

**Timor-Leste**

**National Program for Village Development Support  
Program  
(PNDS-SP)**

**Monitoring and Review Group  
Visit 3 (MRG#3)**

**Final Report**

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## Executive Summary

Programa Nasional Dezensvolvimentu Suku (National Program for Village Development) (PNDS) is a major Government of Timor-Leste program providing village-level infrastructure across the whole country. Using a community driven development approach, whereby communities decide their own priorities and then undertake the process of construction, with support from a team of trained facilitators, the program has achieved a great deal in its early implementation. The program is implemented by the PNDS Secretariat, in the Ministry of State Administration. The Government of Australia contributes to program effectiveness through the PNDS-Support Program (PNDS-SP), including specialist personnel, funding for Field Support Team and other contributions.

This third annual Monitoring and Review Group (MRG#3) visit to Timor-Leste focused on gender and social inclusion aspects of the PNDS-SP. The review team held meetings with leaders and staff of the PNDS Secretariat, staff of the PNDS-SP and officials of PNDS at municipal level. They met villagers involved in five infrastructure projects to date.

The review team found that key elements for ensuring women's participation and promoting gender equality and social inclusion in this program are in place. This reflects appropriate resource allocations and commendable efforts by the Secretariat itself and those involved in supporting the program. The list of inter-related and appropriate elements includes:

- Strong leadership commitment to including women in PNDS processes
- A contextualized gender strategy which is clearly expressed, accessible, short and well-regarded
- A customized, locally owned Action Plan which is clear on how to support women's participation and includes elements of disability inclusive development practice
- Dedicated budget and human resources for gender and social inclusion
- Provision of training on women's participation and to a much lesser extent on disability inclusion for facilitators
- Active role of key personnel in PNDS-SP and DFAT, with strong gender awareness, including the current Program Director, First Secretary (Development Cooperation – Community Development), Social Development Adviser and Gender Officer
- Clear responsibilities for Social Facilitators to meet minimum quotas in relation to women's participation and explain reasons behind the policies at community level
- Appointment of 13 gender focal points at district level and 2 at national level (totaling 7 women and 8 men)
- Collaborative approach between DFAT, PNDS, PNDS-SP officers focused on gender and social inclusion
- Clarity in PNDS systems/processes about ways to ensure minimum levels of women's participation
- Facilitation of regular (monthly) reflection and learning events (called Joint Learning Forum) for senior PNDS staff to discuss and solve issues arising
- Separate reflection meetings for social facilitators
- Monitoring processes to track women's participation and emerging issues (The Asia Foundation, Management Information System and MRG)
- Accountability mechanisms via Embassy Gender Action Plan and Working Group

- Innovative, locally appropriate efforts to discuss issues related to gender among PNDS-SP staff
- Links with local NGOs engaged in women's empowerment and disability issues.

Progress achieved to date is particularly noteworthy in the context of a relatively new program. In addition, the concept of women being included in such activities is relatively radical in cultural and historical terms, so progress is even more remarkable. The foundations that have been laid in the early phases of PNDS augur well for ongoing achievements and progress in relation to women's participation and suggest potential to achieve greater gender equality outcomes in the medium to long term.

The review team found some evidence of changing women's roles and leadership, in discussions with program staff and village representatives. These changes are largely the result of PNDS efforts to date and are consistent with other supportive national processes of change associated with gender equality, women's empowerment and social inclusion.

The review team found no evidence yet of changes in men's roles, for example in taking on domestic and child-raising roles while women participated in program activities, although many stakeholders referred to increasing understanding about the benefits of women's increased participation in community decision-making and responsibilities.

In the case of disability inclusive development, the review team found that the link between PNDS and the national disabled people's organization, RHTO, is well-established, and this is the most critical first step. The link has enabled RHTO to contribute to initial basic training for PNDS facilitators on disability inclusive approaches and has clear potential to contribute to deeper engagement with disability inclusion over the next few years. The opportunity to focus more attention on this area of work, negotiated with local stakeholders and with appropriate external support, is provided by the fact that key elements related to women's participation are now in place.

Building on the important foundations to date, the review team identified the opportunity to consolidate experience of the various processes in the next few years, by focusing resource support from PNDS-SP and DFAT on monitoring and mentoring of PNDS processes and personnel. This would support learning about what works well, monitoring the effects of the approaches taken, management of any risks involved in increasing women's participation and support for remedial action if issues arise. The mentoring process will help meet priorities expressed by PNDS for its own staff to build capacity in this area of responsibility as well as provide an important opportunity for Australia to contribute to strengthening gender equality and social inclusion across the country, after a period of consolidation.

Overall, the review team found that the work undertaken in PNDS to date shows potential for the achievement of transformational change in relation to gender equality at village level. Changes in values which underpin social expectations about the roles and responsibilities of women and men take time, so care is needed to avoid 'pushing too hard too fast.' There are risks associated with such a shift in values, such as potential to increase the workload burden for women without commensurate increases in men's

contribution to other duties, and potential to increase violence against women as they become more confident and independent. Care needs to be taken to monitor any such effects and ensure appropriate steps can be taken. PNDS is in a good position to manage this context and PNDS-SP is an appropriate and valued source of support.

## Acronyms

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination
CMT	Community Management Team
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DPO	Disabled People's Organisation
GoTL	Government of Timor-Leste
MAE	Ministry of State Administration
PNDS	Programa Nasional Dezensolvimentu Suku (National Program for Village Development)
PNDS-SP	PNDS-Support Program
TAF	The Asia Foundation
RHTO	Ra'es Hadomi Timor Oan
SEM	Secretary of State for a Support and Promotion of Socio-Economy of Women

## 1. Introduction

The Programa Nasional Dezenvolvimentu Suku (PNDS), or National Village Development Program, is a nation-wide community driven development program of the Government of Timor-Leste (GoTL). It was launched in 2012, with full program implementation commencing in 2014. The initial estimated budget for the program was \$US300 million over 8 years.

Through PNDS, GoTL provides villages (sukus) with annual grants of between \$US50,000 and \$US75,000, to be spent on village-level infrastructure projects. The Government also funds costs of PNDS staff, through a new PNDS Secretariat at national level and a team of dedicated officers at Municipal level. Incentives are provided for village-level people involved in planning, implementing, maintaining and monitoring each activity.

Australia supports PNDS through the PNDS-Support Program (PNDS-SP). PNDS-SP assists the GoTL in its overall management of PNDS, including through advisory support and staff capacity building.

PNDS-SP is further supported by a Monitoring and Review Group (MRG). The MRG's role is to inform and support program improvement. The first two MRG missions have focused on training (February 2014) and capacity-focused activities (November 2014). This third MRG (MRG#3) event, undertaken in April 2016, focuses on gender equality and social inclusion. This is the report of the review process and findings.

## 2. Purpose and methodology

### 2.1 Review purpose

The primary purpose of the MRG is to support program improvement, and the secondary purpose is to demonstrate accountability. The focus of the MRG is on DFAT's support program (PNDS-SP) specifically, although provision of advice and support to the PNDS program as a whole, is also possible, where appropriate.

The MRG#3 Review was requested to consider the ongoing work of PNDS-SP focusing on gender and social inclusion issues. It aimed to use strengths-based approaches consistent with the focus on contributing to learning and ongoing positive momentum. In summary, the review considered the GoTL's PNDS Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy and how effectively it is being implemented.

The TORs sought consideration of ways of achieving the following, within existing resources:

- Ensuring relevant staff are aware relevant of policies and best practice, and have skills to implement these
- Encouraging social inclusion to be applied across the board, encompassing women, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups

- Identifying positive examples, and leveraging opportunities to replicate local successes across the program.

## 2.2 Review questions

Three key questions and sub-questions were included in the Terms of Reference to guide this Review, as follows:

1. Assess the quality of the Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy (PNDS Secretariat document):
  - Is the strategy appropriate to the context and fit for purpose?
  - Is the strategy well understood by PNDS staff and PNDS-SP advisors?
2. How is implementation of the PNDS Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy progressing at all levels?
  - Is there understanding of GSI issues amongst PNDS and PNDS-SP staff at all levels?
  - Are PNDS and PNDS-SP staff incorporating and addressing GSI in their day-to-day work?
  - Is the PNDS-SP Field Support Team contributing to promoting gender equality?
  - Is there an improved understanding of gender equality and disability inclusive development in PNDS?
  - Where there is increased understanding and efforts on GSI by the PNDS Secretariat, what have been the factors that have contributed to this?
3. Are there indications that inclusive practices by PNDS personnel have contributed to changes at suku (village) level?
  - Is there evidence of differential benefits between women and men at the suku level?
  - Is there evidence of more disability-inclusive approaches at the suku level?
  - If yes, what factors have contributed to this?

Different questions were relevant to each group of stakeholders: [Annex 1](#) provides details of how the questions were planned to be asked for each type of stakeholder.

## 2.3 Methodology

To achieve its purpose, the two-person MRG team sought to generate shared understanding about gender and social inclusion issues under PNDS-SP, by providing opportunities for reflection among stakeholders as well as documenting evidence of progress to date. Thus review methods included group discussions which were intended to be opportunities for self-reflection and collective analysis, as well as processes to generate evidence of changes to date.

A mix of three data collection methods was used: review of key documents: in-country group meetings and individual interviews of program management stakeholders;



observations and small group discussions with participants in PNDS activities at village level.

### Document review

A desk review of project-related documents informed the development of the Review Plan and contributed to analysis of progress against the review questions. [Annex 2](#) includes a list of reports reviewed.

### Meetings and visits to PNDS infrastructure project sites

The review process was undertaken in early April 2016 and included meetings at the national level with:

- Relevant officials at the Australian embassy (Counsellor, those responsible for oversight of PNDS, members of Gender Working Group)
- PNDS Secretariat Director and staff
- PNDS-SP Managing Contractor (Cardno) including management staff, technical advisors and members of the BuiMau group (internal staff group)
- Official involved in PNDS monitoring from The Asia Foundation (TAF)
- Representatives from SEM, RHTO and Patria (national NGOs in disability inclusion and women's rights respectively)

In addition, the review process included meetings and site visits to four PNDS infrastructure projects in three districts: Liquica District (Vaviquinia and Lissadilla suku), Aileu District (Cotolau Suku ) and Dili (Balibar Suku). This included meetings with District Coordinators for PNDS, PNDS sub-national teams (including Gender Focal Points) as well as women and men involved with various projects, in the form of Community Management Teams and others, at suku (village) and aldeia (hamlet) level. The Review team was able to observe the level of engagement with gender and social inclusion issues among those who were available for the visits.

