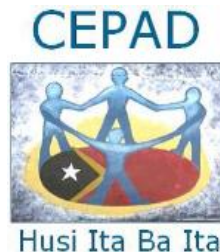


Fostering Freedom of Information for Inclusive Governance Project in Timor-Leste

FINAL REPORT



USAID/Timor-Leste
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Glossary of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
AV	Audio Visual Team of CEPAD
CAC	Anti-Corruption Commission
CEPAD	Center of Studies for Peace and Development
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DLO	District Liaison Officer (CEPAD)
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FOI	Freedom of Information
FY17 Q2	Second Year Second Quarter of FOI Project
FY17 Q3	Second Year Third Quarter of FOI Project
GMN TV	National Media Group TV
GOPAC-TL	Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption Timor-Leste
GoTL	Government of Timor-Leste
HAK	Association for Law, Human Rights and Justice
I-CRES	Inovación para el Crecimiento (Sub Contractors)
INTERPEACE	International Peacebuilding Alliance
JSMP	Judicial System Monitoring Programme
KKN	Corruption, Collusion and Nepotism (Program of CEPAD)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NWG-FOI	National Working Group - Freedom of Information
PDHJ	Ombudsmen for Human Rights and Justice
PGR	Public Prosecutors Office
PMEP	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
PNTL	Timor-Leste National Police
PSA	Public Service Announcement
RTTL	National Radio and Television
RTK	Catholic Radio Station
SEPFPOE	Secretariat of State for Vocational Training Policy and Employment
SESCOM	Secretary of the State for Social and Communication
STL	The Daily Newspaper, Suara Timor Lorosa'e
TI-TL	Transparency International Timor Leste
TLMDC	Timor-Leste Media Development Centre
TOT	Training of Trainers
TVE	Timor-Leste Secondary Schools Television and Radio Station
UNTL	Timor-Leste National University
USAID	United State Agency for Aid and Development
ZEESM-TL	The Special Zones for Social Market Economy

I. Executive summary

On September 29, 2015, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) granted Cooperative Agreement Award No. AID-472-A-15-00002 USAID's Fostering Freedom of Information for Inclusive Governance Project to the Centre of Studies for Peace and Development (CEPAD).

The aim of the two-year project (2015- 2017) was to improve governance by engaging public opinion in demanding greater transparency and accountability in government through a meaningful right of access to information.

The theory of change that frames this project is that: if Timorese citizens are effectively aware of the benefits of exercising their freedom of information rights, either for personal gain and/or social advance, then they will be more greatly involved in scrutinizing government, demanding basic services and be less tolerant of abuses and lack of transparency in the management of state funds.

The approach was based in the premise that facilitating access to public information would dissuade government officials from engaging in discretionary behavior and certain modalities of corruption.

The implementation of the project was guided by the following principles:

1. An indigenous project driven and implemented by CEPAD through a partnership between local civil society organizations and public sector agencies.
2. A results-oriented approach with a direct /tangible benefit to the public.
3. Project results are considered to be the means to an end and not the end by itself.

In the implementation process the following working principles were respected and applied:

1. Inclusivity and representation involving all level of society and balance with gender equality, culture, age, and geographical location.
2. Participatory process using interactive dialogue to engage key stakeholders nationwide.
3. Learning oriented with knowledge based, reflective, and self-critical.
4. Objectivity and neutrality to ensure effective participation.

In pursuing the project's overall goal, different activities were successfully undertaken to meet the following complementary and mutually reinforcing objectives:

1. A total of 1186 participants (495 female and 691 male) attended 78 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs); of this 967 were selected members of the wider community in

1st phase and 219 were selected members of the wider community in 2nd phase (refer to Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP) indicator in Annex One).

2. A total of 503 participants (203 Female and 300 male) attended 31 Training of Trainers (TOTs); of this 227 were common citizens in 1st phase and 245 were public servants in 2nd phase, and 31 were senior staff from selected government institutions (refer to PMEP indicator in Annex One).
3. 16 meetings were conducted with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) including Luta Hamutuk, Belun, Fundasaun Mahein, Asosiasaun Hukum, Hak Asasi dan keadilan (HAK), Judicial System Monitoring Programme (JSMP), Timor-Leste Media Development Center (TLMDC), Fundasaun Haburas, and Patria and facilitated by CEPAD with the aim to build a consensus around improved access to information mechanisms (refer to PMEP indicator in Annex One).
4. In collaboration with the media, over 10 Radio interviews, 3 Radio Talk Shows, 8 Radio PSAs were produced, and aired 378 times via Radio Metro FM and 13 Community Radio Stations countrywide; 1 live TV debate with the National Media Group TV, 3 TV interviews, 3 TV dramas were produced and aired; and 2 press releases, and 7 news articles were produced and published on Timor Post, Suara Timor Lorosa'e (STL), Independente, Naroman, Tempo Semanal, and Diario Nasional.
5. 12 National working Group meetings were successfully undertaken with the participation of members and representatives from the Prime Minister's Office, , the Anti-Corruption Commission (CAC), Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC), Ombudsmen for Human Rights and Justice (PDHJ), Office of Prime Minister's Social Audit-unit, and CSOs (Luta Hamutuk, Belun, Fundasaun Mahein, Asosiasaun HAK, JSMP, TLMDC, Haburas, and Patria).
6. A Baseline Survey was conducted countrywide in 2016, with a total of 883 respondents (356 or 40% Female and 527 or 60% Male). The aim was to provide a picture of the knowledge and views of people throughout Timor-Leste on freedom of information.

An overview of the main findings includes:

- People generally had very little information or understanding about Freedom of Information (FOI). In particular, among FGD participants 82% of the respondents had negative attitude (said No) towards FOI, while only 18% of respondents had positive attitude (said Yes) towards FOI.
 - Measuring the advantages of FOI with yes/no questions, the majority of respondents, about 75% had positive responses and acknowledged the advantages of accessing public information, while 25 % had negative responses and ignored advantages of accessing to public information.
7. End line of project survey was conducted in 27 administrative posts of 9 Municipalities (Dili, Aileu, Covalima, Manufahi, Baucau, Manatuto, Lautem, Ermera, and Bobonaro)

with a total of 405 respondents: (of this 144 or 36% were civil servants and 261 or 64% were ordinary citizens). The aim was to evaluate the impact of FOI training to citizens and public servants. The survey also captured the level of knowledge, attitude, and awareness of participants in relation to their right to supply information and provided information in promoting open governance with regard to democratic participation, transparency, and accountability. The survey also provided recommendation to the government to be more transparent in improving delivery of service to citizens.

The findings of the end line survey include:

- Majority of participants in the end line survey were empowered on Freedom of Information because of workshops conducted across all geographical areas.
- The result of end line survey showed that the level of awareness of the FOI framework tended to be extremely high for both citizens and public servants. Among citizens, (95% of citizens those surveyed achieved an above average score in the awareness of FOI indicator, while and 99% of public servants achieved an above average score.
- The result of end line survey showed that the level of knowledge of the FOI framework were above average for both citizens and public servants. Among citizens, 54% achieved an above average score in the knowledge of FOI framework indicator, while 54% citizens and 64% of public servants achieved an above average score in the same indicator.
- The result of end line survey which was administered to both citizens and public servants showed a wide-spread support for the FOI framework, and belief in the benefits of Freedom of Information to their lives, while only a few of them had negative attitude towards FOI. Only 4% of citizens and 6% of public servants scored below average on the negative attitudes towards FOI indicator.

Summary of Challenges and Constraints

1. In 2015 the main challenges included among others the reimbursement-based agreement was an issue deterring the implementation of some project activities.
2. In 2016 the main challenges included among others the retention of project personnel partially due to lack of commitment and skills for implementing the program, while on the other hand the reimbursement also made it difficult to hire better qualified staff.
3. In 2017 the main challenges included among others Presidential and Parliamentary elections which contributed to delaying the implementation process, while venues and participants were sometimes difficult to secure.
4. The government's bureaucracy often made it difficult to secure the timely participation of public servants in TOTs implemented countrywide.

II. Introduction: Country Context and Program Operating Environment

USAID Awarded Contract No.AID-472-A-15-00002 to CEPAD for the implementation of the two-year Fostering Freedom of Information for Inclusive Governance Project, with the objective of engaging public opinion in demanding greater transparency and accountability in government through a meaningful right of access to information. To meet the above objective several activities were successfully undertaken in Timor-Leste’s 13 municipalities and 65 administrative posts as seen in the following map.

