



▶ HAMETIN

ERA Agro-Forestry Project Newsletter

Partnership for Sustainable Agro-Forestry (PSAF)



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▶ Welcome to the Nineteenth Edition of our ERA Agro-Forestry (ERA-AF) Newsletter “HAMETIN”.

Welcome to HAMETIN, a monthly bulletin of the ERA-AF project, funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the ILO as a component of the Partnership Support for Agro-Forestry (PSAF) Ai ba Futuru. This edition will continue to update you on efforts being made to improve access to markets through rural roads, capacity building of institutions, contractors and the resulting impact on improved roads, decent employment, improved livelihoods, skills development and community empowerment. Our aim is to inform you on how the project is being implemented together with the people and for the people, its impact and other every day issues. We welcome your feedback. Hoping you enjoy this issue of HAMETIN....

Enhancing Rural Access Agro-Forestry (ERA-AF) Project Activities In December 2021

▶ 01. 3rd Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Annual Meeting

The ERA Agro-Forestry project held its 3rd Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting in Lautem Municipality on December 9th, 2021. The PAC meeting was preceded by a site visit to ERA-AF roads where stakeholders saw first-hand project activities on the road sections of Souro Nairete-Leuro 3.25 Kms and Souro-Luturula 2.3 Kms.



The meeting was well attended by Municipal Administrators from Lautem, Viqueque, Manatuto, Representative of President Baucau Municipality and European Union Delegation. It also had representatives from National Authorizing Office (NAO), PSFA-Ai ba Futuru, IADE, R4D-SP and Directors of Public Works from Lautem, Viqueque, Manatuto and Baucau. The meeting had very interesting and fruitful discussions on the progress, sustainability and capacity-building interventions of the project.



► **02. ERA-AF Facilitates Training of Trainers to Team of Engineers from Don Bosco Training Center**

ERA-AF Project continues to facilitate Training of Trainers (ToT) to Don Bosco Training Centre Labour-Based Unit Engineers. The objective of the ToT training is to enhance the capacity of the engineers to continue conducting relevant training at the Don Bosco Training Center. This will ensure the transfer of knowledge continues to other Timorese Engineers and Supervisors within the public and private entities in the future.



03. ERA AF Addresses Contractors' Challenges & Supports Labour Based Contractor Association



So as to address enabling environment challenges faced by contractors, the ERA-AF Project funded by the EU has been facilitating contractors' access to credit, materials and equipment. The facilitation has included provision of advance payments, together with arrangements with BNCTL and BNU for contractors to access credit for bridging finance. Other arrangements have involved access to materials through Cement Timor and Century Gabion which provide cement and gabions on credit with favourable terms. Efforts have also been made to equip contractors by providing enhanced advance payment and linkages to purchase equipment such as rollers which are not available.

To ensure sustainability and also safeguard contractors interests, a number of contractors have decided to establish a Labour Based Contractor Association (LBCA). The purpose of the association, which is being supported by ERA-AF (funded by EU), is to unite contractors to collectively address matters of interest, engage stakeholders, promote good practices and develop contractors. ERA-AF is committed to supporting such interventions that will enable contractors development and sustenance. Keep your eyes open for further news on the establishment of LBCA.



▶ 04. Joint Contractor Tracer Study Recommendations

This is the second of the two-part series on the ERA-AF & R4D-SP Joint Contractor Study Report released in 2021. Issue 17 presented the Findings. A total of 25 recommendations were made based on several themes. Below we present an Extract of the Recommendations that are of interest to stakeholders.

▶ Extract of Recommendations of Joint Contractor Tracer Study 2021



Human Interest

▶ **“Bad Conditions of Roads Leads to Veteran Volunteering Truck to Maintain the Road”**

Mr. Manuel is an individual who does not like just to depend on government alone or just leave it to others to contribute to the development of the country, Mr. Manuel da Costa, a 60 years old veteran and father of 6 children lives in Aldeia Osctico, Suco Ostico, Baucau Municipality. As stated by Mr. Manuel, “After Timor got its independence, I went back to farming by tending my garden and crops so as to be able to feed my family. However, after some time, I did not just want to focus on agriculture alone, so in 2014 I decided to open a small kiosk business from the income that I made from farming. The small business was quite a success, and as a result it enabled me to procure a truck. I opted to do transportation business as opposed to opening companies as many others often do because I did not want to depend on government for income.” Manuel continues, “From my observation, there is some development being made in the Suco, but it is being realized very slowly because our roads are in a bad condition”. “We thank God that in 2021 after the COVID-19 pandemic struck, there was an ILO/ERA-AF programme in my Suco that employed workers to carry out routine maintenance of roads including bush and grass clearing, cleaning of drains, structures and filling of potholes and ruts through a contractor called Helcia. These works really supported the communities by providing much needed employment for the local community including truck drivers to transport gravel materials to the site. I thus decided to volunteer at my own cost to transport materials from the quarry to the site to help workers fill potholes and ruts. As a Timorese it is important to contribute to the activities that are being done in my own Suco and not to look only to government or agencies for help.” says Manuel.



In concluding, Manuel says, “We are very happy with ILO’s plan on providing funds to prioritize rehabilitation in our road. As a result, the road is now in a good condition to transport materials to site and we are able to access to markets”.

The RBSA COVID-19 Road Routine Maintenance project is jointly implemented by the ILO ERA-AF and R4D-SP projects with kind agreement of the project donors EU and DFAT through a USD 550,000 RBSA funding by ILO. The programme supports recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic through targeted employment-intensive emergency public works for the rural poor and vulnerable in Timor-Leste. About 275 kms of roads are to be maintained and employment to be provided to 1,850 beneficiaries, Through ERA-AF about 50 kms of roads leading to PSAF-AbF priority sucos have been maintained.

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