



MINISTRY OF STATE, COORDINATION OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS
COMMISSION FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
TIMOR-LESTE



NATIONAL ACTION PLAN
FOR CHILDREN
IN TIMOR-LESTE
2016-2020

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National Action Plan for Children in Timor-Leste (2016-2020)

May 2017

The National Action Plan for Children (NAPC) in Timor-Leste (2016-2020) has been developed by the Government of Timor-Leste with technical support of UNICEF. The Government of Norway provided financial support for the development of NAPC.

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ACRONYMS

BEmOC	Basic Emergency Obstetric Care
CEmOC	Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric Care
CICL	Children in Conflict with the Law
COBs	Concluding Observations
CPN	Child Protection Network
CPO	Child Protection Officer
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
EGRA	Early Grades Reading Assessment
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ENBC	Essential New Born Care
FCJ	Forum Komunikasaun Joventude (Youth Communication Forum)
GDS	General Directorate of Statistics
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
HINI	High Impact Nutrition Interventions
IMCI	Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ILO	International Labor Organization
KDL	Komisária Ba Direitus Labarik (Commission for the Rights of the Child)
MECAS	Minister of State Coordinator of Social Affairs
MFAC	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery
MCIE	Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Environment
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoED	Ministry of Economy and Development
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoH	Ministry of Health
Mol	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoPW	Ministry of Public Works
MSA	Ministry of State Administration
MSG	Mothers' Support Group
MSS	Ministry of Social Solidarity
MITC	Ministry of Infrastructure, Transportation and Communication
MTCI	Ministry of Tourism, Commerce and Industry
NESP	National Education Strategic Plan
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NHSSP	National Health Sector Strategic Plan
NSRMNCAH	National Strategy on Reproductive, Maternal, New-born, Child and Adolescent Health
ODF	Open Defecation Free
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPAC	Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
OPSC	Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography
PDHJ	Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice
RDTL	Republic Democratic of Timor-Leste
RMNCAH	Reproductive, Maternal, New-born, Child and Adolescent Health
SISCA	Integrated Community Health Services
SSSC	Secretary of State for Social Communication
SSSSEPW	Secretary of State for the Support and Socio-Economic Promotion for Women

SSVTPE	Secretary of State for Vocational Training, Policy and Employment
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNCRC	UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VPU	Vulnerable Persons' Unit
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

FOREWORD



This is the first cross-sectorial National Action Plan to realize the rights of every child in Timor-Leste and this is a truly historical achievement. I would like to congratulate all of you from all Ministries and Institutions of the Government, Civil Society, NGOs, UN Agencies, Development Partners, and foremost our beloved children who actively engaged and who significantly contributed to the development of the National Action Plan for Children.

Children are the future of our Nation and our World in this highly inter-connected global society. The Government, through the Commission for the Rights of the Child, has expressed our commitment to progressively building an enabling environment that respects, protects and fulfills the rights of all children particularly children living in a disadvantaged situation. The National Action Plan for Children is a demonstration and commitment of government's recognition of the children's rights to survival, development, protection, participation, and attain their full potential without leaving any single child in the country.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) clearly articulate and recognize children's rights within the goals. The Timor-Leste's National Action Plan for Children resonates the same SDGs which directly touch on the lives of children. In fact, each SDG goal is inter-linked with each other, as are children's lives. Therefore, it is important for us to coordinate our efforts beyond sectorial borders.

This National Action Plan for Children will serve as a trustful companion in this journey. The NAPC is also aligned with the second five year-term (2016-2020) of the National Strategic Development Plan (SDP) 2011-2030. This is a critical period for a post-conflict country like Timor-Leste to fully transit out of fragility and build stability and prosperity towards Sustainable Development Goals. Investing particularly in children is key to achieving long-term goals and vision, as they represent nearly half of the population, and the nation's future relies on this generation. And this future will be better when we all work together for our children.

The National Action Plan for Children (NAPC) harmonizes its timeline with this critical second phase of the SDP. While this National Action Plan for Children in Timor-Leste provides the vision and road-map of inter-ministerial coordination mechanism, each responsible ministry plays a critical role to lead the operationalization and implementation of NAPC through annual planning at national and sub-national levels. When these vehicles go together, then we can greatly progress in the realization of the rights of every child in the country.

Let us work together for future generations, our today's and tomorrow's children.

Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo



Prime Minister

MESSAGES



I am pleased to present the National Action Plan for Children in Timor-Leste 2016-2020 as a first inter-ministerial national strategic plan focusing on children. We appreciate all stakeholders who engaged in the development of this plan, including Civil Society, international and national NGOs, and children and youth of the country, Government at both central and municipality levels, UN Agencies for their strong cooperation from the initial phase to the revision and finalization of the National Action Plan for Children in Timor-Leste 2016-2020. Without this consolidated effort, the development of National Action Plan for Children in Timor-Leste would not have been possible.

The National Action Plan for Children was approved by the Council of Ministers on 31st January 2017 as a result of strong commitment of the Government of Timor-Leste for full realization of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), which Government of Timor-Leste ratified in 2003. This National Action Plan for Children also provides a useful reference to understand the situation of children in Timor-Leste and actions to follow up based on the CRC and the recommendations received in 2015 from the independent body of UN Committee on the Rights of the Child which is part of an international Human Rights monitoring mechanism. In fact, the development of National Action Plan for Children was one of the key recommendations to the Government of Timor-Leste from UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2015.

The Ministry, through the Commission for the Rights of the Child, will facilitate inter-ministerial collaboration and monitoring according to the National Action Plan for Children in Timor-Leste. The Commission for the Rights of the Child was established under the IV Constitutional Government of Timor-Leste in 2009 to facilitate the government's commitment to CRC. The following V Constitutional Government policy shifted the National Commission for the Rights of the Child from previous Ministry of Justice to current Ministry of State, Coordination of Social Affairs (MECAS) in order to address cross-sectorial issues of children's rights. Based on this progressive effort of the VI and V Constitutional Government, present VI Constitutional Government further enhanced the enabling environment through adaption of the NAPC together with inter-ministerial Coordination and Monitoring Team (CMT) which stipulated in Chapter VI of the NAPC.

Through consolidated effort, we can achieve better results for children by maximizing our limited resources while upholding our vision high for the children where all children without single exception will live in a loving and caring family and community, enjoy their full rights to identity, health, nutrition, and quality education, protected, and fulfill their right to participation and free to express themselves.



H. E. António da Conceição

Minister of State, Coordinator of Social Affairs and Minister of Education

MESSAGES



The National Action Plan for Children (NAPC) in Timor-Leste reaffirms our commitment to protect and promote the rights of children. We extend our sincere appreciation to the Government of Norway for their financial support through UNICEF Timor-Leste who also provided extensive technical support throughout the journey.

In order to hear the needs and aspiration of the people, we started the journey of developing NAPC through community consultations conducted by the staff of the Commission for the Rights of the Child in municipalities.

The voices of community members, especially children and youth have been invaluable for the process of developing NAPC and will be equally important to monitoring and accountability during the implementation.

Following the community consultations, the National Workshops among government line agencies and Municipality Offices were conducted to discuss the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) on the implementation of CRC in Timor-Leste. The four thematic priorities were drawn from the Concluding Observations of the UNCRC as 1) Child protection issues and concerns, 2) Child health and nutrition and adolescent's health, 3) Pre-school education and basic education and 4) Child and youth participation. The participants analyzed the thematic priorities using a causality analysis tool and later on developed the key strategies in a matrix based on their sector strategic plans. This was followed by Results Based Management (RBM) training to strengthen capacity to link planning and expected results. For the finalization of the NAPC, a national consultation was held with international and local NGOs and with government representatives in order to cooperate their valuable feedback as important partners to implement NAPC in Timor-Leste.

The five-year timeline stipulated in the NAPC is aligned with the reporting cycle of UN Convention of the Rights of the Child in 2020. The NAPC will serve our Government to strategically plan, implement, monitor and report the progress of the realization of children's rights in Timor-Leste. This five year period is also a critical second implementation stage 2016-2020 of the National Strategic Development Plan involving the three key directives including Human Resources. As our children and youth are future leaders of the country, it is a critical period for all of us to ensure children are developing their full potential according to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and our national vision for children. In the implementation and monitoring of the NAPC, the Commission for the Rights of the Child of Timor-Leste is fully committed to take a coordination and facilitation role by regularly inviting all stakeholders in a child's interest as a joint effort to fully realize children's rights. National development is obviously seen from the smile of a child. Together we empower each child because the future of Timor-Leste relies on Timorese children.

The Commissioner for the Rights of the Child acknowledged the development of NAPC through participative and collaborative process with key ministries such as MSS, MoE, MoH, MoJ, MCIE, Mol, MSA, SSVTPE, SSYS, SSSSEPW and autonomy institution of General/Public Prosecutor and PDHJ. We all have one thought, improves children's live. Together we strengthen each child because, we can see the prosperity of people through children's smile.

Maria G. Barreto
Commissioner for the Rights of the Child

VISION FOR CHILDREN

(Collectively defined by the participants from Government Ministries and Institutions during the National Workshop on the National Action Plan for Children held 29-31 March 2016 in Dili, Timor-Leste)

IMAGINE A TIMOR-LESTE WHERE ALL CHILDREN...

- Live in a loving and caring family and community
- Enjoy their full rights to identity, health, nutrition, and quality education
- Protected from violence, abuse, corporal punishment, discrimination, trafficking, early marriage and risky labor
- Fulfill their right to participation and free to express themselves



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I. INTRODUCTION

The National Action Plan for Children (NAPC) 2016-2020 of the Republic Democratic of Timor-Leste (RDTL) is a road map outlining how to progressively build an enabling environment that respects, protects and fulfills the rights of all boys and girls in the country particularly of children living in a disadvantaged situation. It is a demonstration of government's recognition of the children's right to survival, development, protection and participation, and children's right to attain their full potential. The NAPC adheres to the guiding principles of non-discrimination, best interest, survival and development, and views of the child of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It reflects a shift from a "need-based" to a "rights based" approach.

The NAPC brings together the individual commitments of all Ministries and Institutions of the Government into a collective whole, and consequently harmonizes the child-related goals, targets, strategies and timelines. This alignment desires to bring forth greater impact on the lives of children in Timor-Leste.

In September 2015, world leaders attending the world summit in New York adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that took effect on 1st January 2016. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development clearly articulate and recognize children's rights within the goals. The Timor-Leste NAPC resonates the same SDGs which directly touch on the lives of children as below (detailed relevant targets are included into sections IV and V of this document).

- SDG 1** : End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- SDG 2** : End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture
- SDG 3** : Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages
- SDG 4** : Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all
- SDG 5** : Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- SDG 6** : Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- SDG 7** : Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- SDG 8** : Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- SDG 10** : Reduce inequality within and among countries
- SDG 11** : Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- SDG 13** : Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- SDG 16** : Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- SDG 17** : Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

The NAPC will serve as a guide for policy makers, planning and programming officials in preparing policies and programs for children by setting the national agenda and priorities for children of Timor-Leste in the next five years and outlines the course of action that the Government will take to ensure the achievement of these priorities.

These priorities for children for Timor-Leste in the next five years, 2016-2020, as drawn from the Concluding Observations (COBs) by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC) (please see Annex 2), focus on:

1. Child protection issues and concerns
2. Child health and nutrition and adolescent's health
3. Pre-school education and basic education
4. Child and youth participation

The NAPC was developed with the collective efforts of National Government Ministries and Municipality Offices headed by the Commission for the Rights of the Child with technical inputs and support from the UNICEF Timor-Leste Country Office.

The process began in February 2016 with community consultations conducted by the staff of the Commission for the Rights of the Child in municipalities. These consultations were part of the CRC awareness raising campaign where the parents and children were asked what their dreams for children were. A National Workshop among government line agencies and Municipality Offices was conducted in 2016 to discuss the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) on the implementation of CRC in Timor-Leste. The thematic priorities were drawn from the Concluding Observations of the UNCRC. The participants analyzed the thematic priorities using a causality analysis tool and later on developed the key strategies in a matrix based on their sector strategic plans. A national consultation was held with international and local NGOs and a finalization workshop with government representatives in June 2016.



Photos: Community consultations prior to the National Workshop on CAP, March 2016; © UNICEF Timor-Leste/2016/ttakahashi

Organization of the National Action Plan for Children in Timor-Leste

The first three sections of the NAPC present the introduction, background/rationale, and brief description of the legal/legislative framework that serves as the foundation of the NAPC. Following section of the NAPC addresses the general measures of implementation, enabling environment, noted by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child such as the issues related to legislation, coordination, allocation of resources, data collection, and independent monitoring. It also includes the need to address the issues related to the CRC principles of non-discrimination, best interest of the child, and views of the child. As an overriding concern, discussion on gender and equality is included in this section

The fifth section is focused on the above mentioned thematic priorities of the NAPC which represent the pressing issues and concerns affecting the children of Timor-Leste. Each of the thematic focus is discussed with the following format

1. Background – describes briefly the child-related problems/issues with key findings
2. Notable accomplishments – enumerates the relevant key gains of the government in the last 5 to 10 years.
3. Key Government commitments - describe briefly key commitment of the government
4. Key strategies – demonstrates in a work plan matrix how the government ministries will address the recommendations of the UNCRC relevant to the child-related problems/issues.

Causality analysis was conducted for each thematic area during the workshop by government participants. This section was included into annex I of this document. The sixth section describes the institutional coordination, monitoring and reporting system.

II. BACKGROUND

In 2003, the Republic Democratic of Timor-Leste (RDTL) ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its two protocols: the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (OPSC) and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC). This ratification reflects the government's strong commitment to its children and their rights enshrined in the Convention and its Optional Protocols. The 3rd Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure came into force globally in 2014, and not yet ratified by the Government of Timor-Leste as of 2016.

In compliance with its obligation to the CRC, the RDTL submitted its first regular report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2007 and has since adopted a number of legislations and policies, and implemented them as part of the ongoing reform of its legal framework. These efforts have contributed to the improvement of the protection, promotion and fulfillment of children's rights in the country.

In November 2013, the RDTL submitted its Combined Second and Third State Party Periodic Report on the implementation of the CRC and its Optional Protocols to the UN Committee on

the Rights of the Child. Covering the period of 2007 to 2012, the report outlines the key measures and initiatives adopted by the RDTL to effectively implement the CRC in the country. The report also reflects how RDTL has taken into consideration the recommendations stipulated in the Committee's Concluding Observations (COBs) on the first regular report. The combined second and third periodic report shows that while the country prioritizes future concerted actions in order to improve the State party's implementation of the CRC, it also recognizes the challenges it faces in terms of fulfilling its obligations.

Following the 70th session of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on September 25th 2015, the RDTL received the COBs on the Second and Third State Party Periodic Report from the Committee for the follow-up actions which need to be undertaken for RDTL to fulfill its responsibility to the CRC and its Optional Protocols, the OPAC and OPSC. One of the key recommendations from the COBs of the Committee for Timor-Leste is to expedite the adoption of a plan of action for children's rights.

This National Action Plan for Children (NAPC) 2016-2020 serves as the collective response of the government to the recommendations stipulated in the UNCRC Concluding Observations on Timor-Leste's implementation of the CRC. It is also designed to serve as the government's roadmap towards the next state party dialogue with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva in 2020.

III. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Since becoming a sovereign state on 20th May 2002, Timor-Leste has ratified most of the human rights treaties developed by the United Nations General Assembly, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and two among existing three of its optional protocols. This government action is fully supported by the Constitution of Timor-Leste, particularly Article 18 of the Constitution which states that "children shall enjoy all rights that are enshrined in international conventions normally ratified or approved by the State". The Article serves as the legal foundation for the universal recognition of children's rights in Timor-Leste. The government, however, has not ratified the Optional Protocol on Communication Procedures.

Since the ratification of CRC in Timor-Leste in 2003, the government has initiated a number of important legislative and policy actions designed to improve the survival, development and protection of children.

One of the policies initiated is the 2008 Basic Law for Education which declares that "all citizens are entitled to education and culture." The law is designed to "promote equal opportunities and the overcoming of economic, social, and cultural inequalities ... ensuring the right to free and effective equalities of opportunities regarding school access and success." It further states that "basic education is universal, mandatory, free, and has nine-year duration." In accordance to the law, the 2011-2013 National Education Strategic Plan and the Annual Action Plan of the Ministry of Education further amplified that education is for all without discrimination as it underlined the importance of improving gender balance at schools.

The National Education Act of 2008 recognizes the importance of pre-school in developing the basic knowledge and skills of children in preparation to the challenges of basic education. The Act establishes the State's responsibility to ensure the existence of a network of public pre-schools as it guarantees that children between 3-5 years of age will have access to begin their quality education in a school that is close to the place where they live.

Meanwhile, the National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2011-2030 (NHSSP) reflects the State's commitment to the provision of free universal health coverage towards the vision of achieving "Healthy East Timorese People in a Healthy Timor-Leste." To support this vision, a number of national preventive and curative health strategies have been developed by the Ministry of Health. In relation to this, the Timor-Leste National Nutrition Strategy 2014-2019 envisions to contribute to the sustainable achievement of national and human development goals by improving quality and productivity of its human capital. The goal is to improve the nutritional status of Timorese population, accelerate the reduction of maternal and child under-nutrition, and to reduce malnutrition and micronutrient deficiency among children and women.

The Dili Commitment signed during the celebration of International Women's Day on the 8th March 2008, concretely expresses the government's commitment to address gender disparities with a pledge to action, such as introducing gender budgeting, eliminating violence against women and girls, promoting equal access to land and resources, and developing gender-sensitive policies in key areas such as health and education.

Some of the key legislative milestones relevant to child protection were the adoption of the Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code, Civil Code, Law against Domestic Violence, Witness Protection Law, Labor Law, Child Protection Law, and the Penal Execution Regime. These laws focus on guaranteeing the children's right to access the formal justice system.

Furthermore, noteworthy to mention is that to further strengthen the government's commitment to child rights, Timor-Leste formed the National Commission for the Rights of the Child on 22nd September 2009 at the office of the Ministry of Justice. The Commission is mandated to promote, defend and monitor children's enjoyment of their rights. The work of the Commission also includes promoting a culture that would secure respect for children's rights throughout the country.

The organic law of the VI Constitutional Government renamed the National Commission for the Rights of the Child as Commission for the Rights of the Child or *Komisária ba Direitus Labarik* (KDL), and transferred the positioning of the Commission from the office of the Ministry of Justice to the office of the Ministry of State, Coordinator of Social Affairs. This is to allow better coordination and a more comprehensive development of public policies in social areas that account for a better provision of services to the citizens. The organizational structure of KDL was approved in 2014 while its organizational Strategic Plan 2015-2019 was endorsed in 2015.

IV. ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

On top of the key issues and concerns affecting children of Timor-Leste organized into four broad categories and which are referred hereto as thematic focus, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child called for government's attention to some cross-cutting concerns relevant to children's full and meaningful exercise of their rights. These issues are as follows (the numbering here corresponds to the numbering of the crosscutting issues as they appear on the Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, for ease of reference):

9. Legislation - a call to continue and strengthen efforts to develop consistent legislative frameworks in all areas affecting children's rights in compliance with the CRC particularly the adoption of the children's code, the juvenile justice regime, the law to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, etc.
11. Comprehensive policy and strategy – a call to develop a national plan of action for the implementation of children's rights. This NAPC is in direct response to this call.
13. Coordination – a call to provide human, technical and financial resources to the Commission for the Rights of the Child which are necessary to discharge its mandate effectively.
15. Allocation of resources – a call to establish a budgeting process that includes a child rights perspective and specifies clear allocations to children particularly for disadvantaged children and to establish mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the distribution of resources for CRC.
17. Data collection – a call to improve its data collection system in all areas of the Convention with appropriate disaggregation by age, sex, disability, geographic location, ethnic origin and socioeconomic background and that the data and information are shared.
19. Independent monitoring – a call to establish child rights section within the Office of the Provider for Human Rights and Justice that is able to receive, investigate and address complaints by children.
23. Definition of the Child – a call to take measures to ensure that all domestic laws are in accordance with article 1 of the Convention so that all children under 18 benefit from the full protection under the Convention.
25. Non-discrimination – a call to ensure that all children have equal rights under the Convention without discrimination, both de jure and de facto, and that it intensify efforts to ensure the effective elimination of any form of discrimination against the above-mentioned groups of children.
27. Best interests of the child – a call to ensure that the best interests of the child principle is mainstreamed across all sectors of government and is enshrined in the draft children's code and the draft law to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons.