CEPAD’s Fostering Freedom of Information for Inclusive Governance Project was designed to meet Timor-Leste’s government priorities in the area of governance development and good governance in the public sector. The Government has indeed identified a need for reform in areas such as management and leadership, systems and procedures, administration, accounting and finance, budget execution and procurement, knowledge and document management, and strategic planning and monitoring. By looking at these areas and fostering Freedom of Information, CEPAD’s project has contributed to wake up a collective “social conscience” within communities through public education on their constitutional rights to access public information (Freedom of Information) so that they are able to resist manipulations and are encouraged to be more involved in improving governance by holding their leaders accountable. Additionally, the project has addressed the need to enhance public access to state records, as a key mechanism to reducing opportunities for corruption, forging transparency in government, demanding government accountability and limiting discretionary.



III. Background

Timor-Leste is a small nation with a population of approximately 1.2 million. After 15 years of independence, the country is still considered as one of the poorest nation in the world; the 2013 Human Development Index shows Timor-Leste ranking 134 out of 187 in terms of social and economic development. Much of the government efforts to develop the nation have been focused on building mega-projects such as Especial Zones of Social Market of Economy (ZEESM) and Tasi Mane Project or the Timor-Leste Government's development strategy of a corridor of petroleum infrastructure along the southwest coast. Without a proper control of public spending, lack of human capacity to implement and assess long-term consequences of such major projects, the benefits of the public spending had the potential to lead to corruption, fraud, and waste.

As a young democratic nation, Timor-Leste is still faced with a wide spread challenge of corruption; this has the potential to threaten the political and social stability of the nation and undermine the good governance and the integrity of the judicial system in this country.

To respond to the needs for public participation to provide the much-needed public oversight on the government's transparency and accountability, CEPAD has been awarded USAID's Fostering Freedom of Information for Inclusive Governance Project to advance CEPAD's mission of leveraging democratic governance to enhance a culture of peace and dialogue in Timor-Leste.

FOI Result Framework

Development Objective:

Institutional and Human Capacity for Development Strengthened to Improve the Lives of Timor-Leste's Citizens

Intermediate Result 2:

Increased Capacity to Deliver Responsive Services at National and Sub-National Levels

Sub- IR 2.2: Sub-National institutions strengthened to respond to citizen priorities

Sub-IR 2.3: Increased community and citizen engagement with government and local institutions

Overall Goal: Improved governance by engaging public opinion in demanding greater transparency and accountability in government through a meaningful right of access to information

Objective: Promote enhanced access to public records as a key mechanism to reducing opportunities for corruption, forging transparency in government, demanding government accountability and limiting discretionary power

Objective: Wake up a collective “social conscience” within communities through public education on their constitutional rights to access public information to become more involved in improving governance and holding their leaders accountable

Outcome: Public administration shows positive attitude towards becoming more transparent and accountable through improved public documentation, archival and availability

Outcome: Civil society is well-informed and empowered to take action to access public information

Objective: Forge cooperation ties with government to implement joint education activities on freedom of information and corruption-prevention

Objective: Establish a collaboration framework of civil society organizations less vulnerable to external pressures and speaking up as a unified voice in defense of democratic practices and principles

Outcome: CEPAD collaborates with key government agencies to successfully launch information and corruption prevention initiatives. Government implements reforms to put into place mechanisms facilitating access to public information.

Outcome: Civil society organizations collaborate to motivate the adoption of concrete mechanisms and/or procedural reforms facilitating access to government information to make government more open and accountable.

3.1. Project Objectives

CEPAD has pursued the overall goal of this project through the following complementary and mutually-reinforcing objectives:

1. Wake up a collective “social conscience” within communities through public education on their constitutional rights to access public information so that they are able to resist manipulation and are encouraged to be more involved in improving governance by holding their leaders accountable.
2. Promote enhanced access to public records as a key mechanism to reducing opportunities for corruption, forging transparency in government, demanding government accountability and limiting discretionary power.
3. Forge cooperation ties with government to implement joint education activities on freedom of information and corruption prevention.
4. Establish a collaboration framework of civil society organization less vulnerable to external pressure speaking up as a unified voice in defense of democratic practices and principles.

3.2. Strategic Approach

The approach taken was based in the premise that facilitating access to public information dissuade government official from engaging in discretionary behavior and certain modalities of corruption.

A series of activities was undertaken using participatory approach in both training of trainers and focus group discussion including baseline and end line surveys to effectively engage participants in the implementation process.

In the implementation process the following working principles were respected and applied:

- Inclusivity and representation involving all level of society and balance d with gender equality, culture, age, and geographical location.
- Participatory process using interactive dialogue to engage key stakeholders nationwide.
- Learning oriented with knowledge based, reflective, and self-critical.
- Objectivity and neutrality to ensure effective participation.

3.3. Gender Integration

CEPAD has been consolidating and empowering women to continue to ensure gender integration throughout all CEPAD's project activities including Freedom of Information project. Women's participation has been highly prioritized during FOI's project held countrywide including in all activities:

- Training of trainers with citizens and public servants with a total of 472 participants, of which 37% were women and 63% men.
- Focus Group discussions with citizens with a total of 1186 participants, of which 58% were men and 42% women.
- Baseline survey with a total of 883 respondents, of which 40% were women and 60% men.
- End line survey with a total of 257 respondents, of which 64% were men and 36% women, while the public servants sample included 140 respondents, of which 73% were men and 27% women.
- Meetings with members of the National Working Group, with an average of 10-12 participants per meeting, of which 70% were men and 30% women.
- In a seminar conducted on the FOI Day on March 16, 2017, of the total of 75 participants, 92% were men and 8% women.
- In the Media Advocacy Campaign through a series of live TV debate, 72 participants attended the event, of which 32% were women and 68% men.

However, as noted in the project quarterly reports the level of women's participation in terms of numbers was relatively low comparing to men's, though in terms of quality participation in the discussions and debates they were relatively vocal and effective. This shows how women were interested in learning and put into practice their rights to Freedom of Information.

IV. Description of Activities and Accomplishments by Objectives

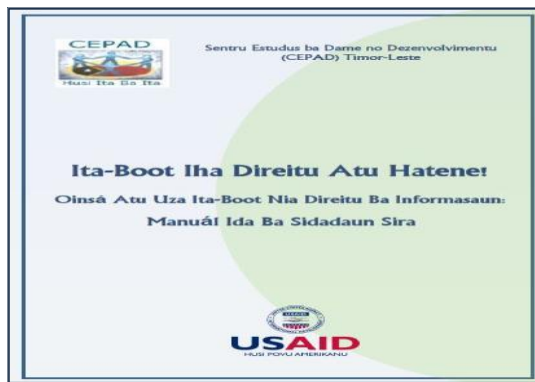
4.1. Component area 1: Public Outreach and Education

The collective awakening of "social conscience" within communities through public education on their constitutional rights to access public information in the context of Freedom of Information in order that they are able to confront manipulations and are encouraged to be more involved in improving governance by holding their leaders accountable.

In order to have a well-informed Timorese society about the right to freedom of information two key informative and educative manuals were developed; these are “You have the right to know” (*Ita Boot iha Direitu atu Hatene*) and Training of Trainers Module for Citizens, and “Supply Information is My Responsibility” (*Fornese Informasaun Hau-nia Dever*) for Public Servants. The development of the manuals was based on a body of documents that aggregate all of the information related to Freedom of Information, including a document mapping existing international conventions and commitments that have been signed and or ratified by the Government of Timor-Leste such as the National Framework on Freedom of Expression and Information enshrined in the Timorese Constitutions; and world best practices on Freedom of Information.

Results achieved: Civil Society is properly educated and empowered to exercise their rights of requesting information from public authorities.

4.1.1. Development of manual training for citizens and Training of trainers



The citizen’s manual and its training module are developed in Tetum and have been published and distributed. This citizen’s manual contains information as follows: the advantages that the access to information brings to society and public administration; international commitments and standards; definition of information; international and national framework on the right to information; how to submit a request for access to information (who to ask, how to ask, what to ask, fees related with access to certain information), limits to the access of information; how to file a complaint; and contacts of relevant organizations.

Based on the citizen’s manual, a Training of Trainers module was developed as a guide for providing training for communities’ trainers.



This TOT manual provides training guidance and facilitation skills for a quality training with selective members of the community as potential trainers who later became facilitators working together with FOI team during the implementation of TOTs and FGDs countrywide.

4.1.2. Distribution of manuals

2698 copies of citizen’s manuals and TOT module were distributed. Recipients of citizen’s manual and TOT module included participants of 65 Focus Group Discussions at the administrative post level in the 13 municipalities; members of the FOI’s National Working Group, including PDHJ, CAC, CSOs, peace houses, universities, and other interested parties and individuals who have participated in the training, for their own reference.



