TRADITIONAL POWER STRUCTURES AND THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE PROJECT

FINAL REPORT

Presented to CEP/PMU, ETTA/UNTAET and the World Bank.

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Dili, September 2001
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Local Power Structures and Political Concepts

The core of Timor’s traditional social structure is the extended family. In the past a number of these families formed a kingdom with a king as ruler. The families were divided into ‘royal’ and ‘commoner’, ordered into a hierarchy and attributed different tasks. The political and ritual authority, which forms the basic matrix in the Timorese world-view, is attributed to certain ‘royal’ Houses in the kingdom depending on their time of arrival on the land.

The Portuguese colonial government used the local political rulers, the liurais, as their links to the people and did not change the internal system of existing local kingdoms. The liurais became an informal power in 1934 when the Portuguese started to work directly with village chiefs; people from the ‘royal’ families were turned into village chiefs. The hierarchical order of the extended families and the specific tasks that were attributed to them within one kingdom or village were still maintained. Whenever the Portuguese tried to interfere in the appointment of leaders they faced protest from the people. The Portuguese were aware that leaders from a ‘commoner’ family had no power. They therefore used the local ‘royal’ powers to achieve their interests. The ritual authorities, which form an opposition to the local political authorities in the communities, were hardly challenged by the Portuguese or even the Church.

At the end of the Portuguese rule when the first political parties were established some of them challenged the power of the liurai system. Their basic thought was that if Timor was to develop as a nation people had to have the capacity to rule even if they were ‘commoners.’

The Indonesian system then prescribed that power positions must be elected democratically. What really happened on the local level was often a continuation of traditional power structures. The traditional elders still had a strong influence on the nomination of candidates, except for the cases where the Indonesian government or the Armed Forces interfered because they had their own special interests. So what looked like democratic elections on the surface was a confirmation of the traditional powers, since after a decision was made by the elders people knew for whom they had to vote for. In cases where the ‘wrong’ leaders were put in place, there were all kinds of excuses or methods by the communities to get around the fact that the leader had no more ancestral (and therefore ‘royal’) legitimacy. The village chief nevertheless represented the core of the struggle between modernity and traditions where as the hamlet chief’s traditional legitimacy was hardly ever challenged.

After the Popular Consultation in 1999, the village and hamlet chiefs were appointed again in differing efforts of cooperation between CNRT, Falintil and the local traditional elders. Here the clandestine and the traditional power system met, but it seems that in many ways they did not appear as a contradiction. Power holders were now selected due to their proven capacity in the clandestine movement and/or for their ‘royal’ descent. Yet the chosen power holders were usually compatible with both traditional and clandestine systems.
The present development of power structures indicates that at the very local level (at the hamlet and village levels), traditional powers are still very strong. The traditional division between ritual and political authority, in accordance with the hierarchical system of extended families, is still an important concept in rural areas. On the higher levels (sub-districts and above) the ritual authorities are still acknowledged but the political authorities seem to split into two groups. There are traditional political powers that are given a symbolic and informal power, while other traditional political powers are actually still integrated into the formal power structure.

In Timor’s rural areas, traditional political concepts are still very present and dominate the power structure. These concepts are only starting to be challenged by international influences and the introduction of modern ideas.

One core difference between the local and modern paradigms is the hierarchy of the former, compared with the idea of equality of the latter. The other main difference is in the form of decision-making.

‘Democracy’ has come to symbolise peace and freedom but is not seen, so far, as challenging the local hierarchical system. Furthermore, a multi-party system is associated with animosity and is not perceived as being connected to the notion of democracy.

**The Community Empowerment Project**

Following the overwhelming results of the Popular Consultation, a unique opportunity was offered to rebuild local governance structures in this new nation. The Community Empowerment and Local Governance Project (usually abbreviated to the ‘CEP’) was set up in late February 2000. The objective was to provide a model for a democratic, participative and transparent forum to increase community participation in the planning and decision-making processes concerning development issues at the hamlet and village levels.

The programme supported the creation of Village Development Councils that are structures for local governance. After a socialisation campaign, each hamlet democratically elected representatives, with equal participation of men and women, to sit in the Village Council. Local leaders, such as village and hamlet chiefs as well as members of the Council of Elders, were not eligible to be candidates for the councils. This measure was undertaken to promote a wider involvement of people who traditionally do not have power. Nevertheless, the councils were supposed to consult with traditional leaders on a regular basis.

So far, the CEP’s major achievement has been the election of more than 6,400 council members all over East Timor sitting in more than four hundred Village Development Councils. In addition, there are sixty Sub-district Development Councils. The councils have undertaken consultations with community members to decide on projects to be funded and to address some of the more urgent needs of the village. During the Emergency cycle of the CEP more than five hundred and fifty eight projects at village and hamlet levels were funded and nearly eight hundred more in the second cycle. These have focused on infrastructure reconstruction as well as the recovery of economic means, lost during the post-ballot violence.
The general perceptions of the CEP by local communities are predominantly positive. People consulted acknowledge the CEP’s major contributions in terms of democratisation and its positive influence in changing their living conditions. They participated in democratic elections of the council members.

A number of conflicts have arisen in the implementation of the CEP. Some of these conflicts are related to the decision-making process, others reflect the social dynamics of the villages and a few arose from unilateral actions taken by individual council members. Traditional methods of conflict resolution, involving traditional leaders, have been used to address most of these conflicts.

A major contribution of the CEP towards improving gender equality in East Timor has been the introduction of a quota of 50% women in the election of Village Development Council members. However, women’s participation in CEP decision-making bodies is still challenged by a series of constraints, most of them related to women’s perceived role in traditional society.

With its extensive network all over the country, the CEP has great potential to introduce sound changes on the ground. The Village Development Councils constitute a unique local governance structure that can be used by the different development and government agencies interested in conducting interventions at the local levels.

The fundamental question to be addressed by the policy decision makers and the new Timorese leadership is whether the current power structures existing at the local level should be promoted and whether the Councils should continue. Further it is important to decide who sits on the councils, whether the local leadership should be inculded or not and what their role and mandate in the future will be.
1. INTRODUCTION

The Community Empowerment and Local Governance Project (CEP) is an UNTAET/ETTA programme, funded by the World Bank administered Trust Fund for East Timor. The project’s aims are to provide support for poverty alleviation and to strengthen the capacity of community institutions. A local governance structure was introduced to emphasise the idea of a ‘bottom-up’ method of community empowerment, after years of ‘top-down’ decision-making by the Indonesian government.

In October 2000 the Anthropology Research Team of the CEP was established to study the interplay between local Timorese power structures and the CEP. Its aim was also to provide a more culturally informed background for the development programme.

The CEP anthropological study required an analysis of traditional power systems and their development. Historically, power structures and political concepts were the most targeted points of foreign rule. The study examined how far traditional concepts are still present in the local communities and how far they influence governmental and other development programmes. The CEP with its idea of a ‘bottom-up’ method for communal empowerment, and its intention to create local governance, certainly seemed to be an interesting and culturally sensitive approach. Therefore the team studied the interplay between local power structures and the system of councils set up by the CEP.

It is a challenging task to inquire into and report on power structures and local governance in a time of socio-political turbulence and change in a young nation like East Timor. After such a long time of traditional power systems, Portuguese, then Indonesian rule and in a stage where a new nation is being formed, many different ideas about power on the local level have appeared. Thus, it has taken a lot of simplification to put our findings together regarding existing ideas. As power concepts at the local level are still very much dominated by traditional ideas, this report has to be read as an introduction to traditional Timorese concepts and ideas. As these are sometimes forgotten when considering national issues, our concern here is to emphasise how relevant are these local concepts. They are especially important to the Timorese in rural areas, who still make up the majority of the population in the country.

This report does not aim to promote traditional local ideas, nor try to give them greater importance on the national level. This has never been the intention of the research. The report only aims to show the richness and complexity of Timorese political concepts and power structures at the local level and illustrate that these ideas have survived hundreds of years of outside rule.

To implement development projects, especially if implemented by foreigners, a culturally informed background can be of help. Therefore it is important to have an awareness of the strength of traditional ideas. Nevertheless, we are not talking about their preservation: how far the Timorese decide to preserve or change their traditional ideas will be determined by the dynamics of the society itself.

The report is divided in two sections, with a concluding chapter linking the two parts. The first section describes traditional power concepts and their historical development, and the second section focuses more specifically on the CEP and how it has been implemented, including the major
challenges faced by the programme. The section devoted to power structures may be seen as a major contribution by CEP to other governmental programmes, UN agencies, bilateral cooperation agencies and NGOs interested in understanding East Timorese local notions of power and social dynamics at the community level. For it is here that the real impact of any development intervention is expected to make a difference. The CEP section provides concrete examples of how a development programme, as ambitious as CEP, can be affected by local power structures. These power structures are still very important in the daily lives of the people. This section also provides examples of conflicts that highlight local level social dynamics. It concludes with recommendations that may help to improve the CEP and other community-based projects.
2. RESEARCH

Objectives

The research conducted was qualitative and exploratory and had three major objectives:

To better understand the existing systems of power and social structures in East Timor. Information on various local systems of power and social structures was to be gathered to provide a picture of the variation in the present local power structures. This ethnographic account was considered important because local cultural systems are likely to affect the project in different ways.

To examine CEP’s interaction with the existing systems of power and its acceptance by the community. This objective leads to recommendations that policy makers and programme implementers may use to improve the social impact of the CEP, by adjusting the programme’s design to the cultural background of East Timorese societies.

To support a small group of East Timorese social scientists to gain competence in applied social research at the community level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The main topics addressed by the research were:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identification of:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Autochthonous power structures.</td>
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<td>• The impact of Portuguese administration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The impact of Indonesian rule.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The impact of the clandestine movement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Present changes in internal society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Changes inflicted by UNTAET.</td>
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| Identification of the role of CEP:           |
| • Which powers are favoured by the programme?|
| • How do the existing powers cope with the programme?|
| • Which new power positions are created through the programme?|

| Evaluation of the aims of the CEP programme in relation to: |
| • ‘Bottom-up’ empowering mechanisms; how well can the local councils integrate into a formal civil service that begins only at the district level? |
| • Democratic accountability; to what extent do democratically elected councils come into conflict with the sources of traditional leadership? |
| • Gender balance; to what extend can the ‘one-man/one-woman’ voting requirements be recognised when the institutionalised problems of gender discrimination remain present in both the modern and traditional parts of Timorese societies |
Methodology

Research Sites

Research was conducted in three districts of East Timor: Aileu, Baucau and Bobonaro. These three districts were selected due to the following multiple features:

- Presence of different ethno-linguistic groups;
- Different geographical locations (central, eastern and western part);
- Coverage of urban and rural environments;
- Different strong historical influences (presence of Fretilin and Falintil fighters, strong militia presence, relevant kingdoms during Portuguese rule);
- Presence of CEP in the different stages of its implementation (see Appendix A).

Research Cycles and Methods

The research consisted of three Cycles. Cycle one covered preparation, recruitment of assistants and a review of literature. The fieldwork was conducted during the second and third Cycles. For these the team split; one team went to Bobonaro and the other to Aileu and for three months undertook field research. Afterwards the two teams went together to Baucau to conduct the same research programme for two months.

During the Second Cycle, 150 in-depth interviews were conducted at the district and sub-district level with key informants. These informants included CNRT representatives, Falintil commanders, traditional elders, descendants of former kings, representatives of civil society organisations, Church representatives, UNTAET and CEP councils and officials. The objectives of this first immersion in the field were to gain a general understanding of issues related to current and past power structures as well as an overview of the functioning of CEP.

At the end of the Second Cycle, three research sites within each district were chosen. Here, the objective was a micro-social analysis of the dynamics of power structures, the functioning and interaction of CEP village councils within their communities and an analysis of major social players and power holders. Each research site consisted of a village and its constituent hamlets. The selection took into account the following

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1 From 23 October 2000 till first week of April 2001.
criteria: the presence of different ethno-linguistic groups, urban – rural settings, the importance of traditional power structures and best and worst practices regarding the implementation of CEP projects (see Appendix A).

During Cycle three, in-depth research was conducted in ten villages: three in the Aileu District (Liurai, Manukasa, Asumau); three in the Bobonaro District (Ritabou, Raheu, Tapo/Memo); and four in the Baucau District (Afoloikai, Bahu, Soba, Uato Hako).

One hundred and fifty-nine in-depth interviews were conducted with key actors: village and hamlet chiefs, civil society representatives, CEP council members and village facilitators, traditional elders, informal power holders and common villagers.

Participant observation was used to observe several meetings including political gatherings, conflict resolution meetings, ceremonies, and CEP council meetings.

During this Cycle, special attention was paid to: the role and functioning of CEP Village Councils, the membership and personal background of their members, the constraints faced by them in the development of their tasks and the efficiency of consultation within communities in the decision-making process.

In total, three hundred and nine interviews were conducted in the three districts (see Appendix B).

The Anthropological Research Team

The research team was composed of two international anthropologists and four young East Timorese researchers who all have an academic background in social science. The East Timorese researchers received on the job training and guidance in social science research and, in turn, provided the team with sound cultural and linguistic knowledge. The final report was written by the international researchers and their Timorese colleagues contributed with reports on their field experiences and research into their ‘own roots’ and reflections on society.

Working together and on the job training

Initially, a three-day workshop was conducted to train the research assistants in basic anthropological concepts and methods, the anthropology of East Timor and in-depth discussions on the research objectives and methodology. They collaborated in the development of the research questions and identification of key informants to be contacted.

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2 Our thanks to the research assistants Fernando da Costa, Cesar Melito, David Alves Lopes, Estanislau Babo Soares.
During the fieldwork period five workshops were conducted to co-ordinate the work between the two teams, to discuss in-depth the research locations, to re-think research questions and informants and exchange experiences in general.

The interviews were mostly conducted in Tetum, though some were in Indonesian, Portuguese, Mambai, Macassae and Nauete. Each interview was discussed and analysed by each research team and then the research assistants transcribed it into English or Indonesian.

Perceptions of the Research Team

The teams were very well received by the local populations in the different research locations. It was astonishing how willingly people were to patiently try to explain their social structure, world-views and customs. Even more so after they understood that the team was not connected to any government or NGO aid program and it would bring nothing into the villages. They always appreciated the research objective of giving international organisations a more culturally informed background. Many of the villagers in remoter areas seemed to feel honoured that finally someone from the ‘outside’ had come to ask about their lives. Villagers and power holders were also convinced that this research was going to bring their voices to the ‘outside.’

Background Information on the Three Districts

Aileu

Aileu District is located inland in central East Timor, forty seven kilometres south of Dili and is one of Timor’s smallest districts, encompassing only seven hundred and twenty nine square metres. The district is quite mountainous, alternating with river valleys. The total population is approximately 33,000. Administratively, it is divided in four sub-districts: Aileu Kota (containing almost half of the total population), Lualara, Remixio and Liquãde. There are thirtyone official villages and thirteen new or independent villages that have emerged since the Popular Consultation as a reflection of the local clandestine organisations³.

The predominant ethno-linguistic group is Mambai, an Austronesian language group with a small minority of Galoli speakers in a few hamlets of Rileó (Remexio) on the border to Manatutu.

Subsistence agriculture and livestock are the most important economic activities. The major agricultural products are rice and maize, which are grown almost exclusively for household consumpion. The most important cash crop products are coffee and tobacco, along with fruits that are mostly produced in the sub-districts of Liquãde and Remexio. Women are active in the production of vegetables, millet and other tubercles

³ Aileu District Profile, January 2001.
cultivated in individual gardens. Men and women participate equally in the agricultural work. Men do the clearing and burning and women the daily weeding. Planting and harvesting are also performed by both men and women.

Historically, during the time of Portuguese rule, the nowadays District of Aileu had five kingdoms: Dailor, Aileu (Hohulo and since 1947 Bandera Hun in Suco Liurai), Liquideo and two in Remexio (Manumero and Kaimao).

Aileu was the symbolic heartland of Fretilin and the struggle for independence. After the coup on 11th August 1975 by the UDT, Fretilin leaders gathered there and declared their counter-coup. After the Indonesian invasion, 99% of Aileu’s population sought refuge in the mountains because the large majority of Aileu’s inhabitants were Fretilin followers.

Bobonaro

Bobonaro is a district that covers a large part of the western border to West Timor. It is a very mountainous environment but also has a long coastline to the north. The main ethno-linguistic groups of Bobonaro are the Kemaq and Bunaq. The Kemaq language is Austronesian and its speakers mainly live in the sub-districts of Atabae, Balibo, Maliana, Kailako and partly in Bobonaro. The Bunaq language belongs to the Papuan language families and its speakers cover a part of Bobonaro and Lolotoe. Bekais speakers inhabit a small pocket of the Balibo Sub-district, an Austronesian language with a small group of speakers. A big part of the population used to settle in the mountains and survive on their hunting and gardening activities. The Portuguese migrated a large number of people down to the fertile valley of Maliana and initiated agricultural programmes. Nowadays, Maliana is a known rice growing area. Historically, there were at least eight larger kingdoms covering the area of the present day Bobonaro district. Due to its border, Bobonaro was through out Indonesian rule very much under the power of pro-Indonesian forces.

Baucau

Baucau is located in the central, northern part of East Timor. Its capital is the second largest city in the country. The district is very mountainous and extremely fertile. Large, wet-rice fields are planted in some of the sub-districts and other parts are covered by lush rain forest. The ethno-linguistic situation here is diverse. The Sub-district of Vemasse is partly inhabited by Galoli speakers and by Waimua speakers. The latter also settled in Venilale and they share the location with Macassae and Mediki speakers. Macassae speakers mainly cover the Quelicai and Laga sub-districts. Baguia is a partly Macassae and partly Naueti speaking population. Macassae and Waimua speakers inhabit Baucaukota. Most of these languages belong to the Austronesian language family; only Macassae belongs to the Papuan language families. Historically, most locations within Baucau were either ruled or influenced (according to oral history) by the kingdom of Vemassee from the west and by the kingdom of Luka from Viqueque.

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*Aileu District Profile, January 2000 by Aileu District Administration.*
In the Indonesian period the second highest mountain of East Timor, Matebean, was an important hide away for many Falintil soldiers. Therefore the Indonesian government resettled a large number of the population away from the mountainous areas.
3. LOCAL POWER STRUCTURES

Traditional Power Concepts

Social Structures

The House and Settlements

A core family usually inhabits a single house. It consists of a married couple and their unmarried children. The core family never exists by itself; it is usually bound in a whole universe of social relationships. Their closest relatives are members of their ‘lineage.’ A lineage consists of a group of people that are related to each other in a ‘unilateral’ way. This means either through the father’s (‘patrilineal’) or through the mother’s (‘matrilineal’) side. For ego in a patrilineal system, all relatives from his father’s side (e.g. his father’s brothers, father’s father or his own brother) are his close relatives and they are all perceived as being connected through ‘the same blood.’ The same structure is applied in a matrilineal system, with the difference being that the relatives here are reckoned only through the mother’s side. East Timorese societies are mainly patrilineal, with some exceptions. In such systems, all members of the lineage refer to a common ancestor. This group of people forms the ‘descent group’ (uma kain / ahimatan). The oldest male person usually heads it. Uma is the Tetum translation for the word house and from here on in the report the descent group will be referred to as the ‘House.’

One or more descent groups can refer to a ‘sacred house’ (uma lulik / uma lisan). All members of the sacred house still refer to a common ancestor but their genealogical links are not traceable anymore. Such sacred houses can be found in many settlements across Timor. Depending on the different societies they have different architectural features. Sacred houses represent the whole cosmos and contain the heirlooms of the ancestors. Therefore they present the ritual focal point of the group, since ‘the uma lulik was the residence of the first ancestors.” The sacred house is guarded by whoever is perceived to be the eldest member of community and his/her spouse, who is seen as the oldest living representative of the ancestors. According to the kinship system this is either the eldest male (in patrilineal systems) or the eldest female (in matrilineal systems). The local perception of the sacred house, or uma kain, is expressed by one of the informants:

We always have a close relation with our uma lulik, because the uma lulik is a symbol for Timorese culture. When god created the world, people already adhered to the uma lulik.

(CNRT leader)

5 For example, the Bunaq in Bobonaro District have a matrilineal kinship system.
6 Informant: villager.
7 Many sacred houses were burned when the Indonesians entered the area in the 70’s and during the unrest following the Popular Consultation in 1999. Hardly any of the sacred houses have been rebuilt, as this is connected with immense costs for the rituals.
The sacred house and uma kain represent the most important social units in Timorese social structure; they are the focal point of marriage relationships and ceremonies as well as political powers. The idea of the sacred house is the centre of concepts and activities and has not lost its importance.

The settlement (uma knua) is a geographical entity and combines several Houses. Two to three uma knua nowadays can form a hamlet.

All the Houses of a specific territory are in relation to each other and ordered by a hierarchical system. The hierarchy amongst them is explained through seniority. The most important entities in this hierarchy are the sacred houses. A specific sacred house is thought to be the ‘oldest’ House. Its ancestors are thought to have been the first people to settle the territory and to ‘open the land.’ Therefore it is regarded as ‘senior’ to the others. Following the oldest House, there is always an ordering of second oldest and third oldest sacred house etc., and when asked, the traditional elders can always count them down. Every House has a fixed position in the hierarchy. Some of them in the past separated from the oldest House and therefore became ‘smaller sacred houses;’ others have migrated from elsewhere and are seen as ‘newcomers.’ Usually a number between four and twelve Houses are regarded to be important. Then it is often mentioned that there are ‘countless smaller ones,’ but they are only uma kain and not ‘sacred house’ anymore.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of sacred house</th>
<th>Order of arrival in present location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Buihale</td>
<td>Oldest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Belegatal</td>
<td>Second oldest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ojabul</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Leikatan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Example from Ayasa, Bobonaro District

The House forms the main entity when it comes to marriage relations. It is an ‘exogamous’ unit; which means one can not marry with members of one’s own House. Through oral history, which remembers all the relations between the Houses, a fixed marriage system has been established. Through this system, all Houses are classified in a certain way to indicate their position in the social cosmos. Therefore, some Houses refer to each other as ‘siblings’ (‘younger sibling’ or ‘older sibling’), where as others are classified as one’s Wife-Giver House or Wife-Taker House or they are classified as ‘newcomers’ and still others as ‘indigenous’ to the land.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of sacred house</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sirobere</td>
<td>Wife Giver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bau’ubun</td>
<td>Wife Taker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lekiloko</td>
<td>Younger sibling of Bau’ubun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lori’ubun</td>
<td>Younger sibling of Bau’ubun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table: Classification of Houses
Table 2: Example from the hamlet Ritabou Bawah, Maliana, Bobonaro District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of sacred house</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mainaua</td>
<td>Indigenous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Utabalu</td>
<td>Newcomers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Manuboi</td>
<td>Indigenous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Uaimuta</td>
<td>Indigenous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Example from the hamlet Osogori, village Uato Hako, Baucau District

Through a House’s specific position in the cosmos, specific tasks are given to it. This includes all important ritual and political issues. For example, a House can be the ‘owner’ of political authority or ‘owner’ of ritual authority. These Houses are said to ‘hold titles.’ Some Houses are responsible for the security of an area or for the water sources, some for the drumming and dancing at specific ceremonies or for holding flags and some are ‘just commoners.’ These attributed tasks are formulated in mythical happenings.

Table 4: Example from hamlet of Ritabou atas, Maliana, Bobonaro District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Sacred house</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Bai ‘ubun</td>
<td>Liurai / Bei</td>
<td>Holder of political / ritual authority</td>
<td>First and biggest House / Elder brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Manepat</td>
<td>Village chief</td>
<td>Gives tasks to people, village chief</td>
<td>Younger Brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Manetelu</td>
<td>Dato</td>
<td>Political power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Leka’ubun</td>
<td>Cabu</td>
<td>Takes drums and Portuguese flags to ceremonies in other territories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Guru’lelo</td>
<td>Cabu</td>
<td>Passes on tasks from dato</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Leamatan</td>
<td>Cabu</td>
<td>Passes on tasks from dato</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Orhomane</td>
<td>Drumming and dancing in ceremonies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Likomau</td>
<td>Drumming and dancing in ceremonies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Beregalta</td>
<td>Drumming and dancing in ceremonies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Leaoboi</td>
<td>Takes drums and Portuguese flags to ceremonies in other territories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Maliuboi</td>
<td>Drumming and dancing in ceremonies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Learema</td>
<td>Drumming and dancing in ceremonies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The members of one sacred house sometimes live scattered over a wide area. Settlements consist of one or more uma kains that can either belong to one or two different sacred houses. The settlements used to be located up in the mountains. It was not like this before the Portuguese and later, when the Indonesians tried to resettle them for various reasons, a large group of them moved to the lower land.
Traditional migration emerged if a fight occurred in a settlement, or if the fertile land was not enough for the whole population. Part of the population then migrated to another location where they ‘opened new land.’ They became the ‘first ones’ on the new land and therefore the ‘Lord of the Land.’ Nevertheless, they still maintained relationships to their Houses in the former location. Often the latter were classified as a ‘mother-father’ House and ritual relations were maintained. This also explains the classification of ‘sibling’ with another House or as Wife Giver or Wife Taker. The House, classified as Wife Giver is often also the oldest House in the location. Furthermore, the ‘ownership’ of the land and the fertility of women whom are given in marriage are closely connected.8

The administrative feature of a village (suco) or a hamlet (povoação) was only introduced with the arrival of the Portuguese.

The Kingdom

When the Portuguese arrived in Timor, there were two big kingdoms that asserted their power over a lot of smaller kingdoms: Wehale and Sonebait. They were located in the territory of nowadays West Timor. The eastern part of the island consisted of a number of smaller ‘kingdoms.’

Internal Structure of a Kingdom

The kingdom consisted of a specific geographical territory, referred to as ‘ancestral land,’ and combined a number of Houses. The structure within a kingdom varied from area to area, but generally, a single ‘king’ who descended from a specific sacred house, or liurai ruled a kingdom. His position was legitimised through his ancestors who had performed a blood oath9 and agreed on his sacred house’s entitlement to political authority.

Next to the sacred house of political authority, there was also a clear structure of sacred houses and their positions and tasks within a kingdom (see Table 4). The kingdom itself was often divided into two parts. Kailako kingdom, for example, was split into an eastern and western kingdom and the eastern Kailako kingdom was considered superior to the west. In other cases, one kingdom perceived another kingdom as its dual opposition, which was evidenced in the way the two kingdoms classified each other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>King of the East (tata-bei lelosae)</th>
<th>King of the West (tata-bei lelotu)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Atudara / Aitutu</td>
<td>Lesoluli / Nami’ilat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldest sacred houses</td>
<td>Mambu / Loi’ubu</td>
<td>Bere’o’mau / Kali’ubu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Division of Kailako kingdom (Bobonaro)

8 Nevertheless the Wife Giver is always perceived as ‘male’ and in most contexts as ‘superior’ to the Wife Taker.
9 Such an oath is a ceremony where, for example, a dog is sacrificed and mixed with the blood of the part-taking people and drunk.
External Relations of Kingdoms

Kingdoms were autonomous units and yet there were relationships between them. Traditional Timorese societies were fairly warlike, so with defence in mind, many settlements were built upon mountains and not in the valleys where there was fertile soil. Military agreements were very important; even more so for fighting against the Portuguese when they tried to rule the whole territory. Kingdoms often had hostile relationships towards an immediate neighbour. However, when peace agreements were made with other kings they would support each other against attacks from a third kingdom. Two kings would enter a blood oath. They were then perceived as being from the ‘same blood’ and were classified as siblings, adhering to each other as ‘younger’ or ‘elder brother.’ The population could visit each other’s territory and take goods, like fruits from the trees, and establish peaceful trade. The population were not allowed to be angry at each other. If conflicts did occur, they had to be reported to the kings, who then gathered the people to discuss the matter. The atmosphere in these meetings had to be peaceful, as it would be in a gathering between brothers.

In the Bobonaro area, for example, the kingdom of Ayasa had such a blood oath with the kingdom of Bobonaro. Their relationship was classified as elder brother – younger brother. The kingdom of Kailako received military help from Hauba and used to have relationships with Atabae, Ermera, Ainaro, Luka, Marobo, Ayasa and Bobonaro.

If the blood oaths proved to not be strong enough, another method of tying another kingdom into a peaceful relationship was through marriage. Classifications of Wife Giver and Wife Taker for the specific kingdoms followed. In these relationships one kingdom was always clearly classified as Wife Taker and one as Wife Giver. Kailako was, for example, involved in the following marriage relations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wife Taker</th>
<th>Wife Giver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kailako</td>
<td>Marobo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kailako</td>
<td>Bobonaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kailako</td>
<td>Atsabe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: The Wife Giver kingdoms of Kailako

The same ways of pacifying kingdoms were used internally if there were fights amongst Houses. Blood oaths and marriage were the most crucial points in uniting people.

Belis [payment for the bride] was given and therefore a relation between the Wife Taker and Wife Giver was established. This marriage relation could unite the people of Timor.

(Liurai, Bobonaro)

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10 At least before the Portuguese arrived.
11 Also described as a hostile relationship.
Marriage Systems

In traditional societies, where there is no state system, social relationships are extremely important for the survival of the individual and the group. One would mostly trust people that are classified as ‘relatives.’ Relatives are related through blood relations or through marriage. Marriage is not a connection between two people – the groom and the bride – but between two or more families (Houses). Marriage can either connect ‘strange’ Houses or it can emphasise the continuity of a relationship between Houses. Marriage relations can establish peace or trade relationships between social entities. When imagining Timorese societies in pre-Portuguese and Portuguese times, with their autonomous kingdoms that were continuously threatened by other kingdoms, it becomes apparent how important the establishments or maintenance of connections to other families can be. Thus, Timorese families must strongly consider to whom their offspring is going to be connected to.

Different societies worldwide have developed specific systems of marriage to maintain social relations or secure their community. In the societies of East Timor, as well as neighbouring societies in Eastern Indonesia, the preferred marriage is what is called ‘mother’s brother’s daughter – marriage’ (short: MBD marriage) or ‘Cross-Cousin marriage’.12 This is a very elaborate system that can combine many families into a wide social environment.

Mother’s Brother’s Daughter Marriage (MBD marriage)
This type of marriage system can be conducted in unilateral societies; societies that either organise their kinship arrangements through their patrilineal side or matrilineal side only. If ego is male, the preferred marriage looks like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>House A (Wife Taker)</th>
<th>House B (Wife Giver)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FF = FM</td>
<td>MF = MM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FZ = FZW</td>
<td>F = M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB</td>
<td>MZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FZD</td>
<td>MB = MBW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego</td>
<td>marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBD</td>
<td>MBS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: MBD marriage, patrilineal system

Although the term cross-cousin marriage also includes the marriage with ego and his father’s sister’s daughter. This is a possible connection but not a preferred one.
Ego belongs to House (lineage) A, as only his father’s relatives are considered to be his kin. Marrying his mother’s brother’s daughter (MBD) is like marrying into another House, but he doesn’t marry ‘far.’ He marries into a family that can be trusted because there are previous marriage relationships; the same House had given his mother to join his father’s family. His own House therefore becomes the group of the Wife Taker, where as his mother’s family becomes the House of the Wife Giver. Yet if Ego would want to marry his FB’s daughter, he marries within his own family and in a unilineal kinship system such a marriage would be incest and is strongly forbidden. Incest regulations are a universal matter.

As we can see in Table 7, Ego’s mother was already given from House B to House A. Now again, a woman (MBD) is given from House B to House A. So House B continues to be the Wife Giver and House A continues to be the Wife Taker. House B can also only give women to House A but House A can never give women to House B. If this system is continued, and there is always a male child of family A marrying his MBD, we have a continuous system where A acts as Wife Taker and B as Wife Giver. Family A then has its own Wife Taker that he gives his daughters to, as well as family B has its own Wife Giver that it receives women from. Finally it becomes a large system in which many families are integrated:

So every House acts as Wife Giver and as Wife Taker to some other Houses, but the relationships are never reciprocal. Hence, at least three Houses are required to make the system function. In Table 9, House Z could give women to House B. But often these systems include a large number or families. After the marriage the woman moves to the man’s family.13

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13 In a matrilineal system everything works vice versa.
A House has at least ten different Wife Givers or Wife Takers. For certain ceremonies, like burials or childbirths, the Wife Givers or Wife Takers all have to be present. Especially in the mortuary process their participation is important, as is their contribution of goods; Wife Takers are supposed to contribute to the feast ceremony with goats and fabrics and Wife Givers with pigs.

*Continuity: Flow of Life*

The Wife Giver is often associated with the value of fertility. It is not perceived that the woman, as an individual person, is passed on to another family, but that the value of fertility is supplied to one’s Wife Taker. In the Wife Taker family, the new woman produces new life again in her children and this new life is then passed on to one’s own Wife Taker. Thus, we speak of a ‘flow of life’\(^{14}\) that flows from the Wife Givers to their various Wife Takers.

As ‘life’ and therefore reproduction is one of the most important values to society, the maintenance of the system is incredibly important. In daily life the relationships of Wife Givers and Wife Takers are always remembered. Often in conversations, people do not call an absent person by name, but they use the term for Wife Giver (*uma mane*) or Wife Taker (*feto san*) according to their relationship towards the person. These relationships order a big part of the social cosmos, with the Wife Giver always seen as superior. The advantage of this system is that it can combine a large number of families and hence, contribute to the establishment of peaceful relationships in a wide territory.

*Marriage Negotiations*

The most important act in a marriage is the exchange of goods. The elders of the Wife Taker and Wife Giver sit together to discuss what amounts of goods have to be exchanged for the marriage. This is a very important task of the elders. They are the only ones to know all the kinship relations and the hierarchy of the Houses and therefore know the appropriate amount of goods to be exchanged. The marriage partners are not of big importance here. It is of more importance what the Wife Taker and Wife Giver groups have to bring.

After the agreement is concluded between both sides and the payment of goods by the Wife Taker is made, the bride is ceremonially transferred to the groom’s family. This ceremony acknowledges her new status as belonging to the man’s lineage. As soon as the man can afford it, he builds a separate house for them on the land of the men’s House. Conversely, in matrilineal societies, the husband moves to the wife’s group.

The other rather atypical form of marriage is when the groom’s family is not able to pay the exchange goods, because they do not have enough money or because the relatives deny their contribution. In this case there is no relationship established between the two Houses. The groom moves to his wife’s location and will be considered by his in-law family as a son but his children will belong to her House. The groom is also expected to contribute to any request of work from his wife’s kin.

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\(^{14}\) Fox, 1980.
Exchange of Goods

The exchange of goods, agreed upon by the elders, has to be very specific goods. There are certain items that the Wife Taker has to pass to the Wife Giver group, and certain goods that the Wife Giver gives to the Wife Taker. This order can never be reversed. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bunaq in Bobonaro</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WT  →</td>
<td>Money, buffaloes, horses → WG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WG  →</td>
<td>Responsible for food in the feast → WT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediki / Waemua in Baucau</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WT → Gives cattle, horses, swords → WG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WG → Tais, necklaces → WG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Exchange of marriage goods in Bunaq (Bobonaro) and in Mediki (Baucau) society.

Nowadays, some of the Wife Taker’s goods can be replaced with money. The money in this case is a symbol for the same value that the buffaloes are representing. As both sides exchange goods it is not spoken of as bridal wealth. Although it is said that the ‘Wife Taker buys the woman and the Wife Giver sells the child.’

A marriage is an exchange of values. We have spoken about the ‘flow of life’, when in each generation the Wife Giver gives women to the Wife Taker. The goods given by the Wife Giver are symbolic for exactly this value of ‘life.’ Food or weavings represent the female values of fertility that is given to the Wife Taker. On the other hand, the Wife Taker supplies the Wife Giver with male values; symbolised in the buffaloes or in weapons, such as swords.

Both sides collect the goods they have to give from their respective Wife Givers or Wife Takers. So the Wife Taker collects buffaloes within his own group and then he goes out to ask his Wife Taker groups for additional buffaloes. He would never ask his Wife Giver, since the value would then flow in the wrong direction.

It becomes apparent that in such marriages not only the two Houses are involved, that of the bride and the groom, but also all their Wife Giver and Wife Taker Houses. Hence, marriage is a significant social event in which the people are reminded of their social cosmos.

15 Informant: villager.
Divorce
When the relationship between the couple is not going smoothly, the husband may complain about his wife and may decide to separate from her. In this case the husband’s House has to pay a considerable fine to his wife’s House because ‘they have to tie the door’ between the two lineages. If the husband doesn’t have sufficient means to pay, the couple is obliged to continue their life together. If the wife wants to leave the husband, her House has to provide another woman from the same House. Then there is no further payment required and the relationship between the two Houses as Wife Taker and Wife Giver is maintained.

Political Concepts
As seen above, there is a basic dualistic structure that underlies most of the concepts in Timor’s traditional cosmology and social structure. There is a Wife Giver and a Wife Taker, there are female values that are opposed to male values and there are Houses classified as newcomers and others as indigenous. This dualistic structure is extensively described in anthropological sources on Eastern Indonesia and East Timor.

