



## **SUMMARY OF PROGRAMA NASIONAL DEZENVOLVIMENTU SUKU (PNDS)**

The Programa Nasional Dezenvolvimentu Suku (PNDS), or National Program for Village Development is a nation-wide community development program of the Government of Timor-Leste (GoTL). The program was launched in June 2012 and valued at US\$300 million (2014-22), it contributes to rural development by funding the “missing link” to services - basic village infrastructure - and providing jobs and training. Through PNDS, the GoTL provides grants to villages in Timor-Leste to plan, construct and manage their own small-scale infrastructure projects. A PNDS Secretariat within the Ministry of State Administration is responsible for coordination and implementation of PNDS.

PNDS follows core principles that govern the design and implementation of the program.

- Poverty Reduction
- Community Driven Development
- Community Management / Ownership
- Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
- Transparency & Accountability
- Participatory Learning
- Environmental Protection

Based on the PNDS the Decree Law, the subsidy amount that each Suku receives annually ranging from a minimum of US\$40,000 through to a maximum of US\$70,000, consisting of two parts - 1) operational Funds to support training, meetings, incentives and administration costs, and 2) the core grant covering Infrastructure to cover the costs of materials, transport, tools and labour. The subsidy amount is determined using a formula considering distance from the municipal capacity and population size.

PNDS is implemented through a 12 step implementation cycle. Projects are planned and implemented by the community, and aim to include broad based participation, including women and people with disability. The mechanism provides a block grant which is sent directly to communities. The grant is managed by a community committee linked to the Suco (village) Council. The overall process is facilitated by PNDS Subdistrict facilitators who are public servants. An indicative menu covering five main sectors of water and sanitation, roads and bridges, small scale irrigation systems, rehabilitation of schools and clinics including small scale maintenance is used to guide options available for villages to determine their priorities. Transparency and accountability are emphasised through all stages of the process. Intensive supervision and monitoring throughout the cycle and a complaints handling process ensure accountability against quality standards and financial management. In the last two years the program or mechanism has also been used to deliver the government social assistance program like the *Uma Naroman ba Povu* (UNP) or constructing houses for the vulnerable families.

Inclusion of women, men and people with disability systematically embedded in the PNDS design. Women comprise 40% of the Community Management Team. The implementation process ensures that a women’s only priority setting meeting takes place and one women’s priority should be funded. The program sets a target of at least 40% female participation in PNDS activities (meetings and labour).

The Government of Australia has provided technical support for the delivery of PNDS since 2012. The current program - PARTISIPA - is helping to strengthen GoTL PNDS systems (HR, IT, PFM) and the capabilities of GoTL's 500 PNDS staff, in areas like social inclusion, M&E, engineering and finance. The Government of Australia has also provided direct budget support of AUD 27 million or USD 20 million to the government of Timor Leste in combatting the impact of Covid 19 pandemic, and that financial support has been executed through PNDS mechanism.