4.1.3. Radio Programs and Public Service Announcements

Public service announcements (PSAs) have become an important mean of communication in generating a critical issue throughout FOI projects. We considered that PSA is more effective in delivering out messages to public countrywide. During the life of project, the PSAs were able to raise public awareness, change public attitudes towards a democratic nation in an inclusive society, transparent, and accountable.

In collaboration with Radio Metro FM through SECOMS, radio programs including interviews, talk shows, and TV and Radio PSAs were produced and aired countrywide. A total of 6 radio programs and 8 PSAs were produced and aired 364 times by 13 different community radio centers countrywide as can be seen in table 1 below. In addition, community radios also interviewed directly FOI team members during TOTs and FGDs, while undertaking these activities in the municipalities countrywide. However, during the whole project implementation, the team was unable to put a figure on how often a PSA was aired, as records by community radio stations were not kept. Nevertheless, according to Radio Metro FM on average a PSA would be aired several times a day, on a regular weekly basis.

Table 1: Number of Radio program and PSA produced and aired during project implementation

Radio program and PSA	Year 1	Year 2	Life of Project
Radio Program	2	4	6
PSA announcement produced	4	4	8
Total PSA Aired	84	280	364
Total PSA	90	288	378

Detail activities of PSAs program during the project implementation

In 2016, CEPAD produced and aired two PSAs in all 13 municipalities through community radios and at the national level through Radio Televizaun Timor-Leste (RTTL), Radio Timor Kmanek (RTK) Catholic Radio, and Radio Metro FM. Additionally, discussions with some community radio stations led to the announcement of several PSAs at municipality level namely Manatuto, Viqueque, Liquica, Bobonaro and Dili. This took place early in October 2016.

With the on-going work relationship with Radio Metro FM, CEPAD started a regular segment on Freedom of Information issues as highlighted in each quarterly report. CEPAD Director did the first of many to follow, with an interview and discussion on Radio Metro FM about CEPAD and activities including FOI at the end of September, 2016. In Year Two, CEPAD produced a PSA short video which was uploaded into CEPAD's Facebook, Website and YouTube channel and was also aired via GMN TV Station.



On February 15, 2017, Mr. Lino Borges, our Monitoring and Evaluation Officer had a half hour segment to talk about the FOI project.



On March 15, 2017, João Boavida (CEPAD Director) and Virgilio Guterres (President of the Press Council and Vice President of the FOI National Working Group) were interviewed on Radio Metro FM in a half hour segment.

Moreover, live PSAs on GMN-TV, RTM, and TV-E for public servants and citizens were proved effective in raising public knowledge and awareness on FOI issues. CEPAD also organized a live TV debate on October 12, 2017 in collaboration with GMN TV which was aired and viewed countrywide. The objective of TV debate was to consolidate the results and activities implemented by raising public viewers and listeners' awareness on issues of freedom of information, a timely initiative to coincide with the formation of the upcoming new government.



4.1.4. Training of Trainer Session for CEPAD Staff



An expert of Transparency and Good Governance, Mathias Huter from I-CRES was giving a TOT workshop on FOI to the entire CEPAD's team

The Training of Trainer (TOT) for CEPAD staff was carried out on June 3rd, 2016 at CEPAD's office in Dili. Nine of CEPAD's core staff were trained with the support from an I-CRES consultant. The training focused on the principles of Freedom of Information, international and local context wise as well as exploring appropriate training methodologies and facilitation skills by involving selected members of communities.

4.1.5. Training of Facilitators for CAC, GoTL, TI-TL and COS



A second TOT was held for 22 participants (8 female and 14 male) from CSOs including, Rede-Feto, Fundasaun Haburas, Belun, Fundasaun Mahein, Luta Hamutuk, JSMP, La'ó Hamutuk, Patria and other key stakeholders from the government institutions such as, GOPAC-TL, CAC

and PDHJ. The objective was to increase the capacity of the representatives of these organizations and institutions about citizens' rights to Access Information; and to support the role of civil society in advocacy with a view to contribute to promoting transparency and accountability in the Government.

4.1.6. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) held at Administrative Post level (Round One)

The objective of countrywide FGDs was twofold; first was to give basic information to the communities about their constitutional rights for access to information from State Institutions; and second was to find out from participants their experience and knowledge regarding freedom of access to information.

CEPAD undertook altogether 65 Focus Group Discussions with a total of 1186 participants (female 495 and male 691) with an average of 18 per FGD, when the initial target was 10 per FGD; participants came from various sectors in the community including: Community Leaders (*Chefe de Suco/Aldeia* (Chief of Villages/sub villages)), officers representing Administrative Posts, Schools, the National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL), Church, Women Organizations, Youth Organizations, Local NGOs and Health Sectors.

Fatumea Administration Post (Covalima Municipality)



Fatumea Administration Post (Covalima Municipality) Focus Group Discussion

Fatumea is a remote and a western most frontier Administrative Post with Indonesia. The community is very frustrated as they have immense difficulties in accessing any information about their Administrative Post and what is happening in their area. The road between Suai town and Fatumea is still not

completed after very many years of road work. They cannot find information about budgets, projects, employment, scholarships etc. They have no access to radio, and the only public transport is once a week out of the village due to the very poor road condition. The people from Fatumea were very grateful to CEPAD; firstly, for visiting the Post as very few CSOs have visited them; and secondly, for empowering them by educating them about their rights to access information and how to apply these rights.

Viqueque Vila Administration Post (Viqueque Municipality)



One of the participants (a policeman) talked about two large road building projects in the Viqueque town. One was being built by a known company who made it clear what their identity was, and the project was successfully completed. The second was built by an unknown company that no one could find out its name-and the project

was never completed. This unknown company left the project unfinished and messy. A policeman found out that the company had a large budget to complete the road project, yet it failed to finish the task successfully. When the policeman asked the Administrator about this company no one knew who it was or why the project was not completed. There are rumors in the community about this company and where they were from, but no one, including the Administrative Post Administrator, actually knew. The policeman was afraid to ask any more questions as he did not believe he had the right to ask. However, after the FDG he realized he could and he sought advice about writing to the Ministry of Transport, which he promised to do.

Faturbeliu Administration Post (Manufahi Municipality)

A *Chefe de Suku* (chief of village) told a story about when a senior public official from the Ministry of Public Works visited the Administrative Post in 2010; they showed that the bridge between Fatukahi and Clakuk was in dire need of repair. The official agreed and said they would receive emergency funding to have the bridge repaired. A company was given the contract, came and demolished the bridge (in order to rebuild) but then did not return to complete the work of rebuilding. The bridge was a vital link between the two *Suku* (villages) to access the health post, church, market, and school. The *Chefe de Suku* and the Administrator of the Post contacted the Director General and the Secretary of State from the Ministry of Public Works but they both said they knew nothing about the project. So now the communities have no bridge at all and the government claims they know nothing about it. The *Chefe de Suku* had followed up on this matter with the Administrative Post and would keep trying until there is a result.

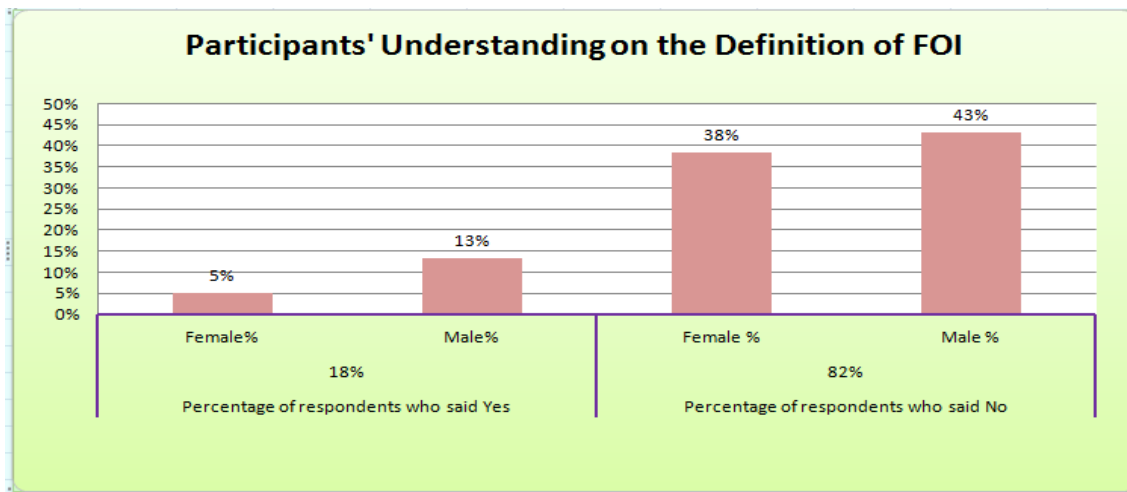
4.1.7. Result of baseline survey

The aim was to provide a picture of the knowledge and views of people throughout Timor-Leste on Freedom of Information. Although the importance of a Baseline Survey is to set the basis for the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the project, due to financial reasons, CEPAD had to devise an alternative which was implemented along with FGDs.

