



Photo: UN Women/Youle Beatty

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Each year International Women's Day (IWD) creates an opportunity to explore new ways for removing barriers and accelerating progress for gender equality. The 2019 Global IWD Theme: "Think equal, build smart, innovate for change", encourages investment in gender-responsive social systems, and building services and infrastructure that meet the needs of women and girls. The theme focused on innovative ways in which we can advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, particularly in the areas of social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure, in line with the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Priority Theme.

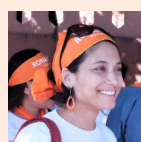
Highlighting the urgency of the commitment and the continued exclusion of groups of women, UN Women's Regional Director (acting interim), Anna-Karin Jafors, in her opening remarks at an IWD Seminar on 4 March, noted: "Whether it is one woman or one hundred thousand women left behind - we cannot wait another year and another IWD to turn around this story."

Through the IWD 2019, Timor-Leste responded to this call to act and take a step toward creating safer and more inclusive public spaces for women and girls and all people through a signed commitment to Safe Cities, made by the Minister of Public Works, the Secretary of State for Equality and Inclusion, the Dili Municipality, in collaboration with UN Agencies represented by the Resident Coordinator, the women's network Rede Feto, and partners such as the nutrition-sensitive agriculture project TOMAK and DFAT in Timor-Leste.

Demonstrating how youth can act as key players for making cities safer, UN Women organized a design competition in collaboration with the Women Engineers Professional Association, TOMAK, and with university students learning from the experiences of market vendors from the municipality of Baucau, to inform ideas of what is needed to make safe public spaces in Timor-Leste. The designs were presented to more than 100 people from government, CSOs, sister UN agencies and other development partners during the launch of the Safe Dili and Safe Cities commitment on 4 March, with the winning design team receiving prizes sponsored by TOMAK and the Women's Empowerment Principle's partner Telkmosel. Through the seminar, UN Women also launched its "Safe Cities Scoping Study" through a short video on the report as well the Gender Market Assessment conducted by UN Women and TOMAK. Alongside the IWD design competition and seminar, UNICEF organized a drawing event with primary school children to imagine their dream city and WHO organized a workshop to raise awareness of women and cancer.

To see more about IWD in Timor-Leste, see [here](#).

The study can be downloaded in both English and Tetum [here](#).



## OPENING REMARKS

As we begin 2019, we enter a year of commemoration and celebration. Timor-Leste has successfully developed as a nation in the 20 years since its historic Referendum for independence in August 1999. The country continues to demonstrate its commitment to democracy and human rights, including the rights of women. In 2019, the Timor-Leste Government will submit its review of progress against the Beijing Platform for Action in the 25 years since women's rights advocates gathered for the historic conference in Beijing. The State periodic report to the CEDAW Committee will also be submitted to share progress and challenges in the country's journey to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.

The reviews and reflections will have many milestones to celebrate- from policies and plans dedicated to gender equality and the growing representation of women in decision-making and leadership positions. And at the same time, these reviews will draw attention to the growing inequality - between women and men, particularly in rural areas, and targeting groups within the population, such as women and children with disabilities, young rural farmers and other informal workers, members of the LGBTI community and others, who are not yet benefitting from the progress envisioned in the policies.

The year 2019 can be a turning point for the youthful nation. Building on the successes of its first two decades of independence, the country and its institutions are well-placed to bring meaningful progress to all its people. This progress begins when all of Timor-Leste's people are empowered, when they are seen and heard. UN Women remains a dedicated partner to supporting this progress, working for all people, to feel respect in their diversity, to realize Timor-Leste's vision for equality. We thank you for joining us on this journey.

**Sunita Caminha**  
UN Women Head of Office



Photo: UN Women/Youle Beatty

## BEIJING +25: SOLIDARITY & TRANSFORMATION FOR ALL

Nearly 25 years ago, when the Beijing Platform for Action set forth a framework of twelve areas for the world to focus on advancing women’s human rights, Timor-Leste was still struggling for independence. Although Timor-Leste was not yet recognized as an independent nation, “Lafai Lighur of the Clandestine Resistance’ shared an email to the conference participants in Beijing. In the letter, Lafai stated, “We hope in human solidarity and believe in the solidarity of the women of the world.”

Now, as the world moves toward the 2030 Agenda and leaving no one behind, this solidarity is even more critical to ensure greater equality in outcomes and opportunities for all. With the presence of UN Women Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, acting interim, Ms. Anna-Karin Jatfors in Dili, a group of Timor-Leste CSOs and activists shared and exchanged their experience on the context of the Beijing Platform in Timor-Leste nearly 25 years after the initial gathering.

