



PEACEBUILDING THROUGH CROSS-BORDER LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Since 2017, Indonesia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNDP Indonesia and UNDP Timor-Leste have been piloting an initiative aimed at sustaining existing peacebuilding efforts through local economic development in selected border areas of Indonesia and Timor-Leste. The Royal Norwegian Embassy in Jakarta is the principal funder behind the initiative.

The initiative is part of Indonesia’s South-South Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), a platform for third-party countries to support Indonesia’s foreign policy activities in the Global South countries. In May 2019, the State Secretary of Norway’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Ms. Marianne Hagen, paid a successful state visit to Indonesia and Timor-Leste to observe the progression of the initiative as its third-party stakeholder. The visit was symbolically seen as Norway’s expression of its strong interest and continuing commitment to the initiative.



Map of the Oe-cusse Special Administrative Region of Timor-Leste, located as an enclave within Indonesian territory (red line)

The initiative currently involves the two border communities of Napan (in East Nusa Tenggara province, Indonesia) and Oesilo (in Oe-cusse Special Administrative Region, Timor-Leste). Both communities are in the least developed parts of Indonesia and Timor-Leste in terms of welfare, climate change and connectivity.

The initiative includes a broad and diverse group of farmers, with an emphasis on women and young people. In Napan, with a population of 1,113 people¹, there are currently 153 farmers (85 households) participating, with 52% of those being women. In Oesilo, with a population of 11,481 people², there are 133 farmers (67 households) participating, with 54% being women. Figure 1.2 illustrates the initiative's emphasis on having a well-balanced gender distribution of participating farmers, organized into 10 working groups.



Following 16 technical trainings and 3 study visits conducted by UNDP Indonesia and local NGOs so far, the farmers have started producing various value-added products, including smoked beef, beef floss, essential oils from candle nuts and cooking spices, among others.

At present, within this initiative the biggest income-generating product for both communities have been vegetables (of a variety of plant types). This is partly explained by how cross-border knowledge exchange among the farmers has taken place most frequently within vegetables farming. The farmers in both communities have particularly benefitted from regular interactions with each other on how to improve their existing vegetables farming techniques. Given the challenges of water scarcity and dry soil in both communities (especially in Oesilo), the significance of increased cross-border interactions, as a means of knowledge exchange and ultimately peacebuilding, cannot be understated.

In the future, the initiative aims to make the ongoing local economic development activities in the border communities more cross-border in nature. In order to meet this agenda, there are some existing challenges that need to be addressed by all relevant governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.



In terms of economic activity, the initiative is boosting local economic development in the selected border communities by building on their existing comparative advantages in various commodity and value-added product specializations. The top three economic activities among households in Napan are agriculture (28%), livestock (28%) and cattle farming (16%), whereas households in Oesilo are predominantly engaged in agriculture (52%) and livestock (45%).



From this initiative, the farmers in the two border communities are expected to enjoy greater agency and become more economically interdependent and self-sufficient in the long run. These are essential conditions to be achieved for sustaining peace and development.

Trade regulations between Indonesia and Timor-Leste have not completely removed existing trade barriers on the ground for the farmers to smoothly exchange products and knowledge across the borders. These barriers also limit the market potential and size of the products sold by the farmers in both border communities. Hence, the East Nusa Tenggara local government and ZEESM Timor-Leste (Zonas Especiais de Economia Social de Mercado de Timor-Leste) had notably expressed a desire to have a better-suited local trade agreement in place soon.



It is expected that the initiative will become a model of reference for other countries in the future to learn from Indonesia's experience in building and sustaining peace in post-conflict areas through cross-border local economic development.

CONTACT US



UNDP Indonesia

Menara Thamrin Building, 7-9th floor

Jl. M.H. Thamrin Kav. 3.

Jakarta 10250, Indonesia

www.id.undp.org

Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

@undpindonesia @undpindonesia UNDP Indonesia

APPENDIX

As of November 2018 – February 2019:

Figure 1.1 Number of farmers and household, by group (absolute number)