In July 2016, the baseline survey was conducted countrywide in the target areas covered 13 municipalities, which consists of 65 administrative posts with a total of 883 respondents were interviewed: (356 or 40% Female and 527 or 60% of Male). The survey was carried out by using paper-based questionnaires for FGDs participants. The survey was mostly based on the Pre and Post FGDs evaluation questions designed. CEPAD also developed a Baseline Survey and a list of questionnaires which CEPAD tested out in Oe-cusse during the pilot FGDs. A final version of the questionnaires was produced integrating communities' feedback and USAID's comments. The survey questions were designed as quantitative questions with YES/NO answers, where respondents were interviewed in group by two facilitators asking the questions, and the respondents providing answers to each of the question asked. The baseline Survey for FGD participants was successfully implemented included the narrative survey report.

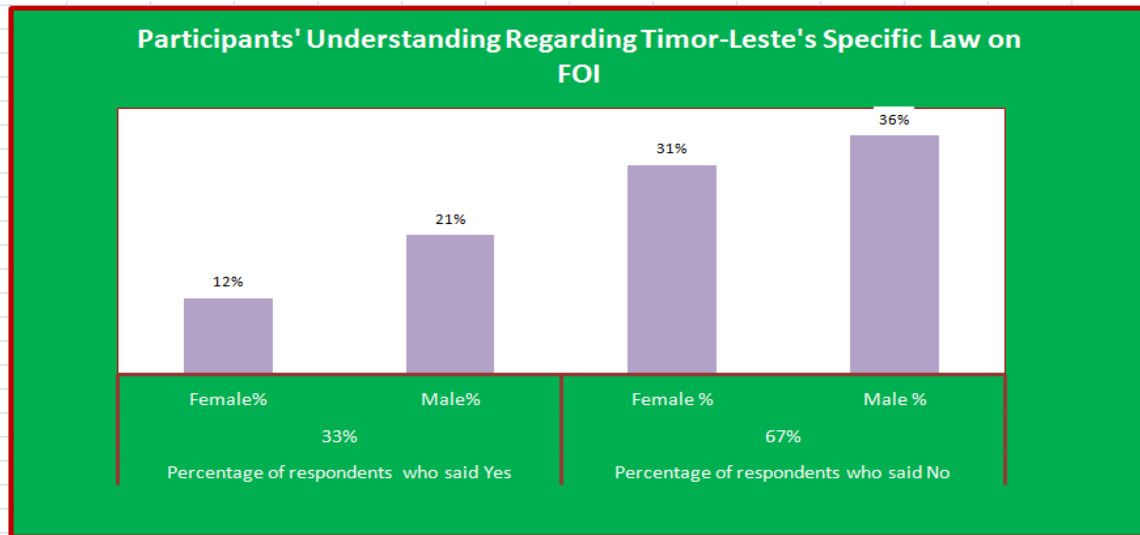
The baseline survey, which was administered to FGD participants, showed interesting information on their awareness or understanding and in support of the Freedom of Information initiative. The result of baseline survey, showed that people in general had very little information or understanding about Freedom of Information (FOI). In particular, among FGD participants 82% (female = 38% and male= 43%) of the respondents had a negative attitude (said No) towards FOI, while only 18% (female = 5% and male = 13%) of respondents had positive attitude (said Yes) toward FOI. The awareness of citizens towards FOI is shown in figure A.

Figure A: Information regarding awareness or understanding of FOI information



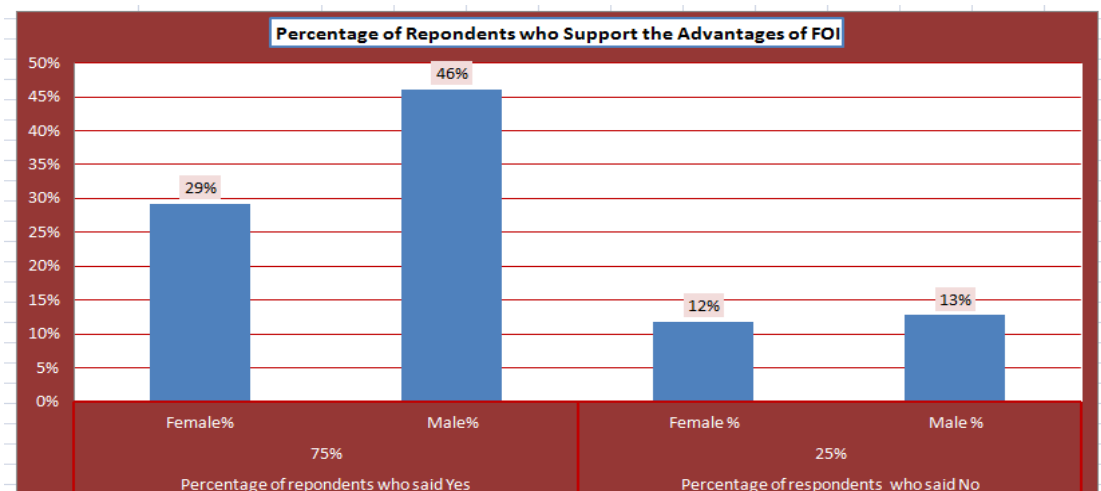
Moreover, the responses provided in the survey also measured participants' understanding if Timor-Leste has any specific laws about Freedom of Information. A minority of participants about 33% (female = 12% and male = 21%) had positive responses (said Yes), while the majority about 67% (female =31 % and male = 36%) had negative responses (said No) towards Timor-Leste's specific law about FOI, as shown in figure B.

Figure B: Participants' awareness or understanding if Timor-Leste has any specific laws about FOI



An attitude towards a statement on the advantages of FOI was measured with yes/no answers which the respondents were asked to gauge their statements. From the survey, FGD participants showed a very positive support and recognized the benefits of Freedom of Information (FOI). While a majority of 75% (female = 29 % and male = 46 %) of the respondents had positive responses towards advantages of accessing to information, while 25 % (female = 12 % and male = 13%) had negative responses on the advantages of accessing to information. The support attitude of citizens towards FOI is as shown in figure c.

Figure C: The support attitude of citizens on the advantages towards FOI.



4.1.8. Result of end line

In early August 2017, CEPAD and Mr. Alexandros Lordos developed end line survey questionnaires. The purpose of end line survey was to evaluate the impact of FOI training to citizens and public servants. The survey also captures the level of knowledge, attitude, and awareness of participants in relation to their right to supply information and provide information in promoting open governance with regard to democratic participation, transparency, and accountability. The aim of the survey is also to provide recommendation to new government in how to be more transparent in improving their good service delivery to citizens.