The MRG team sought to understand the views of women and men of different status/backgrounds in suku and in particular, given the focus on inclusion, the participation of marginalized and disadvantaged women and men.

The people met by the review team are listed in [Annex 3](#).

Analysis of data was undertaken through a combination of systematic review of notes from all meetings and information from documents related to the review questions to identify themes and contradictions; and testing of initial findings with knowledgeable stakeholders. Thematic analysis was undertaken by the review team members, keeping in mind the principles of quality evaluation (systematic processing, focus on accuracy, balance between synthesis and summarization, participation by key stakeholders, identification of emergent concepts and contradictions and finally, validation through triangulation). The review team particularly focused on the following broad approaches in their analysis: strengths based approach (to contribute to ongoing momentum towards

positive change); politically-informed approach (to reflect the importance of ‘power’ in initiating and sustaining policy change); balanced approach to synthesizing holistic and specific information; and mix of quantitative and qualitative data. Consistent with the values of PNDS itself, the review team sought to contribute to ongoing momentum towards increasing gender equality and social inclusion, within the context of community driven development.

The analysis was tested during the Aide Memoire presentation meeting on 12 April (Annex 4), where time was allowed for discussion of findings. Feedback from these discussions was then reflected in this report.

### **3. Context**

#### **3.1 PNDS in Government of Timor-Leste context**

As part of its overall development strategy, GoTL is committed to increasing development in rural areas. PNDS is the first national program which directly focuses on contributing to construction of infrastructure in every suku in the country. The Program was included in the Program of the Fifth Constitution Government (2012-2017) and the Organic Law of the Ministry of State Administration and was approved by the National Parliament in the 2013 Budget. A Decree Law in 2013 gives legal force to its scope, structures and operating principles.

The program was initially budgeted at USD300m over eight years (2012-20). In its first two years of operations, there was high level government interest in rapid implementation, despite the fact that a substantial recruitment process was required and major new systems, structures, policies and processes needed to be developed. A Pilot phase in 2012-13 raised a variety of lessons which have been applied to the delivery of Phases 1 and 2 in 2014-15. In 2015, major changes in the Timor-Leste context contributed uncertainty to program operations, with a shift to a new Ministry (Ministry of Planning and Strategic Investment) and a reduced budget.

The need for PNDS to operate at national level, municipal and sub-municipal (Administrative Post) levels, as well as to reach every village in Timor-Leste requires substantial planning and coordination together with leadership and resources. The use of a community-driven development approach is relatively new in Government programming, but has been used widely by NGOs.

In relation to gender equality, GoTL has a number of institutional structures and processes to support gender equality overall. These include: the Office of the Advisor on the Promotion of Gender Equality (OPE) (established in 2002); and a Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (SEPI) established in 2007 and changed to Secretary of State for the Support and Socio-Economic Promotion of Women (SEM). SEM is mandated ‘to promote gender equality and women’s rights as well as the promotion of gender mainstreaming which will contribute to peace-building and socio-economic development in Timor-Leste in order to pursue the principles of gender equality stated in the Law.’

Progress on gender equality in Timor-Leste is summarized by UN Women<sup>1</sup> as follows:

*'Since independence, the young nation has made serious efforts to improve gender equality and women's empowerment through policy reform, legislation, institutional mechanisms and public awareness campaigns. Equality for women is enshrined in the Constitution, and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) has been ratified. The status of the national women's machinery was elevated in 2008 to a State Secretariat reporting directly to the Prime Minister's Office, which strengthens its authority to develop and implement policies and programmes that address women's needs and concerns. The government signed the Dili Komprimisu, a public declaration that acknowledges the importance of gender equality and investing in women and girls, to achieve sustainable development, address poverty and strengthen society.'*

Overall, there remains broad Government support for PNDS, despite the contextual changes and a wide range of policy and practical challenges involved. At a political level this is evident by the public statements of support for PNDS from the President of Timor-Leste, current and previous Prime Ministers, and current Minister and Vice Minister in Ministry of State Administration, (MAE) responsible for PNDS. At a local level, the MRG mission heard repeated positive comments from community members in support of PNDS.

### 3.1.1 PNDS Overview

PNDS is a central part of the GoTL's strategy to increase development in rural areas. The program is managed by the PNDS Secretariat, which sits under MAE. There are approximately 400 GoTL PNDS staff, including nearly 300 PNDS facilitators who work directly with communities on planning and implementing projects. PNDS is active in all 442 villages (suku) in Timor-Leste. Of these, 242 suku commenced their second cycle of PNDS in 2016, and 202 suku will complete their first PNDS cycle by mid-2016.

PNDS uses community driven development approaches, facilitating processes for communities to collectively determine their priorities and then plan and manage the construction of basic village infrastructure themselves. Typical projects include construction or repairs to water systems, roads, small bridges, health clinics or classrooms and other public use infrastructure.

A widely communicated 12-step process is used to ensure the program's implementation meets the priorities of communities and that construction processes are financially and technically appropriate. A wide range of training programs are provided for the program facilitators at various levels, focused in three groups: social, financial and technical.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.unwomen-eseasia.org/docs/factsheets/05%20TIMOR\\_LESTE%20factsheet.pdf](http://www.unwomen-eseasia.org/docs/factsheets/05%20TIMOR_LESTE%20factsheet.pdf)

PNDS is explicit about gender equality in its design and operations. The program includes gender equality as an element in its overall goal 'improved socio-economic conditions and local governance for village men and women in Timor-Leste through community managed infrastructure.' In addition, women's participation is a key principle throughout the processes used to guide, support and implement program activities. For example, there are mandated minimum requirements for women's involvement in community management teams, and at least one women's priority proposal is required to be considered at suku level.

### 3.2 Government of Australia

The Governments of Australia and Timor-Leste share a commitment to supporting social and economic development in Timor-Leste. Since 2011, Australia has supported the GoTL on the development and implementation of PNDS and is currently committed to funding the PNDS-SP. This Support Program is funded within the context of Objective 2: *Enhancing Human Development* in Australia's Aid Investment Plan for Timor-Leste. PNDS-SP totals AUD42 million over 5 years (2012 – 2017).

The Government of Australia is committed to supporting gender equality and women's empowerment across the entire aid program as well as disability inclusive development. Two relevant policies - *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment* and the *Development for All: Strategy on Disability inclusive Development* - articulate these agendas and priorities in relation to inclusion. Alignment between PNDS –SP and these two policies is strong and should be considered a leading example of their implementation in the aid program.

#### 3.2.1 PNDS-SP Overview

The goal of PNDS-SP is to strengthen GoTL systems to deliver PNDS, so that community members attain increased social and economic benefits. This includes assisting the Government to establish operational procedures and corporate systems, such as finance and human resource management. PNDS-SP operates at both the national and sub-national levels.

Australia implements PNDS-SP through the Managing Contractor, Cardno. A number of advisors support process and systems in PNDS and contribute to the capacity of the PNDS Secretariat.

There are approximately 70 PNDS-SP staff members, including 23 Field Support Team officers. The team is made up of long term and short term, national and international positions, supporting the following broad functions:

- strategic leadership and policy coherence;
- community-driven development and social development;
- program operations and corporate management capacity;
- program monitoring, evaluation, and improvement;
- ICT and information management ;
- stakeholder engagement and communication;

- technical (engineering) and accounting support;
- independent mentoring and monitoring of program (Field Support Team).

PNDS-SP also supports the contribution of other partners to PNDS, such as TAF.

Promoting gender quality is a significant objective of the PNDS-SP, and it has received the highest rating of 6 for gender equality for the past 2 years.

### 3.3 Gender terminology and cultural perspectives on gender equality and social inclusion

The language associated with gender equality can be confusing and used in different ways by different people. For the purpose of this review, it is important to distinguish between the concept of women's participation or involvement in development activities and broader gender equality ideas. While the former is clearly a major element of the latter, the two concepts could be also considered on a spectrum:

- Women's participation and involvement refers to the idea that women should be engaged equally in processes, events, projects/programs, discussions and decision-making about matters which affect their lives and communities, institutions and broader society. This can be seen as a minimum requirement for gender equality, or the first step towards gender equality
- Gender equality usually encompasses much broader concepts at society level, such as equal opportunity, shared/negotiated power, absence of discrimination, equal access to education and employment, freedom from gender-based violence and shared roles in family, community and institutionalized contexts.

'Women's empowerment' specifically refers to the processes associated with women making choices, taking on active roles in deciding their own future and broader community or social changes as well as the ability to bring about such changes, which had not previously been the case.

According to international research (House et al 2004; Rhodes 2014), cultural values which underpin the roles and responsibilities of women and men can be plotted along a spectrum from 'high gender egalitarianism' to 'low gender egalitarianism'. In cultures with high gender egalitarian values, societies seek to minimize the gap in power between women and men, emphasizing concepts such as equality of opportunity in education and employment, equal pay, shared decision-making and women's leadership. In cultures with low gender egalitarian values, societies consider that men have greater power in decision-making and that women's authority is more likely to be restricted to domestic and community spheres rather than formal and institutional contexts. According to the GLOBE Study (House 2004), Australia is among the highest on gender egalitarian values in the world, while Timor-Leste is among the lowest, thus explaining the different beliefs and practices related to men's and women's roles.

In each country context, the factors which influence the manifestation of gender related values, such as colonial history, national experience, the role of missionaries as well as

exposure to other cultures through communications and education, interact in different ways, so value differences can be interpreted widely and can be dynamic.

Social inclusion is a concept that is increasingly used in development programs to ensure that participation in and benefits of development programs cover all members of society, as appropriate to each context. Generally, an understanding of each context is needed to be able to determine if any particular groups may otherwise be excluded, such as ethnic or religious minority groups, people with disabilities, people who identify as LGBTI or others.

Disability inclusive development is now widely used in relation to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which guides all disability-focused efforts internationally, at government and civil society levels. In the Australian Government's Development for All Strategy (2015-20), the definition of this term is:

*Disability-inclusive development promotes effective development by recognising that, like all members of a population, people with disabilities are both beneficiaries and agents of development. An inclusive approach seeks to identify and address barriers that prevent people with disabilities from participating in and benefiting from development. The explicit inclusion of people with disabilities as active participants in development processes leads to broader benefits for families and communities, reduces the impacts of poverty, and positively contributes to a country's economic growth.*

In the context of PNDS, 'gender equality' is the most common term, but it is primarily used to mean 'women's participation'. 'Social inclusion' is also commonly used in PNDS, but in reality refers 'disability inclusion'. While the review team sought to understand whether other potential demographic groups could be considered as being essential for inclusion in the implementation of PNDS in Timor-Leste, none were identified by stakeholders in this review or evident in literature to date.