This structure provides an excellent framework for the local societies to integrate new happenings into their worldview. This was especially relevant when the arrival of the Portuguese and their colonial system had to be explained. The way the Timorese societies dealt with it is in accordance to the findings of Dutch anthropologists in the early 1930’s, who announced ‘the capacity to integrate foreign influence’ as one of the core elements that can be found all over Eastern Indonesia.

Ritual – Political Authority
One of the very basic conceptual dualisms of East Timorese societies, that play a major role in their political concepts, is the opposition between ritual and political authority. In our research we strongly confirmed this concept, as we found many similar examples across the different districts. It is important to understand that this concept is still very relevant today. It may have started to fade in urban areas, but the majority of the rural population still seems to order their world according to this paradigm. Thus, this section will demonstrate some examples of what is meant by the division of ‘ritual and political authority.’

Example a): Vemasse kingdom
In Vemasse we were told the following myth by the former liurai and present day sub-district chief. The myth and the idea of origin here express well the division of political and ritual authority.

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16 Informant: villager.
17 Fox, 1980; Traube, 1986.
18 Van Wouden, 1935.
19 Traube, 1986.
My ancestors stem from Larantuka and I am not Lord of the Land here; I became liurai through an oath. My ancestors came to Timor. There were three people; one went to Vemasse, one to Los Palos, one to Lifao. They came for trading and then they took the water from the well in Vemasse. After they met with the liurai there, the people from Larantuka were invited to his house because the liurai saw that these people were literate. He broke the boat that was sent from the liurai of Larantuka. Then he saw that these people were not married yet, so the ancestor brought one woman for marriage. That woman stemmed from the Lor family. They had no descendants and the woman died. They brought another woman from Lor and she also died. Then they brought the child of the liurai Luka Viqueque. After marrying with the child of liurai Luka they had descendants. Because of that, the lord of the land started approaching the liurai from Larantuka, “if you already have taken women from here and I am the liurai here, but I do not know how to write and to read and to read, I hand over to you.” After he had passed his power to him, they conducted an oath for the Lord of the Land. In this agreement, he received power from the original Lord of the Land and it is said that whoever wants to fight with the new liurai, will not become old.

After that the liurai started to form or divide the borders between the two Houses ‘uma metan’ and ‘uma mutin’ [Galoli: ‘black house’, ‘white house’]. The border of uma metan is in Uailili and Garuvai, whereas uma mutin’s borders are in Quelicai. From that moment on the liurai had to bring his rattan stick every time he visited the area of his power. They formed a power structure with a responsible person in every area.

Table 11: Myth 1: Establishment of political power in Vemasse kingdom (Baucau District)

The myth contains typical concepts of the local systems:

- The newcomer arrives and gets in touch with the local ‘Lord of the Land.’ The Lord of the Land is always connected to the female values of fertility and to the land. Here the newcomer takes water from a local well and in doing so gets in touch with the local value of fertility. In most of the myths across the country the outsider is perceived as being literate, here the newcomer from Larantuka (Flores) is able to read and write.

- Through a marriage union, a relationship between the indigenous Lord of the Land and the foreigner is established. The Lord of the Land always presents the value of femaleness and fertility towards the ‘male’ outsider. He is acting as Wife Giver, which is the part that guarantees the ‘flow of life.’

- After establishing a relationship with the outsider, the rattan stick is passed from the Lord of the Land to the newcomer to appoint him the liurai. Another powerful political ruler, Luka from Viqueque, is also involved.

- The newcomer is now in charge of the political authority and the first thing he does is to order the borders of his realm. One of the most important tasks of the liurai is his responsibility for the borders of the land that is owned by the Lord of the Land.

- At this point, the main values of society are split up. There is now established political authority, as well as the Lord of the Land’s responsibility for the fertility of the land. Now society is created and ‘in order.’
Table 12: Establishment of the kingdom Vemasse (Baucau District)

The dualistic categories and the separation of political and ritual tasks of the main Houses in Vemasse are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sacred house</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lor</td>
<td>Mother-father Wife Giver</td>
<td>Lord of the Land Executive</td>
<td>Gave land, Appointed liurai, Made decisions about land and liurais, Made decisions for war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raha</td>
<td>Mother-father Wife Giver</td>
<td>Lord of the Land Executive</td>
<td>Gave land, Appointed liurai, Made decision about land and liurais, Make decisions for war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uma mametan</td>
<td>Elder Brother Wife Taker</td>
<td>Appointed as Raja upon arrival (because they had been to school), Legislative</td>
<td>Conduct rule (through blood oath), Conducts war</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13: Main sacred houses in Vemasse and their classifications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uma mamutin</th>
<th>Younger Brother</th>
<th>Wife Taker</th>
<th>Appointed as raja upon arrival (because they had been to school)</th>
<th>Conduct rule (through blood oath)</th>
<th>Conducts war</th>
<th>Immigrant from Flores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sasau Gagari</td>
<td>People</td>
<td></td>
<td>Legislative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example b): Raeheu

Raeheu village in Kailako kingdom (Bobonaro district) is another illustration of the division between political and ritual authorities. The latter can be seen in the layout of the village. In the main village centre a flagpole is located between the town hall and the residence of the village chief. This presents the political side of the village cosmos. Outside the village, on top of a nearby hill, is the location for the sacred houses, sacred stones and sacred gardens. These are the locations of ritual life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>forest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flag pole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mountain wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sacred hill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14: Locations of ritual and political centres in Raeheu

Centre of Political Authority

The flagpole, in the centre of town, is said to belong to the king and represents the Kailako kingdom. It is built like a pyramid and has seven levels, with the flagpole located on the highest level. Distinctive stones are placed on the different steps. Every stone represents a specific sacred house. The most important Houses are on the highest step of the pyramid, according to their hierarchical position. All of these Houses are united under the flag of the king. In the middle of all Houses is the Portuguese flag given by the Portuguese to the sacred house of Loi’ubu.
Table 15: Flagpole in the centre of Raeheu mountain

Table 16: Top view of flagpole

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Sacred house</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Loi’ubu</td>
<td>Govern society</td>
<td>King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(stone has ‘hat’ on top)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Mambu</td>
<td>Govern society</td>
<td>Deputy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Bacu’ubu  Govern society
4. Ma’ubu  Govern society
5. Lema’ubu  Executive power (‘security’)
6. Oso’ubu  Executive power
7. Poirema  Helper of the king  Commoners
8. Manapa  Helper of the king  Commoners
9. Daum  Make weavings for king  Commoners
10. Kamaq  Make weavings for king  Commoners
11. Gololo  Commoners, first child of king
12. Miligu  Commoners, first child of king
13. Namulait  Govern in the west, receive orders from king of east  Commoners
14. Lesoluli  Govern in the west, receive orders from king of east  Commoners

Table 17: Order of sacred houses presented on the flagpole in Raeheu.

Centre of Ritual Authority
In opposition to the political centre, in the middle of town, the hill next to the town contains the sacred houses and sacred stones (bosop) of the same Houses. Here the same important Houses act in the context of ritual authority. In close connection is the fertility/garden, closely located to the ritual centre. There used to be five sacred houses and there remain five sacred stones. The sacred stone of Loi’ubu is located in the centre, emphasising the central and highest position of the sacred house in ritual authority.

20 They were burnt by the Indonesians in 1975. So far they are not rebuilt because of the immense ritual costs connected with building a sacred house.
Sacred house of Loi’ubu / bosop (all sacred houses come together here)

Sacred house and stone Batu’ubu contains three stones: Lesopun, Atulai, Umarobo: all come together in Batu’ubu

Table 18: Sacred hill of Raeheu.

Table 19: Sacred Stone (bosop) of sacred house Loi’ubu / Raeheu.

The ritual has the same social structure as the political system. The same sacred houses are perceived as being the ‘eldest’ or ‘highest.’ They act as superior in the two different contexts of political and ritual. Social hierarchy therefore supplies the basis for the different spheres of issues that are present in communal life.

The Perception of the Outside
As shown in Myth 1, where the House holding the political authority is different from the ones in charge of ritual authority, the political House is classified as ‘newcomer.’ In Vemasse it is said they have come from the island of Flores. This is a typical feature and can be found in many
examples throughout East Timor. The ‘outsider’ or ‘immigrant’ entity is connected to political power where as the ‘indigenous’ Houses, as ‘Lords of the Lands,’ are connected to ritual power and fertility. Several versions of the following myth have been recounted in the course of our research:

Two kings and eight guardians descended from Mount Leolaku to the coast of Balibo. The two kings were Nai Kerek and Samelelo Dom Dua. They searched for a fertile place for farming because in their location, on the mountain of Leolaku, they had a food crisis. Nai Kerek led the first group of people to Balibo, another group followed Samlelo to Sanirin. Nai Kerek was appointed as king in Balibo. His area of power didn’t include Sanirin. At that time there was no king in Sanirin, because Samlelo, with his friend Dom Francisco from Batu Gede, went to Oecussi to receive school education. They didn’t succeed in finishing their education. Finally, they were called back and given the Portuguese flag to rule. So far, only the Portuguese had been ruling Oecussi. Dom Francisco went straight back to Batu Gede, while Samlelo went to Sanirin. In Sanirin, Samlelo was then appointed as king for his people. He was appointed as the first king because he had brought the Portuguese flag. The name Sanirin was brought from Oecussi. Sanirin is the location where Samlelo went to school. From then till now there has never been a conflict between Balibo and Sanirin, because the kings and the people of the two places both originate from Leolaku.

Table 20: Myth 2: Establishment of political power in Sanirin (Bobonaro district)

Other versions of the same myth always show the same structure:

- One brother stays at the original land, whereas the other brother leaves to go ‘abroad.’
- Here he usually acquires the skills of reading and writing (symbolic for political power).
- Then he comes back to his origins and is appointed as ‘political ruler.’ His older brother stays as ‘Lord of the Land.’

This myth illustrates how it is understandable that newly arriving powers, like the Portuguese, were easily ordered into the matrix as ‘political power.’ At the same time, in classifying the Portuguese as political, the local Timorese societies perceived themselves as the opposite value: the Lords of the Land.

Since the Portuguese were connected with ‘political power’, they had the authority to appoint local political positions. In the perception of the local societies this was symbolically conducted through the handing over of the flag, or the rattan stick, as ultimate symbols for political rule. As the Portuguese had passed them on they became important insignias for the local political House and today they are still kept as treasures in some of the sacred houses.

In a number of cases we were told, that all people from the ‘outside’ originate from Timor. Everybody’s ancestors descended from a Timorese mountain and then went overseas. In this system the outside is always classified as Wife Taker / female or younger brother, where as the Timorese societies act as Wife Giver / male or elder brother:

- Malays are from this location as well. We are all one family, but this is a long story. Black skin/white skin, they all originate from here, from Timor Lorosae.
- Then they split.
  (Kuku Nain, Aileu).

21 Which probably went along with the fact that the Portuguese government looked for people as liurais that were literate.
The Dutch originated from here. They had received the book as female [another classification for Wife Taker], the male [Wife Giver] received the stick for digging. So the women could sit back home and write. When the Dutch and the Portuguese came, the ancestors said “hey, there are the children of the female coming.” They came to guard the Timorese because they had difficulties, they didn’t come to rule. But the kingdom here is shaking; if you want to find a chair to sit on, find a table.

(Traditional elder, Balibo)

Luarsa and Kisa. Luarsa went to a foreign land and Kisa stayed in East Timor. Foreign people descended from the generation of Luarsa and East Timorese from the ancestor Kisa. Luarsa went across the sea and to the outside, he became Malay, and brought back the book and the pencil.

(Kuku nain, Aileu)

The Traditional Power Holders and their Legitimacy

There is a division of tasks and authorities between the Houses of a specific area. This means that a House holds a position or title. The position is given to one of the family members, either one of the older members or someone that is specifically skilled for the task, depending on the kind of position. Exclusive knowledge is passed on through the generations. There are always two positions/titles that are in opposition to each other. One always refers to worldly, political authority or war, where as the other always deals with the supernatural world and everything that is connected to it.

Division of positions amongst sacred houses

The division of authorities amongst sacred houses can occur in two different ways:

a) In some cases, the ritual authority and the political authority are from the same sacred houses. In political tasks the person would be called Dom/liurai and in ritual tasks, for example, Bei. In places like Raeheu (Bobonaro) the dual positions are applied to the same social structure. The oldest sacred house is Loi’ubun. So in the context of the Bei, a person from Loi’ubun occupies the highest ritual position. When it comes to political issues, Loi’ubun also holds the highest title of the Dom/liurai.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sacred house</th>
<th>Ritual Title</th>
<th>Political Title</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Loi’ubu</td>
<td>Bei</td>
<td>Dom</td>
<td>Big and male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mambu</td>
<td>Bei</td>
<td>Dom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bacu’ubu</td>
<td>Tata</td>
<td>Liurai</td>
<td>Small and female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mau’ubu</td>
<td>Tata</td>
<td>Liurai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21: Distribution of titles in Raeheu (Kemaq)

In the Raeheu case the highest and the second highest Houses divide the political titles amongst each other like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dom  Highest sacred house
• rules the people
• fights wars
• people need permission from him
• sits in sacred house only
• does not talk much

Liurai  Second highest House
• is helper of Dom
• conducts the orders by him
• is reigned by him (if he wants to fight with another Liurai he needs the permission from the Dom)
• leader in wars
• speaks to the people

Dato  Three Houses that follow in the hierarchy

If it comes to ritual issues the same Houses hold different titles:

Table 22: Division of political titles amongst first and second sacred house

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Sacred house</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Bei   | Highest House| Inside sacred house | • holds power  
  • chairs ceremonies  
  • contacts ancestors  
  • responsible for ceremonies |
| Tata  | Second highest House | Outside sacred house | • announces decisions of Bei to the people |

Table 23: Division of ritual titles

b) The divisions can also be attributed to different sacred houses. Which means in the context of political issues, a specific House holds power, where as in the context of ritual issues, another House occupies the position of power. This is also the case in the above-mentioned example from Vemasse. In an example from the Macassae speaking community in Baucau we find similar divisions:

Table 24: Macassae division of titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. Sacred House</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Highest House</td>
<td>Bararin</td>
<td>Ritual authority</td>
<td>Elder Brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Second Highest House</td>
<td>Dom/Regulo</td>
<td>Political authority</td>
<td>Younger Brother</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Table 11.
**Divisions within the sacred house**

A similar division of authorities appears within the organisation of one sacred house and not only on the level of the community. In Bobonaro, for example, we found the following two important positions within one sacred house:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Bei   | • conducts ceremonies  
       | • only sits quiet  
       | • inside the sacred house  
       | • holds power  
       | • from highest House  
       | • gives orders to Tata |
| Tata  | • speaks to people  
       | • passes on orders from Bei  
       | • outside the House |

*Table 25: Division of positions within sacred house (Bobonaro)*

The position of the Bei is usually perceived as superior to the Tata. The Bei is connected to the sacred sphere inside the sacred house and therefore to the ancestors. Through ancestral contact he is the one that can make decisions. The Tata position is the sphere outside the House, so the person deals with the people or outsiders in general. He has to listen to the one who is in contact with the ancestors and has to pass on his decisions. The two positions represent the dualism of ritual and political authority on the level of the sacred house itself, or, as mentioned above, on the level of the whole group of sacred houses (e.g. kingdom).

In the Bunaq village of Tapo (Bobonaro) we find a similar division within a sacred house. The people holding the ritual or political title can be the same; they just act in different contexts with a different title. Moreover, the political authority is appointed by the ritual authority. The political authority is again connected to the outside, the ritual authority to the inside.

In Tapo each of the four important sacred houses has the division of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Sphere of action</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Dato tasmil/engoni’il  | Council / village or hamlet chief | Government       | • conflict solution  
       |                           |                  | • responsible for contacts with other sacred houses or the government | Outside contacts     |
| Matas                  | Executive power           |                  |                                                                      |                      |
| Dato ebi himagomon     | Head of sacred house      | Ritual authority | • speaks  
       |                           |                  | • gives orders to the members of the                                | Inside the sacred house |
Table 26: Political – ritual division within sacred houses in Tapo (Bunaq)

In Aileu amongst the Mambai society, there is an opposition between two traditional leaders: the kuku nain and the lia nain. The lia nain’s tasks are to take care of conflict resolution and negotiations about marriage exchange goods. These tasks indicate that he has a rather political and worldly power. The kuku nain is the one who is in contact with the ancestors and the sacred sphere. He conducts ceremonies, is responsible for sacred goods and through his connection with the supernatural sphere he also has the capacity to act as a shaman and heal people. He represents the ritual authority. Decisions that are reached through the lia nain’s negotiations, he legitimizes through a ceremony, so they become sanctioned by the ancestral powers. There are 1-3 lia nains in one village whom form a council. There are also lia nains that are the heads of the Houses. Every sacred house has a lia nain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lia nain</td>
<td>• conflict resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• negotiation about marriage goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuku nain</td>
<td>• calls rain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• shaman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• in charge of sacred goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• communication with ancestors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• conducts ceremonies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 27: Division of ritual and political authority in Mambai society

The systems of distribution of titles and positions can be very diverse, but the division of political and ritual authority always appears, no matter in which society. This division appears at the level within the sacred house and it also appears within the whole order of sacred houses. The different titles can be held by elders within the Houses, within a settlement (uma knua) or by elders of different sacred houses. The different power-entities that have developed through history are always connected to specific tasks.

**Political Authority**

Political authority is usually appointed by the ritual powers, as this can only happen after consultation with the ancestors. In general they are inferior to the ritual powers because they are the ones connected to worldly issues. The political authority deals with conflict resolution, like the lia nain in Aileu. They conduct marriage negotiations, they are connected to the outside and they go and speak to the people, like the Tata in Bobonaro or Sobu in Macassae.
When the Portuguese arrived and demanded a leader to deal with them, the local dualistic structure provided an easy matrix to create these political positions since the ritual leader in the inside was not to deal with outsiders like the Portuguese. The kings (or liurais, Doms, regulos) on the other hand became an important representative of political power. In accordance to the traditional paradigm their position developed into the link to Portuguese governmental powers. They dealt with the Portuguese government and were the leaders of a kingdom.

The king had to originate from ‘royal’ descent (a sacred house) and be appointed by the ritual elders. They looked for a clever descendant of a specific House, who was able to ‘speak and solve problems.’ Once he had been appointed, he had to conduct a blood oath with a group of elders from several Houses. The agreement that is sanctioned by the blood oath says that someone else can not overtake the position of the king; it can only be passed on within the same House.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liurai (Soru)</td>
<td>King / village chief</td>
<td>• leads society&lt;br&gt; • conflict resolution&lt;br&gt; • passes on orders from government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rata</td>
<td>Ritual elder</td>
<td>• Appoint soru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 28: Appointment of political authorities in Macassae area*

Another entity that became an important political authority under the Portuguese rule was the dato. The sacred houses, under the liurai House, were often connected to the position of dato. They were also seen as ‘royal’ and became a governmental institution.

**Ritual Authority**

The ritual authorities are mostly the ‘first on the land.’ They are connected with the ancestors of the sacred house and all sacred issues. They guard the sacred house, sit inside the house and they are thought to be quiet. They have the most powerful position, but they do not speak. They only pass on their decisions to the political authorities. Thus they are not connected to the outside world or its people, like the Portuguese. They are the ones to conduct ceremonies and they are the guards of fertility and the land. These are the positions like the Bei in Bobonaro, the kuku nain in Aileu or the Bararin or La’ir Atar in Baucau/Macassae.

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23 Informant, villager.

24 The term dato can be used for everything that is perceived as ‘royal’ and can sometimes lead to confusion.

Dato = from the Dom descent.
Dato = like the chefe, only for ritual issues.
Dato = chefe aldeia.
Dato = from the west, here we say chefe Kapitan (the person who holds the rattan).
Throughout history the ritual authorities, in the eyes of the outsider, have always played a minor role. This is only due to the fact that the political authorities dealt with the ‘outside.’ On the local level the ritual authorities have an immense influence and power. In the world, as a totality, they are seen as superior to the political authorities.

**Appointment of Political Powers - the Rattan Stick**

The political rulers are always appointed by the ritual powers. In most cases the elders sit together and discuss who should be the new political ruler. They chose from the right descendants and discuss which of the available people are the most skilled in speaking and negotiating.\(^{25}\)

The ritual authorities are seen as superior, as they have the connection to the ancestors who are the founders of the Houses. Only the ritual authorities have the knowledge about the descent lines and oaths that were taken in the past. Hence they have the capacity to choose a political ruler that is also sanctioned by the ancestors. People are often scared if a ruler does not conform to this system, as this can mean misfortune for the whole community caused by angry ancestral powers.

The elders appoint the political ruler. However it is the ‘outside’ power, like the Portuguese or a powerful ruler in the neighbourhood, that actually hands over the power by giving the flag and rattan stick to the new ruler. His House then keeps the insignias and passes them on through their descendants. Though given by the political power, the rattan stick and the flag have become ‘sacred.’

The traditional power is the lulik, because according to the stories, the one that holds the rattan and the flag has the power to rule. That is the person named liurai. These two goods are usually stored in the sacred house of the liurai. Every good that is stored in the sacred house contains the lulik, because of that the rattan and the flag are lulik items. If the liurai has died, the power has to be held by people from his House because it is only the liurai that owns the rattan and flag.

(Liurai, Baucau)

As in Myth 3 below, the rattan could be taken elsewhere to establish a new kingdom. This shows that the rattan itself contains the power for a king. Historical incidents can cause the rattan stick to be given to other families, as in Myth 4.

\(^{25}\) If there is nobody available, the position can be passed on to another sacred house.
Before the arrival of the Portuguese the people of Atabae lived as a free society. They had their own king. The first king of Atabae was named Rapubuti. He was from the village of Aidabalaten, sacred house of Kelama. While he was reigning, he was always fair and clear to the people, so he was honoured a lot. His tasks were to teach the people to plant fruits, vegetable gardens and to raise animals. The people enjoyed the outcome of this and a part was given to the king. When he died, the seat was given to his child named Tesmali. He became the second liurai, from the same village and sacred house.

During the rule of raja Tesmali, the Portuguese came into the country. As a sign for his good deeds they gave him the Portuguese flag and a couple of other items. Then the raja started working together with the Portuguese and Atabae ended up being ruled by the Portuguese. The raja had a wife from the village Paselara. They lived together in peace and loved each other but they had no children. When the raja died there was no one to replace him. His wife then took the Portuguese flag from Aidabalaten to her village Paselara. There she established a new kingdom with a new liurai. That was the end of the kingdom of Atabae.

Table 29: Myth 3: Establishment of new kingdom through rattan stick in Atabae (Bobonaro District)

Uaimuta was given the rattan from the ancestor as Dato. It was Dom Kristobo who gave it to them. They gave the rattan to Uaianu (this is the female sibling of Uaimuta). But in 1975 they gave it back.

Table 30: Myth 4: Political power passed on to other House, in Uaimuta (Baucau District)

In many parts of Baucau we heard the myth of how the rattan was distributed, starting from the powerful kingdom of Luka Viqueque:

The rattan is coming from Luka. From Luka it was given to Vemasse and then passed to Laga. The rattan was given from Laleia to Quelecai. One generation from Luka went to Baguia. But the main power from Luka in Viqueque was separated in the eastern parts. The rattan is coming from Luka and was distributed to the people who have political power.

Table 31: Myth 5: Distribution of political power in Baucau

In this last myth, the rattan was given by the powerful ruler of Viqueque to establish smaller political rulers, on lower levels such as villages or hamlet sized settlements. Here, in the example of Afoloikai in the Baucau District, the rattans were divided from one sacred house (Afoloikai) into its smaller Houses (uma kains) despite all still belonging to the big House of Afoloikai.

First Rattan from King Luka in Viqueque

According to traditional elders from a neighboring region, the four liurais in Atabae fought too many wars, so the Portuguese government stopped the war and turned them into sub-district chiefs.
### Summary of traditional power structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL ORGANISATION</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>POWER HOLDERS</th>
<th>Type of power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uma lulik/ Uma lisan</td>
<td>Kinship system based on a common ancestor</td>
<td>Liurai</td>
<td>Political power holder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dato</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lia nain</td>
<td>Guardian of rules and customs and conflict mediator (political power on the lower level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kuku nain</td>
<td>Ritual power holder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deputy/Helper</td>
<td>Assistant to liurai or kuku nain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uma kain/ Knua</td>
<td>Extended Family/ geographical area of uma kain</td>
<td>Chefe uma kain</td>
<td>Moral authority of extended family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Power in Portuguese Times

Short History

When the Portuguese landed on the island of Timor in 1515 their main objective was to enter the spice trade with the neighbouring archipelago of the Moluccas. Timor was at that time a source of sandalwood that was harvested by Chinese traders. The first Portuguese dependence in Timor was established in Lifao, Oecussi. The Dutch started to establish power in the western part of the island by taking over the kingdom of Wehale, where as the Portuguese started settling in to Dili because of internal struggle. Nevertheless the actual powers of the Dutch and Portuguese were still very minor and the island was divided into approximately forty autonomous kingdoms, with kings as holders of absolute political power. The foreign powers acted as ‘protectorates’ over some of the indigenous kingdoms but in 1719 the Timorese kings entered in to a blood oath agreement to fight the foreign intruders.

In 1859 the official colonial border between the Dutch and the Portuguese territory was agreed upon. A year later, Affonso do Castro became the first governor to divide East Timor into districts that promoted a better system of administration and economic advantage. Nonetheless local leaders fought continuous wars against the Portuguese, as they were not happy ‘with the Portuguese law.’

Governor Celestino da Silva changed the payment of tributes into a system of tax per head in 1906 to enforce the local population to work more than just for their own needs. The tensions between the local population and the colonial power finally escalated into the ‘Manufahi War,’ where a large number of kings joined alliances to fight the Portuguese. The kings all united under the liurai of Manufahi, Dom Boaventura. In 1911 they entered a blood oath, agreeing to kill all Europeans in East Timor and started attacking Portuguese posts, burning houses and killing Portuguese. The attacks were so strong that it took Portugal nearly one year to stop the war and then only by calling for military help from their colonial armies in other colonies.

This war didn’t only happen in Manufahi, it happened all over Timor. The Portuguese had sent out people by boat to speak to all the liurais. At that time the liurais of west and east were united. Their communication worked through tais that were manufactured through traditional methods. With these they told each other when they would go to attack the Portuguese.

(Traditional elder)

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28 Schlicher, 1996: 133.
29 Informant, villager.
According to other informants, the war is also seen as a ‘pacification’ war because the conditions in Timor amongst the kings were very violent and it was the Timorese themselves that hoped for the Portuguese to change these conditions.

Before Portugal came to East Timor, East Timor was already independent according to the stories from our ancestors. But the people didn’t use law to resolve the problems, they just used force to resolve problems, like killing. So if someone caused a problem, he was killed and his corpse was exposed on the central road, visible for everybody. So for that reasons our ancestors went to Portugal to bring the Portuguese to East Timor.

(Lia nain, Aileu).

The Official Power and Administrative Structure

Upon the Portuguese arrival in Timor, the island was divided into a number of kingdoms, each ruled by a king (liurai). Many kings had hostile relationships with each other or they had entered peace agreements. A kingdom was divided in to sucos (villages), which consisted of several settlements. The head of a suco was called dato, the other people were reino (commoners) or ata (slaves).

Until 1860, Portuguese colonial rule concentrated very much on trade and the catholic mission. Everything was focused on Dili. The governor was the highest representative of the Portuguese in the colony and he had military and civilian functions.

The governor in the second half of the nineteenth century, Affonso de Castro, saw that it was important for economic development to occur if a proper administrative system was to be established. So he divided the country in to eleven districts: Dili, Manatutu, Vemasse, Lautem, Viqueque, Allas, Bibissuco, Cailaco, Maubara, Batugade and Oecussi. Each district had a Portuguese commander, with civilian and military tasks, and a small number of soldiers. The commanders were responsible for peace in their districts and had to work with the local liurais. The Portuguese commander had judicial power over the population. However, his main duty was to collect tax and so the local, traditional power structures were largely untouched by the Portuguese.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PORTUGUESE structure</th>
<th>TRADITIONAL structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Timor Governor</td>
<td>Kingdom Liurai/Reglo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Districts Commanders</td>
<td>Village Dato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family Head of uma kain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 34: Early Portuguese power structures and acknowledged local structures
Governor Castro’s objectives were to strengthen Portuguese rule, to influence the local kings and to stop wars amongst them. Castro described the differences in Portuguese relations with the different kingdoms: ‘they reach from kingdoms that were under Portuguese rule to kingdoms (like the ones at the western border) that fought against them.’

Governor Celestino da Silva succeeded Castro in 1894 and replaced his administrative structure with a military form (Commandos militares). By 1922 the position of governor was only occupied by military officers and it was only in 1934 that a civilian administration was introduced to Timor.

In 1906, when da Silva introduced the ‘tax by head’ system for the Timorese population, he stopped the payments of tribute that the population had to pay to their kings. In its place, the kings (regulos) and the village chiefs (dato) received part of the officially collected tax. This, of course, decreased the rights of the kings and extended Portuguese power. The Portuguese colonial government turned the liurais and datos into their ‘link’ to the population and finally the choice of a new liurai had to be approved by the colonial government.

In 1908, Governor Marques divided Timor into four units (conselhos) and eight commandos militares. The conselhos had a separate municipal administration, where as the centre administered the comandos militares. All the districts were divided in to sub-districts (posto) and these again in to villages (suo) and hamlets (provação). The Portuguese now appointed local village chiefs (chefe do suco, formerly dato) and hamlet chiefs (chefe de provação). The village and hamlet chiefs were used as a link between the colonial government and the local population and then the government declared all land that was not privately owned to be public land.

After the Manufahi War, when the Portuguese conquered one liurai after the other, they immediately took all the power from the ones that had fought against them and exchanged them with liurais and village chiefs that had proven to be loyal to the government. The traditional kingdoms were replaced with a new system, where several sucos formed a comando militares.

My grandfather started as liurai in 1912 but it was only in 1914 that he received his liurai consecration by the Governor Celestino, for his services helping the Portuguese in their battle against the kingdoms of Manufahi.

(Dom descendant, Aileu)

In 1934 a civilian administrative system was introduced. One administrador was responsible for several conselhos. The administrador had military, administrative and judicial power. The conselho was divided in to several postos, and the postos again were divided in to sucos. So the liurais lost their absolute and their official power. Their position was now replaced through the Portuguese administration on the posto level. In some cases the

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31 At that time the Portuguese gave military titles to the local leaders. E.g., the regulo (known also as Dom, Liurai, Rei and in Indonesian Raja) was nominated tinent colonel, the liurai (chefe do suco) was called major, and the dato (chefe do knua or provação), nowadays chefe do aldeia, received the title of captain. (Dom descendant, Aileu)
33 Schlicher, 1996: 262.
postos covered the former area of a kingdom, in others they differed. The chefe de posto worked straight down to the chefe do suco. These chefe’s had to be literate, speak Portuguese and pass on orders from the government to the people. The chefe do suco was now also called liurai in some areas. The traditional king maintained unofficial power in their kingdoms or became the chefe de posto.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official structure</th>
<th>Unofficial, traditional power holders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrador de conselho</td>
<td>Reglo / Dom/ Liu rai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chefe de posto</td>
<td>Chefe uma kain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chefe do suco (liurai)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chefe do povoação (dato)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 35: Official and unofficial political power structure in the Civilian government since 1934

Portuguese people occupied the three important positions in the administrative structure: the Governor of the territory was appointed directly by Lisbon and the Governor, or the council of administrators, appointed the administrador conselho and posto. Timorese occupied the structures below the posto.

On the Local Level

At the beginning of Portuguese rule, the local power structures were hardly challenged. The liurai was the local political authority and the representative of the local community to the colonial power. His traditional duties included the conduct of wars and following the decision of the ritual authorities. So he entered military treaties to fight the Portuguese, when the population became dissatisfied with the tax system. His traditional role as political authority was confirmed through his interactions with the Portuguese.

Mainly after the Manufahi War, the Portuguese colonial government started to exchange disloyal liurais for others. With the new civilian administrative structure created in 1934, the liurais lost their official powers and the chefe do suco became the direct link to the government. The official power was handed over in an adequate way from the liurai to the chefe do suco but this ‘loss of power’ did not happen on the informal level. At that time Vemasse gave the power to each suco to govern their area. People from Vemasse came and said to the people in each suco: because I can not take control myself of each place anymore, I would like some of you to be liurai and to govern your places.

(Liurai, Baucau)

The powers of the liurai remained and the people still adhered to them. The newly acknowledged chefe do suco still came from dato descent, from a ‘royal’ class, and were therefore appropriate powers to work with the Portuguese. There were no requests from the Portuguese to elect the political leaders democratically: they were simply chosen by the Portuguese, who picked people loyal to them. If these people descended from a commoner family the appointment caused conflicts.
Before World War II started (1942) my grandfather was elected as liurai by the Portuguese but he didn’t want to accept this title. He had not descended from the liurai family. So the Portuguese put him in jail for two months with bamboo handcuffs. He was finally released and was forced to accept the position.

(Liurai descendant, Aileu)

If the person came from another royal family, just from a different area, it seems that it was acceptable for the people. Other informants claim that the Portuguese rulers asked whom they would like to appoint. Then the person of the right descent was chosen because they were still chosen by the traditional elders. So the liurai was a descendant of the ‘highest sacred house’ where as the dato and the chefe so suco came from the following sacred houses. The same happened with the hamlet chiefs, who were presumably the heads of uma knuas. These positions all stayed inherited positions. The traditional system continued and new requests from the outside were neatly integrated into an existing structure. There were no contradictions evolving.

It is said that the Portuguese never had much contact with the local population. They gave orders to the liurai and dato as a link between the government and the local level. The Portuguese also gave the ‘law’ to the liurais, so they were able to rule in their common traditional way on the local level. The Portuguese didn’t interfere at these levels, although some informants claim that the people were not happy anymore with the Portuguese behind their liurais. Nevertheless, as long as the liurai or dato was still from the right descent, the system that was sanctioned by the ancestors was not to be challenged.

The raja was from the descent of the liurai. If he had been a normal person, the people wouldn’t have agreed with him.

(Village chief, Baucau)

The Portuguese never challenged the concepts of the importance of descent instead of individualistic features, nor the customary law, conduction of ceremonies or the position of ritual authorities. The latter was challenged by the Church, rather than by the colonial government. The ritual life could remain strong, as it was perceived to be the ‘inside’ of society, and had nothing to do with ‘outside’ political issues.

The Portuguese acknowledged our traditional system. They were clever, that is why things went fine. Because the missionaries knew most about the traditions, they had to understand the local structures to implement something else.

(Intellectual, Bobonaro)

The liurais are always described as very powerful, having a strong influence on the population. They were regularly in contact with the Portuguese and every week they had to come to the sub-district to receive their orders from the colonial government regarding conduct and work in the villages. The liurais were held responsible for their communities and if problems arose the Portuguese would punish them by beating them or charging fines.

The main duty of the liurai, as the local population perceived it, was to be the link to the government. Apart from that he had judicial power. ‘People saw him as a God. The voice of the liurai was to be questioned by nobody.’\textsuperscript{34} He was responsible for the borders of the area, receiving visitors from

\textsuperscript{34} Informant, villager.
the ‘outside’ and opening new roads. He ordered the planting and harvesting activities in the fields, plus he had to register the population for tax purposes and to collect the annual tax.

A secretary accompanied the liurai. Usually the secretary was an illiterate person who had sound oral knowledge on points addressed by the liurai. The person holding this position had the capacity to think about the issues related to government, land and power highlighted by the liurai. He also reported to the liurai about the living conditions of the population. The secretary usually came from the same sacred house as the liurai and was not changed until he died. This was because he was seen as the one having the knowledge and remembering all ‘words’ from the bottom level to the top level.

On a regular basis, the liurai held meetings with the chefe do suco and briefed him about the schedules of work in the fields. The chefe do suco then passed on the order to the chefe do provação with a deadline for the required labour. The latter was then in charge of the implementation of the task by ordering the ‘commoners.’ The same channel was used to pass on information, or to organise special meeting with the communities when the government required a gathering of the population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Other terms</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>King (until 1934)</td>
<td>Liurai / regulo / reino / Dom</td>
<td>Receives orders from Portuguese government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village chief</td>
<td>Chefe do suco / dato / liurai</td>
<td>Orders from liurai and reports back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet chief</td>
<td>Chefe povoação / dato</td>
<td>Orders from village chief and reports back to him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood chief</td>
<td>Cabu / leader of uma kain</td>
<td>Orders from hamlet chief, has to pass them on to the people and make them work. He also reports back to the hamlet chief.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 36: Local powers under the Portuguese Government

The chefs do provação were active at the very local level. They collected and passed on the taxes in their respective hamlets and they had to watch the workers to make sure they were working well.

For example, in the rice fields if people had not finished their work the chefe do provação had to ask them why they stopped. If they stopped because there were not enough buffalos or enough water, the chefe do provação had to organise a meeting and then decide what they had to do first. If the problem was because there was no water to irrigate the rice fields they had to come together to work on it.