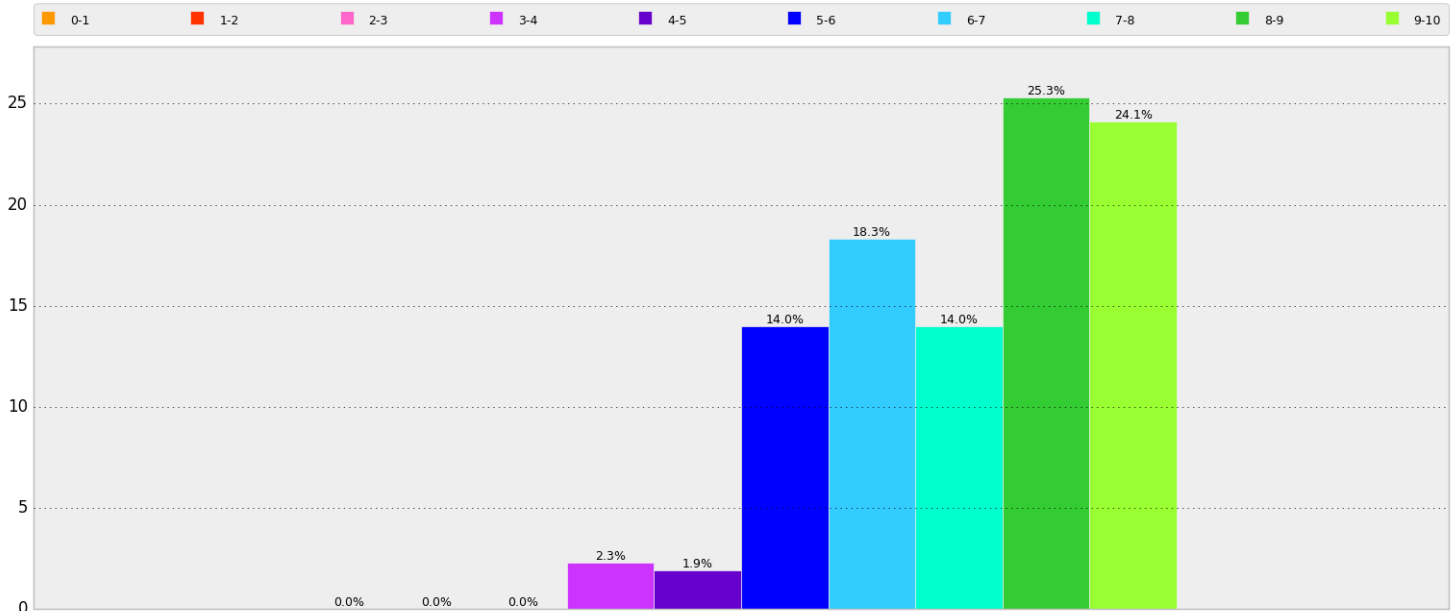
The end line survey was undertaken by CEPAD in the target areas covered 9 municipalities which consists of 27 administrative posts with total of 405 respondents: civil servants: 144 and citizens 261. The survey was carried out by using questionnaires on tablet for public servant and citizens. The questionnaires covered information from the training manual; information also covers among others background characteristics of respondents in FOI related information including their social, economic, politic, and literacy status. The questionnaires are also designed to solicit suggestions and recommendations from the respondents on the effective improve in FOI information. The end line Survey for both public servants and citizens was successfully implemented included the narrative survey report.

The end line survey, which was administered to both civil servants and the public, showed a wide-spread support for the FOI framework, and belief in the beneficial effects of having information freely available on governance. Specifically, 96% of the citizen respondents and 94% of the public servants had an overall positive attitude towards FOI. The attitudes of citizens towards FOI are shown in figure 1, where agreement with various pro-FOI statements was combined into a score from 0 to 10, with 10 representing strong support for all aspects of the FOI framework. The level of awareness of the FOI framework was measured in both the citizens and public servants survey and was found to be very high. Among citizen respondents 95% reported awareness of the framework, while the corresponding percentage among public servants was 99%.The results of which showed that although the project achieved good general awareness and understanding, more work must be done on counter-intuitive aspects of the FOI framework (e.g. limitations of the right to FOI; preference for written communication). In general, both awareness of and support for FOI can be said to be high in Timor-Leste.

The effects of the workshops on the participants were then measured, with a majority of survey respondents reporting that their support for FOI was strengthened after participating, as can be

seen in figure 2. Since scores above 5 represent an increase of pro-FOI sentiment, it can be said that 82% of people reported an increase in pro-FOI sentiments (score of 6 or more).

Fig. 1: Pro-FOI attitudes of citizen participants



A high score means pro FOI attitudes: both support for the benefits of requesting information, and opposition to a secretive state.

Although most people expressed that they felt significant obstacles in requesting information from government agencies, the workshops were found to decrease the perception of these obstacles in most people. Among public servants, the perceived obstacles towards responding to FOI requests were measured, and again were found to have decreased after the workshops in 45 to 50% of the sample.

Although the actual number of requests of information made is still low, there is strong interest in all kinds of information, and a large majority of the sample expressed strong intention to request information in the near future. An important finding of our survey was that interest in requesting information is driven by two underlying factors: interest in information which can be used to scrutinize the government and interest in information which can be used by the individual for their own personal use and development. Some respondents tended to be interested in information relating to public contracts, feasibility studies, etc., while others tended to be interested in information about scholarships and government jobs. Even though different participants might be motivated towards requesting information for different reasons, sometimes unrelated to civic participation, there is still value in having widespread

transparency. Public servants were found to be very open to sharing all types of information in all or most circumstances, with a slight tendency of support for a secretive state.

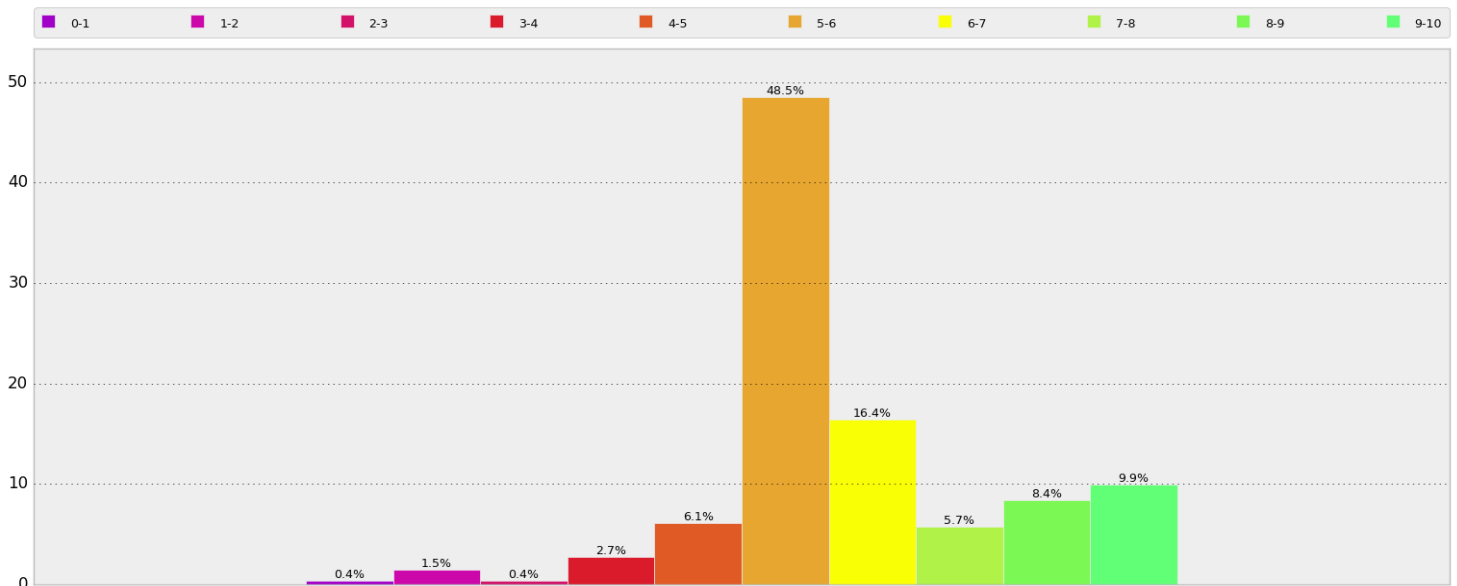
We then focused our attention to those members of the public which had already requested information from the government at least once. In a supermajority of cases, the outcomes were positive: they reported greater trust in the government, more confidence in their own abilities, as well as increased motivation for public engagement. This bolsters the arguments this project has made, underlining the positive effects of civic participation both on society as a whole and the individual participant.

4.2. Component area 2: Mechanisms to Enhance Access to Public Records

Promote enhanced access to public records (freedom of information) as a key mechanism for reducing opportunities for corruption, forging transparency in government, demanding government accountability and limiting discretionary power.

CEPAD took a twofold approach to meet this objective: educating Timorese citizens on their freedom of information rights, and encouraging them to put these into practice. In the process while it was utmost relevance to work in tandem with Government in the implementation of

Fig. 2: Increase of pro-FOI attitudes of citizen participants due to training



High scores (6 and above) represent a shift towards support of FOI attitudes due to the training, while low scores (less than 5) represent a shift away from support. The average represents no change in attitude.

this project, CEPAD also tackled a preconceived attitude that is deeply engrained in the psyche

of public servants, which is that all information in their possession is not to be disclosed to others, or only exceptionally, if arbitrarily approved by upper echelons.

CEPAD raised awareness within the bureaucracy that the vast majority of information generated by, or in possession of the State, is public; that information should only be classified as confidential when it meets clear and predetermined criteria; and that petitioners should not be obliged to demonstrate a valid interest when requesting it. This is an internationally recognized practice acceptable in Timor-Leste in connection with a constitutional provision (Section 40 regarding “Freedom of Speech and Information”). This is not observed in practice given deep-rooted lack of transparent practices and the lack of a secondary law operationalizing it. This implies a 180 degree turn from the prevailing attitude and one of the major challenges under this project.

Result achieved: Public administration showed positive attitude towards becoming more transparent and accountable through improved public information documentation, archival and availability to civil society and the wider public.