## **4. Summary Answers to Review Questions**

### **4.1 Quality of the Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy**

The PNDS Secretariat document entitled 'PNDS Gender Strategy' was developed by Timorese and Australian personnel from PNDS, DFAT and PNDS-SP over the period between mid-2014 and July 2015. It reflects a process of consultations, analysis, drafting, review and revision. A broader group of stakeholders was consulted during its development to test for relevance, accessibility and feasibility. The Strategy has been endorsed by the Director of PNDS. The PNDS Gender Strategy seeks to both ensure that women and men participate actively in the Program processes as well as contribute to improvements in gender equality more broadly.

The Strategy is appropriate for the context of Timor-Leste, in which there is widespread interest in increasing the existing level of gender equality in many aspects of social and economic life, particularly in governance, leadership, income generation and community

and family-level decision-making. As the Strategy itself notes, there are various gender-based barriers to equitable participation in and benefits from development, all of which are not unique to Timor-Leste. There is global recognition that equal opportunity for women and men support economic growth and helps to reduce poverty. There is diversity in the expression of gender egalitarian values as well as the kinds of policies which will influence the pace of change towards greater equality in different countries and communities. There is also a great deal of research about the variety of ways of contributing towards gender equality and women's empowerment in different settings.

The PNDS Gender Strategy is also appropriate for the nature of PNDS. The program is a GoTL program which supports community-led development processes focused on infrastructure construction and maintenance and aims to ensure women and men both participate in and benefit from these activities. The Strategy refers to broader Government policies (see 3.1 above) and spells out how PNDS processes can ensure that minimum steps are taken to support equal participation and shared program benefits. The Strategy focuses on how the program's policies, training and leadership programs will support staff to achieve program objectives, to support women as they take on decision-making roles, and to promote gender mainstreaming approaches. The Strategy links directly with the overall PNDS indicators relating to gender equality, confirming links at all levels of implementation.

A key element of the PNDS Gender Strategy is its Action Plan, which lists a series of manageable steps to be taken by all stakeholders to achieve the program's objectives. This Action Plan includes not only gender-focused elements but also begins to reference broader 'social inclusion' concepts. The mix of ongoing and one-off but coherent events, illustrates that a multi-dimensional and coherent approach is necessary, and that not one element in itself will be sufficient. An equally important element of the Strategy is a list of achievements to date (Annex 3) which contributes to a sense of progress and positive momentum.

The Strategy is not explicit about what is meant by 'social inclusion' and this is understandable – it is likely to be a donor-introduced topic with little resonance with Timorese communities. Literature on the concept is complex and there is little in the way of shared understanding in any context<sup>2</sup> let alone agreed global definitions of scope, parameters or approaches. Any work that PNDS undertakes in this context would ideally reflect broader shared understanding in the Timor-Leste context about what could be relevant. In practice, it appears that within PNDS to date, the term 'social inclusion' has been largely focused on the participation of people with disability in program processes and consideration in some cases of physical accessibility of newly constructed public buildings. This is perfectly valid, in the absence of information which would direct efforts to any other specific demographic group, and reflects recent raised awareness on disability inclusion within Timor-Leste and globally. If over the next 12-18 months, there is evidence of a clearer shared understanding of the scope of 'social inclusion' in Timor-Leste, then this could be reflected in the next version of the Strategy, but at this stage,

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<sup>2</sup> For example, depending on the situation in different countries, it may apply to gender, disability inclusion, religious or ethnic minorities, vulnerable children and young people, people who may identify as LGBTI or any particularly marginalised communities.



there does not appear to be any evidence that a different approach is needed. Thus, for the remainder of this report, references will be made to work undertaken on gender equality and women's empowerment as well as disability inclusion.

In summary, the Review team found that there was shared commitment the concept of women's participation in PNDS processes across all levels of PNDS and among PNDS-SP staff. This largely reflected the fact that such participation is required in the PNDS manual and articulated in plans, position descriptions and particularly reporting requirements. It is important to be clear that this commitment does not mean that all personnel share a deep understanding of the complexity of gender equity and women's empowerment perspectives, issues and approaches. These issues are discussed further in Section 5.

## 4.2 Implementation progress

Overall, implementation of the PNDS Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy is progressing at a rate that could be expected at this time of the program's implementation, i.e. early in a cycle of complex policy, programming, implementation and relationship building. The Review team found some levels of substantial success, many areas of good progress and some areas which could be the focus of future efforts. The fact that progress has been achieved is a credit to the personnel involved, particularly in the context of significant contextual and operational challenges.

Those involved in supporting gender and social inclusion processes in PNDS are commended for their work to date, which has been co-ordinated, culturally attuned, politically sensitive, respectful and collaborative. The approaches taken have contributed to a situation where there is clear leadership and ownership of the key elements of the gender agenda as well as systematic implementation and monitoring of these elements. Experience has shown that without the use of culturally and politically appropriate approaches, it is difficult for externally-funded activities to bring about sustainable change in relation to gender equality, so the team's efforts are particularly important.

It was difficult for the Review team to confirm whether all areas of PNDS are incorporating and addressing gender and social inclusion in their day-to-day work, following a 7 day in-country visit, and site visits to 4 suku, but there were many signs of the efforts taken and progress achieved to date (see Section 5 below).

Annex 3 of the Gender Strategy confirms the following examples of achievements to date:

- Merit based recruitment of PNDS staff - 24% women (8/33) at national and 34% (121/355) at sub-national level
- 50% of Suku Volunteer Facilitators are women from 884 total Volunteer Facilitators
- Approximately 40% of Community Management Team (CMT) members are women
- Women's participation during the socialization from pilot to phase 3 is 40% (31,841 women out of 47,886 men from a total of 79,727)
- Participation of women in priority settings (in Suku level) is 45% (26,124 women /31,411 men = 57,535)
- Participation of women in construction is 28% (1,212 women / 3,128 men = 4,340)



- PNDS Secretariat has developed Gender Strategy along with its action plan in June 2015 as a guideline to promote and ensure gender equality in planning and implementation of PNDS
- PNDS Secretariat has appointed two (2) national gender focal points and 13 municipal focal points in July 2015
- Socialization and training materials includes methods to encourage participation of women and vulnerable groups in participating in PNDS activities
- Mini guidelines for Administrative Post Facilitators on PNDS project cycles include how facilitators can involve women and people with disability in all PNDS activities
- Training for CMT in two modules (B and F) specifically on capacity building for female members of CMT. Participation of women in CMT training modules B and F is 68% (4,825 women / 2,222 men = 7,047)
- Training for PNDS municipal teams and Administrative Post Facilitators on gender and social inclusion prior to mobilising them to the fields and during the refreshing training in 2014
- Training for Municipal PNDS Directors on gender and social inclusion and people with disability in PNDS program
- Standard construction of PNDS also includes accessible points for people with disability
- Guidelines for Administrative Post Facilitators (Social Development Guidelines) has integrated a chapter on gender and social inclusion as well as how to engage people with disability in PNDS
- PNDS Management Information System is already collecting some disaggregated data on participation of women in PNDS activities, such as number of women participating in meetings, chairing the meetings and number of women beneficiaries from the projects
- Since 2015, gender and social inclusion has become a standard agenda item at monthly national level meetings
- Monitoring and evaluation conducted by TAF is also collecting data on participation of women and vulnerable groups in PNDS
- Communication activities such as monthly, quarterly and annual reports includes data on women participation as well communication material (website, poster, television) using actual pictures and story of participation of women in PNDS
- PNDS Secretariat has set up a link in sectoral coordination on gender and social inclusion, for example, a representative from Secretary of State for Women, UN Women and civil society attended PNDS workshop to discuss PNDS gender strategy. Female members of CMT also attended a workshop organized by PATRIA.
- PNDS national gender focal point has been participating in working group discussions such as Disability Working Group with Raes Hadomi Timor-Oan (RHTO), Social Protection Working Group with ILO and Road for Development (R4D) as well as Informal Gender Working group.

Acknowledgement of the importance of facilitating women's participation in PNDS was evident at national, municipal and suku level, and both in PNDS and PNDS-SP. When asked, all staff were clear about the requirements and the processes which have been recommended to ensure women's participation. Whether all those involved would share an understanding about the intricacies and complexities involved in shaping changed values about gender equality and attitudes about the roles and responsibilities of women and men generally, is questionable, but this is perfectly understandable given the nature of PNDS, the newness of its implementation and the complexity of the issues.

A number of facilitators explained their use of a variety of ways to support greater women's participation and to facilitate men's support for their wives and female family members to participate. For example, one said he 'flattered' the husbands and fathers of women who were away from home attending week-long PNDS training events, telling them they were to be commended for allowing their women to be away from home. Others reported that they tried to organise women-only prioritisation meetings at times that would best suit women's other responsibilities. Others mentioned that they sought to link with existing women's groups at suku level in order to maximise participation. One stakeholder said 'some husbands complain but we discuss it and our facilitators are well trained to respond about the roles of women and men, and to explain the importance of everyone's participation for the whole community.' Another stakeholder reported 'in one village, the members said that it was too hard to include women, so they were given a chance to talk about it and reflect, and the facilitators went back the next day to explain and give them information. Then women put up their hands and volunteered to take on the roles. It just takes time for conversation and then it's okay.'

Evidence of understanding about disability inclusion was more limited, but this is understandable at this stage of PNDS implementation. Most were able to describe how individuals with disability participated in various PNDS steps, from planning to construction, and how consideration was given to making public buildings accessible to those who use wheelchairs. Disability inclusive approaches are generally focused on how to enable inclusive societies rather than on identifying individuals with particular impairments, so there are limits to what an infrastructure development program can do in this regard, even if it uses community development approaches. The fact that many villages in Timor-Leste are in remote and/or mountainous locations with little other disability inclusion activity work to complement PNDS efforts also suggests there are limitations.

