



Building Resilience & Ending Vulnerabilities in SIDS

Joint Programme 2022 Annual Progress Report

-

Cover Page

UNCT/MCO: Timor-Leste

Reporting Period: 1 January - 31 December 2022

JP title: Strengthening nation food systems and promoting disaster risk reduction (DRR)

Stakeholder partner: National Government;Sub-national Governments;Civil

Society Organizations;Bilateral aid organizations;Private sector;

Thematic SDG Areas: Food systems transformation;Decent jobs & universal social protection;Digital transformation;Transforming education;SDG localization;

PUNOs: WFP, FAO, WHO

Total estimated expenditures: US\$ 244,261.0

Total estimated commitments (including expenditures): US\$ 405,382.0

Gender Marker: Gender-responsive (for example, the JP aimed to respond to specific gender needs, such as linking social assistance with GBV response services or maternal health support)

Resident Coordinator: Balogun Alexander, Olufunmilayo

Resident Coordinator Email: funmi.balogun@un.org

Executive Summary

The Joint Project (JP) has made significant contributions to the national dialogues on Timor-Leste food summit system conducted in 2021. Three key areas ,namely strengthened food control system, reduces post-harvest loss, and established acute integrated food security phase classification are among several priorities highly recommended from the dialogue that are well aligned with the overall outcomes of the JP. Following are the three keys results that the JP has jointly produced during the reporting period:

1. Impact on Governance financing and policy through strengthening Market analysis assessment, food crises forecasting, and food control system assessment. Through this JP, the three participating UN agencies came together and collaboratively conducted the first Timor Leste market, food security and food system assessment. The findings from these assessments will enable the decision makers (Government of and Stakeholders) to design appropriate responses in order to strengthen both the supply and demand side of the National food systems and improve the resilience of the national systems to tackle food insecurity and nutrition issues in Timor Leste. These Joint Programme's activities have set the foundation to overcome the main causes of losses of staple crops in Timor Leste and paved the way to reduce severe food insecurity and reduce prevalence of all forms of malnutrition (UNSDf, outcome1).

2. Impact on institutional capacity development through Training curricula and module developed, and training. In addition, the three participating UN agencies collaboratively delivered several trainings to increase the capacity of Government Ministries on the acute integrated food security phase classification (IPC). Training of Trainers (TOT) programs and Policy documents and advocacy briefs have been developed, and have contributed to strengthened institutional capacities of government, NGOs and value chain actors, which is envisaged to result in reducing post-harvest losses along the supply chain, development of appropriate policies and

functionalizing the food control system in the country. The government has committed to review and update the existing national food policies and strategies and develop food act/law. This policy shift will further contribute to fostering a healthy food environment and bring favorable changes in consumption patterns which is a vital factor in addressing malnutrition in Timor Leste.

3. Greater partnership and collaboration for multi sector intervention fostered through strengthening communications. Under the JP, UN agencies convened multisectoral coordination with diverse stakeholders such as relevant government institutions, CSOs, Academia and value chain actors. To strengthen the demand and supply side of food system the participating UN agencies jointly produced several communication materials such as a promotional video, food security bulletin, market price report and policy note. These communication materials foster improved post-harvest practices and technologies adopted by the value chain actors, market transparency and policy dialogue between the private sector and government strengthened.

The collaborative work among the three participating UN Agencies as members of Value Chain Inter-ministerial Committee led by the Prime Minister has leveraged financial resources to ensure an integrated multi-sectoral policy in accelerating the achievement of sustainable development goal in Timor Leste. This has been proved through the inclusion of resource allocation for national value chain in the 2022 National budget, where \$50 million being allocated as soft loans with 3% interest rate and additional \$80 million to second food basket program. In addition, high level policy advocacy on CODEX has led to establishment of National CODEX secretariat which will facilitate continued political commitment and allocation of resources from the government for a functional CODEX committee.

Annual Progress

Overall JP self-assessment of 2022 progress:

On-track (expected annual results-achieved)

Overall progress against 3 key results

During the first year of implementation of the joint program, the participating UN agencies cooperated with relevant ministries, development partners and civil society organizations to achieve the following key result 1) market assessment, food security and food control system assessment conducted 2) Training conducted and training module developed and 3). Greater partnership and collaboration for multi sector intervention Fostered.

