

Final Evaluation Report

Strengthening Early Recovery for Comprehensive and Sustainable Reintegration of Internally Displaced People (SERC) Project

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List of Acronyms and Glossary of Terms

Aldeia	A territorial demarcation of community, smaller than a Suco
Chefe Aldeia	Elected chefe or leader of the Aldeia
Chefe Suco	Elected chefe or leader of the Suco
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CRPU	Conflict Prevention and Recovery Unit
DNAS	Direktoret Nasional Asistencia / National Directorate for Social Assistance
DNSAS	Direktoret Nasional Servisu Aguas no Sanamentu / National Directorate for Water Supply and Sanitation
DPBSC	Department of Peace-Building and Social Cohesion
GOTL	Government of Timor-Leste
GMF	Grupu Manutensaun Fasilidade / Facility Management Group
HHF	Hamutuk Hari'i Futuru / Building Future Together
HHK	Hamutuk Hari'i Konfiansa
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSS	Ministerio de Solidaridade Sosial/Ministry of Social Solidarity
NDSA	National Directorate for Social Assistance
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRS	National Recovery Strategy
PD	Project Document
PIP	Project Implementation Process
PMB	Project Management Board
PNTL	National Police for Timor-Leste
PSTWG	Project Selection Technical Working Group
SERC	Strengthening Early Recovery for Comprehensive and Sustainable Reintegration of IDPs
Suco	Territorial demarcation of community, typically encompassing several Aldeia
TCDM	Training and Capacity Development Mentor
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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Executive Summary

In order to contribute to implementation of the Trust-Building Pillar '*Hamutuk Hari'i Konfiansa*' (HHK) of the Government of Timor-Leste's (GOTL) National Recovery Strategy (NRS) '*Hamutuk Hari'i Futuru*' (HHF), the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS) implemented the project "Strengthening Early Recovery for Comprehensive and Sustainable Reintegration of IDPs (hereinafter referred to as the SERC Project)." The SERC Project¹ ran from November 2008, when the Project Document (PD) was signed, until the end of March 2011. The Project has been funded by the Government of Australia (600,000 USD), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (1,250,000 USD) and the United Nations Peace Building Fund (308,963 USD).

The overall objective of the Project is to support the implementation of the NRS by strengthening early recovery efforts for durable solutions to IDPs and their receiving communities. The Project is divided into two components: (1) developing mechanisms and processes to meet the needs of the IDP-receiving communities as a follow-up to the community dialogues process; and (2) augmenting early recovery coordination capacity to implement the NRS. The Project has three main outputs (the first two of which correspond to the first component of the Project):

- 1) Enhance skills of Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS) staff to conduct participatory planning for community development projects and assess their impacts;
- 2) Assist MSS staff to identify needs, plan and implement small community infrastructure projects in a participatory process; and
- 3) Support the integration of early recovery policies and strategies into the National Recovery Strategy (NRS) and relevant national priorities.

A final evaluation of the SERC Project was conducted between March 16 – April 8, 2011 which focused on assessing: 1) achievement of Programme/Project Results; 2) Project design and management; 3) stakeholder participation and partnership; 4) government/community ownership; and 5) prospects for sustainability. The evaluation also included an identification of lessons learned and recommendations for future cooperation between UNDP and the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS) in the area of peace building.

The main findings of the evaluation are as follows:

- Overall, the SERC Project Objectives and Outputs were successfully achieved and through the Project, significant progress was made towards attainment of Outcome 7 and Output 7.2 under the UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP).
- The Project directly supported implementation of GOTL priorities, namely the Trust-Building Pillar of the NRS, and positively contributed towards the IDP reintegration and early recovery process.

¹ Throughout this report, the word "Project" capitalized will refer to the SERC Project and lower case "project" will refer to the individual community infrastructure projects.

- The active participation of IDPs and members of receiving communities in identifying, implementing and using infrastructure projects of shared interest and common benefit has helped to sustain interaction between IDPs and members of receiving communities and foster social cohesion.
- Throughout the Project, significant efforts were made by Project staff to ensure the active participation of both men and women in the implementation, decision-making process and evaluation of the community infrastructure projects.
- As a result of extensive capacity development support provided through the Project, the ability of MSS staff, through the Social Mobilisers (SMs), to conduct participatory planning increased significantly.
- There were many good practices developed through implementation of the Project including: 1) the comprehensive participatory planning process used to actively engage community members in the design and implementation of infrastructure projects; 2) the capacity development process used to enhance skill levels of the SMs; 3) the establishment of synergies between the UNDP/MSS SERC, Dialogue and Peacebuilding Projects.
- There was strong ownership by MSS from the beginning to the end of the Project and Ministry officials had a lead role in project bodies.
- While community ownership over infrastructure projects was found to be high, in some communities, there was a lower sense of shared responsibility for the management and maintenance of facilities.
- The establishment of the new Peacebuilding Department under MSS will impact positively upon sustainability of the SERC Project results.
- The Project Manual will be an important tool for transferring knowledge from Project to MSS.

The evaluation also identified several lessons learned:

- Infrastructure projects implemented after the Project Implementation Process was in place had a higher level of community participation and better overall implementation results.
- The lengthy process for staff recruitment had an adverse affect on Project implementation early on.
- Efforts to build the capacity of MSS staff to conduct participatory planning for small community infrastructure projects were focused on the SMs hired by MSS temporarily under the Project, resulting in a loss of skills and knowledge following the completion of the Project.
- The development of a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan for the Project took longer to develop and implement than initially planned and as a result, results/findings from monitoring were only identified at the end of the Project.
- During Project implementation, community ownership in terms of facilities management and maintenance was lower in some communities due to an understanding that the Government was responsible for this function.
- While the SERC PD originally envisaged strong engagement of relevant line ministries, their participation was not fully realised during the implementation of the Project.

The evaluation includes a series of general recommendations for UNDP management as well as specific recommendations relate to future cooperation with MSS in the area of peacebuilding.

Introduction

As a result of the 2006 crisis in Timor-Leste, more than 150,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) took refuge in 65 camps in Dili and other Districts. In order to ensure a concerted and comprehensive response to IDP and early recovery challenges, the GOTL adopted the NRS which consists of five pillars (housing, stability, socio-economic development, trust-building and social protection). Under the Trust-Building or HHK pillar, MSS, aimed to increase trust among returning IDPs, people of the community and the Government to promote return, relocation and reintegration of IDPs through community dialogue and other trust-building activities.

In the aftermath of the 2006 crisis, three UNDP Crisis Prevention and Recovery (CPR) projects were developed with the aim of supporting implementation of the Trust-Building pillar of the NRS. The first project, “Strengthening Institutional Structures and Mechanisms for Dialogue” (hereinafter referred to as the “Dialogue Project”), involved the establishment of dialogue teams under MSS which aimed to address the root cause of conflict in communities through a national dialogue process focused on issues of conflict management, and State and Nation building.² Between July 2008 and December 2009, the dialogue teams conducted a total of 688 mediation services, 95 small scale preparatory meetings and 38 community-level dialogue meetings to assist IDPs to safely return and relocate into communities.³

The second project was the HHK NGO Small Grants Fund initiative which focused on supporting NGOs that contributed toward the Trust-Building pillar of the NRS. Under the Project, grants were administered to implement trust-building activities at the community level in Dili and other districts, which included support to dialogue processes, youth exchange schemes, dissemination of information regarding the NRS and post return/relocation monitoring of IDPs and their communities.

The SERC Project served as an important complement to the Dialogue Project and HHK NGO Small Grants Fund initiative. It responded to the need for appropriate follow-up of community dialogue and addressed findings of IDP return monitoring reports which cited the lack of basic community infrastructure as a threat to stability. The SERC Project was developed to support implementation of the NRS by strengthening early recovery efforts for durable solutions to IDPs and their receiving communities. Under the Project, community infrastructure projects were implemented in 21 communities (where reintegration and dialogue processes were completed) using a participatory process to involve IDPs and members of receiving communities.

² UNDP Timor-Leste, Project Document, “Strengthening Institutional Structures and Mechanisms for Dialogue”, May 2008.

³ UNDP Timor-Leste, Project Document, “Support to the Department of Peace-Building and Social Cohesion in Timor-Leste”, October 2010.

Project Description

The SERC Project was launched in 2009 and funded by the Government of Australia (600,000 USD), the United National Development Program (UNDP) Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (1,250,000 USD) and the United Nations Peace Building Fund (308,963 USD).

The overall objective of the Project is to support implementation of the GOTL NRS by strengthening early recovery efforts for durable solutions to IDPs and their receiving communities. The Project was also developed in support of UNDP's CPAP in particular:

Outcome 7: National capacity built for restoring the foundations for development following conflict or disaster with active women participation and access to decision-making).

