

## Evaluation of Project

### *Supporting and strengthening rural farmers' organisations in Timor Leste*

#### Terms of reference

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA was established in 1984 by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) as the Australian union movement's overseas aid arm. Our purpose is for Australian unions to work globally in partnership for the achievement of dignity at work, social justice, economic equality and the realisation of human rights.

We work to achieve this through strong unions and social movements, sustainable development programs, global solidarity and support in times of crisis. We work through local partner organizations and unions in South East Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East and southern Africa.

#### **Background**

The project is supporting the emergence of new farmers' organisations and assisting existing organisations to consolidate so that they can support fair and sustainable economic development of rural Timor Leste. The majority (80%) of the Timor Leste population are small-scale farmers (2010 census) and form the basis of the national economy. However agricultural production is low and farmers' income is insecure. Local food and cash crop production do not meet national or export demands. Existing agricultural policies are ineffective because the sector is fragmented and not organised. There are particularly strong support needs around the production and marketing of crops. Local communities have low levels of knowledge and skills to independently and sustainably increase productivity.

Working across 9 districts of Timor Leste, the project works to strengthen village-level independent organisations and support local initiatives mobilising the community to identify the agricultural challenges they face, and collectively find answers, ie a development approach from within the community. The project is delivered in partnership with three Timorese NGOs: Instituto Edukasaun Popular (IEP), Kdadalak Sulimutuk Institute (KSI) and, Uniaun Agrikultor Ermera (UNAER). All three are focused on strengthening independent farmers' organisations from the local to the national level through the identification of issues, development of community leaders, mobilising of community members and intensive education in the areas of food production, agricultural economics and agricultural technology.

The project seeks to train identified leaders to undertake representative advocacy to the government and international institutions on matters of agricultural policy. It also supports farmers' group leaders to learn how to work collectively with networks of existing NGOs and local community organisations to find ways to collectively overcome the problems facing the community to achieve greater impact and coverage for agricultural and rural development. Among 1,207 beneficiaries 421 will be women farmers and leaders. The project also supports initiatives to develop food distribution networks at the district and national levels and promotes good management of community economic cooperatives through economic and cooperative management education on community bases.

### **Purpose of the evaluation**

Union Aid Abroad- APHEDA seeks to examine in-depth the work of three current DFAT funded ANCP project partners working in Timor Leste:

- Institutu Edukasan Populaire (IEP)
- Uniaun Agrikultura Ermera-UNAER,
- Kdadalak Sulimutuk Institute (KSI)

The evaluation will review progress across the entire program, including sample visits to the districts and meetings with farmers groups of the project. The evaluation will focus on direct outcomes for farmers in relation to crop outputs and income generation as well as organisational strengthening objectives, including the consolidation of farmer's unions, economic cooperatives and participation in training and skills development. The evaluation will take into consideration the environmental impacts of the project and give regard to capacity building in identified cross-cutting areas such as gender and disability.

### **Overview of Projects:**

This project started in July 2016 through ANCP funding in 2016/17. This supported project partners to establish and consolidate community bases, strengthen farming communities and develop collective economic plans through concentrated education and skills sharing within and across rural communities in Timor Leste. The first year of the project (2016/2017) was significant in aligning the project partners' shared objectives to extend the reach of the project to a larger number of districts across Timor Leste (9 in total) building on existing community structures and introducing new methodologies, training and tools while supporting rural community-centred decision making and control. The second year (2017/2018) was important because the expanding numbers of beneficiaries were demonstrating tangible economic and social benefits through their participation in the project including international training opportunities, pooling of resources, collective decision making, leadership development and cash profit. The project is being implemented by 3 partners.

### **Institutu Edukasan Populaire (IEP)**

IEP is an accredited Timor Leste NGO that provides support for community led vocational training and the establishment of small business cooperatives in rural areas.

Through this project IEP seeks to strengthen farmers; community bases through organising, identifying issues, engaging in capacity development and intensive education in areas of food production and agricultural technology so as to create a strong, independent community organisation from local through to national level.

This project also introduces the concept of alternative agriculture, undertakes advocacy and support for agriculture laws, trading laws, creates a distribution network at district and national level, and seeks to participate in governance.

### **Uniaun Agrikultura Ermera (UNAER)**

UNAER is a peasant organization based in Gleno of the Ermera municipality in Timor Leste. UNAER has its principal role to defend farmers rights to access land, sustainable farming and strengthen farmers' economic capacity.

Through this project they seek to:

Empower the UNAER's member in order to be actively producing and increasing the agricultural production for household consumption and improve household incomes.