29. Respect for the views of the child – a call to ensure respect for the views of the child in various draft laws and in relevant administrative processes and judicial proceedings relating to children.
31. Birth registration – a call to ensure that all children are provided with birth certificates free of charge, including through mobile units and outreach programs in remote areas.

The following matrix in page 18 presents the specific interventions that the government will undertake to address the above cross-cutting issues. Addressing these issues will also contribute to creating an enabling environment conducive to the realization of a large number of SDGs mentioned before the matrix.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Related SDGs Goals and Targets:

Goal 1.

End poverty in all its forms everywhere



1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

1.a Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions

Goal 2.

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture



2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round

2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons

Goal 3.

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages



3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes

Goal 4.

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all



4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

Goal 5.



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation

Goal 6.



Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

6.1 By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all

6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations

6.b Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management

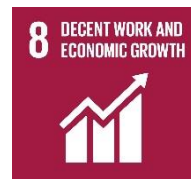
Goal 7.



Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services

Goal 8.



Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth (aged 15-24) not in employment, education or training

8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms

Goal 10.

Reduce inequality within and among countries



10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies

Goal 16.

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children

16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration

16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime

16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development

Goal 17.

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development



17.8 Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology

17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries

17.18 By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts

17.19 By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries

KEY INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS SOME KEY ENABLING ENVIRONMENT ISSUES IN THE COBS OF THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the Recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
9. Legislation Continue and strengthen its efforts to develop consistent legislative frameworks in all areas affecting children's rights in compliance with the Convention. In particular (1) prompt adoption of the children's code, (2) the juvenile justice regime, (3) The law to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons and laws currently being drafted that relate to child protection and alternative sentencing.	Approval and implementation of the Law of Special Regime for Youth aged 16 – 21 (currently with the Council of Minister for approval) (on-going).	MoJ and MSS (KDL)	X	X	X	X	
	Finalization of the Law of Tutelary Educative for Minors Aged 12-15 (Lei Tutelar Educativa ba Menores) to be in line with the context of Timor-Leste and the International Standard (on-going).	MoJ and MSS (KDL)	X	X	X	X	
	Following up the approval of the proposed law on human trafficking by the National Parliament. This has been approved by Council Ministers (completed).	MoJ and MSS (KDL)	X				
	Continuous monitoring of the status of adaption of the children's code, the juvenile justice regime (on-going).	MoJ and MSS (KDL)	X	X	X	X	X
10. Comprehensive Policy and strategy Adoption of a plan of action for children and ensure the development of a strategy for its full implementation, including specific time-bound and measurable goals and targets to effectively monitor and evaluate progress in the implementation of children's rights throughout the State party.	Development of the National Action Plan for Children (NAPC) in Timor-Leste 2016-2020. NAPC was approved by Council of Ministers (completed).	KDL (MoJ, and other line ministries)	X				
	Consultation with key stakeholders for raising awareness on CRCs, COBs, and NAPC (on-going).	KDL (MoJ, and other line ministries)	X	X	X	X	X

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the Recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
13. Coordination Provide the Commission for the Rights of the Child (KDL in Tetum) with the human, technical and financial resources necessary to effectively implement and coordinate comprehensive, coherent and consistent child-rights policies at all levels and to assess the impact of such policies and programs on children's rights.	Conduct capacity gap analysis of KDL (human, technical, and financial resources) (completed in 2014).	KDL	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Development of five year strategic plan of KDL (2015-2019) (completed in 2015).	KDL	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Establishment of KDL with human, technical and financial resources tasked to effectively implement and coordinate comprehensive, coherent and consistent child-rights policies at all levels and to assess the impact of such policies and programs on children's rights. Establishment was completed but required on-going work as mentioned in its 5 years strategic plan (on-going).	KDL	X	X	X	X	
	Expand the duration of the mandate of the Commissioner from current 2 to 4 years to ensure continuity of coordination work on children's rights (approved).	KDL	X				
15. Allocation of Resources (a) Establish a budgeting process that includes a child rights perspective and specifies clear allocations to children in the relevant sectors and agencies, including specific indicators and a tracking system.	Organization of and provision of technical support to a committee led by MoF for the establishment of a budgeting process that includes a child rights perspective (on-going).	MoF (KDL, MoH, MoE, MSS)	X	X	X	X	
(b) Define strategic budgetary lines for children in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations who may require affirmative social measures, and ensure that those budgetary lines are protected even in situations of economic crisis, natural disasters and emergencies, especially with respect to health and education.	Part of the tasks of the committee mentioned above should be to define strategic budgetary lines for children in disadvantaged situations that these are protected in any eventuality (planned).	MoF (KDL, MoH, MoE, MSS)		X	X	X	

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the Recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
(c) Establish mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the efficacy, adequacy and equitability of the distribution of resources allocated to the implementation of the Convention.	Assigning a focal point in the MoF to monitor and evaluate the efficacy, adequacy and equitability of the distribution of resources related to the CRC (completed).	MoF (KDL, MoH, MoE, MSS)	X				
	Provide technical support to respective focal point for regular monitoring and evaluation of the efficacy, adequacy and equitability of the distribution of resources allocated to the implementation of the Convention (planned).	MoF (KDL, MoH, MoE, MSS)		X	X	X	X
(d) Provide disaggregated information on the proportion of the national budget allocated to the implementation of the rights of the child at the national and local levels.	Provide national budget allocated to the programme related to CRCs at national level (on-going).	MoF (KDL)	X	X	X	X	X
	Provide disaggregated information on the allocation of budget for child rights at national and local levels. (planned)		X	X	X	X	X
	Conduct Public Expenditures Trend analysis for key social sectors related to CRCs (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
17. Data Collection Expediently improve its data collection system. The data should cover all areas of the Convention and be disaggregated by age, sex, disability, geographic location, ethnic origin and socioeconomic background. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the data and indicators be shared among the ministries concerned and used for the	Strengthen existing data collection and dissemination system (EMIS, HMIS, Census Info, MSS database etc.) for collection, analysis and dissemination of disaggregated data, particularly related to children (on-going).	GDS, MoF, MoE, MoH, MSS (KDL)	X	X	X	X	X

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the Recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
formulation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programs and projects for the effective implementation of the Convention. In this context, the Committee also recommends that the State party strengthen its technical cooperation with, among others, UNICEF and regional mechanisms.	Coordinate national level data collection exercises (DHS, Census, etc.) to improve the quality and level of available disaggregation of data with special focus on children (on-going).	GDS, MoF, MoE, MoH, MSS (KDL)	X	X	X	X	X
19. Independent Monitoring Establish an appropriately staffed and resourced section for child rights within the Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice that is able to receive, investigate and address complaints by children in a child-sensitive manner, ensure the privacy and protection of child victims, and undertake monitoring, follow-up and verification activities for victims as previously recommended.	Joint training on child rights for Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and KDL (on-going).	Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice (KDL)	X	X			
	Establish a child rights section/focal point within the Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice (planned).	Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice (KDL)		X			
23. Definition of the child The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to ensure that all domestic laws ensure that, in	Setting up of a committee that will be tasked to take measures to ensure that all domestic laws are in accordance with the CRC's definition of the child (planned).	MoJ (KDL)		X			

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the Recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
accordance with Article 1 of the Convention, all children under 18 benefit from the full protection under the Convention.	Integrate this definition into on-going advocacy work by KDL (on-going).	KDL	X	X			
25. Non-discrimination Ensure that all children in the State party enjoy equal rights under the Convention without discrimination, both de jure and de facto, and that it intensify efforts to ensure the effective elimination of any form of discrimination against the above-mentioned groups of children and other groups of children in marginalized situations through, among other things, awareness-raising campaigns and education, especially at the community level and in schools.	Setting up a committee that will strategize for the practical elimination of all forms of discrimination against vulnerable groups of children (planned).	MoJ		X	X		
	Integrate this definition into on-going advocacy work by KDL (on-going).	KDL	X	X	X	X	X
	Non-discrimination is integrated into Child-Friendly School (CFS) initiative and relevant teacher training curriculum. The same is also observed in the Social Welfare Workforce Curriculum for Timor-Leste Social Welfare Officers (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
27. Best interest of the Child In the light of its general comment No. 14 (2013) on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to ensure that this right is appropriately integrated and	Develop legislation to promote best interest of the child to comply with international instruments such the convention on child's rights (planned).	MoJ (MSS)		X	X	X	X

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the Recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
consistently interpreted and applied in all legislation, administrative and judicial proceedings and decisions, as well as in all policies, programs and projects that are relevant to and have an impact on children. In this regard, the State party is encouraged to develop procedures and criteria to provide guidance to all relevant persons in authority on determining the best interests of the child in every area and on giving due weight to those interests as a primary consideration.	Review and elaboration of the proposed law on minimum age (planned).	MoJ (MSS)		X	X	X	X
	Continue implementation and roll-out the Child and Family Welfare Policy to all 13 municipalities (on-going).	MoJ (MSS)	X	X	X	X	X
29. Respect for the Views of the Child Take measures to ensure the effective implementation of legislation recognizing the right of the child to be heard in relevant legal proceedings, including by establishing systems and/or procedures for social workers and courts to comply with this principle.	Conduct of seminar/workshop to hear ideas from all entities working on and with children about the proposed laws on minimum age (planned).	MoJ (MSS)		X	X	X	X
	Enhancement of existing collaboration among key government bodies ministries (SSYS, MOJ, and KDL) to ensure that the voice of the children and adolescents is heard through existing systems particularly in the Youth parliament (on-going).	SSYS	X	X	X	X	X
31. Birth Registration The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen efforts to ensure that all children are provided with birth certificates free of charge, including through mobile units and outreach programs in remote areas of the State	Development of a policy and interventions that will eliminate all barriers in the goal of ensuring that all children in Timor-Leste are provided with birth certificates free of charge (planned).	MoJ		X	X		
	Conduct public campaigns to raise awareness of parents on the importance of birth registration (on-going).	KDL (GDS)	X	X	X	X	X

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the Recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
party, raise awareness of the importance of birth registration and adopt and implement the draft civil registry code.	Conduct training of CRVs and raise awareness for community leaders (completed in 2015).	GDS (MSA, MoJ, and MSA, KDL)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Finalization of Civil Registration Vital Statistics (CRVS) Strategy Timor-Leste by ensuring that birth registration is provided free of charge and accessible including mobile units and outreach programs in remote areas (on-going).	GDS (MSA, MoJ, and MSA, KDL)	X	X	X		
Women and Gender (a) Ensure that the minimum age of marriage for boys and girls be raised to 18, and that a child below the age of 16 can in no circumstances marry.	Advocacy with Ministry of Justice to send civil registration code on minimum age for youth which has been amended from 17 to 18 years old (on-going).	KDL (MoJ, SEM)	X	X	X		
(b) Develop awareness-raising campaigns and programs on the harmful effects of early marriage on the physical and mental health and well-being of girls, targeting households, local authorities, judges and religious and community leaders.	Integrate the issue into on-going community raising campaign with local authorities (on-going).	KDL (MSA, MSS, MoJ, etc.)	X	X	X		
(c) In the light of joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on harmful practices (2014); take active measures to put an end to harmful practices against children in the State party.	(please refer to CEDAW and related action plan)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

V. THEMATIC FOCUS OF THE CHILD ACTION PLAN

THEMATIC FOCUS 1: CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

1.1 Background

Violence against children

The Timor-Leste Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) in 2009-2010 reported that approximately 38 per cent of women aged 15-49 years and 30.8 per cent of girls aged 15-19 years have experienced physical violence since the age of 15. The same study showed that perpetrators of these violence were mostly parents (76 per cent), partners (60.4 per cent), and siblings (15.2 per cent). Study results indicated that in most of the stages of the lives of women and children, they were vulnerable and could be both witnesses and victims of violence.

The Situation Analysis of Children in Timor-Leste or SitAn (2014), put forward the concerning issue of very limited solid information and reliable and recent data on the prevalence of violence against children and sexual abuse in all settings in Timor-Leste, in order to appropriately inform policy, decision-making, and child protection programming. The only available official data to date are those coming from the records of the Child Protection Officers (CPOs), the Vulnerable Persons' Units (VPU) or service providers and from shelters for children.

The SitAn (2014) cited a study entitled "Speak Nicely to Me" (2006) which reported that "violence in schools was manifested by severe corporal punishment by teachers within the Timorese school system." The same study revealed that 67 per cent of students interviewed said that they have witnessed a teacher beating a child with a stick and 39 per cent have witnessed a teacher slapping a child in the face. It also reported that majority of children were physically punished at their home or in school. More than one third of parents believed that as a form of discipline, it was normal for them to "beat a child with a stick," "twist his/her ears" or "slap the child on the face" if he or she committed a mistake. More recent research on Violence against Children (VAC)¹ in and around School Settings revealed that 75 per cent of boys and 67 per cent of girls reported that they had experienced physical violence by a teacher at school in the last 12 months, including being hit (with hand or object), slapped, kicked, pinched or pulled by a teacher.

Children deprived of family environment

Based on the report of the 2009-2010 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), nearly one in four households (23 per cent) in Timor-Leste had orphans or foster children within their care. Informal kinship care appeared to be the primary form of alternative care for children in the country according to a Mapping Assessment conducted by the Ministry of Social Solidarity

¹ The study was approved by Ministry of Education in 2016, and to be published in 2017.

and UNICEF Timor-Leste (2012). Meanwhile, some of the children were sent to residential care centers and a number may have gone through inter-country adoption. (The government is currently working on a case of abuse of two Timorese children who were adopted by a foreign couple living abroad. No other formal alternative care options exist in the country particularly for child victims of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence).

The same mapping assessment mentioned above revealed that there were 59 residential care facilities in Timor-Leste in 2012 of which 21 were orphanages, 30 were boarding houses and 8 were temporary shelters for victims of abuse. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) remained as the key service providers while majority of the care facilities were run by Catholic nuns. Many of them were based in Dili with satellite services in some municipalities.

Further, the Assessment added that there were about 3,500 to 5,000 children housed in residential care facilities in Timor-Leste. Majority of them were girls (88 per cent). Many of them had irregular contacts with their families and stayed longer than necessary in temporary shelters due to lack of other relevant services. Updated data on the number of children in need of alternative care or are already in shelters are difficult to generate.

Child labor and street children

The prevalence of child labor in Timor-Leste was considered high at about 9.3 per cent of 10-14 years old children and 24 per cent of the 6-14 years old. This is based on the Census of Population in 2010 which also reported that over 8,000 children aged 10-14 (6.2 per cent) were employed while more than 4,000 were seeking work. The 2010 Census also showed that there were more economically active 10-14 years old children in rural areas (11 per cent) compared with urban areas (3.8 per cent).

The SitAn (2014) acknowledged the difficulty of estimating the number of working children in the country and in determining whether they were increasing or declining. This is mainly due to the lack of updated data and the difficulty of consolidating the existing surveys with different definitions and methodologies.

The ILO has finalizing a child labor survey but the results have not yet been published. A rather outdated data from Rapid Assessment on Child Labor in Timor-Leste in 2007 found a growing number of children working on the streets in urban areas in Timor-Leste, particularly in Dili. They sold fruits, vegetables, fuel, newspapers, mobile phone cards, and DVDs, among others.

Children in conflict with the Law (CICL)

Compared to the number of children reported by MoJ, the MSS has recorded more cases of CICL. The difference between the numbers of cases recorded by both Ministries suggested that many cases must have been resolved in one way or another at the community level and that the cases were of lesser offenses so that they did not require detention.

According to the 2012 Juvenile Justice Strategy Paper, the number of CICL cases in Timor-Leste was usually under-reported as there was no centralized data collection system across different organizations. This implies that the actual number of cases of CICL may be higher

than what was documented by the MSS, and Police and that it shows majority of cases may be resolved in the community only.

Sale, trafficking and abduction

In its Concluding Observations in 2015, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed its concern over the fact that Timor-Leste has become a destination country for women and girls subjected to sex trafficking and has been a source-country for adults and children for forced labor. It was also concerned about the lack of data on the number of children involved in sexual exploitation, including prostitution, child pornography and human trafficking, as well as, the lack of information on the training of border and law enforcement officials to prevent trafficking.

1.2 Notable achievements

Violence against children and child abuse and neglect

The government has drafted a Children's Code prohibiting corporal punishment in schools and providing for mandatory reporting obligations with respect to child abuse within or outside the school. However, the code has not yet been approved for implementation.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has been implementing the Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) approach to create favorable environment for children in schools. In addition, the Ministry has taken measures to investigate complaints of corporal punishment in schools. However, this needs to be supported with a law that explicitly prohibits violence against children and abuse or corporal punishment.

The government has deployed additional child protection officers in all 13 municipalities in an effort to address the issue of violence against children, abuse and neglect at sub-national level. A Project Review on Justice and Welfare System for Children in Timor-Leste was conducted in 2016² as part of UNICEF, Government of Norway and RDTL cooperation. Results of the review exercise showed that the increase in the number of CPO deployment and capacity building have resulted in the increased number of official response to violence against children, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Since 2014, the Commission for the Rights of the Child has been implementing awareness-raising initiatives such as public meetings in municipalities, public speaking competition, and street theatre involving young people at different public places in the municipalities. The purpose of these were to call the attention of parents, care-givers, teachers, leaders and children themselves on the prevention of violence and abuse against children.

The Child and Family Welfare Policy (CFWP) was developed in 2014, and endorsed by the Ministry of Social Solidarity in 2016. CFWP has been piloted in three municipalities in 2015/2016 in terms of providing proactive and preventative approaches to vulnerable children and family.

² UNICEF Timor-Leste (2016). Strengthening Justice and Welfare System for Children in Timor-Leste – End-of-Project Review.

Children deprived of family environment

The Child and Family Welfare Policy, approved by MSS in 2016, will help strengthen families and communities in protecting and caring for their children. This is a welcome development in the country's efforts to prevent children from being placed in care institutions or for adoption. Simultaneously, the Adoption Law has been drafted and scheduled for approval. The law aims to regulate the process of adoption in Timor-Leste to ensure the best interest of the child whether the adoption is by locals or by foreigners. There is also a need, however, to adopt laws and policies to implement the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Inter-country Adoption.

The Guardianship Guide is yet to be approved. The purpose of the draft law is to establish rules to appoint one legal representative, in case the paternal power cannot be performed by the parents. Furthermore, it defines the guardian's rights and duties and provides the creation of a family council to monitor the performance of the guardian's duties.

Child trafficking, child labor, children in conflict with the law and street children

As lead agency for child protection, the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS) has established strategic partnerships with the Ministries of Health, Education, Justice and the National Police of Timor-Leste which included the Community Police and the Vulnerable Persons Unit. It is also working in partnership amongst others with UNs, NGOs, and other partners in addressing issues related to gender inequality and violence against women and girls. Moreover, MSS has built a collaborative partnership with local NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

Despite inadequacies, there are now Inter-sectoral Child Protection Networks (CPNs) established and Child Protection Officers designated in all 13 municipalities in the country. The CPNs are currently being established at administrative post (sub-district) level in 5 municipalities.