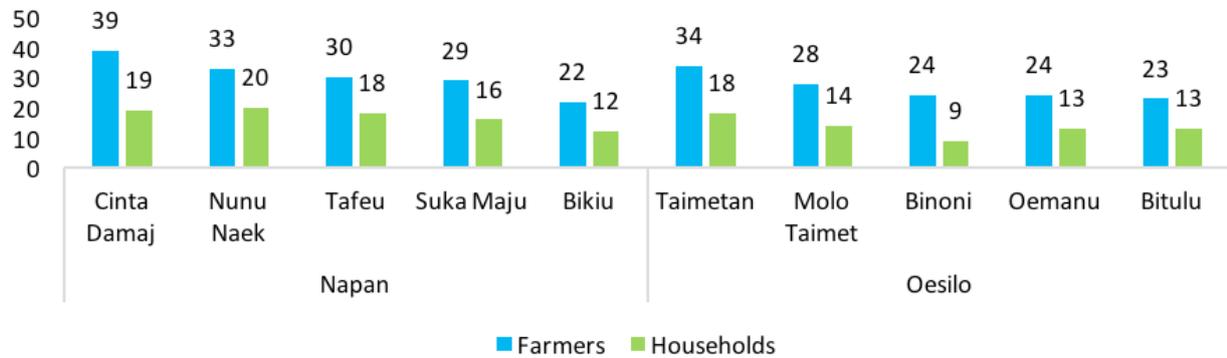


Figure 1.2 Gender distribution, by work group (%)

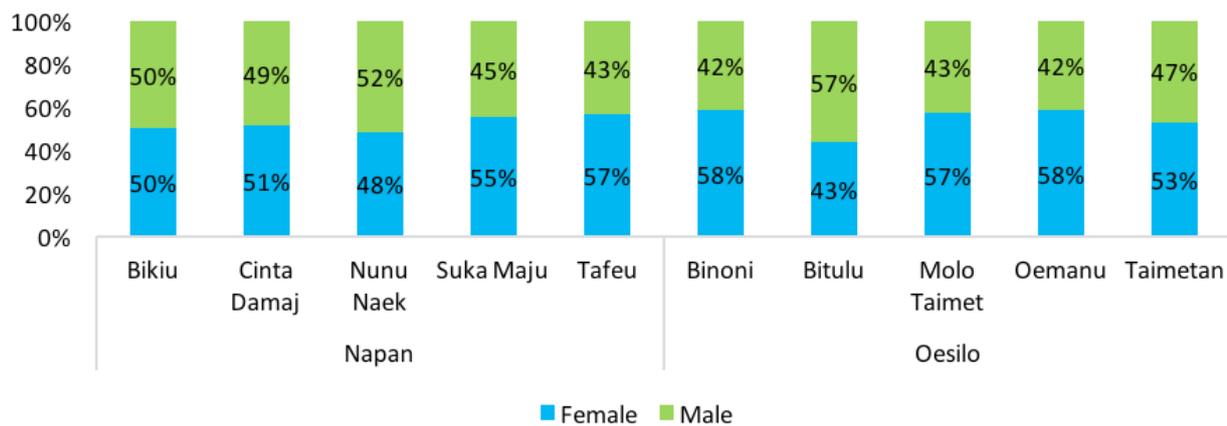


Figure 2a. Napan households, by activity (%)

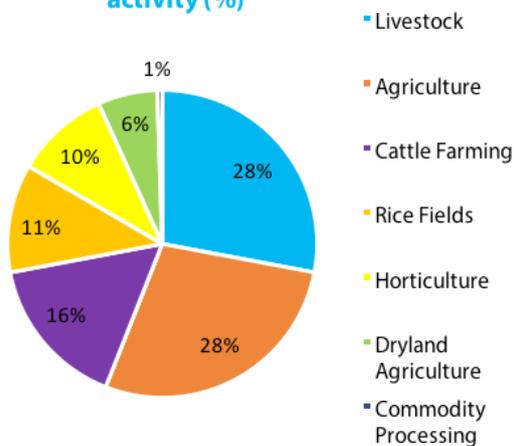
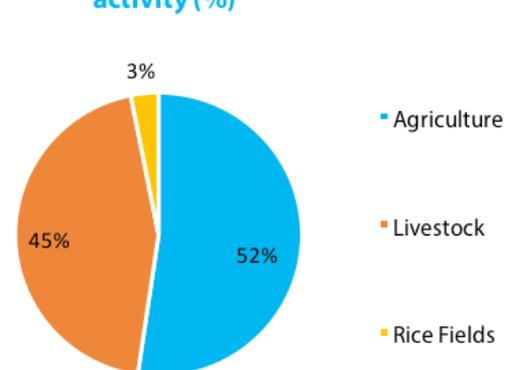


Figure 2b. Oesilo households, by activity (%)



¹Desa Napan Population Census (2016). Link: <http://napan.desa.id/data/kependudukan/>

²Statistics Timor-Leste: Population and Housing Census (2015). Link: <http://www.statistics.gov.tl/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Wall-Chart-Poster-Landscape-Final-English-rev.pdf>