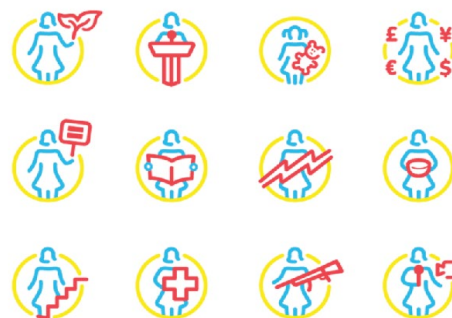
Ms. Jatfors shared experience from the regional and global UN context and noted specific examples of progress and challenges related to the twelve areas of concern identified in Beijing for Timor-Leste and actions needed to advance the concern areas. The include: the gap in implementing

commitments made, CSO representatives recognized the progress in laws and policies established, but highlighted several areas of future focus. These the need for sustained investments in gender equality and support to women’s organizations, and the important role of government resource allocations and political will.

From the discussion, CSOs called for enhancing coordination amongst CSOs and sharing their research and evidence to advance collaboration, avoid duplication, and better understand existing Government gender equality efforts. The group committed to contribute for the Beijing +25 national review, led by the Secretary of State for Equality and Inclusion and stay engaged in the lead up to the 25th Anniversary of Beijing in 2020.

Want to know more about the Beijing +25 Review? See [here](#).

### Beijing +25 12 Critical Areas



## CONNECTING WITH RESPECT TO PREVENT VIOLENCE

Creating a violence-free society requires schools and communities that nurture respect and gender equality. UN Women, with the generous support from the Governments of Australia and Korea, is proud to partner with the Ministry of Education to roll-out an extra-curricular initiative to promote respectful and healthy relationships, gender equitable norms and skills to prevent school-related gender-based violence among pre-secondary and secondary students in three schools based in Dili and Liquica. The pilot initiative kicked-off with a Training of Trainers for educators and parents on “Connect with Respect” with support from the University of Melbourne, building on global evidence of using a whole school approach engaging students, teachers, parents and community leaders to prevent violence before it begins.

To see more about the project, click [here](#).



Photo: UN Women/Youle Beatty

“ In my long career as a teacher, I have never seen comprehensive materials like Connect with Respect. It enriches our civic education knowledge to teach our children to prevent violence at the school and in the community.

Geraldo Ribeiro Soares (School Principal at Primary School in Cassait).

## STAFF PROFILE: BASILIO PEREIRA

“ In my family, my son and I also cook and clean the house

Seven years working with UN Women as an Administration Assistant, Basilio Pereira has been advocating for gender equality practices within his family. “The mentality of our society about gender divisions has put so much burden to women and girls. For instance, men have to eat first and are not allowed to cook. In my family, my son and I also cook and clean the house,” said Basilio.

From his point of view, unequal access to education has been one of the biggest barriers that disadvantage women and girls the most in our society. To advocate for that and recognizing that men have a role to be actively engaged as well, Basilio has supported six of his nieces to

university. Not trying to be unfair to his nephews, he noted his focus on his nieces, “because my nephews are financially supported by their parents.” From his support, two have earned their

master’s degree and four others have completed their bachelor’s degree. Furthermore, they have helped their family financially. He wanted to show to his family that providing women a chance to higher education can benefit their family.

Being proud of his nieces’ achievements, he continues to raise more awareness by encouraging other family members to grant their kids equal right to education.



Photo: UN Women/Helio Miguel

Basilio’s wife also never had chance to go to university, even though her brother did. Therefore, he has supported his wife to pursue her university education. Basilio is very optimistic that one day Timorese society will achieve gender equality.

“I see our society is moving forward to the equality line as people are more aware of gender issues. I want to see my daughters and sisters are not excluded from equal rights and I invest in them.”



Photo: UN Women/Youle Beatty

## COLLABORATING AND CONNECTING PARTNERS FOR MORE INCLUSIVE SERVICE

Under the Joint UN Project Empower for Change, service providers, organizations of persons with a disability (DPOs) and actors working on addressing gender-based violence

(including justice actors from the Prosecutor, Public Defender’s Office and Courts) came together to discuss issues around access to GBV services for women and girls with disabilities.

Through the day-long “Workshop on GBV and Rights of People with Disability” on 15 February 2019, key stakeholders reviewed the work by the Community-Based Rehabilitation Network (CBRN) and Timor-Leste Leprosy Mission for a Toolkit being developed for DPOs to conduct training with service providers on gender-based violence and disability-inclusive

services. Participants were able to share their experiences, recognizing the urgent situation to improve access to services for persons with a disability and strengthen their networks, noting the need for continued coordination of the different service providers on disability inclusion.