The MSS reported that there has been significant progress in terms of capacity building activities for CPOs, police officers and the judiciary officials to further strengthen the Child Protection Networks and to further enhance access to improve child protection services.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child noted Timor-Leste's advancement through the establishment of the National Commission against Child Labor in 2014, the General Labor Inspectorate in 2010, as well as, the implementation of the Program to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor in 2014. It has also observed the Government's initiatives to address the prevalence of children in streets despite the lack of sufficient information and data on their situations and the lack of related policy.

The Committee noted the establishment of the inter-agency working group on trafficking and the draft law submitted to the Parliament on prevention, suppression and punishment for trafficking in persons, which specifically addresses child victims and witnesses.

1.3 Key Government commitments in the next five years

Violence against children and child abuse and neglect

- Adopt the children's code and amend its legislation to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, including family, schools and institutions.
- Promote positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing and discipline and expand parenting education and training for those working with and for children.
- Strengthen efforts to inform the general public about the negative impact of corporal punishment on children. Involve children and the media in the process.
- Formulate a comprehensive strategy for preventing and combating child abuse in all settings with the involvement of children.
- Establish an easily accessible mechanism for children and others to report cases of abuse and neglect, ensuring the necessary protection for the victims.
- Facilitate the physical and psychological rehabilitation of child victims and ensure they have access to health services, including mental health services.
- Provide training to all professionals working with and for children on prevention and monitoring of domestic violence addressing complaints about such violence.
- Allocate adequate human, technical and financial resources to the Child Protection Networks (CPNs) to enable the implementation of programmes addressing violence and abuse.
- Encourage community-based programmes aimed at preventing and addressing domestic violence, child abuse and neglect.
- Establish mechanisms to ensure the mandatory reporting and investigation of cases of child sexual abuse, exploitation and incest, and prosecution of perpetrators.
- Raise public awareness against stigmatization of child victims of sexual exploitation, abuse and incest, and ensure effective channels for reporting of such violations.
- Provide child protection agencies with adequate staff and funds and ensure that all professionals undergo background checks and provided with the necessary supervision and training.
- Train law enforcement officials, social workers and prosecutors on how to receive, monitor, investigate and prosecute complaints on child abuse.
- Develop programs and policies for the prevention of child sexual exploitation and the recovery and social reintegration of child victims.
- Implement the National Plan of Action on Gender-Based Violence and ensure that it is adequately financed.

Children deprived of family environment

- Implement the Child and Family Welfare Policy.

- Provide appropriate assistance to parents and guardians in situations of poverty by strengthening the system of family benefits and child allowances and other services, such as accessible early childhood education and care.
- Expand family counseling and parenting education programmes.
- Strengthen support to biological families to prevent out-of-home placements, including informal arrangements.
- Ensure that children in need of alternative care are placed in family-based care rather than in institutions.
- Ensure adequate safeguards and clear criteria for determining whether a child should be placed in alternative care.
- Strengthen government oversight regarding the operation of residential care facilities, and review the Policy for Child Care Centres and Boarding Houses.
- Allot adequate human, technical and financial resources to alternative care centres and relevant child protection services.
- Adopt laws and policies that will regulate informal adoption and inter-country adoption with compliance mechanism.

Child trafficking, child labor, children in conflict with the law and street children

- Adopt laws/policies to address child labour and prohibit involvement of children in bonded and dangerous labour.
- Raise awareness on the negative consequences of child labour.
- Consider ratifying the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138).
- Undertake a study on children in street situation and to develop a strategy for the protection of children in street situation.
- Provide children in street situations with adequate protection and assistance for recovery and reintegration, including shelter, and their services.
- Adopt and implement a law and implement the national plan of action to combat human trafficking.
- Establish a monitoring mechanism for the investigation and redress of those who exploit children prostitution or forced labour.
- Continue implementing policies and programmes for the prevention of child sexual exploitation and the recovery and social reintegration of victims.
- Ensure that all children are protected by the juvenile justice system.
- Adopt a holistic and preventive approach in addressing the problem of children in conflict with the law.
- Promote restorative justice and alternative measures to detention, such as diversion, probation, mediation, counselling or community service, wherever possible.
- Ensure that adequate facilities exist for children in conflict with the law, in cases where detention is unavoidable.

- Provide effective rehabilitation services such as counselling and substance abuse treatment, social skills and education.
- Enhance the skills of law enforcement personnel, lawyers, judges and social workers involved in the juvenile justice system.

1.4 Key Interventions

THEMATIC FOCUS: CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

Five-Year Goals of Government of Timor-Leste:

1. The number of child victims of abuse, violence, and neglect who received assistance from the MSS has increased from 400 in 2015 to 1,000 in 2020 and that 90 per cent of reported cases of violence against children, abuse and neglect in each municipality have benefitted from rehabilitative and re-integrative services within community.
2. By 2020, 80 per cent of Children deprived of family are placed in family-based alternative care, and if not possible, they are placed in residential institutions that comply with government minimum standard quality of Care for the short period possible in the best interest of the child.
3. Cases of child labor, street children, children in conflict with the law (CICL) and child trafficking reduced by 2020. Child victims received appropriate rehabilitative and integrative responses from government agencies.

Relevant SDG Goals and Targets:

Goal 1.



End poverty in all its forms everywhere

- 1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day
- 1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions
- 1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

Goal 3.



Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

- 3.4 By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being
- 3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes

Goal 4.



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all

4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

4.a. Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

Goal 5.



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation

5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences

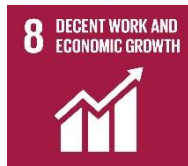
Goal 7.



Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services

Goal 8.



Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms

Goal 10.

Reduce inequality within and among countries



10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies

Goal 11.

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities

11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels

Goal 16.

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime

KEY INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS SOME KEY ISSUES IN THE COBS OF THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
33. Corporal punishment (a) Adopt the children's code and amend its legislation to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, including the family, schools and institutions.	Advocate with policy makers for the adoption of the Children's Code and for the amendment of legislation explicitly prohibiting corporal punishment in all settings (on-going).	MSS (KDL)	X	X	X		
(b) Promote positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing and discipline as an alternative to corporal punishment, and expand parenting education programs and training for principals, teachers and other professionals working with and for children.	Piloting of parental education program 'Hametin Familia' with focus on "strengthening family" (on-going) and eventual roll-out of in all municipalities (planned).	MSS (KDL and MSA)	X	X	X	X	X
	Integration of key messages from the parenting education programme into the parenting and community engagement sessions of the alternative pre-schools programme focusing on positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing and discipline (on-going).	MSS (KDL and MSA)	X	X	X	X	X
	Piloting the implementation of Child and Family Welfare Policy (on-going until 2017) and roll-out in all municipalities (planned).	MSS (KDL and MSA)	X	X	X	X	X
(c) Strengthen and expand government's efforts through awareness-raising campaigns to inform the public in general about the negative impact of corporal punishment on children and actively	Strengthen teacher training under on-going Child-Friendly School System (on-going).	MoE and MSS (KDL and Secretary of State for Social Communication)	X	X	X	X	X
	Alternative Disciplines session as part of Parenting Education program 'Sesaun Komunitaria Hametin Familia' aimed at strengthening parent and care giver's skills on non-violent discipline and other positive child rearing practices (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X

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			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
involve children and the media in the process.	Socialization sessions on positive discipline as part of the community based activities promoted by the Child and Family Welfare Policy (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
	Awareness-raising on the negative implications of corporal punishment by using mass media (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
37. Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (a) Establish mechanisms, procedures and guidelines to ensure the mandatory reporting of cases of child sexual abuse, exploitation and incest, and the speedy and effective investigation of those cases and prosecution of perpetrators.	Enforcement of Domestic Violence Law to ensure mandatory reporting of violence against children based on the best interest of the child (on-going).	MSS (KDL, SEM)	X	X	X	X	X
	Implementation of the Case Management Policy and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to guide inter-ministerial agencies in managing child abuse cases (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
	Revision of Case Management Policy and SOP for children to ensure best interest of the child is considered in all case management actions (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
	Advocacy to ensure speedy investigation and prosecution of perpetrator including speedy application of immediate removal of perpetrator from community (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
(b) Conduct awareness-raising and education programs to combat the stigmatization of child victims of sexual exploitation, abuse and incest, and ensure accessible, confidential, child-friendly and effective channels for reporting such violations.	Development of community outreach programs to combat stigmatization of child abuse (planned).	MSS	X	X			
	Refresher course for Child Protection Network members, Child and Family Welfare Teams, MSS staff and partners on referral of child victims of violence, abuse and neglect and ensuring accessible, confidential, child-friendly and effective channels for reporting such violations (planned).	MSS		X	X	X	X

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			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
(c) Ensure that child protection agencies are adequately staffed and funded, and that all professionals and staff working with and for children undergo background checks and are provided with the necessary supervision and training.	Deployment of additional Social Animators and CPOs at all municipalities with high number of populations as guided by the CFW Policy Human Resource Strategy to ensure the ratio of social worker distribution who will be able to provide proactive and preventive services (on-going).	MSS (Civil Servant Public Commission)	X	X	X	X	X
	Social welfare workforce training for MSS and partners including VPU, Community Leaders, line ministries (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
	Development and approval of MSS Social Worker standard code of ethics (planned).			X	X	X	
(d) Provide systematic training to law enforcement officials, social workers and prosecutors on how to receive, monitor, investigate and prosecute complaints in a child- and gender-sensitive manner that respects the privacy of the victim.	Training of MSS and partners including VPU, Community Leaders, and line ministries on Parenting Education Program 'Hametin Familia' in Viqueque and Ermera Municipalities and ensure the scale up of the programme is taking place (on-going).	MSS (Line ministries)	X	X	X		
	Training of law enforcers, lawyers, prosecutors, judges and social workers on Administrative Justice for Children through the Judicial Training Centre (planned).			X	X	X	X
(e) Ensure the development of programs and policies for the prevention of child sexual exploitation and the recovery and social reintegration of child victims, in accordance with the outcome documents adopted at the World Congresses against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.	Implementation of Child and Family Welfare Policy in all municipalities (planned).	MSS	X	X	X	X	X
	Establishment of clear standard criteria for placing children in residential care with clear standard actions that promote reintegration (planned).			X	X	X	

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
(f) Effectively implement the National Plan of Action on Gender-Based Violence and ensure that it is adequately financed.	Coordination with the Secretary of State for the Support and Socio-Economical Promotion of Women (planned).	Secretary of State for the Support and Socio-Economical Promotion of Women (SSSEPW), MSS	X	X	X	X	X
35. Abuse and neglect (a) Further strengthen awareness-raising and education programs, including campaigns, with the involvement of children, in order to formulate a comprehensive strategy for preventing and combating child abuse in all settings, including with respect to implementing the necessary legislation and policies, in particular the law against domestic violence and the policy for child protection, and adopting and implementing the draft child protection law.	Undertaking social mobilization and mass media campaigns to increase awareness of parents, teachers and community leaders including children in the area of child protection which and link to prevention (on-going).	MSS (KDL, MoE.SSSC, PNTL)	X	X	X	X	X
	Finalizing the draft law on child protection (Child Protection Law was approved by COM).			X			
	Piloting of parental education program 'Hametin Familia' with focus on "strengthening family" (on-going) and eventual roll-out of in all municipalities (planned).			X			
	Piloting approved "Child and Family Welfare Policy" (on-going until 2017) and roll-out in all municipalities (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
(b) Establish an easily accessible mechanism for children and others to report cases of abuse and neglect, ensuring the necessary protection for such victims.	Strengthening of the Child Protection Network in all municipalities for municipality and administrative post levels as a safe mechanism to report children's cases (on going).	MSS	X	X	X	X	X
	Wider disseminated of the safe mechanism in schools to help children report their cases while in schools (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
	Improving data base system for child protection (planned).				X	X	X

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
(c) Facilitate the physical and psychological rehabilitation of child victims and ensure they have access to health services, including mental health services.	Providing financial support and humanitarian assistance for institutions/centers that have shelters for people with disabilities (planned).	MSS		X	X	X	X
	Implementation of National Policy for inclusion and promotion of the Rights of People with Disabilities (planned).			X	X	X	X
	Ensuring social assistance for disabled people through national rehabilitation center (planned).			X	X	X	X
(d) Ensure that all professionals and staff working with and for children are provided with the necessary training on how to prevent and monitor domestic violence as well as receive, investigate and prosecute complaints about such violence in a child- and gender-sensitive manner.	Training on child protection and gender-based violence for NGOs as service providers working closely with MSS (planned).	MSS		X	X	X	X
	Continuous training of service providers in specialized area/ social service to ensure effective implementation of the child and family welfare policy; standard operational procedures about referral network and management of children cases and domestic violence (planned).			X	X	X	X
(e) Ensure the allocation of adequate human, technical and financial resources to the Child Protection Network to enable it to implement long-term programs for addressing the root causes of violence and abuse.	Establishing Social Solidarity Center in all municipalities (planned).	MSS		X	X	X	X
	Strengthening of Child Protection Networks in 13 municipalities (planned).			X	X	X	X
(f) Encourage community-based programs aimed at preventing and	Incremental roll-out of the implementation of Child and Family Welfare Policy in all municipalities (planned).	MSS (MoE)	X				

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			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
addressing domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, including by involving former victims, volunteers and community members and providing them with training and support.	Development of community outreach program to prevent and address domestic violence and child abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation (planned).			X	X	X	X
	Life Skill Based Education for Children and young people (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
	Adoption and eventual implementation of the approved “Child and Family Welfare Policy” (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
39. Family Environment (a) Finalize and implement the Child and Family Welfare System Policy with its focus on strengthening families and communities to protect and care for their children;	Implementation of Child and Family Welfare Policy with its focus on strengthening families and communities to protect and care for their children (on-going).	MSS (MSA, KDL)	X				
(b) Intensify efforts to provide appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities, in particular in situations of poverty and especially in rural areas, including by strengthening the system of family benefits and child allowances and other services, such as accessible early childhood education and care, accessible early childhood education and care.	Inclusion of families of child victims in the Bolsa da Mae Conditional Cash Transfer (on-going).	MSS	X	X	X	X	X
	Provision of disability benefit when necessary (on- going).		X	X	X	X	X
	Provision of support to families caring for children deprived of family (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
	Provision of free early childhood and care for children affected by poverty and special cases (planned).		X	X	X	X	X

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			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
(c) Expand family counseling and parenting education programs.	Expansion of the municipal coverage of the family counseling and parenting education programs (on-going).	MSS	X	X	X	X	X
41. Children Deprived of Family Environment (a) Further strengthen the support provided to biological families to prevent out-of-home placements, including informal arrangements.	Inclusion of families of child victims of violence, abuse, and neglect in the Bolsa da Mae Conditional Cash Transfer (on-going).	MSS	X	X	X	X	X
	Provision of disability benefit when necessary (on- going).		X	X	X	X	X
	Provision of support to families caring for children deprived of family (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
(b) Increase efforts to ensure that children in need of alternative care are placed in family-based care rather than institutions and that they maintain contact with or are returned to their families when it is in their best interests.	Establishment of community-based mechanisms to monitor children in need of family environment and to seek for appropriate child care solutions at the community and family levels (planned).	MSS (MAE, KDL)	X	X	X	X	X
	Provision of support to families who take of children in need of family environment in community (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
(c) Ensure adequate safeguards and clear criteria, based on the needs and the best interests of the child, for determining whether a child should be placed in alternative care, including periodic review of the placement of children in children's homes.	Establishment of case management instruments to evaluate risk and needs of child victims (on-going).	MSS	X	X			
	Establishment of criteria to determine whether a child needs alternative care based on the best interest of the child and procedures for the reintegration of child victims back to family and community (planned).			X	X	X	X
(d) Strengthen government oversight regarding the operation of residential care facilities, and review the Policy, Procedures and Standards for Child Care Centres and Boarding Houses	Review of the Policy, Procedures and Standards for Child Care Centers and Boarding Houses (2010) to ensure that all residential care facilities are operated in compliance with the policy, which should include an enforcement mechanism (on-going).	MSS	X				

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			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
(2010) to ensure that all residential care facilities are operated in compliance with the policy, which should include an enforcement mechanism.	Development of a Decree Law on Residential Care in Timor-Leste which also includes the registration procedures for all residential care facilities in Timor-Leste (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
(e) Ensure that adequate human, technical and financial resources are allocated to alternative care centres and relevant child protection services, in order to facilitate the rehabilitation and social reintegration of children resident therein to the greatest extent possible.	Providing funds for shelters and orphans to guarantee quality care (planned).	MSS	X	X	X	X	X
	Re-enforcement of minimum standards for residential care facilities in planning for a successful reintegration of children into their families and communities (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
57. Economic Exploitation Child Labor (a) (a) Take measures to prevent children from being economically exploited by adopting legislation and policies to address child labor in both the formal and informal sectors and ensuring compliance with article 32 of the Convention, in particular by prohibiting the procuring or offering of a child for all illicit activities, including bonded labor, as well as dangerous work.	Advocate for the adoption and amendment of laws and policies to prevent child labor and exploitation such as: the Constitution, penal code, law on immigration and asylum, law on domestic violence, law on education, and law on labor (planned).	Secretariat of State for Vocational Training, Policy and Employment (MSS,KDL)		X			
	Dissemination of the results of Child Labor Survey conducted in 2016 upon completion of the survey (survey completed; finalization of report on-going for publication).		X	X			

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			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
(b) Continue to raise awareness about the negative consequences of child labor through public educational programs, including campaigns organized in cooperation with opinion leaders, families and the media, such as those to commemorate the World Day against Child Labor.	Campaigns in schools, communities to raise the awareness of parents, teachers and community leaders about the importance of child protection and children working in risky situations (on-going).	SSVTPE	X	X			
	Developing a community-based mechanism to ensure that children are not victimized by potential exploiters (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
(c) Consider ratifying the International Labor Organization Minimum Age Convention.	Integration of child labor issues into the on-going public campaigns in schools and communities to achieve the goal of eliminating child labor by 2020 (on-going).	SSVTPE	X	X			
	Advocacy to the government on the need to ratify the Minimum Age Convention together with the National Commission against Child Labor (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
(d) Seek technical assistance from the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor of the International Labor Organization.	Setting-up meetings/consultation with the ILO to discuss and seek technical assistance and guidance from the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (planned).	SSVTPE	X	X			
59. Children in Street Situation (a) Undertake a comprehensive study	Include analysis of issues linked to street children in the next Situation Analysis on Children (planned).	General Directorate of Statistics and MOE		X	X		

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			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
of the root causes forcing children into street situations, such as poverty, family violence and lack of access to education.	Completion of the National Study on Out-of-School Children in Timor-Leste (on-going).		X				
(b) Develop a comprehensive strategy for the protection of children in street situations with the aim of preventing and reducing this phenomenon.	Based on the Situation Study, development of a national strategy to address the issue of children in street situation to reduce the phenomenon or prevent it from growing (planned).	MSS	X				
(c) Provide children in street situations with adequate protection and assistance for recovery and reintegration, including shelter, education and vocational training, adequate health-care services, including HIV/AIDS screening, and other social services, including substance abuse treatment programs and mental health counseling.	Integration of the children in street situation into the existing service delivery system to avail of protection, recovery and reintegration assistance (on-going).	MSS	X				
61. Sale, trafficking and abduction (a) Adopt and implement the law to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons; establish, approve and implement the national plan of action to combat human	Continuous information dissemination about child trafficking by child protection officers as part of their community awareness raising activity on child protection (on-going).	MSS	X	X	X	X	X
	Strengthening the Child Protection officers in their responsibility to manage cases of child trafficking when they occur (planned).		X	X	X	X	X