Output 7.2 By 2013, capacity of MSS and lead ministries further developed to address in a gender sensitive manner pressing socio-economic shortcomings for returnees and other vulnerable groups to avoid setbacks in the recovery process

The Project is divided into two components: (1) developing mechanisms and processes to meet the needs of the IDP-receiving communities as a follow-up to the community dialogues process; and (2) augmenting early recovery coordination capacity to implement the National Recovery Strategy.

The SERC project has three main outputs (the first two of which correspond to the participatory community infrastructure component of the Project):

- 1) Enhance skills of Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS) staff to conduct participatory planning for community development projects and assess their impacts;
- 2) Assist MSS staff to identify needs, plan and implement small community infrastructure projects in a participatory process; and
- 3) Support the integration of early recovery policies and strategies into the National Recovery Strategy (NRS) and relevant national priorities.

Achievement of the Project outputs was supported through a series of activities which focused primarily on the development of measures, models and processes to increase the capacity of MSS staff to support sustained IDP reintegration and foster community cohesion through the use of a participatory planning process in implementing 21 community infrastructure projects.

Purpose and Scope of Evaluation

According to the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Final Evaluation of the SERC Project developed by the CPR Unit (see Annex 1), the overall objective of the evaluation is “to review progress towards the projects’ objectives and results, assess the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of implementation, identify strengths and weaknesses in project design and implementation, and provide recommendations on design modifications and specific actions that would increase the effectiveness and impact of future similar initiatives.”⁴

In pursuit of these overall objectives, this Final Evaluation provides an assessment of the following key areas:

- 1) **Achievement of Programme/Project Results** – The extent to which the overall Project objectives and outputs/results were achieved and the degree to which the Project contributed to outcome 7 and output 7.2 of the UNDP CPAP⁵;
- 2) **Project Design and Management** – The management processes used in the implementation of the Project including the M&E framework/processes and risk assessment/management;
- 3) **Stakeholder Participation and Partnership** - Networks and partnerships in support of the implementation of the Project;
- 4) **Ownership** - The degree of Governmental/community ownership developed and the likelihood of continuation and sustainability of Project outcomes and benefits after completion of the project;
- 5) **Sustainability** - Key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects for sustainability of project outcomes and the potential for replication of the approaches; and
- 6) **Lessons Learned** - The main programmatic and institutional lessons that were learned and which can be applied in future project implementation by UNDP.

The evaluation also includes a set of recommendations, including general recommendations and specific ones related to future cooperation between UNDP and the Ministry of Social Solidarity in the area of peace building.

The scope of the evaluation was limited to the first two outputs of the PD. The third output related to early recovery coordination is not included due to the fact that this output had a different focus and was implemented as a stand-alone sub-project.

⁴ UNDP Timor-Leste, Terms of Reference for a Consultant Evaluation of UNDP SERC project.

⁵ UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (Output 7.2) - By 2013, capacity of MSS and lead ministries further developed to address in a gender sensitive manner pressing socio-economic shortcomings for returnees and other vulnerable groups to avoid setbacks in the recovery process.

Methodology of the Evaluation

In evaluating the SERC Project, a results-based management (RBM) approach was applied whereby progress in achieving overall objectives and outputs was assessed using baseline data and indicators identified within the Project Document and the revised M&E framework developed by the Project Team.

In line with the overall approach of the Project, the evaluation process was consultative and participatory whereby the views and opinions of a wide range of relevant national authorities, community beneficiaries and other stakeholders/partners involved in, and affected by implementation of the Project, were actively sought and included within the overall findings of this report.

When examining the Project results and impact, gender considerations were taken into account and mainstreamed into the evaluation design, methodology and findings. Efforts were made to include an equal number of women and men in the consultation meetings and to actively seek the input of male and female beneficiaries. The evaluator also engaged a female former SM, who had established contacts with women from several communities, to assist with the scheduling of community visits. When scheduling community consultations, local leaders were also asked to ensure participation of both men and women.

During the Project evaluation, **62 persons were consulted, 20 of whom were women.** Despite the aforementioned effort to actively engage men and women in the consultation process, in the end, the participation of women was lower than that of men. In order to address this challenge, the evaluator also spoke separately with female beneficiaries in communities to seek their views and opinions about the Project.

The evaluation methodology was based on the following:

a) Desk Review of Relevant Project Documentation

A comprehensive document review was conducted at the beginning of the evaluation process which included the following documents:

- The SERC PD
- Activity and project reports including monthly reports on project implementation, quarterly quality assessments and project progress reports by the Programme Manager
- SERC Project Processes Manual
- Reports and Issue/Risk/Lessons Learned logs from Atlas
- Baseline reports and data (including pre- and post perception surveys)
- Minutes from project coordination bodies and technical working groups
- Reports from stakeholder meetings/consultations
- Relevant UNDP/UN Country Team reports, strategies including UNDAF and the CPAP
- Relevant GOTL documents including the NRS
- Other external reports and documentation provided by project staff

b) Interviews with Project Management, Partners, Stakeholders and Donors

Between March 17 and 31, the evaluator conducted a series of formal interviews with Project Management (including current and former staff), senior officials from MSS, representatives from other line ministries and one of the Project donors. For a full list of interviewees, see Annex 2.

In the original evaluation proposal submitted to the CPR Unit, a comprehensive list of evaluation questions was developed (see Annex 3) which were used as the basis for the interviews. Questions were then asked according to the relevant role/involvement of each interviewee in the Project design/implementation process.

c) Visits to Communities and Infrastructure Project Sites

Due to the limited number of days for the evaluation process, it was not possible to visit all of the 21 communities where the Project was implemented. To address this challenge, a representative sample of eight communities were selected on the basis of 1) location (representing a range of sub-districts); 2) type of infrastructure project (i.e. water drainage, community centre, etc.); 3) timeline of projects (in order to include those implemented in the early and later phases of the Project); 4) partnerships established during the implementation process; and 5) implementation modalities (focusing on contractual arrangements for completion of the work).

Project	Sub-District	Project Type	Date of first community consultation	Partnerships	Implementation Modalities
Mauc	Dom Alexio	Community Centre	August 2009	Secretary of State of Youth and Sports	Private company contracted
Mundo Peditio	Dom Alexio	Football field	August 2009	Secretary of State of Youth and Sports	Private company contracted
Rai Nain	Dom Alexio	Volleyball court	October 2009	Secretary of State of Youth and Sports	Private company contracted
Caqueo Laren	Cristo Rei	Rubbish collection	November 2009	Ministry of State Administration	Private company contracted
Culau Laletec	Cristo Rei	Drainage system	November 2009	Ministry of Infrastructure (DNSAS)	Community contracted
Camea	Cristo Rei	Public toilets/water tank	October 2009	Ministry of Infrastructure (DNSAS)	Private company contracted
Duyung	Metinaro	Community wells	November 2009	Ministry of Infrastructure (DNSAS)	Contracted through local NGO - HTL
Zero III	Dom Alexio	Pre-school	September 2009	Ministry of Education	Private company contracted

Since only three out of the 23 projects were implemented in Ermera District, and because the time for conducting the evaluation was limited, field visits were confined to Dili District. Through this focus, the evaluator was able to visit a greater number of communities within the set timeframe.

During the field visits, the evaluator met with community leaders including the Chefe de Suco and Chefe de Aldeia as well as members of the Facilities Management Group (GMF), youth leaders, police and community beneficiaries of the infrastructure project. The evaluator used individual interviews and focus group discussions in order to solicit community feedback about Project implementation. The evaluator also visited the infrastructure sites and spoke with Project beneficiaries (i.e. women using water pumps, youth playing football, girls watching basketball, etc.) in order to ensure that feedback was not limited to only leaders from the community. Given the low participation of women in the consultation meetings, surveying community members using the facilities also enabled the evaluator to seek the views of women in each community.

d) Use of the SERC Project Monitoring and Evaluation Pre-Survey Results and Analysis

Between November 2010 and February 2011, the SERC Project M&E Team administered 286 surveys in 13 Project communities. In conducting the surveys, the M&E Team used Goal Attainment Scaling and Story Gathering through Focus Group Discussions in order to evaluate the qualitative success of the Project against intended impacts.⁶

Given the comprehensive nature of this data and the timeliness of it, this evaluation will use the report as an important source for assessing the overall impact of Project implementation on communities.

⁶ SERC Project Monitoring and Evaluation Pre-Survey Results and Analysis, February 2011.

Main Findings

Achievement of Programme/Project Results

Programme Outcomes and Project Objective

While it is still early to assess the overall impact of the SERC Project in relation to outcome 7 and output 7.2 of UNDP's CPAP (which has the target date of 2013), it can be concluded that Project has tangibly supported progress towards these results.

The SERC Project contributed towards enhanced national capacity (namely that of MSS) for restoring the foundations of development following conflict through the implementation of infrastructure projects using a participatory planning process. Together, members of communities (including women and IDPs) actively contributed to the identification of shared post-conflict infrastructure needs in their communities. As a result this process, MSS was able to effectively address pressing socio-economic shortcomings in a number of communities of high IDP return.

