



## IN BRIEF

# TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

## LEADING FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS



### What's the Issue?

Timor-Leste's 2011-2030 Strategic Development Plan sets a vision to be a "gender-fair society where human dignity and women's rights are valued, protected and promoted". To meet this ambitious vision, strategic investments in individual leadership and institutional transformation are needed, propelling a new model of leadership where "no one is left behind".

Women from all parts of society in Timor-Leste have played historical roles in partnership with men to contribute to the country's independence and subsequent peace and state building process. Despite their significant achievements in Timor-Leste's story as a young nation, women continue to face discrimination and violence from the home, in the streets and in workplaces. Recognizing this inequality as a persistent barrier to peace and development, the Government has taken important steps to address disparities between women and men including developing and implementing sound legal frameworks and policies.

A variety of leadership programmes have been developed for State institutions, civil society networks and related organizations in Timor-Leste. These interventions have reached civil servants, members of security institutions, political parties, and non-governmental representatives.

However, given persistent inequalities, transformative leadership approaches are needed to develop the capacities of leaders across sectors to promote a shift in individual and structural beliefs, attitudes and behaviours toward realizing a more inclusive and equitable society by 2030.

### Our Solutions

The UN Women, grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls, the empowerment of women, and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action, peace and security.

Promoting women's leadership and decision-making is a core component of UN Women's efforts across its thematic areas: promoting women's economic empowerment, addressing violence against women and girls, advancing the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda, and ensuring legal and policy commitments on gender equality are implemented and monitored.

Transformative leadership has been recognized as a vital key to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. Following requests from institutional partners, and working with the UN Women Training Centre in Santo Domingo, with the generous financial support from the Government of Japan, UN Women Timor-Leste designed a unique Transformative Leadership programme in 2017, promoting gender-responsive leadership and supporting women's participation in contribution to Timor-Leste's state-building and development process.



## Objectives

The training programme aims to strengthen capacity and knowledge of current and emerging leaders to advance gender equality, women's empowerment, and women's rights agendas within their organizational contexts as spelt out in national and international normative frameworks. The training seeks to strengthen leaders' use of gender-inclusive and transformative leadership principles and practices to address institutional gender biases and promote commitments to gender equality and women's rights.

## Methodology

The course is learner-centered and tailored to build on the needs and interests of the specific cohort of participants in each workshop.

It builds on the considerable work undertaken by many feminist and gender equality thinkers and practitioners over many years.

The design is based on principles of adult learning and the specific training activities and approaches are participatory, adaptive, and experiential. It demands well-timed and managed group processes, shaped to achieve clearly defined learning outcomes with ample time for reflection and discussion.

The training has convened learning lunches with diverse leaders in Timor-Leste sharing their experiences of leadership, including representatives of the Government, Diplomatic Corps, activists, among others.

A six-month mentoring component complements the group sessions for self-selecting participants to facilitate exercises individually between training sessions and deepen participants' application of skills on transformative leadership for gender equality.

## Expected Results

At the end of the programme, participants will be able to:

- Understand various leadership models, and apply appropriate models that align with gender equality principles.
- Critically analyze and understand personal and institutional practices of power, privileges, biases, and discrimination.
- Articulate their visions for gender equality and women's rights that will guide their daily practices as leaders in their institution.
- Develop strategies and actions to transform leadership styles to promote gender equality and women's right.
- Communicate and advocate for gender equality priorities tailored to different audiences.
- Influence decision-making processes using power-with approaches.
- Apply their knowledge and use tools to conduct inclusive value-based communication with others.

The training will also enable participating institutions/organizations to:

- Have tools for examining deep-structure gender-based biases and discrimination in the workplace.
- Identify strategies to institutionalize transformative leadership for gender equality and women's rights.
- Contribute to building collective movements for gender equality and women's rights in Timor-Leste.
- Promote transformative leadership for gender equality and women's rights in their organizational contexts.

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***“It is good if UN Women could continue this training for other group in SEIGIS after this batch is finished.”***

–Benigna Maria Amaral, Director of Administration & Finance, SEII

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## Who has participated

The training was initiated in July 2017 with three groups of key stakeholders from the Secretary of State for Equality Inclusion(SEII), the National Police of Timor-Leste(PNTL) and the women’s network Rede Feto.



REDE FETO



SEII



PNTL

Following an initial assessment to identify participants, a total of 57 participants(41 women, 16 men) have been reached, benefitting from a series of targeted training sessions facilitated by UN Women focused on achieving results at the individual and institutional level. Selected participants are also involved in a mentoring component of the initiative, which began in April 2018.



After just 2 out of 5 sessions, **88%** of participants were applying the skills gained

*“We provided a driving training for female colleagues and involve more female colleagues in the operation and field work.”*

-Agustinus Baliada, a Chief Inspector at the PNTL

*“I try to motivate other colleagues in the office to work to become more unified as a team.”*

-Manuel dos Santos, Director of PRADET and Rede Feto Member

*“I use my power as a leader to work; I need to listen to others and don’t ever force as we want; to have other people follow you, you have first to show the example.”*

- Maria Filomena Babo Martins, a Chief of Training Department at SEII

## Training activities in 2018





## Comments from Participants

*“In the past, I was not confident to speak in front of many people, especially members of the government. However, from the training, I’ve learned to speak up and what I should do in front of people in high-positions if needed. Also, I hope I can motivate my friends so that we all become leaders.”*

*-Apolonia da Cunha, Chief of Department, IT, SEII*



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*“A leader refers to everyone. It is not about a position that you are assigned. Everyone could be a leader, in their family, church, or their communities”*

*-Felicia T. da Silva, Staff Department of Promotion of and Women’s Participation in Politics, SEII*

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