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			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
trafficking; and strengthen capacity-building initiatives aimed at improving the response of law enforcement officials regarding cases of human trafficking.	Coordination with the International Organization for Migrations on training of police and immigration officers on the rights of victims of trafficking, integrated referral case services, drafting of the trafficking law for approval by the national parliament (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
(b) Establish a monitoring mechanism for the investigation and redress of such abuses, with a view to improving accountability, transparency and the prevention of violations of the Convention, and ensure the effective prosecution and punishment of those who exploit children for the purposes of prostitution or forced labour.	Together with the MoJ establish a monitoring mechanism to ensure the effective prosecution and punishment of child traffickers (planned).	MSS (NPTL, MoJ)		X			
	Training of Child Protection Officers on case management with support from NGOs partners and VPU to ensure application of child friendly procedures in investigations (planned).		X				
(c) Continue to implement appropriate policies and programs for the prevention of child sexual exploitation and the recovery and social reintegration of victims, ensuring that education and training, as well as counselling. Health care and other social services are provided to them, in accordance with the outcome documents adopted at the World	Continuous public awareness campaigns about child sexual exploitation using the tri-media modes of communication and community sessions at the village level (on-going).	MSS	X	X	X	X	X
	Capacity building of MSS staff in working with parents and care givers about prevention measures against child sexual exploitation and other child protection issues (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
	Provision of funds to an NGO for forensic examination and psychosocial counseling (planned).			X	X	X	X

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Congresses against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.	Provision of funds to child care institutions for temporary safe shelter, counseling and life skills training for child victims of sexual abuse (planned).			X	X	X	X
(d) Expand public education campaigns on identifying possible victims and perpetrators, preventive measures and avenues for assistance and redress, including the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, within the tourism industry.	Community sensitization activity on child protection using child protection campaigns (on-going).	MSS	X	X	X	X	X
	Coordination with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture regarding its role in the prevention of child trafficking based on the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (planned).	Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture (MoTAC) (SSSC,KDL)	X	X	X	X	X
63. Administration of Juvenile Justice (a) Ensure that all children, by definition persons under 18 years of age, are protected by the juvenile justice system.	Advocacy for the approval of the Law of Special Regime for Youth aged 16-21 (on-going).	MoJ (MSS)	X	X	X	X	X
	Advocacy for the finalization of Tutelary Educative for Minors Aged 12-15 Law in line with Timor-Leste context and international standard (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
	Approval of Juvenile Justice Action Plan (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
	Continue the National Coordination Mechanism for Juvenile Justice (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
(b) Adopt a holistic and preventive approach to addressing the problem of children in conflict with the law and the	Conduct a study on the traditional practices relevant to juvenile justice to determine which practices can be appropriately used to address the issue of children in conflict with law (planned).	MSS		X	X	X	X

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			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
underlying social factors, with a view to supporting children at risk at an early stage, including by expanding intervention programs, vocational training and other outreach activities.	Awareness-raising for parents and community to increase their capacity and ability to prevent and protect children in conflict with law (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
(c) Promote restorative justice and alternative measures to detention, taking into consideration gender differentiated programs for boys and girls in conflict with the law, such as diversion, probation, mediation, counselling or community service, wherever possible, and ensure that detention is used as a last resort and for the shortest possible period of time and that it is reviewed on a regular basis with a view to withdrawing it.	Collaboration with institutions or training centers within the community to support children in conflict with law (planned).	MSS	X	X	X	X	X
	Providing emergency funds for reintegration process (planned).		X	X			
	Establishment of temporary rehabilitation centers for CICL with separate programs for boys and girls (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
	Collaboration with institutions or training centers within the community to support children in conflict with law (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
(d) In cases where detention is unavoidable, ensure that adequate facilities exist for children in conflict with the law, that children are not	Establishment of MoU between MSS and MOJ on activities that promote reintegration, MoU between MoJ and MoH on health, MoU between MoJ and MoE on the provision of education opportunities in juvenile rehabilitation centers (planned).	MSS, MoJ, MoE, MoH	X	X	X	X	X

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			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
detained together with adults, and that detention conditions are compliant with international standards, including with regard to access to education and health services.	Establishment of a rehabilitation center to provide a residential support for CICL as the last resort and for short period of time possible and with separate programs for boys and girls that promote a successful reintegration (planned).			X	X	X	X
(e) Provide effective rehabilitation services, including access to mental health counselling and substance abuse treatment, as well as effective social skills development and education, including vocational training programs.	Establishment of a mechanism to support children in conflict with the law whether in rehabilitation centers or in the community with provision of access to appropriate services such as mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment, effective social skills development and vocational training programs in a way that promote a successful reintegration (planned).	MSS	X	X			
(f) Enhance the skills and specialization of all relevant actors in the juvenile justice system, including law enforcement personnel, lawyers, judges and social workers, strengthen the judiciary and strengthen training materials.	Training of MSS staff, particularly staff of Vulnerable Person's Unit (VPU) on comprehensive case management of CICL (planned).	MSS	X	X			
	Training of prosecutions and judges on child-sensitive legal procedures at judicial training centers (planned).		X	X	X	X	X
	Designing risk assessment instruments for CICL who are victims of abuse (on-going).		X	X	X		
	Implementation of service package for children in conflict with law (on-going).		X	X	X	X	X
(g) Make use of the technical assistance tools developed by the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice and its members, including the United	Continuous collaboration with UNICEF and other partners to strengthen justice system for children through capacity building of justice officials (on-going).	MSS	X	X	X	X	X

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Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNICEF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and non-governmental organizations, and seek technical assistance in the area of juvenile.	Continues the National Coordination Mechanism for Juvenile Justice (on-going).	MSS	X	X	X	X	X

THEMATIC FOCUS 2: CHILD HEALTH AND NUTRITION AND ADOLESCENT'S HEALTH

2.1 Background

National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2011-2030 (NHSSP) reflects the State's commitment to the provision of free universal health coverage towards the vision of achieving "Healthy East Timorese People in a Healthy Timor-Leste." To support this vision, a number of national preventive and curative health strategies have been developed by the Ministry of Health. In relation to this, the Timor-Leste National Nutrition Strategy 2014-2019 envisions to contribute to the sustainable achievement of national and human development goals by improving the nutritional status of Timorese population, accelerating the reduction of malnutrition and micronutrient deficiency among children and women.

Based on the Demographic Health Survey 2009-2010, the number of deaths among under-five year old children from 2002 to 2009 plummeted by half, i.e., from 125 children per 1,000 live births to 64 children per 1,000 live births. This means that one in every 16 children born in the country died before his/her fifth birthday. For the same period, infant mortality rate also declined by half, from 88 to 45, suggesting that the probability of children not reaching their first birthday is 45 children out of 1,000 live births. There were more deaths among infants and children recorded in rural areas than in the urban centers.

According to the MoH Joint Annual Health Sector Review or JAHSR (2015), malnutrition remained a significant public health problem in Timor-Leste although there were indications that the situation is improving. The review indicated that severe malnutrition (as measured at facilities) has decreased significantly in the last 5 years. Timor-Leste Food and Nutrition Survey (2013) shows the rate of stunting for children under five have decreased from 58 per cent in 2009 to 50.2 per cent in 2013, while wasting declined from the critical level of 19 per cent in 2009 to 11.0 per cent in 2013. Underweight among women has also slightly decreased from 27 per cent in 2009 to 24.5 per cent in 2013.

Timor-Leste is one of the countries with very high adolescent birth rates in South East Asia with 62.7 births per 1,000 girl's ages 15-19 years old according to the report of the 2010 Census Youth Monograph Report. The Demographic and Health Survey of 2010 complemented this findings with its estimate that one in five women (19 per cent) in Timor-Leste married before reaching the age of 18, and one in four women already had a child while in her teens. The Timor-Leste Census (2010) reported that marrying at an early age in Timor-Leste was common for girls particularly in rural areas. Unwanted pregnancies force young girls to marry. This was more predominant amongst girls with little or no education and those who belong to families within the poorest quintile.

2.2 Notable Accomplishments

There has been a significant progress made in the area of reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health (RMNCAH) in Timor-Leste during the last decade. There has also

been a general improvement in the nutritional status of children in Timor-Leste although much still needs to be done to fully address the issues of malnutrition, stunting and wasting.

According to the National Strategy on Reproductive, Maternal, New-born, Child and Adolescent Health (NSRMNCAH), the Ministry of Health emphasizes the importance of implementing health programs and services, including RMNCAH, in an integrated manner through strengthening the health systems based on the primary health care approach. For RMNCAH programs, the MoH has adopted the continuum of care approach along the life course. The national strategy was complemented by the SISCa activities and micro-planning at the village level which facilitated community empowerment in addressing health issues in the community. The overall strategy of the MoH has resulted to significant improvements in health service coverage particularly in terms of services affecting children and mothers. Overall, trends in performance suggested overall national improvement, but with a wide disparity in municipal performances, suggesting the need to strengthen the sub-municipal health systems.

Since the development of the 2004 NNS, the Government of Timor-Leste has been implementing a number of nutrition interventions such as the High Impact Nutrition Interventions (HINI) to address child malnutrition. Efforts were being made to scale up this intervention with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery (MAF), and Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Environment (MCIE), NGOs and faith-based organizations.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recognized the government's programs and services aimed at preventing and addressing adolescent's health problems, including those relating to reproductive health. The MoH has been delivering adolescent-friendly health services (AFHS) in municipal hospitals which was piloted in a community health center in Dili using national guidelines developed in 2012. The AFHS has been providing promotive and preventive information materials and services for adolescents with problems. Meanwhile, the MoE, in partnership with the MoH, piloted the implementation of a new curriculum on sexual and reproductive health (SRH) in 10 secondary and high schools in seven municipalities.

2.3 Key Government commitments in the next five years

- Ensure the provision of adequate financial and human resources, for neonatal, prenatal and postnatal care, especially in rural areas.
- Increase the number of deliveries at health-care facilities by improving access to health-care professionals for childbirth.
- Prevent stunting, wasting and undernourishment of children, through promotion of proper feeding practices.
- Improve children's access to high-quality health-care services, including immunizations in all municipalities.
- Improve access to adequate safe drinking water, basic sanitation and hygiene facilities.
- Introduce clean cooking technologies and reduce reliance on firewood, including by subsidizing the cost of cooking fuel.

- Approve and implement the Timor-Leste breastfeeding policy and the code of marketing of breast-milk substitutes.
- Strengthen the quantity and quality of services and programmes of mental health for children.
- Raise awareness of households, authorities, religious and judges on harmful effects of early pregnancy.
- Promote age-appropriate sex education and prevention of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.
- Establish a minimum age for alcohol consumption and tobacco use, and address substance abuse.
- Undertake a comprehensive study on adolescent health problems, with the full participation of adolescents.

2.4. Key interventions

THEMATIC FOCUS: CHILD HEALTH AND NUTRITION AND ADOLESCENT'S HEALTH

Five-Year Goals of Government of Timor-Leste:

1. Maternal mortality rate (MMR) is reduced from 557 in 2010 to less than 300 per 100 000 live births by 2019.
2. Neonatal mortality rate (NMR) is reduced from 22 in 2010 to at least 15 per 1000 live births by 2019.
3. Under-five mortality rate (U5MR) is reduced U-5MR from 64 in 2005-2009 to at least 40 per 1000 live births by 2019.
4. Percentage of underweight among under-five children is reduced from 37.7 in 2010 to <30 by 2019.
5. Percentage of stunting among under-five children is reduced from 50.2 in 2010 to <40 by 2019.
6. Percentage of wasting among under-five children is reduced from 11 in 2010 to <10 by 2019.
7. Adolescents have more access to adolescent-friendly services and appropriate knowledge on sex education, reproductive health including HIV/AIDS.

Relevant SDG Goals and Targets

Goal 2.

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture



- 2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round
- 2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons

Goal 3.

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages



- 3.1 By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births
- 3.2 By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births
- 3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases
- 3.4 By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being
- 3.5 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol

3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programs

3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all

3.9 By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination

3.a Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate

3.c Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing State

Goal 6.



Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

6.1 By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all

6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations

6.b Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management

Goal 7.



Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services

KEY INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS SOME KEY ISSUES IN THE COBS OF THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
47. Health and health services (a) Continue to strengthen efforts to ensure the provision of adequate financial and human resources, in particular for neonatal, prenatal and postnatal care, especially in rural areas. (b) Improve training and access to health-care professionals and midwives for childbirth, and expand the community birth preparedness initiative to increase the number of deliveries at health-care facilities.	Establishing/Strengthening policy on human resources for RMNCAH services and ensuring its implementation (on-going).	Ministry of Health (MoH)	X	X	X	X	
	Capacity building of national, municipal officers and CHC/HP staff, including orientation of doctor and midwifery graduates before deployment at Community Health Centers (CHC) and health posts (HP) levels (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
	Ensuring continuous availability of essential commodities and equipment for RMNCAH including training of staff on management of commodities, monitoring tools and supervision (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
	Strengthening information system for RMNCAH including review of forms, mapping of facilities and capacities and program review (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
	Review, updating and/or development of communication plans/kits/IEC materials and counseling manuals in RMNCAH (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
(c) Continue targeted interventions to prevent the stunting, wasting and undernourishment of children, including the promotion of proper feeding practices for infants and young children,	Improving community access to nutrition counseling, social mobilization and behavior change communication interventions including improvement of nutritional status of mothers and adolescent girls and proper feeding practices for infants and young children (on-going).	MoH (Ministry Agriculture and Fisheries.)	X	X	X	X	X

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
and continue to raise awareness of nutrition issues and promote overall nutrition education, including through the revised National Nutrition Strategy. (h) Approve and implement the Timor-Leste breastfeeding policy and the code of marketing of breast-milk substitutes, breast-milk supplements and related products, increase the number of health centers supporting these initiatives, and increase the current maternity leave from three months to six months to support appropriate infant feeding.	Continuous implementation of Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM), Infant Young Child Feeding (IYCF) program, Micronutrient supplementation and Iodine, Hospital Care of malnourished children (on-going).	MoH (Ministry Agriculture and Fisheries.)	X	X	X	X	X
	Continuous improvement in the inter-ministerial collaboration & cooperation with WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, and NGOs (on-going).	MoH (Ministry Agriculture and Fisheries.)	X	X	X	X	X
	Continuous lobbying and advocacy for the passage of breastfeeding policy (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	
	More strict implementation of the International Code of Marketing Breast milk Substitutes (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
	Establishment of Baby Friendly Hospital Initiatives (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	
	Continuous organization of Mother 's Support Groups (MSGs) (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
(d) Increase the quantity and coverage of health-care professionals to ensure that children have access to high-quality health-care services, including immunizations in all municipalities, and implement the electronic child-tracking system to ensure that all children are registered for immunization.	Improving access and increase coverage among target populations by provision of quality routine immunization services and related interventions at SISCa point in every SUCO (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
	Development and periodic updating of national immunization plans, and will mobilize resources accordingly to reach national, regional and global goals of the immunization program (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
	Ensuring that adequate quantities of WHO prequalified vaccines and other supplies required for the immunization program will be procured in a timely manner (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
	Develop effective advocacy and communication strategies and implement suitable interventions (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X		

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	Training, monitoring, supervision and evaluation of EPI activities at all levels (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
(e) Strengthen efforts and increase resources to ensure that homes, schools and other public facilities have adequate safe drinking water, basic sanitation and hygiene facilities, in particular in rural areas, and raise awareness about open defecation and proper sanitation and hand washing practices, including by implementing the policy to promote open-defecation-free rural communities. (f) Improve access to clean water facilities by strengthening government coordination, developing an action plan and providing the Department of Water Supply of the Ministry of Public Works with adequate staff and an adequate budget, in particular for rural communities. (g) Strengthen measures to introduce clean cooking technologies and raise awareness about the links between respiratory illnesses and the use of firewood in traditional cooking practices, and reduce reliance on firewood, including by subsidizing the cost of cooking fuel.	Coordination with the Ministry of Public Works to construct water and sanitation facilities in schools with toilets put up separately for boys and girls (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Community mobilization in preparing an action plan designed to improve basic sanitation for community (on-going).	Ministry of Public Works (MoH)	X	X	X		
	Communication for RMNCAH programs including promotion of ODF Open Defecation Free Program in communities in order for each house to have sanitary toilet and basic sanitation and promotion of hand washing practice using soap (on-going).	Ministry of Public Works (MoH)	X	X	X	X	X
	Continuation of the community campaigns against the use of firewood in traditional cooking (on-going).	MAF (MoH)	X	X	X	X	X
	Promotion of the use of fuel (gas) in cooking including possible subsidy for cooking fuel (on-going).	MAF (MoH)	X	X	X	X	X
49. Mental Health	Integration of mental health in existing government health facilities (planned).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
(a) Take measures to increase the number of specialists in children's mental health and ensure adequate facilities and outpatient services for psychosocial rehabilitation.	Coordination with NGOs in provision of psychological therapy to children with mental health problems (planned).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
	Compliance with the Health Sector Planning Strategy of 2011-20130 ensuring a mental health specialist in each Regional Hospital (planned).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
(b) Ensure that all professionals working with children are trained to identify and address mental health problems, in particular in children's homes, places of safety and juvenile correction centers.	Training of health professionals on mental health management in all municipalities and national and health facilities (planned).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
	Ensuring a comprehensive multi-disciplinary team consisting of psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, psychologists and mental health technical professionals who have been appropriately trained (planned).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
51. Adolescent's health (a) Develop awareness-raising campaigns and programs on the harmful effects of early pregnancy on the physical and mental health and well-being of girls and their babies, targeting households, local authorities, religious leaders and judges.	Work together with the MoE, Secretary of State of Youth and Sport and other NGOs to implement a School Health Program including prevention of teenage pregnancy (on-going).	MoH (MoE and SoSYS)	X	X	X	X	
	Development of a Protocol and training tools for Health staff on Youth Reproductive Health particularly on reproductive health, HIV/AIDs, consequence of early pregnancy (on-going).	MoH (MoE and SoSYS)	X	X	X	X	X
	Development of a National Guide for Youth-Friendly Health Services and setting up information Center for Youth Reproductive Health (on-going).	MoH (MoE and SoSYS)	X	X	X	X	X
	Continuous advocacy meeting and coordination with religious institutions to disseminate relevant information on youth health (on-going).	MoH (MoE and SoSYS)	X	X	X	X	X
(b) Promote age-appropriate sex education targeted at adolescents as well as the wider community, with special attention paid to the prevention	Reaching out to young people to increase awareness on reproductive health and on desirable practices through behavior change communication strategy and through the engagement of the community using SISCa strategy (on-going).	MoH (National Commission on HIV/AIDs, SoSYS)	X	X	X	X	X

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS	Working together with the MoE on the inclusion of reproductive health subject in the curriculum for pre-secondary and secondary (on-going).	MoH (National Commission on HIV/AIDS, SoSYS)	X	X	X	X	X
(c) Adopt laws establishing a minimum age for alcohol consumption and tobacco use, and establish support programs and services to address substance abuse, as well as intervention programs and awareness-raising campaigns.	Development of rules and regulations about cigarette law which has been approved by Council of Ministries (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
	Monitoring of designated smoke-free areas in hotel, shops, schools, and government and private institutions (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
	Continuous IEC and media campaign on enforcement of cigarette law particularly in government institutions (on-going).	MoH	X	X	X	X	X
(d) Undertake a comprehensive study to assess the nature and extent of adolescent health problems, with the full participation of adolescents, as a basis for future health policies and programs.	Working together with the Secretariat of State of Youth and Sport and Ministry of Education to do a study on the adolescent health issues with the participation of adolescents (planned).	MoE, MoH, and SSYS (GDS)		X			

THEMATIC FOCUS 3: PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION, BASIC EDUCATION AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY

3.1 Background

Pre-school education

Access to pre-school education remains a big challenge in Timor-Leste. Only 14 per cent of children aged 3-5 years are enrolled in pre-school education (SitAn 2014), leaving nine out of 10 Timorese children without access to early learning opportunities. Majority of the pre-schools are in urban areas.