Through the extensive involvement of IDPs and members of receiving communities in the planning and design of infrastructure projects, the SERC Project also helped to foster social cohesion and contribute to the sustainability of results achieved by the MSS/UNDP Dialogue Teams. This not only lent credence to the dialogue process but also provided an important opportunity for continued community interaction and further reintegration. The participatory planning process applied during the development and implementation of community infrastructure projects brought together community members on several occasions including during: a) initial community meetings/consultations to identify and agree upon infrastructure priorities of common benefit to the community; b) follow-up meetings to discuss and reach consensus on the project details and to sign the Community Agreement; c) construction of the infrastructure (in cases where members of the community were contracted to do the labour); d) inauguration of the project; and e) post-assessment surveying conducted by the M&E Team and the Project evaluation in 13 communities.

UNDP Country Programme Action Plan

Outcome 7

National capacity built for restoring the foundations for development following conflict or disaster with active women participation and access to decision-making

Output 7.2

By 2013, capacity of MSS and lead ministries further developed to address in a gender sensitive manner pressing socio-economic shortcomings for returnees and other vulnerable groups to avoid setbacks in the recovery process.

Project Objective

To support the implementation of the NRS by strengthening early recovery efforts for durable solutions to IDPs and receiving communities.

By bringing community members together on a frequent basis through a participatory planning process the SERC Project was able to sustain dialogue and interaction in support of the reintegration process.

Community members were also brought together through the implementation of stabilisation activities which were introduced by the Project to address problems with raised expectations and delays in implementing the infrastructure projects during the early stages of the Project. In line with the Project's objectives, such activities aimed to support social cohesion, conflict mitigation and community ownership. Stabilisation activities included conflict resolution training, training for GMF members on infrastructure management and maintenance, sports tournaments and mural paintings. According to the SERC Project M&E post-survey results, 45% of respondents who demonstrated an awareness of such activities also perceived the benefits of such activities to be high in terms of supporting the Project's overall objectives.⁷

Under the SERC Project, the rehabilitation of community centres and sports facilities in areas of high return has helped foster reintegration by bringing people together and fostering social cohesion.

Director of Social Assistance, MSS

Once the infrastructure projects were completed, the facilities continued to play an important role in sustaining interaction and social cohesion between community members. The best examples of this were the sports facilities, community/youth centres and school. During the evaluator's visits to communities where sports facilities were rehabilitated, members of the community stated that such facilities played an important role in bringing together different members of the community (including IDPs, youth and martial arts groups) and in contributing to the reduction of community tensions. The following testimonies from Project partners and beneficiaries further substantiate this finding:

- "Football fields help bring together different groups (including IDP, youth and martial arts groups) and through their participation in activities and mutual exposure, there is less conflict after." (Director of Social Assistance, MSS)
- "By constructing a football field for use by youth, frustrations of youth over unemployment as well as violence by youth could be diverted into something positive." (Chief Technical Advisor/Project Manager, MSS/UNDP Strengthening Institutional Structures and Mechanisms for Dialogue Project)
- "In Rai Nain, there was no communication or dialogue following the crisis, therefore when the sports field was constructed, it helped to bring people together. This was also the case in Atsabe where people were brought together through the development of a community centre." (Former SM)
- "Before the football field was built, there were tensions in the community, but now, after the field, there are less tensions. The field played an important role

⁷ SERC Project Monitoring and Evaluation Pre-Survey Results and Analysis, 28 February 2011.

in contributing to peace and in building relations between youth.” (PNTL Office, Mundo Perdido)

- “The school has helped to reduce conflict because while parents wait outside the school for their children, they interact. This has helped to reduce tensions in the community.” (Member of GMF, Zero Tres)

It was also evident from interviews with project beneficiaries that a number of the infrastructure projects directly helped to address tensions related to social jealousies between and within communities related to IDP return and reintegration. For example, some of the projects implemented involved cooperation with other communities (this was the case in Mundo Perdido where local leaders and community members from the neighbouring Aldeia participated in the rehabilitation of a sports field). In other communities such as Duyung and 4 de Setembro, where community water systems became a source of tension with the return of IDPs, the development of a water supply system was seen as a way to mitigate conflict.

As a result of the increased interaction between community members in the planning, development and use of the new facilities in their communities, it can be concluded that the Project played a key role in reducing community tensions and in supporting the reintegration process at a community-level.

Project Outputs

The Project made significant progress in the achievement of Output 1 and a measurable change occurred in the capacity of SMs to facilitate participatory planning processes.⁸ In assessing achievement of this output, the evaluator examined data sources that provided evidence of measurable changes in the capacity of the SMs. The second indicator (the development of guidelines and resources to build and sustain capacity within MSS to conduct participatory planning processes for community infrastructure) was also used to measure progress made against this output. Due to the fact that the first indicator applied to the dialogue process which was completed before implementation of the SERC project started, this indicator could not be used to measure achievement of the output.

A comparison of the results from capacity assessments of the SMs carried out in January and June 2010 by the Training and Capacity Development Mentor (TCDM) illustrate this change. While in January the SMs had a mean capacity rating of 2.8 out of 5 (which rated as a medium capacity level and limited understanding and use of topics/skills specific to their role), by June, the SMs assessed themselves as having a mean capacity rating of 4.3 out of 5 which rated as a high level of understanding and confidence in using topics/skills specific to their role.⁹ This change in capacity was due largely to the extensive training and mentoring provided to the SMs by the TCDM. SMs attended 22 training sessions on a range of topics including conflict resolution, participatory planning processes and M&E. The SMs were also provided with a resource library with over 46 resources in Tetum, Indonesian and English.

The increased capacity level of the SMs was further substantiated during a focus group

Project Output 1

Enhance skills sets of MSS staff to conduct participatory planning for community development projects.

Baseline:

- MSS staff does not usually consider issues of tension between receiving communities and returning IDPs
- No documented mechanisms for participatory planning are in place for community infrastructure

Indicators:

- Number of issues between receiving communities and returning IDPs identified and managed by MSS
- Mechanisms/ guidelines for participatory planning elaborated and implemented by MSS

Indicative Activities:

- Recruit Project team and mobilize the project
- Develop mechanisms and guidelines for participatory planning and implementation of community infrastructure projects that can improve social cohesion
- Train project and NDSA staff [at least 40% are women] on participatory planning processes
- Develop in collaboration with NDSA a longer-term strategy to continue working with Suco Councils on community development projects.

⁸ One of the key questions raised during the evaluation was whether the target of capacity development assistance to MSS was the SMs hired temporarily under the Project or staff in positions funded under the ministry's budget. While the initial focus described in the PD appears to be the latter, through the implementation of the Project, the focus seemed to shift towards the SMs. When clarifying this point with the management of the Project, the evaluator was informed that efforts to build the capacity of MSS staff focused primarily on the SMs hired under the Project.

⁹ Final Report of the Training and Capacity Development Mentor.

meeting that the evaluator convened with four of the former SMs. The SMs were asked questions about their capacity to conduct participatory planning at the beginning of the Project and at the end. All SMs responded that their skill sets has significantly increased and that by the end of the Project, they felt that they had sufficient training and mentoring support in order to continue conducting participatory planning processes.

The findings in the SERC Project M&E post-survey results related to community participation are another important indicator for assessing the skill level of the SMs. According to the survey, perception of participation in communities was moderately high with the majority of participants (68%) perceiving that “everybody” in the community was involved (although actual participation was much lower with only 34% of males and 15% of women participating in the process).¹⁰ This finding was also substantiated during interviews with community members conducted during the evaluation process. In all of the eight communities the evaluator visited, all members of the community consulted stated that men and women as well as youth and IDPs were actively involved in the initial consultation meetings related to the identification and selection of infrastructure projects in their community. This active participation of community members demonstrates the ability and effectiveness of the SMs to conduct participatory planning processes.

Another significant achievement linked with Output 1 was the development of the Project Implementation Process (PIP). The PIP was a comprehensive framework that provided Project staff with clear direction and guidance on how to conduct participatory planning processes based on principles of “do no harm”, government/community ownership and gender mainstreaming. The PIP consisted of 14 steps related to the initial identification of target communities, pre-project information gathering, consultation and partnership with MSS and communities on project selection, design and implementation, establishment and training of community management structures, handover and inauguration of the facilities and follow-up/monitoring of each project. For a more comprehensive overview of the PIP, see the SERC Implementation Process Flowchart in Annex 4.

In order to build the institutional capacity of MSS to continue conducting participatory processes during the development of community small-scale infrastructure projects, the Project staff produced a Project Manual which contains a detailed overview and explanation of the PIP which will be translated into Tetum and shared with Ministry staff.

Based on the above findings, it can be concluded that through the development of the PIP and the extensive training and mentoring efforts undertaken to develop the skills and knowledge of the SMs, the capacity of MSS staff to conduct participatory planning for community development projects significantly increased as a direct result of the SERC Project.