4.2.1. Working with GoTL Representatives

Between October 2015 and October 2017, members of the National Working Group of Freedom of Information, integrating representatives of government through the Social Audit Unit under Prime Minister’s Office, including CAC, PDHJ, GOPAC, SECOM, and civil society organizations (Luta Hamutuk, Fundasaun Mahein, JSMP, Belun, TLMDC, Assosiasaun Hak, Patria) met 12 times to discuss FOI plan and implementation process including sharing information and results.

1. On 15 March, 2016, CEPAD met with members of the National Working Group as mentioned above with focus on the preparation and discussing the National Working Group Terms of reference.
2. On 10 May, 2016, CEPAD met with members of the National Working Group with focus on developing and producing the citizen manual.
3. In September 2016, CEPAD met with members of the National Working Group with focus on actualizing and implementing FOI projects including training for member of civil societies organization in order to strengthen their roles for demanding accountability and transparency for state institutions.
4. In October 2016, CEPAD met with members of the National Working Group with focus on introducing and discussing the project to establish a new mechanism and

collaboration for strengthening FOI project. The meeting was attended by senior government officials and representatives of selected agencies.

5. On 8 November, 2016 CEPAD met with members of the National Working Group to formalize cooperation with the government to implement joint education activities on Freedom of Information with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). However, this meeting led to the agreement reached by and between Members of the National Working Group on finalizing and approval of the National Working Group Terms of reference only.
6. In December 2016, CEPAD met with members of the National Working Group to introduce both CEPAD's FOI and KKN projects and discussed mechanisms of collaboration between CEPAD and CAC, PDHJ, SECOM, as institutions.
7. On February 14, 2017, CEPAD met with members of the National Working Group to plan and discuss preparations for the commemoration of FOI Day on March 16, 2017.
8. On April 10, 2017, members of the National Working Group of Freedom of Information met and discussed ideas on the development of the public servants manual.
9. On June 7, 2017, CEPAD met with members of the National Working Group to update the training for the public servants at the municipality level countrywide and the need to take up FOI with the incoming new government as part of the advocacy campaign, while inviting the government to be part of the planned interactive live TV debate to be organized. With the contribution of legal experts and the input from members of National Working Group, CEPAD successfully developed, printed, and distributed Public Servants Manual.
10. On August 9, 2017, members of the National Working Group of Freedom of Information met and discussed ideas for the follow up training with key institutions and line ministries and the interactive live TV debate which took place on October 12th.
11. On October 10, 2017, members of the National Working Group of Freedom of Information met to discuss preparations for the TV debate activity and received the feedback on the draft of the development of Joint Statement.
12. On October 24, 2017, CEPAD had last meeting with members of National Working Group. The joint statement was formally announced publicly in a press conference through media and an opportunity for CEPAD and USAID to appreciate the collaboration and efforts made by members of National working group during the implementation of FOI.

4.2.2. Development of a Public Servants Manual on Freedom of Information

The main objective of public servants manual is to contribute to increasing public servants knowledge about the importance of freedom of information, so that they are aware of their obligations to provide the information when this is required by citizens. Public servants manual

as it is, it remains a key reference for the public sector whenever freedom of information is an issue of relevance.

A total of 3,530 of Public Servants Manual was developed and printed. Of this 2,839 copies were distributed to all government institutions at national and municipality levels, including Universities, members of CSOs, Individuals, and members of National Working Group.

For the development of the public servants manual, the FOI citizen's manual provided both reference and basis and in the process CEPAD had the contribution from legal experts from Social Audit Unit - Prime-Minister's Office and input from members of National Working Group.

4.3. Component area 3: Partnership with Key Government Agencies

Forge cooperation ties with government to implement joint education activities on freedom of information and corruption-prevention.

The main purpose of the partnership focuses on continuing the work with the Anti-Corruption Commission (CAC) as well as other Government of Timor-Leste (GoTL) agencies. In this context CEPAD provided trainings to 245 public servants (female 79 and male 166) from all existing government institutions at the national and municipality levels with the aim to contribute to increasing public servants knowledge about the importance of freedom of information, so that they are aware of their obligations to provide the information when this is required by citizens. Beyond exposing government officials to freedom of information, these sessions aimed to change attitudes towards favoring transparency in government.

CEPAD continued to work with member of National Working Group to advocate for the adoption of sensible recommendations which had emerged from this process by both citizens and relevant government agencies through members of National Working Group (refer to FOI joint statement in appendix number 4).

Joint Statement is an initiative as part of the advocacy campaign proposed by members of National Working Group as an instrument to inform and demand state organs in order to consider FOI as an essential issue in contributing to transparency and accountability in government.

Working with the government is a way to joining forces in advocating for the adoption of procedural reforms facilitating access to government information, Media outlets are key partners in our efforts as they are essential to put FOI efforts in the forefront of the public

agenda and to push, oversee and report on the implementation of a functioning freedom of information system and mechanisms.

Result Achieved: Collaboration with key government agencies is well established and joint information lunched to help prevent and combat corruption by improving public access to information.

4.1.9. 4.3.1. Training of GoTL Officials

4.3.1a. TOT training for public servants

In the TOT sessions participants shared their positive experiences, ideas, and supports with one another for effective learning during the TOT training sessions. The TOT for public servants includes 245 participants, of which 32% were women and 68% men. The result of pre and post test provided showed that the overall average of participants' knowledge increased by 25%. The TOT trainings showed that most of participants demonstrated their improved ability and understanding of citizen's right to know as well public servants' responsibility to supply information to promote good governance. The complete activities of Training of Trainers (TOTs) are indicated as follows:

TOT in Bobonaro Municipality



Participants were very enthusiastic during the FGD training in Bobonaro municipality. Participants argued that freedom of accessing information is more about the information on news media. They stated that FOI training will facilitate them to educate the community to be well informed, thus freedom to access information is very important in this

nation. Regarding the responsibility of public servants in providing information to citizens, they said, "Until now we are still providing information to citizens during business hours, but the problem we face in the office is different because we do not have the responsibility in making the decision to respond to requests. Therefore, sometimes we have to wait for our superiors to make the decision which can take longer than necessary." With the FOI training for public servants, participants recognized that the training is essential to help public servants to ensure a good service delivery to citizens.

TOT in Oecusse Municipality



When talking about access to Freedom of Information most participants thought that freedom of information was about how community can have freedom to express and receive information via media. Based on their understanding and experiences they have supplied some information to the community; for example, supply of information about tax and price of

goods. One of the participants argued the process of supplying information takes longer and it depends on the decision maker or superior in their institution. He said, “As civil servants, sometimes we have to wait for the answer from our superior in our institution before answering to community requests and the decision takes more time.” Based on our personal observation during the training, most participants were actively participating in the discussion and they could understand easily about the FOI information and were able to distinguish the difference between news and public information. Thus, in the training they are able to understand clearly the process of providing information that has been guaranteed by the Decree-Law no.43/2017

TOT to Line Ministries



Of the total number of participants of 26, 11 participants were men and 15 women. These participants consisted of representatives from the Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, State Secretary for employment, Ministry of Interior, National Police of Timor-Leste, and Ministry of State Administration.

From the results of pre and post tests provided showed that the overall average of participants increased by 25%. During the training sessions of Training of Trainers for public servants, each of the participants seemed very interested in the topics of discussion. In the discussion process, participants agreed that citizens should have the right to access all information in the

government and there should be no limitation. On the other hand, some participants argued that there is no need to share and provide government information to citizens because citizens already received information from social media such as the print media, news online, radio, and television. At the end of training sessions, all participants agreed that it was important for citizens to have the right to get access to information from government and public servants the duty to provide information whenever this is requested following right procedures. This could help citizens to actively engage in the governance process to ensure more transparency in the government.

TOT to Key Government Institutions



During the training sessions of Training of Trainers for key government institutions, participants were very interested in the topics. Of the total participants of 18, 10 participants were men and 8 women. These participants consisted of representatives from CAC, GOPAC, PDHJ, SECOMS, and National Parliament. From the results of pre and post tests provided showed that the overall average of participants

increased by 16% . In the beginning of training sessions, participants were very enthusiastic in the discussion process because most of the participants already had a basic understanding about Freedom of Information. When they shared their opinions regarding freedom of information, they argued that the concept of information from news is from information released by government institutions. They recognized that even though this country already has a law and regulation to classify access to government information still a lot of information is kept by government and seems to have limitations and it is considered secret. At the end of this training session, participants acknowledged the training was seen to be well planned and as a result most of them could understand and recommended the training needs to have a continuation on the related topic in the future.