Equity issues in pre-school learning need to be better addressed as there were significant disparities in coverage by municipality. Many children whose home language differs from the medium of instruction (Tetum) live with the double disadvantage of not receiving early learning opportunities and not being familiar with the language being used for instruction. Children with disabilities rarely had pre-school learning opportunities due to lack of adequate facilities, teaching-learning materials and trained teachers. Social norms against children with disabilities compound the situation.

Basic education

More Timorese children are now enrolled in schools with the primary Net Enrolment Rate (NER) at 88 per cent in 2015 compared with 68 per cent in 2005. According to Education Management Information System (2015), the number of children enrolled in primary education has increased from 157,516 in 2005 to 243,559 in 2015.

Based on the 2010 Census, more than 32 per cent of children aged 6-11 in rural areas have never attended school, as compared to 20 per cent of children in urban areas. About 80 per cent of children aged 6-11 in the whole country attended primary schools, while only 60 per cent of children in the same age group attended school in the rural areas of Ermera and Oecusse. Meanwhile, compared to the number of boys, more girls enroll and proceed to the higher grades in basic education. The participation of girls, however, becomes less than boys at the secondary level. Basic education of nine years – six years of primary education and three years of pre-secondary education - is free and compulsory as per the Basic Law for Education 2008.

Children with disability

The Concluding Observation of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2015) noted with concern that children with disabilities are subjected to widespread discrimination, neglect and abuse, lack access to education and health care, and are not integrated effectively in all areas of social life. It also observed the lack of public awareness of the rights of children with disabilities and the lack of statistical data concerning. The Committee added that there were insufficient and inadequate facilities for children with disabilities in schools, sports and leisure facilities and residential facilities particularly in rural areas.

According to the 2015 Report of the *Ra'es Hadomi Timor Oan* (RHTO), the national Disabled Person's Organization in Timor-Leste, government's administrative data collected through education or health management information systems do not adequately disaggregate data by disability. Thus, the data obscure the particular situation of children with disabilities which otherwise could inform appropriate policies and programs to advance the situation of girls and boys with disabilities.

3.2 Notable accomplishments

Pre-school education

The Ministry of Education made a significant decision to elevate the Division of Pre-School to become a National Directorate of Pre-School in 2013. This gives opportunity to the Directorate to accommodate more resources including increasing number of staff from five in 2012 to more than 30 in 2015. This enhances the capacity of the Directorate to support the Ministry in providing pre-school education of good quality to 3-5 years old children.

The MoE has accredited 299 public and private schools using the new School Accreditation Policy Guidelines for registration and operation of private schools. The same guidelines will be used to monitor the functioning of the system. The Ministry is now working on licensing procedures.

The MoE has established new pre-school education within the existing Central Basic Schools. The aim is to provide a minimum of one pre-school in all 442 sucos in the country. To support the work of the Pre-School Directorate, the MoE has trained and deployed 12 new school inspectors in 12 municipalities and is planning to recruit more to address the increasing demands. This initiative is being supported by several bilateral donors and development partners.

The Department of EMIS has made a remarkable initiative in establishing a separate data system for pre-school since 2013. The Department is planning to integrate pre-school data into the main database for basic education. This initiative will provide more accurate and reliable data on pre-school education that will inform policy and program development.

Basic education

Education is a top priority of the government. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child noted the significant progress at all levels of education, the significant investment in the construction and rehabilitation of school buildings and the significant increases in budgetary allocations for education, including vocational education.

Through the years, a number of legal and policy frameworks and structural system foundations for education have been established. These include: Basic Law for Education (2008); the Basic Education Law (2010); the Teacher Career Regime (2010); the Teacher Qualification System (2011); the National Education Strategic Plan 2011-2030; the MoE

Organic Law (2013); the National Policy Framework for Pre-school Education (2013), and national Inclusive Education Policy (2017).

The National Institute for Training of Teachers and Educational Professionals, and a planning unit has been established. The curricula for basic education and secondary education have been developed and approved reflecting the Child-Friendly Schools principles, which are also reflected in the Basic Education Decree Law.

Children with disability

The government has taken progressive steps to fulfill the rights of persons with disabilities particularly children with disability. Most notable of these are the “National Policy for the Inclusion and Promotion of the Rights of People with Disabilities” and the “National Action Plan for People with Disabilities”. However these are yet to be formally approved by the Council of Ministers.

The government has taken an initiative to include persons with disabilities in the Strategic Development Plan (2011-2030), particularly with respect to the promotion of health. Although still on a pilot stage, there have been three training centers established in selected municipalities that provide teachers with training to support the integration of children with disabilities in public schools. The Ministry of Education also developed a National Inclusive Education policy with the support of UNICEF.

3.3 Key Government commitments in the next five years

- Implement the National Policy Framework for Pre-school and the pilot project of establishing preschools in remote communities in the Aileu and Ermera municipalities as part of child-friendly schools initiative.
- Increase access to and completion of basic education through inclusive and enhanced quality education, in particular for children with disabilities, children living in extreme poverty, pregnant teenagers, children living in remote areas and children who are members of minority linguistic groups.
- Provide high-quality training for teachers and develop bilingual textbooks and teacher guides to improve the quality of education for all children, and with particular emphasis on rural areas.
- Step up school grants and feeding programs, and address the shortage of school facilities.
- Mainstream gender equality policies in the education sector. Include gender and sensitivity training in all training of teachers and address the situation of violence and sexual harassment in schools.
- Strengthen the legislative and policy framework for the promotion and protection of the rights of children with disabilities.
- Approve the National Action Plan for People with Disabilities.

- Strengthen support for caregivers of children with disabilities, including by providing counselling and training, increasing the Bolsa da Mãe stipend and considering implementing a stipend for caregivers to help support children with disabilities.
- Ensure that continuing training is provided for professionals working with children with disabilities, such as teachers, social workers and health, medical, therapeutic and care personnel, that guidelines and training materials are developed, and that mechanisms are in place to monitor the performance of care providers.
- Ensure that schools and health-care facilities are accessible and adequately staffed and funded, and that children with disabilities are treated with dignity and respect and benefit from effective protection.
- Undertake sustained public awareness campaigns to familiarize the public and other stakeholders with the rights of children with disabilities.
- Take all measures necessary to ensure that children with disabilities are integrated fully into all areas of social life, including schools, sports and leisure activities, and that facilities and other public areas are accessible for children with disabilities.
- Strengthen the collection of data, disaggregated by disability, to provide a comprehensive assessment of the situation of children with disabilities to inform key sectors about appropriate policies and programmes to advance the situation of children with disabilities.
- Consider ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

3.3 Key interventions

THEMATIC FOCUS: PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION, BASIC EDUCATION, AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY

Five-Year Goals of Government of Timor-Leste:

- By 2020 at least 87.541 of the 3-5 years old children have access to begin their quality education in a school that is close to the place where they live.
- By 2020, 277,809³ of school-age children are enrolled in quality basic education while the rate of dropout has drastically reduced by 2020.
- By 2020, all children with disabilities are treated by the society with dignity and respect and are fully integrated into all areas of social life, including schools, sports and leisure activities.

Relevant SDGs and Targets

Goal 4.



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all

- 4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes
- 4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education
- 4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations
- 4.7 By 2030, ensure all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others. through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender, equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.
- 4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all
- 4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States

³ National Education Strategic Plan 2011-2030-MoE

Goal 5.

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

Goal 13.

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts



13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

KEY INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS SOME KEY ISSUES IN THE COBS OF THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
55. Education including vocational training and guidance Pre-school education (a) Implement the National Policy Framework for Preschool Education and the related strategic action plan, and implement the pilot project establishing 12 preschools in remote communities in the Aileu and Ermera municipalities as part of the child-friendly schools initiative, and allocate sufficient financial resources for the development and expansion of early childhood education.	Consider an integration of at least one year of pre-school education in the first cycle of basic education (planned).	Ministry of Education (MoE)		X	X	X	X
	Development of a new curriculum framework for pre-school education based on current theories and best practices on child development (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Hiring of new teachers with good educational background and reassignment to ensure the required teaching capacity (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Development and implementation of new package for service and in-service training of teachers in pre-school including production of local materials (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Building of new pre-school classrooms in existing basic primary and filial schools that are equipped with furniture and instructional materials. Refurbishment of unused classrooms in existing schools to turn them into early childhood education classrooms (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Issuance of accreditation policies and guidelines for registration and operation of private schools (ongoing).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Raising awareness of community on the importance of early childhood education in general and specifically for children with moderate/severe disabilities (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Implementation of accreditation policy and guideline for registration and operation of private schools (planned).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Basic Education (b) Increase access to, retention in and completion of basic education through inclusive and better quality education, in particular for children with disabilities, children living in extreme poverty, pregnant teenagers, children living in remote areas and children who are members of minority linguistic groups.	Implementation of the National Policy on Inclusive Education and Action Plan to address the educational rights of socially marginalized groups including tribal groups and children with disabilities (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Establishment of a child-friendly environment in basic education schools for children with disabilities and children from different cultural groups (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Building and rehabilitation of schools in equipping them with appropriate instructional materials and furniture (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Implementation of positive discipline programs for teachers and parents in partnership with NGOs (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Social mobilization to raise awareness of parents and communities on the importance of education and the right of all children to education regardless of their gender, economic status, geographic location, ethnicity, disability, etc (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
(c) Continue to improve the accessibility and quality of education for all children, and provide high-quality training for teachers, with particular emphasis on rural areas.	Development of a teacher performance evaluation system utilizing the education quality assurance systems implemented in the classrooms (planned).	MoE		X	X	X	X
	Development and implementation of new teacher deployment policy to ensure teaching quality in remote and urban areas, and to provide fair opportunities for all female teachers (planned).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Development of a national teacher competency framework (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Implementation of the new teacher career regime based on merit and performance (planned).	MoE		X	X	X	X

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
(d) Continue to develop bilingual textbooks and teacher guides in all core subjects.	Continuous development of bilingual textbooks and teacher guides in all core subjects (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
(e) Ensure access, especially for children in vulnerable situations, to education regardless of the ability to pay for indirect expenses, including by stepping up school grants and feeding programs, and continue to expand capacity to address the shortage of school facilities.	Finalization of National Study on Out-of-School Children in Timor-Leste that will include analysis for barriers to education and key recommendations to address these barriers (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Causality Analysis of the main factors hindering enrolment or causing dropouts by school cluster and develop a plan to address these factors (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Development of a plan to complement the school grants and school feeding programs that are operational now, such as conditional cash transfers, scholarships, transportation solutions and other (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Introducing the use of internal scholarships, loans and other mechanisms to promote the participation of women in key education areas (secondary, higher) and the number of female teachers (on-going).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
(f) Mainstream gender equality policies in the education sector, ensuring that gender issues and sensitivity training are made an integral, substantive and mandatory component of all teachers training at all levels, and address the situation of violence and sexual harassment in schools.	Integration of gender sensitivity and understanding gender-related issues in all trainings for teachers at all levels including violence and sexual harassment in schools (planned).	MoE	X	X	X	X	X
	Recruitment, training, and deployment of female teachers from ethnic group (planned).	MoE		X	X	X	X
	Reinforce key messages around gender equality at an early age, preferably in pre-school program and early grades of basic education (planned). Parenting education programmes also contain key messages around gender equality.	MoE	X	X	X	X	X

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	Development of more gender-sensitive teaching-learning materials and provision of healthy, protective, gender sensitive facilities for girls (planned).	MoE		X	X	X	X

THEMATIC FOCUS 4: CHILD AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION

4.1 Background

The National Youth Policy (2016) recognizes young people as resources for socio-economic transformation in the society. Through this Policy, the government declares its commitment to invest in young people with the belief that young people have the spirit to develop themselves and their country, passion and willingness to help other people, as well as hope and dedication to take care of their nation.

The Timor-Leste Census (2010) shows that nearly a quarter of young people 15-24 years (22 per cent) are neither in school nor at work. Girls and young women are engaged in house work while most of the boys are just idle because there are no available jobs. In the community, there are limited opportunities for them to express themselves in a creative way or opportunities to make a positive contribution to the community.

The National Youth Policy (2016) acknowledges that there are some young people with specific needs that require specific attention from the government, civil society and the development partners as they are facing specific challenges. These challenges and concerns are violence and crime, absence of employment opportunities, lack of space for civic engagement, drop-out, illiteracy, health risks and vices, early marriage among girls, etc.

4.2 Notable Accomplishments

The Youth Parliament created in 2009 is a government initiative designed to increase young people's participation. The Parliament encourages young people to learn about civic education, empowers them to speak about youth issues, and supports them to work with their peers. The Youth Parliament is managed by the Secretariat of State for Youth and Sports. The task of this office is to provide a space for young people to build their capacity to become articulate young citizens who can contribute to the development of the nation. The Youth Parliament provides an opportunity for the young people to ventilate their concerns and pressing issues affecting them and to voice out their recommendations in a dialogue with the National Parliament.

On the other hand, the National Youth Policy (2016) directs the Government to prioritize and set strategic steps towards promoting child and youth participation. It expresses the government commitment for youth development through appropriate implementation mechanism and sufficient resource allocation. This policy is also expected to guide cooperation at the local, national and international levels.

Administratively, the Secretary of State for Youth and Sports was created to provide young people with the opportunity to participate in cultural or artistic activities and to promote initiatives for developing sport activities, according to the objectives set in the National Youth Policy.

4.3 Key Government commitments in the next five years

- Promote the meaningful and empowered participation of all children within the family, communities, schools and student council bodies.
- Develop a National Framework and on child Participation.
- Build the capacity of teachers, community leaders, social workers and other stakeholders in promoting a meaningful child participation in all settings.

4.4 Key interventions

THEMATIC FOCUS: CHILD AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Five-Year Goal of Government of Timor-Leste:

All children and youth have opportunities to exercise their right to express their views and to participate in decision-making in a meaningful way at home, school, communities and institutions.

Relevant SDGs and Targets

Goal 4.



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all

4.7 By 2030, ensure all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender, equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

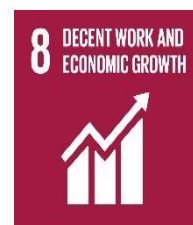
Goal 5.



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

Goal 8.



Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth (aged 15-24) not in employment, education or training

Goal 11



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities

11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels

Goal 16.



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere

16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children

16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development

KEY INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS SOME KEY ISSUES IN THE COBS OF THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS ON THE CHILD

Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (The numbering and recommendations here were directly lifted from the COBs)	Strategy of the Ministry to address the recommendations (Status)	Responsibility	Year				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
29. Respect for views of the child (a) Take measures to ensure the effective implementation of legislation recognizing the right of the child to be heard in relevant legal proceedings, including by establishing systems and/or procedures for social workers and courts to comply with this principle.	Issuance of a guideline directing all concerned legal officials to recognize the right of the child to be heard in relevant legal proceedings (planned).	Ministry of Justice (MoJ)		X			
	Establishing a set of procedures for social workers and court officials to comply with the principle of recognizing the views of the child in legal proceedings (planned).	MoJ		X			
(b) Conduct programs and awareness-raising activities to promote the meaningful and empowered participation of all children within the family, communities, schools and student council bodies, with particular attention paid to children in vulnerable situations, including children with disabilities.	Continuous implementation of child participation initiatives by the National Youth Council, the National Directorate for Youth and the Youth Parliament. SSYS to discuss specific programs related to children in vulnerable situation and disability (on-going).	Secretary of State for Youth and Sport (SSYS)	X	X	X	X	X
	Develop the National Child and Youth Participation Framework for Timor-Leste with guidelines on the promotion of meaningful child and youth participation particularly amongst disadvantaged children and children with disabilities (planned).	SSYS		X	X		
	Conduct of a training to build the capacity of Social workers, NGO workers, teachers and community leaders in applying the National Child and Youth Participation Framework (planned).	MSS (SSYS, KDL)		X	X		
	Development of Behavior Change Communication strategies to promote the participation right of children and youth in all settings (planned).	SSYS, MSS (KDL)		X	X		

VI. INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION, MONITORING AND REPORTING MECHANISM

The Commission for the Rights of the Child (Komisária Ba Direitus Labarik or KDL), with support from the UNICEF Timor-Leste, coordinated the development of the National Action Plan for Children (NAPC) 2016-2020, with the participation of the government line ministries and institutions and municipality officials and in consultation with local and international NGOs, UNs and development partners.

The National Action Plan for Children (NAPC) 2016-2020 will be implemented mainly by the individual government ministries and institutions who have committed their human and budgetary resources to address specific thematic priorities based on the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. The strategies and activities in the NAPC were taken from the sector strategic plans of the concerned government agencies. The five-year NAPC will be translated into an annual work plan by the agencies in the beginning of the every year. Towards the end of the year, an annual program review will be conducted to determine the progress of the implementation of the NAPC.

By virtue of its mandate, the KDL will oversee the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the NAPC together with focal points from ministries and other government institutions. The KDL draws its mandate from the Ministerial Order no. 151-A/GMJ/V/2008 and Ministerial Order no. 020/II/2010. It became functional in February 2010. One of the key functions of the Commission is to “strengthen service coordination lines among stakeholders for the implementation of child related programs.”

To assist the KDL in ensuring a harmonious, consistent and effective coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Plan, a Coordination and Monitoring Team (CMT) was organized composed of focal points from each of the government agencies involved. As lead institution in the CMT, the KDL will have the following functions:

- Serve as secretariat of the CMT.
- Convene the quarterly meetings of the CMT.
- Organize the Annual Joint Review and Annual Joint Planning.
- Coordinate the collection of data and information related to the NAPC.
- Develop and distribute a standard report format and guidelines for accomplishing it
- Lead in the preparation of the Annual Report on the Implementation of the NAPC.
- Lead in the preparation of the Fourth Periodic Report of the RDTL to the UNCRC in 2020.
- Represent the CMT in various government and NGO meetings relevant to children.
- Coordinate the capacity building activities of the CMT.

The agency member representatives of the CMT should be at the General Director or Department Chief levels. The members will be given official designation by their respective offices to allow them to participate officially and fully in decision-making on coordination and

monitoring processes and to be able to serve in a continuous process. The functions of the CMT members are:

- Attend all meetings of the CMT
- Participate actively in the Annual Joint Review and Annual Joint Planning
- Collect and analyze data and information related to the NAPC in their respective agencies
- Provide inputs to Annual Report on the Implementation of the NAPC
- Lead in the preparation of the Fourth Periodic Report of the RDTL to the UNCRC in 2020
- Represent the CMT in various government and NGO meetings relevant to children.
- Support drafting of the next Periodic Reports of the RDTL to the UNCRC

To allow the members of the CMT to perform their functions effectively well, they will receive training that will enhance their knowledge and skills. The proposed trainings are as follows:

- Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) history, principles and provisions
- Concept and practice on Coordination and Monitoring
- Application of Results-Based Management in Planning and Monitoring
- Data Base Management
- CRC Monitoring
- Report writing for the annual report and periodic report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Public Finance for Children

The CMT will meet quarterly for updating and annually for joint program review and joint work planning. There will be special meetings to prepare the annual reports and the 5-year periodic report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. The Commission together with the CMT will collect all the required data, information and reports from all line ministries and forward them to the Ministry of Justice who is officially responsible for writing the RDTL's Periodic Report and submission to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva.