(Dom/regulo descendant, Aileu)

Opinions on the Liurai

Today, opinions about the liurai are varying. Mainly the older informants think that some of them were good rulers: they gave the people the opportunity to make gardens, rice fields and raise animals, and the people felt free because they could go everywhere without fear. They are seen as fair rulers, who helped to solve conflicts and establish peace. They are said to have had good programmes for education, health and other issues for
the community. They were very interested in people’s needs and there was no corruption. This obviously depended very much on the individual person.

Others describe their experience with liurais very differently. According to them, they were dictators; whatever they said had to be followed, no matter whether or not it was good. They did not pay attention to people’s needs and they did not want the common people to be educated, as they perceived it as a threat for themselves. They only co-ordinated with the Portuguese but never with their own people, every activity had to be reported to the liurai and he had to be asked for permission for everything.

The pictures we received from our informants also depended on the informants themselves. Some thought that the system of the liurais was good because they made people work hard and enforced discipline. Others did not appreciate that kind of forced labour.

 Mostly in Portuguese times, the history is full of dictatorships, no justice, they just beat people without passing the court first. They did everything they wanted.

(Sub-district chief)

The Local Perception of the Portuguese Government

Perception of the Portuguese on the conceptual Level

The Portuguese are said to have paid attention to local customs. They allowed the population to conduct ceremonies and they respected the local leaders. They left the sacred houses alone and they never judged the leadership: except if they threatened the Portuguese government. As one of the informants said the law system was the ‘true law.’

The Portuguese strategic approach utilised respect for the traditional customs because they not only accepted the local structures but also made use of them to their own advantage. For a long time the Portuguese colonial rule experienced resistance from the Timorese, as many of the liurais were so strong. So the Portuguese used a local method to establish peace: entering blood oaths with liurais, to create agreements that they would no longer fight war. They also started to marry the daughters of the liurais, which established Wife Giver and Wife Taker relationships. In the previous chapters we have emphasised the importance of the marriage system for the establishment of peace. The establishment of these relationships with the local liurais were the strongest method of ensuring peaceful relations with the local powers because it is forbidden to attack one’s Wife Taker. Through this method, some of the liurais were tied in such strong relationships with the Portuguese that they had to help the Portuguese fight against other liurais. The Manufahi War is a good example of this. The Portuguese used the liurais from the east (as their Wife Giver) to fight against Dom Boaventura in Manufahi. Utilising this method, the Portuguese were able to win the war.

When entering marriage relations with local families, the Portuguese were always classified as the Wife Taker, the typical classification for the ‘outsider.’ As the indigenous communities are always seen as the ‘Lord of the Land’ and therefore closely connected with the values of fertility, they have to act as Wife Giver (passing on fertility through the women that are given) in relation to the ‘outsider.’
Another typical classification in this context is that the ‘outsider’ is seen as a younger brother and therefore connected to values such as political authority. Traube, who conducted research among the Mambai people in Portuguese times, describes how the Portuguese were integrated into the local socio-cosmic system. They were the younger brothers who originated from Timor, but had travelled overseas. At a certain stage these Portuguese brothers come back to introduce political values. Historical reality fitted neatly into local classification systems and even when the Portuguese misbehaved, the Mambai would excuse them as being the ‘wilder young brother who doesn’t know better.’

Perceptions of the Portuguese in daily life

There are many different opinions on the Portuguese, including some declaring the Portuguese times as ‘paradise.’ In these cases even forced labour is declared as positive:

> It taught people how to work. And all this work was directed to raise Timor Lorosae, but that was only for the good of the people. The forced labour was to build the roads in the state and to work in the garden of the liurai. People were forced so they wouldn’t become lazy. The Portuguese taught us discipline to work.
>
> (Traditional elder, Bobonaro)

Some also think it was good that education standards were raised, though others claim education went only as far as primary school for most of the locals because the Portuguese were scared that the Timorese would otherwise become a threat to their government. Informants claimed that only the children of liurais and datos were allowed to attend school.

Furthermore, it is said that there was no terror against the local people and no murders. Yet this is mostly said in comparison with the following Indonesian system.

It is mostly emphasised that the Portuguese respected the local customs. Others say the Portuguese did not respect the local customs as they changed the titles of the rulers and did not respect the traditional elders (which probably means that they did not pay respect). The traditional elders had nothing to do with the government, as they were the ritual and not the political power.

For many, the tax system and forced labour were perceived very negatively:

> People suffered a lot from that. They worked in their gardens and the next month they had to help the government. The payment from the government wasn’t enough and the lazy people didn’t have enough food.
>
> (Liurai, Bobonaro)

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57 A phenomenon that often appears after the experience of another power.
The Church

If we compare the Portuguese with the Indonesians, the Portuguese didn’t come with weapons, but with their Christian missions.
(Villager, Bobonaro)

The Portuguese government had little interest in local customs, except for the cases where they made use of them, and they had no intention to change them. The intentions of the Church were very different. During Portuguese colonial rule, the Church and its missions were very strong.

An often-heard local perception about the missions in Portuguese times was that the missionaries tried to undermine people’s beliefs in their sacred items. Nonetheless, the sacred items are so much part of the social system that they never lost their importance for the locals. Flexibility may have also contributed to their retention because often the actual value of something could be replaced by another item.

Asked about Christianity, a number of informants tried to give us interpretations of similarities between their belief system and Catholicism as they integrated the new religion into their local systems.

The Church forbade the people to believe in trees, lulik (sacred items), stones and other items. But with the increasing of the catholic religion, the beliefs in traditional customs also increased. That was because offerings for God in Church were brought up to the altar. Offerings for the traditional sphere were brought up to mountains or hills or stones. And they always looked above to the stars and sun, so it was nearly the same.
(Elder, Baucau)

It was not until the Indonesians entered the country that the Church could gain a real hold among the population.

Power in Indonesian Times

Short History

In 1974 the Portuguese dictator Marcello Caetano was overthrown and the new left-wing government urged a policy of decolonisation. This meant Portugal would immediately release East Timor into independence. One informant explained:

Governor Laves Alameda called all the liurais to go to Dili and told them that from now on, the 25th of April, there is liberty for the Timorese people. The Portuguese governor gave authorization to the Timorese people to decide about the future of their country. He told us to establish political parties to represent us. Then East Timor had five political parties: Apodeti, UDT, Fretilin, Kota and Trabalista. These five parties had different political ideologies. That is why a civil war happened in 1975.
(Lia nain, Aileu)
The Indonesian military orchestrated conflict amongst the new parties and in November 1975, East Timor was integrated into the Indonesian nation.  

**The Official Structure**

Officially the Indonesian Government adjusted the administrative structure of East Timor to the Indonesian system, in line with the rest of their country. East Timor became the 27th province of the Republic of Indonesia and was divided into the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Indonesian term</th>
<th>Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>Kabupaten</td>
<td>Bupati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-district</td>
<td>Kecamatan</td>
<td>Camat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Desa</td>
<td>Kepala desa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Dusun</td>
<td>Kepala dusun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
<td>RT</td>
<td>Kepala RT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 37: Indonesian Administration structure*

In comparison with the systems described below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>INDONESIAN OCCUPATION</strong></th>
<th><strong>PORTUGUESE RULE</strong></th>
<th><strong>TRADITIONAL POWER HOLDERS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bupati (Kabupaten)</td>
<td>Administrador de conselho</td>
<td>Reglo / Dom/ Liu rai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camat (Kecamatan)</td>
<td>Administrador de posto</td>
<td>Liu rai/ Lia nain/ Kuku nain/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kepala Desa (Desa)</td>
<td>Reglo</td>
<td>Adjudante</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kepala Dusun</td>
<td>Liu rai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kepala RT (Rukun Tetangga)</td>
<td>Chefe do povoação</td>
<td>Dato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Head uma kain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 38: Comparing Indonesian and Portuguese administration with local systems*

The new Indonesian government made changes in the administrative structure for security reasons. The Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI) moved people out of the mountains to the lower areas that were more controllable. This happened, for example, in some sub-districts of Baucau where the

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39 Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia.
population was not allowed to stay in the mountains because it was the hiding place of Falintil guerrillas. The Indonesians resettled them to the coastal areas.

The administrative structure of different levels was changed. At the sub-district level the government was composed of the camat (sub-district chief) and assisted by a secretary (sekwilcam). Other administrative sections were placed in charge of particular areas: civil administration, personnel, welfare, rural development, finance and the village offices.

The Indonesian administrative differences from the former Portuguese system were at the local level. The important power at the local level, the village chief, was not to be appointed anymore according to his descent, but to be elected democratically by the people. With the underlying traditional power structures, which had survived and been supported in the Portuguese period, and with the attempts by the Indonesian government and military to exert power over the territory against the local resistance, a very interesting evolution developed in the local level power structures.

**Local Powers**

The major change in local powers related to the Portuguese colonial structure was the introduction of democratic elections for the position of village chief. Power positions depending on descent were officially abandoned. In some areas, depending on what kind of resistance the Indonesian government faced, the government appointed sub-district chiefs from other places:

> Under the Indonesian rule we didn't have people originally from Aileu in important positions, those positions were mostly held by people from Maubessi and Ermera. The only position Aileu people held was that of the village chief.
> (Sub-district chief)

Sometimes, informal traditional powers were turned into formal power positions again. In Baucau the former liurai was appointed, even in agreement with the traditional powers:

> This appointment was through the Indonesian government and the group of all liurais in Baucau. So his position was agreed upon by all the liurais.
> (Liurai descendant, Baucau)

In 1982 the first five-yearly democratic elections for village chiefs were held. According to our informants, the election of the village chiefs were prepared by the sub-district chief in co-operation with people at the village level, the hamlet chief and the traditional elders. They were gathered in two institutions called LKMD and LMD and had to select two or three candidates for the election.

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40 The first Indonesian parliamentary elections were held in East Timor in 1982.
41 The Indonesian Government had formed village councils:
   LKMD: Lambaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa (Council of the village people)
   LMD: Lembaga Musyawarah Desa (like the Council of the Elders)
The main criteria mentioned for a candidate’s eligibility were that they had to be originally from the village in question, have knowledge about law and sound capacities in conflict resolution. Once the candidates had been selected, the ballot was conducted. On the day of the election, for example, the pictures of the candidates were glued onto card boxes so people could recognise the candidates and they put their vote into the box of their chosen candidate.

Asked about the process of elections, many interviewees describe it as democratic:

> In reality it was a democratic process, all the people from the different hamlets participated in the election and stayed until the end of the counting of ballots. (Woman, Aileu).

However, democratic appearances decrease if we look in to the background of candidate selection. The process of the selection of candidates already pre-supposed how strong traditional power structures remained. The power holders of the village, who decided still in accordance with the traditional power structure, chose the candidates. It is therefore very likely that descent still played an important role. Their method of selecting candidates was also very traditional. A specific group of people sat together and discussed the matter until a consensus was reached. Different powers then had their influence on the actual outcome of the elections. The Indonesian government and the Armed Forces adjusted the election results to their interests. In some of the politically sensitive areas, the Indonesian government and military is said to have put the village chiefs of their own choice in place. This could be disguised as a democratic election:

> But there were not really democratic elections, since Indonesian militaries were exerting pressure on the population to elect the candidate favoured by the Indonesian Government. (Liurai descendancy, Aileu).

It appears that the Indonesian government recognised, in some cases, the convenience of having a former liurai in place, especially if he acted pro-Indonesian. He still had informal power over the people and often still acted in conflict resolution. So some of them entered governmental positions again.

We also heard of cases in which the Indonesian government used traditional customs to integrate the liurais that were only holding informal power. The former liurais were invited for governmental activities (*upacara*) and after the activities they were given a *merah putih* flag\(^{42}\). Nevertheless, most of the informants state that the Indonesians did not honour the liurais and village chiefs anymore.

> It is claimed that the LKMDs were working in a very nepotistic and corrupt manner. Most of the council members were government workers, sometimes coming from other areas and not being local villagers. They are blamed for often having used development money for themselves. The head of the LKMD in the village could make his own decisions because he didn’t have to report to anybody. The population wasn’t free to complain and there was no transparency.

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\(^{42}\) Red-white flag, the national flag of Indonesia
Then there were also the traditional elders who had to sanction an elected candidate because, in their view, the village chief definitely had to come from a certain family:

...The chefe do suco .... didn’t pass elections, but it were the elders from Hohulo and Raimansu who told the Indonesian government that they want this man as their village chief.
(Chefe do suco, Aileu).

A significant number of the population in the rural areas, and especially the traditional elders, explained to us the importance of the village chief descending from the House that holds political authority. Therefore in many cases, when nobody interfered, the candidate of the ‘appropriate’ uma lulik was elected and his informal power turned again into formal power. The traditional elders had their influence in the selection of candidates and the people then voted in the democratic elections for the ‘right’ person. So in the perception of some people the ‘liurai now became the village chief.’

In the eyes of the Indonesian government, rulers were elected democratically. On the surface it looked like a change in the power system happened, but underneath local structures continued to survive. Even in cases where informants claim that the Indonesian system was different and the descent of a leader was not important anymore, we would often find that the village chief in Indonesian times was still from the ‘political’ sacred house. In other cases, it seemed that people took the chance to eradicate a disliked ruler and he then retained only symbolic power. In these cases, people tell about how much they had disliked their liurai and that the Indonesian rule was a chance to leave the feudal system.

The elders often excused this change of power by claiming that people just voted like that because they didn’t have the knowledge of who was the right person to be the village chief. However, the elders were now fearing ancestral sanctions as the ‘wrong’ person was sitting in the caderna manas (hot chair). To avoid misfortune, the liurai had to keep his position in ritual functions. In Baucau, the village chief could stem from the House that did not hold the liurai title, but before he was appointed he had to go to the liurai’s sacred house and ask for permission. The descendants of the liurai passed on the rattan stick and appointed him as their representative.

In other examples, the new leader was at least declared to be of ‘royal descent.’ In a town in the Bobonaro district, where the son of a militia leader was put in charge, the elders still found that his wife was from a liurai’s descent and was thus legitimate in front of the ancestors.

Many of the village chiefs that came from a different sacred house are said to have not engendered much trust from society. The people did not honour them as they originated ‘from a small uma lulik’ and this was most especially in relation to the ones that were put in place by the Armed Forces. They needed the official governmental power behind them to exert their power. Informants also explain that they were only ‘transitional:’

43 Informant, villager.
The village chief in Indonesian times was from the uma lulik Kerilelo. But he was only there transitionally. In '97 we returned to Baheo. Nowadays the nurep is from Baheo. In '97 there was a public vote. The people still believe that the village chief has to be of the right descent.

(Village chief, Baucau)

At the hamlet level, the appointments and the background of the hamlet chiefs were even more traditional than in the case of the village chief, since government interference here was not strong. The hamlet chief was not elected democratically. Most often someone from a ‘royal’ (dato) House acted as hamlet chief (kepala dusun). He was usually appointed through traditional methods, with the elders, in agreement with the village chief, gathering to discuss the right person for the position. We were often told if the village chief had wanted to appoint someone from a ‘commoner uma lulik,’ the people would not have agreed.

Traditional Elders
Informants complain that the Indonesian government did not pay respect to the traditional elders. They were recognised but not respected. The spheres of power crossed when it came conflict resolution; a task of the elders connected to political authority. Traditionally it had been the elders who had to deal with conflicts. Informants claimed that under the Indonesian rule, the police and the court did not respect their decisions anymore. The really powerful people are said to have been the military, Bupati, Camat and the police. In the perception of the locals, conflicts that were settled by the elders were often taken up again by the Indonesian government and brought to the court and there a lot of manipulation is said to have happened.

The law system of Indonesia was different to the Timorese culture. What we considered as serious, they considered as light and the other way round.

(Hamlet chief, Bobonaro)

Along side the elders concern with conflict resolution, ritual authorities still existed. Their conduct of ceremonies is described as being cut. If ceremonies were to be conducted, the villagers had to ask officials for permission, who then often requested money or meat (from the ceremony).

In Indonesian times we didn’t conduct many ceremonies. The camats always had to check how much people spend on rituals. The village chief had to give permission for it, and therefore he had to be paid.

(Community member, Bobonaro)

Resistance Movement

Parallel to the Indonesian governmental system, another system was informally put in place: the clandestine movement for resistance against the Indonesian rule. On the 28th November 1975 Fretilin declared unilaterally the independence of the Democratic Republic of East Timor (RDTL: Republica Democratica do Timor Leste) due to the threat of Indonesian occupation that was said to be advancing into East Timor at the request of
help from UDT and Apodeti. On the 7th December Indonesian troops launched a massive attack on Dili, forcing Fretilin forces to escape to the mountains.\textsuperscript{44} Fretilin then started to fight Indonesia through armed struggle.

Resistance against Indonesia was organised as a military front, Falintil, the clandestine structure and the political and diplomatic front. The diplomatic front was undertaken by some of the political leaders in the Diaspora and over the years of occupation several associations were set up in different countries throughout the world. Falintil had two major functions: one was the political organisation of the masses through the clandestine front (organisacao das masas politicamente) and the other was military attacks on Indonesian positions through guerrilla strategies.

During the long period of struggle for independence, Falintil members were very respected by the local people and received unconditional support by the clandestine structure because they were volunteers fighting on behalf of all the people of East Timor.

Within the clandestine structure a large number of the population supported Falintil and its struggle for independence. Falintil commanders were powerful and respected leaders in their communities. They set up a parallel system of governance, where the personnel were nominated in a clandestine way to support the resistance fight. This network of key elements was composed of the nureps (nucleos representatives), the leading person at the village level and the celcom (cell of communication) leader at the hamlet level. Their main tasks were to organise the population to support the resistance fighters and to establish an information system for the population.\textsuperscript{45} Although Falintil nominated nureps and celcom in the early nineties, most of them had been actively involved in the resistance movement since the mid-eighties.

The clandestine movement did not follow the same political boundaries as the Portuguese and Indonesian administrations. Some villages were split and some hamlets were considered as separate villages to accommodate operational and logistic facilities.

When the CNRT (Conselho National de Resistencia Timorense) clandestine structure was set up in 1998, the same organisation was used since the majority of CNRT representatives were already involved in the resistance movement.

The designation of the clandestine ‘power holders’ by Falintil at the local level was organised through a consultation process with community members. It took into account the relationship of the potential candidate with the population, his work performance and particularly his trustworthiness. This selection process is well described by a nurep:

\textsuperscript{44} Morlanes, 1991.

\textsuperscript{45} Next to the military part and the clandestine movement, the sacred family was established to support the military wing and to conduct socialisation campaigns in the villages for the independence fight. El Foray Boot, also known as L7, acts as their leader. Their main centre is Laga in Baucau District. In their structure, they have branches in every district with a leader on the district level. Each village has a co-ordinator for women and one for all the men. The leaders were appointed through Falintil, if they had a good background in organising people. The differences with the clandestine movement were the religious and traditional aspects: ‘we loved all our enemies and tried to avoid to take steps that would harm other people. If we hadn’t used the religious way, we only would have had a small number of members. People had thought that we were a political organisation.’ (Village leader of sacred family, Baucau)
We had a big meeting with representatives of the seven hamlets and 675 people came to participate. Falintil also came to conduct the election of the nurep... Falintil members asked the people who were participating ‘now please, all of you will chose the best person as candidate for the chefe do nurep for your village.’ So people chose three persons... Afterwards the Falintil commander divided the room into three parts and gave a symbol to each candidate and asked people to choose the candidate by raising hands. At the end the person elected was nurep and the two others were elected as first and second deputy of the nurep.

(Village chief, Aileu)

The clandestine sub-district chief secretario do zona (zone secretary) was chosen by Falintil commanders. Often the people selected had been involved in Fretilin since 1975.

In the context of a clandestine resistance fight, we do not speak about official administrative issues and so it seems that traditional, political authorities were not involved. When we asked informants, the backgrounds of the clandestine leaders revealed that people trusted them in their work and deeds. Their capacity as a person was always emphasised. This trust is very different to the belief that a specific person has to hold the political chair so as to avoid sanctions from the ancestors. In this context, people speak about personal trust and individual capacities. In the perception of the people, the clandestine movement was supporting Falintil who were ‘warriors’ and not necessarily people in the traditional position of political authority.

How many of the nureps were actually from ‘royal’ families is another point. In many cases the political positions in the village or hamlet were filled anyway, so on the political level, everything was in accordance to traditional requirements. Nevertheless, in some cases the nurep was also from a ‘political family.’ Indeed, after the Popular Consultation, after the nureps had been put in place as village chiefs, nureps from the ‘wrong’ descent were often perceived as only being transitional.

The Role of Lulik in the Resistance

The traditional ritual authorities were very involved in the clandestine movement. In Aileu, the kuku nains are said to have provided spiritual support as well as food to the warriors. People active in the resistance movement, both the clandestine structure and the Falintil guerrilla fighters, often went to the sacred houses to take part in special ceremonies ‘to indicate the right path in their endeavour.’ Strength for the fight for independence was thus gained with the support of the ancestors through the ritual authorities as the link to them. Traditional ceremonies, such as oaths, were held in the mountains to keep soldiers fighting until the end. Some of the guerrilla fighters had sacred and magical powers (lulik) to encounter the enemies and their ceremonies gave invisibility to the soldiers to protect them from their enemies.

Practises like the blood oath were also used strategically with the Indonesian Armed Forces. One informant told us:

46 Informant, villager.
In 1984, I entered a blood oath with the Indonesian military in Baucau. This was done because the military was too suspicious and killed too many people. I felt sorry and invited the military and the government. The military commanders of Baucau… came. We killed a goat and drank the blood together. That was conducted so the military would stop killing people. If they had continued to kill people, I myself would have led the people into the mountains. I had also invited the Church for the oath, but the pastor refused because they do not agree with blood oaths.

(Liurai, Baucau)

The Church

During the Indonesian period and the resistance fight, the importance of the Church increased. It was less that the Church started to challenge traditional belief systems but more so that the Church started to play a very important socio-political role. The population was suppressed through the Indonesian government and the Armed Forces so they had no power to say things openly. Therefore, the Church could listen to their concerns and pass them on and thus becoming involved in supporting the fight. One of the priests explained:

We always had close contacts with the political leaders / Fretilin, as most of them had graduated from our schools. Therefore the people trusted the Church.

(Priest, Baucau)

The Church actively supported and protected Falintil fighters, yet on the other hand stayed in a mediation position with the Indonesian government. According to the priests we interviewed the Church also received empowerment, due to the suppression of traditional ceremonies by the Indonesian government. This brought people to the Church as it replaced something similar in their eyes. According to Church leaders they also gained importance as they replaced traditional powers:

The identification with the liurai is still deeply rooted. The Church replaces symbolically some of the traditional powers, therefore people come to us. This happened during the Indonesian period when a leadership was missing.

(Priest, Baucau)

We found that the influence of the Church during Indonesian times was different between the districts. It seemed stronger in centers of the resistance fight. Even in discussions with traditional elders the Christian ideas always played a role and informants tried to overcome the differences between Christianity and their traditional belief systems. In other areas the Church was hardly ever mentioned at the village level.

Perception of the Indonesian Government

Asking the villagers about their opinion of Indonesian rule, they delivered positive and negative points. The positives mentioned that they opened a lot of schools, created work for unemployed people, built up the infrastructure, shops, markets and other facilities and stopped forced labour. The negative points mentioned were corruption, loss of moral discipline, too many people were killed and mistreated, no one listened to the villagers and there was no respect for Timorese customs. Very critical informants also pointed out that Timorese people were also part of these foreign systems:
The worst colonisers of Timor are the Timorese people themselves: liurai, dato and then the pro-autonomy people, integrationists, militias. Then there are the Portuguese and the Indonesians.

(Intellectual, Bobonaro)

**Power in the Transitional Period**

When the Japanese came, everything was normal; in 1975 everything was normal, but now not anymore. There is no more normal. Indonesia wanted to win, we wanted to win. We were afraid they would kill us, we just pretended. I went to the elections. In my heart I wanted *merdeka* [freedom]. I looked for my way.

(Elder, Bobonaro)

**Short History**

With the resignation of the Indonesian president Soeharto in May 1998, Indonesia entered a new political era of *reformasi*. In January 1999, during this period of change, Soeharto’s successor Habibie declared that the people of East Timor would be consulted to decide their future. On May 5th Indonesia, Portugal and the United Nations signed a tripartite agreement on the conditions for a Public Consultation of the East Timorese people. From the Consultation a clear outcome favouring the independence of East Timor emerged.

**Transitional Powers**

The official power in the transitional period, before independence is given to East Timor, is constituted by the United Nations. Shortly after the rampages, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, or UNTAET, was created in October 1999. According to PBB No. 1272, the Security Council gave the legislative, executive and judicative power to UNTAET. At the same time, a parallel local structure was re-established as the Council for National Resistance in Timor (CNRT). It recruited mainly through the leaders of the former clandestine and Falintil structures.

UNTAET’s administrative structure only went as far as the sub-district level. In lower administrative levels, UNTAET relied on the information exchange with the local levels through the CNRT structure. It took several months of the first year of UNTAET for the population of the rural areas to become aware of UNTAET, as they were only in touch with the CNRT.
Table 39: UNTAET, CNRT and clandestine administrative positions at the local levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative division</th>
<th>ETTA / UNTAET</th>
<th>CNRT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>District Administrator + team of International and local staff</td>
<td>Secretary and vice secretaries + committee of sectoral representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-district</td>
<td>District Field Officer</td>
<td>Chefe do Posto + two deputies and people for education, health, agriculture and security (Conselhos dos Katuas) (OMT - OJT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Chefe do Suco + two deputies, Conselho dos Katuas, (OMT - OJT)</td>
<td>Chefe do Aldeia + two deputies, Conselho dos Katuas, (OMT - OJT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>District Advisory Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 40: Transitional structures

**Governmental Bodies and Civil Society**

**UNTAET - CNRT**

At the very local level, the understanding of UNTAET’s functions is still very limited. After one and a half years of government, the majority of the population has heard about UNTAET but the main ideas about it is that it provides security and gives aid. In the border areas security plays the most important role and in these areas many people are in favour of the PKF.

Speaking to the traditional elders, some give UNTAET a position in their cosmos:

They are the first children. UNTAET is right as government. They came here, not as leaders, but to fix Timor again, of course we need them. We are brothers. If the younger brother is in difficulties, the elder brother has to come, if the elder brother has difficulties, the younger brother has to come. Last year UNAMET came to bring peace, as younger brothers.

(Traditional elder, Bobonaro)
Asked, ‘who has got the power?’ most informants state it is UNTAET and CNRT. For most of the villagers CNRT is the main representative of governmental power, as they are represented down to the village level. UNTAET does not reach very far in to the local level, so it is far beyond the daily sphere of the villagers. UNTAET’s main link to the local level is through the DFO (District Field Officer), who co-ordinates governmental matters with the village chiefs. In the universe of the villagers, the village chief is the focal point and the powerful person. UNTAET also empowers the village chiefs, though so far not formally, by inviting them to all the meetings and co-ordinating all issues with them. Hence, the village chief gains the monopoly on information about government, development and all issues that have to do with life ‘outside’ of the village life:

The transitional government has only been on for one year now. But there are already results. For example, the people get wood and aluminium for their roofs to build houses again. They also receive money to open a business or to rebuild public facilities that were destroyed, repair roads or school buildings, which were burnt by the TNI and militias. All these results are from the hard work of the nurep.

(Hamlet chief, Bobonaro)

The DFO’s play a crucial role in the perception of UNTAET/ETTA at the local level. They are mostly honoured because of their ‘high’ position, but in many cases people do not respect them, as they feel that they have no knowledge about local culture and political concepts. For the implementation of government work on the local level it is extremely important that the work of the DFO is understood by the international community as a reciprocal process. The DFO can deliver information from the local level but the DFO should also be the person that is able to implement and explain ‘governmental issues’ to the locals. The DFO should not be seen purely as a ‘messenger’ from the government.

**Sub-district Chief**

Down to the village chief, the power holders are mostly CNRT members, or are close to the CNRT. At the level of the sub-district the power of UNTAET meets the CNRT. The sub-district chiefs of the transitional period were not elected democratically by the people but appointed by important society leaders, like the CNRT district leaders and others in the clandestine movement.

Even after Indonesian rule put different kinds of district leaders in place, who were often from other areas, a frequently heard statement on the village level was that ‘a leader of people has to be the child of a raja.’ And in the majority of the cases studied, we found that the sub-district chief was of a ‘royal’ descent. When asked, most of them are said to be presently closely connected with the independence fight and the clandestine structure. Many informants claim that their descent was not important anymore, but they had been very active in the clandestine movement.

I am the sub-district chief. The people have seen the way I work since ’75 with the parties and then for five years in the forest. Then I have an education from Portuguese times and they have seen how I worked in the government and how I cared about the people’s ideas. So they appointed me as sub-district chief.

(Sub-district chief, Baucau)

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47 In some sub-districts the DFO is called *administrador* as the sub-district chief was called in Portuguese times.
Village Chief and Hamlet Chief

On the local level the main powers are the village chief, the hamlet chief and the traditional elders, without question. The village chief is a very central figure, as he is the junction point where clandestine powers, traditional political concepts and the modern outside world run together. He is a very crucial point for the relationship between inside and outside, between the local level and the government.

Usually the village chiefs are invited to UNTAET meetings about food, infrastructure and water. They are then supposed to report back to their hamlet leaders. The same process is used for orders from CNRT. All the activities on the hamlet or village level are co-ordinated with the CNRT, as they come under the CNRT structure. The relationship between the village and the hamlet chief is very close, as the village chief represents the ‘exit’ to the outside world for the hamlet chief. Everything that comes from the outside goes through him.

The traditional elders and the hamlet chiefs are rather traditional powers that rule on the very local level. The main power or duty of the hamlet chief is in conflict solution, as many of them are from the traditional political powers or at least in close connection with them.

Election and background

The position of the village chief in Indonesian times was quickly restored after the unrest in September 1999. Shortly after the population started returning to their villages in late 1999, a nurep was put in place, in accordance with the clandestine structure of 1998. They were appointed by Falintil, CNRT and the village elders. There was, in most of the cases, an agreement between CNRT and Falintil about whom to appoint. In conjunction with this, the village elders gathered to discuss the appointment following a traditional paradigm. Village elders state that the appointment was due to them, akin with CNRT and Falintil.

I think the selections were not democratic because no elections were performed then. The traditional elders in the village had already agreed to elect the child of the sub-district chief as the village chief because he is from the liurai descent. So there haven’t been any elections yet.

(Traditional elder)

From March 2000, a directive of Frente de Política Interna (FPI) of CNRT prescribed that the village chief now had to be democratically elected. This has not happened yet in all places. The sub-district representative was responsible for the campaign and the population was briefed about the process. Candidates were selected through the hamlets. According to our informants, the selection on the hamlet level was conducted by the traditional elders and heads of the Houses. A census of the village population was held to identify the number of voters. Then, for example, three cardboard boxes with the photo of each candidate were displayed and people had to give their vote.

The same procedure is said to have been conducted by the village chiefs for the election of the hamlet chief, who were elected in September 2000. Here the election process is perceived as democratic:

The election process in my hamlet was democratic because nobody could be influenced, people came to vote and they felt free to choose the person they wanted to vote for. They all had the same right and there was no intimidation.
In other areas the actual election was more traditional:

I became hamlet chief through elections, but the election was not a ballot. It happened through a public meeting in the hamlet; the lianains from each uma kain chose myself as hamlet chief of …

(Hamlet chief, Baucau)

In the traditional system, the elders discuss which person is from the right descent. This is the person they choose and nobody else can occupy the position. The position is connected to the ‘way of the ancestors’ and to the sacred lulik. If the wrong person acts as political ruler, this would mean misfortune for the whole village. Their choice is then offered to other society leaders, who discuss again so a common agreement can be made and everybody accepts the final choice. Traditionally the choice of the elders is not challenged. The system has survived the Portuguese rule and the challenging system of the Indonesians in great parts. Now it seems that for the transitional period the different powers, CNRT, Falintil and traditional elders have developed into a conglomerate to appoint the right people for the position of village chief. The criteria that were considered important for the selection of the village or hamlet chiefs reflect this:

- In accordance with their descent.
- According to their activities in the clandestine government.
- Former communal activities and possible detainment by TNI (which ensures villagers’ trust).
- Capacity as leader in conflict resolution.

In the selection of the hamlet chiefs not many ‘outside powers’ seemed to be involved. So most of the hamlet chiefs we found were rather older people who still seemed very traditional. On the hamlet level, life is not challenged so much through modernity and remains very traditional. Hamlet chiefs are sometimes school teachers but sometimes uneducated. Their power is strong, as some of the hamlets have to act in great isolation. When informants say that someone was ‘elected from the people’ there is no contradiction to mention in the same sentence that he is from the appropriate House. This point still seems to be of utmost importance in the choice of hamlet chief.

The head of the hamlet has to go with the history. The House of Kutubu must be the hamlet chief. If the chief dies, he has to be replaced by one of his brothers. Nobody else can become the hamlet chief. Even if there is no male member left, a female can become the hamlet chief.

(Traditional elder)

When we analysed the different cases of village leaderships the following picture was drawn: nowadays, the majority of the village chiefs are still from the ‘right’ descent, or at least the elders try to find a link to a specific House to justify their position. In these cases it is often mentioned that ‘nobody else could become village chief.’ The position often had been occupied by the same family since way back in Portuguese times or had been handed over to another ‘royal’ family.
In the cases where the village chief is not in accordance with the right descent, we found two opposing groups of opinions. The traditional elders and a big part of the village population found several explanations for their ‘wrong’ leader: he is perceived as ‘transitional’ only until the right person can be elected again, or the former chiefs worked too closely with the Indonesians and militias, but they still hold ‘the meat and the beef’ (ceremonial function). So, if for very pragmatic reasons the right family can not rule anymore, they are at least still given their ritual position.

The other group rejects the importance of descent and wants to turn to a modern system. They either emphasise the deeds of a leader in the resistance movement, his personal capacity or they emphasise that it is the people’s choice:

The hamlet chief actually doesn’t fit into this position. But during the clandestine movement he was fighting for the Maubere movement, around 1989. Then the people elected him as cecilom and then they saw his work and how he co-ordinated the people and their problems. In his election nobody considered his education, family or uma lulik.

(Traditional elder)

The Resistance Movement

Where as the clandestine movement now merges into the political life of the nation, the military aspect was handed over to the UN for the creation of an East Timor Defence Force (ETDF) in an official ceremony on 1st February 2001. Six hundred soldiers were chosen to take part in the first selection of the new defence force. The rest of the Falintil soldiers (1,100) will be included in a reintegration package offered through a grant of the World Bank and USAID and to be implemented by IOM.

Women’s Organisations

OPMT (Organização popular de Mulheres Timorenses) was created by Fretilin in 1975 as a national organisation with antennas in the districts. Its purpose was to bring all the women together and raise political awareness of independence.

In 1985 the clandestine structure, through the FPI (Frente de Política Interna), created OMT (Organização de Mulheres Timorenses) to organise women and to prepare them to work in the resistance movement and to provide support to Falintil fighters. It was during a convention in 1998 that CNRT officially established OMT at the district level. The sub-district antennas were created after the 30th August 1999 ballot. Few instructions were received during the National Congress of Timorese Women that was held in June 2000.

In some districts, soon after the transitional period began, there was a well-established OMT structure put in place. In other areas, even over a year later, OMT is still not organised but OPMT still exists. Right now OMT is no longer part of the CNRT structure. OMT representatives see the need to reflect a new role and status for their organisation and to modify the structure to respond to the present and future political needs of East Timorese women.
Formerly, Falintil chose the OMT representatives, according to their capacity in organising people and their activities in the fight for independence. After the Popular Consultation, CNRT leaders either appointed the OMT representatives or they were democratically elected. The elections were chaired by the nurep and hamlet chief and voters could be both men and women. It is said that ‘everybody coming to the election has to agree.’ It seems that here, there was a more traditional system of decision-making put in place, despite the choice of candidates having no connection to a traditional power system.

I was elected out of two reasons. First of all I have a background in nursing. The second reason, in the times of the independence fight, I was a brave woman that went to the Falintil places to treat the guerrilla fighters that were injured.

(OMT representative, Baucau)

Those elected were representatives for the district, sub-district, village and hamlet levels. The representatives at the different levels consist of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District level</th>
<th>Village level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Secretary OMT</td>
<td>1. Chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Vice secretary I and II</td>
<td>2. Deputy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Assistant 4 people</td>
<td>3. Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sectors (9 people)</td>
<td>4. Members (all females of the hamlet)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 41: OMT organisation

The decision-making process within OMT is said to be democratic. They ‘take decisions together and not individually.’ The leader has no power to make sole decisions except for very important, urgent issues.