The PNDS-SP Field Support Team is contributing to women's participation and gender equality in a variety of appropriate and innovative ways, recognising the need for local leadership and ownership of the overall agenda, consistent with its broader mandate and responsibilities. The recent creation of an internal, informal staff group (called BuiMau) for example, which provides an opportunity for corporate staff of the PNDS-SP to discuss issues they face at home and in their families, is an excellent initiative. This is expected to provide a safe, accessible and culturally appropriate space for consideration of gender issues and may lead to deeper awareness of the implications of both gender inequality and greater gender equality among men and women. This model could be considered for other PNDS stakeholders, eg municipal teams.

The factors which have contributed to commitment by and engagement within PNDS on women's participation are varied and inter-related. The fact that tGoTL has clear policy and institutional commitments is important, and this is complemented by leadership, systemic training, institutionalised monitoring, development of a realistic strategy and action plan and the provision of thoughtful and respectful advisory support.

### 4.3 Evidence of changes at suku level

The Review team visited PNDS construction projects in four sukus (Vaviquinia and Lissadilla, Maubara Administrative Post in Liquica Municipal; Cotelau, Laulara Administrative Post in Aileu Municipal; and Balibar in Dili Municipal) over three days and its assessments are based on this limited exposure. Nation-wide evidence, included in reports, understandably suggests a mixed picture of changes at this early stage of implementation.

In summary, there is evidence that many women are engaged in decision-making, leadership and management, labouring and monitoring and reflection in new ways, as a result of their participation in PNDS. One village head reported 'we see that women are allowed to attend meetings and speak up, as a result of PNDS, and this is the first time we have seen this.' One woman reported that 'I never had experience of managing so much money before, but other members of the CMT have helped and now I am more confident to keep doing this.' Section 5 below provides more details. It should be noted that there is not yet any evidence of changes in men's roles, but some evidence of initial changes in awareness and attitude.

## 5. Findings

Overall, the Review team found that a wide range of appropriate elements are in place to support women's participation in PNDS and this reflects well on both PNDS and PNDS-SP. The combination of these elements and coherence between them has contributed to a strong foundation within PNDS on gender equality and a sense that progress has been positive. The fact that all these elements have been put in place from the beginning of PNDS and in its early stages of implementation is a credit to all involved. There do not appear to be any significant 'missing pieces' in the picture, and the solid foundation augurs well for the future likelihood that PNDS will contribute to greater gender equality, women's empowerment and inclusion in future.

The elements which are currently in place include:

- Strong leadership commitment to including women in PNDS processes
- A contextualized gender strategy which is clearly expressed, accessible, short and well-regarded
- A customized, locally owned Action Plan which is clear on how to support women's participation and includes elements of disability inclusive development practice
- Provision of training on women's participation and to a much lesser extent on disability inclusion for facilitators
- Active role of key personnel in PNDS-SP and from the Australian Embassy, with strong gender awareness, including the current Program Director, the First Secretary (Development Cooperation – Community Development), the Social Development Adviser and part-time Gender Officer
- Clear responsibilities for Social Facilitators to meet minimum targets in relation to women's participation and explain the reasons behind the policies at community level

- Appointment of 13 gender focal points at district level and 2 at national level (totaling 7 women and 8 men)
- Collaborative approach between DFAT, PNDS, PNDS-SP officers focused on gender and social inclusion
- Clarity in PNDS systems and processes about ways to ensure minimum levels of women's participation
- The facilitation of regular (monthly) reflection and learning events (called Joint Learning Forum) for PNDS staff to discuss and solve issues arising, among other things, and separate meetings for social facilitators who play a key role in women's participation
- Monitoring processes to track women's participation and emerging issues eg TAF, PNDS management information system, MRG
- Accountability mechanism via Embassy Gender Action Plan and Working Group, MRG
- Locally appropriate efforts to discuss issues related to gender among PNDS-SP staff
- Links with local NGOs

Details of these elements and other related issues are discussed in the following sub-sections which are organized in order of the key themes/findings presented to program stakeholders in Dili on 12 April 2016.

### 5.1 Major changes in context

PNDS and the Support Program are relatively new, large and complex entities. Both are operating in the context of major budgetary and policy changes in the last 1-2 years, in Timor-Leste and Australia. These changes have affected fundamental aspects of program implementation, such as geographical coverage, the pace of implementation, the availability of specialists and access to resources. In Timor-Leste, changes in the Ministerial location of PNDS and a period of uncertainty associated with political leadership have affected the program's momentum at a critical stage of its implementation. A cut in the PNDS budget from US\$22m to US\$10m in 2015 was clearly a substantial reduction in resources. At the time of the Review, a major policy commitment to decentralization also became clearer. While this may potentially draw PNDS' experience at community levels into different ministries and policy processes, this could have both positive opportunities and negative effects. The lead up to an election may also affect the profile of, support for and momentum associated with PNDS' efforts. In Australia, a significant budget cut in 2015-16 (34% compared with 2013-14 expenditure) led to the loss of at least seven adviser positions, reduction in funding for field transport and other cuts to planned work in PNDS-SP. Also, uncertainty about GoTL longer-term funding and policy commitments, DFAT's large new Human Development Program and an upcoming election in Timor-Leste, could impact the amount of energy available in DFAT to support the work of PNDS-SP.

This context is very important in terms of the ability of officials and advisers to undertake day-to-day tasks, engage in more complex cross-cutting issues and contribute to higher level, longer-term objectives. Sustained changes in gender equality, gender roles, relationships, equity and social inclusion are not likely to occur within the life of short-

term projects, but rather require coherent, long-term and negotiated commitment, which is supported by local leadership, ownership of the change agenda and effective partnerships. Processes associated with sustainable and systemic changes in gender roles and relationships, let alone social values and attitudes, are generally likely to involve many years, if not decades of continued and coherent effort.

Even though PNDS is a national program, the focus of its operations is at village level and on village infrastructure, rather than explicitly on gender equality or social inclusion objectives. While the Review team found the potential for PNDS' efforts to contribute to broader and longer-term change, major society-wide changes are not likely to be evident nationally for some time, and many other parallel and supportive influences are likely to be needed for them to be sustained.

The concept of Governments providing direct grants to communities and authority for communities to manage and implement construction processes, as per PNDS, is completely new in Timor-Leste. There are clearly risks associated with this approach, compared with approaches where ministries or commercial contractors are made responsible for grant management and implementation. The approach suggests potentially new ways of considering the roles of government and citizens could emerge, once communities develop greater experience in self-determination and self-development.

The work of PNDS on women's participation, and thus on changes in values relating to gender equality, has attracted a positive profile and external support within Timor-Leste. For example PNDS has showcased case studies at a national event on rural women (Maubisse, October 2015), has participated actively in a Gender Working Group of NGOs and built collaborative links with SEM.

At the time of the Review, it was clear that a number of issues were affecting the ability of PNDS and PNDS-SP, in various ways, to focus on gender and social inclusion processes, including:

- The pressure for deadlines to be compressed and processes to be fast-tracked in order to deliver infrastructure activities to more communities more quickly, leading to a sense among many that things are 'too fast and too much.' This means that the capacity for PNDS staff to genuinely engage in the kinds of conversations and negotiations that are appropriate to generate value shifts on gender roles and responsibilities is limited.
- There are consistent requests from community members for increased incentive payments, on the basis that they consider the responsibilities are greater than they envisaged and allocated funding is inadequate, although written reports suggest this is not uniform and many communities have in fact volunteered labour in order to achieve their respective projects more quickly.
- The funding and time available for PNDS facilitators and the PNDS-SP Field Support Team members involved in repeated travelling to large numbers of sites (every village in Timor-Leste) is limited and thus they are stretched both financially and

time-wise – this risks leading to staff illness, accidents, and turnover, which could negate the benefits of training and experiential learning to date

- There are currently a number of proposals from both the GoTL and other development partners to use the structures or systems developed for PNDS for other purposes, not necessarily determined by communities themselves, such as playgrounds or economic/income-generation activities.

In summary, PNDS and PNDS-SP operate in the context of major policy and funding changes which affect the amount of energy available and the uptake of issues such as gender equality and inclusion. The Review team took this context into account when assessing progress to date and the potential for ongoing contributions to substantive and sustainable changes.

## 5.2 Commitment by PNDS Secretariat and staff

The commitment by PNDS Secretariat to women's participation is strong and clear at all levels. The list of elements described above has been undertaken with the full support of the Director of PNDS and through the concerted efforts of a team of leaders, advisers and other supporters working collaboratively and coherently. The Director of PNDS confirmed that the principles of social inclusion and gender equity underpin the entire program. She highlighted a range of examples of achievements made in this regard, including the recruitment of women as 33% of all staff across the program, the development of the Gender Strategy, the identification of and support for Gender Focal Points and the support provided by the Secretariat for inclusive village level processes.

The efforts of two DFAT-funded officers – the Social Development Adviser and the Gender Officer – were highlighted by the Director of PNDS. She confirmed their important role in supporting the gender equality agenda within PNDS. The Director reported that 'all stakeholders appreciate that PNDS has involved women' and that 'PNDS is more advanced than other government programs in relation to women's participation.'

Other senior staff in the PNDS Secretariat confirmed that women's participation has been prioritized in all PNDS processes, from the selection of village-level infrastructure projects to the management of funds and oversight of labour. Senior PNDS staff reported their experience of witnessing women describe their achievements following access to PNDS-related training, engagement in PNDS processes and participation in community-based construction, all facilitated deliberately by the program.

Gender-oriented work undertaken by PNDS complies with broader Government policies and aims to achieve broader objectives related to gender equality. The Director affirmed the complementary links between the work of PNDS and other GoTL agencies, including the Secretary of State on the Promotion and Support of Women's Economic Empowerment. This alignment is an important contribution to sustainability of efforts and benefits. Some stakeholders reported that PNDS is actually ahead of other Government agencies in terms of its systemic attention to women's participation.

The fact that indicators are in place and data is being collected related to women's and men's participation in all aspects of PNDS and there is evidence that both women and men are clearly benefiting from the work undertaken to date, also demonstrates commitment to this agenda. The research undertaken through TAF on various aspects of PNDS implementation is an important aspect of ongoing monitoring. One piece of research (TAF, 2015) found that in urban areas, women's participation in PNDS processes is much higher than in rural areas and this information has been fed into PNDS management for consideration. PNDS's response to the finding was to seek ways to increase the capacity of rural women to design their own priorities and encourage greater understanding of the need for women's participation. The interest in understanding the gender differential impact of various village infrastructure projects in future, such as the difference that access to clean water can make for women's income generation for example, is an important part of ongoing monitoring to ensure PNDS maximizes its potential contributions.