4.3.1b. FGD with communities and local leaders (2nd Round)

The Focus Group discussion (FGD) guidelines manual has been an essential tool for community leaders for increasing their comprehensiveness and awareness in understanding in a way that citizens are well informed, especially when citizens have any concerns to access government records. As the constitutional law and the decree law recognize that every individual has right to access information held in the national level of government institution and municipality level of government.

The Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with communities and local leaders have covered a total of 219 participants (males 119 or 54% and females 100 or 46%), and the detail information is included in Appendix seven. The FGDs participants came from various sectors in the community such as: community Leaders (Chief of villages and Chief of sub-villages); officers representing administrative posts, church, women organizations, youth organizations, teachers and universities, local NGO's and community health posts. The detail activities of Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) are pointed out as follows:

FGD in Covalima Municipality



Throughout the FGD training in round two, we noticed that the majority of participants already familiar with FOI because they already received the same information from FOI training in round one. During the sessions, participants shared that they wanted to spread out freedom of information (FOI) issue to their friends and

neighbors about how to ask for information to a relevant government institution. They also stated that they have used the format of the request letter from the training in writing the request letter for job opportunities to the Secretary of State for Vocational Training and Employment (SEFOPE) including to the municipal court.

FGD in Ainaro Municipality



Based on our observation in the FGD training, we noticed that most of participants had a basic understanding on accessing public information because these participants already attended the round one training of related issues. They shared that after learning information on FOI training, they tried to ask for

information about the effectiveness of the road project in the government institution in Ainaro municipality level. In this training session, one of participants said that he was not sure about the procedures of requesting information to a government institution. He shared, “previously, I was not sure what appropriate criteria I have to follow when sending my request for information, but after having discussions with other participants and trainers, now I understand the right procedures to request for information. For example, if I want to request information about a road project in my community, I need to submit my request for information to the Ministry of Public Works. The Ministry is required to respond my request within 15 working days.”

FGDs in Viqueque Municipality



Participants enjoyed the activity during the discussion. The participants said they were very delighted for the opportunity to attend these activities, because the issue on freedom to access the information is super important for every citizen to understand. Additionally, other participants also mentioned that after they

received this information, they will use this format of requesting for information to a relevant government institution, specifically the Ministry of Social Solidarity regarding the criteria of

receiving support or funding for retirement ages and retirement veterans. Based on their opinion, those who have received payment for veterans' retirement, they are not deserved anymore to get funds for retirement ages, but in reality some received payment for both. Meanwhile, the head of Viqueque administrative post said, "at the end of this activity I will open the door to all citizens who want to know about this matter from the administration post itself."

4.4. Component area 4: Collaboration with Civil Society Organizations

To establish a collaborative framework of civil society organizations less vulnerable to external pressures and to speak up as a unified voice in defense of democratic practices and principles.

The coordination of Timor-Leste's Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), informed intellectuals as well as the general public, is vital in getting people to come out and question the legality of actions that undermine the democratic practice and principles as well as the lack of governments accountability to its citizens.

Through FOI activities CEPAD built strategic alliances with CSOs, particularly those who were Members of National Working Group and media outlets. As a result together with civil society organizations making up the National Working Group, CEPAD was able to come up with the joint statement as read in (refer to appendix number 4) a way to joining forces in advocating for the adoption of procedural reforms facilitating access to government information. Media outlets are key partners in our efforts as they are essential to put FOI efforts in the forefront of the public agenda and to push, oversee and report on the implementation of a functioning freedom of information system and mechanisms.

Results Achieved: Civil Society Organizations together with CEPAD adopted a joint statement with potential to motivate procedural reforms facilitating access to government information (in the form of a law or internal regulations) to make Government more open and accountable.

4.1.10. 4.4.1. Meetings with stakeholders

Civil society organizations are key actors in democratic process: they monitor government's commitments while at the same time empower citizens to demand their rights. Recognizing the power to trigger right change, this project aims at establishing a collaborative framework among various civil society organizations to enable discussions on freedom of information issues that each of them might have already faced and at the same time to propose for a collective actions to address challenges. During the second quarter, introduction meetings were held with all organizations integrating the National Working Group-Freedom of Information (NWG-FOI), namely: HAK Association, Belun, Lao Hamutuk, Luta Hamutuk, Fundasaun Mahein,

Haburas, JSMP, TLMDC, Rede Feto, Patria and Caucus. The approach reinforced the group's credibility and confidence to work and act as one single voice to advocate for change. In addition to that, other organizations particularly government institutions, such as Social Audit Unit-Prime Minister's Office, CAC, PDHJ, GOPAC-TL were part of the national working group meetings. Likewise it is important to acknowledge the presence of TLMDC and Media Forum Foundation as both of them are umbrella organizations for media actors in Timor-Leste, which are fundamental not only as a guarantor of freedom of information, but also to guarantee the freedom of expression.

4.1.11. 4.4.2. Advocacy campaigns, joint statements and policy papers on FOI issued by CSOs

FOI Day (March 16, 2017) is actually a United States Day that celebrates the “Father of the Constitution” (James Madison Jr.) for drafting the United States Constitution and the United States Bill of Rights which eventually led to the USA Freedom of Information Act (1966). CEPAD saw this fitting reason to have an event to bring together students, media, and supporters for a seminar and panel discussion at the National University of Timor-Lorosae (UNTL) titled: "We have the Right to Know; Freedom of Information" (Ita iha Direitu Atu Hatene; Liberdade Asesu ba Informasaun). This seminar focused on Timor-Leste’s commitment to the right to access information for its citizens through our Constitution as well as the United Nation’s conventions and covenants that Timor-Leste is a signature to.

75 people attended this event from ten different organizations and five universities. These organizations included JSMP, Lao Hamutuk, Luta Hamutuk, PDHJ, SECOMS, Belun, CAC, and eleven Media outlets. CEPAD also used the opportunity to launch the Citizens Manual for “Freedom of Information” and the Training of Trainers FOI Manual, and over 100 were distributed to representatives of the universities, CSOs, Government departments and media during the event.

There were three speakers as part of the Seminar and Panel Discussion: Jorginha Martins (Junior Legal Adviser for the Social Audit Unit from the Prime Minister’s Office), Constança B. de Jesus Barros (Chief of Department of Social Communications, Faculty of Social Science, UNTL), and Dr. João Boavida (Executive Director of CEPAD). Live discussion followed the presentations.

A live TV debate was organized on 12th of October in collaboration with GMN TV and Radio station with countrywide coverage. Making up the TV debate panel included government representatives (Valentim Ximenes, Minister of State Administration), a religious entity (Me. Guilhermina Marçal Fdccc), CAC representative (Rosario de Araujo), National Police of Timor-Leste representative (Euclides Belo), and Facilitated by CEPAD (João Boavida).

On 24th of October 2017, Members of National Working Group launched a Joint Statement to the public via TV, Radio, and Media outlets including distribution to the representatives of state organs.

V. Assessment of Progress Made Towards Objectives

It is not easy to conclude how successful the FOI project has been if assessment was to take into consideration the results of baseline survey, because the way baseline survey questionnaires were formulated and how it was implemented (via FGDs) with focus only on citizens and not on public servants. However, the results of the end line survey provided comprehensive and informative data and information which confirm in fact how successful the project is.

To assess the progress made towards objectives please refer to a summary of results in section 4.1.8. Here we present results which are specifically relevant to the following outcomes: Awareness of FOI framework, Knowledge of the FOI framework and Attitudes towards the FOI framework. The full data is presented in the following table, which has been disaggregated by gender and municipality. It should be noted that the municipalities which are not represented in the table were not surveyed.

	CITIZENS			PUBLIC SERVANTS		
	Awareness of FOI	Above average knowledge of FOI	Above average positive FOI attitude	Awareness of FOI	Above average knowledge of FOI	Above average positive FOI attitude
MEN	96	83	94	99	91	94
WOMEN	92	86	98	100	87	95
Aileu	93	83	90	100	92	85
Baucau	100	87	100	100	80	93
Bobonaro	92	84	96	100	78	89
Covalima	87	74	93	94	100	94
Dili	88	92	100	100	100	100
Ermera	92	88	92	100	87	93
Lautem	96	86	100	100	93	93
Manatuto	100	66	96	100	93	100
Manufahi	100	92	92	100	85	100

All numbers in the table represent percentages. The ‘knowledge of FOI’ column was calculated by taking the percentage of respondents who achieved an above average score in a short quiz which was part of the survey. They were asked to identify which statements about the FOI framework were true and which were false. The ‘positive FOI attitude’ column was calculated by taking the percentage of respondents who had an attitude towards the FOI framework, which was more positive than negative. This was measured by presenting the participants with a series of statements about the benefits of requesting information from the government (in combating corruption and improving governance) as well as statements against state secrecy. For a more detailed presentation of these data, including exact distributions of the respondents and a fuller commentary of the results, the Endline Survey report may be consulted.