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. Increasing trainee's knowledge about integrated agricultural practices in the uplands
2. Assisting the farmers to produce their seedling for coffee rehabilitation and reforestation

### **Kdadalak Sulimutuk Institute (KSI)**

**KSI** is built on the fundamental values of humanism, ecological protection and people's democracy. The basic guiding principles include; solidarity, social and ecological justice and constant learning.

KSI has two objectives:

- promoting non-violent conflict transformation initiatives based on local practices in the identified communities;
- promoting social transformation through alternative/transformational education and alternative economy.

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Through this project they seek;

- In collaboration with key partners, to aid the growth of mass, democratic farmers organisations in Liquica, Suai, Same, Bobonaro and Ainaro districts
- To assist in building the material base upon which the movement can flourish, integrated into to the broader objective of building a farmers' movement
- To facilitate the integration of a literacy and political education movement within the farmers' organisations
- To build the political capacity and influence of the movement
- To increase active community participation at village level in the process of national reconstruction and democracy.
- Push for the rights of workers and farming communities to access land and local resources as well as their outputs, in a way that is independent and sustainable.
- Support the existence of local, structured organizations that are strong, legally constituted, and independent from local to national level.

### **Evaluation objectives**

1. Assess relevance, effectiveness, outcomes and outputs of project in 2016 to 2020 against the plan.
2. Assess changing situation of agriculture development and farmers' situation in Timor Leste.
3. Assess sustainable impacts on the farmers of farmer organizing, in particular on situation of women, children and people with disabilities and suggest new approaches to programming.
4. Assess effectiveness and suggest enhancements to policy and procedures around child protection, counter-terrorism, fraud and sexual exploitation for all three partners.
5. Outline emerging concerns and possible interventions, or other projects to be funded.
6. Assist in suggesting key areas for a project design for the period 2021-2024.

7. Draw lessons from the long term strategic partnership of Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA and KSI, IEP, UNAER and provide recommendations for strengthening impact in future collaboration.

### **Evaluation questions**

1. To what extent have the APHEDA partners achieved their project objectives in last four years?
2. Effectiveness: in which areas has the program been successful? In which areas have efforts not provided sufficient results?
3. In terms of efficiency and long-term impact: how has the program performed in terms of value for money?
4. Relevance: Describe whether and how the overall development goal/impact goal is relevant in the current context and emerging issues relevant to the impact group/s.
5. Describe areas where the projects may better utilize resources for greater outcomes or impact.
6. Cross-cutting issues: were the following aspects of the project sufficient and adequate and what lessons could be learned for future projects in terms of
  - a. Gender equality
  - b. Disability inclusion
  - c. Child protection
  - d. Environmental safeguards
  - e. Sustainability

### **Methodology**

Please send your proposed methodology in your application.

### **Expected output**

1. a final methodology and planning before the start of the field research,
2. a draft evaluation report, one week after the end of the field research,
3. a final report
4. a detailed acquittal (timesheet, receipts and summary expenses).

The final report should include the following:

- An executive summary (maximum 3 pages)
- A critical description of methods used (and potential limitations) (maximum 2 pages)
- findings of the study (maximum 20 pages)
- lessons learned (maximum 5 pages)
- recommendations (maximum 2 pages)

### **Selection criteria**

The consultant should ideally meet the following selection criteria:

1. Strong international development project evaluation experience
2. Substantive experience in rural development programs in Timor Leste and agriculture development.
3. Demonstrated experience with a range of evaluation methodologies
4. Strong capacities in child rights and child protection
5. Ability to synthesise and communicate complex development project lessons, in English and in writing
6. Understanding of agricultural development context in Timor Leste.

**Budget**

The total budget for the evaluation is up to AUD \$8,000 including local meetings and consultations and any travel required.

**Timeline**

Submission of offers open	23 February 2021
Submission of offers closes	9 March 2021
Selection of consultant(s)	22 March, 2021
Field research in Timor Leste	April, 2021
Submission of draft evaluation report	10 May 2021
Union Aid Abroad - APHEDA provides comments on draft report	15 May, 2021
Submission of final report	21 May, 2021

**Logistics**

APHEDA will facilitate the consultant(s) work in Timor Leste, in particular with regards to introduction to partners and other key stakeholders.

**NB:** Due to COVID 19 Travel Restrictions, Applications will only be sought from current residents of Timor Leste with strong preference given to Timorese nationals.

**Applications should include:**

1. CV of evaluator(s)
2. An evaluation plan to include (no more than 5 pages)
  - 2.1. Proposed methodology, scope
  - 2.2. Planning/timetable
  - 2.3. Budget (clearly indicating number of days)

**Contact**

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