The fact that deliberate efforts have been made to recruit women and men to facilitator positions (currently around 35% women) is also a demonstration of commitment although these pro-active recruitment policies do not appear to extend to recruitment of other staff, as Municipal level Program Directors are all men). All staff have been extensively trained on how to encourage women's participation, with social facilitators receiving more detailed training and ongoing support from the PNDS-SP Field Support Team.

### 5.3 Systemic approach

Women's participation is systematically factored into PNDS processes. Recruitment efforts have been made to ensure women are involved in PNDS, increasing the proportion of women in senior positions is possible over coming years. The systemic approach appropriately focuses on ensuring that women are encouraged and supported to participate in the 12-steps associated with PNDS activities. This in itself is a major change at village levels because PNDS is the first national program that has directly sought village-level leadership on government activities and because women have not traditionally been invited to contribute to decision-making, leadership and participation in community activities of this nature. One PNDS Director said 'PNDS is unique because the Manual requires women's participation in all steps – this is the first time I have seen this. It is our role to ensure this requirement is met and we have learned how to encourage women to participate appropriately.'

The effort required to both establish nation-wide systems and to address gender equality issues is substantial and should not be underestimated. While a systematic approach of including women and men is included in all steps of PNDS and there is much support provided to maximize effectiveness, it is important to remember that all processes are still relatively new, so will need time to be embedded and to achieve sustainable changes at community level. However, there is potential for such a systemic approach to contribute to transformational changes in gender equality across the nation.

The training provided for large numbers of facilitators, gender focal points and other PNDS staff has been a feature of achievements to date. Given PNDS' national coverage,

the logistics and issues associated with such work (detailed in the previous MRG Reports) are complex. The Head of Training described PNDS' success in accessing additional funds from other GoTL sources (Human Capacity Development Fund) and PNDS-SP as none was available within PNDS budget, to train social, financial and technical facilitators in 2015-16. In 2015, three training courses were provided on gender and social inclusion and more are planned. A targeted training program for Gender Focal Points and CMT members involved a field visit to Lombok, Indonesia in 2015 for the purpose of observing women's participation, including in income-generation activities.

Support provided by PNDS-SP on gender issues is also an important contribution to the systemic approach. The two dedicated advisers in this area of work have built effective relationships with PNDS at all levels as well as facilitated appropriate plans, discussions and events. Their deep knowledge of Timor-Leste values, systems, history and community/Government structures, as well as gender and development concepts and issues, have meant that their efforts have been relevant, respectful and therefore effective. Other key personnel involved in supporting PNDS are also gender-sensitive and actively support this agenda.

Community members and PNDS leaders acknowledged the major difference in PNDS' systemic approach on participation of women and men compared with other Government programs. PNDS has found that it is able to inform others about its strategies and processes and has now become widely regarded for its efforts.

It is important to remember that PNDS is a community infrastructure program that attempts to work in gender equitable ways, but it is not focused entirely on achieving broader gender equality outcomes. The PNDS Director confirmed this when she said 'we follow the principles of gender equality in implementing PNDS's work on infrastructure, but we cannot deliver on all aspects of gender equality, the bigger issues, related to all aspects of community life.' She said 'we cannot go further ahead, otherwise we would be ahead of government policy.' This acknowledges that there are limits to what PNDS can achieve as a project.

The use of both internal PNDS and The Asia Foundation monitoring has supported the systemic approach to equality and inclusion, with recognition that gender disaggregated data is just one part of the picture and more nuanced monitoring is also required to assess the quality of participation and also monitor emerging issues and risks.

#### 5.4 Resources

An appropriate mix of financial and advisory resources appears to be allocated by PNDS-SP for supporting gender equality and inclusion, in the broader context. As noted above (Section 5.3), the systemic approach has included the provision of funding to support training of PNDS officials and the work of two dedicated officers, the Social Development Adviser and a Gender Officer (part-time in the Australian Embassy in Dili and part-time in PNDS-SP). Leadership within PNDS and PNDS-SP as well as strategic support from DFAT has been important in supporting the appropriate allocation of resources in this regard.



PNDS Secretariat officials reported that the PNDS' contributions, particularly funding for training and the Social Development Adviser and Gender Officer, are highly valued. In particular, the Director expressed gratitude for the high quality support that has been provided by PNDS-SP. She expressed a commitment to avoiding reliance on external advisers and policy advice in the longer term and to ensuring PNDS staff have the capacity to implement Government policies, such as the gender equality policy. An important aspect of PNDS' location within Government is its opportunity to link up with other Government agencies, contributing to and benefitting from broader policy processes and experiences.

Given the early stages of PNDS implementation and the Gender Strategy in particular, continued support from PNDS-SP is essential, at least for the next 12-24 months, but potentially for the full life of PNDS-SP, in recognition of the centrality of the issues.

External resources to support PNDS are currently only provided by DFAT. The Director seeks commitments from other development partners to maximize resources for PNDS in general and gender equality and inclusion activities in particular, as a sensible strategy to avoid reliance on a single source. The Government of New Zealand has expressed interest in using the PNDS approach to implement another activity in the area of early childhood development, although the extent to which this may actually contribute resources to the PNDS Secretariat or capacity building for PNDS staff, is unclear.

At Municipal levels, consistent appreciation was expressed for the resources that had been provided to PNDS to enable staff to undertake their complex and challenging roles across multiple villages. One Municipal PNDS Director summarized this feedback with his comment 'the support from the Government of Australia to the Government of Timor-Leste through the PNDS-SP is highly valued. As a result of the support provided by the Field Support Team and the Secretariat's efforts the program is now working well and we are witnessing good levels of participation by women and men in PNDS activities.'

One potential resource to support and encourage the work of PNDS, not widely mentioned among stakeholders, is a group of 'champions' on gender equality within the broader Timor-Leste Government or community. This could support efforts by PNDS to ensure the work undertaken is politically and culturally appropriate in the Timorese context. In some contexts, this can be a helpful contribution to the quality and positive momentum associated with increasing gender equality. The identification of and formal or informal use of champions for change could be worth exploring over the next period, depending on PNDS' interests and perspectives.

## 5.5 Variation in levels of participation

Processes established within PNDS for supporting participation of women are well understood and being implemented but there is variation in the extent of participation in different settings. This is understandable given the natural variation between communities and the extent of previous exposure to ideas about women's participation, gender equality or disability inclusion.

Facilitators consistently expressed their understanding of the Gender Strategy and their responsibilities to support women's participation. Many of them stated that it was part of their jobs to ensure women's participation. For example, one Facilitator said 'we follow the manual (PNDS Program Operations Manual) and have to ensure that women participate in all steps.' Another Facilitator said 'the whole program ensures women and men participate.'

In some villages visited by the Review team, participation of women and men was clearly evident, with both expressing their experience of the PNDS process, the benefits of their participation and current issues. For example, in one village, a woman leader who had been actively involved in determining the priority infrastructure projects and in ensuring they were constructed, was clearly an active participant. She described the pride of the women in achieving their objective and the contribution of the new building to enabling women to work collaboratively and earn increased incomes and to keep safe.

One PNDS Director noted that in some villages, four out of 11 of the community management team's members are women while in others, seven out of 11 are women. Overall in that municipality (Aileu), 42% of team members are women, across the 31 villages.

The Gender Strategy is known by most and understood by those most closely involved but is just one of many major responsibilities for most personnel, so needs to be understood in context.

Given the foundations are in place (leadership, ownership, partnership, strategy, action plan and systems), it is timely to consider a slight shift in focus to mentoring, policy dialogue and monitoring in relation to gender equality.

The Gender Focal Point in the PNDS Secretariat noted that 'we created guidelines not just to achieve the numbers spelled out in the policies, plans and indicators, but also to achieve quality interaction, genuine participation and joint implementation.'

Another confirmed 'we are not just interested in numbers of women and men participating in PNDS, but also the extent to which women's priorities are implemented and we want to encourage greater rates of implementation of women's priority projects. We want it to be clear that the voices of women and people with disability are heard.'

Links with PATRIA, a national women's NGO, were highlighted as critical for PNDS support for women's participation. PATRIA, which started in 2011 with a focus on women's capacity at community levels, has been actively identifying 'women with potential' at municipal level and is now funded for its efforts in 7 districts. These women are being targeted for training and support as part of the 100% Siap (100% ready) campaign. This campaign aims to include more women candidates in suku elections in late 2016. As a result, it is likely that more female candidates will nominate and potentially some of these women could be elected. The potential for transformative change is related to this work, combined with efforts by PNDS, but clearly this takes time and is not without risks.

## 5.6 Disability inclusive approaches

Some progress has been made to raise understanding about disability inclusive approaches, with a focus on participation and accessible infrastructure. There is now an opportunity to deepen understanding about what is possible in Timor-Leste in the next few years of PNDS, in terms of disability inclusive approaches. Disability inclusive thinking generally can build on the experience of gender equality efforts, but in practice, requires different approaches and practices, not simply because of the relatively smaller proportion of the population involved (i.e. 15% vs 50%) but because fewer systemic steps are needed.

While the Director of PNDS reported that to date, ‘we have not yet reached our plans’ in relation to disability inclusion, the establishment of a good working relationship with the national Disabled People’s Organisation, Ra’es Hadomi Timor Oan (RHTO) (see below) is an appropriate starting point. The Director reported that greater effort is expected to be given to involving people with disability at municipal level and moving beyond basic accessibility considerations for public infrastructure. Training programs for social facilitators in 2014-15 did include a short session on disability inclusion, developed in consultation with RHTO, but this is insufficient on its own to bring about systemic changes, which inevitably require coherent, multi-activity and supported approaches over a sustained period of time.

RHTO, a national DPO which operated initially with just one volunteer from 2006 to 2010, so has only really been resourced for 5 years, now plays a key role in advising government and development partners on how to achieve disability inclusive development. It currently has a national office plus a staff member in each of the 13 municipalities in Timor and funding (from DFAT) which enables it to achieve its operational objectives. RHTO’s work is consistent with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, supported by the international network of DPOs and reflects strategic planning about priorities in the Timor-Leste context. Its current work is focused on advocacy, livelihoods, clean water/sanitation and accessibility.