Overall, scores were generally high or very high, with no score which is below average. Compared to citizens, public servants tended to have, on average, a better awareness and understanding of the FOI framework, with a similarly positive attitude. The table can also be used to assess the project on a municipality level, or to plan future actions. For example, the sampled citizens in Manatuto had a very high level of awareness and a high support, but they had the lowest actual knowledge of FOI framework. This would imply that future projects should better explain FOI in Manatuto. Or, all civil servants in Dili achieved above average knowledge about FOI and attitude to FOI which means that they might serve as a vital partner in achieving similar scores with civil servants stationed in other regions of the country.

VI. Impacts and Sustainability

CEPAD’s programmatic approach is long-term, broad based, inclusive, and participatory. This means that the way the project has been implemented it has to some degree ensured integration of some of the results into CEPAD’s ongoing projects as well as into programs of the members of the National Working Group.

1. This initiative built upon CEPAD’s major anti-corruption project implemented since 2007 with financial and technical support from MISEREOR, Interpeace and others. In terms of objectives the two projects share almost the same goal of transparency and accountability improvement. As such it could be said that in the implementation of CEPAD’s anti-corruption project, some of the focus will be on how to sustain the good results obtained from FOI project.

Based on existing MoUs signed between CEPAD and State owned anti-corruption institutions namely CAC, PDHJ, Public Prosecutor’s Office, and through the partnership with GOPAC-TL, FOI concept, objective and practices as read and reflected through

manuals and modules produced will continue to be useful to these institutions in their program of work - the same goes for civil society organizations forming the National Working Group.

2. In Ainaro, one of the participants stated “only when we have access to such documents, can we claim evidence of any government project that is not well designed and implemented. In this case, we can form our thoughts and opinions in a more critical way to amend the State’s implementation system, which ideally should reflect the action plan created. At the same time such documents serve as a strong base for making any petition.”

In Manatuto a participant from a local CSO said “... we are truly appreciative of the fact that USAID/CEPAD has engaged us in this TOT as a unique opportunity to learn and to write a formal request to State Institutions asking for information”

In Betano one of the program participants shared her experience that after attending FOI training, she made a request about school feeding program to the Ministry of Education. She said “...I made a request for information to the relevant authority and I was referred to the Director of primary school in Betano Village. As a result, my request was fully attended with complete information provided by the director of the local primary school in Betano Village with positive results.” This showed that FOI project has given a positive impact on the various entities that participated in the various activities; therefore, the project alone has found a niche in the communities and is sustaining itself into the future. In Manatutu a participant from a local CSO said “... we are truly appreciative of the fact that USAID/CEPAD has engaged us in this TOT as a unique opportunity to learn and to write a formal request to State Institutions asking for information.” (for more successful stories, please refer to Q-reports)

3. It is very much hoped by almost every program participant both individual and institutional that this would ideally lead to the formulation and development of Freedom of Access to Information Legislation. Should this become a reality sustainability of the very project would be wholly achieved.

VII. Capacity Building

CEPAD’s approach to ‘capacity building’ in practice has always been ‘learn by doing’ and ‘doing by learning’ – a collective and participatory learning process that has encouraged both individual capacity building and organizational growth in the course of CEPAD’s existence since its inception in 2007. USAID’s funded “Fostering Freedom of Information for Inclusive

Governance Project in Timor-Leste” became an opportunity for CEPAD to further consolidate the above approach, in particular for the Department of Administration and Finance through the recommendations for capacity improvement provided in the ‘Special Award Conditions’ regarding Absorptive Capacity, Financial Management and Internal Control System, Procurement System and Human Resources Management.

Internal Control System

For CEPAD internal controls include all of the policies and procedures the management uses to achieve among others the reliability and integrity of financial information. The well-established segregation of duties as a result of the assistance provided through the USAID funded Fostering Freedom of Information for Inclusive Governance Project in Timor-Leste has helped to ensure that management has accurate, timely and complete information, including accounting records, in order to plan, monitor and report project operations and activities. Whereas the provided additional controls on cash management, monitoring cash advances, and training on finance and other related policies for the Finance and Administration staff have improved and reinforced risk identification mechanisms to enable the management to implement thorough documentation and authorization practices to better control and prevent unwanted situations. Internal controls systems have thus provided CEPAD tools and mechanisms to improve management and monitoring for the successful achievement of operational goals and objectives of every project now and in the future.

Financial Management

Variance analysis and variances in monthly financial statements are vital to the success of CEPAD when managing and monitoring the financial status of a project on monthly basis. As variances help understand the difference between budgeted amounts and actual income or expenses, CEPAD has found variance monthly reports very useful a tool to help the management make changes in financial forecasts and monitor the performance of the organization, its teams and the projects by reallocating resources when and where necessary.

Procurement policies

CEPAD’s procurement policies apply to all sub-awards issued under any project implemented by CEPAD. With the improved and well established procurement policies as a result of the USAID’s FOI project, CEPAD is in a better position to determine the appropriate monitoring level to monitor the activities of sub-award recipients to ensure that sub-awards are and will be in compliance with CEPAD’s applicable procurement policy.

Organization management

For CEPAD appropriate staff planning and staff structuring are critical for the management to effectively implement any project in all areas including sub-award management, monitoring and evaluation, accounting, and procurement. CEPAD has always developed an organizational chart showing clearly all staff working on a project and an organogram indicating clearly how staff communicate and report to and with each other and how they report to the management level; this includes a narrative explaining the expertise and qualifications of each staff member

in the organization and on the different projects. It has proved to be helpful for the management when deciding how best to run and manage project activities in all areas including sub-awards, monitoring and evaluation, accounting and procurement in an efficient and effective way.

Management review

Accountability and transparency are critical to CEPAD and the foundation for accountability and transparency is the very well organized filing systems and adequate supporting documentation. Well managed records with adequate supporting documentation has ensured CEPAD the integrity needed within the organization which allows staff to account to their managers who in turn account to donors through donors' reviews or internal and external audits. CEPAD having an anti-corruption focused project has since its inception in 2007 tried its best possible to minimize and prevent the loss of control of financial records so as not to create opportunities for fraud, thus it has preserved over the years an audit trail of decisions, actions, and procurement and as a cost-effective deterrent mechanism to fraud and corruption, as very many internal and external audits so far can confirm.

Timesheet management

Timesheet management showing accurate actual staff time spent on project activities provides CEPAD useful information on staff real-time visibility into project performance, which has assisted CEPAD in creating more accurate budget forecasts and identifying out-of-scope work to be able to share project progress with internal project teams and donors. Also more accurate actual time spent on project activities can now assist CEPAD in recruitments to optimize employee scheduling for maximum profitability in future projects, as well to enable CEPAD to better understand when and whom to hire for specific projects and specific skills and qualification requirements. In addition, timesheet with accurate actual time also helps CEPAD understand if the project and its team are the most or least billable and it allows project teams to realize their own productivity by seeing their own utilization and billability goals to drive increased transparency and performance.

Thus, the improvement made in the above areas has also contributed to further strengthening staffs' knowledge and skills and organizational improvement, which is much needed for CEPAD to move on to the next level in terms of organizational effectiveness, as the organization is required to make a step-change in its organizational work in general to have a greater impact on positive outcomes for Timor-Leste.

VIII. Challenges, Constraints and Recommendation

Key challenges CEPAD encountered included among others:

- In 2015 the main challenges included among others the reimbursement-based agreement which was an issue deterring the implementation of some project activities.

- In 2016 the main challenges included among others the retention of project personnel partially due to lack of commitment and skills for implementing the project, while on the other hand the reimbursement also made it difficult to hire better qualified staff.
- In 2017 the main challenges included among others Presidential and Parliamentary elections which contributed to delaying the implementation process – venues and participation were sometimes difficult to secure.
- The government’s bureaucracy often made it difficult to secure the timely participation of public servants in TOTs implemented countrywide.

Recommendation:

- CEPAD came to realize how extremely important the FOI project is in the current social, political, and economic context of the country. This is to say that for a project of such importance the two year implementation was proved insufficient to engage state organs and community countrywide effectively to meet the objectives of the project in its entirety. More so in the current context where the people of Timor-Leste are facing political uncertainty following the elections 2017.

IX. Annexes

- 1. PMEP Indicator**
- 2. List of Program**
- 3. Staffing**
- 4. Joint statement**
- 5. Baseline survey**
- 6. End line survey**
- 7. M&E data**