The participants also showed strong support for Timor-Leste to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability (CRPD). Follow the work of the Community-Based Rehabilitation Network [here](#).

## 4 P'S 4 PEACE

# WOMEN, PEACE & SECURITY



This page is dedicated to activities under the “[Enhancing women’s meaningful Leadership and Participation in State Building and Development in Timor-Leste](#)”, project which is generously funded by the Government of Japan



Photo: UNDP Timor-Leste

## DIALOGUE AND PATHWAYS FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE

UN Women together with UNDP, with support from the Government of Japan, organized a roundtable discussion on gender-responsive mediation and access to justice for government actors and civil society partners working in the area of mediation, gender equality and human rights on 04 March 2019. The gathering at Timor-Plaza, was opened by

UN Women’s Regional Director (acting interim) for the Asia and Pacific Region, Anna Karin Jatfors.

“The effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is not conceivable without access to justice. When women’s rights are protected through effective justice systems, pathways are created for sustainable peace.” she said.

Over 30 participants (50 of women), including the Public Defender General, Inspector at the Office of the Prosecutor General, and representatives from the Ministry of Social and Solidarity, Ministry of Legal Reform, Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice, Secretary of State for Employment and Professional Training, Ministry of Interior, village chiefs and CSOs came together to foster a common understanding on the approach to inclusive mediation. Initial joint agreement was developed around the principles of mediation; the approach to mediation; and the development of mediators training curriculum. For more information on UN Women’s work on gender-responsive alternative dispute resolution, see: Women’s Multiple Pathways to Justice in Timor-Leste [here](#).

## WOMEN SPEAK OUT AGAINST YOUTH VIOLENCE

Women from Baucau condemn these acts of violence that have an impact on women and children,” said municipal Women,

Peace and Security (WPS) advocacy group coordinator Elisabeth da Costa. Since January 2019, Baucau was the site of violent conflict between youth groups, putting pressure on the local economy, on people’s freedom of movement, and creating an overall sense of insecurity. This is not the first time that community violence has taken place in

Baucau. According to the NGO Belun’s Early Warning and Early Response System, Baucau has the single highest level of youth violence in the country, after Dili. In February 2019, the WPS advocacy group in Baucau jointly with the Baucau Municipal Administration representative, Maria Viegas, responded to the violence.

They rallied their partners, UN Women, Belun, Ba Futuru and ACBIT to highlight the impact of the violence on women and children’s freedom of movement, organizing



Photo: UNDP Timor-Leste

a press conference that was broadcasted on the two major Timorese news channels. They called for the community to take action in reporting, and for civil society organizations (CSO) to lead conflict prevention dialogues and train the public. “Youth, parents, religious leaders and veterans have to be united to strengthen peace and stability”, Libania Soares, the group speaker, asked for all entities to build an inclusive society. Their intervention was among the joint conflict prevention actions from the PNTL, the Ministry of Interior’s National Directorate on Community Conflict Resolution, and local

leaders, that brought back a sense of calm to the city.

Baucau’s Women, Peace and Security (WPS) group was formed by 28 women from Baucau after attending their first leadership and advocacy training in 2018 organized by Ba Futuru in the framework of the Women, Peace and Security programme supported by UN Women through funding from the Government of Japan. Bringing international commitment to local practice, the group advocates for conflict prevention and gender equality in their municipality.



Photo: Tatoli

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEWLY PROMOTED PNTL GENERAL COMMANDER

UN Women would like to extend our warmest congratulations to the newly promoted General Commander Commissioner Faustino da Costa, and the 776 recently-promoted PNTL personnel in their career development. It is positive to see that 131 (17) of personnel promoted are women officers, which contributes to the PNTL Gender Strategy 2018 – 2022’s objective to create a more representative security service, through increasing the institutional promotion, recruitment, and representation of women in the PNTL.



Photo: PNTL/Melquiades

“We all have responsibilities to fight inequalities and poverty. There’s a need to have equal opportunity between men and women. We need to expand and strengthen gender equality” Commissioner Faustino da Costa at the International Women’s Day in Oeusse.

UN Women remains committed as a partner of the PNTL to work for this continued advancement of gender equality and the overall success of the institution’s mission.