The good relationship between PNDS and RHTO, particularly the ability to build on existing links at municipal levels and deliver training, provides the opportunity to progress this work in the next few years. PNDS-SP should consider directing resources to building on initial awareness of disability inclusive approaches in PNDS, in ways that reflect the priorities and existing awareness and understanding in Timor-Leste. While RHTO has grown significantly in the last five years, long-standing negative attitudes towards people with disabilities and multiple barriers to participation will take time to be addressed. PNDS has an opportunity to contribute to raised awareness and greater inclusion in terms of community-led infrastructure, but other parallel processes and consistent messages will be required to bring about sustained changes across the country.

There is already some awareness and engagement on this issue. For example in Aileu Municipal the Director reported ‘in the Pilot phase, we weren’t thinking about inclusion of people with disabilities, but then we started to invite people with disabilities to participate in Phase 1. They told us they cannot attend meetings if the venues are

inaccessible, so we learned that we are the ones who need to make changes in order to be inclusive. On reflection, PNDS has been responsible for raising our awareness of the inclusion of all people at community level – women, men and people with disability - this is a major achievement.’

Suggestions that could be considered in the next period by PNDS and PNDS-SP, based on Review team consultations in Timor-Leste and broader international experience, include:

- Ongoing involvement of RHTO in PNDS joint planning, training, action learning processes and monitoring of disability inclusive approaches and practices
- Use of the international Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as the foundation to inform all PNDS activities (with particular reference to Articles 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 14, 19 and 21-31)
- Engagement between RHTO and technical/engineering personnel on specific aspects of universal design<sup>3</sup> including through training, advisory services and facilitated action learning
- Engagement between RHTO, PATRIA and PNDS to focus attention on ensuring women with disability are able to maximize engagement in community driven development activities
- Identification of ways of raising awareness in communities about the rights of people with disability
- Focusing on the importance of data related to inclusive/accessible buildings, inclusive community events (e.g. church services), inclusive health services, inclusive education strategies and other services (as opposed to collecting data about the numbers of people with disabilities, which reflects a charity approach rather than an inclusive societies approach).

## 5.7 Monitoring

As noted above (Section 5.3), both quantitative monitoring related to participation by women and men and qualitative monitoring is included in PNDS systems (both internally and through the relationship with TAF). This monitoring has enabled the program’s leaders, staff and PNDS-SP to understand what has been achieved to date, to deepen knowledge about nuances and complexities. This combination of quantitative and qualitative information is essential to inform future PNDS practice.

Use of MIS and TAF monitoring is contributing to raising awareness and deepening understanding of more nuanced issues, which are both critical to take the strategy to the next level and to manage risks. Over the next period, TAF may consider closer linkages between PNDS monitoring work and the Ending Violence against Women program, called Nabilan (e.g. drawing on Nabilan’s Violence Against Women Prevention Toolkit).

The newness of the program and its radical approach in the Timorese context bring significant potential risks. It is appropriate for PNDS-SP to prioritise support for PNDS to monitor and mitigate these risks at this stage of the program’s life. Risks such as excessive

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<sup>3</sup> DFAT’s Accessibility Design Guide: Universal Design Principles for Australia’s Aid Program

workload burden for women and increased risks to women's safety (both facilitators and community members) are of potential significance. Other issues to investigate include gendered impacts of incentive payments for construction work, broader (non-financial) incentives for staff to promote women's participation and gender equality, changes in men's attitudes and roles, and contributions of PNDS to women's leadership pathways.

One issue that emerged through some community-level conversations relates to the 'incentives' which are available for those involved in managing and working on construction activities and the potential for these incentives to influence the roles of women and men differently and to influence the quality of relationships between women and men. PNDS allows communities to decide whether those involved in planning, implementation and maintenance committees will be paid an 'incentive' for their effort, and amounts are capped at maximum levels. In some communities, men and women have decided to work for no payment, symbolizing their commitment to the community asset and the benefits for all and reserving maximum funds for procurement of materials. In other communities, there have been no issues associated with the incentive payments. In some communities, women and men have formed the view that the incentive payments have been insufficient vis-à-vis the expectations of the work involved, and in some cases, it has been noted that the low daily fee (a maximum of \$3 per day) leads to men deciding that women should work for this rate, but men would be able to earn more in other settings (the national average daily rate for unskilled labour was quoted as \$4.75 per day, but on some commercial projects, may be up to \$6 or \$7 per day). There is a potential, therefore, for the PNDS incentive arrangements as they are, to lead to gender differentiated incomes in some settings, depending on a range of factors. While this is not necessarily the case across Timor-Leste, future monitoring might consider the extent to which this is occurring, perhaps within broader consideration of issues associated with 'incentive' and whether other approaches could be used to ameliorate such inequality.

## 5.8 Signs of change

PNDS staff, PNDS-SP advisers and community members themselves report that women's experience of participation, shared decision-making and joint management of resources is contributing to changing roles for women. There is widespread acknowledgement that the approaches taken by PNDS are new and there is also widespread understanding that there are already signs of change. Importantly the dominant view is that the changes are seen as positive. As summarized by one stakeholder 'it is hard work to facilitate conversations about social change, but we have made it meaningful for communities so that now there is a sense of ownership of the issue. Women are now interested in participating more than before, and men are realizing the benefits of including everyone in a village. Community ownership of village infrastructure, as well as of new ways of working, is increasing.'

As noted in Section 3.3 above, increasing gender equality involves changing deeply held values about the roles of different groups of people in society and the relationships between them. For a Government program such as PNDS to engage in this process of

changing values is innovative, progressive and also essential, given the well-known social and economic benefits associated with equality. Several stakeholders highlighted the ‘radical’ nature of PNDS’ efforts in this context. For example, one PNDS Municipal Director said ‘PNDS contradicts Timor culture but that culture does not allow women to have a say and we want that to change. PNDS is trying to bring about change and to demonstrate the power of that change. Some husbands complain, but our facilitators discuss it with them. Our facilitators are well trained to respond now on the roles of women and men and the benefits for the whole community.’

In each context, examples were given about signs of transformational changes brought about by PNDS processes. For example, in Cotelau, it was reported ‘the fact that women prioritized the development of a new maternity clinic reflects the opportunity that women had to raise their voice about what is important to them – this in itself is new and it has helped lots of women to raise their voices.’ In Maubara for example, facilitators reported that women’s experience of working on Community Management Teams enabled them to build confidence, skills and credibility, to the extent they now intend to seek leadership roles as part of upcoming in village governance elections. This experience complements the work of PATRIA in contributing to the capacity of who they call ‘women with potential’ to take on increasing leadership roles. One Gender Focal Point summarized this with ‘PNDS enables women to do things other than stay at home. Our socialization process is important for both women and men. We make sure that village heads support the process. We have seen that the communities like the transparency that is associated with these process.’

During the Pilot phase of PNDS, of all the projects that were approved, none had actually been nominated by the separate women’s groups consulted. In response to this data, more effort was given by PNDS officials and facilitators to support joint decision-making processes in the community-wide prioritization meetings. Since then, of the 1000+ projects completed to date from 442 villages (approximately 2.7 projects per village), many more (between 10 and 25%, depending on how they are counted) have been those initially identified by the women’s only groups as their top priority<sup>4</sup>.

The Director of PNDS reported ‘given the complexity of PNDS, we are proud of our achievements to date in relation to gender equality and we hope to build on this and increase our understanding of the issues over time.’ Another senior official reported ‘we can say it’s been a great success so far, because we have achieved 40% women’s participation in PNDS to date.’

One senior PNDS Secretariat official said ‘in Timorese cultures, women did not work in construction, only in the kitchen, but now they can do work the same as men. We always

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<sup>4</sup> There is some complexity in determining the actual number of women’s priority projects selected per village. Currently if women’s only priorities are agreed to at the subsequent joint (men and women) meetings, then these priorities are no longer classified as ‘women’s priorities.’ Anecdontally this is causing underreporting of what were initially women’s proposals. In response to this, PNDS-SP is assisting PNDS to expand monitoring and tracking tools so women’s priorities projects are better tracked.

try to involve more and more women in PNDS activities, and now we find that only a small percentage of women are too afraid to participate.’

Many stakeholders consulted during this review highlighted that the involvement of women in decision-making outside the home, in determining and facilitating community level processes and in leading and managing change, is relatively new at village levels in Timor-Leste. While there are national NGOs, community and government leaders who have advocated for and promoted gender equality in recent years, the majority of Timorese people live in villages where traditional values about the respective roles of women and men are deeply held, long-established and understood equally by both women and men. In other cultural contexts, changes have come about through major challenges to the status quo and often a mix of sustained locally-determined efforts over many years. Thus, efforts to bring about shifts in cultural values in Timor-Leste, need to recognize that shifts are not generally likely to occur in short periods of time or as a result of one or a small number of short-term projects.

The Director of PNDS confirmed that monitoring to date has indicated that a next useful focus of effort should be on the quality of participation by women and men. The expectation is that participation of women will enable them to express their ideas, engage in joint decision-making and gain leadership skills in order to influence processes and development outcomes. She reflected that after 4-5 years of PNDS operation, it may be possible to expect that larger numbers of women could become village leaders, from the small number now.

## 5.9 Focus over next 12-18 months

After a period of consolidation, monitoring and deepening experience, there is scope for PNDS and PNDS-SP to refine the gender strategy and move beyond women’s participation to more nuanced approaches to gender equality, disability inclusion and women’s empowerment. With strong foundations in place, PNDS is in a good position to proceed through its complex processes of implementation towards meeting its various targets and objectives. With ongoing resources dedicated to supporting inclusive approaches, the next 12-18 months provides an opportunity to further embed processes, collectively monitor progress and respond to emerging issues. In particular, this period will allow for more communities to experience the benefits of shared decision-making, increasing gender equality and women’s empowerment, as well as begin to recognize their role in increasing inclusion of people with disability.

To support this process, a focus by PNDS-SP on monitoring and mentoring is suggested for the next 12-18 months. The focus on monitoring will enable PNDS staff to be supported as they analyse data about quantitative and qualitative trends and reflect on implications for approaches and practices. Data is only really useful for management and decision-making at PNDS level, if there are opportunities for discussion, reflection and analysis of the implications. Thus the benefits of the data are limited unless there is time for those delivering programs to consider the data. PNDS-SP is well placed to support this process.

It is possible that issues will arise, associated with for example increasing the workloads of women without encouraging men to take on household and community roles, or increasing security risks for women staff working in remote locations, or with threats to harmonious relationships caused by changes to women's and men's expectations of each other, which may need to be considered and addressed within PNDS. While monitoring processes are already in place, it is often the case in other government programs that insufficient time is allowed for them, particularly when there are increasing pressures to reduce timelines, increase coverage and reduce resource expenditure. The support by PNDS-SP in this regard would be appropriate.