The Participating UN agencies of this JP conducted the 1st Timor-Leste market assessment and the 1st Timor-Leste Acute Integrated food security Phase Classification (IPC) in 2022 as part of intervention to achieve output 3.1- Food crisis forecasting has been implemented through acute food security and nutrition monitoring systems. In response to the assessment result, the partners have provided Technical Assistance for the establishment of three Loja do Povo in 3 municipalities Ainaro, Dili and Lautem.

Technical support to the key line ministries to assess the current food control system capacity were jointly provided by the JP partners as part of intervention to achieve output 1.3 – National capacity on food safety and surveillance system strengthened. The first ever National Food Control Systems Assessment completed and recommendations for strengthening resilience of food systems actioned. Based on the assessment a set of recommendations have been provided to the government to strengthen food control system at national level. As a result, the government has agreed to review and update the existing national food policies and strategies, to develop legal instruments such as food act/law or food standards, to allocate sufficient resources and fundamental infrastructures for food control, to develop an integrated plan to functionalize food control system at country level, as well as to design a comprehensive education programme for all food safety stakeholders.

With the strong commitment and leadership from the Government, ministries participating in the implementation of JP activities would sustain and scale the JP results beyond the initiative and that will support the achievement of UNSDCF 2021-2025 Outcome 1 that focuses on transformative change to address malnutrition, food security and low agricultural productivity in Timor-Leste. As a results of market assessment, market price monitoring, and policy note on impact of global conflict to Timor-Leste, the government has approved new government local food procurement policy, which is establishes the obligation to acquire at least 75% of foodstuffs produced in Timor-Leste within the scope of public procurement operations. The JP agencies were also provided the recommendation to the second food basket programme (Cesta Básica) and the additional budget allocation of \$80m in 2022 as part of government economic recovery plan has been allocated. The Acute IPC results are potentially influenced the government state budget and programme 2023 that will contribute to better food crisis forecasting through acute food security and nutrition monitoring systems and in the long run will enabling the government implementing policy instruments aimed at supporting the shift to sustainable consumption and production.

The three participating UN agencies collaboratively delivered several trainings to increase the capacity of relevant stakeholders on improved harvest and post-harvest practices and technologies and assessment of food system capacity. These activities contributed to strengthen institutional capacity development of government, NGOs and value chain actors.

Finally, the joint programme supported system strengthening through its initiatives on designing of Food Based Dietary Curriculum and training module development. This would contribute to achievement of Government commitment to reduce malnutrition and food insecurity and in the long-term achievement of UNSDCF outcome 1.

SDG Acceleration progress towards the SDGs, focusing on the main SDG targets

1. SDG Target 12.3.1: The ToT on improved harvest and post-harvest practices was conducted introducing best practices and technologies of harvest and post-harvest to reduce the loss of edible foods / PHL (Post Harvest Loss) along the supply chain. Reducing PHL is essential in enhancing availability and access to food, increasing incomes, and ultimately protecting the ecosystems.
2. SDG Target 2.2.2: The training of the trainers also integrated food processing to value-add perishable local agriculture product and produce organic and nutritious product to help the value chain actors generate more income.
3. The efforts to strengthen CODEX and food control systems also contributes to SDG target 2.2.2. In addition, successful advocacy on sugar and SSB taxation is a huge policy level shift contributing to promotion of healthy diets and preventing all forms of malnutrition.
4. SDG Target 12.1.1: The project is also proactively exploring how the market linkages can be enhanced, direct market linkages between communities where food losses are high. The project is now engaging with the two MSMEs working on food processing and explore to provide support to these MSMEs to increase their production capacity to accommodate more fresh produces from project beneficiaries. More farmers then can sell their produce to these MMEs. The project is exploring to introduce improved post-harvest technologies to women groups to help them save labor and time at the same time increase their income. Improved post-harvest technologies also play important role to enhance smallholder family's food security.
5. SDG 2.1.1: To reduce the prevalence of malnutrition that has been well articulated in the SDG2- consolidated national action plan to reduce food security and nutrition
6. SDG 3.8.1: to increase universal health coverage whether woman, adolescents and population in general has the access to health facilities and services
7. SDG 12.1.1: Policy instruments to enable health and safe nutritious food and sustainable consumption and productions
8. SDG 13.1.2: Timor-Leste adopts and implements national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030
9. The policy advocacy material provided by WFP helped government to developed and implement the policy instruments to strengthen national production (SDG Target 12.1.1).
10. The mobile food security survey and Acute IPC tools that been developed and adopted contributed to the SDG Target 13.1.2. with the multi-sectoral involvement which focus on food security and nutrition agenda through the Acute IPC analysis will strengthen the coordination mechanism within different stakeholders for the achievement of the SDG target (SDG Target 17.16.1).