Our observations show that the way activities are conducted on the different levels are very hierarchical. The district level OMT gives tasks to the lower levels and the OMT in the hamlets must wait for orders from the village level. Some of the comments made by the OMT representatives at the village and hamlet levels also show their state of expectation. Since, in the traditional system as well as in the Indonesian system, people were less challenged to create their own initiatives. They are expecting someone to give orders. The hamlet OMT’s are waiting for someone from the village OMT to ‘come down’ and give them orders. The village OMT waits for the OMT from the sub-district level and so on. Without a higher authority nothing happens. A hamlet OMT representative will often not bypass the village and sub-district OMT and hand in project proposals to UNTAET or NGO’s. Things always have to go the proper way.

Now that support to independence fighters is not necessary anymore, OMT representatives see their tasks in all kinds of village functions, ceremonies and church activities where they are responsible for preparing food and drinks. They are also involved in weaving, sewing and dancing. They take care of the school children’s feeding and in Maliana they are planting rice fields and gardens as co-operatives.

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49 Informant, villager.
50 Informant, OMT.
The OMT organisation in Bobonaro district is very strong and this strength seems to stem from specific personalities. Most activities concentrate on the district level. In Aileu the organisation is quite strong and active in several projects. In Baucau OMT seems to be barely organised. Although a district antenna exists and some projects have received support from CNRT to create a co-operative and sewing workshop, there is not much co-ordination and liaising with the sub-district level and the training courses are focused in Baucau town. In some areas of the Baucau district OMT is organised and has conducted a few projects in Baguia and Laga but in other areas no activities have been conducted yet because the lower levels have not received orders.

In some areas, where there is a close working relationship with CNRT and with UNTAET, OMT receives orders from the village and hamlet chiefs and are a part of the administrative structure. In many districts, OMT representatives join the District Advisory Council. They also work together with the Organização Joventude Timorense, or OJT.

Organização Joventude Timorense: OJT

OJT was formed during Indonesian times in 1983 by the clandestine movement. The strengths of Timorese youth were channelled to support the guerrilla force. After the Popular Consultation in 1999 it was re-established on orders from CNRT.

In the clandestine period Falintil leaders appointed OJT representatives. The new OJT is appointed in different ways:

- By Falintil (like in the clandestine times).
- Chosen by the young people in the hamlet, village or sub-district, in discussion.
- Via democratic elections with UNTAET and CNRT as witnesses (conducted by the whole society, elders, Falintil and youth).
- Elected by hamlet chief, village chief and youths (no democratic election).
- Appointed by village chief.

It is often stated that the appointment of OJT youths has nothing to do with their education or descent. The main criterion was the candidate’s ambitions to fight for independence. It was significant if a candidate had experience and was active in the clandestine movement and some of the OJT representatives are ex-Falintil. They spent the first couple of months after the consultation in Aileu, in the Falintil cantonment, and have since returned to their villages. Here they were appointed as OJT leaders and given the opportunity to lead a hamlet. They are said to have the trust of the people, since, ‘the young people elect someone … they think … is capable of the task.’

Nearly all of the OJT leaders refer their position back to their activities in the clandestine movement or Falintil involvement. Like OMT, OJT leaders are present on the district, sub-district, village and hamlet levels. Each young male of the village is a member of OJT. Here there structure consists of a leader, a deputy and a secretary.

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51 Informant: OJT.
During the clandestine times, OJT’s main tasks were to support Falintil with food or to give them shelter. When the militia violence started they organised the evacuation of people into the forests.

In some areas, new tasks for the OJT are not really clear defined as yet. Representatives are claiming they are still waiting for orders from CNRT. Some say they are co-ordinated but they do not really have a function yet. The main perception nowadays is that they are to help rebuild the country.

In the border areas, security is one of their main objectives, but the connection between them and local security organisations are not clear due to continual change. They also organise the manpower for all kinds of village activities; such as, working groups for farming in the rice fields and in the common gardens, cleaning the environment, church activities (preparing ceremonies) and they help in conflict resolution.

Some OJT groups seem better organised and more active than others. They have handed in project proposals to UNTAET to buy tractors and plant rice fields in a joint effort of work with NGO’s. Some representatives claim that they do not receive enough attention from CNRT. They suggest activities, like art and sports, but their proposals are not considered. They themselves have no money to conduct activities and no transportation. The relationship with the hamlet and village chiefs seems to be fairly good and their organisation is integrated into the organigramme at the hamlet and village levels. They receive tasks from the hamlet and village chiefs. They also work with OMT and the Church for common activities. Activities are usually checked with the traditional elders as well.

When the research team conducted its field research, OJT was still in a stage of reorienting itself. Some would still relate back to the times of the clandestine movement and legitimise their organisation through the need for clandestine aid. Thus security seemed a good replacement task, especially in the border districts.

**Traditional Elders**

The elders that are in charge of ritual authority are still responsible for establishing contact with ancestral powers and to appoint power holders at the local level. As the sphere of village life is widening and traditional elders are the ones that feel responsible for the appointment of political powers, they have thoughts about the presidency of their new nation. In a meeting with the elders in one of Bobonaro’s sub-districts, we were informed that the decision regarding the president of this country must come from the traditional elders who speak to the ancestors and to the people and thus can decide on someone who can lead society. They have to find a political representative and according to them, Xanana Gusmao will be a good political leader, as he is of ‘royal’ descent.

The elders do not appear much in the political and civil society context that the government and the NGO’s are dealing with. The only elders that are involved with the outside powers are the ones dealing with conflict resolution. Here their power is still very obvious. Depending on the areas, their power in conflict resolution is still very strong and they are still respected by the villagers. In conflict resolution the elders have a close working relationship with the hamlet or village chiefs.
We hope that the conflict resolution will be returned to the traditional elders again. They should have a position where they are honoured and where they can finish problems before they are brought to the police and to the court.

(Traditional elder, Bobonaro)

In other areas, the younger generation is starting to challenge traditional systems. Here, the elders are less respected in their attempts to ‘interfere’ in local conflicts. But mostly it is said that all the elders are trusted very much by their people. They receive the reports about problems (fights, theft etc.) and they are expected to solve them. Only criminal cases are taken to the police.

To be able to conduct conflict resolution, or to advise political figures on the ancestral links with political issues, Councils of Elders were formed. They have existed in the past on different levels. CNRT suggested establishing them formally again in the governmental organigramme as a legislative power known as Conselho de Katuas. Now in the transitional period the following picture can be drawn:

a) In parts of Baucau, the sub-district chiefs have set up a Council of Elders at the sub-district level. The council leader represents the ‘opinion of the people’ to the political leaders and there is a close working relationship when it comes to conflict resolution. In Baguia, we heard of a Justice Commission put in place by Falintil that is led by a Council of Elders. In Laga and Quelicai the Conselho de Katuas is composed of liainais, bararins, liurai descendants and other people democratically elected at the village level by the House chiefs and village chiefs.

b) In Bobonaro there exist informal councils of traditional elders up to the sub-district levels. They are mostly working at the hamlet or village level and only in a few cases at the sub-district level. The members of the hamlet and village councils are sometimes fixed people. In other cases, the elders, representing a House in a specific case, sit on the council. In Kailako we found a council with leaders from different ‘big’ uma luliks. In other places at the village level, the council members represent the hamlets. In Lolotoe, there is a proper Council of Elders within the former kingdom of Lolotoe that comes together whenever they are needed. Amongst them they have a hierarchical relationship, according to the hierarchy of their Houses.

c) In Aileu each sacred house has several lia nais for conflict resolution. They belong to the same clan and try to solve problems. They also act as a conflict resolution body and intervene when requested by the village or hamlet chief. A Conselho de Katuas has been established at each level of the administrative structure and serves as a legislative body. Its major task, next to conflict resolution, is to advise the sub-district chiefs and so lia nais represent moral authority at the sub-district level.

For conflict resolution or the co-ordination of ceremonies, the elders have a close relationship with the village and hamlet chiefs. With UNTAET there is nearly no contact at all. We were sometimes surprised at how well our research team was perceived by the elders. They felt ‘honoured’ that finally representatives of UNTAET, or the ‘outside world,’ had come to ask them about their customs. In their view, it is important that government issues are legitimised by the ancestors:

'It has to be in accordance with our ancestral times, at these times not everybody governed, but we would all listen to each other.'

(Traditional elder)
The Church

East Timor is considered to be a Catholic nation. On the national level the Church appears very powerful, as it has played an important role in the resistance movement. UNTAET views the Church as a separate power and often invites the priests as representative of ‘Civil Society’ into their meetings. In Baucau, the Church has a strong influence in the transitional period.

The Church is rebuilding Baucau, UNTAET hasn’t done much. The Church is faster. We are not mixing with politics. (Priest, Baucau)

At the local level, the Church seems to still be respected and honoured as a powerful institution. In local political concepts the Church is never mentioned. In the clandestine system, the Church as an institution gave a structure for the resistance movement to conduct their meetings and tasks. Therefore the Church was very powerful on the local level. But nowadays, even some of the priests perceive that this power has declined with the end of the fight. The Church united the people then: they were the only power that could resist the Indonesians and this was why the people came to the Church. Today, the situation for the Church becomes problematic, as there is no more external force to rally the people. People now attend by their own choice and there is no more pressure.

Local power and the influence of the Church also depend very much on the priests. Some of them have been in the areas for a long time and have made a real effort to understand local systems. Other priests seem to have a very minor knowledge of it. In some sub-distincts, the priest is called to attend conflict mediation meetings. In these cases he represents a respected person to witness the process or to make suggestions, but never decisions, regarding a solution.

The Church had less influence in relation to local belief systems and the power of ritual authorities at the local level. Rarely do people see a contradiction between the Church and their local system.

Traditional versus modern Concepts

Traditional versus modern Leadership

As becomes clear in the above-described historical development of local political powers, traditional power concepts are still very strong in East Timor and have survived two periods of foreign influence. Yet the continuation of traditional power systems does not mean that the legitimate leaders are liked very much. People with higher education, or people in urban areas, have started to openly criticise them. They advocate a modern system of democracy, in which leaders should be elected in accordance to their capacities. In opposition to this, the majority of the population continues adhering to the traditional power system. According to this paradigm, if the right leader is put out of place, ancestral sanctions will bring
misfortune to the whole community. In many cases we heard that nobody else but the right leader dares to occupy the position ‘because people who have done this before died very quickly.’

The other candidates didn’t want to take the chair. They said that there has been an oath once and this position is not meant to be theirs. I have a nephew that was sekretaris, he got crazy because he didn’t belong there, he sat on a ‘cadera manas’ (hot chair).

(Village chief, Baucau)

These traditional political concepts form a system in which a traditional society can work without a proper state body. Similar features can be found worldwide in traditional societies. Traditional social systems have a mechanism to prevent itself from collapsing as there is no formal constitution. The ancestors are the secure point to the past. They are the ones that have established the system and if their descendants disregard it they have to fear ancestral punishment. The traditional system was the most suitable in the stateless environment to guarantee social stability. It is the paradigm in which the majority of East Timorese people have grown up, for them it is the way things have always been. Therefore, we were not surprised to observe that in most places the power holder is still selected in accordance to the traditional social structure. Even in places where informants stated, ‘that the old system is over, everybody can become village chief’ and they have conducted democratic elections, the chiefs of the ruling families are still in place. If this is not the case, the former liurai would often still hold an informal power, still speak and be listened to by the people.

Apart from the findings from our observations, people have their own thoughts and perceptions of their rulers. They openly explain their opinions. We found different mainstreams of thoughts amongst the various groups of informants:

There are people on the village level that would like to keep these powers. Like my village in Quelicai. The people there are split in two groups. The first group thinks that the village chief has to be from the descent of the liurai. These are old and young people of the village. The second group wants the village chief to be elected by the people. These are mainly people that live in other villages and that live in the city. Because of that there is no real village chief so far that heads the people here.

(Villager, Quelicai)

Traditional

The conservative view wants to see people of the right descent in place because they are the ones that have the power, legitimised by the ancestors. These leaders are connected with the sacred lulik power. There is still immense trust or fear of the sacred power. Someone that comes from the right descent is thought to naturally own abilities as a good leader, with the support of the sacred. The one that holds the rattan stick and the flag has the power to rule. These two goods are usually stored in the uma lulik of the liurai. If the liurai has died, the power has to be kept by people from his House.

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52 Informant, villager.
Very conservative voices think the elders now have to meet again and put all the liurais back in place. First the elders have to sit together and make their choice, then they can make requests to the sub-district government and to the district.

The people that are still very much in favour of the traditional system are the ones that have little knowledge about the state system (which is the majority of the country’s population), are traditional elders or people that derive from a royal descent. Amongst them is a partition:
- the ones that want to re-establish the old liurai system with all consequences,
- the ones that want a new system but still based on traditional social structures, and
- the ones that talk about a new system and do not realise that, at the same time, they are still promoting an old structure.

**Modern**

More educated people, people in rather urban environments, people that have no legitimate ancestral power and people in areas where there have been very strict and disliked liurais, often see the issue in a very ‘modern’ way. They want to leave the ‘feudal’ system, where people lead society only because of their origins. According to these groups, everybody should have the possibility to enter a position in accordance with their abilities.

They also do not want to see the traditional system re-established because of their bad experiences in Portuguese times:

> Although I am the liurai, I think in the future the position of the village and the sub-district chief should be taken by people with education, because the world has already become modern. The power system of the liurai doesn’t need to be used anymore because it doesn’t go with the time of development that we have now.  
> (Liurai, Bobonaro)

For most of these informants, the liurai or dato only has symbolical power left. In ceremonies, like if a new House is built, they still receive a specific part of the meat and society still conforms to their fixed role in the social structure. According to the modernists, their family names are still important and still a lot of the people believe in them - but they have no real power.

In some areas of Baucau, we found a system to choose a well-liked leader that at the same time kept the traditional powers as a symbolically acknowledged power to secure society from ancestral sanctions. The new ruler, if he were not from the right sacred house, would undergo a ceremony in which he goes to the formal liurai and asks him for permission to rule on behalf of him. Then the rattan stick, which is in the uma lulik, can be given a long age and strength to lead.

The paradigmatic differences between traditional power concepts and modern ideas are so massive and the low level of education amongst the rural population ensures that traditional power concepts are remaining very strong. Even voices that sound modern are often supportive of traditional ideas, though not deliberately. Or, as the Baucau example shows, a modern system is accepted but there are still concessions made to avoid ancestral sanctions.
Many indicators support a new two-fold system:

i. Level of power: local level powers are still descent-dependent, regardless of whether national politicians are elected within a democratic paradigm.

ii. Context of power: the traditional divisions of political and ritual authorities remained intact under the Portuguese and Indonesian influence. Nowadays, structurally, the opposed values stay the same but on the applied level it develops as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Local level</th>
<th>Higher level (kingdom, sub-district, etc.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ritual authority</td>
<td>Political authority</td>
<td>Ritual authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional system</td>
<td>Kuku nains, beis, etc.</td>
<td>Lian nains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese system</td>
<td>Kuku nains, beis, etc.</td>
<td>Lian nains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian system</td>
<td>Kuku nains, beis, etc.</td>
<td>Lian nains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional period</td>
<td>Kuku nains, beis, etc.</td>
<td>Lian nains</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 42: Applied levels of power

**Traditional Powers – Clandestine Powers**

Looking at the nurep and village chief appointments in the transitional period, it can be seen that in many cases the traditional elders are still involved in the process; though most of them were said to be appointed by Falintil and CNRT, in accordance with their achievements in the clandestine fight. The CNRT appoints village leaders but the traditional elders also have to approve them. Therefore, it is likely that the nureps had a
clandestine background as well as stemming from the right family. People would state that someone has done good work in the clandestine movement, but not mention that he is also from the ‘right’ House to hold power.

The traditional and the clandestine systems cannot be perceived as two opposing power systems. The same counts for the Falintil guerrillas. They are sometimes extremely honoured by the people for their activities, but if they are not from the right descent, they are said to only be honoured as warriors and should never become politicians. This is different with Falintil figures that descended from a ‘royal’ family. They are now strongly expected by the people to take over a political role.

**Traditional Concepts – the Church**

Though the Church gained a powerful position through the history of the country, on the local level, they did not interfere much with political authorities. Politics and religion goes side by side and the Church sometimes even supports the local authorities in conflict resolution. Another picture can be seen where the Church meets the ritual authorities:

> We pray to the rising sun seven times and to the setting sun five times, in accordance with what our ancestors did. Seven times they thank God for giving life. That goes with the doctrine of the Catholics with seven sacraments and five orders of the Church.

(Traditional elder, Baucau)

In many cases where we interviewed traditional elders, they tried to interpret Christianity in a way that fits within their own belief systems. From the perception of the majority of locals, Christianity does not form a contradiction with their local systems. The only struggle arises when the Church forbids central aspects of the local social and power structure, such as in the marriage system. As marriage is such an important part of maintaining peace and creating the local social structure, here the Church and the local systems clash most.

One of the main functions of marriage is the creation of fertility by passing on the woman to the Wife Taker and by exchanging marriage goods. So if there is only a wedding ceremony conducted at church, but not a traditional marriage, the life of the whole community is thought to be threatened:

> If there were only religion, there wouldn’t be many of us. Going to church, marrying, drinking and eating, already finished. There is nothing. When we have our customs, we have cattle, a lot of things. All the exchanged goods, the osamian [golden discs].

(Villager, Baucau)

The exchange of goods in the marriage plays such an important role in creating fertility and establishing a wide social system, ‘to get tied into two sides to form a new neighbourhood.’\(^{53}\) The only concern locals have about the exchange of goods is that the system does not promote economic development.

\(^{53}\) Informant, villager.
The price should go down because now people are rather poor after 25 years of war [supporting the war] and also because of the aftermaths of the ballot.
(Village chief, Indonesian time, Baucau)

Still, for the local systems it is the very basis of their social structure and is still practiced in all the rural areas of East Timor. Some families in urban settings do not ask for the exchange of goods anymore, but the agreements between the families to the marriage is still always required. The same counts for the system to marry one’s Mother’s Brother’s daughter. Most informants state that this is not practiced anymore, but by investigating their family relationships we would often find confirmation for the continuation of the system.

Another concern of the Church is polygamy. Yet, despite the effort of the Church, these practices are still ongoing. A well-known liurai and administrator from the Indonesian times told us:

We shouldn’t be monogamous. The kings were very rich, who should receive all his goods if there is only one wife? There is a reason why he had many wives. If they are monogamous, they still fight, maybe because their dollar isn’t enough. All the wives are like siblings, they have economic freedom and they get treated fairly. Love is only with the first one.’
(Liurai, Baucau)

The practice seems to have reamined very much alive. According to an UNTAET registration officer, he faces the problem of receiving information about polygamy every day. The person to register is asked to choose only one wife to be recorded in the file system, because the registration system only accepts one wife. Usually one wife is married through the Catholic Church, the others are married through the traditional system. In more urban settings, a couple marries traditionally and some years later they conduct a church wedding as well. This illustrates the fact that people can integrate both their belief systems without causing major problems. Traditional marriage is still ongoing and can be found all over East Timor. Even in urban environments we were told:

The Catholic religion had no influence on the local customs. Most of the people stay with the customs. Only some have turned towards religion. The thoughts of traditional customs and religion have to walk together.
(Villager, Baucau)

How the Church and local customs go together seems to depend a lot on the local priest. Sometimes Christian and traditional ceremonies are practised together, while other priests forbid the locals to go to their sacred places and try to tell them their ancestors are evil spirits.

In our observations, for most of the villagers the priests seem to be very respected people. They are given an honoured, high position in society according to the sacred issues they are dealing with. In fact, there are a lot of activities that are conducted together with the Church. Nonetheless, in relation to content, the thoughts of Christianity do not play a big role in the life of the village. Information about the Christian belief system is respected, as it seems to have to do with ‘lulik’, but it is integrated into the local belief system. All the different Christian stories are listened to and interpreted in a way that they confirm the local systems rather than contradict with them. Christianity is respected but is seen as something
‘younger’; the ‘old’ and therefore more important aspect is the local belief system. The ritual authorities pay the Church respect and go to the masses, but within their Houses and areas they know well that the traditional system is the ‘true and old’ way of their ancestors. ‘God baptised us straight away but the traditional system goes first. Traditional system, Church, then the government.’

On the local level, the Church does not even form a contradictory system and locals do not perceive that they have to choose between two differing systems. There is only one system and new thoughts, like the Christian ones, are integrated into the indigenous system.

Here we find a very typical phenomenon, that scholars have written about in the last century and declared to be a typical core structure of the societies of the area: their way of integrating new things into the local systems. This is what happens with Christianity on the local level in East Timor.

The priests and intellectuals in most cases differently perceive this perception. Here, the view of the national system of the Church is as a very powerful force, although not in the sense of religious influence on the local level:

…Because in the eyes of the people the Church has credibility and influence. The Church has also proved itself in the fight. The Church always paid attention to the suffering of the poor. Another thing that should never be forgotten by the Timorese is that when Bishop Belo received the Nobel Prize, in a political sense it was a point of winning for the fight of freedom.

(Intellectual, Bobonaro)

Civil Society Organisations

Like the Church, that has lost one of their main roles as a supporter of the resistance movement, many civil society organisations are now without objectives. OMT and OJT were created to support the fight, which required heavy involvement and competent organisational skills. Now, in the transitional period, in most areas they are re-established and are structurally functioning. In some areas they have found new tasks to practice but in others they seem to be disoriented.

As a lot of the youth now have nothing to do, development programmes should now target those that were formerly involved in the clandestine fight much more. There are a lot of fights among youth in the villages and towns throughout East Timor. Few regard them as a vulnerable group and so they are not sufficiently integrated in to development projects. Yet, the youths have the manpower to achieve a lot and would be good recipients for income generating projects. They could be used for many of the communal projects as a way to rebuild the system of communal labour.

54 Informant, villager.
55 Josselin de Jong, 1935.
56 Which was destroyed through projects like ‘Food For Work’ run by WFP. This is a criticism we heard very often from the village chiefs.
Gender

In Indonesian times, women were given the possibility of taking part in the government but only in a limited fashion. On the local levels there were also women’s organisations established in this period. However, they only acted within their typical role model framework. The first important roles that woman performed were in the clandestine movement. Falintil appointed two women per village for the female organisation. Their main task was to organise the women in the village for the support of Falintil fighters in their attempts to hide and with the provision of food. When Falintil had meetings in the forest, woman always came to take care of the food. They, and their families, were always ready to give shelter and aid to the Falintil members who were sick or wounded. Although female organisation was there during the independence fight, they never had much influence on the decision-making processes. Decisions were only made by the men, especially in relation to strategic and war matters.

An often-heard complaint from the female side is that in the clandestine time the women of the villages were given the possibility to help in the fight but now that the situation is different again, they are expected to go back to the kitchen and to their family issues.

The men of Timor need the help of the women only in conflicts. If everything is quiet they just need a wife and kids to stay in the house.  

(OMT representative, Bobonaro)

Now under the transitional government, women on the local level still do not take part in governmental decisions, or in a large part of the meetings. They are also still weak in the CNRT.

Perception of gender balance

The majority of urban informants have heard about the request for gender equality. However, they also believe that men are the exclusive contributors in meetings, even when women are present. Most of the intellectuals interviewed think that the involvement of women in the government is very important. The fact that the administrator of Aileu is a woman seems to impress many people. They think in the government sectors women have started the war and while things will not happen very quickly, the important thing is that they have started.

Most women in rural areas are not even aware of their inferior position. That is why most of our informants on the village level would say that women are already very active and equal to men (within their traditional roles). Further, it seems for many rural women the idea of having to leave their roles is a rather frightening concept.

It is difficult to assess the amount of physical violence conducted against women, but it is certainly very present. The usual way to reconcile violent action is through the lianain at the village level. They kill a goat and take the blood of the goat to conduct a ceremony in the man’s uma lulik. The man and the woman have to drink the blood, saying that this problem is not going to happen again. Then it is said that the aggressor fears ancestral sanctions if he commits the deed again.
The main contradiction and difficulty for gender balance and female leadership, is said to be in traditional values. The more conservative informants think that gender equality has to happen in accordance with the traditional conditions, otherwise balance will disappear. It is very new concept for women to force themselves in to sharing power with the men.

The more modern view from informants is that the traditional system has always put women in a marginal role. Now woman have to fight for their rights with rational arguments so as to challenge the traditional system of gender balance. Some informants want to see a combination of traditional values and new conditions:

- Our traditions tell them (the women) to stay in the kitchen, as it is at the moment. Women now have to overtake part of the development, but they also still have to take care of the house. If we stay with the conservative values we cannot develop. The same the other way round, if we suspend the traditional values we will lose our identity.
  (Intellectual, Bobonaro)

Female informants have suggested the following:
- Women need more education first to fulfill these positions.
- We hope that the gender balance will be recognized strongly in our law.
- The women have to be empowered in the development of village life.

  Our main principle is to be independent from our husbands, we want to be dependent on what we earned with our own sweat.
  (Female villager, Baucau)

**Democracy**

Confusion in relation to power structures is created by the introduction of the term democracy. By now everybody has heard this expression, even in the very rural areas of East Timor. The local perception of what democracy is varies, in a wide range of interpretations, depending on a person’s education and on the challenge of integrating something new into local concepts.

When speaking to younger informants it is often mentioned that traditional values should be modified but not disappear. They are seen as the identity of the Timorese people. None has ever suggested that they should neglect all traditional values and become modern; they always seek a combination. This sounds very reasonable and sensitive. The question of how this combination between traditional and modern values should look like specifically is a very difficult one. Yet we have hardly received any detailed strategies of how to combine these different concepts with political legitimacy.

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58 See also future thoughts in Appendix D.
One of liurais that has worked for many years with the Indonesian government told us about how he perceives himself in a double role:

"At home we wear the cawat (traditional clothing), outside we wear the tie. Our culture is our identity. We have to study our culture and we have to pay attention to it. In our hearts there are still traditional customs. If we want democracy, everybody has to be educated. They have to go to school. But later they still will remember traditions. Traditional systems and democracy can not destroy each other. They have to go on one road. Their objective is the same: the happiness of the people. They have two ways, but their ideas are the same. Only if they start to play power it is wrong. That they can not do. The traditions are always there, but if they start playing power, we do not want democracy."

(Liurai, Baucau)

Multi-Party Systems

The interesting question at this time is; how far can a democratic system be introduced to societies that are hierarchically ordered and that strongly reject the notion of opposition in their system?

How problematic this is can be seen in the present establishment of a multi-party system. The local paradigm is now challenged to integrate the idea of an opposition. As this new notion is very strange to the local system, it is ordered into a category where it seems to fit best: the idea of an enemy and a violent relationship. Therefore violent actions against members of other parties can be explained by local systems.

Many informants that desire democracy react with rejection when we mention the multi-party system that comes with a western-based democracy.

Asking about multi-party systems, the answers we continuously faced were:

- That the humanitarian situation is still too bad for people to start thinking about politics.
- People are still in trauma about the war in 1975. This was the first time they experienced ‘multi-party’, so now they do not want to hear about it.
- They support the concept of ‘we all have to walk one way’ and there can only be ‘one party’ to create unity in the state.

The people of Timor have still too many needs, we do not need to establish political parties yet. People are still hungry and do not have houses. The people of Bobonaro are not going to receive political parties.

(Village Chief, Bobonaro)

I do not mind a multi-party system. But with the parties we have so far, it is better they would all disappear. Better we go back to the raja. What is that at the moment?

(Hamlet Chief, Baucau)
These points show that there is so far a lack of understanding of a multi-party system. The context, in which parties appeared first in the eyes of the people, was after the Portuguese released the country into independence. This period is closely connected with the experience of civil war that broke out shortly after.

The argument about people still being hungry and not having shelter, points to similar conclusions of a lack of knowledge about party systems and that politics on the national level is too far beyond people’s sphere of daily action. Already, shortly after the Consultation, when people started returning to their villages, local political issues seemed to be very important. Within the first months of the transition period, there were already land conflicts appearing on the surface that had been quiet for the years of the Indonesian occupation. Fights about forming new villages and administrative boundaries go on in a very urgent fashion. The population does not connect these problems to political parties. There is no understanding that parties could be channels for exactly these problems and they could prevent the problems from turning into violence.

The third point concerns ‘unity.’ During the independence fight unity was one of the most important notions; even more so because before then there was no common East Timorese identity. ‘Multi-party’ has to become a symbol for democracy and not for animosity.

The main difference, if we compare certain features of the traditional paradigm with western democracy, is hierarchy versus equality.

Traditionally, the idea of hierarchy is a core element in the local social structure. People identify people through their descent, their Houses. These Houses are hierarchically ordered. The highest Houses are seen as ‘royal.’ Here the idea of precedence is important. Whoever was first on the ground is the ‘Lord of the Land’ and therefore politically and ritually more important than others. Leaders can only come from certain Houses, or the people do not trust their rule, as they are not connected to the ancestor’s legitimacy. Apart from this, values are exchanged between the social groups. For example in marriage, which defines a very sophisticated system of social ranking.

This system is opposed to a western-based democracy where every individual has an equal value: individualism. There is no relationship for the party system to the traditional system of families. Thus, the idea of parties is very new and is closely connected to individualism.

Two or three parties will be enough to elect the parliament since people will make their selection based on individuals not on political parties.

(OMT leader, Baucau)

Decision-making concepts: the traditional decision-making process is very much characterised by the notion of discussion and agreement by everybody. All the power holders sit together and speak (sometimes for days) about a topic. At the end when they split, everybody has to agree to the decision made and to be content with it. In this way nobody ‘loses face.’ The powerless people accept the result and do not question it. The democratic concept is based on the idea of an opposition. One part has to be the loser, which comes very close to the concept of an enemy.

In Baucau we even heard that people are afraid to be registered, because they are scared of elections.
The state – identity: the idea of a state and state bodies is not inherent in the traditional systems. There is low trust towards leaders that are not connected with sacred items and ancestral legitimacy. That is why elders try to connect leaders like Xanana to their royal descent to justify their position. Next to this there is no state identity. In Portuguese times the country was not unified, with all its separate kingdoms. There were agreements between different kingdoms, but no common identity of all kingdoms. In Indonesian times, there was the attempt to integrate the Timorese into a unified Indonesian state. The resistance movement promoted the first creation of an East Timorese identity.

There is no common identity yet, because of bad roads and the lack of communication. Therefore, people do not know each other and cannot have a common identity. No understanding of identity was taught in the formal education. Also through the different languages there couldn’t be an understanding. So we had to intermarry our children. We also established an identity through the independence fight. We had the same enemy.

(Intellectual, Bobonaro)

Where do we go from here?

Most of the above mentioned paradigmatic differences cannot be changed in a short period. If we are to promote discussion, what is important is that there is awareness on the national and international level that these differences exist.

To promote an approach between the two paradigms, education and information are of absolute necessity. Civic education, in the short term and school education, in viewing the long term, are crucial starting points. Power holders should also be one of the main targets for education; and this education should use the traditional paradigms as a starting point to explain differences.

Then it is up to society, in how far it starts changing. The process will take a long time and education and information campaigns should be aware of this. Out of this long process a society can develop, in which partly traditional values are maintained as identity but where democratic values are also appreciated. ‘We can have a written system and an unwritten system (adat).’

…this is the difference to western democracy. This system is very strong and it couldn’t be destroyed under the Indonesian system. The modern system has to be introduced and raised. Then the two systems will mix and the local paradigm can be challenged.

(Liurai, Baucau)
4. CEP: COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE PROJECT

Background

The Community Empowerment and Local Governance Project (CEP) is an UNTAET programme, funded by the World Bank administered Trust Fund for East Timor. It intends to provide a model for a democratic, participative and transparent forum to increase community participation in the planning and decision-making process of development issues at the hamlet and village levels. The grants allocated by the project are injected into the village or hamlet to alleviate the most pressing development issues identified by community members.

The programme supported the creation of the Village Development Council established under UNTAET Regulation 13/2000. The Village Development Councils are community-decision making mechanisms that acting on behalf of their communities have the responsibility for the allocation and management of development funds provided by CEP and other potential donors.

The councils are composed of an equal number of men and women who have been democratically at the hamlet level. So far more than 416 Village Development Councils (Conselho do suco) have been formed encompassing over 6400 Village Development Council Members in the whole country. This means that around 3000 separate elections were held at the hamlet level.

CEP Objectives

The general aim of CEP is poverty alleviation and support inclusive patterns of growth and development. The name of project “community empowerment” is based on the principle that projects will be produced by communities for communities. The project search strengthening the capacity of community institutions. This strengthening requires the development of interventions directed to:

- Increase community participation in the planning, implementation and maintenance of the community’s assets and economic activities.
- Increase business activity, income generation and expand employment opportunities.
- Provide infrastructure and facilities at the local level.
- Increase the capacity of community institutions, and their elected representatives to facilitate the process of community empowerment in the implementation of development programmes.

The CEP has three project components: Component One concerns Community grants and sub-grants; Component Two concerns Cultural Heritage; and, component three focuses on a Civil Society Support Fund. This report concerns only CEP Project Component One. The total amount of CEP is USD $ 17.5 million.

Accomplishments of CEP to date and possibilities for the future up to 23rd November 2000.

CEP Memorandum to International Agencies of 20 October 2000.
CEP Community Grants

The main purpose of the CEP is to allow villagers to make their own development choices, via the mediation and accountability ensured by Village Development Councils. CEP Component A consists of grants allocate to the sub-districts to be distributed in four cycles to each sub-district. So far, the First (emergency) and Second cycle of grants have been implemented or are in the process of implementation. In almost all areas the Emergency and second Cycle are over and in a few the third cycle is being prepared.

Emergency Cycle

During the Emergency Cycle, CEP grants were distributed in equal amounts to each village once the election of council members and the formal establishment of the Village Development Council were achieved. In the CEP Emergency Cycle, grants focused on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of social infrastructure, such as public meeting halls, schools and clinics, roads and water supply; and, on economic recovery through, for example, the purchase of agricultural tools, seeds and livestock. Each village (suco) received the same amount of money within a sub-district (posto). The grant was to be distributed between the hamlets according to the proposals agreed by the Village Development Council. Each sub-district received US$10-20,000 according to the sub-district population.

Second Cycle

For the Second Cycle, or Second Cycle, of grants, the amount of money to be allocated at the sub-district level is from US$25,000 to 75,000 according to the population. There is no standard amount of money to be distributed by village. The Sub-district Development Councils decide how to use the money by prioritising proposals submitted from villages. Money was allocated through competitive selection process between villages, and between the hamlets within a village.

A maximum of four proposals can be submitted from each village and half of them must be from women’s groups. Suggestions for activities come from hamlets and the villages decide together about a negative lists of things, which cannot be funded.

Second Cycles grants uses an open-menu principle, with three types of activities that can be funded: i) social infrastructure activities, ii) productive economic activities and iii) social welfare activities.

The CEP Team

CEP is composed of senior staff members at the central level in Dili, who decide on the policies and provide the necessary follow up and inputs to a team at the district level. The CEP team at the district level is composed by different members whose major role is to serve and assist the Village Development Councils in developing their role as development planning and management bodies. These members are:
• District Monitor co-ordinates the team of facilitators and reports to the national level.
• District Technical Facilitators mobilises and provides technical advice for proposals.
• District Project Accountant ensures the transfer of funds and transits financial management units and village treasurers in book-keeping and accountability.
• Sub-district Facilitators (Posto Facilitators).
• Two Village Facilitators.

A brief historical Overview

A Grant Agreement between the Trust Fund for East Timor represented by the International Development Association (World Bank) and UNTAET was signed on 21st February 2000 to establish the CEP. The Project has been fully supported by the CNRT structure at national and local levels.

UNTAET Regulation No. 2000/13 on the ‘Establishment of Village and Sub-district Councils for the Disbursement of Funds for Development of Activities’ provides the legal framework for the establishment of the councils thus creating an entity at the community level, legally able to receive and disperse funds from CEP or other potential donors.

The CEP started in March 2000, but according to officials at that time UNTAET did not have the capacity, in terms of competent staff in the required quantity neither the operational facilities, to manage the planned operations. These constraints were overcome by providing a contract to Community Aid Abroad/Oxfam (CAA/OXFAM), an Australian international NGO, as the implementing agency.

In August 2000, the Project Management Unit of CEP was integrated into the Department of Internal Administration. A month later, in association with the World Bank, it was decided to transfer the general management of the project to the Timorese senior team once the contract with CAA ended. Since 23rd November 2000 the project has been totally ‘Timorised.’

About this Part of the Report

The first part of this report addresses traditional power structures and their relationship with the structures of colonial and occupying powers. The second part of the report presented the major findings of the research team concerning the CEP. It is not a description of how CEP should have operated. It is a combination of what actually happened as described by people and their perceptions of this. It is worth reiterating here that the fieldwork for the study was carried out between October 2000 and March 2001 and covers only Component A of the CEP: Community Grants.

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63 10th March 2000.
The research was undertaken in three districts: Aileu, Baucau and Bobonaro and it does not necessarily represent the situation of the programme in the whole of East Timor. It is believed however that many of the findings could be shared by other districts.

Different actors at the district, sub-district, village and hamlet level were consulted about the programme. Those included representative of government structures at all levels, Conselho dos katuas (Elder Councils), OMT, OJT, Catholic groups and other existing civil society organisations, CEP project staff members at the district, posto and suco levels and Village and Sub-district Development Council members at the sub-district, village and hamlet level as well as ordinary people at the hamlet aldeia level.