VII. ANNEXES

Annex 1. Causality Analysis of Issues Affecting Children in Timor-Leste

THEMATIC FOCUS 1: CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Immediate Causes

Violence against children and child abuse

The SitAn (2014) reported that emotional, physical and sexual abuses are often perpetrated by someone known to the child. The issues are seldom talked about because they usually occur within the privacy of the family and households. There are also cultural practices that tend to keep the issue of child abuse within the family domain such as the customary system of justice and the traditional conflict resolution.

During the Multi-Sectoral Workshop on Child Action Plan (2016), government participants observed that there were children in rural areas who work as domestic helpers to pay for the debts of their parents. These children, they said, were the most vulnerable to violence and abuse. They added that there were girls who were made to marry so that parents could benefit from dowry from the husband. These girls, they said were also susceptible to violence and abuse from their partners. These cases are usually kept within the family and remain unreported.

As mentioned in the background, corporal punishment appears to be widely accepted in Timor-Leste as a way to discipline children. It remains tolerated in schools, in the home, care and justice facilities and in residential institutions. Child abuse has, therefore, been considered a taken for granted reality in Timor-Leste.

Children deprived of family environment

The Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child noted the situation of poverty, food insecurity and lack of appropriate assistance as the main causes of children being placed in residential care facilities in Timor-Leste. The SitAn (2014), on the other hand, noted that family support services to prevent the risk of family separation is scarce. This is compounded by inadequate family counseling and parenting education programs in the community.

In Timor-Leste, it has become a tradition for parents to informally transfer the care of their children to other family members for cultural and economic reasons. The giving-family may be too poor to care for the child; the school may be too far from the residence; or the receiving-family may have requested a relative for a child with specific gender to fill in a gap in the family. There were reports that some girl-child victims are placed by their families in care facilities for an extended period of time to hide a pregnant daughter for fear of social stigma. There is no formal alternative care for children apart from residential institutions and adoption.

Child trafficking, child labor, children in conflict with law, and street children

During the National Workshop on the Development of this NAPC, the government participants agreed that the immediate causes of child protection issues such as child labor, trafficking, children getting entangled with the law are linked up with parents with low educational attainment and who live in

situation of poverty. They said that children whose parents have little awareness of child rights and of the negative consequences of child labor, trafficking and juvenile justice are in most vulnerable situation.

The participants said they have knowledge of children forced by unfortunate circumstances in the family to work at a tender age in order to augment family income. They also cited anecdotal reports in rural areas about poor families who are forced to have their children work as servants in other families in order to settle outstanding debts of their parents.

According to them, children even at an early age are expected to assume certain duties, including economic responsibilities. This is, they said, is the same reason why some children are trafficked or and the same reason why some of them work in the streets.

Underlying Causes

Violence against children and child abuse

A UNICEF-commissioned Mapping and Assessment of the Child Protection System in Timor-Leste (2011) found that the overall child protection system in the country still remains basic due to lack of a comprehensive legal and policy framework pertaining to child protection. The MSS have a case management policy and standard operating procedures to guide case management of child victims of abuse and children in conflict with the law. However, it still needs to include specific key interventions such as community-based care, criteria for placement of child victims in alternative care, and parameters for closing a case.

Although there are initiatives to enhance the prevention of violence and child abuse, and provision of protective and rehabilitative services for child-victims of sexual violence and abuse, these efforts remain to be limited in terms of adequacy of facilities, quality of service, and technical capacities of human resources. Many of these services are available only in Dili generally catering to girl- and woman-victims of domestic and gender-based violence. Violence against boys appears to be widely tolerated and there are no specific services available to support them.

There are a limited number of social workers in Timor-Leste and not all professionals working with children in the government have the knowledge and skills to provide protective, rehabilitative and integrative services for children.

Children deprived of family environment

None of the caring facilities in the country had a license to operate from the government, according to the mapping assessment conducted by UNICEF and the MSS in 2011. The quality of care provided to children in residential care is generally low because the staff members lack appropriate training. Moreover, relevant services were inadequate, other necessary facilities were insufficient and standard case management procedures were lacking, including psychosocial counseling and permanency planning. In addition, there was no provision for the security and safety of the children, placing them at risk of violation of their right to privacy and a possible re-victimization.

Child trafficking, child labor, children in conflict with law, and street children

In the same workshop mentioned above, the participants cited the limited services in the community that vulnerable children can access such as health services, life skills, basic safety and protection, reproductive health education and family planning services.

They said that there are government initiatives in raising public awareness on the negative consequences and impact of child labor, trafficking, and children getting entangled with the law but these efforts need to be enhanced to reach the families who are most disadvantaged and the communities which are most difficult to reach.

According to the participants, the Child Protection Officers in the municipalities are usually deployed in the centers and have limited time and resources to reach out to far flung areas. Meanwhile, legal services including courts and lawyers are not available in all municipalities. They said they are Police Officers available in the community but they need capacity in managing cases involving children.

The MSS recognizes the need to build the capacities of social workers and other concerned professionals in case management, psychosocial counseling and trauma therapy. Judges, prosecutors and lawyers need familiarization sessions on child-friendly court procedures which includes how to integrate victim protection throughout the duration of court proceedings.

The Mapping and Assessment of the Child Protection System, 2011, reported that the government does not have care facilities for child victims of abuse, violence, trafficking and children in conflict with the law. NGOs and religious organizations operate child care facilities for girls but with very little guidance and monitoring from the government. The other concern is that there are no shelter provisions catering to boys.

Basic Causes

Violence against children and child abuse

In 2008, the Minister of Education declared a “Zero Tolerance Policy” for violence against children at school but this has never been formalized in an official document. The Policy was designed to monitor and promote a violence-free learning environment. This policy needs to be followed up. Meanwhile, the Children’s Code which prohibits corporal punishment is yet to be adopted.

The MSS has developed a case management policy and Standard Operating Procedures to guide the case management of child victims of abuse and children in conflict with the law. However, there is still need to include some specific key approaches such as community based care, criteria for placement of child victims to alternative care, and parameters in determining closure of a case.

The SitAn (2014) noted that there was limited information on investigations, follow-up, recovery and social reintegration of child victims of violence including the number of cases brought before the courts and the outcomes of such proceedings.

Children deprived of family environment

There is a lack of a comprehensive legal and policy framework that authorizes the MSS to monitor the care provided in the various residential care facilities. **There is a need for a decree complementing the Policy on Child Care Centers and Boarding Houses that will allow the MSS to implement its provisions.**

Child trafficking, child labor, children in conflict with law, and street children

The national legal framework for child protection is characterized by a gap in terms of legal regulation and confusion over applicable law. It is also marked by weaknesses in the full enforcement of the provision of relevant laws. To date, there is no specific child protection law in place in Timor-Leste.

Justice for children is currently administered with few or no special considerations for children under adult justice laws. The Child's Rights Code and the Juvenile Justice Law are still in draft stage awaiting approval. The Penal Code applies only to children who are above the minimum age of criminal responsibility, which are 16.

Timor-Leste has not yet ratified the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138). The Labor Code does not clearly stipulate what "light work" constitutes and does not list prohibited hazardous child work. The Code does not make any reference to children working in the agricultural sector or domestic chores, the main areas of child work in Timor-Leste.

Currently, there is a need to develop a comprehensive anti-trafficking law which is consistent with international standards that includes protection mechanism for victims and provides clear guidance on roles and responsibilities for implementation of the law. There is also a need to finalize a national plan of action on child trafficking, to allocate resources for the implementation of the plan and to officially designate a lead agency to coordinate national efforts to address trafficking.

THEMATIC FOCUS 2: CHILD HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Immediate Causes

According to the National Strategy on Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (NSRMNCAH) in Timor-Leste (2015-2019), deaths among infants and under-5 years old children is higher in rural compared to urban areas because of poor access to health care services, weak communication system and use of harmful indigenous practices. The same source identified the issue of wife-beating even at the critical stage of the wife. This can adversely affect the condition of the mother and the baby. There is also a general perception amongst parents that having 5-6 children in a family is the normal.

The DHS (2009-2010) noted that mothers identify more with the traditional system of health promotion and disease prevention than with messages from medical professionals. For example, a new or boiled blade is used in only one in five of the most recent non-institutional births. In addition, the survey observed the low knowledge on the danger signs for new-borns. Meanwhile the NSRMNCAH reported the limited community and male participation which are strategic in improving maternal and newborn health particularly in areas far from health facilities.

One of the key causes of high teenage pregnancy rate in Timor-Leste is the prevalence of child marriage. The Situation Analysis of Children of Timor-Leste (2014) noted that in Timor-Leste, early marriage and early childbearing appear to be an accepted or tolerated social norms in the society. The Civil Code allows teenagers to marry, starting from the age of 17 (or 16 with parental consent). Traditional marriage happens earlier since there are parents who follow the traditional belief that a girl is ready to marry upon the onset of puberty.

In terms of nutrition, the SitAn (2014) noted that the economic status of the households influences the nutritional status of children. Children living in poor families have higher level of malnutrition compared with those from rich families. However, the TLDHS 2009-2010 suggests that the rich families also have a high level of stunting, wasting and underweight.

The Situation Analysis identified the combination of three broad categories as immediate causes of malnutrition. These are the absence of affordable nutritious food, inappropriate maternal child care and feeding practices and lack or absence of safe water, sanitation facilities and sanitary practices.

The Timor-Leste Food and Nutrition Survey 2013 noted that 63 per cent of families have adequate food on the table but only 17 per cent meet the minimum acceptable diet. While access to water is not a huge issue, access to sanitary toilet facilities is rather problematic particularly in rural areas where open defecation is widely practiced.

Underlying Causes

According to the recently published Concluding Observations (2015) on Timor-Leste's Implementation of CRC, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child noted the overall condition of the health service delivery system of Timor-Leste such as the insufficient number of skilled health care professionals, poor health standards and insufficient formal health services particularly in rural areas. These conditions could be the main causes of the still high infant and under-5 mortality rate, the high maternal mortality rate, the high incidence of disease and disabilities in children. The Committee is also concerned about the limited access to mental health care and psychosocial rehabilitation for children, especially for those who were exposed to violence, including sexual violence and harassment, abuse and neglect.

According to the Situation Analysis (SitAn) of Children in Timor-Leste, (2014) basic maternal and child health services are not distributed evenly throughout the country. It also noted that, in general, the access and quality of health services constitute a challenge for the majority of the population, except the richest quintile and those living in the capital city.

The NSRMNCAH noted that the apparent weakness in follow-up action to remedy identified problems on maternal and new born care because of various reasons, such as, limited transportation, heavy workload of health professionals and the absence or lack of midwives . The DHS 2009-2010 noted that the key gap in Timor-Leste is in the number of midwives.

In the community, there are not enough awareness-raising campaigns on the harmful effects of early pregnancy on the physical and mental health and well-being of girls and their babies. There are also no age-appropriate sex education for adolescents, with special attention to the prevention of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS.

Basic Causes

According to the NSRMNCAH there are legislative and policy gaps that may hinder the implementation of key interventions in RMNCAH. One example is the use of corticosteroid in pregnant women who are at risk of premature birth, eclampsia, and other complications. When it is included in the essential drugs list, only medical doctors could administer it. Meanwhile, most deliveries are assisted by midwives.

The SitAn (2014) identified other laws and policies that require urgent approval and implementation such as breastfeeding policy, the code of marketing of breast-milk substitutes, breast-milk supplements and related products and salt iodization. The current maternity leave need to be amended from three months to six months to support adequate and appropriate infant feeding.

The National Strategy on Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) in Timor-Leste (2015-2019), noted the need for policy decision on how to fill in the midwifery personnel gaps quickly. It also noted the lack of research in various aspects of MNH that can lead to strategic decision-making for improving services and program development.

In terms of adolescents' health, there is a need to adopt a law and a comprehensive communication plan to address the issue of dowry system, early marriage and early pregnancy. In corollary, there is also a need to develop and adopt rehabilitative and protective care facilities for pregnant girls who need health care services, or temporary shelter when necessary. There is also a need to adopt relevant laws establishing a minimum age for alcohol consumption and tobacco use, and to establish preventive and protective care programs and services to address substance abuse and alcoholism.

THEMATIC FOCUS 3: PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION, BASIC EDUCATION AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY

Immediate Causes

Pre-school education

The demand for pre-school education, particularly in rural areas, is rather low because parents are not fully acknowledging the relevance and value of the same for their pre-school aged children. Aside from lack of awareness, economic status also causes low demand for pre-school education in Timor-Leste. Parents of poor households often cannot afford to send their pre-school aged children to available private institutions operating pre-school services because of cost implications.

Basic education

Timor-Leste has achieved a remarkable progress in basic education. There however some few challenges that need to be addressed such the geographic reason, economic condition and social norms and cultural values on the demand side. In rural areas, many students live in communities that are too far away from schools. Absence of public transportation prevents children from regularly attending classes. While basic education is free in Timor-Leste there are indirect expenses in schools that students need to pay for such learning materials, and other school requirements.

The SitAn (2014) noted a general perception among parents in Timor-Leste of low returns on family investment in education and weak link with employment. This is the main reason why some children are discouraged from going to school. According to the Timor-Leste Census (2010), 39 per cent of the adult population has never been to school. Meanwhile, base line survey in a *Ba Futuru' School Project* (2013) found that the prevalence of violence in school including gender-violence and corporal punishment negatively affects the regular attendance of students, particularly girls, in schools. The survey indicated that 81 per cent of the respondents had witnessed student to student violence and 49 per cent have experienced being beaten by teachers once a week or more.

Children with disability

Children with disabilities generally live in a disadvantaged, marginalized and vulnerable situation because there is a general lack of awareness of the rights of children with disabilities and understanding of their condition at the community, school, institution and family levels. Although disabilities cut across social classes, affected persons mostly come from poor families and from rural areas. Aside from lack of awareness and understanding, children with disabilities continue to live in

disadvantaged situations because caregivers of children with disabilities lack support for specialized training, including other support mechanism such as counselling and *Bolsa da Mãe* stipend.

Underlying Causes

Pre-school education

The National Directorate of Pre-school Education of the MoE (210) revealed that the total number of pre-schools was only 200 in 2012 and increased to 236 in 2013. Only 13.8 per cent of primary schools had a pre-school attached or in close proximity to the schools. Most of the pre-schools are managed by private institutions or by NGOs. Meanwhile, many of the pre-school institutions are located in the municipality centers and are far from those living in remote and hard to reach areas.

Quality of teaching is a major overall concern. The National directorate reported in 2010 that there were only 6per cent of pre-school teachers available (irrespective of qualification) against the total required numbers by size of the 3-5 years olds population. Many of these teachers do not meet the national qualification standards nor are “volunteer teachers” who are without qualification and who generally have very poor training opportunities.

Basic education

The factors that drive the low access to quality basic education on the supply side are insufficient number of public schools, inadequate facilities, indirect costs of education, and lack of professionally trained teaching staff.

There are schools distributed in all municipalities throughout the country but these are concentrated in areas along the main roads. According to EMIS (2010), only 61 per cent of primary schools have toilet and water facilities. Classrooms have insufficient desks and chairs. There are also inadequate textbooks in *Tetum* and no age-appropriate bi-lingual textbooks for grades 1-6 for some subjects.

The EMIS (2010) reported that, In general, classroom availability in Timor-Leste has a concerning shortage as many classrooms are overcrowded. Schools have also adopted shifting schedules to accommodate more students. This has reduced teacher’s close contact with the pupils, as well as, close monitoring of pupils’ school performance.

The same survey said that the classrooms are managed by a significant number of teachers who lack minimum qualifications for teaching. Hence, many of the teachers have limited teaching capacity and lack effective teaching skills. In general, only 40 per cent of the teachers meet the national qualification standards. Majority of them are concentrated in Dili.

Children with disability

Children with disabilities are not fully integrated into many areas of social life because there are often no provisions for them to physically access basic facilities and services including schools, social services, health care, sports and leisure activities, public areas, and playgrounds.

In Timor-Leste there is a lack of detailed guidelines or protocol that can guide teachers, social workers and health, medical, therapeutic and care personnel in the proper treatment of children with disabilities. There is also no system of monitoring the performance of care providers.

Agencies that collect data on persons with disabilities have not been consistent in disaggregating data by disability, age, gender, social status, ethnicity and place of origin to provide a comprehensive

assessment of the situation of children with disabilities and consequently to inform policies and programs.

Basic Causes

Pre-school Education

The Situation Analysis of Children of Timor-Leste (2014) noted that pre-school education is beginning to receive increased attention from both the government and civil society. The approval of the National Policy Framework for Pre-school Education demonstrates the commitment of the government to promote preschool education in Timor-Leste.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child noted this development and hoped that the related strategic action plan be implemented including the pilot project which involve the establishment of 12 preschools in remote communities in the Aileu and Ermera municipalities as part of the child-friendly schools initiative.

A number of pro-active actions are still needed to improve access to pre-school education and to address the existing bottleneck such as the low resource allocation for the development and expansion of early childhood education from the MoE. In 2013, the budget allotted for pre-school education sub-sector was only 0.9 per cent of the total education budget.

Basic Education

Timor-Leste adopted the Basic Education Law of 2008 which provides for a universal free compulsory basic education (Grade 1-9) for all children. However, there was no specific mechanism for the inclusion of marginalized groups of children. The National Education Strategic Plan, 2011-2030, includes a framework to reduce disparities in education including access factors affecting girls, children with disabilities, the poorest sectors, and children belonging to Ethnic groups. However, there is no costed operational plan developed and corresponding specific budget allotted for implementation. The Child Friendly School Initiative has been adopted in the Basic Education Decree Law. The National Quality School Standards for implementation are yet to be finalized and approved.

Children with disability

Timor-Leste needs to strengthen its legislative and policy framework for the promotion and protection of the rights of children with disabilities at the national level. There are specific legislations that need to be in place to further ensure the promotion and fulfilment of the rights of persons with disabilities such as a building code that requires better physical access to public structures by children or all persons with disabilities; a mechanism or avenue where people can complain about maltreatment, abuse, neglect or discrimination of children with disabilities; and opportunities for their active and meaningful participation in all spheres of the society.

To note, Timor-Leste need to hasten the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. There is also need to review and approve the National Action Plan for People with Disabilities and the National Policy on Inclusive Education in order to ensure that in an inclusive manner, children with disabilities benefit from social services that they deserve. There is also a call to advocate for the increase of resource allocation in terms of budget and staffing, particularly in offices that cover remote areas.

It will be important to further ensure that persons with disabilities receive equal recognition before the law and full access to justice facilities, including provision of legal aid, translation and interpretation, rehabilitation and protection services.

Unfortunately the Government has not yet signed or ratified the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. There are still gaps in the implementation, and a lack of information and awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities, generally, and even less when it comes to specific services for children. The specific rights of children with disabilities are not explicitly addressed in these policy documents, and children with disabilities often lack the relevant information to claim their rights and the obligations owed to them.

THEMATIC FOCUS 4: CHILD AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Immediate Causes

The National Youth Policy (2016) noted that economic difficulties and family needs often demand families to sacrifice the youth to stop from schooling to help the family. With very limited economic opportunities, many of them are confronted with unpleasant influences in the community such as alcohol and drug abuse. Adolescents with disabilities faced more complex problems because of lack of access education and other facilities. The policy added the phenomenon of some young people earning their living on the street in 2014 especially in Díli.

The National Youth Conference with youth participants from the 13 Municipalities held in 2014 noted that the major challenges in promoting youth participation are the attitude of the young people themselves, their families, as well as, the communities. These challenges refer more specifically to young people lack of capacity for social interaction, the elderly's lack of trust on young people, lack of encouragement from the family, and low community awareness on the potentials of young people.

The SitAn (2004) explained that the traditional concept of children, cultural practices and social norms do not appear to be conducive to support a meaningful participation for children and adolescents. Economic deprivation also restricts the adolescent's opportunity for participation and empowerment. Upon reaching a certain age, children in Timor-Leste suddenly transition to adulthood stage where he or she is given responsibilities and suddenly subjected to pressure to make contribution to the family.