¹⁰ SERC Project Monitoring and Evaluation Pre-Survey Results and Analysis, 28 February 2011.

In accordance with Output 2, the Project achieved important results in assisting MSS staff to identify, plan and implement small community infrastructure projects in a participatory manner. In measuring the attainment of results and in line with the Project indicators, the evaluator considered the number of infrastructure projects completed as well as qualitative factors such as community satisfaction with the projects overall and in contributing towards the reintegration process. Additionally, the evaluator examined tools/processes developed to assist MSS in planning and implementing community infrastructure projects.

Between January 2010 and March 2011, the Project implemented small infrastructure projects in 21 communities. While the original target of projects was 30, this number was reduced due to the Project being underfunded by USD 1.6M and changes in the social context of Timor-Leste. The change in the number of projects was discussed and agreed to by both MSS and the Project donors.

In order to assist MSS staff in planning and implementing these projects, the PIP was developed and included within the Project Manual which will be handed over to MSS. Two Project management bodies were also established, the Project Management Board (PMB) and the Project Selection Technical Working Group (PSTWG).

Based on data from the Project M&E post-assessment survey, the infrastructure was perceived as positive and of benefit to the community by 77% of respondents. This finding was further substantiated during the evaluator's visit to eight communities with seven of the communities expressing strong satisfaction with the infrastructure projects.

While it is difficult to assess the level of satisfaction of communities and returning IDPs with the reintegration process, and to attribute such satisfaction with the planning and implementation of small infrastructure projects, M&E data indicates that projects

Project Output 2

Assist MSS staff to identify needs, plan and implement small community infrastructure projects in a participatory process.

Baseline:

- Pre-project perception survey to provide baseline information in the targeted Sucos
- IDPs and receiving communities have identified lack of community infrastructure as an obstacle for return

Indicators:

- Level of satisfaction in the targeted Sucos – receiving communities and returning IDPs – with the reintegration process through a pre- and post project assessment survey
- Number of infrastructure approved, implemented and completed on time in Sucos.

Indicative Activities:

- Develop with NDSA transparent operational procedures for the identification/selection of target Sucos in Dili and priority districts as a follow-up to MSS dialogue initiatives.
- Conduct participatory needs assessment and relevant training for Chefes de Suco and community leaders to identify community infrastructure needs
- Help establish and participate in MSS technical working group
- Implement community projects with MSS
- Monitor and evaluate development projects

helped to reduce problems and foster greater community cohesion. Based on the Project M&E post-assessment survey, 83% of respondents perceived that the infrastructure currently helps to reduce problems between people in the community and 89% perceived that in the future it could reduce problems between people in the community.¹¹ As previously discussed in the above section on “Programme Outcomes and Project Objective”, through the engagement of IDPs and members of receiving communities in designing, implementing and using shared community infrastructure projects, their interaction was increased which helped to reduce tensions and promote community cohesion.

Project Design and Management

Project Design

The SERC Project was developed as a follow-up to the UNDP/MSS Dialogue Project. As a result, the PD was designed in a way that clearly established linkages between the two projects and identified important areas of cooperation and coordination early on. Recognizing these synergies in the original PD paved the way for successful collaboration between the two Projects during the implementation process.

As previously mentioned, the Project was divided into two components, the first involving the development of mechanisms and processes to meet the needs of the IDP-receiving communities as a follow-up to the community dialogues process and the second related to augmenting early recovery coordination capacity to implement the NRS. While both components related the overall objective of “supporting implementation of the GOTL NRS by strengthening early recovery efforts for durable solutions to IDPs and their receiving communities,” implementation of the two components was carried out separately and the Project evolved as two distinct sub-projects. This made it difficult to monitor and evaluate overall Project results (the second component is not included in this evaluation).

Another finding linked to the design of the Project is that the results framework included in the PD could have benefitted from better defined outputs and indicators. While the first output was well-defined, the second output (assist MSS staff to identify needs, plan and implement small community infrastructure projects in a participatory process) was formulated more as an activity and in a way that the intended results were unclear (i.e. was the result simply to plan/implement the projects using a participatory process or was the result that MSS was assisted in doing this). Since the Project was not simply about building infrastructure but also supporting the reintegration/recovery process, this element was not well reflected in either of the outputs. To resolve this problem, output two could have established a link between the infrastructure projects and the reintegration process.

In terms of the Project indicators, as mentioned previously, one of the two indicators developed for the first output (number of issues raised) could not be measured since it

¹¹ SERC Project Monitoring and Evaluation Pre-Survey Results and Analysis, 28 February 2011.

relied on findings of the Dialogue Project which was completed prior to the end of the SERC Project). For the second output, the indicator of “level of satisfaction about reintegration” did not correspond to the output. In this regard, half of the indicators used were not a realistic measure of success.

In addressing these shortfalls, new indicators were developed during Project implementation for component 1 which were: 1) Participatory processes were applied in at least 22 conflict prone and IDP return communities; 2) At least 30% participation of disadvantaged groups (youth, women, IDPs) in all participatory processes. These general indicators for the Project were better formulated and defined than the original indicators in the PD and were also SMART (specific, measurable, achievable realistic and timebound).

Unlike the approach UNDP uses for the Results-Oriented Annual Report (ROAR), the results framework in the PD did not include data sources or clear targets for each intended result. The use of well-defined indicators, baseline data and annual targets for the SERC Project under the ROAR enables UNDP to effectively measure progress against results. The use of the ROAR framework in the PD would have improved the Project’s ability to track and measure its results and overall impact.

Project Management

Despite serious setbacks and challenges encountered at the beginning of the Project, including staffing delays, turnover of the Project Manager and initial capacity limitations of national staff, overall, the Project was well managed by the UNDP Project Team and risks encountered during the implementation process were effectively mitigated in order to enable the Project to achieve its intended results. The management style of the Project Manager was highly appreciated by Project staff and stakeholders as well as his deep knowledge of community-driven development approaches and his ability to adapt the Project to respond to changing needs and circumstances.

Early on in the Project, the lengthy process for the recruitment of the International and National Project Managers contributed to significant delays in the implementation of the Project. Although implementation was expected to start in November 2008 (upon the signing of the PD) and conclude in November 2010, implementation did not begin until June 2009 due to the lengthy process for recruitment of the International and National Project Managers. The process for hiring the SMs was also lengthy (the SMs were not in place until September 2009) and the Project management encountered significant difficulties in finding suitably qualified staff. More than 90 persons were interviewed for ten positions which contributed to the lengthy process. The same challenge was encountered in finding four qualified national engineers, which delayed their start date until January 2010.

Given the post-crisis context and the need for an immediate response to support early recovery and IDP reintegration, the delayed recruitment of staff had several adverse affects on Project implementation. It caused the entire timeline of the Project to shift and as a result, important funding windows were lost as the interest of the donor community shifted from early recovery and IDP reintegration/return towards more traditional development projects. Delays in Project implementation had an adverse affect on

relations with MSS, early on, given expectations that the Project needed to be implemented quickly in support of the IDP reintegration process. The delays also added pressure to Project staff to implement the projects quickly which meant that at the beginning of the Project, the implementation process was compromised and not fully participatory.

In response to these early challenges, Project staff introduced stabilisation activities early on to mitigate issues associated with community frustration due to delays and raised expectations. In addressing the initial capacity development challenges, staff of the CPR Unit provided the Project Team with ongoing support and assistance by putting in place additional staff to support the Project (including the TCDM, International Architect and Operations Officer). As discussed previously, the TCDM worked closely with the SM to increase their skill level and the international intern taken on during the Project also played a key role in supporting capacity development of the national engineers. These measures were important in building knowledge, skills and expertise within the Project required for the successful implementation of the infrastructure projects.

Project Management Structures

In terms of the management structure and approach of the SERC Project, the Project was jointly executed by UNDP and the National Directorate for Social Assistance (NDSA) of MSS. In line with the PD, two management bodies were developed including the PMB and PSTWG. The aim of the PMB was to provide overall technical advisory and management guidance, Project assurance and oversight for implementation of the Project¹². The other Project body established was the PSTWG which was responsible for discussing and approving the community infrastructure projects and for resolving issues arising during the implementation process.¹³ Both bodies were envisaged to include representation from other line ministries, and although invited, representatives from other ministries did not regularly attend meetings which meant that in many circumstances, the actual engagement of other ministries did not start until infrastructure projects were completed and about to be handed over to communities.¹⁴

Project Documentation and Reporting

Given the need to oversee and manage 21 community infrastructure projects, it was important for the Project Team to have in place strong systems for collecting and recording data and information related to the status of each individual project as well as the overall SERC Project. A database was established in order to enable Project staff to track and enter information about each project. Database reports were then shared with MSS as well as donors. Regular reporting on Project progress (at the output and activity-level) was also conducted on a quarterly and annual basis and reports were also shared with MSS and donors.