This second part focuses on the following topics: council elections, the background of CEP council members, local perceptions of the CEP, the decision-making process, conflict resolution, the CEP’s relationship with other stakeholders, gender issues and a summary of stated issues and general recommendations. Although each of these topics are covered in a separate part of the report, the reader may have the impression of a general overlapping between the different components addressed. This is largely unavoidable due to the interconnectedness of the topics. All are relevant to power relations and decision-making at the community-level because all are political issues.

## Council Elections

### The UNTAET Regulation

UNTAET Regulation 2000/13 provides the legal framework for the establishment of Village Development Council. It gives clear instructions regarding the way elections should be conducted. It states that ‘the selection of hamlet representatives to the Village Council shall be organised by a selection committee consisting of the hamlet chief and two trusted members, one male and one female, of the hamlet community.’

The selection committee is required to organise a democratic process: asking community members to identify male and female potential candidates for positions as hamlet representatives. They must fulfill the following criteria:

- be more than 18 years old,
- be resident in the hamlet,
- not be traditional or local leaders, and
- have time to work in the Village Council.

Every hamlet resident, male and female, more than 17 years of age or married, is eligible to vote and it is required that at least 50% of the hamlet residents eligible to vote participate in the election.

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64 UNTAET Regulation 2000/13
The elections for Village Council members at hamlet (aldeia) level were conducted during the first half of 2000 in more than 400 villages. The following table shows the rate of community participation in the election process for the three districts where this anthropological study was conducted.65

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aileu</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baucau</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobonaro</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>83.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 43: Reported average participation rate of eligible voters in election of aldeia representatives.

Election of Hamlet Representatives

The majority of the informants consulted in the three districts described the selection of the Village Development Council members as ‘democratic since all the members were elected at the hamlet level. The election process was usually described as starting with the visit of the CEP sub-district facilitator or the village facilitator, who briefed the hamlet chief on the CEP project and the voting mechanisms.

Following the initial visit of the CEP facilitator a list of four people was proposed and the population was invited to select two among them, a man and a woman, that in their view would be the best people to represent the interest of the community and ‘bring its aspirations to the top level. (Council member, Aileu).

Although most of the interviewees stated that a list of candidates was set up, some variations were identified in the manner of the establishment of the list. The most common modality mentioned was that a selection committee was created by the hamlet chief (as required by UNTAET regulation) to register the names of candidates among the population. Then the villagers were invited to choose a man and a woman amongst the candidates. In a second modality, the hamlet chief himself proposed four names and asked the community whether they had other candidates to add to the list. In a third modality, the Council of Elders, the hamlet chief, with the participation of the whole community, selected the two representatives. An example of this modality is from Er Hetu:

The CEP suco facilitator came here and explained about CEP and told the elder people and the hamlet chief to choose two representatives for the village council. Afterwards a meeting was organized by the hamlet chief and the council of elders to explain to the population. We didn’t vote but made a discussion and chose the two candidates. We used this way because people are illiterate so they do not write therefore we couldn’t organise a proper election.

(Village Council member, Aileu).

65 Quantitative results of such elections were collected by CEP Sub-district Facilitators. For a detailed description on Village Council elections a document is available in CEP.
The idea of “discussing” the candidates seems to be very important. In Bobonaro some informants mentioned that:

It was discussed who should be elected.

The traditional elders sat together with the people and elected the candidates.

In a fourth modality no list of candidates was made. Instead, people from the different hamlets met at the village level and through a discussion meeting elected their two respective representatives for each hamlet to the Village Council.

In only one account, from a sub-district in Aileu, it was stated that the village facilitator came and asked the hamlet chief ‘to try to find a member of your family, your son or daughter with some education to be part of the Conselho Popular,’ or Popular Council, as the Village Development Council is called in this area. In some other hamlets the hamlet chief without election directly appointed the council members.

In the three research areas, the elections at the hamlet level were conducted using two different voting procedures:

**Acclamation**, in which the community chose directly by raising their hands or applauding the person considered best to be the hamlet delegate.

**Secret vote**, in which the names of the candidates (with or without a picture) were displayed on different boxes into which people, in private, put their vote. In a variation of this, maize seeds were put into a basket, or glass, with the name of the candidate. Afterwards the sub-district and village facilitators took the box, basket or glass and the ballots or maize seeds were counted in front of the whole population.

In the first approach people would be more likely to be influenced by others. The second approach complies better with the requirement of a democratic election, as understood in the western paradigm, and the possibility to freely express an opinion: particularly taking into account that a pre-selection of candidates had been made by a selection committee.

The quantitative data gathered by CEP through their sub-district field officers, some of whom are presented in the following table, show the procedures used in the elections in the three study districts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Secret ballot</th>
<th>Show of hands</th>
<th>Acclamation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aileu</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baucau</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobonaro</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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66 Sub-district council member, Aileu.
This data supports the hypothesis that traditional leaders are more likely to be selected when voting is by acclamation. This procedure was the most common form used in the Baucau District, where a higher proportion of village elders were elected as council members. In Bobonaro, where acclamation was least often used, a higher proportion of council members were relatively young and educated.

It is clear that in many instances the selection of candidates involved ‘traditional’ ways of decision-making. Traditionally, candidates for important positions are never selected by secret vote; potential candidates, who must be from the right descent, are chosen by village elders through discussion (as in the election of the village or hamlet chiefs) and afterwards the constituency is invited to vote.

Whatever the modality of selection of candidates and voting used, the majority of Council Members interviewed were emphatic that it was the community who nominated the candidates and elected the members. This was not only stated by village and hamlet chiefs and elected members themselves but also by ordinary villagers. In the perception of most respondents in either approach the choice is made by the people themselves, however, the research shows that secret votes is more likely to select people other than traditional leaders.

**Formation of the Village and Sub-district Development Councils**

Once the representatives of each hamlet had been elected, the CEP Sub-district facilitator organised the first meeting of the Village Development Council to elect the council head or coordinator, a deputy, a secretary and a treasurer. Usually in the same meeting two representatives (a man and a woman) were also elected to sit in the Sub-district Development Council. In most cases the head of the Village Development Council was one of those elected, as proposed in UNTAET regulation 2000/13.

Following the election of sub-district representatives in each of the Village Development Councils, a first meeting of the Sub-district Development Council was organised by the CEP Sub-district facilitator. Once again the council members elected a head of council, a deputy, a secretary and a treasurer. It seems that sometimes the CEP sub-district facilitator has played a significant role in the election of the head of council:

> I do not know how I was elected as head of the Sub-district Council … they elected me to sit there but the facilitator had already made the decision and all the people agreed. I didn’t want to accept because I do not have enough experience but the facilitator said to me he can not change my position. Only the people from the hamlet can change it.

(CEP Sub-district Council chief, Aileu).

In Bobonaro it was mentioned that power holders, such as traditional elders and sub-district chiefs, were invited to witness the meeting but were not involved in the nominations at this levels. In the other districts, in general, only the CEP team and council members attended the first Sub-district Development Council meeting.
The “Extra Election”

UNTAET regulation 2000/13 stipulates that the number of council members at village level must be more than ten and no more than sixty. Taking into account the requirement of gender balance the minimal membership, therefore, would be twelve members (six men and six women). Although this requirement existed from the outset of the project, it was not well disseminated to the different players at the local level. Once the first elections were concluded and comparisons between different districts made, it was clear that some of the villages did not comply with the minimum membership requirement. Therefore it was necessary to organize a new election to complete the membership. The extra elections were organised in June and July 2000.

The need for the extra election highlighted the deficiencies in the flow of information between CEP project staff members at national and district level and the difficulties that a project of this scope may face due to time-frame constraints and the emergency of the situation. Many staff in the field thought that a second regulation had been issued, though this was not the case.

Previously, according to the manual from CEP national, the numbers of the CEP village council constituents depend on the numbers of hamlets with two representatives each. But it was not written, regarding the number of CEP council members for each village that there must be a minimum of twelve people. (Sub-district Facilitator, Baucau)

We explained to the community that what is written in the manual from CEP national is our platform. Some villages/sub villages had already conducted the election to choose the CEP council members. All of a sudden the CEP national send a new regulation, saying that for each village, there should be a minimum of twelve council members. Those villages who have less than six hamlets must conduct an extra election to complete the target. (Sub-district Facilitator, Baucau)

It was not easy for the CEP field staff to face people’s reactions at the village level. As some facilitators explained to the research team this extra election created some difficulties. First, the ‘new’ policy orientation stated that the number of people to be elected at hamlet level depends on the number of hamlets within each village. For instance, if the number of hamlets are six or over, two representatives should be elected per hamlet. If the number of hamlets is three they should nominate four representatives (two men and two women), and so on. This meant that the number of people to be added to the former elected Village Development Council varied according to the number of the village’s constituent hamlets. This created some confusion.

Secondly, some hamlets felt they were adequately represented and felt no need for more representatives. Thirdly, some communities had already submitted their proposals for the Emergency Cycle but the funds could not be disbursed until the council membership process had been completed and this created delays in meeting the community’s expectations.

As facilitator it was a problem, because people asked ‘why must we make an extra election while the proposal has not yet been implemented’? Some hamlets didn’t want to conduct elections because they said they didn’t have time. As facilitator we can’t use force to say you must do this or that. (Sub-district Facilitator, Baucau)
As one CEP report states, the second round of election had a lower participation rate, due in part to the demands of the communities’ economic activities (coffee plantations, rice harvesting, gardens, etc), but also to a certain degree due to fatigue with the election process. A sub-district facilitator stated, in Baucau at that time there were too many elections going on: village chief, hamlet chief and then the CEP extra election. People were confused.
CEP Council Members’ Backgrounds

One of the major reasons for polemic and criticism concerning the CEP, from different international stakeholders in East Timor, is that traditional leaders were not eligible to be part of the Village Development Councils. Some consider that the parallel structure set up by CEP is undermining traditional powers. The non-eligibility of traditional leaders for election in this community structure is very clearly stated by section 4C of UNTAET Regulation 2000/13. The rationale behind it is to promote a more horizontal and democratic system, based on a western paradigm, to promote community-based organisations. It was intended also to balance the influence of power holders in the allocation of funds and reduce elite-capture and corruption that seems to be part of the history of East Timor during Indonesian rule.

The first part of this report discussed traditional systems of power. These are found to be still very much alive in the three study districts, despite 450 years of colonialism and occupation. The research team was interested in exploring the background of council members, the possible linkages with the traditional power structure in the villages, and the extent to which criteria established by the UNTAET Regulation had been respected. Our initial hypothesis was that it was very likely that people coming from the ‘right’ descent in rural areas would be more likely to be nominated in the ‘new’ power structure: the Village Development Council.

Factors influencing Election of Council Members

The constitution of the Village Development Councils and the factors influencing it differed from area to area within each of the study districts. Some general statements can, however, be made based on the respondents’ comments.

The majority of informants stated that the most important criteria for the election of the council members was the capacity to do the job; meaning they should be literate, intelligent, good speakers, know the community well and be able to coordinate CEP activities in their hamlets, villages and sub-districts. Education and former experience were both ranked as important criteria. This was confirmed by the negative comments of some informants concerning some of the elected people saying that they were just charismatic speakers and did not have sufficient knowledge and education. Also mentioned as important were age and marital status.

It is important to note that across the three study districts the selection for the position was perceived as a duty that can not be rejected.

I was elected, I didn’t become the deputy of the CEP council of the hamlet because I wanted it myself.
( Village Council member, Bobonaro).

I became council member because they choose myself to represent them in the Sub-district Council, but actually I do not want to sit as member, people forced me to do it.
( Sub-district Council, female member, Baucau).
Importance of descent and ethnic background

Preferences for a specific ethnic group or a specific descent were not mentioned as important criteria. Nearly all informants stated that the House of council members didn’t play any role in the Village Development Council elections. “This becomes important when we elect a liurai.” In Bobonaro, the research team systematically asked for the Houses of the council members and compared them with the Houses that traditionally hold political authority. The results showed Village Council members do not follow any pattern of traditional House divisions.

Some informants in Aileu confirmed that the choice of council members is not based on traditional power structures. They stated that if someone from the descent holding political authority came up as council chief it was not because of his/her status in the power structure but simply because he/she was chosen as the best person by community members. This is illustrated by the following account of a Sub-district Development Council chief:

All council members are not from the liurai descent, they are only appointed by elections. If someone from the liurai descent becomes chief of the Village council or Sub-district Council, this is pure accident. People do not think about background, people think whether the person represents the inspirations of people on the ground.

(Sub-district Council chief, Aileu).

In Bobonaro, there are also some locations where there are ‘ethnic’ differences within one village. According to the ‘minorities,’ they state that they are seen as ‘newcomers’ and are not given as much power in the councils. They joined the councils as representatives of their hamlets (which are from one origin) but complain that in the Village Councils their voice does not count as much and their opinions are not considered to be important. In these cases there is usually a wider ethnic conflict existing in the villages, not only within the Village Development Councils.

Religion

In Aileu District (Aileu Kota, Remexio and Liquidoe Sub-districts) and in Baucau (Laga and Baguia Sub-districts), some villages or independent hamlets are split between Catholic and Protestant religions. The Village Development Councils are composed of members with different religious background and this does not seem to affect CEP activities negatively. People have been elected for their capacity and not according to their religious background. Moreover, the implementations of project activities are conducted smoothly with the participation of both groups.

Education

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67 Informant, villager.
68 Originating from different areas or different languages.
As has been stated, education is an important criterion for the election of council members, particularly for the selection of the head of the council, whom people consider should be literate. The more council members who live close to, or come from, urban areas, the higher their levels of education. This is illustrated in an example from the Bobonaro District:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Rural areas</th>
<th>Urban areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>50 %</td>
<td>4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle school</td>
<td>34 %</td>
<td>56 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>16 %</td>
<td>36 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 45: Distribution of Village Council members by level of education: samples from Bobonaro

Over 90% of the council members in this example have at least primary school education, which is significant in an area with an approximate illiteracy rate of 80-90%. The percentage of higher education, middle school and high school, amongst council members increases the more urban the environment is. Whereas, in rural areas hardly any of the council members have a higher education than primary school, since for the attainment of a higher education degree, people have to move to the sub-district capitals and deal with all the economic and family implications of such a move.

Findings were similar in Aileu and Baucau Districts, where a relatively high proportion of council members near to urban settings have finished their primary schooling and some have some junior or senior education. In Quelicai, for example, all the sub-district council members are educated people and the female secretary has finished secondary high school. In Baucau town, a few of the sub-district councillors have been educated at university.

In contrast, in the rural areas, particularly the most remote hamlets, council members have hardly any primary education and are mostly functionally illiterate. This appeared to be the situation in Baguia and Laga Sub-districts, as has been stated by one CEP Sub-district Facilitator:

> People have the right to decide whom they want to choose but regarding educational background of council members the majority of them are illiterate. Nevertheless they have constructive ideas for development. (Sub-district facilitator, Baguia).

Perhaps the capacity considered most important in relation to education is the ability to read and write, as exemplified by the comment of a sub-district council member in Aileu:

> For it is in urban areas where schools, in particular junior and senior high schools, are usually located.
Council members should have a maximum education; in Remexio most of the council members never graduated from primary school but they know how to write and read.
(Sub-district council member, Aileu).

Experience

Most informants stated the importance of experience for the role as Village Councillor. This could mean experience in leadership, in projects or in working as a civil servant. It seems that the most important fact is that a person has proven to be a good leader by being involved in hamlet activities and has the capacity to organise social matters.

Across the districts differences can be seen between urban and rural areas. The majority of people in rural areas have experience mostly as farmers. Therefore, a person’s capacity seems to be evaluated by his/her behaviour in society or by his involvement in Falintil, OJT, OMT or the clandestine movement during Indonesian times. Very few council members in rural areas had previous experience with the Indonesian government as civil servants.

Other council members have experience in ‘project work.’ In most cases this means their labour involvement in Indonesian road projects that were conducted in their areas. Although it has not much to do with the work of the Village Development Council, the villagers seem to perceive it as useful ‘experience’ in dealing with the ‘outside’ world.

In urban areas, a certain number of council members have previous experience working as civil servants with the Indonesian government. Here this seems to be one of the important criteria for the nomination of the heads of Village and Sub-district Development Councils:

In the whole sub-district council my self (secretario) and the council chief are the elders and we also have previous experience from the Indonesian time. We are transparent and are respected by all the members of the council.
(Sub-district council member, Aileu)

In addition, there seem to be a number of young people active in the Village Development Councils that have a high and middle school degree but are unemployed. Some have experience with work in former councils that had been formed by the Indonesian government.

Political/ military Background

In Bobonaro District, activity as a Falintil or in the clandestine movement might be considered to prove a person to be a good leader. As they have no other working experience and therefore have not been employed by other agencies, it seems this military involvement is the motivation for why they were elected into the CEP councils.
I fought hard for the big fight that is why people chose me. They say I am a candidate for leadership in the future. My task is to develop and rebuild this village and to give the aspiration of the people to the Bank and I am responsible towards the CNRT.
(Sub-district council member, Bobonaro)

In the troubled locations, where society is split between RDTL and Fretilin, it is said that no Village Development Council members are members of RDTL. Therefore the CEP is rejected by the RDTL part of the village.\textsuperscript{70}

In Aileu District, the majority of council members, both men and women, in the four sub-districts have been involved in the clandestine movement and this seems to be the most important criteria for their selection.

In Baucau District, the link between council members and the clandestine movement was not so clear. While no mention was made of previously belonging to the Falintil, the militancy of the Baucau population in backing up the freedom movement is very well known.

Age

Age seems a very important variable for the selection of council members. Most of the informants consulted in Bobonaro stated that council members are young people. The following table shows the known age groups of council members from the three research locations in the Bobonaro district:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group (years)</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 – 39</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>56 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 29</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 46: Distribution of Village Council members by age group: Bobonaro

While some council members in rural areas in Bobonaro District are younger than in the urban areas, overall, the proportion of people less than 30 years is higher in urban areas.

The great majority of council members in Aileu District are between 25 and 45 years. The research team learned of one female, council member aged 16 years. This was in a village where the majority of the population, militia followers, are still in West Timor and the remainder of the eligible

\textsuperscript{70} See ‘conflicts’ section of the report.
population filled other positions. In Remexio and Laulara sub-districts, however, traditional power holders considered the council members as being rather young.

In Aileu, marital status was mentioned as another important criterion for election of council members. The majority are married and it seems that this status is associated with a certain seniority by the local population and by council members themselves.

The composition of council members in Baucau District is mixed with both young and more senior people. There is, however, variation within the district; in Quelicai the councillors are rather young, whereas in Laga they are older, as shown by the statement of one youth leader:

All of the council members are only elders; none of them is young. The members are elders who have the power to influence inside the community of the hamlet and village. I do not know how they were elected … only one to two people were involved.

(Youth leader, Baucau).
Perceptions of the CEP

One of the topics explored by the research team was the perception of the programme by local communities. The general perception of the CEP by the population is predominantly positive. Still, a significant proportion of people do not know about the CEP and there is a need for a clearer information campaign, with concise clear messages, to overcome this barrier. Negative perception of CEP will be discussed in relation to the programme’s constraints and limitations. Some of the positive perceptions of CEP are presented below.

General Perceptions of the Programme

An overwhelming majority of the people consulted in the different research sites categorically described the CEP as a good project and made comments such as: ‘it helps the community to develop themselves’; ‘it is participative; ‘it is inclusive’; ‘it is transparent’; and, ‘it is democratic, (because) council members were selected by the community itself.’

In the perception of most respondents there is no doubt that the programme is making a major contribution in terms of democratisation as well as changes in the living conditions of people. Some of the positive feedback on the CEP is summarized below in relation to its influence in several major aspects of community life.

Economic and social conditions
The majority of respondents acknowledged the social and economic contribution of CEP in the life conditions of East Timorese people. The following statements were registered in the different research locations:

The CEP programme is great because it assists people economically and people use this program to develop their life.
(Village Council member, Aileu)

The CEP is a good programme to assist people in progress, we hope the program will still be on in the future.
(Village chief, Aielu).

It helps the people of East Timor, money is given to people, the programme promotes economic stability, and the programme has good and concrete results, like clean water.
(Village council member, Bobonaro).

What we can see is that the people here are working well on the CEP programme. I think CEP is really a good programme because for the first Cycle CEP has already helped to build the roads in our hamlets.
(Village Council member, Baucau).
Democratisation

It is clear for the majority of the respondents consulted in the areas where the programme is running well, that council members have been democratically elected. People feel free to vote for their council members and it is stated the programme has a good impact in the community in terms of democratisation because it teaches community members about the democratic process.

The programme provides a democratic space where people’s wishes are taken into consideration: their voices, their concerns and suffering are passed on to the top levels through council members.

- Ordinary people are involved in the decision-making process: all decisions must come from people at the basic level. People in power positions make suggestions but do not decide.
  (Village Council member, Bobonaro)

Inclusiveness, the Participatory Process and Transparency

The CEP is perceived as supporting women. The balance between men and women has been emphasized; 50% of council members are women. Other women also participate in meetings and give their opinion.

The CEP is viewed as an open process by which people participate in their community’s development. People are very active in the programme and work together. There is good participation of community members.

- It involves everybody, not only council members like in Indonesian times.
  (Council member, Bobonaro)

- The programme is different from those existing in Indonesian times as the villagers are asked for their needs before the project starts, and the money is not only used for the families in power.
  (Catholic catechist, Baucau)

- Before, in Indonesian times, the development programmes were planned by the government but now people are planning themselves. Like us now, the CEP program was planned by the people and then the government was asked for support.
  (Hamlet chief, Baucau)

- The programme benefits villages and hamlets. It is not a top down programme; people on the ground make decisions.
  (Council members, Bobonaro)

The programme is considered by most respondents to be transparent.
There are no suspicions, and people know what has to be done.
(Village Council member, Aileu).

The programme differs from all other programmes: people do not argue for salaries but look for the cheapest solution in their own interest.
(Village Council member, Aileu).

People get trained in working together in the programme, council members received training in organising and leading people, the programme trains people in discussing.
(Village Council member, Baucau).

The above statements show that in general the programme is well perceived by local communities in the three study areas. The projects are considered as making a difference on the ground; community members are involved in decision-making and contribute to the implementation of the projects. There is a sense of ownership of the project. The funds allocated for the projects are managed in a transparent way. The common people have a say in development issues; an opportunity to be empowered is given to them, not only to the leaders. Women have an important role and gender balance has been created to allow for the formal participation of women in decision-making processes.

**Perception of Council Tasks**

The majority of informants at village and hamlet levels, including elders and civil society members were not really clear about the tasks of the Village Council members. Most of the village and hamlet chiefs, as well as the council members themselves, perceive the counsellors tasks as follows:

- To organise meetings in hamlets with village and hamlet chiefs to make decisions on projects.\(^{71}\)
- To look for possible projects and gather ideas from the population; make suggestions and make sure that people’s ideas go forward by defending their ideas or projects as necessary.
- To pass on information about the programme from the centre to the villages and from the bottom to the top. Transmitting instructions from the monitors and facilitators to the people and people’s ideas to the village level and supporting people in their decisions.
- For the chief, to hand the reports to the sub-district and be responsible for the outcome of the work of the people.
- To organise, implement and monitor projects.
- To prevent decision-making solely by people in power positions.

The counsellors themselves perceive their role as a facilitator or a bridge between community members and decision makers.

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\(^{71}\) It is important to note that council members do not have the power to call people for meetings because people usually only follow village and hamlet chiefs’ instructions.
The role of the council is like a street or bridge, it is a facility. The council does not hold power, the council just helps the community to bring information from the basic level to the top level and to inform leaders what is important for the people in remote areas, or what they want to do in the village or hamlet. For example, if in one hamlet they want to have a project like this or that, the facility at the hamlet level (council member) reports this to the village council and then to the sub-district and so on.

(Village Council member, Aileu).

Some council members stated they should collaborate with village chiefs about the programme and have to know what are the core problems and how to collaborate with community members:

The council should be ‘peoples’ eyes, peoples’ ears and peoples’ feet’ (povo nia matan, povo nia tilun no povo nia ain). That means people can not touch the top level but they have to pass by the council and the head of council will inform the above level about people’s problems and what they need.

(Sub-district Council chief, Aileu).

Some members perceived they are not working alone because they have the full support of the people and the community is supervising their role. Both community and government are supporting the idea because a consensus has been achieved.

The Role of the Village and Sub-district Facilitators

Another important CEP agent at local level is the Village Facilitator. Usually there are two members, a man and a woman, in each village that should reside in the village. They are not part of the Village Development Council but part of the CEP project staff. According to one CEP Sub-district Facilitator, the mechanism for electing the village facilitator depends on council members. Some of the council members, however, stated that the village chief selects the village facilitator and that this position had often been established before the council. The latter case seems to be true for the initial Cycle of implementation of the project before the election of the council and just after, or overlapping, the process of socialisation. According to Council members the major roles of the village facilitators are:

- To act as an assistant for the sub-district facilitator,
- to help announce the program of activities at village level, and
- prepare the election for CEP council.

According to sub-district facilitators, the tasks of village facilitators are similar to their own, that is:

- To replace him/her when s/he is not able to attend a meeting,
- to pass on information from sub-district to village councils, and
- promote the CEP programme among community members.
However, some council members mentioned that the major role of Village Facilitators is to deliver meeting invitations to council members and to provide material for the meetings.

Village facilitators receive an honorarium of 150,000 rupiah per month and usually have a three months contract. This is a very contentious issue since the council members do not receive any stipend for their work and they perceive this as unequal treatment. In addition, village facilitators are very often perceived by council members as not performing their duties. In some cases they are seen as an unwelcome “supervisor” of council members, as was very strongly stated by one member of a Sub-district Council:

People chose us as their foot and their hand, and the village facilitator acts as a watch-dog for the CEP Council.
(Sub-district Council member, Aileu).

Council members and facilitators perceive the tasks of the sub-district facilitator as follows:

- To coordinate with CNRT leaders from sub-district to hamlet level, UNTAET (DFO and CEP Focal Point) and NGO’s representatives.
- To visit the hamlets and prepare the election process.
- To consult with all concerned to resolve the problems in community.
- To attend the village meeting, if invited.
- To send invitations to all council members if s/he organises a meeting.
- To maintain good relations between the Sub-district and all Village Councils.
- To establish work timetables with the village facilitators.
- To hear and support the decisions of the council.
- Promote the CEP program to the community.

The Sub-district Facilitators themselves perceive their function as ‘a bridge to the people, like a car passes across a river.’ They seem themselves as not having any power or influence in the decision-making process because ‘all the power is within the council.’
An example of good practice: Afoloikai, Baguia Sub-district, Baucau

Afoloikai (Afo = Stone + Loikai = herdsmen), the most remote village in the Baguia Sub-district, is located on the slopes of Matebean Mountain (Matebean Mane). Its 1,048 inhabitants live in four hamlets: Oquilari and Waimata, Buibela and Lena’a, the last two high in the mountains, three hours walk from Afoloikai town. The majority of the population speak Naueti, an Austronesian language. The population of Afoloikai was exiled to Baguia and Watecarbau (in Viqueque) for more than ten years during the Indonesian occupation; in two hamlets resettlement was not allowed until 1994. During those years only guerrilla fighters and the Indonesian army were in the area.

The people of Afoloikai have a very positive perception of the CEP. They are unanimous about its positive impact and that the community participated actively in it for the development of their village. The village chief confirmed that community members expressed satisfaction with the programme’s achievements during both Cycles.

The programme has been very inclusive without distinction to gender or religion – men and women, Catholics, Protestants and animists worked together for the welfare of the village. Although those who worked received a modest stipend this was not their prime motivation, as stated by one Catholic catechist:

‘The community is involved in this process, people come to work on a self-supporting basis but at the end we receive a small honorarium but it is not so much. For us the important thing is that we must do something for our village, especially as development is already a commitment for Afoloikai people.’

The grant for the Emergency Cycle, 20 millions rupias, was mainly used to rehabilitate 4.5 km of road from Disoe to Afoloikai. The four hamlets agreed to use the funds in the reconstruction of the village road and people from all four worked on the project, receiving 23,000 rupia per day.

‘In first Cycle the money from the World Bank was finished and we did self-supporting to finish our program. We had to do that because the program is for the community, not something else that only makes one person rich but we do it for all the people.’

(OJT leader, Afoloikai).

In the view of villagers the CEP would have a major impact if the authorities at sub-district level, such as the CNRT sub-district chief and the ETTA/UNTAET administrator (DFO), make a serious effort to rehabilitate the road between Osso Huna and Haikoni.

In the Second Cycle of the CEP the people chose another infrastructure project - water supply. Again, the four hamlets agreed to work together, using half of the 40 million rupia grant to the village. The money was controlled by the Village Development Council and each person working received 20,000 rupia per day. Local leaders and the hamlet chief supervised the work and the CEP Village Facilitator kept a daily checklist of the workers. The CEP notice board displayed all expenditures on materials and wages.
The project had finished three days before the visit of the research team and was changing the daily lives of the people, particularly women and children who previously carried water at least one kilometre. Now each hamlet has a tank and each compound its own tap. With the other 50% of the grant it was proposed that the OMT would buy a sewing machine or, if there is enough money, one for each hamlet.
Village Council members are proud of their position and believe the programme makes a difference in people’s lives. Their major motivation and satisfaction is working for their people and seeing progress in the area. The community trust the programme and support it, even if the work is hard and they have to go to each hamlet by foot sometimes returning very late.

The relationship between Village Council and the other major actors in the village is outstanding. Council members discuss and consult with the chefe do suco, the chefes do aldeia and the elders about their projects. This good relationship is in part the result of the election process to select Council members. All the population from the four hamlets came to the suco and elected the members by a show of hands. Village facilitators (one female and one male) were also selected through a public meeting attended by the people of all hamlets.

In Afoloikai, gender balance is not an issue for the people. Men and women on the Village Council participate equally in providing ideas and, with equal numbers and pay, in project implementation. This was underlined by the OMT leader:

‘In our village no-one has come to say why just men come to work or why just men get paid because we have a good coordination amongst each other: if men come to work women also come to help, this is the reality in Afoloikai.’

And confirmed by the village chief:

‘In other areas women do not work as carpenters, only men. Here women know how to build houses and make other things. For instance to build houses: men have their one concept but women also have their own ideas and contribute to it. … Women are working side by side with men for the development of their village.’

Men and women have the same right to participate in meetings:

‘Because now the situation is changing so women and men have the same right to be involved in the decision-making process.’

The consultation and decision-making process is through public meetings organised by the Village Council. Everyone participates and gives their opinion. Ideas are noted during the public meeting and based on these notes, the Council writes proposals to the Sub-district Council where the final decision is taken.

‘Decision-making power is with the people. The community decides what to do in it’s hamlet. Afterwards the decisions are passed to the Village Council and then to the sub-district council.’

(Village chief).

‘Decision-making by discussing at the village level provides the opportunity for all community members to be involved in the activity and strengthens the moral responsibility to participate and to help decide.’ (OMT representative)
Decision-making Processes

The intended Process

The CEP programme has been planned as a bottom-up structure for community consultation and decision-making at the lowest level of society. The Village Development Councils have been democratically elected and are responsible for the planning, managing and implementation of village development activities using funds allocated for that purpose.

Council members work together with hamlet community members on the identification of development needs and the possible solutions to address them. They facilitate the discussions with the collaboration of CEP facilitators and once the ideas are identified they make decisions on which project will be supported.

According to UNTAET Regulation 2000/13, these decisions shall be made only in meetings where all hamlet representatives have been invited and where at least 60% of the Village Council members are present. The decisions are taken by consensus, or if this is not possible, by majority vote. But only Village Council members are eligible to participate in the decision-making. All the decisions taken by the Village Development Council should be written and disseminated to the public.

For the funds allocated at the sub-district level, the two Village Council representatives who sit in the Sub-district Council will present and defend the project proposals coming from communities groups within their respective villages. The decisions about what projects will have priority in the villages during the Second Cycle will eventually be taken by the Sub-district Development Council.

Variations in the Process: who makes the Decisions?

CEP Sub-district Facilitators and Council members insisted vehemently that the decision-making on proposals is not a top-down process. It does not come from the Sub-district Facilitator or Village Development Council, but directly from the community at the hamlet level. The majority of informants have confirmed this statement by saying that decisions for CEP are made by people on the ground with the facilitation of council members:

• First the community discusses ideas about the projects they want at the hamlet level and then council members communicate their decisions to the Village Council who, in the Emergency Cycle, decided directly the allocation of funds.
• In the Second Cycle of the CEP the proposals are taken to the sub-district level where the final decisions are taken by the sub-district council members.
Although this is the case in some of the locations, as acknowledge by some informants, there seems to be variations in the way decision-making is made. In certain regions traditional leaders and other power holders still play a major role in this process.

In one of the research locations in Bobonaro, it was said that prior to a meeting people were divided into the social organisations of the village:
These groups discuss and plan projects at the hamlet level first and then present their ideas in a meeting where everybody is invited. The final decision is taken by all the participants, but especially by these four groups that represent the whole society.

One informant explained the way of decision-making clearly:

First we received explanations about the programme, then we come up with many alternatives, after discussing we have some alternatives left, and we finally end with one alternative.

(Village council member, Bobonaro)

This statement shows the Timorese idea of decision-making: through discussion every member of the group gets convinced of a specific proposal. This traditional local way of decision-making contradicts with the concept of western democracy. In the latter system, a number of alternatives are named and each member of society decides, with an equally valued vote, on their favourite alternative. The idea with the majority of votes is then accepted. The local, traditional way excludes the notion of opposition in its process when deciding on a single proposal.

In other modalities mentioned, the Village Council Head gathers all the people from the different hamlets, disregarding their social status. The objective is to discuss some ideas and to offer people the possibility of coming to agreement and provide some criticisms.

It has been observed in most of the meetings that it was the local powers, such as village chiefs, teachers (mostly the older and educated people in the village) and Church representatives that spoke the most and discussed the ideas that came up for the people. In most cases, council members only took notes but hardly ever actively took part in the discussions; nor did they facilitate the discussion. They were implementing rather than leading the decision-making instances.

One example of the dynamics of the decision-making process came from Quelicai in the Baucau district:

In the village Lelaia a community meeting was organised to explain UNTAET directives. Problems with school tools arose, an elder mentioned kitchen utensils and another tools for agriculture. These three main problems were identified and the Village Council decided to buy these items. Afterwards the community argued that most of the money was going to be used in transportation and therefore they would end with less money.

The facilitators discussed the issue with the village chief and decided to divide the money between community members. The money was divided according to uma kain and the number of people in each uma kain. Each person received 15,000 rupias. The distribution of money was supervised by the village chief and hamlet chief.
In Kailako Sub-district the research team was informed of the formal involvement of the traditional elders in the decision-making process. All people are said to be free to make suggestions for the programme, but traditional elders have to ensure that the programme works in accordance with the local traditional customs.

There seems to be a difference between the reporting of how decisions are made and how they actually happen. Most informants insist that the decision-making is up to the people, but in reality it still seems to be the people in old power positions that make decisions.

In some of the studied areas, the bulk of the grants for the Emergency Cycle were invested in the reconstruction of village meeting halls or offices. This is the case in the districts of Aileu and Baucau. Although in most of the cases it seemed the constituent hamlet representatives had discussed the decision, it appeared that very often the village chief had influenced the decision-making process in that direction.

From some of the interviews with different actors in the constituent hamlets, it could be inferred that decisions were not necessarily well accepted by all the hamlets within a village. Their opinion seems to depend on the geographical distance to the facility established; the closer ones looking at the project with good eyes, whereas those living further away were unsatisfied with the decision because they could not enjoy the advantages of the facility.

In one of the sub-districts of Baucau, some power holders and Village Council members from the more remote areas, argued that the Sub-district Facilitator had told them that money was going to be distributed equally between the different hamlets. Yet when it eventually turned up, the money was used to rehabilitate the village office. They feel their views were not taken into consideration and blame the Sub-district Facilitator for changing the initial position.

Another example, where the decision-making process seems to have been driven by the village chief, is the construction of a primary school in one of the districts. The research team explored the issue with different actors in the field. Some of the examples of problems related to a disregard of the hamlet representatives in the decision-making process are discussed below under Conflict Resolution.

It is intended in Regulation 13/2000 that the Village Development Council members should make the decision by themselves, however as has been discussed above the discussion are mostly dominated by traditional power holders or people who has important positions in the community and the rest of the community members agreed on what had been discussed. Then the Council Members approved what has been agreed by ‘consensus’.

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72 During the fieldwork the majority of activities implemented were funded from the Emergency Cycle. The process of the Second Cycle was on going in Aileu and Baucau; only in a few areas Second Cycle projects were implemented.

73 The precedence of the village chief and other power holders is discussed under Relationship of the CEP with other Stakeholders.
This is still a very traditional way of decision making and the transfer of decision making power to council members has not happen yet. It will take more effort, more education to the community as a whole to accept new changes of roles.