Constraints that were encountered and any adjustments that were made to strengthen the relevance and effectiveness of the JP and the coherence and coordination of UN system support.

- Most of project preparation at the individual agency level had just started during the reporting period (January to June 2022)- effectively in April 2022 after official launching of the project on 31 March 2022. This includes internal approval processes, for example in the case of FAO, that took a bit of time to get the project to fully operational status. Substantial activities took place during the reporting period were mostly institutional set up, project scoping exercises and recruitment process, all of which took time and did not incur many expenses. Timor-Leste also had Presidential Elections in April/May – which also made it difficult to commence project implementation. All these factors have delayed the implementation of the main project activities and consequently lower delivery rate during the reporting period.
- There is limited information available on food loss and waste in the country which the project can use as baseline for the project for the selection of commodities to focus on. Thus, a national workshop was organized at the national level invited key stakeholders to have a technical discussion to identify around the issues of agricultural post-harvest losses on 3 categories of crops and identify key intervention to reduce post-harvest losses. This activity initially was not planned in the project document. This caused delays to planned training activities, as training materials development could not start without a clear decision on type of crops to target.
- External to the joint programme, the delay in designing and approval to develop the training curriculum and module has been a constraint to the provision of timely UN support under the joint programme. The curriculum was developed by the senior staff of MoH, however due to other roles and responsibilities the curriculum and module couldn't completed in due timeline.
- SGD funds available only after March 2022 and reflect to organizations workplan after the Joint Programme launched in April 2022.
- The Government of Timor-Leste guarantees local market access by creating Decree Law N. 36/2022 on 19 May, which establishes the obligation of purchase of local foodstuffs at least 75% in public procurement. This policy on local food procurement being created but no significant benefit to the women groups.

Next steps, scaling and sustainability [up to half a page]

The Participating UN agencies are expected to collaboratively carry out following activities during the next calendar year:

- Training the 25 groups of value chain actors on improved harvest and post-harvest practices and technologies integrated both theoretical and practical training
- Continue awareness raising campaign on the magnitude of causes and impacts of post-harvest losses in Timor-Leste. Production of second promotional video to introduce the solution to reduce the losses along the supply chain.
- Market linkage activity, foster/ facilitate links with the private sector (market) including support to agribusiness initiatives (individual and/or cooperatives). This will include linking farmers to the wholesalers, buyers, middlemen, and food processing company.
- Start the plastic crates distribution to the value chain actors in 3 municipalities for minimizing damage during handling transportation purpose of the fresh products.
- The draft curriculum and training module present to INS for approval and first phase training will be conducted
- Advocacy and disseminations of healthy meeting guidelines at national level targeting government institutions and private food business.
- Provide capacity strengthening to relevant government authorities/agencies and food inspectors on food safety and quality.
- Continue awareness campaign on healthy diet, breastfeeding practices and 5 keys to food safety
- Engage with Ministry of Tourism, Commerce & Industry (MTCI) to ensure women groups are benefits from current policy. A local consultant will be engaged to support the process and provide monitoring support during the programme implementation.
- Approval of the Acute IPC report by municipalities authority and national government
- To present the report to the Council of Minister for the high-level response

Following key results are expected to achieve by the participant UN agencies during the following calendar year:

- 300-400 value chain actors acquired knowledge and adopted improved harvest and postharvest handling practices and technologies to minimize losses
- Solution to reduce the loss along the food supply chain released will be documented and widely disseminated in a short video format for wider public access.
- At least 30% of project beneficiaries are linked to market both at municipality level as well as at national level.
- 250 plastic crates are distributed to the targeted value chain groups in 3 municipalities for minimizing damage during handling transportation purpose of the fresh products.
- Local food procurement policy on gender-lens drafted
- Acute IPC report validated and launched
- Recommendations from the technical food control system assessment actioned, and national capacity on food safety and quality strengthened.
- Capacities of health workers and community awareness on optimal behaviours for nutrition and healthy diets strengthened

Programmatic Survey

Total number of people benefited from the JP in 2022: 300

Percentage (%) of women benefited among the total number: 33

Percentage (%) of children & youth (0-24 years of age) benefited among the total number:33

Percentage (%) of older persons (age 60 and above) benefited among the total number:33

Percentage (%) of persons with disabilities benefited among the total number:2

Explain how people benefited from the joint programme.

The people are directly benefited through training on improved harvest and post-harvest practices delivered through by the project.

Priority Cross-cutting Issues

Cross-cutting results/issues

In bullet points, please describe how the JP addressed cross-cutting results including gender equality and women empowerment, human rights, SDG data, youth, and principles of leaving no one behind in its implementation.

- Cross-cutting issues addresses by the project relate to youth and gender equality and women empowerment. The participating UN agencies categorize youth inclusion as a cross-cutting issue (CCI) to ensure that needs and challenges of the youth are taken into consideration during programming. Throughout the project implementation it ensures their participation are fairly represented as well as ensure their meaningful participation at all the activities delivered by the project. The beneficiaries of the project are 75% young people from farmers associations to young social entrepreneurs.
- Post-harvest loss has a negative effect on food security, nutrition, and household economy for smallholders' farmers (both male and female). Women play immense role in the post-harvest handling and processing stage of the value chain, where considerable food loss occurs. Therefore, the project integrated food processing in the training to help the women group to value add the agricultural products before it deteriorates, by then women in rural area could generate more income to support their household economy.
- The project is also exploring to introduce improved drying, prepackaged and storage technologies which can help to save time and labor and can directly or indirectly increase smallholder farmers' income. Improved post-harvest technologies can enhance all four dimensions of smallholder families' food security - increasing physical availability, improving economic access, ensuring safe utilization, and improving stability by providing continuous access to produce, and thereby enabling community resilience.
- Based on the acute IPC result recommendation women and girls experience greater impacts of climate change, which amplifies existing gender inequalities and poses threats to livelihoods. Women, particularly in developing countries, also play a crucial role in the production of food and feeding their families. This links gender equality to food security at a local, national, and global level. As gender and climate concerns are cross-cutting, it is important that they are mainstreamed into future policy formulations and our immediate response plans

How did the JP apply the Gender Marker

The JP is Gender-responsive (for example, the JP aimed to respond to specific gender needs, such as linking social assistance with GBV response services or maternal health support). Policy dialogues, advocacy (e.g. direct inputs to national policies, strategies, laws, including women's and girls' rights groups in coordination mechanisms); Adaptation of existing programmes (e.g. revision of eligibility criteria, removal of conditionalities); Capacity development (e.g. training of social workers, local governments, local communities);

JP address the below cross-cutting issues and principles of leaving no one behind

Human Rights	Persons with disabilities	Youth	Environmental and social standards
No	No	Yes	No

Key meetings and events organized in 2022

JP steering committee/ programme board meeting	Strategic partners/ donors event	Kick-off meeting
Yes, in 2022	Yes, in 2022	Yes, in 2022

Explanation if you have not held any key meeting/events.

Contribution to enhancing SDG Financing

Drafted a bill, strategy, Produced financing, and/or approved a law costing, diagnostic and	Improved efficiency (cost savings) in the	Improved effectiveness (value for money; i.e. policies/regulatory	Drafted	Structured new financial
---	---	---	---------	--------------------------

increasing the fiscal space for the policy focus	feasibility analyses as a basis to invest or increase spending on the SDGs	management of programmes/schemes	social impact of \$1 spent) of spending	frameworks or developed tools to incentivize private sector investment on the SDGs	instruments (public, private or blended) to leverage additional funding
No	No	No	No	No	No

How JP contributed to enhancing SDG financing