



# Local Governance Monthly Bulletin

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*Local Government as the Key to Development*

## Government holds Consultations on Three Draft Local Governance Laws

The Government wants encourage involvement, participation, and include ideas from the people in local government reforms through public consultation. The National Director for Local Development and Territorial Management (DNDLOT) Mr. Miguel P. de Carvalho, together with a technical team, have been traveling through all districts holding consultations about three draft laws on local governance: the draft law on local government, the draft law on administrative and territorial divisions and a draft law on municipal elections. During the consultations, officials present the draft laws to the public and solicit opinions from local authorities, community leaders, civil society and local communities.



*Director DNDLOT Miguel Pereira leads a discussion on the law proposals for local government in Manatuto on 11 November 2008.*

The DNDLOT Director explained the importance of these consultations: "The Government is holding consultations to involve all people in the process, and to gather thoughts, suggestions, commentary, as well as concerns and doubts from the people so that we can improve these three draft laws before National Parliament approves them," said the Director after the consultation held in Manatuto district on 11 November 2008.

During the consultation which was held in the Liquiçá District on the 14th of November 2008, Mr. Domingos dos Santos, a youth from Liquiçá, talked about his ideas on the importance of these consultations. "This consultation process

is important for the people to be able to give their thoughts and suggestions about what should be included in these laws, because in the future these laws will regulate the formation of Municipalities. It won't be good if we only say something is wrong with the laws after they have already been approved; this would be too late. We want laws that will be able to guarantee that the Municipalities will function well, so that we can better development," said Mr. Domingos after the consultation in Liquiçá. He also asked the government to include intellectuals and have them give their thoughts on the proposed laws.

"We are very pleased with these three draft laws, even though there are still some things which are not included entirely. It is excellent, however, that we can move forward on the road to decentralization. The things that are missing, we can fix. The most important thing is that we need to start the establishment of the Municipalities based on these draft laws, and when we have already started we will review them. If not, we will never go forward," said Mr. Rui Gomes, the Sub-District Administrator of Natarbora, at the end of the consultation in Manatuto.

During the consultation process, some of the concerns presented by participants included the elections process, funds for villages, the relations between villages and future municipalities, and the village boundaries.

These three laws on local governance will become the legal basis for decentralization, which will bring the work of the government closer to the people and strengthen local communities to respond to their development needs at the local level.



*Groups discuss the law proposals during consultations in Liquiçá on 14 November.*



# Assembly Members Share Experiences and Build Friendship During Comparative Visits

## In Brief

### Events in December

- Submission of final reports
- Happy Holidays!

Members of the District Assemblies that participate in the pilot Local Development Programme (LDP) from eight districts have held comparative visits from the 19-20 November. Members from six districts visited the two host districts, Bobonaro and Lautem. The Bobonaro District hosted members the Baucau, Covalima and Manatuto districts, and Lautem District hosted members from the Aileu, Ainaro and Manufahi Districts.

“The objective of this visit was to give opportunities to the assembly members to share experiences about LDP, so they get some new ideas and see obstacles that the other districts have faced and how they resolved them, so that they can compare it to their own experiences with LDP,” said Mr. Gaspar Henrique da Silva, Head of the Department of Territorial Management in the Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management, and coordinator for the district cross-visits.

During the three days of activities in the Lautem District, members of the assemblies visited villages and sub-districts that had been involved in the LDP programme, to see the quality of the infrastructure projects which had been built and to ask the community about their thoughts as beneficiaries of these projects. They asked about how the community members would submit their projects for consideration for LDP funding.



Assembly Members visit projects built in Lautem.

advantages and disadvantages of the two models.

“What we found in Lautem is that we can create a working collaboration which will help the LDP programme,” said Mr. Jose A.C. Braz, the District Development Officer of Manufahi.

“We are very pleased with this comparative visit, because we have learned new things, we can share ideas, and compare the difficulties we have faced. From this we can better understand how to face the obstacles and make decisions about the problems we must solve in LDP. In addition, this visit also strengthened the friendship between our districts and help us get rid of the East-West differences,” said Mrs. Hoana Mario Babo, a member of the Aileu District Assembly during the farewell party held in Lospalos.

Mrs. Babo also asked that the programme expand in the future to other districts. She said that in Aileu they would be pleased to receive representatives from the Lautem District or other districts.

Assembly members also used the opportunity of the district cross visits to disseminate information about LDP through a talk show they held at the local community radio, Vox Populi Lautem, where they explained the function and responsibilities of assembly members in LDP and explained the objectives of the district cross-visits to the community in Lautem.

## Local Government as the Key to Development



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Assembly Members share experiences in Lautem.

In addition, assembly members also met with members of the District Assembly in Lautem, and asked about their mechanisms in the LDP programme. The districts run two different models of LDP, with the districts of Aileu, Manatuto and Manufahi with only one decision-making assembly at the district level, and a supporting body called the Sub-District Development Committee at the sub-district level. Lautem District has a model of the LDP programme which established assemblies at both the district and sub-district levels. Members of the assembly were interested in comparing the



Assembly Members hold a talk show in the local community radio about the LDP programme and the cross-district visits.