The Role of the Verification Team

The Verification Team is a body nominated during the second meeting of the Sub-district Development Council in the second cycle of the CEP. The objectives of the Verification Team are to look at different proposals submitted by the villages and to provide written advice to Sub-district Council members whether the proposals are viable and technically correct.

The task of the verification team are perceived by the community as:

- Check all village proposals.
- Make field observations in every village to evaluate the possibility of success of the proposals.
- Give written recommendations to the CEP Sub-district Council.

In the Bobonaro District, the Verification Teams were formed at the end of the year 2000. Each village nominated candidates and the Sub-district Council appointed the members. The teams in Bobonaro have between 10-15 members.

The candidates had to fill the following criteria:

- Not be a member of the Village or Sub-district Councils.
- Experience and education in technical issues, finance, economy
- Be neutral and not corrupt.

In Maliana, a public meeting was held with the participation of UNTAET, CNRT and NGO’s. The Verification Team in Maliana includes one academic, various ex-civil servants and one CNRT representative appointed by CNRT leaders at the sub-district level. This last appointment was a specific measure taken by Sub-district Council to make the work of the Verification Team more transparent to CNRT. In other sub-districts, some CNRT representatives are involved in the teams. In general the Verification Team members in Bobonaro are mainly older and well-respected people.

74 See box below
Once the Sub-district Development Council receives the Verification Team’s results, a meeting is convened and the whole proposal reviewed. Sub-district Council members make a decision on which proposals will be supported. The Verification Team does not have the right to make any decisions, only recommendations.

The question is whether the young members of the sub-district councils would actually use their ‘power’ to make decisions against the village and sub-district authorities recommendations? The idea that the Verification Team, as was claimed by a CNRT representative in Bobonaro, is to judge the work of the sub-district councils work, matches traditional power structures again. The usual power players (village chief, sub-district chief, CNRT members or at least highly respected society members) are finally involved in the CEP.
The second meeting of Sub-district Council was attended by twenty-three members: eight women and fifteen men; three CEP officials: District Monitor, Sub-district Facilitator and District Technical Facilitator; UNTAET CEP Focal Point at the district level and two members of the research team as observers. The District Monitor and the Sub-district Facilitator facilitated the meeting.

The first part of the meeting focused on the presentation of different proposals submitted by the hamlets within a village. The different proposals by the villages were written in a flipchart displayed on the wall. Laulara Sub-district has five villages. Some of the villages had more than four proposals, i.e. Madebeno had five projects and Cotolau had six projects. Therefore it was decided that they need to consult again with community members, to review their priorities, and decide on two to four projects per village.

The District Monitor stressed that projects should be practical and must benefit the whole community - not only two or three people. He also explained that the Verification Team would choose the projects to be put forward in the third meeting with the participation of NGO’s.

Afterwards the participants nominated the Finance Management Unit members and the Verification Team. The membership of the Verification Team is between five to ten people and the selection criteria were that the team members must be: a resident of the sub-district; not a member of the Councils; and, with some managerial experience. Sub-district council members were consulted about the candidates but there were neither a proper election nor any significant discussion about it, since all the participants in the meeting accepted the proposed candidates. The nominated members of the Verification Team had completed senior high school, are rather young and have a good representation of women.

It was stated that the Verification Team would require the support of UNTAET and other NGO’s for technical input for projects related to sanitation and electrical issues.

In summary, this chapter analyses the process of decision-making in relation to the funding of CEP proposals. Although the mechanisms have been created to provide a forum in which all citizens are invited to express their major concerns and ideas on development issues, the different examples collected show that this process is still very much dominated by traditional decision-makers.

So far, Village and Sub-district Council members who, according to UNTAET Regulation 2000/13, are the only people eligible to make decisions, had little room in the decision-making process. They were instead adopting ideas agreed by consensus, once the more vocal people in the meetings advocated for them.

Local powers, even in the CEP process, were still in place and were not challenged by the councils as new power.
Such a process of transfer of ability takes time and the results of this active citizen participation in local governance cannot be viewed in a short time frame. It needs a permanent on-going process of changing attitudes, and increase knowledge of the local constituency, to increase active participation in decision-making at local level. Civic education campaigns would be critical and would need to use local concepts and metaphors, and should target as starting point traditional power holders and then community members as a whole.
CEP Conflicts and their Resolution

The Approach to Conflict Resolution

In the first parts of this report, traditional approaches to conflict resolution were discussed. We have shown the critical role that traditional leaders play at the level of each House, which is the first resort of conflict resolution. When this resort is unsuccessful, a further step is taken by involving the Council of Elders and hamlet chiefs at the hamlet level. If unsuccessful at this stage, the problem is passed on to the village level and then the sub-district level, involving the Council of Elders, the Village Chief and the Sub-district Chief at each level.

Traditional leaders are still very respected and listened to, as their capacities in conflict resolution are widely acknowledged by the whole population. Traditional methods have also proven to work faster and are more efficiently than other methods.

The approaches used in conflict resolution, in the framework of CEP, are not so different from the other approaches found at the community level. However, the strategies used and the level of conflict resolution depends on the severity of the problem. One modality mentioned by most of the informants consulted about this topic has the following procedures:

1. The sub-district facilitator speaks with the two opponents.
2. The elders are invited by the Council and/or by the sub-district facilitator to mediate and look for a solution.
3. Someone that has the power to help is invited in to discussions.

Traditional methods of conflict resolution are still very important in the context of CEP projects; usually when problems arise and are not directly solved by the council members themselves, traditional leaders (Conselho do Katuas) are called in to mediate. Other traditional leaders involved at the village level are the hamlet chief and/or village chief. When the conflict is not solved in this instance, because of its dimensions, a next level of intervention is involved: the sub-district level, where the sub-district chief and Council of Elders (if available) are invited to mediate.

Sometimes, according to the nature of the problem and the coordination relationship between the different stakeholders, an UNTAET representative is invited. This representative is usually a District Field Officer.

In some situations the conflict had acquired such a big dimension that it can not be resolved at the sub-district level. Then the district and national level power holders are compelled to intervene in the conflict resolution.
Examples of resolved and unresolved Conflicts from the different Districts.

Example A: A clash of generations

A conflict arose between the Village Development Council and the population of two hamlets. The problem was related to the decision of what to do with Rupiah 10,240,000 remaining from a water supply project implemented during the Emergency Cycle.

The majority of the people decided they wanted to use the money to buy chairs but a certain group wanted the money distributed to the people. This group threatened the Village Development Council and took the money to distribute it. Finally there was a protest from the people and the conflict was solved by a meeting and reconciliation of the parties.

Most informants stated that the problem occurred because people did not trust the Village Development Council members because they are all young people. It had been said that the Council did not work together with the CNRT, who gives orders to the people:

‘If everybody gives his own orders, a system can not work. If they do not want to work with the nurep (village chief), the sub-district chief and the district chief, the people do not want them anymore. CNRT is the face, CEP has to work with the local authorities. Then things can work. The local leadership has to be in the back. From top down.’

(Village chief)

‘The young have to work with the old. The council did not work with the traditional elders, but I told them they have to do so. They have to coordinate.’

(Village chief)

Conflict resolution

The council members invited all the important people of the village for a meeting. In this meeting the traditional elders received a special place, because they were witnesses. First the council members read out all the activities conducted and all financial receipts were given to the traditional elders. Following this, the head of the Council handed the rest of the money to the elders to be distributed between the two hamlet chiefs. They used the money to buy utensils for public use, like chairs and kitchen tools for ceremonies and public meetings.

It is said that in the conflict resolution process the traditional elders have the most powerful position. If they can not help, the CEP Facilitator gets involved. In this case there was clearly a generation conflict at work. There were so many young council members, it seemed to be a tool for the young people to express their wishes and to revolt against the traditional powers in place.

Table 49: A Clash of Generations
Example B: A Reconciliation Ceremony

The conflict concerns a Village Council head that was blamed for having taken some of the left over money of a project. This incident was partly an expression of the political tension in the village between RDTL- and CNRT supporters. RDTL at that time did not recognize UNTAET’s transitional government and neglected foreign aid efforts. One of the two hamlets of the village had been one of the first RDTL strongholds in the district. They did not take part in the CEP meetings. The CEP was used to express political divisions. When the CEP money disappeared the village tensions came to the surface. The conflict was eventually solved.

The council members admitted they had illegally taken money after people from the village sent written complains to UNTAET, CivPol and the Human Rights Office in Dili asking to replace the Village Development Council.

Conflict resolution

To solve the problem a reconciliation ceremony was held to reintegrate the council members into society and to alleviate the existing political tensions. The ceremony was held in the compound where the sacred houses and sacred stones or bosop are. The meeting was planned a week before and discussed by the traditional elders. It started with the traditional elders and a ‘judge’ (also an elder from a specific House that has a judicial function), discussing the fine the council members have to pay. Finally it was decided that they had to give the stolen money back. Then they have to pay the traditional elders for their duty and a buffalo to be sacrificed. A buffalo was sacrificed during the ceremony and the meat was afterwards distributed among the participants to be immediately eaten.

The ceremony was attended by the UNTAET DFO of the sub-district, well educated people from the village who nowadays live and work in Dili, the Deputy District Administrator from the district, traditional village elders and villagers. RDTL members were also present. After this reconciliation ceremony a new Village Development Council was elected, and the village chief stayed in his position.

Lessons learned

It is interesting to note that for whatever reason a conflict appears in the village, the traditional elders still have the power to judge. In this instance, a conflict about money introduced from outside-powers. Although the case was brought to the vast attention of the outside (UNTAET, CIVPOL), it was solved internally following traditional methods. The ‘outside’ was invited to witness the process and therefore increase its validity.

Table 50: Reconciliation ceremony

Example C: A Complex Case of Land Tenure

75 All mud houses - as former uma luliks were burnt and could not be rebuilt so far due to immense ritual costs.
The conflict arose after a decision was made by the Village Council following a meeting held with a certain hamlet chief where it was decided to build a primary school in the hamlet. The project rational was based on the fact that there are many children in the hamlet and the distance to the nearest school is too long. It was also stated that during the rainy season the road is very dangerous for the children because of falling trees.

The Council of Elders, village chief and hamlet chief were charged with choosing the site for building the school. They decided to build the school in a coffee plantation belonging to the Dom (Regulo) generation who escaped from the area with the arrival of the Indonesians and since then lives in Dili.

**Village Council members perspective:**
According to some council members of the two other hamlets, the village chief used his role as village chief to influence council members. When the money was disbursed other council members were not invited and only the village chief and council treasurer came to the sub-district and told them about the program they wanted to do. Council members of the other two hamlets were not consulted and members of those hamlets did not participate in the construction work when it started because they disagreed with the village chief.

‘We do not have good relations with the village chief because he did not respect the council members, perhaps he thinks that the council will change his position as village chief. We knew that this land has an owner and they never consulted with the owner. The problem continues and so far a solution has not yet been found.’
(Village Council member).

This viewpoint was confirmed by an ordinary person from one of the two hamlets:

‘Personally what I found very bad is that village chief used his position as chief to influence the community to do something but the idea is not from the community but from himself. This is a real case in our suco for that reason when they start to work they didn’t have people from aldeia 02 and 03 to participate.’
(Hamlet inhabitant)

**Traditional elders’ opinion:**
According to the elders the liurai is not from this land but was taken by Portuguese people from Balibar because at that time ‘people did not have knowledge of Portuguese language and that was the reason why they imposed other person to lead us.’ Originally all the liurai descendants are coming from another area.

**Village chief’s perspective:**
For the village chief the property belongs, since a long time ago, to people descending from the House Damata but because at that time nobody spoke Portuguese in the area, the Portuguese called another person from Balibar to sit as liurai (Dom). Because this land belongs to all people and because the current liurai is living in Dili, ‘we believed they would let us to rebuild the school here but afterwards it was a problem.’
‘The decision to build the school here is our decision, people decided through a meeting. People want to open the school that will be used by our children. Even if we had known that this land belongs to someone, it had not been a problem because we are still a family. Also, this school is for our grandchildren who are the future of this nation.’
(Village Chief).

According to the liurai (Dom) perspective the CEP project occupied his property and built a school in the location where the graves of his ancestors are. They used the money of the people that should have been used to rehabilitate destroyed schools and built a new school on his property without consulting him. To set up any project they should inform the landowners. If they had first consulted with him he would have indicated an appropriate location for the construction of the school.

When the villagers started to build the foundations of the school with CEP grants, he claimed his rights to the property to the village chief and the sub-district chief. According to him the village chief stated he was not going to continue the construction but it continued and right now the school is finished.

In his view the people responsible for this conflict are the World Bank, the person living on his property, the village chief, and the CNRT.

**CEP Project Staff:**
A CEP Project Staff member recommended that the Village Council members solve the problem. The money for the Second Cycle is not going to be disbursed until the problem is solved. According to the CEP Monitor the responsible person for this conflict is the village chief and the Village Council.

**Sub-district chief:**
The Sub-district chief was never involved in CEP programme. There were no consultations or communication mechanisms with CEP staff. He was only informed when the problem arose.

**Conflict Resolution**
Because the land dispute continued, the CEP sub-district facilitator requested the intervention of the sub-district chief, the traditional elders, and called the owner of the land to discuss how to solve this problem.

Community representatives argued, that to take the school off the land, the landowner has to pay for the material already used to build the school. According to the District Administration records, CEP provided Rupiah 18 million for the project of which half had already been spent on the half-finished school building. The owner of the coffee plantation offered three million rupiahs as compensation, leaving a six million shortfall for the village, which wishes to rebuild the school in another site to be provided by the landowner. The case was raised by the CNRT sub-district representative in the District Advisory Committee, asking for additional CEP funding to allow the school to be rebuilt in another location. The DA
tried to attain funding assistance from the education department but the location was not in their list of priorities as the nearest school was going to be opened three kilometres from that location.

In summary, the problem was not solved and the community finished the school in the original location. A new claim was sent by the landowner to the District Administration and he wants to have a tribunal, to decide, because East Timor is a free country now. The conflict was still ongoing and CEP money from the Second Cycle had not been disbursed, when this report was written.
Lessons learned:
It is clear from this case that traditional leaders had influenced the decision-making process and the decision did not involve all council members. It shows also that Village Council members do not have any real power; it remains in the hands of traditional leaders.

The CNRT representative was not involved since the problems started but only when the situation deteriorated. Another major question mark is what the role of the CEP sub-district facilitator is and why he did not intervene in a more pro-active way at the start of the project? From a historical perspective, this case could be also interpreted as a present day rejection to the imposition of a new power through the Portuguese rule after the Manufahi War.

Table 51: A Land Tenure Conflict

The special Problem of ‘new’ Villages

One of the major difficulties with some of the recently established Village Development Councils is the refusal of its members to sit together as Village Council, because their hamlets are fighting for the status of an independent village. These cases are known as ‘old and new villages’ and such difficulties are ongoing in all the research-districts.

‘New’ villages that were hamlets established in Portuguese times, and then merged with other small hamlets by the Indonesians for security and administrative reasons. Since the resistance period, some of the hamlets were treated as a separate village since they had a nurep in charge in the parallel clandestine structure. After the Popular Consultation, some of these hamlets declared their ‘independence’ or village status and started to report directly to the sub-district level.

‘Old villages’ refer to the villages existing during Indonesian times. This structure was used for planning and policy development by CEP and UNTAET. The notion of village is based on the former Indonesian administrative structure and was adopted by the transitional government. It was agreed at the national level with Timorese leadership that boundaries should not be altered during the term of the transitional government.

In the CEP, some of the ‘new’ villages did not want to receive CEP grants as part of an ‘old’ village.

Example A: Lahusi – Liauatina, Aileu

In Aileu Kota, Lahusi is the ‘new’ village and Liauatina the ‘old’ village. They argued with the CEP about their treatment as separate villages. After a process of conflict resolution they agreed to have one council for the two villages and agreed to divide the money between the new and old village and distributed it between the hamlets.
The approach used by council members to solve the conflict involved traditional leaders, and influential people, such as CNRT and the traditional elders at village and sub-district levels, as well as the Village Development Council.

*Table 52: Problem of old-new villages in Lahusi-Liauatina, Aileu*
Example B: Hohulo – Liurai, Aileu

Another example is the village of Hohulo, which forms a ‘new village’ and the ‘old’ village of Liurai. The CEP Facilitator and Monitor explained why the communities had to submit proposals through the original village of Liurai. A similar approach to conflict resolution as discussed above was used, but Hohulo was reluctant to accept the solution of sharing money. Discussions continued to try solve the situation and eventually an agreement was reached that in the CEP Emergency Cycle the Village Council was elected with representatives from both villages and the money was shared between them. By the end of April 2001 the problem was not totally solved.

Table 53: Problem of old-new villages in Hohulo-Liurai, Aileu

Example C: Abofalu – Waetame, Baucau

A similar problem occurred in the Quelicai Sub-district between the ‘new’ village Abofalu and ‘old’ Waetame. It was resolved in the middle of March 2001 after months of disagreements and conflicts.

The CEP programme started in May 2000 and after the socialisation campaign conducted by an integrated team of CNRT and CEP project staff members, it was realised that Abofalu was not recognized as a village. Both villages agreed to sit together in the same council with four representatives from Abofalu and eight from Waetame. After the first meeting of the Village Council, where the council structure was set up with the nomination of the council’s chief, deputy and secretary, people from Abofalu did not participate in the meetings. The second meeting focused on proposal development and they again did not attend. For the third meeting, the CEP Sub-district Facilitator invited the sub-district chief as mediator, but the Abofalu council representatives did not come. They stated that they wanted to receive the same amount of funds as Waetame.

In the Quelicai Sub-district, the CEP Emergency Cycle funding was implemented very fast in all the villages, except in Abofalu and Waetame because they would not agree to share it. Abofalu claimed its status as village during the clandestine period. It has its own village structure and some NGO’s and the sub-district chief treat Abofalu as a separate village. In addition ETTA had a registration office there.

The CEP Sub-district Facilitator continued his efforts to solve the conflict by inviting the sub-district chief to mediate and make a proposal. He also raised the case with CNRT and CEP in Dili and other actors. On 16 January 2001 a meeting was organised with the participation of CEP National Level and CNRT National level. It tried to find a resolution for the conflict between the two villages. The advice provided was that the villages should share the money according to the number of hamlets within each village. The representatives from Abofalu remained in their position and did not accept this solution.

76 Despite the fact that it is considered as village rai moris: existing since the beginning of the world, and an ancient kingdom before the Portuguese changed the capital to Bandera hun (village Liurai) in 1947.
The District Administrator then came in to the case by planning to hold a meeting in Abofalu on the 8th March to solve the problem. Unfortunately, he could not go because of a security situation in the town of Baucau. On the 19th March, the village and hamlet chiefs from Abofalu came to ETTA Baucau with a delegation of community members to protest because they have not received the money.

The problem deteriorated and appeared on the national level. A meeting was held in Dili on the 27th March with the participation of CEP senior staff, Baucau District Administrator, DFO Quelicai, the sub-district chief, the traditional elders and the village chief of Abofalu. A solution was finally agreed on; ETTA Cabinet member for Internal Affairs and CNRT at the national level recognised Abofalu as a village and therefore CEP could implement the programme in this new village. It was decided that the two villages shall share the money for the CEP Emergency Cycle, however, for the CEP Second Cycle each village is going to receive their own allocation of money once they have completed the process of council membership.

In the Quelicai Sub-district, the money for CEP Second Cycle projects was pending until a resolution for this case was found.

In this case it is important to highlight two aspects: the persistence of the CEP Sub-district Facilitator to speak through this case with the different stakeholders to get the problem resolved; and the tenacity of the community to keep fighting in the recognition of its perceived rights. This is especially interesting as the community was in a Cycle of humanitarian emergency. Even here, the local identity was more important than the aid given.

As the problem is resolved, the Posto Facilitator regains his credibility with the community and his self-confidence to continue working in this trouble area.

Table 54: Problem of old-new villages in Abofalu-Waetame, Baucau
Relationships of the CEP with other Stakeholders

The local governance structure has been set up to provide a forum for community consultation regarding development needs that are initiated at the hamlet level in a bottom-up approach to decision-making. These community bodies have been established, through an election process, at different levels of the administrative structure: hamlet representatives who form the Village Development Council, which in turn represent their villages in the Sub-district Development Council. The local governance structure is strengthened by being provided with grants to enable them to plan, select and implement their own development activities. They are supported in doing so by a number of CEP Project Staff members at local level.

In conducting their functions, council members and CEP Project Staff have to interact with different stakeholders including those who hold positions of power at all levels of the politico-administrative structure. Table 55 shows the administrative structure below district level in relation to the geographical areas where the CEP Project Staff members and Village and Sub-district Development Councils operates.

The research team examined the relationship that Village Development Councils and CEP Project Staff have established at the local level with other powers and found that these relationships differ from location to location.

CNRT

The CNRT assume an overarching role in East Timorese political power and made the link with the transitional administrative structure of UNTAET. All respondents consulted by the research team were very categorical mentioning CNRT as “the government of East Timor in coordination with UNTAET”.

A local administrative structure operated under the CNRT. This structure was composed of the Sub-district Chief (Chefe do Posto or Secretario do Zona, as he was usually called), Village Chief (Chefe do Suco, Liurai or Nurep), Hamlet Chief (Chefe do Aldeia or Celcom) who were the major political power holders at each level of the transitional administrative structure as can be seen in the table.

During the CEP socialisation campaign, conducted in the first semester of 2000, a partnership was established between the CNRT sub-district chief and the CEP sub-district facilitator in the different sub-districts all over the country. Together they undertook the major task of informing the local populations about the CEP and its electoral process for the establishment of Village Councils. In general, the socialisation campaign was qualified by CNRT representatives as establishing a good working relationship with CEP Project Staff. However, once the councils were set up at the village and sub-district levels, the working relationship between these actors has varied from one area to the next.

77 District Monitor, Technical Facilitator, Sub-district Facilitator and Village Facilitator.
78 Shortly after completing the final draft of the report in June 2001 the CNRT was officially disbanded.
In a number of villages covered by the research, the Village Development Council is integrated into the village administrative structure (as was seen in its organigram displayed in the village office), having in some cases a co-ordination or advisory role. In a few, the Village Council is fully incorporated into the rural development section.
# TRANSITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative division</th>
<th>ETTA / UNTAET</th>
<th>CNRT</th>
<th>CEP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>District Administrator + team of International and local staff</td>
<td>Secretary and vice secretaries + committee of sectoral representatives</td>
<td>District Monitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District Advisory Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub district (Posto)</td>
<td>District Field Officer (Called Administrator)</td>
<td>Chefe do Posto + two deputies and persons for education, health, agriculture and security Conselhos dos Katuas OMT and OJT</td>
<td>Posto Facilitators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conselho do Posto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village (Suco)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chefe do Suco + two deputies Conselho dos Katuas OMT - OJT</td>
<td>Suco Facilitators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conselho do Suco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet (Aldeia)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chefe do Aldeia + two deputies Conselho dos Katuas OMT - OJT</td>
<td>Aldeia representatives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 55: Transitional administrative structure in relation to CEP activities*
In certain locations in Bobonaro, some CNRT leaders feel that the Village Development Councils do not want to work together with them. The CNRT considered that they were the one giving orders and if everybody starts giving their own orders the system cannot work. They claimed that if the councils did not start working together with the CNRT, the people would not want them anymore. As one informant put it: ‘CNRT is the face. The CEP has to work with the local authorities, and then things can work. The local leadership has to be behind it.’

When asked, council members in Bobonaro reported co-ordinating their work with CNRT but they made it clear they do not receive orders from CNRT. They perceive themselves as an independent body.

In the Aileu District, the general opinion of CNRT leaders regarding CEP Project Staff was rather negative. None of the CEP project staff was originally from the area and, they did not live there. Three sub-district chiefs, out of four, reported a lack of communication and knowledge about CEP activities. In the Lualara Sub-district, the CNRT Sub-district Chief mentioned three changes of CEP Sub-district Facilitators within a period of six months and that no information was given to him prior to their departure. In his opinion, there were no proper handover procedures from one facilitator to the next. In the Liquido Sub-district, the CNRT representative was not invited to witness the distribution of money at the Sub-district Development Council during the Emergency Cycle. Such witnessing is considered important for the transparency of the process. In Remexio, the Sub-district Chief was not aware of CEP projects when they started and it was only afterwards, when problems started, that he was called on to be actively involved in conflict resolution.

Nevertheless, most CNRT sub-district chiefs considered CEP as a good programme and would have liked to participate more actively in it. They did not, however, have the power to intervene because as one of them pointed out:
There is no regulation that the CEP sub-district facilitator and the council have to work with the sub-district chief. So they didn’t inform me. As sub-district chief I am responsible for my people so when there are problems I have to go and see the facilitator to consult with him. But the facilitator never comes here to discuss with me.
(Subdistrict chief, Aileu).

From the perspective of the CEP Sub-district Facilitators the situation is very different; they report good coordination with CNRT representatives.

In Aileu Kota, the Sub-district Chief was invited to address the Sub-district Development Council when the money was distributed. Sub-district chiefs and village chiefs are consulted and invited to mediate in conflict resolution related to ‘new’ villages.

In the Baucau District, the relationship between CNRT and CEP seemed good. CEP sub-district facilitators and the council members have good coordination with CNRT representatives; they are always consulted before the start of the projects and information is shared with them regularly.

The CEP Sub-district Facilitator’s relationship with the CNRT was critical because in the early stages CNRT’s power in the communities. The sub-district chief was an essential channel to pass the information on to all levels. The importance of good relations with CNRT officials was, however, not limited to the sub-district level; when CEP Project Staff went to the villages to meet with CEP Village Facilitators or Village Development council members, they also needed to meet with the village chief. Council members also needed to have good relationships with local leaders in each village or hamlet.

Most of the village chiefs interviewed by the research team, acknowledged they worked together with Village Councils. They were invited to the meetings and became involved in conflict resolution. In their perception the roles of CEP and CNRT cannot be divided because they are responsible to all the people. Although local populations respect council members, in some areas people will not participate in meetings convened by the Village Development Council unless the village chief calls them and is present. As stated by a CEP Sub-district Facilitator:

The local leader has power and influence over the community; so when we want to visit a village we must go with some local leaders (village chief or hamlet chief), if we don’t, people do not want to come. This does not mean that because local leaders have influence people do not listen to council members. But it just shows the traditional mentality of the community, which is still loyal to the leader in the area.
(Subdistrict Facilitator, Baucau).

Cases of bad relations were also reported. In one of the research locations, the head of the Council complained that there was a problem with the village chief. This was because the CEP achieved more with the funds than the village chief at that time.

This kind of situation created a gap between village chiefs and councils. Conflicts can arise because a parallel power is challenging the traditional power of village chiefs; they are supposed to be in charge of public issues and relationships with the outside world. They have power because they are the ones responsible for distributing shelter and food aid from international NGO’s, and they attend the meetings with UNTAET.
Sub-district, village, and hamlet chiefs are very important power holders at the local level and have the respect and credibility of the local population. Therefore, they had the capacity to mobilise major involvement of community members in the assessment, design and implementation of projects promoted by Village Development Councils. Sub-district and village chiefs have an overall view of what is going on in their respective areas and have privileged information regarding the development projects to be undertaken by the government and other potential donors.

Involvement of the political leaders could result in better coordination of planned activities. Such coordination would eliminate the overlapping of projects implemented directly by the stakeholders active in the area and those proposed by the population through Village Development Councils. This would allow for a more comprehensive long-term vision of development needs; projects could fit into a general development framework summarising what it is really needed, who will do what, when and by what resources.

**UNTAET / ETTA**

UNTAET is the governmental structure exercising the power at national and district level in consultation with CNRT. As shown in Table 55, in contrast with the CNRT and CEP structures, that of UNTAET extend only to the sub-district level with the presence of a District Field Officer (DFO) often called by the local people ‘Administrator’. Although the CEP is an UNTAET project, it has not yet been integrated into the UNTAET administrative structure; in most cases it functions rather independently.

During the Emergency Cycle of the CEP, UNTAET had no place in its implementation or the follow up. Despite having an international official as the CEP Focal Point, in charge of guaranteeing the coordination between CEP Project Staff and UNTAET administration, information dissemination across the sectors of the district administration was often poor. Some DFO’s did not realise CEP was an UNTAET programme, thinking of it as a World Bank programme being implemented in the area. Sometimes, there was duplication of initiatives and no joint planning at all at the local levels. Still, the relationship between UNTAET and the CEP varied between the districts studied.

Overlapping of projects was addressed very rapidly in Bobonaro. UNTAET approached the CEP and raised the issue of a lack of communication. A monthly meeting was put in place between the CEP monitor, facilitators and UNTAET staff to overcome this problem. In the first meeting it became clear that there was also a lack of understanding of the project from the side of some UNTAET staff. The idea of a ‘bottom-up’ method was not well understood and UNTAET staff complained about the lack of sustainability in the projects conducted.

At the sub-district level, the working relationships were very different. In some areas, the facilitators sought advice from the DFO’s. In one sub-district, the DFO frequently joined the CEP meetings at the sub-district and village level. The DFO would speak first and pass on information about

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79 As the posto administrator was called during Portuguese times.
future governmental development plans for the village to the villagers. Then the meeting would start and ideas for project proposals were gathered. In this way, good co-ordination between UNTAET and CEP occurred and the projects were conducted in a more sustainable way.

In Aileu District, the coordination between the UNTAET CEP Focal Point and the CEP District Monitor is qualified as good by both sides, the same cannot be said at the sub-district level. One of the major constraints identified is the lack of communication between UNTAET DFOs in charge of the implementation of the projects at the sub-district level and the CEP Sub-district Facilitators. A monthly evaluation meeting is organised by the District Monitor but it is not often attended by the DFO’s. The latter complain of not seeing the CEP Sub-district Facilitators when they visit their assigned sub-district. This problem was tackled in a meeting at the end of last year and it seems that the relationship in some of the sub-districts has improved since then.

During the field work of the research team in Aileu the District Administration expressed the intention to set up Sub-District Development Committees with the participation of major stakeholders: Sub-district Chiefs, Council of Elders, Sub-district Development Council representatives, NGO’s, UNTAET DFO’s, CEP Facilitators, and cooperation agencies with the aim of better coordinating projects and resources. Although the idea is good, it seems not to have been implemented by the date this report was written.

In Baucau, at the district level, UNTAET reported that no mechanisms exist to involve CEP Project Team in the administrative structure. The flow of information is not so good; UNTAET has requested a list of the different proposals to be funded by CEP during the Second Cycle. Integration of CEP Project Staff into the district administration structure is being considered.

At the sub-district level in Baucau, CEP facilitators reported inviting DFOs to their meetings conducted with the Sub-District Development Council. The relationship between CEP Project Team and DFOs is often limited by the lack of a common language. Another difficulty highlighted by CEP Facilitators has been the lack of coordination and the negative effect of UNTAET implemented TEP (Temporary Employment Projects) and QIP (Quick Impact Projects) projects that introduced the notion of “working for three dollars a day.” This practice disrupted the traditional system of community work and nowadays the community does not want to work on a voluntary basis, creating some difficulties for the implementation of CEP projects.

Summarising, there is a need to increase the communication between UNTAET and CEP Project Staff and councils. More efficient mechanisms of coordination should be found to synergise the impact of the councils at the local level. ETTA / UNTAET could play a major role, by stimulating NGO’s to involve the Village Development Councils in their work. Councils know what are the major problems and priorities and have elaborated development plans at the village level. They have a good coordination system with village chief, hamlet chief and Council of Elders that are involved in the development plan; any problems are also discussed and solved with these actors.

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80 TEP funded by USAID and QIP funded through the Consolidated Fund for East Timor. Both projects are implemented through the UNTAET District Field Officers.
ETTA/UNTAET could benefit from this strategic alliance since working with the Village Development Councils would highlight its presence and visibility on the ground, that so far is almost absent.

Other Donor Projects

According to some CEP Sub-district Facilitators, UNTAET Regulation 2000/13 states that NGO’s should work with the Village Development Councils but so far this is not happening all across the districts. It was expected that NGOs establish contact with them and work together in their respective projects. UNTAET was supposed to raise awareness amongst NGO’s to involve the Councils in their work.

In all the districts covered by the research, it was pointed out that UNTAET had invited NGO’s to join the meetings between CEP and UNTAET for information sharing about on-going projects and future development plans. The need to strengthen co-ordination at the local level and to avoid overlap in order to maximise impact was highlighted at these meetings.

The intended collaboration was, however, far from being a reality as reported in the different districts. It seemed that only in Bobonaro did such fruitful co-ordination exist. In some sub-districts international NGO’s started to make use of the Village Development Council as advisors on developmental issues in the villages. Council member also reported that they have written proposals for other NGO’s that come into town.

They have the money and we have the society and the data.
(Village council member, Bobonaro)

The NGOs could contact Village Development Councils because they are official community bodies. Through the councils, NGO’s can go straight to the hamlet level. Normally, NGOs only come as far as the sub-district level. The involvement of the Councils in NGOs’ projects is very positive as they can develop into a real development council.

Yet, in most areas, Council members felt powerless because NGO’s have not yet started to acknowledge them. To empower them, good training is needed on community development issues. It was also important to sensitise NGO’s to work with the councils to strengthen their role in their communities.

In the long term, the councils could turn into development focal points for their villages and act as advisors not only for CEP but also for NGO and inter-sectoral governmental programmes such agriculture, health and civic education. A country wide system would be established in which also NGO’s could contribute to support a bottom-up method.

Traditional Elders
The traditional elders or *Conselho dos Katuas* act as a legislative body and are integrated into the administrative structure at hamlet, village and sub-district levels as can be seen in Table 55. The Elders Council is usually composed of the senior members of their social groups (*umakain*) and is invested with a moral authority over the extended family (lineage, clan) and community members.

None of the informants consulted in Bobonaro mentioned the exclusion of traditional elders in CEP discussions on development issues. In their perception they always had to be involved. Traditional elders were seen as an important group.

The majority of informants in Bobonaro mentioned that Village Development Council always has to coordinate with the elders; the younger generation do not know much about the traditions and therefore need the elders for direction. After the council has gathered the ideas of the people, they sat together with the village chief and the elders to discuss the ideas. Some informants even thought the CEP Sub-district Facilitators and District Monitors should have been more in touch with the elders as co-ordinators.

Other informants saw the role of the elders as contributors of ideas and as witnesses in the process. They also looked for solutions.

The views about Village Development Councils’ relationship with the elders vary between two extreme standpoints:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Younger informants</th>
<th>Rural areas</th>
<th>Traditional elders</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>urban areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The Elders can only give advice but cannot stop the council decisions.</td>
<td>• The Elders have to agree on the election of the council members as well as on the proposals handed in. Without their agreement, nothing can proceed.</td>
<td>• Everything is still passed through the elders, that is why things are still running well and people are not suspicious against each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The Village Council has to listen to and to receive advice from the Elders.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
However some of the elders consulted about CEP had never heard about the programme. Often they would be the last recipients in the chain of information. The majority of them do not live in the village, they might only speak the local languages and they are illiterate.

In observed CEP meetings, the elders present would give their opinion on projects, especially when it came to their area of duty. For example, when the talk turned to water projects, there would be an elder involved that descended from the sacred house that traditionally guards the water sources. He then has to conduct a ceremony and fix the time when the project can be conducted. To take water from springs is not an easy issue, especially if other villages get involved.

In the Kailako Sub-district, the first money from CEP was put on the table with betel nuts, then a chicken was killed and the blood spilled on it, so everything would work well.

As has been discussed in the precedent chapter on CEP Conflicts and their Resolution the elders definitely had a critical role when conflicts arose. They were the first to be proposed by the Village Development Councils themselves or by formal political powers at local level to resolve conflict. The CEP Project Staff acknowledged their role as essential figure to judge and solve problems related to CEP.

OMT

The East Timorese Women’s Organisation is a national organisation under the umbrella of CNRT with antennas at the district, sub-district, village and hamlet levels as can see in the table.

The most widespread OMT comments regarding the CEP, were that it is a good project that provides an opportunity for women to be involved in the decision-making process on development issues and that both men and women are equally represented. Some of the female council members in Aileu District were also part of the OMT organisation and a few OMT proposals were supported by the CEP.

In Baucau, OMT leaders at the district level said they had not been involved, or invited to participate, in CEP meetings; at the sub-district level, the situation was quite different, as a number of female leaders were involved as village facilitators or have participated in the development of proposals for CEP.

In summary, some OMT members have taken part in meetings and provided ideas, while some have never heard about the project and claimed not to be involved.

OJT
The East Timrose Youth Organisation under the umbrella of CNRT has branches in all the districts with antennas at the sub-district, village and hamlet levels.

The relationship between OJT and CEP varied in the different areas. At the district level in Aileu the OJT leader had first heard about the project a few days before the research team contacted him.

Some OJT leaders reported that the CEP had no working relationship or co-ordination at all with the youth. They are waiting for a formal invitation to participate in CEP meetings. This was the case in the Laga Sub-district, where they would like to be involved but so far have not been invited to participate in the council meetings or to co-ordinate with the implementation of the programme.