Underlying causes

The National Youth Policy (2016) noted that young people in rural areas face difficulties in accessing quality education, adequate health treatment, and training and employment opportunities. In the same National Youth Conference (2014) mentioned above, young people said that the major causes of their limited involvement and civic participation were the limited human resources and social communication facilities to promote their participation. There were youth centers in some communities but did not have adequate facilities and resources to promote meaningful youth involvement and participation.

The Sector Strategic Plans of the MSS and MoE are silent on the promotion of child and adolescent participation. There are no activities or strategies that will provide a space for a meaningful child and adolescent participation. The programs of NGOs such as Plan International, World Vision and Child Funds laid out in their website do not show that child and adolescent participation is a priority.

Basic Causes

The National Youth Policy (2016) provides a good framework and a platform for meaningful youth participation. Concrete implementation procedures, political will, strong leadership and budget allocation, however, are needed to translate the policy into action.

With UNICEF assistance, the Youth Parliament in Timor-Leste was established and endorsed by the Council of Ministers. UNICEF hopes to continue supporting the group with the aim of empowering the Youth Parliamentarians in advocating for children and adolescents' development, life-skills, peace building and risk reduction, and HIV/AIDS prevention, and in organizing and facilitating youth development activities.

Annex 2. Concluding observations on the combined second and third Periodic Reports of Timor-Leste

United Nations

CRC/C/TLS/CO/2-3

Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Timor-Leste

1. The Committee considered the combined second and third periodic reports of Timor-Leste (CRC/C/TLS/2-3) at its 1st and 2nd meetings (see CRC/C/SR.2041 and 2042), held on 25 September 2015, and adopted the following concluding observations at its 2nd meeting (see CRC/C/SR.2052), held on 2 October 2015.

I. Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the State party's combined second and third periodic reports and the written replies to the list of issues (CRC/C/TLS/Q/2-3/Add.1), which allowed for a better understanding of the situation of children's rights in the State party. The Committee expresses appreciation for the constructive dialogue held with the high-level and multisectoral delegation of the State party.

II. Follow-up measures taken and progress achieved by the State party

3. The Committee welcomes the ratification of or accession to the following instruments:

- (a) United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, in 2009;
- (b) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, in 2009;
- (c) Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, in 2009;

(d) International Labour Organization Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), in 2009.

4. The Committee notes with satisfaction the adoption of the following legislative measures, among others:

- (a) Labour Code of 2012;
- (b) Civil Code of 2011;
- (c) Law against domestic violence of 2010;
- (d) Penal Code of 2009;
- (e) Law on protection of witnesses of 2009;
- (f) Basic law on education of 2008.

5. The Committee also welcomes the establishment or adoption of the following institutional and policy measures:

- (a) Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan for 2011-2030;
- (b) National Education Strategic Plan for 2011-2015 and the Education Action Plan;
- (c) National Policy Framework for Preschool Education, in 2015;
- (d) National Commission for the Rights of the Child, in 2009 (currently known as the Commission for the Rights of the Child);
- (e) Child-friendly school programme, in 2009.

III. Main areas of concern and recommendations

A. General measures of implementation (arts. 4, 42 and 44 (6))

Committee's previous recommendations

6. The Committee, while welcoming the State party's efforts to implement the Committee's concluding observations of 2008 on the State party's initial report (CRC/C/TLS/CO/1), notes that several of the recommendations contained therein have not been fully addressed, in particular, those related to dissemination, awareness-raising and training (ibid., para. 23).

7. The Committee urges the State party to take all measures necessary to address those recommendations from the concluding observations on the initial report submitted under the Convention which have not been fully implemented.

Legislation

8. The Committee welcomes the on-going legal reform that has contributed to the improvement of children's rights in the State party. However, it is concerned about the delay in the adoption of legislation in all areas affecting children's rights that is instrumental to the implementation of the Convention.

9. The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation that the State party should continue and strengthen its efforts to develop consistent legislative frameworks in all areas affecting children's rights in compliance with the Convention (see CRC/C/TLS/CO/1, para. 9). In particular, the Committee urges the prompt adoption of the children's code, the juvenile justice regime, the law to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons and laws currently being drafted that relate to child protection and alternative sentencing.

Comprehensive policy and strategy

10. The Committee notes the information provided by the State party that the development of a national plan of action for the implementation of children's rights in the State party is under discussion within the Consultative Council. The Committee is, however, concerned about the delay in the adoption and implementation of such an overarching plan of action.

11. The Committee recommends that the State party expedite the adoption of a plan of action for children, as previously recommended (see CRC/C/TLS/CO/1, para. 11), and ensure the development of a strategy for its full implementation, including specific time-bound and measurable goals and targets to effectively monitor and evaluate progress in the implementation of children's rights throughout the State party. The national strategy should additionally be linked to national, sectoral and municipal strategies and budgets to ensure appropriate allocation of the human, technical and financial resources required for its implementation.

Coordination

12. The Committee notes the establishment of the Commission for the Rights of the Child in 2009, which is under the authority of the Minister of State, the Coordinator of Social Affairs and the Minister of Education. The Committee is, however, concerned that the Commission does not have the staff and resources necessary to discharge its mandate effectively.

13. The Committee recommends that the State party provide the Commission for the Rights of the Child with the human, technical and financial resources necessary to effectively implement and coordinate comprehensive, coherent and consistent child-rights policies at all levels and to assess the impact of such policies and programmes on children's rights.

Allocation of resources

14. The Committee welcomes the significant increases in budgetary allocations for health, education and social services for children, as well as international assistance and development aid in relation to the implementation of the Convention. The Committee is, however, concerned about the lack of data on the proportion of budgetary allocations for the implementation of children's rights under the Convention.

15. In the light of its day of general discussion on resources for the rights of the child and the responsibility of States, held in 2007, the Committee urges the State party to:

(a) **Establish a budgeting process that includes a child rights perspective and specifies clear allocations to children in the relevant sectors and agencies, including specific indicators and a tracking system;**

(b) **Define strategic budgetary lines for children in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations who may require affirmative social measures, and ensure that those budgetary lines are protected even in situations of economic crisis, natural disasters and emergencies, especially with respect to health and education;**

(c) **Establish mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the efficacy, adequacy and equitability of the distribution of resources allocated to the implementation of the Convention;**

(d) **Provide disaggregated information on the proportion of the national budget allocated to the implementation of the rights of the child at the national and local levels.**

Data collection

16. The Committee notes that data collection processes are under development and that several ministries have developed databases for collecting and analysing data on children. It also notes the various surveys that have been conducted on children's issues. The Committee is, however, concerned that no national central database on children has been developed and about gaps in the overall data collection apparatus of the State party, in particular with respect to national planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting.

17. In the light of its general comment No. 5 (2003) on general measures of implementation of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party expeditiously improve its data collection system. The data should cover all areas of the Convention and be disaggregated by age, sex, disability, geographic location, ethnic origin and socioeconomic background. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the data and indicators be shared among the ministries concerned and used for the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programmes and projects for the effective implementation of the Convention. In this context, the Committee also recommends that the State party strengthen its technical cooperation with, among others, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and regional mechanisms.

Independent monitoring

18. The Committee welcomes the information that the Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice has been recognized as an "A" status institution, as well as the range of activities undertaken by the Office, including investigations, monitoring, awareness-raising and education programmes in Dili and the districts with respect to the Convention. The Committee, however, regrets that neither a special unit for children nor a focal point for children's rights within the Office has been established, owing to a lack of expertise, human resource capacity and financial constraints. It is also concerned about information received that the Office has not taken an active role in defending children's rights and following up on complaints by children or made on behalf of children.

19. In the light of its general comment No. 2 (2002) on the role of independent national human rights institutions in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Establish an appropriately staffed and resourced section for child rights within the Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice that is able to receive, investigate and address complaints by children in a child-sensitive manner, ensure the privacy and protection of child victims, and undertake monitoring, follow-up and verification activities for victims as previously recommended (see CRC/C/TLS/CO/1, para. 15);**

(b) **Raise awareness among the general public, and children in particular, of their right to file a complaint, and ensure that the procedures are accessible, confidential and child friendly.**

B. Definition of the child (art. 1)

20. While the Committee notes that the age of majority is 17, it is concerned that not all children under the age of 18 are benefiting from the full protection under the Convention.

21. The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to ensure that all domestic laws ensure that, in accordance with article 1 of the Convention, all children under 18 benefit from the full protection under the Convention.

22. The Committee is concerned that the minimum age for marriage is set at 17 for both boys and girls, and that child marriage, especially of girls, remains highly prevalent in the State party. The Committee is particularly concerned that 16-year-old girls and boys can enter into marriage with the consent of their parents.

23. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Ensure that the minimum age of marriage for boys and girls be raised to 18, and that a child below the age of 16 can in no circumstances marry;**

(b) **Develop awareness-raising campaigns and programmes on the harmful effects of early marriage on the physical and mental health and well-being of girls, targeting households, local authorities, judges and religious and community leaders;**

(c) **In the light of joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on harmful practices (2014), take active measures to put an end to harmful practices against children in the State party.**

C. General principles (arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12)

Non-discrimination

24. The Committee commends the inclusion of specific provisions for the protection of children from discrimination in the State party's Constitution and other laws, including with respect to children with disabilities and children born out of wedlock. The Committee is concerned, however, that certain groups of children, especially children of returnees, children who are not in possession of a baptism certificate, children born out of wedlock, children conceived from sexual relations among family members, and children with disabilities, face de facto discrimination, most importantly with regard to access to education and other services.

25. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that all children in the State party enjoy equal rights under the Convention without discrimination, both de jure and de facto, and that it intensify efforts to ensure the effective elimination of any form of discrimination against the above-mentioned groups of children and other groups of children in marginalized situations through, among other things, awareness-raising campaigns and education, especially at the community level and in schools.

Best interests of the child

26. The Committee welcomes the information in the periodic report that the best interests of the child principle is mainstreamed across all sectors of government and is enshrined in the draft children's code and the draft law to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons. However, the Committee is concerned about insufficient information regarding the State party's efforts to ensure the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken into account as a primary consideration in all actions, and to apply that right in all legislation, administrative and judicial proceedings, policies and programmes relating to children.

27. In the light of its general comment No. 14 (2013) on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to ensure that this right is appropriately integrated and consistently interpreted and applied in all legislation, administrative and judicial proceedings and decisions, as well as in all policies, programmes and projects that are relevant to and have an impact on children. In this regard, the State party is encouraged to develop procedures and criteria to provide guidance to all relevant persons in authority on determining

the best interests of the child in every area and on giving due weight to those interests as a primary consideration.

Respect for the views of the child

28. The Committee notes the State party's efforts to ensure respect for the views of the child in various draft laws and in relevant administrative processes and judicial proceedings relating to children. It also notes the numerous child participation activities and initiatives carried out by the National Youth Council, the National Directorate for Youth and the Youth Parliament. The Committee is concerned, however, that traditional and cultural practices do not readily accommodate and recognize the views of the child in homes, schools and communities, and that respect for the views of the child is not adequately implemented in practice in all relevant areas and at the national and local levels, including with respect to children with disabilities.

29. In the light of its general comment No. 12 (2009) on the right of the child to be heard, the Committee recommends that the State party take measures to strengthen this right in accordance with article 12 of the Convention. To that effect, it recommends that the State party:

(a) **Take measures to ensure the effective implementation of legislation recognizing the right of the child to be heard in relevant legal proceedings, including by establishing systems and/or procedures for social workers and courts to comply with this principle;**

(b) **Conduct programmes and awareness-raising activities to promote the meaningful and empowered participation of all children within the family, communities, schools and student council bodies, with particular attention paid to children in vulnerable situations, including children with disabilities.**

D. Civil rights and freedoms (arts. 7, 8 and 13-17)

Birth registration

30. The Committee welcomes the information in the report of the State party concerning efforts to increase birth registration through the expansion of birth registration offices, the establishment of an online registry and mobile birth registration, as well as through the national campaign for the registration of children. The Committee is concerned, however, about the number of children who are not registered or are registered late, and about barriers to registration, in particular regarding children in rural areas and costs for documents. It also reiterates its concern that the draft civil registry code has not yet been approved (see CRC/C/TLS/CO/1, para. 35).

31. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen efforts to ensure that all children are provided with birth certificates free of charge, including through mobile units and outreach programmes in remote areas of the State party, raise awareness of the importance of birth registration and adopt and implement the draft civil registry code.

E. Violence against children (arts. 19, 24 (3), 28 (2), 34, 37 (a) and 39)

Corporal punishment

32. The Committee notes that the draft children's code prohibits corporal punishment in schools and provides for mandatory reporting obligations with respect to child abuse within or outside the school. The Committee welcomes the information in the report of the State party about measures taken by the Ministry of Education to

investigate complaints of corporal punishment in schools. The Committee, however, is concerned that corporal punishment is widely accepted in society as a way to discipline children and remains lawful in schools, as well as in the home and in residential institutions. It is also concerned about the lack of data on the number of incidents of corporal punishment in all settings.

33. In line with its general comments No. 8 (2006) on the right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment and No. 13 (2011) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Adopt the children's code and amend its legislation to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, including the family, schools and institutions;

(b) Promote positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing and discipline as an alternative to corporal punishment, and expand parenting education programmes and training for principals, teachers and other professionals working with and for children;

(c) Strengthen and expand its efforts through awareness-raising campaigns to inform the public in general about the negative impact of corporal punishment on children and actively involve children and the media in the process.

Abuse and neglect

34. The Committee notes that the State party has undertaken various initiatives to address the issue of abuse and neglect of children, including the deployment of additional child protection officers in all 13 districts of the State party. The Committee is, however, concerned about the prevalence of abuse and neglect of children in the State party. It is furthermore concerned about the limited data available on child abuse and neglect and about the lack of information on investigations, follow-up, recovery and social reintegration.

35. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Further strengthen awareness-raising and education programmes, including campaigns, with the involvement of children, in order to formulate a comprehensive strategy for preventing and combating child abuse in all settings, including with respect to implementing the necessary legislation and policies, in particular the law against domestic violence and the policy for child protection, and adopting and implementing the draft child protection law;

(b) Establish an easily accessible mechanism for children and others to report cases of abuse and neglect, ensuring the necessary protection for such victims;

(c) Facilitate the physical and psychological rehabilitation of child victims and ensure they have access to health services, including mental health services;

(d) Ensure that all professionals and staff working with and for children are provided with the necessary training on how to prevent and monitor domestic violence as well as receive, investigate and prosecute complaints about such violence in a child- and gender-sensitive manner;

(e) Ensure the allocation of adequate human, technical and financial resources to the Child Protection Network to enable it to implement long-term programmes for addressing the root causes of violence and abuse;

(f) Encourage community-based programmes aimed at preventing and addressing domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, including by involving

former victims, volunteers and community members and providing them with training and support.

Sexual exploitation and abuse

36. The Committee welcomes the criminalization of offences of sexual exploitation and abuse of children in the Penal Code. It also welcomes several initiatives by the State party to enhance the protection of children, including assistance and support for victims of sexual violence and abuse. The Committee, however, is seriously concerned about the widespread sexual abuse of children in the State party, including incest. It is also concerned about the lack of information and data on the number of cases brought before the courts and the outcomes of such proceedings. The Committee is further concerned that the National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence lacks resources for its effective implementation.

37. The Committee urges that the State party:

(a) **Establish mechanisms, procedures and guidelines to ensure the mandatory reporting of cases of child sexual abuse, exploitation and incest, and the speedy and effective investigation of those cases and prosecution of perpetrators;**

(b) **Conduct awareness-raising and education programmes to combat the stigmatization of child victims of sexual exploitation, abuse and incest, and ensure accessible, confidential, child-friendly and effective channels for reporting such violations;**

(c) **Ensure that child protection agencies are adequately staffed and funded, and that all professionals and staff working with and for children undergo background checks and are provided with the necessary supervision and training;**

(d) **Provide systematic training to law enforcement officials, social workers and prosecutors on how to receive, monitor, investigate and prosecute complaints in a child- and gender-sensitive manner that respects the privacy of the victim;**

(e) **Ensure the development of programmes and policies for the prevention of child sexual exploitation and the recovery and social reintegration of child victims, in accordance with the outcome documents adopted at the World Congresses against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children;**

(f) **Effectively implement the National Plan of Action on Gender-Based Violence and ensure that it is adequately financed.**

F. Family environment and alternative care (arts. 5, 9-11, 18 (1) and (2), 20, 21, 25 and 27 (4))

Family environment

38. Despite the impressive number of services and programmes aimed at assisting parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities, the Committee is concerned that many families are in situations of poverty, face food insecurity and lack appropriate assistance, resulting in children being placed in residential care facilities. The Committee is also concerned about inadequate financial support, despite poverty reduction initiatives and access to early childhood education and care for young children.

39. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Finalize and implement the Child and Family Welfare System Policy with its focus on strengthening families and communities to protect and care for their children;**

(b) **Intensify its efforts to provide appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities, in particular in situations of poverty and especially in rural areas, including by strengthening the system of family benefits and child allowances and other services, such as accessible early childhood education and care;**

(c) **Expand family counselling and parenting education programmes.**

Children deprived of a family environment

40. The Committee:

(a) Is concerned that informal foster care arrangements, whereby children are placed in families other than biological families owing to a variety of reasons, put these children at risk of abuse and exploitation;

(b) While noting that kinship care is a widespread traditional practice in Timor-Leste and is generally a positive practice, is concerned that the limited monitoring by protection services puts children at risk of abuse;

(c) Is concerned about inadequate government oversight regarding the placement of children and the monitoring of the quality of care in residential care facilities.

41. Drawing the State party's attention to the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, the Committee emphasizes that financial and material poverty, or conditions directly and uniquely attributable to such poverty, should never be the sole justification for removing a child from parental care, for receiving a child into alternative care or for preventing a child's social reintegration. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Further strengthen the support provided to biological families to prevent out-of-home placements, including informal arrangements;**

(b) **Increase efforts to ensure that children in need of alternative care are placed in family-based care rather than in institutions and that they maintain contact with or are returned to their families when it is in their best interests;**

(c) **Ensure adequate safeguards and clear criteria, based on the needs and the best interests of the child, for determining whether a child should be placed in alternative care, including periodic review of the placement of children in children's homes;**

(d) **Strengthen government oversight regarding the operation of residential care facilities, and review the Policy, Procedures and Standards for Child Care Centres and Boarding Houses (2010) to ensure that all residential care facilities are operated in compliance with the policy, which should include an enforcement mechanism;**

(e) **Ensure that adequate human, technical and financial resources are allocated to alternative care centres and relevant child protection services, in order to facilitate the rehabilitation and social reintegration of children resident therein to the greatest extent possible.**

Adoption

42. The Committee is concerned about the practice in the State party regarding informal adoption whereby families place their children with other families, often because of situations of poverty and indebtedness. It is also concerned that the State

party, which has ratified the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption, has not implemented this Convention in practice.

43. The Committee recommends that the State party regulate on an urgent basis the issue of informal adoption in the State party. It also recommends that the State party adopt legislation and policies on adoption in accordance with the Convention. The Committee further recommends that the State party adopt laws and policies to implement the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption and provide information on measures taken in this regard, including compliance mechanisms, in its next periodic report.