An equally appropriate role for PNDS-SP is to provide a mix of informal and formal mentoring for PNDS Secretariat staff and particularly the Gender Focal Points, as they deepen their experience, test practices and reflect on approaches and results. Culturally appropriate mentoring will enable PNDS staff themselves to strengthen their professional skills, deepen their understanding about what works well and reflect on effective approaches, relevant to their level of responsibility and experience. Any such scheme would need to be voluntary, confidential, respectful and flexible, and managed within negotiated parameters. This could make a valuable contribution to the capacity of PNDS staff to achieve the program's objectives.

## **6. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The Review team found that essential, coherent and appropriate elements are in place to support PNDS in relation to women's participation in village-level infrastructure processes. These elements are appropriate to the PNDS and Timor-Leste contexts and effective in contributing to women's participation in program activities, including at village level.

As could be expected, there is variation between communities in the extent and nature of women's participation as well as in the extent to which experience in PNDS contributes to broader changes in gender roles, responsibilities and relationships. However, the experience to date suggests there is potential for this progress to date to contribute to transformational change, if efforts can be sustained over an extended period and if changes in the broader environment are supportive.

### **6.1 Recommendations**

Recommendations for improvement through PNDS-SP (actionable within existing PNDS-SP resources)

#### **For PNDS-SP**

1. PNDS-SP should continue to support PNDS' leaders and personnel in consolidating current systems and rules which apply to the participation of women and men in community processes
  - This should continue to be undertaken within a collaborative and supportive relationship, where there is shared commitment to deepening understanding



about changes in Timorese values about gender equality and implications for Timorese society.

2. PNDS-SP should build on achievements to date by focusing on mentoring PNDS staff over the next 12-18 months as they undertake their duties and achieve the program's objectives, with a particular focus on reflective/action learning.
3. PNDS-SP should support PNDS' ongoing monitoring of gender disaggregated data and assist with the analysis of data and management responses to issues arising. Particular attention should be given to monitoring the quality of participation and the effects of increased participation on women's and men's roles, responsibilities and relationships. Consideration could be given to understanding and preventing risks to women's safety in the home and in the community, unreasonable time-burdens, and potentially contributing to income gaps via incentive payment structures, within a 'do no harm' context.
4. PNDS-SP should support raised awareness in PNDS about how to apply disability inclusive approaches within its systems, in ways which are appropriate to the Timor-Leste context.
5. PNDS-SP could also consider supporting PNDS to deepen understanding about issues associated with incentives (financial and non-financial) for PNDS staff to promote GSI, if there is shared interest in this topic and if resources permit.
6. After a period of consolidation (up to 18 months), PNDS-SP should seek to support PNDS to update the Gender Strategy to move beyond women's participation to a more nuanced approach to gender equality, women's empowerment and broader social inclusion, based on lessons learned from experience.

#### **For DFAT**

7. DFAT should maintain current resources (budget and personnel) to support GSI work in PNDS.
8. DFAT should continue to participate in policy dialogue with GoTL officials and NGOs on gender equality, women's empowerment and disability inclusive development approaches across shared development objectives.
9. DFAT should work closely with PNDS and PNDS-SP to identify and support 'champions' for gender equality in Timor-Leste within government or the broader community and encourage collaboration with PNDS in opportunistic ways.

## Annex 1 Questions for stakeholder groups

Questions	Relevant to:	Expressed as:
1. Assess the quality of the Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy (PNDS Secretariat document)	Program documents and reports	a) Is the Strategy clear, relevant, culturally savvy and accessible? b) Does the Strategy reflect contemporary perspectives on social inclusion and gender equality? c) Does the Strategy identify how its objectives will be achieved and how changes will be tracked within the context of cultural values and other realities in Timor-Leste, in practical and realistic ways?
1a. Is the strategy appropriate to the context and fit for purpose?	Australian Embassy officials  Asia Foundation and World Bank officials  GoTL representatives	d) Do you think the Strategy is relevant and well-suited to the Timor-Leste cultural context? e) Do you think the Strategy is relevant and well-suited to the PNDS context?  cc) What do you think are the key forms of social exclusion in Timor-Leste in addition to gender and disability (e.g. illiteracy)?
1b. Is the strategy well understood by PNDS staff and PNDS-SP advisors?	PNDS Secretariat Staff  PNDS-SP Advisors	f) Can you tell us what you know already about the Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy? g) Do you feel confident in your understanding of the ideas and approaches included in the Strategy?
2. How is implementation of the PNDS Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy progressing at all levels?	Project reports  Australian Embassy officials	h) Do the reports describe Strategy progress and if so, what is evident so far?
2a. Is there understanding of GSI issues amongst PNDS and PNDS-SP staff at all levels?	PNDS Secretariat Staff  PNDS-SP Advisors  PNDS District and sub-district teams	i) Can you tell us about your understanding of the gender and social inclusion issues within PNDS? j) How well is the Strategy's implementation going overall? Are there examples to illustrate? k) Do you feel confident about achieving the Strategy's objectives and undertaking the tasks involved in terms of gender equity?

		l) Do you feel confident about achieving the Strategy's objectives and undertaking the tasks involved in terms of ensuring everyone is included in PNDS processes, like decision-making and managing construction of infrastructure?
2b. Are PNDS and PNDS-SP staff incorporating and addressing GSI in their day-to-day work?	PNDS-SP Managing Contractor  PNDS Secretariat Staff  PNDS-SP Advisors  RHTO	m) What is your own experience of using the Strategy in your work? n) What reactions do you receive from people you work with, when you apply the ideas and processes included in the Strategy? o) What have you learned from using the Strategy in practical terms?  (for RHTO only)  p) Can you tell us about your engagement with PNDS to develop their gender and social inclusion strategies? Do you have examples to illustrate this? q) What do you know about the program's inclusion of people with disabilities at suku level? r) Do you know of any consequences of PNDS using this approach?
2c. Is the PNDS-SP Field Support Team contributing to promoting gender equality?	PNDS District and sub-district teams          Community Members	m) What is your own experience of using the Strategy in your work? n) What reactions do you receive from people you work with, when you apply the ideas and processes included in the Strategy? o) What have you learned from using the Strategy in practical terms?  s) Are you aware of any changes in relations between men and women and the level of inclusion in sukus of all people, which might be connected with the way that PNDS is working? If so, what kinds of changes?  <b>{For Community members only}</b>  Can you tell us about your experience of the PNDS in your suku?  t) Have you noticed that PNDS tries to ensure that both men and women from all parts of the community participate and benefit from the funded activities?

		<p>u) Have you been aware of any changes in the roles of women and men as a result of this program?</p> <p>v) Have you been aware of any changes in the way that all people, including people with disabilities or any others, are involved in the PNDS-supported activities?</p>
2c. Is there an improved understanding of gender equality and disability inclusive development in PNDS?	<p>PNDS-SP Managing Contractor</p> <p>PNDS Secretariat Staff</p> <p>PNDS-SP Advisors</p> <p>PNDS District and sub-district teams</p>	p) What have you learned from using the Strategy in practical terms? Can you give us some examples?
2d. Where there is increased understanding and efforts on GSI by the PNDS Secretariat, what have been the factors that have contributed to this?	<p>PNDS-SP Managing Contractor</p> <p>PNDS Secretariat Staff</p> <p>PNDS-SP Advisors</p> <p>PNDS District and sub-district teams</p>	<p>w) If there have been positive changes in gender inclusion, what do you think are the success factors?</p> <p>x) If there have been positive changes in the inclusion of all people in PNDS-funded activities, what do you think are the success factors?</p>
3. Are there indications that inclusive practices by PNDS personnel have contributed to changes at suku (village) level?	<p>Project reports</p> <p>Australian Embassy officials</p>	y) Do the reports describe Strategy progress and if so, what is evident so far?
3a. Is there evidence of differential benefits between women and men at the suku level?	<p>PNDS Secretariat Staff</p> <p>PNDS-SP Advisors</p>	z) Have you noticed any different benefits between men and women at sukus, as a result of PNDS work? E.g. Have you noticed any changes in relationships between men and women or changes in the roles of men and women in decision-making and participation of suku activities? Do women and men categorized as marginalized/disadvantaged have different views from others?

	<p>PNDS personnel at district level</p> <p>Asia Foundation and World Bank officials</p> <p>GoTL representatives</p> <p>Citizens of Timor-Leste at community level</p>	
3b. Is there is evidence of more disability-inclusive approaches at the suku level?	<p>PNDS Secretariat Staff</p> <p>PNDS-SP Advisors</p> <p>PNDS personnel at district level</p> <p>Asia Foundation and World Bank officials</p> <p>GoTL representatives</p> <p>RHTO</p>	aa) Have you noticed any changes in the level of inclusion of all people, including those with disabilities, in the communities where you work?
3c. If yes, what factors have contributed to this?	<p>PNDS Secretariat Staff</p> <p>PNDS-SP Advisors</p> <p>PNDS personnel at district level</p> <p>Asia Foundation and World Bank officials</p>	bb) If you have noticed any positive changes in gender and social inclusion in sukus, what do you think are the factors that may have contributed to these changes?