PNTL Promotion 2019		
	Women	Men
Inspector Assistant to Inspector	1	1
Sergeant to First Sergeant	109	431
Agent to the Principal Agent	22	214
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>646</b>

Resource: PNTL April 2019 inputs to General Secretary (1325 UNSCR Report)

## QUOTES FROM 2019 IWD OECUSSE



Photo: Tatoli

**Interim Minister of Interior H.E. Filomeno Paixão:**

“ It’s the time to transform our thoughts toward women. Lots of women are victimized by various forms of violence because we don’t respect them. We need to put them in a higher place because we are equal. That’s why we need to honor them and give them more attention.”

**Secretary of State for Civil Protection (SoSCP) Alexandrino de Araujo:**

“ Women and girls face many challenges and had many burdens and pressures during the conflict, but they continued to support and contribute to freedom and peace. What women and men do and teach their children today will become an example in the future.”



Photo: UN Women/Helio Miguel



Photo: UN Women/Helio Miguel

## THE HIDDEN VOICES OF THE RESISTANCE FIGHTERS

“Don’t leave us behind, but walk with us into the future” - Survivor Beatriz Miranda

Seventeen years since the restoration of independence, many female fighters and survivors of the Indonesian occupation continue the struggle for recognition of their contributions to Timor-Leste’s resistance. Beatriz Miranda, from the village of Kraras (known as the widow village after many of the men in the village were killed in a 1983 attack during the occupation), recalls the stigma she faced within her own family when in 2003 she shared her survival story to the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation.

“You brought shame to the family before [because of the sexual violation by the Indonesian Military], and now you are still going to share those stories of shame,” a relative told her.

This stigma has created fear for many survivors and perpetuated a silence that has kept their stories hidden. For many of these women, the struggle continues today for recognition as veterans, with the privileges entitled for the resistance fighters, or simply to access basic services. Numbers from the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion show that of the 53,098 people receiving a veterans pension, only 5,000 are women (source: Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion, Timor-Leste report on progress of UNSCR1325 to UN Secretary General, 2019). Asosiasaun Chega Ba Ita (ACBIT), gives survivors the opportunity to voice out their stories. In commemoration of the 2019 International Women’s Day, ACBIT, supported by UN Women, with financial

contribution from the Government of Japan, among other partners, organized a safe space for sharing and fundraising themed “Women Help Women”. Through the 14th March 2019 event, women survivors shared their stories together with two female activists to recall the past and share their visions for the future.

Mrs. Olga da Silva, a survivor from the central municipality of Ainaro described her memory of being taken from school by the military at the age of ten and being tortured. “They carried me out of the classroom. Then they stunned me, sexually violated me, and hit me. No one could defend me,” she recalled. Even though the occupation has ended, they continue to fight for their right to be recognized by the Government and for many, struggle as single parents while helping other survivors.

“ You brought shame to the family before [because of the sexual violation by the Indonesian Military], and now you are still going to share those stories of shame.”

A relative told Survivor Beatriz Miranda.

## WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER

Through the work of ACBIT, and in support of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Timor-Leste, Olga and Beatriz, among other women, are supported to contribute in their communities and move beyond their experiences of the past. For example, Maria de Fatima, who acts as a bridge to speak for a wider group of survivors, proudly shared her success supporting her children to access opportunities in Korea and England. She has asked the Government, as with other survivors, to recognize her contributions during the war. Olga, who is a teacher and a women's small business group leader in her village, noted that having each other is the biggest contribution to her group.

Despite the group's financial struggles, she wants to see the Government build a better future for the new generation, emphasizing that Timorese have suffered enough. To advocate for female survivors, Olga underlined at the discussion that it wasn't only men who fought in the war, but women who also contributed. This point was reiterated by the Her Excellency Cidalia Lopez Guterres, who noted, "The men were hidden in the forest and still could breath, while women in the villages when the army came, they had to sacrifice their bodies."



Photo: UN Women/Helio Miguel

“ Even though we don't have a lot, we still stand up and support other women. We are stronger together,” said Maria de Fatima.



Photo: UN Women/Helio Miguel

“ Women helping women will bring recovery and progress to the future. When women are stronger, we can make our nation stronger.”

The Vice-President of Parliament, Maria Angelina Sarmento.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The women also encouraged young people to avoid fighting and love each other, noting the fights between youth groups in certain areas around the country has created a sense of fear and insecurity in public spaces. This concern is shared across generations, where a 2018 scoping study by UN Women Timor-Leste highlighted that both women and men in the capital Dili identified there is no public space free from the risk of sexual harassment and abuse, which most often targets women.

