Institute through capacity development at the central and local levels.

US\$ 1,200,000 for 3 years

- Build capacities through regional trainings, workshops and study tours to countries with relevant experiences.

US\$ 80,000 for 3 years

- Conduct national advocacy and promotion campaigns and share the country's experience through country/regional briefs, web pages, and videos.

US\$ 60,000

### LISTENING TO YOUR AMBITIONS

As a donor, you receive regular reports on the progress made and have access to ongoing project activities and performance indicators.

To further discuss your objectives and the ways in which you can support stakeholders in Timor-Leste and improve people's lives, you can contact:



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<sup>1</sup> The activities are under negotiation with the Government and should be considered as possibilities requiring further discussion and development.