In three locations in eastern Baucau (Baguia, Afoloiakai, Quelicai), the general opinion by OJT leaders on the CEP was good; but they regret that the organisation cannot submit their own proposals as a youth group passing through the Village Development Council. There is a need for more information about how the programme works and that community groups can submit proposals for CEP Second and Third Cycles.

In Venilale, it is said that the participation of youth in the programme was very important down to the hamlet level. OJT, as an organisation, had nothing to do with it but as community members they were free to give ideas and some OJT members are project leaders in their villages.

In Bobonaro, the involvement of OJT within CEP was outstanding. In most of the locations OJT representatives spoke very highly about the CEP. The CEP was perceived as good training for the youth of the villages to start making decisions for themselves. It was hoped that more NGO’s were going to conduct projects like the CEP.

Although there was no formal relationship between OJT and CEP, many OJT members are also members of the Village Development Council. In some locations there was a working relationship established, as OJT often organised the communal labour in the villages on orders from CNRT. If manpower for the CEP project is needed, OJT would organise it.

The Church

The Catholic Church has been often mentioned by many respondents as a key power. The Church administrative structure is different from that of UNTAET and CNRT. It is composed of two Dioceses one in Dili, one in Baucau, embracing different parishes covering more than two sub-districts. At local level each village has a Catechist.

Hardly any working relationships between the Church and the Village Development Councils were found in the three studied districts. Some of the Church representatives at the district and local level had heard very little, or nothing, about CEP.
In Laga, where the parish covers the eastern region of Baucau District (Laga, Quelicai, Baguia), the big question mark for the priest was where the money was invested? In the Baucau Sub-district, the situation was very different with the priest reporting a good relationship with the Village Development Council that consulted him and asked for help. The Church was invited to participate in CEP meetings.

The CEP Sub-district Facilitator in Venilale reported solid support from the Church. It had provided them with a safer place to keep the project money before being distributed and advice was given when the council needed to buy a rice-grinding machine for a project.
Example: Discussion about working relationships of CEP in Laga

A recurring question, explored by the research team in discussions held with traditional leaders, was: how to integrate the traditional power structure within local governance bodies, without interfering in the democratic process of Village Councils?

The following example, discussed with traditional authorities in the Laga Sub-district, provides an illustration of the deficiencies that could be found in the way CEP programme was operating at the sub-district level. It suggests possible solutions to make the programme more reliable and transparent to the traditional authorities.

In the Laga Sub-district, the councils worked as an independent structure separate from the other two main important power structures that were the political power, represented by the Sub-district Chief, and the customary power.

During the CEP Emergency Cycle there was no real co-ordination between these three institutions and the Sub-District Development Council did not invite the Sub-district Chief and the Council of Elders to participate in the process. However, when a problem related to CEP arose in the hamlets, the villagers brought the case to the Sub-district Chief to be resolved but he was not in a position to intervene.

To remedy this lack of participation and improve communication it was suggested that, for the Second Cycle, co-ordination be improved by involving these much-trusted actors. The programme function will also benefit in terms of transparency.

The following diagram shows the proposed lines of co-ordination between the three structures:

![Diagram showing lines of co-ordination between Chefe do Posto, CEP Posto Council, Conselho de Katuas, UNTAET DFO, and Political and Moral Power areas.]

Table 56: CEP Posto Council Co-ordination

From the view-point of the Laga authorities, the participation of these actors in the CEP process is critical because:
• The sub-district chiefs knew the scope of the different projects and NGO activities in the area and could help ensure synergy between these and CEP activities.
• The Council of Elders had the moral authority and was familiar with the problems that can arise and can prevent mistakes committed in the past; in addition they have the conflict resolution skills. They have strong authority at the local level and can judge if projects are in accordance with traditions.
• UNTAET could also benefit from a more active involvement in the functioning of the council: it will have more visibility at the local level by interacting with the key actors.

Another point addressed by Laga authorities concerned the need for a monitoring or control body, at the village level for the projects conducted by the Council. This point was based on the following rationale:

When the proposals were first made people came to complain to the Sub-district Chief, but he was not able to help solve the problems since he was not involved in the process; in his view this was according to CEP regulations.

The leaders argued that CEP should supervise how the money was invested and exercise some control at the village level; for this a monitoring team is needed. This team should have an independent status and be composed of a representative of Village Development Council, Church and/or another representative of civil society (e.g. teacher) and an elder. The political authorities, such as the sub-district, village or hamlet chief, could not be involved in this supervising body to avoid any questions of political influence.

In addition, it was suggested the elders could also be involved in the Village Council as elected members. According to Timorese tradition, people still listen to the katusa for instance ‘if someone misused the money and the katusa say you have to pay back, the person has to do it.’

This proposal from the Laga authorities corresponded to the point stated by UNTAET Regulation 2000/13, section 9 concerning the Village Monitoring Team. However, it seems that this body has not yet been implemented in Laga and in other locations visited during the research fieldwork.

The above example is a proposal, from the local perspective, of how traditional structures could be integrated into the functioning of CEP programme. This remains a fundamental question for the CEP: should it accommodate traditional power structures or remained independent from them?

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81 Informant, Sub-district chief.
82 This regulation states that this body consists of the village head, the representative of the village council and a traditional leader. If poor bad practice is identified in village level development activity the Village Monitoring Team shall attempt to correct it. This team should report to the Sub-District Council and the ETTA District Administration.
Gender Issues

One of the major contributions of CEP towards gender equality in East Timor has been the introduction of a quota of 50% women in the election of Village Council members. As the UNTAET regulation states, ‘…each Village Council shall, in principle, consist of an equal number of women and men.’

This requirement seemed to have been accepted without problems in all localities where the research was conducted. In these places, a man and a woman have been elected in each hamlet to be part of the Village Council. The research team explored the extent to which women were participating as equal partners with men in this new decision-making body.

Women in the Councils

In the experience of the research team during the fieldwork, the female council members seemed to be side-lined. No head of a village or sub-district council in the study areas was female. When the female representatives were present in interviews with male council members they would not make any comments, unless directly asked. Even then, the male member would often reply because women councillors usually took some time before replying. In addition, in interviews with some female council members, the team found that their knowledge about the programme was insufficient.

In CEP village meetings, female council members could mostly be observed taking care of food and drinks for the people in traditional power positions who attended the meeting. Sometimes they would take notes of the suggestions made, but they were never seen actively encouraging people to speak or discuss matters themselves. In part, this may be because they are not in the more vocal positions within the council. In internal CEP meetings women participated, but usually men dominated the meetings.

However, there are differences between regions and localities and, according to their male peers, women councillors were quite active, particularly the elder ones. They proposed ideas, raised important issues and sometimes even criticized their male partners. This comment from a female member of the CEP Sub-district Council in Aileu Kota summarised these points:

The participation of woman in meetings has the respect of men. When elders finished debating about the programme, they say that now women and men have equal rights. For example, if we have a meeting, the women also criticize the men, ‘why did you (man) come to the meeting but your wife didn’t come to participate’.

However, according to the same informant, younger women seemed shyer:

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Male councilors were promoting the active participation of women as equal partners within council bodies, as a consequence of the informed choices made during the ballot period.

Actually, women are very active in the council, not like before when women’s rights were constrained, because we chose that we decided to start to respect women’s rights. Democratisation is not only for men but also for women.

(Sub-district council member, Aileu)

In another sub-district, the head of the Sub-district Council told the research team:

Until now there are not problems about the discussion. In the meetings everyone has the right to speak but the older people (katuaus) speak first … Women also actively speak and specifically speak out the women’s needs. When a woman speaks the men have to listen to her … Women are active in the meetings … they give ideas how to do with the programme.

(Sub-district council chief, Aileu)

In Bobonaro, most of the male informants felt strange about the gender balance in the councils. Nevertheless they do not feel threatened, as the women in the council remained within their traditional paradigms. When asked, OMT representatives or female council members perceived themselves as very vocal already. They say they have the same rights now as men and they perceive that they already overtake part of the CEP meetings. Still, they realized that they had no power in decision-making because men are still too dominant.

In Aileu, the majority of female Village Council members were active during the resistance movement. In Remexio and Liquideo Sub-districts, women council members were acknowledged as being active and outspoken by the different stakeholders. They were also very much involved in the decision-making processes. Good examples of this, in the Aileu District, are the villages of Malere and Aisirimou where women councillors undertook consultation with women at the hamlet level.

In the Baucau Sub-district, women described themselves as being very active in the programme. They took part in the meetings and had the right to speak. Facilitators in the same area think that the women’s contributions were good but they are not active yet in the meetings. The men are still making the decisions and therefore ruling the meetings.

Male councillors usually state that everybody has the same rights and if women know how to work they should do it. The way to reach gender balance is proposed by one informant:
If we cannot have equal rights between men and women we have to strengthen women’s activities. If the women are successful the men will start appreciating their wives.

(Village council member, Baucau)

In Afoloiakai, Baucau, the general perception was that women are actively contributing with ideas and are hard working in the implementation of CEP projects. There were no distinctions between men and women. When asked, a male informant said:

I can’t give the correct information because perhaps you will think that I’m wrong, but please ask the women they will give you the correct information. If you want my opinion, I can say that Afoilikai is different from other villages. The reason is, when we have a program in the village or sub-village, not only men come to work but all the women come as well, they are working like the men; this is the reality in our village.

(Catholic catechist, Baucau)

Major Constraints to Women’s Participation

The research team often heard from CEP project staff and other outsider stakeholders about the poor attendance and lack of active involvement of female Village Council members in the meetings. Women’s participation in CEP decision-making bodies was constrained by the demands of their traditional role in society and also by the lack of transportation and training.

Women’s Position in Society

Traditionally in East Timorese societies the decision-making process is the domain of the senior male of the existing social groups within the hamlets. Rural women are not supposed to be outspoken and to take the floor in public meetings. However, the ferik (senior women) have an important role in social exchanges and rituals. In economic activities there are some aspects of East Timorese traditions to reinforce gender balance. There is a fair distribution of tasks between men and women in agricultural labour. Both of them participate in the different steps from planting to harvesting. Women are also responsible for selling cash crops in the market that are produced by their vegetable gardens. Men sometimes care for children while women are undertaking these duties.

Family Constraints

Another major constraint to women’s participation is family problems. Some council members stated that their female peers have difficulties with their husbands. This issue was highlighted by the sub-district council chief in Liquiçao:

Sometimes the discussions with the community takes hours and when they go back home their husbands are fighting with them saying she should receive money for that job.
Husbands also complained because, when their wives attend council meetings, they have to do their wife’s chores. This was explained by a female representative of the CEP Sub-district Council in Laga:

Some women are married and when they come to the meeting their husbands argue: ‘who will stay at home and pay attention to the children and who will cook for them?’ Some men support their wives to participate in the activity or programme in the village but some men do not want their wives to go anywhere.

**Social Conditions**

Another problem mentioned is the lack of employment opportunities for women and some female councillors are discouraged and want to be paid for their tasks as council members. A female sub-district council member of Quelicai said:

The women in the council participated only during the first time, many of them then did not want to participate anymore because they are living far away from town and also there is no payment for them. They do not want to participate anymore. Sometimes we have meetings here but only a few people come.

Especially in the more urban setting of Baucau town, where there is more employment opportunities for women, some women councillors stated they do not want to work voluntarily anymore, neither in the councils or for an organisation like OMT, because they have jobs and go to work.

Transportation was another issue raised by council members, but not only for women. Council members lived in different villages and had to walk many kilometres to participate in the meetings, or to go to villages to explain about the CEP program to community members.

**Need for Training**

Some female councillors spoke of their desire to receive more training. In some of the areas women had not received any capacity building training by the sub-district facilitators nor at the District level. Aileu District Administration had organised several workshops to strengthen women’s role in councils meetings.

**Women’s Project Proposals**

In Aileu, in the first round of CEP fund allocation, women’s proposals centred on vegetable gardens, handicrafts, sewing workshops and water supply. In three different villages in Aileu Kota, women’s participation is considered exemplary with initiatives that benefit the whole population, but specifically alleviate women and children’s chores. In terms of a ‘practical gender approach’ such initiatives can make a great difference in daily life.
The three projects are related to water supply implemented in different locations. In the hamlet Kabasfatin, in the village of Malere, women conducted a water supply project to relieve the lack of water. The decision was taken by all the women and the proposal was submitted through the local women’s organisation (OMT) to the Village Council. All the community participated in the rehabilitation of the water supply.

In the village of Aisirimou, women submitted a proposal on water supply and agriculture. When the money was received, a meeting was organised by the Council and women decided to use the money for three different projects: water supply, communal plantation and the rest of the money was used to buy chairs for the village office.

In another village, women were involved in the construction of a water place and a laundry. Women worked very actively carrying the rocks and helping the men to connect the pipes.

In Bobonaro, the women’s CEP projects have been oriented to weaving mats and hats and planting rice fields and gardens. The major difficulty for them has been where to sell their weavings. They have no marketing strategy and the market is saturated with tais production since several development agencies are orienting women’s projects towards fabric making. A few voices critical of women’s proposals stated that women only ask for what they need for today. They felt project proposals from the men are much better as they work together with CNRT and UNTAET.

Opportunities to improve Women’s Participation

The CEP offers a policy framework in which women are allowed to participate as equal partners in the decision-making process in the Village Development Council; since a quota of 50% representation has been given to women. However, as has been discussed, women are still only playing a minor role in the overall CEP structure. There are structural constraints that prevent them from taking a more pro-active role. To achieve the status of equal partners with men in the decision-making process, a long process of change of mentality in both men and woman is needed, particularly in rural areas. The team thought that social changes should not be too strongly enforced on society, but happen through society itself.

Nevertheless, some steps forward could be undertaken to facilitate this process. CEP Sub-district Facilitators can play an important role by encouraging women to participate in an environment where they feel free.

Also some of the points discussed above could be remedied, if a real capacity building strategy is designed to overcome some of the gaps identified. Such a strategy should have different components, including communication techniques to increase women’s confidence to be more outspoken about their own concerns in council meetings within their own cultural framework.

Another component that should be addressed, relates to more practical matters such as basic accountancy and management skills. This would assist people in their use and administration of CEP project and funds; how to prepare proposals and address potential donors; how to undertake participatory rapid assessment, and, basic notions of community development.
As one interviewee said, ‘East Timor is a new nation and women, more than half of the population, need more training to participate actively in the construction of the country and to increase women’s conditions.’ Since one of the aims of CEP is to alleviate poverty and develop the entrepreneurial spirit, the CEP could offer specific training in income-generating projects and micro-credit schemes including marketing strategies for their products, using interactive techniques and practical exercises in the field with basic accountancy and managerial skills. Different experiences around the world have shown women are good administrators and invest their money in the family, not in drinks or cock fighting.

These training components within a package, will give female councillors the confidence and competence to advise their peers towards better development choices at the local level and will reinforce their competence to be equal partners with men.
5. General Recommendations on CEP

The fieldwork for the anthropological study on ‘Traditional Power Structures and the CEP’ was conducted from October 2000 to March 2001 in the districts of Aileu, Baucau and Bobonaro at the community level. It focused on CEP Component A, Community Grants and Sub-grants disbursed through Village Development Councils.

The following recommendations are based, therefore, on information gathered during this period and the CEP up to that time. They should be read in conjunction with table 57 below, which contains more details regarding the major issues identified and provides suggestions to address some of these issues.

**Increased collaboration**

- **Collaboration between government/administration and the CEP should be strengthened.**
  ETTA international development officers employed by the District Administrations and their Timorese counterparts should be well informed about district development plans and maintain good contact with NGOs and other development agencies. They are the focal points for all developmental issues in the Districts and they should be in close co-operation with the ETTA sub-district co-ordinators who feed them with proposals and development needs from the ground level. The CEP replicates this structure. Therefore the CEP District Monitor should establish a close working relationship with the ETTA development officer. Similarly, the CEP sub-district facilitators should work closely with the ETTA sub-district co-ordinators. In many cases this coordination is not visible. Stronger working relationships between ETTA and CEP would facilitate sharing of knowledge of needs and opportunities and help avoid duplication of effort. Better information and advice could be provided to the local population based on the wider sub-district picture. Local decisions on projects would not only be made based on knowledge about one village. Co-operation between villages (especially when it comes to water supply or environmental issues) could be reinforced. In summary, ETTA and CEP, which are both under the Minister for Internal Administration, should conduct most of their work together while managing different funds.

- The above recommendation is based on the situation at the time of the research. It is, however, difficult to make recommendations on this issue as the future governmental structure in relation to development is uncertain. The position of the international development officer will end at the beginning of October 2001 and by February 2002 most of the international District Field Officers will leave the District Administration. The future of the ETTA Sub-district Co-ordinators is uncertain. The new transitional government and the up-coming government of independence might decide on a different administrative structure. The future working-relationship between CEP and the governmental bodies will depend on the new model of administration. **Whatever decision is taken on the status of the Village Development Councils and its links with the new government this should preserve the ‘bottom-up’ approach.**

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84 The consequences of the dissolution of CNRTin June 2001 could not be included in these recommendations as it occurred after completion of the final draft of the report.
Empowerment of council members

- **Village Development Council members should be empowered in their role as development agents** in order to better coordinate different development interventions. ETTA should help ensure synergies of action at local level by sensitising NGO’s and others to collaborate with Village and Sub-district Development Councils. By strengthening the collaboration of CEP with potential development partners the Councils can ensure a more comprehensive development programme with greater impact.

- **More training in community development issues should be organised for council members** to provide them with the necessary skills. Most have insufficient knowledge of development work, even to conduct needs assessment. If they were better trained they could act as ‘development advisors’ to the community, by conducting needs assessments, facilitating reflection on priorities, gathering proposals from the people, and finally making sound decisions on the projects to be funded. They could become the ‘development focal-point, of the community; their authority would be as development “specialists” in contrast to the “generalist” traditional powers.

CEP Village Facilitators versus Village Development Council members

- **The CEP should consider eliminating the position of the Village Facilitator** for the next Cycle, transferring their tasks to the Village Council members. If the CEP decides to keep the village facilitators position they should not be paid as it creates tension between the paid facilitators and unpaid Village Development Council members.

  *Pilot trials should be conducted in three different locations, one where both council members and village facilitators are paid, one where neither are paid, and another where the village facilitator position is abolished.*

Women’s participation in Village Development Councils

- **Women councillors should be trained to provide them with the competence and confidence** to be more outspoken about their own concerns in council meetings. *Specific training in income generation projects, micro-credit schemes,* and other development project models are required to enable them to play a more pro-active role advising their peers about project proposals.

Not undermining the role of traditional leaders

- **While empowering the Village Development Councils as development agents at the village and sub-district levels, attention should be paid not to undermine the role of the village- and hamlet chief,** who until now have served as the point of contact for projects in the community. They usually have a broad knowledge of the local situation and should not be excluded from the CEP decision-making process. Interestingly,
although they were not formally included in the process, in many places they found a way to dominate the discussions and influence the outcome.

Traditional leaders could be formally appointed to the Village Development Councils. To avoid their domination of the councils, elected council members should be empowered through training and education in development issues. In this way they could achieve more credibility, gain the trust of the community and be in a more equal position in relation to the traditional leaders. Council members should not be in a position hierarchically inferior to the traditional powers. This composition would ensure that the knowledge of the traditional leaders is integrated into the decision process. At the same time the elected council members could make use of their formal power and, in the long term, could start challenging the traditional powers.

*Election approach*

- **CEP should promote secret voting rather than acclamation.** Elections using secret voting at the community level have so far shown that peoples’ choices are still dominated by the traditional concepts of power and political legitimacy. Nevertheless, the elections for the Village Development Councils do give people freedom of choice and if secret voting is used allow them to select the people they really think would be the best councillors. In the long term such an approach may lead to changes in the traditional practice. These elections provide a unique opportunity to introduce and develop support for the more democratic concept of secret voting.

*Raising awareness and improved understanding of the CEP among community*

- **Information about CEP should highlight that it is an UNTAET/ETTA programme** as people on the ground still consider it as a World Bank programme. An effort should be made in this regard at all the levels, starting with the CEP District Monitors and but also including Sub-district Facilitators, Village Facilitators and Sub-district and Village Development Council members. This is crucial for UNTAET/ETTA visibility on the ground. Clear messages about the CEP should be integrated into the ongoing process of socialisation for the forthcoming election of new council members.

- **The basic idea of the CEP should be more thoroughly explained,** as the local populations are still used to ‘top-down’ approach. Most Facilitators observed had a very technical approach to explaining the process. Meetings at the village level should always be accompanied by explanations of the program. A basis for efficient education is to relate new ideas to former ‘known’ systems as a starting point. Explanations should start with references to the development system under the Indonesian government and refer to the differences in the CEP. They should make clear that in the past most decisions in development issues were in the hands of the village chief. Under the project decisions are taken by the Village Development Councils in discussion with the people. The extensive knowledge that village chiefs have through their liaison with the ‘outside-world’ will still be considered but ideas should now come from the people themselves.
This socialisation process should build on previous civic education campaigns. From these campaigns people are now familiar with western terminology, but not yet with their full meaning. Terms like ‘democracy’ should be used but explained using local concepts. The CEP could be used as a model to bring the democratic idea closer to the population in every day life and not only in election- and State-related issues. Village Development Councils could work closely with future Civic Education programmes.

- **Information about the CEP should be disseminated in a more appropriate ways, using other means of communication than written material** since the majority of the population in rural areas are illiterate. More sensitisation is needed at the community level to increase the knowledge and potential of CEP. The most effective medium is oral communication using concise and clear messages repeated frequently. The best channels are through the facilitators and the councils, complemented by the traditional channels such as village and hamlet chiefs. This approach respects and utilises the traditional channels but ensures that the village chief does not have a monopoly on information.

**Information flow among CEP project staff**

- **The flow of information between Village Development Councils, Sub-district Facilitators, District Monitors and CEP Project Staff at national level should be improved in both directions.** Feed–back and problem solving from high levels should be rapid, to avoid the deterioration of potentially problematic situations. Failure to give rapid feed-back on decisions taken at a higher level severely undermines the credibility of the CEP Sub-district Facilitator when facing Village Development Council members and traditional leaders.

**Accelerating the process of allocation of grants**

- **The CEP should review its mechanisms of allocation of money to make the process more flexible and less bureaucratic.** There are too many steps. It must, however, maintain the necessary measures to avoid corruption and nepotism. Council members should be well briefed by the facilitators about the realistic time-lines to avoid false expectations. The long delay in the allocation of money for Second Cycle projects created anxiety and mistrust in the transparency of the whole process, undermining the hard-won credibility of council members at all levels. This could be improved in the Third Cycle.

**Top-down monitoring**

- **Top-down monitoring tools and supervising mechanisms should be developed for the different levels of intervention, to verify the roles of the monitors, facilitators and councils.** These should focus on the way in which money is allocated and the impact of the projects at the local level.

**Bottom-up monitoring and control**
A monitoring mechanism should be established at the village level to guarantee transparency. The community itself should exercise some control and supervise how the money is being invested by creating an independent team composed of trusted community members. This team could include an elder, a representative of the civil society (e.g. teacher, catechist), a representative of women and youth groups and a representative of Village Development Council. The terms of reference should make clear that they are not evaluating or making decisions on what projects will be approved, but assessing whether the process is carried out correctly, whether the funds have been properly used, and whether the intended beneficiaries have indeed benefited.

Improvement of proposals

- CEP project proposals should be better prepared, specifying clearly objectives, strategies and beneficiaries. Strengthening the capacity of council members in this regard will contribute to the process of empowering them to develop and submit development projects to other potential donors. This activity could be conducted in collaboration with UNTAET/ETTA District Development Officers.

Voluntary or paid work

- Contradictory policies of voluntarism and payment for community work should be avoided by better coordination between UNTAET, CEP and other actors on the ground. Care should be taken not to undermine traditional motivations for carrying out community work by introduction of payments.
### Knowledge about and visibility of the CEP

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<th>Statements/Issues</th>
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<tr>
<td>People do not know CEP by its real name, nor do they know that it is an UNTAET programme; when consulted people refer to the ‘World Bank programme.’</td>
<td>Since the outset there has been confusion on this issue; the programme was disseminated as a World Bank project and it remains that very few people know what the CEP is all about.</td>
<td>A promotional campaign should be conceived to correct this perception and to make CEP more visible. It is also important to pass the message that CEP is an ETTA programme, especially as ETTA does not have much of a presence at the lowest level of the administrative structure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>People are not clear about the role of CEP. The programme is not very well known yet.</td>
<td>There is not a clear understanding of the purpose and functions of the CEP and many of the ordinary villagers have not heard about the programme yet.</td>
<td>A clear and concise campaign of information is needed. It must use appropriate channels and communication methods because the great majority of people in rural are illiterate.</td>
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<td>People ask why they have to work? They have heard that the CEP money should be distributed to them because of their suffering.</td>
<td>In remoter villages people only speak the local languages</td>
<td>An information system has to be established that does not rely as much on written media. Oral communication using established channels should be favoured.</td>
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<td>It would be better if facilitators come from the same region and can use local languages in their meetings</td>
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### Community participation

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<td>People do not take part in the meetings; ‘meetings and meetings and nothing happens.’</td>
<td>Community members have many tasks to do and have time constraints, therefore it is very important to respect the time of the community. For women it is even worse since they have many chores to do. There are too many meetings at the community level, seen as imposed from outside, especially in urban areas where people are too busy and are involved in working relationships.</td>
<td>Increase information on the relevance of the meetings.</td>
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<td>Facilitators claim that meetings are not well attended because community members have other activities or work to do.</td>
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<td>Organise meetings only when it is essential and make well known the topics to be addressed.</td>
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<td>Council members should set up meetings at appropriate times and get people interested; market days at village level could be a good option.</td>
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| Community members do not want to work any more on a voluntary basis; they would like to be paid by the CEP. | Traditionally, community members have worked on a voluntary basis to contribute to maintenance of infrastructure in their villages. Since the UNTAET TEP and QIP’s paid workers US$3 per day, some communities are very reluctant to work for free, even if it is for the benefit of the community. | • Facilitators have to be equipped with the skills to convince people that CEP is a bottom-up programme “from the community, for the community” (Ownership).  
• A better co-ordination with ETTA/UNTAET officials may prevent this from happening again. |
| People do not trust young council members because of their lack of experience and power. | Traditionally young people do not have an important role in the decision-making process in society. | • Village Development Councils need more comprehensive training in community development issues to improve their role and credibility in the community and therefore gain the trust of the people. |
| Community based organisations such as OJT and OMT, village and hamlet chiefs, traditional elders are not invited to the CEP meetings. | Usually written invitations are handed out to representatives of various Civil Society organisations. Here people do not understand the new concept yet; that they are seen as members of the village and not their organisation. The traditional elders miss the usual respect and consideration of customary issues in everything that happens in their village. | • UNTAET regulation states that all meetings of Village Development Council should be open to the public but it is only the council members who are eligible to participate in the decision-making. Better information on the programme should be given to the different actors at the community level. |

**Participation of traditional leaders**

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| There is lack of involvement and knowledge of the sub-district chief about the CEP. They want to provide ideas to the CEP posto council but they are never consulted or invited. The UNTAET regulation does not state that the CEP sub-district facilitator should work with the sub-district chief, so they often do not inform them. | The sub-district chief is an important person on whom people rely when problems arise with the CEP at village level. They feel, however, that they do not have power to intervene because they are not involved or invited by CEP Project Staff. The sub-district chief usually has an overall vision of what is going on with the different stakeholders, as the sub-district structure has a rural development section. If there is a lack of co-ordination between these bodies there may be overlapping between different projects submitted to donors. | • The sub-district chief should be involved in the CEP process as an observer or adviser.  
• CEP facilitators and council members should be UNTAET Regulation reminded that 2000/13 stipulates that Village Development Councils shall consult routinely with traditional elders and local leaders. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements/issues</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Suggestion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional elders are not involved enough in the</td>
<td>Traditional elders still have strong authority at the local level. They can judge if projects are in accordance with traditions and perhaps foresee the range of potential problems; since one of their traditional tasks is conflict resolution.</td>
<td>Traditional elders should be involved in the CEP process as advisers; they have a moral power acknowledged by the whole community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>meetings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project implementation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• There is a long delay in the allocation of money in</td>
<td>The long delay in allocation of funds creates great anxiety and mistrust in the whole process. It undermines the idea of transparency and the credibility of council members at all levels. Villagers do not have the overview of the big picture; they only see the sub-district facilitator coming and going and wonder why the money has not arrived yet. Sometimes money received is delayed, or tools needed for the projects arrive from elsewhere. The trust of council members is challenged.</td>
<td>CEP should review their mechanisms of allocation of funds to make the process more flexible, since there are too many steps; while preserving anti-corruption measures and a correct management of the use of funds. Council members should be well briefed by Sub-district Facilitators about the realistic timelines to avoid false expectations of the community. More transparency in a way that illiterate villagers can understand (can not read notice boards). Better information and explanation to all the actors in a transparent way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Second Cycle. People complain that their proposals</td>
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<td>have been submitted at least two months before and</td>
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<tr>
<td>they do not know what is going on at the top level;</td>
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<td>either the coordination does not work well or the</td>
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<tr>
<td>sub-district facilitator has not yet submitted their</td>
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<tr>
<td>proposal.</td>
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<td>• Sometimes the sub-district facilitator promises</td>
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<tr>
<td>the money will come quickly, but then people have</td>
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<tr>
<td>to wait a long time.</td>
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<td>• Villagers do not understand that implementation of</td>
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<tr>
<td>projects take so long and get suspicious with the</td>
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<tr>
<td>council head.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• ‘We do not know about the running costs of micro-</td>
<td>Now that the credit Cycle has started, people need even more information about the programme so they have equal chances. Otherwise only the more educated people are likely to use the credit scheme. Those interested in credit are mostly middle-aged people rather than economically weaker groups including women and youth (especially the illiterate).</td>
<td>More accurate information on the ground in a simple and understandable way is needed, especially targeting women and youth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>credit; the community says that if people have to</td>
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<td>pay back the money, the poor do not have the</td>
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<td>possibility to do that and just the rich will get the</td>
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<td>money.’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statements/issues</td>
<td>Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Problems can be expected in the Second Cycle because of the rejection of projects related to the competitive bidding process between hamlets within a village.</td>
<td>The idea of competing for funds goes strongly against the society’s sense of equality. Equality as intended in the Second Cycle is not always possible; sometimes hamlets are so far away from each other that none of the two to four projects to be accepted by the villages would benefit all of the hamlets. If there are many hamlets the money can not be divided between all of them. Sometimes money stays on the village level and is not distributed so people in the hamlets do not know what the money was used for and whether council members used it for themselves. There is a strong sense of equality; in some cases aid was refused because it couldn’t be distributed equally amongst the villagers.</td>
<td>• More education and information is needed, especially that the CEP councils are not to be held responsible for rejection of projects. The CEP should review its strategies and consider project funding by hamlet and not by village. The grants should be distributed equally to the hamlets or even according to population size.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Villages are fighting over money, as there is not enough to be distributed to all.</td>
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<td>• In the reception of money the number of hamlets within a village should be taken into consideration and the grant should be equally divided between all village constituents.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The fact that facilitators are in some cases not originally from the area and do not live in the area makes the building up of relationships with community members and principal stakeholders extremely difficult.</td>
<td>The CEP should review the profile of the facilitators and give preference to people from the area that know the local idiosyncrasies even if they have not finished an undergraduate degree.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Villagers have to decide on projects but have a lack of knowledge on development issues. For example, in many villages kitchen utensils were bought with the money of the Emergency Cycle. They were considered suitable because they could be distributed equally (an important notion) and are objects of prestige.</td>
<td>Sub-district facilitators and council members need specific training on community development issues to provide them with the necessary skills to facilitate the reflection process at the level of the community and help them to put into perspective the different development options.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The CEP Project Staff and Council members</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 'The facilitators do not live in the sub-district. So it is difficult to discuss any important issue or hold a meeting because in addition they are very rarely in the CEP office. Some of the proposals for the Second Cycle were put through the windows!'</td>
<td>The CEP Project Staff and Council members lack skills to guide community members towards sound project development decisions.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Some sub-district facilitators and council members lack skills to guide community members towards sound project development decisions.</td>
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<td>Statements/issues</td>
<td>Comment</td>
<td>Suggestion</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Village facilitators receive a small salary where as council members do not; sometimes the village facilitator is perceived of as being paid for doing nothing. • Council members want to be paid (salary).</td>
<td>This is a complaint often heard, as some of the village or sub-district council heads are very busy and have to travel a lot. This is a very contentious issue since council members do not receive any stipend for their work and it is perceived as an unequal treatment policy. Equality is a very important notion; in the view of the people, either all of them are paid, or none of them are paid.</td>
<td>• Consideration should be given to stopping the payment of village facilitators. • The CEP should consider the abolition of the village facilitator position since his tasks could be performed by council members. Their 'salaries' could be share between council members with an increment of 200,000 rupia as a sort of stipend to motivate them and prevent the drop out of Village Council members.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sub-district council members cannot always participate in the meetings because they live far away and there is no transportation.</td>
<td>The more educated young bachelor council members find jobs in Dili and other major towns and leave the area.</td>
<td>• Meetings could be held, in turn, in different hamlets.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• There is a high rate of drop out of young council members.</td>
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<td>• Set up a system to change council members or review criteria of inclusion including elders and consider paying stipends.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• No structure is in place to replace Village Council members</td>
<td>There is no official way of replacing council members who have done wrong and lost people’s trust or dropped out.</td>
<td>• Put a system in place that allows council members to be replaced if the majority want this.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Most council members are not very active, they lack information, education and training</td>
<td>This is particularly true for youth who in some areas are over-represented in council bodies. Young men and women are not used to having ‘power.’ Traditionally they can only carry out tasks, but have no decision-making or conflict resolution power.</td>
<td>• Empower council members through more training in community development issues to provide them with tools to increase their role in the communities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statements/issues</td>
<td>Comment</td>
<td>Suggestion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Women’s issues</strong></td>
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<td>• Women counsellors are not so active. They always have obstacles to participate because of pregnancy, cooking, sickness, they have to look after their children or because their husbands do not support them. When women manage to come they do not participate actively in the meetings. Sometimes they have questions but are afraid to ask and discuss the issues.</td>
<td>Some of the women’s constraints are related to their traditional role in society. Culturally they do not have much room to express their concerns publicly. Women are not used to taking an active role in decision-making processes.</td>
<td>• Women’s capacity should be built through interactive workshops, to increase self-confidence, and more pragmatic training.</td>
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<td>• Female council members, in particular, lack experience.</td>
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<td>• The facilitators have to find a way to involve women in the discussions and motivate their participation. Facilitators should work in separate groups with women to facilitate their input.</td>
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<td>• ‘There is no need to supply widows with help…. it is a strange idea; they are doing well in most cases. We have to look who it is and not just support any widows.’</td>
<td>This comment may be important in relation to matrilineal societies, like the Bunaq, where women do not ‘marry out’ and remain in their families. They ‘own’ most of the goods and gardens, although they have no political power.</td>
<td>• There is a need to define more carefully the idea of ‘vulnerable groups.’</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Transparency</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• ‘People in the community complain about the money and think that council members have received the money and put it into their pockets.’</td>
<td>Money issues were not always dealt with openly. Villagers are suspicious that council members hold back money. They trust village chiefs more and want them to be in charge of the money.</td>
<td>• The process of allocation of money should be made known to the whole population using appropriate channels of communication; very few people in rural areas understand written information.</td>
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<td>• There is suspicion within councils between members and the leader or finance officer.</td>
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<td><strong>Transitional Government Policy</strong></td>
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<td>• The ‘new villages’ called <em>rai moris</em> are not recognised by CEP.</td>
<td>Resolution of this issue is out of the scope of CEP. A political decision taken by the transitional government states that the administrative units are based on Indonesian structures. CEP is not involved.</td>
<td>• CEP should analyse each case individually as soon as possible. Conflict-solving groups should be set up with the participation of political leaders and traditional elders.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Some hamlets that gained the status of villages during the resistance period are not recognised as such by the CEP. Based on Indonesian structures, CEP is constantly affected by this decision.

Table 57: Summary of stated issues and suggestions for addressing them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements/issues</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Suggestion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some hamlets that gained the status of villages during the resistance period are not recognised as such by the CEP.</td>
<td>Based on Indonesian structures, CEP is constantly affected by this decision.</td>
<td>Political leaders and traditional elders to try to find a compromise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. CEP and the local power structures

Local Governance

The Village Development Councils, empowered by their potential to influence the use of funds allocated to address development concerns, were supposed to build a power structure parallel to existing local power structures. They were to give a chance to act on behalf of people different than the normal powers. Therefore, the village chiefs and other powers were excluded from being elected into the Village Development Council. The new power structure was to give society the opportunity to decide on the council members by using a democratic paradigm. The council members were to be elected via a democratic election, where every villager had an equal voice and everybody, irrespective of their origins, could be elected.

