



Domingas (centre) and her daughters, Delia (17, left) and Abrial (12, right) found harmony at home through the Reducing Gender-Based Violence project.

**Photo:** Jaime dos Reis/  
World Vision

## TIMOR-LESTE REDUCING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY

**GOAL:** Assist communities to address gender-based violence by focusing on harmful attitudes and behaviours towards women and violence survivors.

**LOCATION:** 30 *aldeia* (sub-village) in eight *suco* (village) in two administrative posts in Aileu Municipality

**BENEFICIARIES:** 1,095 people

**DURATION:** January 2015 – June 2018

**SUPPORTED BY:** The Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

### CONTEXT

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a significant problem in Timor-Leste, due to entrenched norms regarding women's and men's roles in society. High rates of GBV have been identified in Timor-Leste as a major concern and government priority – particularly intimate partner violence and domestic violence. In Timor-Leste, 59 percent of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner. Also 41 percent of women reported they experienced sexual violence in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup> Studies found that intimate partner violence is treated as normal by individuals, families and communities; many people use interpretations of cultural, social and religious discourse to reinforce the idea that the man is the 'boss' and can use violence to correct his wife's behaviours.

### PROJECT APPROACH

To address GBV issues inside communities, the project worked with community and faith leaders to discuss and address GBV through their spheres of influence, using World Vision's Channels of Hope for Gender approach; sought to remove barriers to links between communities and service providers; and worked with community and church action teams (*Ekipa Hadomi Familia*) to address GBV at the community level.

<sup>1</sup> The Asia Foundation (2016) *Understanding Violence against Women and Children in Timor-Leste: Findings from the Nabilan Baseline Study*

## Community group leader Marta helps families find peace

In Aileu Municipality, Marta's peers selected her for training as a community group leader.

"The key messages that I provide to the community are about gender equality," she explains. "If there's peace between a husband and wife, there is peace in the family and this extends to the whole community."

Through her commitment and passion, Marta is helping local families to dramatically change their lives.

"This takes quite a long time because, if we are talking about human beings, we have different ideas, different opinions and different characteristics ... But we never tire to give more and more and we continue to give information to those people."

"Honestly I feel grateful and really happy because all the information I have finally has a result for the family," she says of one couple she's supported closely.



A community group leader Marta from Aileu Municipality. **Photo:** Suzy Sainovski/World Vision

## KEY OUTCOMES

### Increased awareness on gender-based violence among faith and community leaders

Most of the survey respondents (faith and community leaders) did not agree with the claim that "man is the boss and can hit/kick/hurt women to show he is the boss". The share of male respondents who believe this claim was 12 percent, and only 6 percent of female respondents agreed with this claim.

 **88% of men disagreed that man is the boss and can use violence against women to show he is the boss.**

### Sufficient links between communities and services

More than 70 percent of the survey respondents indicated that if a woman has been severely beaten, she turns to close relatives for help. The list of answer options also included the Ministry of Social Solidarity, church leader and health clinic.

 **77% of the survey respondents know organisations that help women when they experience violence, compared to 50% at baseline.**

### Positive impact and role of Ekipa Hadomi Familia

*Ekipa Hadomi Familia (EHF)* received lots of positive feedback and many members cited the positive influence of the EHF. Community members responded that the EHF was very good, that they are involved in this project and that they work as a community with the EHF structure to reduce violence in their area.

 **95% of women and 98% of men learnt about the impact of GBV and how to access support services from action teams.**

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Broader social inclusion:** Strategies should be developed to intentionally include youth, women, people with disabilities and boys and girls in project activities to help drive change.

**Tradition:** The role of custom, culture and tradition (beyond religious customs and tradition) should be better incorporated into the next phase of the design and development of the project.

**Sustainability:** Work towards achieving sustainability of project results through longer timeframes and commitments to existing communities.

*\*Endline survey: 291 Aileu respondents*

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