¹² Terms of Reference, PMB (SERC PD).

¹³ Terms of Reference, PSTWG (SERC PD).

¹⁴ SERC Project Processes Manual, p. 16.

Gender Mainstreaming

Significant efforts were made to ensure the active participation of both men and women in the implementation, decision-making process and evaluation of the community infrastructure projects. Given the challenges related to low participation of women in the community consultation process, the SMs held separate meetings with women in order to ensure that their views and perspectives were taken into account. The SMs were also given special training and support on participatory methodologies to engage women and other vulnerable groups.

In order to sustain women's involvement in the management and maintenance of facilities, the Project Team worked with communities to ensure that women were represented on the GMFs (out of 161 GMF members, 48 were women and 113 were men).¹⁵

While conducting the M&E survey, efforts were made to ensure a gender-balance in the number of persons surveyed (women made up 48% of respondents and men 52%) and of the 11 people who attended M&E Focus Group Discussion, 5 were men and 6 women.¹⁶ The surveys were implemented by national male and female Project staff and male staff administered surveys to males and female staff to females.¹⁷ Project staff also integrated questions into the survey in order to provide an assessment of women's participation in the community consultation process. While the survey found that perceptions of participation were moderately high, males were more likely to perceive that everybody was involved than women. This figure was even lower in terms of decision-making with only 15% of females and 34% of males perceiving that they participated in decision-making.¹⁸ Figures from the SERC database also indicate that despite significant efforts made by Project staff to facilitate the active involvement of women in the design and implementation of infrastructure projects, women's actual participation was lower than males, with women making up 34% of participants and men 66%.¹⁹

Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Given the delayed start of the Project, the establishment of an M&E Plan for the Project was delayed and took longer to develop and implement than initially planned. As a result, findings from monitoring were only identified at the end of the Project and could not be incorporated into ongoing project implementation.

In developing an M&E framework, the Project Management engaged different consultants. The first consultant was brought on in July 2010 with the task of providing recommendations about the type of monitoring approach and methodologies the Project should develop in terms of community M&E. The consultant recommended the use of two methodologies – Goal Attainment Scaling to provide a comparison between projects and Most Significant Change to provide a qualitative understanding of the link between infrastructure and community cohesion. In August 2010, an intern was hired to develop a

¹⁵ Data provided by the SERC Project Manager.

¹⁶ SERC Project Monitoring and Evaluation Pre-Survey Results and Analysis, 28 February 2011, p. 8.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 13.

¹⁹ SERC Project Database.

community survey (based on the identified methodology) and to provide training to a team of SMs to administer the survey. Between November 2010 and February 2011, the Project M&E team administered 286 surveys in 13 SERC Project communities. The results from the survey proved to be a valuable instrument for assessing levels of sustainability, community perceptions about ownership, community satisfaction with the participatory process and perceptions about impact at the community level.

In monitoring and evaluating changes in ability of the SMs to conduct participatory planning processes (in line with output two of the SERC Project), capacity assessments were conducted by the TCDM before and after training/mentoring support was provided.

While these two approaches provided important M&E data, overall, the Project lacked a more comprehensive M&E framework to assess and measure progress of the Project in achieving its intended results (including achievement of the Project outputs and contribution towards the Programme outcomes/output under the UNDP CPAP).

Risk Management

During Project implementation, ongoing and new risks were effectively identified and mitigated. The PD contains a risk management matrix which identifies a series of security, organizational, strategic, operational, political, financial and regulatory risks and mitigation/ management strategies. During Project implementation additional risks were identified and added to the risk management matrix including lack of donor interest to fund the gap and unclear land and property situation, In both cases, strategies were developed to deal with these risks including requesting a no-cost extension from donors and terminating projects in areas where communities were unable to clarify land ownership issues.

Resource Allocation and Management

The Project Management acknowledged early on the impact of funding deficiencies on project implementation and strategies were developed to address funding shortfalls. Such strategies included adjusting the target number of infrastructure projects from 30 to 22 (in consultation with MSS) and requesting a three month no-cost extension from the donors.

In terms of resource allocation and management, one project partner expressed concern about the fact that staffing costs under the SERC Project budget exceeded the cost of the infrastructure projects. Out of the total expenditures, \$737,651.72 USD was spent on staff salaries and other human resource costs out of a total budget of \$1,477,984.07 USD. This meant that staff costs were \$233,419.72 USD more than funds allocated for the project grants. The reason for the higher staff costs was due to the complexity of the Project and capacity challenges encountered during the implementation process which required a continued need for an International Project Manager and International Engineer until the end of the Project.

Stakeholder Participation and Partnership

Throughout the design and implementation of the SERC Project, there was genuine partnership between Project Management and MSS (including the Minister, Secretary of State and Director of Social Assistance) and MSS exercised a leadership role in decision-making related to the Project. MSS jointly signed the PD, approved all of the infrastructure projects and was actively involved in the implementation process from the beginning until the end of the Project.

Relevant line ministries were, however, not as involved in the Project implementation as initially envisaged under the PD. As discussed previously (see section on “Project Management Structures”), although the Management Arrangements under the PD stipulated that relevant line ministries would be included in the membership of the Project Board and despite efforts of MSS and Project Management to invite other line ministries to meetings of the PMB and PSTWG, participation of these ministries was not sustained over time. Some of the stakeholders the evaluator met with felt that the involvement of other ministries at project inaugurations was only symbolic and that more formal engagement was needed, including formal agreements related to the handover of responsibility for maintenance, especially in communities where capacity remains limited.

As previously discussed, members of communities actively participated in the planning, design and selection of infrastructure projects to address their needs. Close collaboration was established with GMFs by the Project Team in order to provide the necessary training and support to build their capacity to collect finances for asset use, arrange maintenance and repair and decide when and how the infrastructure should be used.²⁰

Use of community infrastructure by men and women varied based on the type of project. Of the eight communities visited, the evaluator found that use of facilities by both men/boys and women/girls was highest for water storage systems, the school, youth/community centres and lowest for sports facilities which were used primarily by men and boys. While visiting the community of Duyung, women from the community told the evaluator that it is difficult for them to operate the water pumps due to the fact that the handles are heavy.

In implementing the drainage and rubbish collection projects, the Project established close cooperation and coordination with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Timor-Leste. Partnerships with local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) were also established. The Project partnered with Fundasaun Bia Hula, an NGO with extensive experience in water and sanitation, to develop and implement trainings for GMF members on managing and maintaining the infrastructure built by the Project. In constructing the community shallow wells in Duyung, the SERC Project engaged the local NGO HTL.

Through community consultations, the evaluator was informed about a number of conflict resolution training seminars conducted for communities by international and local

²⁰ SERC Project Processes Manual, p. 25.

NGOs. These seminars indirectly contributed towards the sustained results of the Dialogue Teams and served as a useful complement to stabilisation activities conducted through the SERC Project.

Since the SERC Project was designed as a follow-up to the UNDP/MSS Dialogue Project, it also facilitated cooperation and partnerships within UNDP. Data and knowledge related to pre- and existing conflicts in each community was shared between the Dialogue and SERC projects as well as information related to infrastructure needs previously identified by communities. The MSS/UNDP Dialogue Teams also provided conflict resolution training for the SMs and some of the GMF members. In this regard, important synergies were developed between the two projects which enabled the SERC Project to build on the successes and lessons learned of the Dialogue Project. The decision to combine the management boards of both projects also helped to ensure further synergy and coordination.

Ownership

During Project implementation, officials from MSS demonstrated a high level of ownership over the Project. MSS co-signed the PD, was actively involved in the

As a partner of the SERC Project, MSS regularly evaluates and assesses the Project while it is implemented. There is collective and genuine partnership between MSS and UNDP and from the beginning until the end, MSS has been directly involved.

Director of Social Assistance, MSS

recruitment of Project staff and assumed full responsibility for selecting communities where small infrastructure projects were implemented. MSS also chaired the PMB and PSTWG. According to Project Management, when initial delays in Project implementation were encountered, the Minister, Secretary of State and Director of Social Assistance were actively involved in following up such delays and in requesting the Project Manager to move forward with implementation.

While community ownership over the infrastructure projects was assessed to be high (88% of respondents of the SERC Project post-assessment survey stated that the infrastructure belonged to the

community),²¹ the evaluator found that community ownership over the management and maintenance of infrastructure projects was low.²² One of the reasons seemed to stem from confusion in communities related to responsibility for maintenance of the community infrastructure. Many of the community members interviewed did not understand that the community, through the GMF, was responsible for maintenance. According to some of the GMF members interviewed, it was because of this misunderstanding that community members were reluctant to contribute money to

²¹ SERC Project Monitoring and Evaluation Pre-Survey Results and Analysis, February 2011.