The hypothesis of the research team was, that people from the descent of a House that still holds political authority would be elected by such a process. The hypothesis proved to be wrong. Instead of traditional power holders, mainly young literate people were elected into the councils, who either had some kind of ‘project experience’ before or had proven themselves to be good leaders in the clandestine movement. As many of the elder people are illiterate, the elected young people were able to fulfill the requirements to implement the projects as they can read and write. They were not chosen in accordance with traditional political concepts. Most of them were not descend from the traditional Houses that hold the political authority, or were coincidentally. This points out that the Village Development Councils are not classified as belonging to the ‘political’ sphere of the world, nor to the ritual life. Therefore anybody could be elected to the councils.

The council members position is seen as purely functional. They are not perceived as having the ‘traditional’ political tasks: conflict resolution and political decision-making. They are solely seen as implementers of projects and, therefore, their position in the local socio-cosmos, does not collide with the traditional powers. This also means that most of the councils have not yet developed as a parallel power to the traditional power holders. Not only that, but the local community does not perceive them as political power holders because they are also too young to have authority. Political and ritual authority are strongly connected to age. Council members are perceived as ‘commoners’ who cannot have political powers.

The lack of power and the exclusion of the power holders from the process caused some tensions at the village level. The council members were given power through their influence over the funds, but they are not acknowledged as holders of power positions. The idea of a local ‘development agency’ has not come up yet, even more so as in Indonesian times development projects were always closely connected to the village chief.
powers deal with developmental and political issues. Only through long-term education in development issues, can the council members become an acknowledged power and the traditional power concept could decline or be repositioned. It will be up to the people and political leaders, to use the opportunity given through CEP to create a ‘democratic’ society with equal participation. Of course, such development might take a long time. The Village Development Councils have not challenged ‘old’ local powers so far, but a system is now in place that gives new people the frame and support to establish themselves in a new power position. Whether the latter development happens or whether traditional local powers stay in place is now up to the local societies. To have an impact into the socio-political structure of the Timorese, the CEP has to run for a longer period of time.

b) To make economic development and the rebuilding of the country more efficient, in the short-term, the involvement of traditional powers would make the process easier. They are an established structure, have the power and often the trust of the population, as well as the monopoly on the knowledge of developmental plans brought in from the outside. What was thought to become a new parallel power, the Village Development Councils, could be turned into development focal points that go along with local powers. In that case the Councils and the traditional powers could compliment each other. The system would be more easily understood by the local population and economical development would work more efficiently.
APPENDICES

Appendix A: Choices of research sites

The research sites were selected after consultation with different informants in Cycle Two. Through interviews with key informants on the district and sub-district level, an overview of the situation in possible research sites was gained. The selected sites combined relevant criteria such as: importance of historical happenings, good and bad examples of CEP, different ethnic-linguistic groups, ex-militia bastions and urban and remote villages.

By selecting different locations, the diversity of the local realities were reflected. Three research sites where chosen in Aileu and Bobonaro and four research sites in the Baucau district.

Aileu

In Aileu the following research sites were selected:

Asuama
Asumau is located in the Remexio Sub-district in the centre of town. The total population is composed of 1,108 people with 224 families. It has three hamlets: Lerolisan, Fatumanara and Aimerahiun.

Asumau used to be the centre of a former kingdom (Manumero) and was named Asumau ‘since the creation of land’. Asu (dog) and Mau (Bad). Its centre is in the hamlet Lerolisa. When the Portuguese arrived they imposed a regulo from Balibar to rule the area.

The CEP Emergency Cycle has been implemented in Asumau.

Liurai
Suco Liurai is located in the Aileu Kota Sub-district and is composed of seven hamlets. Its geography alternates between highlands and lowlands. The population is Mambai speakers. Two of the ‘places of origin’ are located in this village, so they have ritual importance: Hohulo and Raimainsu.

Hohulo was the centre of the former kingdom of Aileu. When the Portuguese rulers arrived they moved the village office from Hohulo to Bandera Hun and changed the named of the village to Liurai. In pre-Portuguese times, Hohulu and Bandera Hun always had problems therefore they established relationships as Wife Givers and Wife Takers.
The village is divided into two religions: Protestants and Catholics, who have a good relationship.

CEP is working well. During the Emergency Cycle the village office was built and for the Second Cycle the proposal concerns water supply, road rehabilitation and kitchen utensils. The collaboration between CEP and the village chief is good.

Lequidoe was the centre of a kingdom in Portuguese times. The traditional system of the li a nain as problem solver and the Wife Giver – Wife Taker relationships are still on-going, allowing community members to know each other and strengthen links between social groups.

Baucau

In Baucau the following research locations were selected:

**Afoloikai**

Afoloikai is located in the Baguia Sub-district on the slopes of Matebian Mountain. It is the most remote village on the border to Viqueque. The population are Nauete speakers (only two villages out of ten in Baguia are Nauete speakers) with a total of 1,048 inhabitants distributed throughout four hamlets.

Afoloikai was part of a former kingdom ruled by Dom Feliciano and is composed of three major areas: Afoloikai Baguia, Afoloikai Waterkarbau and Afoloikai Watuleri.

The CEP is working well here. The implementation of CEP has been selected as a case of CEP best practice and is discussed in-depth in the report.

**Bahu**

Bahu is a village of four hamlets that forms part of the central city of Baucau, in the sub-district of Baucaukota. The inhabitants of Bahu are all Makassae speaking.

**Soba**

Soba Village is located in the Laga Sub-district and forms its capital. The geography combines mountainous areas and coastal lowland areas devoted to rice cultivation. There are seven hamlets: four of them in the highland, located far away from the town office and three clustered along the coastline near the village facilities. The whole population are Makassae speakers.

Soba is the centre of the former Laga kingdom. Traditional powers are still very much present and well respected by the local population. The descendents of the former Dom and liurai (Younger
and of Makassae speakers (Osogori and Liabala). So in one village, speakers from two different language families are combined. Though Uato Hako is in the centre of Venilale, it is still in a very rural environment. Parts of it are very fertile areas where the population built rice terraces.

**Bobonaro**

In Bobonaro the following research sites were selected:

**Ritabou**

Ritabou is a village that is part of Maliana town, capital of the Bobonaro District. Therefore, it is the most ‘urban’ area one can find in Bobonaro. Ritabou consists of twelve hamlets. Inhabitants refer in their origins to different areas in the mountains of Bobonaro, from where they had migrated for different reasons; but mainly to make use of the good wet rice land in the Maliana valley. There is no common identity amongst the population because they do not derive from the same locations. Tensions amongst specific hamlets are strong and have a potential for violence. Most of the population regards their settlements as ‘gardens’ only and refer ritually to their sacred houses in the mountains. The majority of the hamlets are Kemaq speakers.

**Raeheu**

Raeheu, in the sub-district of Kailako, is seen as the ritual center of the former kingdom of Kailako. It is located in a rural area, the population is Kemaq speaking and has a strong identity with the former kingdom of Kailako. Raeheu is reachable by road from Maliana only in the dry season.

**Tapo/Memo**

Tapo is located in the sub-district of Bobonaro. Its inhabitants are Bunaq speakers. Historically they had formed a separate entity and were ‘under’ the kingdom of Ayasa for a certain period. Their location is far up in the mountains of the Bobonaro Sub-district. As the place became inaccessible for us in the rainy season we moved to the village of Memo. Memo nowadays belongs to the Maliana Sub-district. It is located on the other side of the mountain of Tapo. The people of Memo originally descended from Tapo to grow wet rice in the lower areas. Ritually they still have a strong connection to their families in Tapo.
Appendix B: Amount of interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Cycle 2</th>
<th>Cycle 3</th>
<th>Total number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aileu</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baucau</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobonaro</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Experiences of Research Assistants

An Early to Commence
By: Fernando A. da Costa

An interesting research
As a Timorese, I was always feeling proud of my identity, but this is not enough if I don’t even know what my culture is about. Now, after having conducted the research I feel more confident. I don’t know all the cultural systems of my country, but I know part of them.

For a long time it seemed like the intellectuals abandoned this nation’s culture, they always referred to examples from outside when they talk about values. Sometimes they also took some development models from outside, thinking they would be good for implementation in East Timor. I think that every model of development must be based on the reality of the life of the Timorese people and it can be dangerous to run a development programme without knowing the culture of the country. The experience in other countries tells us how development models that come from the outside are not necessarily appropriate for Timor.

Through the research, I became aware about the values of East Timorese cultures and these values must be kept until the end of the world.

Destruction of colonialism
In the Portuguese times, cultural systems were destroyed by integrating traditional structures into the government structure. Nevertheless, because several hamlets in Laga didn’t agree to pay taxes to the Portuguese government, the Portuguese re-organised the traditional structure by putting other people into power positions.

Another strategy to take control of the traditional king was by applying de vide e impera. This political strategy was very useful at that time; kingdoms that had war relationships were overtaken by Portuguese power. They put Portuguese-loyal leaders in place. This strategy was used by the Portuguese to organise the war against Dom Boaventura, which is known as the War of Manufahi; this strategy was successful. After the Manufahi War, the Portuguese imposed more kings on several places in East Timor.

The other strategy is to integrate the traditional structure with the government structure, so the traditional power can be controlled by the Portuguese. The liurai became regulo. After the Portuguese integrated traditional systems in to the government bit by bit, the regulo became less powerful. The Portuguese established the sub-district chief and he was taking control over the
The Timorese population settled within groups of Houses, called uma knua, which descend from the same clan. Several knua form a hamlet, several hamlets form a village and several villages form a sub-district.

In Indonesian times, the government strongly suspected the traditional houses and their leaders of being involved in the resistance movement. The sacred houses were a hiding place for people from the clandestine movement and the guerrilla fighters received their power from the sacred house, therefore, they were burnt by Indonesian soldiers. Not only that, the Indonesian military also resettled Timorese people from the mountains down to the places close to the main roads. When people had to move, their sacred houses were abandoned because no one came back to conduct ceremonies again, since they were afraid of the military. If they left their village they were suspected to be in contact with the guerrillas.

Some Timorese are separated from their traditional life since the Indonesian occupation. At the current time, people return to their original life by building their sacred houses again. They commence again with traditional ceremonies in public, without being afraid of the military.

The Indonesians had used the traditional leaders by putting them as “Tokoh Masyarakat” (members of society). Here they had a function as problem solvers.

Rural communities are strongly organised through the traditional structures. People still trust the old structure of the liurai system because the liurai structure is also based on the way of life of the traditional system. Because of this, people in the rural areas believe that the person in the liurai position has to have a relationship with the former liurai. Some say that the “hot chair” has to be passed on through the liurai descendance. The “hot chair” means the position of liurai. Even when democratic elections were launched by CNRT, they didn’t change the traditional structures. The democratic election looked like they destroyed the traditional power inside the community. Nevertheless, even in the election people knew whom they had to vote for. In other places things changed, because the criteria to be liurai was to be literate. Some liurais therefore couldn’t become a candidate. People would still go to the old chefe do suco. They believed in him, because he was appointed by the ancestors. That is what the ‘hot chair’ means; only liurai descendants can be in this position, or misfortune will happen.

*The Timorese People*

The two biggest language groups in East Timor are Mambai and Makassae. The Mambai people occupy most of the mountain areas in central East Timor. The language used most is Tetum.

The Mambai people are in Aileu, Ermera, Ainaro, Liquisa partly, Dili and Manufahi. Moreover, all
In terms of traditional issues, Makassae people also still believe in their sacred items and respect their traditional leaders. Laga is a good example of Makassae people in the eastern side. Here the UNTAET structure exists and doesn’t influence the traditional powers. Because of people’s trust in traditional structures, they pass on their protests the same way. When the people have issues to be addressed, they put it straight through to the DAC (District Advisory Council), and the regulo of Laga was in charge of that.

*CEP council - a new structure*

Generally people are happy with the CEP programme and they wish that the CEP programme will be continued. We often heard positive things; but I think people are flexible, if the CEP money doesn’t arrive fast enough, they immediately speak negatively. The important point that should be passed on through the CEP programme is to see the needs inside the community and planning sustainable programs.

What I want to suggest, is that the CEP program should look to the community needs and should have social awareness. Community needs also imply that the products of the projects need a market. People often complain that their agricultural products can not be sold.

The CEP council should become a sector to handle rural development. They just need the skills to run programs.

**Personal Experience as a Researcher**

By: Estanislau Babo Soares

*Pengantar*

Bagi setiap bangsa, budaya merupakan pedoman yang didalamnya tercangkup seperangkat nilai dasar yang hidup dan selalu diyakini akan kebenarannya. Perangkat nilai ini menjadi LANDASAN PIJAKAN yang mengatur segala bentuk tata cara pergaulan, kebiasaan-kebiasaan dan pandangan pandangan seseorang atau sekelompok orang terhadap dirinya, kelompoknya dan dunia sekelilingnya.

Menyadari arti pentingnya ini maka, wajar, setiap orang dituntut untuk mempelajari budayanya sendiri dan karenanya juga sebagai identitas unik yang dapat membedakannya dari suku bangsa lain. Persoalan yang satu ini lebih penting lagi bagi suatu kelompok masyarakat seperti, orang-orang Timor Loro’Sae, manakala negerinya baru saja melepaskan diri dari belenggu penjajahan.

Dalam periode periode jajahan, pendudukan dan transisi menuju kemerdekaan, telah terjadi pembauran (akulturasi) nilai-nilai budaya bangsa dengan nilai budaya asing yang sudah tentu tidak
Konsekwensinya, sejumlah nilai produk import telah kita telang bulat-bulat begitu saja dan dipraktekkan dalam hidup keseharian. Bodohnya, kadang-kadang ada diantara kita yang merasa bangga menggunakan milik orang lain. Nampannya selama ini kita belum memahami dan menjawai niali-nilai budaya kita sendiri sehingga kita begitu mudah terbuai dengan hal-hal baru yang sesunggunya kita memiliki tetapi tidak ingin dikembangkan.

Keseluruhan dampak yang telah disebutkan di atas terbungkus dalam satu kemasan yang disebut ‘Krisis Identitas Budaya’ yang untuk sementara waktu, boleh dianggap persoalan sepele tetapi, untuk jangka panjang, proses ini menjadi masalah yang tidak semudah kita bayangkan dan penyelesaiannya-pun tidak dapat di simsalabingkan.

Bila hal ini tetap kita abaikan niscaya, pembangunan bangsa ini akan didirikan bukan diatas nilai budaya kita sendiri sehingga untuk jangka panjang, sudah pasti, kita akan menghadapi hantaman badai dan ombak yang tak kunjung berakhir.

Berdasarkan alasan diatas, kiranya pengalaman mengenal diri sendiri ini disertakan dalam laporan penelitian dan dapat menjadi bahan cerita kecil bagi mereka yang ingin melakukan hal yang sama. Tulisan ini hanya sebagai bagian kecil dari laporan penelitian dan tujuannya, peneliti ingin menampilkan sedikit pengalaman yang diperoleh selama proses penelitian. Tentu, isinya juga tidak menyentuh substansi hasil penelitian, di dalamnya hanya memaparkan pengalaman pribadi peneliti sewaktu hidup dan bergaul dengan orang-orang kampung, khususnya di wilayah Bobonaro dan Baucau.

Kami juga menyadari bahwa, suatu cerita pengalaman tidak selalu penting dalam suatu penelitian tetapi, kami ingin meyakinkan bahwa sebagai orang negeri Loro’Sae, kami merasa mendapat kehormatan ketika diundang turut membantu dalam penelitian ini. Paling tidak melalui, kami dapat mempertebal jati diri kami sebagai seorang TIMOR OAN. Kami merasa yakin bahwa, banyak dari saudara-saudari kami di negeri ini yang belum memperoleh kesempatan layaknya kami dapatkan, oleh karena itu merupakan kebanggaan bagi kami jika masih ada anak-anak LURICO ASSU WAIN yang sudi meluangkan waktu untuk melakukan hal yang sama.

Derita tiada akhir
Ketika saya menginjakkan kaki di daerah Bobonaro, perasaan bangga dan sedih segera silih berganti menyaksikan keindahan alam dan keramatamahan orang-orangnya yang tetap ceria dan bersemangat di atas puing-puing reruntuhan. Ternyata, daerah ini termasuk salah satu wilayah pelampiasan amarah Millisi dan ABRI yang secara telak telah kalah dan menelant pil pahit hasil Referendum.
Dua tahun terakhir sebelum referendum, saya pernah berangkat Builalo untuk beberapa hari sehingga, saya tahu persis keadaan orang-orang di negeri seberang yang tinggal di perbatasan, mereka benar-benar lebih melatar dari kita. Orang-orang tersebut selama ini menyimpan dendam yang mendalam terhadap tetangganya Timor Loro’Sae, jadi tidak mustahil, kesempatan itu telah dimanfaatkan dengan sangat baik untuk menyapuh bersih semua harta yang ditemui.


Beberapa keluarga yang beruntung, bisa mendapatkan bantuan dari UNHCR berupa, peralatan bangunan rumah darurat yang sangat sederhana sedangkan. Bagi yang belum kebagian, terpaksa harus menumpang pada keluarga yang lain. Yang jelas, ketika itu yang terpenting bagi penduduk, bagaimana orang bisa melindungi sanak keluarganya dari teriknya panas matahari dan angin yang sewaktu-waktu dapat mengancam.


Semua kenyataan ini segera mengingatkan saya pada cerita-cerita perang saudara tahun 1975 bahwa, konsekvensi dari perang telah meninggalkan serentetan masalah yang sulit dilupakan. Bukan saja karena orang kehilangan harta benda dan sanak saudara yang entah di mana rimbanya tetapi, lebih dari pada itu, untuk beberapa tahun bahkan bisa sampai puluhan tahun keadaan psikologis
Kedua kelompok itu termasuk yang telah lama dilatih secara milliter oleh ABRI. Mereka cukup memiliki disiplin dan tahu sistim komando sehingga, tidak terlalu bernafsu bertindak secara babi buta terhadap rakyat. Berbeda dengan rekan-rekan mereka dari Distrik lain yang gemar mengkomsumsi pil anjing gila dan tidak mengenal kata kompromi, yang satu ini justru masih bisa diajak berkolusi dengan cara halus khas Indonesia, ada uang semua beres.

Issu yang senter ketika itu bahwa, beberapa pejabat pemerintah putra daerah dan pihak Gereja berhasil menjinakan luapan emosi Millisi dan ABRI yang ingin membumi hanguskan kota.Caranya, para komandan dari kelompok tersebut didekati dan diberi uang dalam jumlah yang tidak sedikit.Ternyata strategi ini berhasil sehingga, korban manusia pada rakyat kecil hampir tidak ditemukan dan sebagian besar rumah penduduk bisa di selamatkan dari amukan api.


Apa yang dikatakan sangat beralasan. Saya sering berjalan ke pasar. Terlihat bahwa banyak sayuran dan buah-buahan yang di jual dalam jumlah yang banyak dengan harga murah tetapi, hanya sedikit yang bisa dibeli orang. Kadang-kadang, banyak yang layu dan busuk sehingga terpaksa di bawah pulang oleh pemiliknya.

Demikian juga, tingginya angka pengganguran dan kurangnya lapangan kerja yang berdampak pada rendahnya perputaran uang di pasar, membuat orang bisa menghalalkan segala cara untuk mendapatkan uang. Sebagai misal, ketika saya dan seorang teman peneliti pergi ke salah satu kecamatan dengan menggunakan mobil, di tengah jalan, kami di hadang oleh sejumlah pemuda yang sedang memotong pohon penghalang jalan. Mereka meminta sejumlah uang kepada kami dan mengatakan, jika ingin melalui jalan ini, terlebih dahulu, kami harus berikan sejumlah uang kepada mereka yang telah capek memotong pohon penghalang jalan. Mendengar kata-kata itu, kami mulai protes tetapi apabila bukan, kami harus mengejar waktu. Untuk itu, negosiasi pun terjadi dan terpaksa kami membayar sejumlah uang. Walaupun tidak sebesar yang diminta, yang jelas kami telah dipaksa untuk membayar.

Bagi saya, mereka melakukan hal itu karena keterpaksaan. Sebagai orang Timor, saya cukup tahu bahwa, bukan sifat kita melakukan hal-hal seperti itu. Setiap saat saya lewati jalan tersebut, para
Mengenal Jati Diri

Setelah beberapa hari saya dan kedua orang teman saya mengadakan observasi dan berbincang-bincang dengan penduduk untuk mengetahui keadaan secara umum, selalu tiba saatnya bagi kami untuk menyiapkan rencana kegiatan wawancara dengan para sumber dari tingkat Distrik sampai ke Aldeia-aldeia. Inilah kesempatan yang saya nantikan karena, kami akan memperoleh informasi dan cerita-cerita menarik tentang kisah kehidupan orang-orang campung.

Beberapa orang penting segera didaftar namanya untuk dihubungi. Mereka adalah orang-orang yang dianggap tahu seluk beluk kehidupan masyarakat. Di antara mereka yang paling menarik bagi saya adalah para ketua adat, tokoh masyarakat dan bekas raja (liurai) pada zaman portugis. Bukan berarti nara sumber lain tidak penting, tentu semua sangat diperlukan, hanya saja secara pribadi, beberapa orang tersebut, hasil wawancaran pasti mempunyai nilai plus bagi saya karena mereka adalah orang yang tahu adat istiadat dan kebiasaan masyarakatnya.

Kesamaan yang hampir saya temui pada semua tempat yang kami kunjungi adalah, sifat keramatamahan dan rasa cepat akrab dari penduduk. Pada setiap jalan dan lorong yang diliati selalu disambut dengan senyum dan lambai-tambain yang tak henti-hentinya.

Kadang-kadang kami sendiri merasa capek untuk membalasnya karena, dalam sekali perjalanan, puluhan orang yang kami temui di sudut-sudut jalan.

Sering kali dalam perjalanan itu, kami harus berhenti ditengah jalan untuk suatu kepentingan dan jika hal itu dilakukan di dekat rumah-rumah penduduk atau di dekat.

Sejumlah orang, pasti kami dikerumuni oleh orang-orang tersebut atau paling tidak menarik perhatian mereka terutama, dilakukan oleh anak-anak dan ibu-ibu. Dalam benak saya terbayang, orang-orang campung selalu merasa ingin tahu, apa maksud dan tujuan kehadiran orang asing di tempat mereka.

Seorang rekan kami dari Jerman, sering mengeluh, katanya, mengapa kita selalu dilihat dan dikerumuni? Pertanyaan ini selalu diucapkan. Ia menanyakan hal itu karena menurutnya, di Jerman dan Eropa umumnya, orang tidak terbiasa melakukan hal seperti itu karena merasa malu dicap sebagai orang yang suka mengetahui rahasia orang lain. Atas keluhannya ini, kami menjawab bahwa, itulah salah satu perbedaan kebiasaan antara kita. Di negeri kami orang selalu mengganggap wilayah di sekelilingnya adalah rumah sendiri sehingga tuan rumah merasa terpanggil mengetahui tujuan kedatangan tamunya.

Bagi saya, perjalanan ke wilayah Maliana dan Baucau bukan hal yang baru sebab pada masa pendudukan Indonesia, saya telah beberapa kali melakukannya tetapi, untuk menelusuri seluruh


Dalam percakapan biasa, saya mengatakan kepada rekan dari Jerman bahwa, apabila kita berjalan di wilayah di Timor Lor'O'Sae, tanpa membawakan bekal makanan, kita tidak pernah merasa lapar dan haus karena, di setiap rumah yang kita kunjungi, walaupun kita orang asing, pemilik rumah selalu menyediakan air, the atau kopi dan makanan ringan buat kita.

Bahkan pada beberapa tempat yang kami kunjungi, ceritanya lain. Apabila orang yang akan diwawancarai adalah seorang ibu maka minumannya sudah jelas, the atau kopi tetapi, jika itu seorang bapak atau beberapa orang laki-laki, kadang-kadang kami disodori arak dan tuak mutin.
suka mendengar dari kita dan mereka akan menceritakan pengalamannya jika kita lebih dahulu menceritakan punya kita.


Saya juga mengalami hal yang hampir serupa. Sewaktu saya adakan wawancara dengan seorang tua adat di kecamatan Venelale, Baucau.Ia justru menunjukan sikap marah kepada saya dan orang-orang yang hadir di situ. Saya memperkenalkan diri dan menjelaskan tujuan saya, setelah itu saya membuat beberapa pertanyaan kepada mereka tetapi, ia diam sambil mengexpresikan raut wajah yang tidak bersahabat.

Untuk membuatnya merasa akrab,saya mencoba memperkenalkan latar belakang keluarga saya yang panyang lebar. Setelah mendengar cerita saya, ia mulai memberanikan diri untuk bicara. Seketika hati saya terasa legah karena perubahan sikapnya itu tetapi, ternyata dugaan saya meleset. Bapak itu justru mengatakan dengan sangat sopen kepada saya bahwa, walaupun ia mengetahui cerita nenek moyangnya tetapi, ia tidak berani ceritakan kepada saya karena takut, kematian segera menjemputnya.

Berbeda dengan yang disebutkan diatas, pada beberapa tempat lainnya justru saya memperoleh cerita-cerita yang sangat menarik. Cerita-cerita ini ada yang membuat bulu kuduk saya merinding ketika mendengarnya.Ini bukan disebabkan oleh perasaan takut, heran atau lucu tetapi, karena saya merasa bangga mengetahui berbagai kisah kehidupan nenek moyang kita.

Para orang tua selalu menuturkan kisah-kisah itu dengan penuh semangat.Mereka sungguh bernostalgia dengan kisah yang diceritakan.Karena terlalu bersemangat, ada yang menganjurkan kepada kami untuk menyebar luaskan kisah kehidupan nenek moyangnya ke seluruh dunia.
serius. Masalah seperti ini sulit terpecahkan karena setiap orang selalu ingin mempertahankan argumennya berdasarkan cerita lisan diketahuiannya.

Bagi saya, banyaknya perbedaan cerita diantara mereka merupakan kandungan kekayaan kekayaan budaya yang kita miliki. Banyaknya etnik di negeri ini seperti, Bunaq, Makasae,Kemak, Mambae, Fatalucu dan lain sebagainya. Semuanya pasti memiliki cerita yang berbeda-bedan dan menarik. Bila itu kita kembangkan, saya yakin kebudayaan bangsa kita akan mempunyai nilai yang amat tinggi.

Saya juga selalu merasa bangga melihat kebiasaan para nara sumber mempertahankan pendapatnya walaupun diantara sesama saudara mereka sendiri. Buat saya, itu merupakan hal klasik bagi kita orang Timor Loro’Sae yang memang suka berbeda dan tidak mudah menyerah begitu saja. Saya sering membayangkan, sifat yang satu ini mempunyai keuntungan tersendiri bagi kita untuk membangun suatu negara yang demokratik karena negara yang demokratis hanya bisa dibangun dari perbedaan-perbedaan dan perbedaan ini juga yang akan memperkuat pengetahuan kita tentang hidup berdemokrasi.


Saya pernah merasakan keterimaan masyarakat kita terhadap orang lain sangat berniali. Meskipun ada tempat di hati setiap penghuni negeri ini untuk menerima semua orang dari negara manapun. Kedatangan bangsa Portugis ratusan tahun yang lalu, pada mulanya disambut dengan baik oleh masyarakat kita. Walau pun pada akhirnya sering terjadi pemberontakan-pemberontakan lokal, toh itu disebabkan cara-cara penindasan di luar batas kemanusiaan.

Pendudukan bangsa Indonesia secara paksa dan illegal, walaupun telah membawahi penderitaan bagi rakyat kecil di negeri ini tetapi, bagi orang-orang kampung, penjajah yang satu ini tetap dianggap sebagai saudara yang harus dibina hubungan dengannya. Demikian juga, dalam masa transisi menuju kemerdekaan, negeri ini didatangi oleh berbagai orang dari berbagai belahan
akan kita bangung diatas identitas sendiri dan sanggup berjalan bersama-sama di barisan depan dengan bangsa-bangsa lain yang tinggi nilai kebudayaannya.
Appendix D: Future Thoughts

We asked villagers about their thoughts about the future. The following are important points for the future expressed by the villagers, in order of their occurrence:

Modified system of traditions

We should go back to our traditions. They are the basis for us to work together in-between families. Then we can go to the upper structures. Then we have modifications. The basis has to come from the traditions; it has to be connected with modernity. I like the traditional way, we are together in a family.

The liurais are already poisoned. Their self-respect has disappeared. They were used too much by other powers. We want to combine the modern concept with the traditions. If the liurai family person has no charisma, we should elect someone else. But we will still honour the liurai uma lulik.

People are fairly rich in terms of land, buffaloes, gold, but these things are only good for traditional ceremonies. This is still important for the people. It shouldn’t be that way anymore; the traditions today should help so we can develop. People should be given the choice between the traditions and the modern life.

In Bobonaro many people still believe in the Traditional Elders and sacred houses, more than they trust the CNRT. Traditional powers have to be modified because in the villages the people respect the power hierarchy very much.

Keep traditional powers

The international world has to learn about Timorese culture, as it is nothing that stays behind, it is involved in everything. Traditions are something that is normal for the people, they are not just left behind with the elders, but also lived by the young people. They are the people’s identity of every area. They need to be developed so we can show them to the international world, so the Timorese identity can be seen through its culture.

The young people have migrated to Dili, if they come back now; they want to return to traditions. The ties of the families here are very strong.

The power should be like in Portuguese times again. The liurai and dato should be appointed again according to their uma lulik (from the highest one).

The liurai is not democratic and it will depend on the political leaders, whether they want to raise the liurai again.

Democracy
We have to create the feeling of unity in TL. So what we fought for in 24 years can actually run well.

*Development in the economy*

The modern life is more economic. If we only live the traditional way it is too expensive.

*Peace*

In 1975 there was a lot of blood spilled. The same happened again in Aug. 1999. The people only want to live their lives in peace.

We hope that the political leaders see the suffering of the people and don’t force things upon them, from what party ever.
Appendix E: Resume of researchers

David Alves Lopes, is originally from Los Palos, uma lulik Tailuro-rato, uma kain Titilari. He conducted studies in Social Anthropology at the University of Udayana in Bali, Indonesia. He interrupted his studies following the results of the Popular Consultation and his final dissertation is pending. He had work experience with civil society organisations in Bali and in Los Palos. He speaks Fataluku, Tetum, Indonesian and English. After completing this research he went back to Bali to finish his training.

Estanislau Bobo Soares is originally from Ermera. He studied Political Sciences at the East Timor University. He finished his studies but has not yet graduated. He worked for five years as civil servant in Dili and was hamlet chief in Dili. He speaks Mambai, Tetum, Indonesian and Portuguese. After completing this research he joined the UNTAET/OCPI Television Unit.

Fernando da Costa was born in Dili and is originally from uma lulik Uaikana in Viqueque. He conducted four years of study in Statistics at ISTP in Java (Indonesia) but could not finish following the Popular Consultation. He has completed several courses in journalism. He had work experience with different civil society organisations in Dili, Liquica and Baucau and worked with the UN Resident Co-ordinator Office as NGO Liason Officer for the Common Country Assessment. He speaks Tetum, Indonesian and English. After completing this research he joined UNDP.

Cesar Melito dos Santos Martines, is originally from Aileu, uma lulik Hohul, uma lisan Dilbaku. He conducted three years of agricultural studies in Udayana University in Bali (Indonesia) but was obliged to interrupt them after the Popular Consultation. He has work experience in a human rights civil society organisation in Aileu and had recently worked as an interpreter in the Aileu District Administration. He has also worked as a teacher in a junior high school in Aileu. He speaks Mambai, Tetum, Indonesian and English. After completing this research he went to the East Timor University in Dili to complete his studies.

Tanja Hohe is a German Anthropologist with a Masters degree in Indonesian Studies, Social Anthropology and Sociology from the University of Frankfurt. She lectured at the Universities of Frankfurt and Leipzig. She has conducted anthropological field research on local value systems in the Moluccan Islands (Eastern Indonesia). In East Timor she worked with UNAMET and UNTAET. After this research she joined UNTAET Political Affairs Unit. She can be contacted through e mail: thohe99@gmx.de

Sofi Ospina, is a Colombian Anthropologist with a Masters degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology at the Sorbonne University in Paris and in Development Studies at the University of
## GLOSSARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adat</strong> (Ind.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional customs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administrador</strong> (Port.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>District chief in the Portuguese administrative structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ahimatan</strong> (Tetum)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Literally, ‘hearth’; used to denote people of one descent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aldeia</strong> (Port.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hamlet in the transitional period; name given by the clandestine structure immediately after the ballot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ata</strong> (Tetum)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Slave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bararin</strong> (Makassae)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ritual leader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barlake</strong> (Tetum)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiations and agreement between two umakains on the goods to be exchanged for the marriage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bei</strong> (Kemaq)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ritual leader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belis</strong> (Tetum)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Exchange goods paid by Wife Taker group for marriage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bosop</strong> (Kemaq)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sacred Stone place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bunaq</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Language group in the western districts of Bobonaro and Suai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bupati</strong> (Ind.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>District Administrator in the Indonesian administrative system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cabu</strong> (Port.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Portuguese military rank.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cadera manas</strong> (Tetum)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Literally, ‘hot chair’; used for the position of the political leaders that exclusively follow the descent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camat</strong> (Ind.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-district chief in Indonesian administrative system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cawat</strong> (Ind.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Loin-cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Celcom</strong> (Port.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hamlet leader in the clandestine structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<td>-----------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conselho do Suco</td>
<td>CEP Village Council.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dato</td>
<td>Term for different kinds of power positions. Mostly used in Portuguese times for village or hamlet chiefs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desa</td>
<td>Village in the Indonesian administrative system.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dom</td>
<td>Portuguese term for the chief or king of a kingdom (also known as regulo, rei, liurai).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dusun</td>
<td>Hamlet in the Indonesian administrative system.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ebi himagomon</td>
<td>Ritual leaders in Bunaq societies.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ferik</td>
<td>Senior woman.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feto san</td>
<td>Wife Taker.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frente de Politica Interna</td>
<td>Internal Political Front, or FPI.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galoli</td>
<td>Language group in the districts of Manatutu, Baucau and part of Aileu.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kabupaten</td>
<td>District in Indonesian administrative system.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Katuas adat</td>
<td>Traditional elders.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kecamatan</td>
<td>Sub-district in Indonesian administrative system.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kemaq</td>
<td>Language group in the districts Bobonaro and Ermera.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kepala desa</td>
<td>Village chief in the Indonesian administrative system.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kepala dusun</td>
<td>Hamlet chief in the Indonesian administrative system.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kepala RT / rukun tetangga</td>
<td>Neighbourhood chief in the Indonesian administrative system.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuku nain</td>
<td>Ritual leader.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mambai Language group in Aileu.

Matas (Bunaq) Traditional political power.

Mediki Language group in the districts of Baucau and Viqueque.

Merah-putih (Ind.) Red-white; term for the Indonesian flag.

Merdeka (Ind.) Freedom.

Naueti Language group in the districts of Viqueque and Baucau.

Nureps: Nucleos Representatives (Port.) Village leader in the clandestine structure.

Organização de Mulheres Timorenses (Port.) OMT: Timorese women’s organisation, under the umbrella of CNRT.

Organização Joventude Timorenses (Port.) OJT: Timorese youths’ organisation under the umbrella of CNRT.

Organização popular de Mulheres Timorenses (Port.) OPMT: Timorese women’s organisation under the umbrella of Fretilin.

Posto (Port.) Sub-district in the Portuguese administrative structure and in the current transitional structure.

Povoação (Port.) Hamlet in the Portuguese administrative structure

Rai moris (Tetum) Ancient land.

Raja (Ind.) King

Reformasi (Ind.) Reformation.

Regulo / Reglo (Port.) King, liurai, Dom.

Reino (Port.) Kingdom; also refers to people without power in the traditional power structure (commoners).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suco (Port.)</td>
<td>Village in Portuguese administrative structure; also in the current transitional administrative structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmil / engoni’il (Bunaq)</td>
<td>Traditional political authority in Bunaq societies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tata (Kemaq)</td>
<td>Traditional political authority in Kemaq societies, term also used for other positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tata-bei lelosae (Kemaq)</td>
<td>Eastern king in Kemaq kingdom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tata-bei lelotu (Kemaq)</td>
<td>Western king in Kemaq kingdom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tais (Tetum)</td>
<td>Traditional weavings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukun (Tetum)</td>
<td>Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uma kain (Tetum)</td>
<td>Unilineal kinship group (lineage). It also refers in terms of the State or modern society to the nuclear family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uma knua (Tetum)</td>
<td>Kinship group that resides in a common settlement where the original House is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uma lisan (Tetum)</td>
<td>Sacred house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uma lulik (Tetum)</td>
<td>Sacred house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uma mane (Tetum)</td>
<td>Literally, male House; Wife Giver group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uma metan (Galoli)</td>
<td>Literally, black house; specific sacred house in Galoli area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uma mutin (Galoli)</td>
<td>Literally ‘white house’, specific sacred house in Galoli area. This expression also refers to the house where the ‘outsider’ dignitaries are received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upacara (Ind.)</td>
<td>Ceremony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waimua</td>
<td>Language group in Baucau and Viqueque district.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wehale</td>
<td>Important kingdom in central Timor, when the Portuguese first</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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