

▶ HAMETIN

ERA Agro-Forestry Project Newsletter

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Partnership for Sustainable Agro-Forestry (PSAF)



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▶ Welcome to the Twenty-first and Final Edition of our ERA Agro-Forestry (ERA-AF) Newsletter “HAMETIN”.

Welcome to HAMETIN, a monthly bulletin of the ERA-AF project, funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the ILO as a component of the Partnership Support for Agro-Forestry (PSAF) Ai ba Futuru. This issue marks the last issue of HAMETIN as the project closes on 31st March 2022. We have been able to produce 21 issues informing the public of the ERA Agroforestry Project.

In this issue we will inform you on how the project was implemented, together with the people involved and the impact created. Hoping you enjoy this issue of HAMETIN....

Enhancing Rural Access Agro-Forestry (ERA-AF) Project Activities From 2017-2022

▶ 01. The Road Construction Journey

The ERA Agroforestry Project funded by European Union and implemented by ILO is part of the Partnership for Sustainable Agroforestry (PSAF) with the general objective of “contributing to a peaceful, inclusive and sustainable development in Timor-Leste, through improved rural access, the creation of employment, economic and domestic revenue opportunities, and a durable reduction in food insecurity and malnutrition in rural areas”. As a result, 15 rural roads have been prioritized and rehabilitated in 4 Municipalities including Manatuto, Baucau, Viqueque, and Lautem.

In realizing this and so as to ensure the quality of the roads through used Labour-Based methods, capacity building was provided to a total of 34 contractors with 19 of them being women owned. Training was provided on Labour-Based Methods at the Don Bosco Training Center and on Business and Contracts Management at IADE.



As seen throughout our previous newsletters, a number of contractors and their staff have stated how the training has helped them tremendously in managing their business and ensuring the delivery of quality roads. Supervision of road works is done by ERA-AF Engineers from Baucau Team, Supervisors from Don Bosco, and also Municipal Public Works supervisors to ensure successful implementation. As in any project, there are few challenges faced while rehabilitating the roads including adverse weather, social issues, traditional customs, a lack of community participation and Covid-19. These did impact the implementation of the road to some degree by delaying the progress, but different measures were taken by the team to help mitigate the issues to ensure timely delivery of road works.



02. Key Activities



The good work of the 4-year project was accomplished through the activities that were done throughout the year by the team in liaison with partners and stakeholders. Here are a few of the important ones in chronological order. The project's first year was focusing on establishment and beginning of operations including capacity building and selecting contractors for the trial contract for batch 1 roads in Baucau Municipality. Training was provided to 10 contractors on Labour-Based Method. It included training on technical aspects by Don Bosco Training Center to Contractors' Supervisors and Engineers while the Business and Contract Management training was provided by IADE to Directors. Participating in the training was a prerequisite for contractors before competing in the bidding process. Furthermore, socialization was done by Syndicate of Timor-Leste Trade Union Confederation (KSTL) to local contractors and labour in regard to Labour Code, Contractor and Labour Condition. A similar process was applied to batch 2 with 15 contractors from Viqueque and Manatuto Municipality in the second year and batch 3 with 9 contractors from Lautem and Manatuto Municipality in the third year.



To ensure the progress of the road works, supervision was implemented and interventions made by the project team on solving issues arising on site. This included engaging with communities, provision of coaching and mentoring to engineers on road constructions and seeking solutions with contractors.

To be able to receive feedback and the opinion from donor, partner, stakeholders, and beneficiaries on the ongoing road progress, a Project Advisory Committee was formed to inform these entities and allow for constructive criticism and feedback on improving the works. Meetings were held annually, and the feedback was very helpful and greatly appreciated.



▶ 03. Past Achievements



By implementing 100 kilometers of rehabilitated roads including 19.5 kms of spot improvement, the roads built have provided not only the access but also short-term employment, opening of small businesses and market linkages to targeted agroforestry community. Besides the short-term employment and income gained during project implementation by 4,889 workers, 1,216 being women, the community of about 17 sucos and 90 aldeias have improved domestic revenue within their households through improved access.

Efforts were also made to support contractors in accessing credit, materials, and equipment. The project has been able to support 4 contractors acquire compaction rollers and provided 2 rollers to Contractors' Association and Don Bosco Training Center.



A Joint Contractor Tracer Study was also conducted, which showed training to be of good use, but which also identified problems faced by contractors. Recently a White Paper was developed to promote contractors' development and support also provided to CCI TL to operationalize its MoU with MPW for joint classification through a feasibility study.

On the other hand, local contractors have benefited not only by implementing the roads, but the contractors and their teams of engineers and supervisors have been very grateful for the opportunity to be capacitated in many areas including technical, business, and contracting capacity.

Through this capacitation, they can now better manage their company resources while also being able to handle social issues when dealing with communities in ensuring the sustainability of local resources-based approaches and contractor development. ERA-AF is also proud to support the formation of the new Labour Based Contractor Association (AEBT).



Human Interest

▶ ERA-AF Teamwork Made the Work Possible



Officially commencing in June 2017 and ending in March 2022 (with 2 extensions), 4 years and 10 months of ERA-AF project funded by EU and implemented by ILO has seen so many memorable achievements, challenges, setbacks, and delays among others. Through it all teamwork has made it all possible, through persistent efforts, hard work, good communication, liaison with stakeholders, solving problems and many more attributes. The 4-year ERA-AF project would not have been possible without the contribution of every single staff that has worked for the project. Below are reflections from few representative staff on their experiences with the project:

Andre Faria (Private Sector Coordinator): *"Provide a great intervention to private sector"*

Domingos de Deus (M&E Officer): *"Unique project, that is inclusive"*

Luisa Varela (ICT and Database Asst): *"Grateful for experiences gained with a strong Team"*

Joseph Odongo (Contractor Training Officer): *"Provided great Institutional Capacity. Also, customization of principles of proven practices were possible with the support from the Government and local institutions"*

Samsan Vann (Labour Base Field Engineer): *"Provide a beautiful roads to the community"*

Leopoldina (Admin and Finance Asst): *"We gave access to communities and capacitated local contractors to develop infrastructure in Timor-Leste"*



It has been a great pleasure for all the ERA-AF Team to work for the ERA-Agroforestry project, We are thankful for the financing and support from our donor EU and collaboration from all stakeholders and partners.



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