²² The issue of low community ownership related to infrastructure maintenance was also addressed in the SERC Project M&E report which concluded that people are unclear about who the infrastructure belongs to and who is responsible for management and maintenance.

support the ongoing maintenance of facilities, instead, viewing this as the responsibility of the Government.

According to the MSS Director of Social Assistance, communities still need awareness-raising in order to build an understanding about the value of community projects that are of common community interest.²³ One example raised during the community consultations was that in some communities, people took parts from the infrastructure facilities (i.e. pipes) because they did not understand the communal benefit of a community drain or water storage facility. In order to address this challenge, projects need to be better socialized within communities so that the common benefit is clearly communicated and widely understood by all members of the community. One place that proved to be a positive exception was Caqueo Laran where, after socializing the project of establishing a community rubbish bin, the community immediately began using the bin and understood the purpose and value of having it. This project demonstrates the importance of having in place a clear socialization process.

During the consultation process, some of the interviewees expressed concern about the involvement of private companies (especially non-Timorese ones) in the construction of the infrastructure and stated that in some cases, the use of such companies undermined community ownership and caused further tension in communities. According to the Project Staff, companies were needed in order to ensure the quality of the work, especially in cases where skilled labour was required. In order to address concerns, the Project Management required companies to contract all unskilled labour from communities. The Project Team also worked with the UNDP Procurement Unit to run a training session for Timorese companies to build their capacity bid for UNDP procurement processes. As a result of these efforts, by the end of the Project, 11 out of 22 contracts were issued to Timorese companies.

Sustainability

According to MSS officials, the results of the SERC project will be sustained, replicated and integrated into new Peace-Building Department through the Stabilisation/Small Grants Unit. The work of this Unit will build upon the participatory planning process developed through the SERC project. The Project Manual developed under the SERC Project is a valuable resource that will facilitate the transfer of knowledge, expertise and lessons learned related to the implementation of community participatory planning processes by SMs to permanent MSS staff as well as staff temporarily employed in the new Peace-Building Department. The Project Manual also has important applications for the Ministry of Infrastructure, in particular, DNSAS, given their current efforts to help communities develop Community Action Plans.

A significant sustainability challenge facing the project was that the SMs were temporary MSS staff members and left after the project ended. While MSS lost some of knowledge and accumulated expertise of the SMs in conducting community participatory planning processes, the employment of two of the former SMs by MSS under the Support to the Department of Peace-Building and Social Cohesion in Timor-Leste Project will help to

²³ Interview with MSS Director of Social Assistance, March 22, 2011

MSS retain some of the skills and expertise of the SMs. It is also worth noting that after the SERC Project ended, many SMs found employment in local and international NGOs which will mean further transfer of their knowledge in other projects and initiatives.

In order to sustain the use and maintenance of infrastructure projects implemented in communities, GMFs were established in most of the communities and trained on how to manage the infrastructure. Although the majority of GMF members felt that they had adequate knowledge and skills following training provided by under the Project, some of the participants, as well as the trainer (Fundasaun Bia Hula), felt that further training and support should be offered to GMF members, especially in terms of money management.²⁴ Officials interviewed from MSS and DNSAS also pointed out that for some communities, further support and follow-up will be needed to sustain the knowledge and capacity levels of GMF members. This is especially the case for some of the more technical infrastructure projects such as those related to water supply. One example of this was in Duyung where the evaluator observed that both water pumps were broken. Based on discussions with GMF members, it was not clear that they possessed the relevant skills to repair the pump and needed further support from the Project staff. In this regard, follow-up by relevant line ministries will be required in order to further develop and sustain the capacity of GMF members. In an interview with an official from DNSAS, the evaluator was informed that following DNSAS' involvement in the training of GMF members in 4 de Setembro, they are now ready and willing to continue to offering support to the GMF.

²⁴ Summary of GMF Training help by Fundasaun Bia Hula from 1 October to 31 December 2010.

Lessons Learned

Project Management

1. Infrastructure projects implemented after the PIP was in place had a higher level of community participation and better overall implementation results. Unfortunately, this process was not in place for implementation of the first community infrastructure projects. This adversely affected implementation of the initial infrastructure projects and resulted in lower participation of communities and in some cases tensions between Project staff and community members. In the case of the first project, the rehabilitation of a community centre in Mauc, although several community meetings were held, the process was not participatory (only the Chefe Aldeias and Chefe Sucos were invited to attend) and considered unsuccessful due to the lack of proper planning processes in place to ensure community participation.²⁵ In response to these challenges, the Project Team was quick in identifying the need for a clear process to guide future community consultations. In response, the PIP was developed which provided a framework for participatory planning during the design and implementation of the infrastructure projects. This process was used in the implementation of the remaining 21 projects.
2. Effectiveness and efficacy of the Project was impacted upon early on by the lengthy process for staff recruitment. Since the Project was implemented during a critical time in reintegration process, delays in starting the Project had several adverse affects on Project implementation. These included the loss of important funding windows as the interest of the donor community shifted from early recovery and IDP reintegration/return towards more traditional development projects. Delays in Project implementation also had an adverse affect on relations with MSS early on the Project as Ministry staff grew increasingly anxious to see infrastructure projects launched quickly in support of the IDP reintegration process.
3. Efforts to build the capacity of MSS staff to conduct participatory planning for small community infrastructure projects were focused on the SMs hired by MSS temporarily under the Project. This meant that following the completion of the Project, the knowledge and skills of the SMs would be lost. While there was an expectation that the SMs would be absorbed into MSS following the completion of the Project, there was no formal agreement or process in place to ensure this.
4. The length of time required to conduct 14-step participatory planning and implementation processes was not always understood by members of communities who in some cases expressed frustration with the length of time required to complete small infrastructure projects. In this regard, it was as important to socialize the process as much as the project in order to ensure realistic community expectations.

²⁵ Interview with SERC Project Manager (March 15, 2011)

5. Given the delayed start of the Project and the need to expeditiously implement 21 infrastructure projects in a limited timeframe, the development of an M&E Plan for the Project took longer to develop and implement than initially planned. As a result, results/findings from monitoring were only identified at the end of the Project and could not be incorporate into ongoing project implementation. Had the framework been in place earlier, monitoring results could have been used to improve the Project.
6. The engagement of a Capacity Development Specialist with the SERC Project was a good practice that should continue to be replicated for other UNDP projects with a significant capacity development objective. The capacity assessments conducted by the TCDM during implementation of the Project provided important M&E data to measure change in the capacity of the SMs. For future projects, it is recommended to prepare a capacity development strategy during the start-up phases of project implementation and to allocate resources within the PD budget to support the engagement of a capacity development specialist.
7. Given the delayed start of the Project, the establishment of an M&E Plan for the Project was delayed and took longer to develop and implement than initially planned. As a result, results/findings from monitoring were only identified at the end of the Project and could not be incorporate into ongoing project implementation.

Sustainability

8. The establishment of the new Peacebuilding Department under MSS will impact positively upon sustainability of the SERC Project results. Under the new Department, a Stabilisation/Small Grants Unit is being developed which will have the opportunity to build upon the participatory planning process developed through the SERC project. The Project Manual developed under the SERC Project is also an invaluable resource that will facilitate the transfer of knowledge, expertise and lessons learned related to the implementation of community participatory planning processes by SMs to permanent MSS staff as well as staff temporarily employed in the DPBSC.
9. During Project implementation, community ownership in terms of facilities management and maintenance was lower in some communities due to an understanding that the Government was responsible for this function. This has created problems for the GMF in terms of collecting community financial contributions to repair and maintain the facilities. In order to overcome this, the role and responsibilities of the GMF should have been better socialized in order to provide community members with a clearer understanding related to facility management and maintenance of the infrastructure and a stronger sense of ownership.

Stakeholder Participation and Partnership

10. While the SERC PD originally envisaged strong engagement of relevant line ministries, their participation was not fully realized during the implementation of the Project. Despite the participation of ministry officials in inauguration ceremonies, there was no clear agreement to ensure their sustained involvement in the Project, in particular through providing follow-up support to GMF members for the management and maintenance of infrastructure. An exception to this was the involvement of DNSAS in training members of the GMF in 4 de Setembro which provided an important link between the ministry and the community and established a clear role for DNSAS to provide future support to the GMF. This linkage succeeded because it was established early and enabled DNSAS to fully understand the Project and the role and importance of the GMF.
11. The link between community cohesion and infrastructure projects was higher for some projects than others. It was generally felt that the projects which brought together members of communities and fostered increased interaction (rehabilitation of sports facilities, community/youth centres and the school) had a direct role in contributing to the reduction of tensions and the promotion of community cohesion.