In response to the stories shared by survivors, the Vice Minister of Social Solidarity and Inclusion Signi Chandrawati Verdial stated that the Government will collaborate with partners to address this problem. The Vice-President of Parliament, Maria Angelina Sarmento, emphasized the importance of solidarity. She remarked, "Women helping women will bring recovery and progress to the future. When women are stronger, we can make our nation stronger."

From UN Women's Head of Office, Ms. Sunita Caminha, noted the importance of civil society voices, emphasizing that, "We must continue to create space for the many women living in the shadows of injustice to lead us, and listen to their words and experiences". In appreciating the support from the partners, the Director of ACBIT, Ms. Manuela Leong Pereira, noted the important role of men as partners in supporting and advancing women's rights.

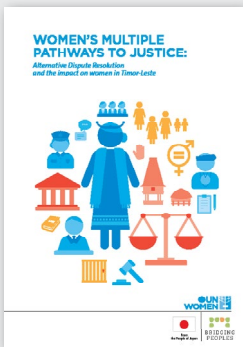
Learn more and follow the work of ACBIT: (include link <https://web.facebook.com/chegabaita/>)

# RESOURCES ON GENDER EQUALITY



## Seminar Report on Gender Responsive Alternative Dispute Resolution (December 2017)

As the formal justice system in Timor-Leste develops to meet the needs of the population, many disputes and conflicts continue to be resolved outside of the formal system, using alternative dispute resolution (ADR), such as customary justice, mediation or arbitration. The Ministry of Interior, under the Community Conflict Prevention Directorate, is currently developing guidelines for their conflict mediators, to provide guidance on the process. This report provides an overview of a December 2017 seminar convening over 70 Government, civil society representatives, mediators, National Police (PNTL) and local leaders to discuss ADR mechanisms and how they can benefit women and men more equitably. You can access the report [here](#).



## Women's Multiple Pathways to Justice in Timor-Leste: Alternative Dispute Resolution and the Impact on Women in Timor-Leste

The alternative dispute resolution (ADR) landscape in Timor-Leste is a dynamic and important source of justice provision. In the context of a formal justice system, as yet unable to deal effectively with its caseload, the operation of ADR is largely positive, allowing community members to deal with conflicts quickly, restore balance to the community and avoid further pressure on the courts. This UN Women research examines women's experiences in seeking justice in three types of cases: (i) land, (ii) abandonment/child maintenance, and (iii) domestic violence. You can find the report [here](#).



## Safe Cities Scoping Study VIDEO

This video presents the findings of UN Women's Scoping Study on Safe Cities in Timor-Leste's capital Dili. The study was conducted between 2017- 2018 and highlights public perceptions of sexual harassment in Dili, the impact of the problem and recommendations for making public spaces safe for women and girls and safe for all people. You can find the video here. Tetum with English sub-titles [here](#)

## Key dates for gender equality and women's empowerment in Timor-leste in 2019

To support the cooperation and inclusion of our partners towards gender parity UN Women Timor-Leste has created a Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) calendar. It includes the relevant events in Timor-Leste in relation to GEWE. The calendar is in both English and Tetum.

Want to promote Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) in Timor-Leste in 2019? Get involved with an upcoming event opportunity!			
May	June	July	August
1 May 17 May 20 May 23 May 29 May	1 June 16 June	9-18 July	12 Aug 20 Aug 30 Aug
INTL Labor Day INTL Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia & Biphobia Independence Day 1st Gender Coordination Group (GCG) Meeting INTL Day of Peacekeepers TL Review Beijing +25	INTL Children's Day INTL Domestic Workers' Day  • Rede Feto Congress (TBC)	• Pride Month in TL SDG VNR High Level Political Forum  • Gender Statistics Workshop	INTL Youth Day Falintil Day Referendum Anniversary
September	October	November	December
21 Sept 27 Sept	11 Oct 15 Oct 24 Oct 31 Oct	3 Nov 11-4 Nov 12 Nov 25 Nov 25-8 Nov 28 Nov	1-10 Dec 1 Dec 3 Dec 10 Dec 31 Dec
INTL Day of Peace World Tourism Day	INTL Day of Girl Child INTL Day of Rural Women Global Open Day 1325 UN Day Anniv. of UNSCR 1325 2nd Gender Coordination Group (GCG) Meeting	NTL Women's Day SDG 16+ Showcase NTL Youth Day INTL Day to Eliminate VAWG & 16 Days Camp. Reg. Review Beijing +25 Proclamation Day CEDAW Progress Report	16 Days Campaign Ctd. World AIDS Day INTL Day of Persons with Disabilities INTL Human Rights Day National Heroes Day
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