	GoTL representatives RHTO	
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### Allocation of questions across stakeholder groups

Stakeholder group	Questions
Relevant officials at the Australian embassy (Minister-Counsellor, PNDS staff, Gender Working Group)	<p>cc) What do you think are the key forms of social exclusion in Timor-Leste in addition to gender and disability (e.g. illiteracy)?</p> <p>d) Do you think the Strategy is relevant and well-suited to the Timor-Leste cultural context?</p> <p>e) Do you think the Strategy is relevant and well-suited to the PNDS context?</p> <p>h) Do the reports describe progress in implementing the Strategy and if so, what is evident so far?</p> <p>y) Do the reports describe benefits resulting from the Strategy's implementation and if so, what is evident so far?</p>
PNDS Secretariat staff	<p>Can you tell us about your understanding of the gender and social inclusion issues within PNDS?</p> <p>f) Can you tell us what you know already about the Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy?</p> <p>g) Do you feel confident in your understanding of the ideas and approaches included in the Strategy?</p> <p>cc) What do you think are the key forms of social exclusion in Timor-Leste in addition to gender and disability (e.g. illiteracy)?</p> <p>j) How well is the Strategy's implementation going overall?</p> <p>K) Do you feel confident about achieving the Strategy's objectives and undertaking the tasks involved in terms of gender equity?</p> <p>l) Do you feel confident about achieving the Strategy's objectives and undertaking the tasks involved in terms of ensuring everyone is included in PNDS processes, like decision-making and managing construction of infrastructure?</p> <p>m) What is your own experience of using the Strategy in your work?</p>

	<p>n) What reactions do you receive from people you work with, when you apply the ideas and processes included in the Strategy?</p> <p>o) What have you learned from using the Strategy in practical terms?</p> <p>w) If there have been positive changes in gender inclusion, what do you think are the success factors?</p> <p>x) If there have been positive changes in the inclusion of all people in PNDS-funded activities, what do you think are the success factors?</p> <p>z) Have you noticed any different benefits between men and women at suku, as a result of PNDS work? E.g. Have you noticed any changes in relationships between men and women or changes in the roles of men and women in decision-making and participation of suku activities? Do women and men categorized as marginalized/disadvantaged have different views from others?</p> <p>aa) Have you noticed any changes in the level of inclusion of all people, including those with disabilities, in the communities where you work?</p>
PNDS-SP Managing Contractor (Cardno) including management staff and technical advisors	<p>Can you tell us about your understanding of the gender and social inclusion issues within PNDS?</p> <p>cc) What do you think are the key forms of social exclusion in Timor-Leste in addition to gender and disability (e.g. illiteracy)?</p> <p>f) Can you tell us what you know already about the Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy?</p> <p>g) Do you feel confident in your understanding of the ideas and approaches included in the Strategy?</p> <p>j) How well is the Strategy's implementation going overall?</p> <p>k) Do you feel confident about achieving the Strategy's objectives and undertaking the tasks involved in terms of gender equity?</p>



	l) Do you feel confident about achieving the Strategy's objectives and undertaking the tasks involved in terms of ensuring everyone is included in PNDS processes, like decision-making and managing construction of infrastructure?
Asia Foundation and World Bank officials	<p>d) Do you think the Strategy is relevant and well-suited to the Timor-Leste cultural context?</p> <p>e) Do you think the Strategy is relevant and well-suited to the PNDS context?</p> <p>cc) What do you think are the key forms of social exclusion in Timor-Leste in addition to gender and disability (e.g. illiteracy)?</p> <p>z) Have you noticed any different benefits between men and women at suku, as a result of PNDS work? E.g. Have you noticed any changes in relationships between men and women or changes in the roles of men and women in decision-making and participation of suku activities? Do women and men categorized as marginalized/disadvantaged have different views from others?</p> <p>aa) Have you noticed any changes in the level of inclusion of all people, including those with disabilities, in the communities where PNDS works?</p> <p>bb) If you have noticed any positive changes in gender and social inclusion in suku, what do you think are the factors that may have contributed to these changes?</p>
GoTL representatives (eg Secretary of State for Women's Empowerment)	<p>d) Do you think the Strategy is relevant and well-suited to the Timor-Leste cultural context?</p> <p>cc) What do you think are the key forms of social exclusion in Timor-Leste in addition to gender and disability (e.g. illiteracy)?</p> <p>e) Do you think the Strategy is relevant and well-suited to the PNDS context?</p> <p>z) Have you noticed any different benefits between men and women at suku, as a result of PNDS work? E.g. Have you noticed any changes in relationships between men and women or changes in the roles of men and women in decision-making and participation of suku activities?</p>

	<p>aa) Have you noticed any changes in the level of inclusion of all people, including those with disabilities, in the communities where PNDS works?</p> <p>bb) If you have noticed any positive changes in gender and social inclusion in suku, what do you think are the factors that may have contributed to these changes?</p>
RHTO	<p>p) Can you tell us about your engagement with PNDS to develop their gender and social inclusion strategies?</p> <p>q) What do you know about the program's inclusion of people with disabilities at suku level?</p> <p>r) Do you know of any consequences of PNDS using this approach?</p>
PNDS District and sub-district teams (including Gender Focal Points)	<p>cc) What do you think are the key forms of social exclusion in Timor-Leste in addition to gender and disability (e.g. illiteracy)?</p> <p>m) What is your own experience of using the Strategy in your work?</p> <p>n) What reactions do you receive from people you work with, when you apply the ideas and processes included in the Strategy?</p> <p>o) What have you learned from using the Strategy in practical terms?</p> <p>z) Have you noticed any different benefits between men and women at suku, as a result of PNDS work? E.g. Have you noticed any changes in relationships between men and women or changes in the roles of men and women in decision-making and participation of suku activities? Do women and men categorized as marginalized/disadvantaged have different views from others?</p> <p>aa) Have you noticed any changes in the level of inclusion of all people, including those with disabilities, in the communities where you work?</p> <p>bb) If you have noticed any positive changes in gender and social inclusion in suku, what do you think are the factors that may have contributed to these changes?</p>

<p>Community Members (Suku leaders and other Community Management Team representatives and others)</p>	<p>Can you tell us about your experience of the PNDS in your suku?</p> <p>t) Have you noticed that PNDS tries to ensure that both men and women participate and benefit from the funded activities?</p> <p>u) Have you been aware of any changes in the roles of women and men as a result of this program?</p> <p>v) Have you been aware of any changes in the way that all people, including people with disabilities or any others, are involved in the PNDS-supported activities?</p>
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## **Annex 2      List of reports reviewed and other references**

- PNDS Gender Strategy
- PNDS Gender and Social Inclusion work-plan
- PNDS Program Operations Manual
- PNDS Support Program Design Document
- PNDS-SP annual strategic plan
- PNDS SP M&E Plan
- PNDS SP Progress report July-Dec 2015
- Monitoring and Review Group Mission 1 report
- Monitoring and Review Group Mission 2 report
- PNDS-SP Aid Quality Check 2015
- Embassy PNDS-SP Gender Action Plan
- World Bank Mixed Method Baseline Survey
- 'Back Stories- How to Sustain PNDS Success' – research study by TAF

## **Annex 3 List of people met**

### **PNDS Secretariat**

Diretora Dulce Guterres  
Chefe Rosito Guterres  
Chefe Secondino Moreira  
Olderico Lopez  
Fortunato Amaral  
Marcio Marcal  
Rogerio Muakandala  
Victoria Gomes  
Duarte Dos Santos  
Constantino Ribeiro

### **PNDS-Support Program**

Uche Cunha, Social Development Adviser  
Melinda Mousaco, Senior Advisor Program Implementation  
Alvaro Ribeiro, Program Implementation Advisor  
Teuku (Mizan) Mizansyah, Senior Advisor Engineering  
Erna Suryani, Finance Advisor  
Geraldo Sarmiento, Coordinator, Field Support team  
Abilio Araujo, Training Development Advisor  
Alexandre Ronchi, Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Advisor  
Fiona Hamilton, Operations Manager and members of BuiMau (Gender working group)

### **DFAT**

Peter Doyle, Ambassador  
Anita Dos Santos Silva, Gender Officer, PNDS-SP and DFAT, Community Development Officer  
Sonja Litz, PNDS-SP Program Director  
Regan Field, Second Secretary, Aid Management  
Kristie Maiden, Senior Coordinator, Gender and Disability  
Emi Quilty, First Secretary, Gender and Disability  
Kathy Richards, First Secretary, Community Development  
Peter O'Connor, Counsellor Rural Development

### **RHTO**

Silvia Soares

### **PATRIA**

Elda Barros

### **SEM (Secretary of State for Women's Empowerment)**

Senhora Ubalda Filipe Alves

### **ASIA FOUNDATION**

Sato Amaral

### **LIQUICA MUNICIPAL**

Fernando Gonsalves, District Director, PNDS  
Alcino Lopes da Cruz, Gender Focal Point, PNDS  
Liquica Municipal and Administrative Post PNDS facilitators (group)

**AILEU MUNICIPAL**

Abel da Conceicao, District Director, PNDS

Armindo Moreira, Gender Focal Point, PNDS

Aileu Laulara Administrative Post PNDS facilitators (group)

**DILI MUNICIPAL**

Tadeu Soares, District Director, PNDS

Leopoldo Moniz, Gender Focal Point, PNDS

Dili Municipal and Administrative Post PNDS facilitators (group)

## **Annex 4      Aide Memoire**

[NB the material below was presented in Tetum and English in a set of slides, within photographs taken by the Review Team (with verbal consent) during the visit]

### **Purpose**

1. Assess the Gender and Social Inclusion strategy and action plan.
2. Identify progress on implementation.
3. Look for any signs of contribution to changes at village level.

### **Context**

- Both the PNDS Secretariat and Support Program are new and complex and have been subject to a variety of significant changes in funding and governance.
- PNDS faces a number of current issues, including:
  - Pressure to compress deadlines
  - Incentive payments at community level
  - Funding for logistics (travel)
  - Pressure on staff to cover large numbers of sites
  - Additional proposals to use PNDS system

### **Findings**

1. Commitment by PNDS Secretariat to social inclusion is strong and clear at all levels
2. The systematic approach of including women and men is embedded in all steps of PNDS but all processes are still relatively new.
3. Appropriate resources are allocated for supporting inclusion.
4. Processes for supporting participation of women are well understood and being implemented but there is variation in the extent of participation in different settings.
5. Some progress has been made to raise understanding about disability inclusive approaches, with a focus on participation and accessible infrastructure
6. Use of MIS and TAF monitoring is contributing to raising awareness and deepening understanding of more nuanced issues, which are both critical to take the strategy to the next level and to manage risks

10. Community members and PNDS leaders acknowledge the major difference in PNDS' approach on participation of women and men compared with other Government programs
11. Community members report that their experience of participation, shared decision-making and joint management of resources is contributing to changing roles for women.
12. The Support Program's contributions, particularly funding for training and the Social Development Adviser and Gender Officer, are highly valued by PNDS.
13. Given the foundations are in place (leadership, ownership, partnership, strategy, action plan and systems), it is timely to consider a slight shift in focus to mentoring, policy dialogue and monitoring in relation to gender equality.
14. PNDS Support Program should consider directing resources to building on initial awareness of disability inclusive approaches in PNDS, in partnership with disabled people's organisations.
15. After a period of consolidation and monitoring, there is scope for PNDS and PNDS-SP to refine the gender strategy and move beyond participation to more nuanced approaches to gender equality, disability inclusion and women's empowerment.