Recommendations

UNDP Project Management

1. When UNDP projects are implemented in a crisis or post-conflict operating environment, with a limited window of opportunity to respond to immediate needs of the government and communities, fast-track or specialized recruitment procedures are needed in order to ensure the effectiveness and timeliness of such projects.²⁶
2. In order to clarify expectations about timelines related to the start and implementation of future UNDP projects, PDs should contain a realistic start-up phase which includes the mobilization of resources, staffing of the project and development of implementation processes/frameworks to proceed the implementation phase of a project.
3. It is important for future projects to develop an M&E Plan early on so that results/findings from monitoring are identified on a continuous basis and incorporated into ongoing project implementation. It is also important that M&E frameworks measure and assess not only achievement of outputs and activities but also progress made towards achieving project/programme objectives and outcomes. In this regard, UNDP's ROAR provides an important M&E framework that can be applied and integrated into the design of future PDs.
4. The PIP/participatory planning model developed during implementation of the SERC Project was a significant achievement and a good practice model that can be replicated for future UNDP small infrastructure projects implemented in a crisis/post-conflict context. The process provides a comprehensive methodology incorporating principles of do-no-harm and gender mainstreaming.
5. In designing and implementing the SERC Project, strong synergies were established with the UNDP/MSS Dialogue Project. This cooperation and coordination between the two projects is an institutional good practice which should be replicated for other UNDP projects where relevant. Important synergies were developed between the two projects which enabled the SERC Project to build on the successes and lessons learned of the Dialogue Project. The decision to combine the management boards of both projects also helped to ensure further synergy and coordination.
6. During the evaluator's visits to eight of the communities where SERC infrastructure project were implemented, several important issues were raised related to support for GMFs and problems in maintaining the infrastructure. A list of these issues will be shared with staff of the UNDP CRPU and it is recommended that, in the interests of sustaining the results of the SERC Project,

²⁶ The need for fast-track recruitment procedures in crisis and post-conflict situations was also recommended in the report "Institutional Flexibility in Crisis and Post-Conflict Situations: Best Practices from the Field" developed by the UNDP Evaluation Office in 2004.

the former SMs employed under the MSS/UNDP Peacebuilding Project, follow-up on these issues with communities.

Future Cooperation with MSS DPBSC

7. Established processes, practices and lessons learned during implementation of the SERC Project have important applications for the new Peace Building and Social Cohesion Department, especially the new unit responsible for community stabilisation projects and small grants. The Project Manual, which documents the PIP, including objectives, methodologies, successes, challenges and lessons learned, once translated into Tetum, should be shared with staff of the new Department. The Manual should also be shared with the Ministry of Infrastructure, in particular the Community Water Supply District Officer from the Department of Water and Sanitation (DNSAS) who is currently engaged in supporting communities to develop Community Action Plans as well as with other relevant line ministries and international/national NGOs conducting projects with a participatory planning component.
8. As a result of the MSS/UNDP SERC and Dialogue Projects, a significant number of individuals have developed important knowledge and skills in the areas of peacebuilding, conflict resolution and community participatory processes. While some of these individuals have already been engaged under the MSS/UNDP Peacebuilding Project, it is recommended that a roster of experts be created by the DPBSC so that such experts can be quickly called upon when needed.
9. Members of the GMFs are a valuable resource for the new DPBSC given their understanding of participatory planning processes and their links to the community. Some members of GMFs have also received training in conflict resolution. In order to sustain contact with, and support for the work of GMFs, it is recommended that the DPBSC organize a joint event/training to increase their knowledge about peacebuilding and conflict resolution approaches and to help facilitate synergies and further cooperation between GMFs.
10. Since one of the intended outputs of the MSS/UNDP Support to the Department of Peace-Building and Social Cohesion in Timor-Leste Project, is to increase the capacity of MSS for peace-building and social cohesion,²⁷ it is recommended that the Project build on the successful practice established through the SERC Project of conducting baseline and follow-up capacity assessments in order to support later M&E of Project results. In line with the intention of MSS to draft a capacity development plan, it is suggested that a Capacity Development Mentor be employed to support the development of the plan, conduct an initial assessment of staff capacities and prepare a training schedule. Such a position should be established on a short-term basis with the aim to build the capacity of members of the Department to sustain capacity development efforts and conduct M&E relevant to capacity development results.

²⁷ MSS/UNDP Project Design Document, Support to the Department of Peace-Building and Social Cohesion in Timor-Leste Project, October 2010.

11. During community consultations the evaluator was informed about a number of conflict resolution training seminars conducted for communities by NGOs. These seminars indirectly contributed towards the sustained results of the Dialogue Teams and served as a useful complement to stabilisation activities conducted through the SERC Project. For the new MSS Peace-Building Department, it will be important to conduct a mapping of all the trainings that were held in order to establish a further baseline for community capacity to resolve conflict.

Annex 1: Evaluation Terms of Reference

Position Title:	Consultant: Evaluation of UNDP "Strengthening Early Recovery for Comprehensive and Sustainable Reintegration of IDPs (SERC)" project
Mission Duration:	15 working days
Contract type:	Individual Contract(s)
Expected starting date:	March 2010
Duty Station:	Dili, Timor-Leste (with travel Ermera district)
Organisation:	Crisis Prevention and Recovery (CPR) Unit, UNDP

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND PROJECTS DESCRIPTION

The Social Reintegration portfolio, implemented under the UNDP Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit, aims at supporting the Ministry of Social Solidarity in promoting peace building and social cohesion in Timor-Leste.

In support to IDPs reintegration into communities, and in response to the lack of basic community infrastructure which was identified in IDPs return monitoring reports as a threat to stability, the project entitled "SERC" was launched in 2009. It developed a participatory approach for the identification of small community infrastructure projects in areas of high IDP return and/or conflict prone communities. This project is funded by the Government of Australia, the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and the United Nations Peace Building Fund.

The project document can be accessed through the following link:

http://www.tl.undp.org/undp/recovery_ongoingproject.htm

2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE FINAL EVALUATION

The overall objective of the Final Evaluation is to review progress towards the projects' objectives and results, assess the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of implementation, identify strengths and weaknesses in project design and implementation, and provide recommendations on design modifications and specific actions that would increase the effectiveness and impact of future similar initiatives.

In pursuit of the overall objectives, the following key issues will be addressed during the Final Evaluation of the project:

- 7) Assess the extent to which the projects achieved their overall objectives;
- 8) Assess the extent to which the outputs/results were achieved;
- 9) Assess the extent to which the projects contributed to the relevant outputs of the UNDP Country Programme Action Plan:
Output 7.2
 - By 2013, capacity of MSS and lead ministries further developed to address in a gender sensitive manner pressing socio-economic shortcomings for returnees and other vulnerable groups to avoid setbacks in the recovery process
- 10) Review and assess the management processes used in the implementation of the project;
- 11) Review the implementation of the project monitoring and evaluation framework and processes;
- 12) Review the risk assessment and management of the project;

- 13) Describe and assess networks and partnerships in support of the implementation of the project;
- 14) Assess the likelihood of continuation and sustainability of project outcomes and benefits after completion of the project;
- 15) Describe key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects for sustainability of project outcomes and the potential for replication of the approaches;
- 16) Describe the main lessons that have emerged;
- 17) Provide a set of recommendations for future cooperation between UNDP and the Ministry of Social Solidarity in the area of Peace building, including project design and arrangements.

3. EXPECTED OUTPUTS & DELIVERABLES

1. **Executive summary and preliminary report:** The consultant will present a summary of evaluation conclusions and preliminary recommendations at the conclusion of the field research component of the evaluation. (S)he will present this information in the following formats:
 - a. A verbal presentation (debriefing) to UNDP and other relevant stakeholders. This presentation will be arranged by the Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit and will be used to share preliminary recommendations and receive feedback from the national government counterpart.
 - b. A Preliminary Evaluation Report not exceeding 10 pages in length (excluding annexes) and including an executive summary. This report is to be submitted no later than **20th March 2011**.
2. **Project Evaluation Report:** The consultant will submit an evaluation report highlighting: achievements, constraints, lessons learned and recommendations for ensuring sustainability of project outcomes and for future cooperation. The final evaluation report should also include a general section which contains the consultant's overall assessment of the projects' complementarities and contribution to IDP reintegration and relevance to Government priorities.
3. **Other:** The consultant will provide:
 - a. All questionnaires/instruments and copies of raw data collected during the field research.
 - b. A PowerPoint presentation outlining the main findings of the evaluation as documented in the final report.

The final report incorporating UNDP and other stakeholders' comments shall be submitted by the consultant no later than **30th March 2011**. The consultant should follow the 'table of contents' laid out below detailing the minimum reporting requirements for the final report.

Evaluation Report Format:

The Evaluation Report should contain the following:

- Title Page
- List of acronyms and abbreviations
- Table of contents, including list of annexes
- Executive summary
- Introduction – Background and context of the projects
- Description of the projects – their rationale, results framework and external factors which are likely to have affected results
- Purpose of the evaluation
- Methodology of the evaluation
- Findings per project

- Lessons learned per project
- Recommendations
- Conclusions
- Annexes

4. METHODOLOGY FOR EVALUATION APPROACH

The Final Evaluation will be done through a combination of processes including a desk review, selected site visits and interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries and will include:

- A documentation review: UNDP will provide necessary internal documentation, including activity and project reports, specific agreements, and technical reports. The evaluator will also be required to make reference to any other external documentation which is appropriate for the study.
- Field-based research involving no fewer than 5 calendar days in Timor-Leste and including the following:
 - A series of interviews with former IDPs, beneficiary community members, NGOs and other counterparts, UNDP staff, and other persons that UNDP or the evaluation consultant deems necessary
 - Field visits to the Districts of Ermera to conduct discussions with District Officials and community members involved in community infrastructure projects.
 - Other field-based research techniques as proposed by the evaluation entity, including focus-groups, small-sample surveys, etc.
- Consultations with MSS National Directorate of Social Assistance and Natural Disasters and relevant partners;
- Discussions with the Senior Management of UNDP;

In preparing the work plan, the evaluator is required to keep in mind that the communities of high return of IDPs are difficult to access; furthermore, visits to some of these communities will require pre-arrangements with local authorities.

5. QUALIFICATIONS

Qualifications:

- Master's degree in political science, international relations, development, monitoring and evaluation or any other relevant discipline;
- Relevant background and experience in evaluation. Familiarity with UNDP mechanisms and procedures is an asset;
- Minimum three years of international experience in monitoring and/or evaluation the areas of development assistance, preferably in a post-conflict / development context;
- The consultant must prove experience in having conducted at least three final evaluations for International Development Agencies;
- Previous experience in implementing or evaluating programs in a post-conflict context;
- Experience and knowledge of the socio-political context of Timor-Leste is a strong an asset.

Competencies:

- Demonstrated excellent written and oral communication skills in English;
- Ability to communicate in Tetum. Knowledge of Bahasa Indonesia or Portuguese is an asset. Otherwise a full time Tetum interpreter should be factored in the Consultant's financial proposal.
- Strong negotiating skills and ability to work independently;
- Cross-cultural management experience and sensitivity;

- High level planning, organisational and time management skills, including flexibility, attention to detail and the ability to work under pressure to meet changing deadlines;
- Well developed interpersonal skills , including the ability to liaise effectively at all levels;
- Analytical and problem solving skills of a high order, including the ability to formulate recommendations and policy advice desirable.

6. REPORTING AND MISSION SUPPORT

Working closely with the SERC Project Manager and the CPR Programme Officer, the Evaluation Consultant will report to UNDP Senior Management through the Assistant Country Director/ Head of Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit.

The CPR unit, together with the projects' teams, will provide support as requested. Transport for official purposes will be provided by UNDP.

The deadline for submission of the first draft of the report will be 20th March 2011. The Final report will be submitted to CPR unit no later than 30th March 2011.

How to apply:

UNDP wishes to invite suitably qualified service providers to submit proposals as per the terms of reference indicated above. Proposals should include the following:

- A statement outlining your ability to undertake this consultancy; please attach curriculum vitas of the individual/s who will undertake the assignment.
- An outline of the proposed methodology of how you plan to accomplish the assignment
- A draft work plan with detailed activities, milestones, timeframes
- A financial proposal, outlining daily rates which should be inclusive of all costs apart from airfares.
- Three contactable references who must be former employers/clients.
- P11 forms for all consultant (see link).

The deadline for submitting applications is 18th February 2011

Only short-listed candidates will be notified. Women candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.

Annex 2: List of Interviewees

UNDP

1. Ms. Alissar Chaker, Head of CPRU
2. Ms. Yolanda Rodriguez, Programme Officer, CPRU
3. Mr. Paul Tyndale-Biscoe, SERC Project Manager
4. Ms. Amelia de Jesus, SERC Deputy Project Manager
5. Mr. Jose Belo, Chief Technical Advisor/Project Manager, MSS/UNDP Strengthened Institutional Structures and Mechanisms for Dialogue Project / Support to Department of Peace Building and Social Cohesion Project
6. Ms. Annie Sloman, Documentation and Evaluation Specialist, SERC Project

MSS

7. Mr. Jacinto Rigoberto, Secretary of State
8. Mr. Amandio Amaral Freitas, Director of Social Assistance and General Coordinator of Hamutuk Hari'I Futuro program (Building Our Future Together)
9. Ms. Emelda Belo, Ms. Lusia da Costa, Mr. Reinato Gama and Mr. Cesar da Silva, Former SERC/MSS Former SMs
10. Mr. Adao Jorge Baptista Pinto, M&E Team Leader, Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion Department, MSS

Line Ministries

11. Mr. Joao Rodriguez, Director of Youth and Sport, Office of the Prime Minister
12. Mr. Julian Baptista, Head of Distribution, DNSAS, Ministry of Infrastructure
13. Mr. Antonito da Silva, Community Water Supply District Officer

Donors

14. Mr. Darian Clark, First Secretary, Development Cooperation, AUSAID

Communities

Meetings with Chefe Aldeia/Suco, youth leaders, police, GMF members and other project beneficiaries.

Annex 3: SERC Project Evaluation Questions

Project Objective:

- 1) To what extent has implementation of the SERC project contributed to the promotion of early recovery and durable solutions in Timor-Leste, particularly in terms of provision of basic services to IDPs and their surrounding and recipient communities due to damaged and destroyed infrastructure?
- 2) To what degree was the project able to promote social cohesion through the design and implementation of infrastructure projects?
- 3) How has the project promoted collective decision-making and participatory planning of communities towards shared priorities? How has it enhanced community capacity to resolve conflicts?

Project Outputs:

Output 1:

- 1) How were MSS staff (SMs) assisted through the project to identify needs, plan and implement small community infrastructure projects in a participatory process?
- 2) To what extent have the skills/capacities of MSS SMs increased in order to conduct participatory planning for community development projects?
- 3) Which mechanisms/guidelines for participatory planning and implementation of community infrastructure projects have been developed? Does MSS intend to utilize the participatory planning guide developed by the SERC project?
- 4) To what extent is MSS now able to further implement participatory planning without UNDP support? Is there an NDSA strategy to continue implementing participatory planning in community development projects as a tool for social cohesion?
- 5) Based on the pre- and post project assessment survey, what is the level of satisfaction in communities regarding the infrastructure projects? Is there a perception that such projects have directly contributed to community cohesion?

Output 2:

- 1) How many infrastructure projects were approved, implemented and completed on time in targeted Sucos?
- 2) To what extent were communities involved in the project implementation process? What is their level of satisfaction with the community infrastructure projects?
- 3) Are communities using and managing (maintaining) infrastructure? Are community stakeholders (women, men, youth, elderly and minority groups) accessing the facilities?
- 4) Is there a reduction in interventions by dialogue/conflict mediation teams in target communities?

- 5) What was the level of participation of MSS staff and relevant Government Ministries in the Technical Working Group? Did robust discussions about the projects take place at the TWGs?

Partnership/Ownership:

- 1) To what extent were Government counterparts and project beneficiaries/stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of the project? What was their role and was their input actively sought during the project design and implementation phases taken into account? What partnership strategies/approaches were incorporated into the project design and implementation process?
- 2) Did the Government exercise a leadership role in the decision-making through the various project management boards?
- 3) To what extent were other IOs/INGOs and local NGOs consulted? How was the project coordinated with other existing efforts to ensure synergy and work towards a common objective?
- 4) To what extent can outputs implemented by UNDP be attributed and credibly linked to the achievement of the overall outcome?

Relevance:

- 1) How did the project support implementation of existing Government strategies and priorities? How did it contribute to implementation of overall UNCT/UNDP strategies and objectives for Timor-Leste (i.e. UNDAF, UNDP CPAP)?
- 2) To what extent did the project address the needs of beneficiaries?
- 3) Was the project adjusted to effectively respond to the evolving situation in Timor-Leste? Were new developments sufficiently anticipated and risks encountered effectively mitigated?

Effectiveness/Efficiency:

- 1) How did resource allocation/management support programme achievements?
- 2) Were the resources allocated appropriate and necessary in order to meet the project outputs?
- 3) What was the impact of funding deficiencies on project implementation? What strategies were utilized to address funding shortfalls?
- 4) What management processes were used in implementation of the project? How did these contribute to the effective implementation of the project? What challenges were encountered? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the management process utilized?
- 5) What monitoring and evaluation frameworks/systems were in place to assess and measure project implementation? To what extent were these frameworks/systems effective?

Sustainability:

- 1) What skill sets and competencies were developed and effectively transferred to national and local authorities in order to sustain the results of the project and ensure that genuine capacity is created?
- 2) What strategies are in place and what institutional structures/mechanisms have been established to ensure an effective exit strategy for UNDP project staff and to support full Government ownership?
- 3) To what extent are participatory planning processes in place in communities order to identify shared priorities?

Annex 4: SERC Implementation Process Flowchart