G. Disability, basic health and welfare (arts. 6, 18 (3), 23, 24, 26, 27 (1-3) and 33)

Children with disabilities

44. The Committee welcomes the inclusion of disabilities in the Strategic Development Plan with respect to the promotion of health. It also welcomes the establishment of three training centres as pilot projects in Dili, Lautem and Aileu, which provide teachers with training to support children with disabilities in mainstream education. The Committee is, however, concerned that:

(a) The legislative and policy reforms, and the coordination at the national level, necessary to secure the rights and active participation of children with disabilities in all spheres of society have not been implemented;

(b) Children with disabilities are subjected to widespread discrimination, neglect and abuse, lack access to education and health care, and are not integrated effectively in all areas of social life;

(c) There is a lack of public awareness of the rights of children with disabilities;

(d) Sufficient and adequate facilities for children with disabilities in schools, sports and leisure facilities and residential facilities are lacking, in particular in rural areas;

(e) There is a lack of statistical data concerning children with disabilities in the State party;

(f) The State party has not yet ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

45. In the light of its general comment No. 9 (2006) on the rights of children with disabilities, the Committee urges the State party to adopt a human rights-based approach to disability, set up a comprehensive strategy for the inclusion of children with disabilities and:

(a) **Continue to strengthen the legislative and policy framework, as well as efforts to coordinate laws and policies, for the promotion and protection of the rights of children with disabilities at the national level, including by reviewing and approving the National Action Plan for People with Disabilities and the National Policy on Inclusive Education and Action Plan, ensuring that they are implemented in an inclusive manner that enables children with disabilities to benefit;**

(b) **Strengthen support for caregivers of children with disabilities, including by providing counselling and training, increasing the Bolsa da Mãe stipend and considering implementing a stipend for caregivers to help support children with disabilities;**

(c) **Ensure that continuing training is provided for professionals working with children with disabilities, such as teachers, social workers and health, medical, therapeutic and care personnel, that guidelines and training materials are developed, and that mechanisms are in place to monitor the performance of care providers;**

(d) **Ensure that schools and health-care facilities are accessible and adequately staffed and funded, and that children with disabilities are treated with dignity and respect and benefit from effective protection;**

(e) **Undertake sustained public awareness campaigns to familiarize the public and other stakeholders with the rights of children with disabilities;**

(f) **Take all measures necessary to ensure that children with disabilities are integrated fully into all areas of social life, including schools, sports and leisure activities, and that facilities and other public areas are accessible for children with disabilities;**

(g) **Strengthen the collection of data, disaggregated by disability, to provide a comprehensive assessment of the situation of children with disabilities to inform key sectors about appropriate policies and programmes to advance the situation of children with disabilities;**

(h) **Consider ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.**

Health and health services

46. The Committee commends the State party for its commitment to providing access to primary health care free to all nationals of the State party, and notes plans to implement the National Health Sector Strategic Plan, as well as various strategies relating to immunization, nutrition and child and adolescent health. It also commends the reduction in the under-5 mortality rate and efforts to address the number of children classified as stunted, wasted and underweight; the improvements in the nutritional status of children overall; and the vaccination coverage of children, including the elimination of maternal and neonatal tetanus, small pox and polio, among others. The Committee, however, is concerned about:

(a) The insufficient number of skilled health-care professionals, poor health standards and insufficient formal health services in all parts of the State party, in particular in rural areas, which are persistent factors that serve to perpetuate the still high infant and under-5 mortality levels, the high maternal mortality rate, disabilities in children and the high incidence of disease;

(b) The high levels of malnutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and stunting rates, the high number of children not fully immunized, and insufficient access to safe drinking water, basic sanitation and hygiene facilities, including in schools and health facilities, especially in rural areas;

(c) The high levels of indoor air pollution resulting from traditional cooking practices;

(d) The need for continued improvements in breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices.

47. The Committee, in the light of its general comment No. 15 (2013) on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, recommends that the State party:

(a) **Continue to strengthen efforts to ensure the provision of adequate financial and human resources, in particular for neonatal, prenatal and postnatal care, especially in rural areas;**

(b) Improve training and access to health-care professionals and midwives for childbirth, and expand the community birth preparedness initiative to increase the number of deliveries at health-care facilities;

(c) Continue targeted interventions to prevent the stunting, wasting and undernourishment of children, including the promotion of proper feeding practices for infants and young children, and continue to raise awareness of nutrition issues and promote overall nutrition education, including through the revised National Nutrition Strategy;

(d) Increase the quantity and coverage of health-care professionals to ensure that children have access to high-quality health-care services, including immunizations in all districts, and implement the electronic child-tracking system to ensure that all children are registered for immunization;

(e) Strengthen efforts and increase resources to ensure that homes, schools and other public facilities have adequate safe drinking water, basic sanitation and hygiene facilities, in particular in rural areas, and raise awareness about open defecation and proper sanitation and hand washing practices, including by implementing the policy to promote open-defecation-free rural communities.

(f) Improve access to clean water facilities by strengthening government coordination, developing an action plan and providing the Department of Water Supply of the Ministry of Public Works with adequate staff and an adequate budget, in particular for rural communities;

(g) Strengthen measures to introduce clean cooking technologies and raise awareness about the links between respiratory illnesses and the use of firewood in traditional cooking practices, and reduce reliance on firewood, including by subsidizing the cost of cooking fuel;

(h) Approve and implement the Timor-Leste breastfeeding policy and the code of marketing of breast-milk substitutes, breast-milk supplements and related products, increase the number of health centres supporting these initiatives, and increase the current maternity leave from three months to six months to support appropriate infant feeding.

Mental health

48. The Committee is concerned that there is limited access to mental health care and psychosocial rehabilitation for children, especially for those who were exposed to violence, including sexual violence and harassment, abuse and neglect.

49. The Committee, referring to its general comment No. 15, recommends that the State party strengthen existing quality services and programmes of mental health for children and, in particular:

(a) Take measures to increase the number of specialists in children's mental health and ensure adequate facilities and outpatient services for psychosocial rehabilitation;

(b) Ensure that all professionals working with children are trained to identify and address mental health problems, in particular in children's homes, places of safety and juvenile correction centres.

Adolescent health

50. The Committee welcomes the information on the programmes and services aimed at preventing and treating adolescent health problems, including those relating to reproductive health. The Committee, however, is concerned:

(a) About the high teenage pregnancy rate, which is linked to the prevalence of child marriage in the State party, limited knowledge of reproductive health, and

social and cultural barriers that prevent young people and adolescents from seeking reproductive health information and services;

(b) About the significant challenges faced by the State party in ensuring effective coverage of and access by adolescents to sexual reproductive health services, including for the prevention of HIV and sexually transmitted infections;

(c) About the high level of tobacco and alcohol consumption among adolescents;

(d) That no comprehensive study to assess the nature and scope of adolescent health problems has been undertaken by the State party, including with respect to substance abuse and prevention of HIV/AIDS.

51. In the light of its general comment No. 4 (2003) on adolescent health and development in the context of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Develop awareness-raising campaigns and programmes on the harmful effects of early pregnancy on the physical and mental health and well-being of girls and their babies, targeting households, local authorities, religious leaders and judges;**

(b) **Promote age-appropriate sex education targeted at adolescents as well as the wider community, with special attention paid to the prevention of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS;**

(c) **Adopt laws establishing a minimum age for alcohol consumption and tobacco use, and establish support programmes and services to address substance abuse, as well as intervention programmes and awareness-raising campaigns;**

(d) **Undertake a comprehensive study to assess the nature and extent of adolescent health problems, with the full participation of adolescents, as a basis for future health policies and programmes.**

Standard of living

52. While noting the allocation of some financial assistance to families by the State party, the Committee is deeply concerned about the high rate of children living below the poverty line, which affects their enjoyment of many of the rights protected by the Convention, including the rights to health, to education and to social protection.

53. The Committee urges the State party to:

(a) **Intensify its efforts to address, both in the short term and in a sustained manner, the high level of child poverty, including by designing public policies and a national plan to combat child poverty;**

(b) **Strengthen all social protection programmes, in order to further improve outcomes for children, and poverty reduction strategies, in order to identify priority actions against the exclusion of children, with specific and measurable objectives, clear indicators, deadlines and sufficient economic and financial support;**

(c) **Partner with UNICEF and others to create a nationally defined social protection floor for access by children to basic services, as part of the Social Protection Floor Initiative of the United Nations.**

H. Education, leisure and cultural activities (arts. 28-31)

Education, including vocational training and guidance

54. The Committee welcomes the significant progress at all levels of education, the significant investment in the construction and rehabilitation of school buildings and the significant increases in budgetary allocations for education, including vocational education. The Committee, however, is concerned about:

(a) The low number of children enrolled in preschool, low enrolment rates in secondary schools, in particular in rural areas, the number of children out of school, repetition, especially at the pre-secondary level, and dropout rates, in particular among boys;

(b) The inadequate number of public schools, inadequate facilities, indirect costs of education, the insufficient number of professionally trained teaching staff, inadequate teacher training and materials and low literacy levels in Tetum and Portuguese;

(c) Insufficient access to education by children with disabilities, adolescent mothers, working children, orphaned children, children living in poverty and linguistic minorities;

(d) Sexual harassment and violence in schools, early pregnancy among adolescent girls and stigmatization and exclusion faced by such girls upon returning to school.

55. **In the light of its general comment No. 1 (2001) on the aims of education, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Implement the National Policy Framework for Preschool Education and the related strategic action plan, and implement the pilot project establishing 12 preschools in remote communities in the Aileu and Ermera districts as part of the child-friendly schools initiative, and allocate sufficient financial resources for the development and expansion of early childhood education;**

(b) **Increase access to, retention in and completion of basic education through inclusive and better quality education, in particular for children with disabilities, children living in extreme poverty, pregnant teenagers, children living in remote areas and children who are members of minority linguistic groups;**

(c) **Continue to improve the accessibility and quality of education for all children, and provide high-quality training for teachers, with particular emphasis on rural areas;**

(d) **Continue to develop bilingual textbooks and teacher guides in all core subjects;**

(e) **Ensure access, especially for children in vulnerable situations, to education regardless of the ability to pay for indirect expenses, including by stepping up school grants and feeding programmes, and continue to expand capacity to address the shortage of school facilities;**

(f) **Mainstream gender equality policies in the education sector, ensuring that gender issues and sensitivity training are made an integral, substantive and mandatory component of all teacher training at all levels, and address the situation of violence and sexual harassment in schools.**

I. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37 (b)-(d) and 38-40)

Economic exploitation, including child labour

56. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the National Commission against Child Labour in 2014 and the General Labour Inspectorate in 2010, as well as the implementation of the Programme to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour. The Committee is, however, concerned about the high number of children involved in labour, the majority of whom are found in agriculture, including the coffee sector, fishing, construction, domestic service, street and market vending and prostitution, as well as the situation of children forced to work as servants to settle outstanding debts of their families.

57. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Take measures to prevent children from being economically exploited by adopting legislation and policies to address child labour in both the formal and informal sectors and ensuring compliance with article 32 of the Convention, in particular by prohibiting the procuring or offering of a child for all illicit activities, including bonded labour, as well as dangerous work;**

(b) **Continue to raise awareness about the negative consequences of child labour through public educational programmes, including campaigns organized in cooperation with opinion leaders, families and the media, such as those to commemorate the World Day against Child Labour;**

(c) **Consider ratifying the International Labour Organization Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138);**

(d) **Seek technical assistance from the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour of the International Labour Organization.**

Children in street situations

58. The Committee welcomes the information regarding initiatives by the State party to address children in street situations. It is, however, concerned about the insufficiency of information and data on children in street situations and the lack of a policy in this regard.

59. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Undertake a comprehensive study of the root causes forcing children into street situations, such as poverty, family violence and lack of access to education;**

(b) **Develop a comprehensive strategy for the protection of children in street situations with the aim of preventing and reducing this phenomenon;**

(c) **Provide children in street situations with adequate protection and assistance for recovery and reintegration, including shelter, education and vocational training, adequate health-care services, including HIV/AIDS screening, and other social services, including substance abuse treatment programmes and mental health counselling.**

Sale, trafficking and abduction

60. The Committee commends the establishment of the inter-agency working group on trafficking, and notes that the draft law to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, which specifically addresses child victims and witnesses, is now before the National Parliament. The Committee, however, is concerned that the State party is a destination country for women and girls subjected to sex trafficking and has been a source country for adults and children for forced labour. It is also concerned about

the lack of data on the number of children involved in sexual exploitation, including prostitution, child pornography and human trafficking, as well as the lack of information on the training of border and law enforcement officials to prevent trafficking.

61. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Adopt and implement the law to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons; establish, approve and implement the national plan of action to combat human trafficking; and strengthen capacity-building initiatives aimed at improving the response of law enforcement officials regarding cases of human trafficking;**

(b) **Establish a monitoring mechanism for the investigation and redress of such abuses, with a view to improving accountability, transparency and the prevention of violations of the Convention, and ensure the effective prosecution and punishment of those who exploit children for the purposes of prostitution or forced labour;**

(c) **Continue to implement appropriate policies and programmes for the prevention of child sexual exploitation and the recovery and social reintegration of victims, ensuring that education and training, as well as counselling, health care and other social services, are provided to them, in accordance with the outcome documents adopted at the World Congresses against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children;**

(d) **Expand public education campaigns on identifying possible victims and perpetrators, preventive measures and avenues for assistance and redress, including the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, within the tourism industry.**

Administration of juvenile justice

62. The Committee notes the information in the report of the State party that the juvenile justice regime is currently undergoing significant review and reform. However, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of information on the draft tutelary and education law for minors 12 to 16 years of age, and the draft law on a special penal regime for minors 16 to 21 years of age setting the age for juvenile justice protection at 16;

(b) The insufficient capacity and specialized training of personnel in child justice administration, including lawyers, judges, prosecutors, public defenders and correctional officers;

(c) The lack of data on legal assistance provided to children in conflict with the law, diversion programmes and alternatives to detention, such as community service and probation;

(d) The absence of data on the number of children held in police stations and pre-trial detention and on the duration of detention before such children are brought before a judge or magistrate;

(e) The use of informal community mediation mechanisms to deal with serious cases of children in conflict with the law;

(f) The grouping together of juveniles and adult prisoners at the Becora prison, and the lack of a single juvenile centre.

63. In the light of its general comment No. 10 (2007) on children's rights in juvenile justice, the Committee urges the State party to bring its juvenile justice system into line with the Convention and, in particular, recommends that the State party:

(a) **Ensure that all children, by definition persons under 18 years of age, are protected by the juvenile justice system;**

(b) Adopt a holistic and preventive approach to addressing the problem of children in conflict with the law and the underlying social factors, with a view to supporting children at risk at an early stage, including by expanding intervention programmes, vocational training and other outreach activities;

(c) Promote restorative justice and alternative measures to detention, taking into consideration gender differentiated programmes for boys and girls in conflict with the law, such as diversion, probation, mediation, counselling or community service, wherever possible, and ensure that detention is used as a last resort and for the shortest possible period of time and that it is reviewed on a regular basis with a view to withdrawing it;

(d) In cases where detention is unavoidable, ensure that adequate facilities exist for children in conflict with the law, that children are not detained together with adults, and that detention conditions are compliant with international standards, including with regard to access to education and health services;

(e) Provide effective rehabilitation services, including access to mental health counselling and substance abuse treatment, as well as effective social skills development and education, including vocational training programmes;

(f) Enhance the skills and specialization of all relevant actors in the juvenile justice system, including law enforcement personnel, lawyers, judges and social workers, strengthen the judiciary and strengthen training materials;

(g) Make use of the technical assistance tools developed by the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice and its members, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNICEF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and non-governmental organizations, and seek technical assistance in the area of juvenile justice from members of the Panel.

J. Ratification of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure

64. The Committee recommends that the State party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, ratify the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure.

K. Ratification of international human rights instruments

65. The Committee recommends that the State party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. It also recommends that the State party ratify the optional protocols to the core human rights treaties deposited with the Secretary-General to which it is not yet party.

L. Cooperation with regional and international bodies

66. The Committee recommends that the State party cooperate with, among others, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries.

IV. Implementation and reporting

A. Follow-up and dissemination

67. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure that the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations are fully implemented. The Committee also recommends that the combined second and third periodic reports, the written replies to the list of issues of the State party and the present concluding observations be made widely available in the languages of the country.

B. Next report

68. The Committee invites the State party to submit its fourth periodic report by 15 April 2020 and to include therein information on the follow-up to the present concluding observations. The report should be in compliance with the Committee's harmonized treaty-specific reporting guidelines adopted on 31 January 2014 (CRC/C/58/Rev.3) and should not exceed 21,200 words (see General Assembly resolution 68/268, para. 16). In the event that a report exceeding the established word limit is submitted, the State party will be asked to shorten the report in accordance with the above-mentioned resolution. If the State party is not in a position to review and resubmit the report, translation thereof for the purposes of consideration by the treaty body cannot be guaranteed.

69. The Committee also invites the State party to submit an updated core document, not exceeding 42,400 words, in accordance with the requirements for the common core document in the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific document (see HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6, chap. I) and paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 68/268.

Annex 3. Participants in the Workshops NAPC

Note: Below list covers all workshops held between March and June 2016

A. Government Institution

Institution	Name	Position
Ministry of State, Coordination of Social Affairs	H.E Sr. António da Conceição	Minister
Ministry of State, Coordinator of State Administration Affairs and Justice and Ministry of State Administration	H.E Sr. Dionísio Babo Soares	Minister
Commission for the Rights of the Child	Sra. Maria Gorumali Barreto	Commissioner
Ministry of Social Solidarity	Sr. Miguel M. G. Manetelu	Vice Minister
Ministry of Health	Sra. Ana Isabel Soares	Vice Minister
Ministry of Social Solidarity	Sra. Florinda de J. Amaral	
Ministry of Interior	Sra. Zelia Trindade	Deputy General Prosecutor
Ministry of Interior	Sra. Ivonia Guterres	Prosecutor for the Minor
Ministry of Social Solidarity	Sr. Domingos Fernandes	Chief of Social Protection Department
Ministry of Social Solidarity	Sr. Florencio Pina	Director of DNDS
Ministry of Social Solidarity	Sr. Abel de Sousa	
Ministry of Health	Sra. Isabel M. Gomes	Director of DNP
Ministry of Health	Sra. Epifania D. Marques	Technical Professional of MoH
Ministry of Health	Sra. Metha Samosia	Technical Professional of MoH
Ministry of Interior	Sr. Alexandre da Silva	
Secretary of State for the Support and Economical Promotion of Women	Sra. Adalgisa Ferreira	Focal Point PAN – SEM
Municipality of Baucau, Ministry of State Administration (MSA)	Sr. António Aparicio Guetres	Municipality Administrator of Baucau
Municipality of Bobonaro, Ministry of State Administration (MSA)	Sr. Zeferino S. dos Santos	Municipality Administrator of Bobonaro
Municipality of Ermera, Ministry of State Administration (MSA)	Sr. José Martinho S. Soares	Municipality Administrator, Ermera
Municipality of Covalima, Ministry of State Administration (MSA)	Sr. Agostinho Gusmão	Representative of Municipality Administrator, Covalima
Municipality of Bobonaro, Ministry of State Administration (MSA)	Sr. Julio Caeiro	Municipality Administrator, Bobonaro

Institution	Name	Position
Municipality of Baucau, Ministry of State Administration (MSA)	Sr. Jacob Peli da Conceição	Representative of Municipality Administrator of Baucau
Ministry of Education	Sra. Abelina da Costa	National Director of Preschool
Ministry of Education	Sr. Agostinho H. de Viana	Technical Professional of MoE
Ministry of Education	Sr. Ostalino da Costa	Technical Professional of MoE
Ministry of Education	Sra. Estelita Soares	Technical Professional of MoE
Ministry of Education	Sr. Marcal da Silva	Technical Professional of MoE
Immigration Office	Sra. Justina Daos	Immigration
Immigration Office	Sra. Imaculada M. Barreto	Immigration
Secretary of State for Empowerment Policy and Vocational Training	Sr. Jacinto B. Gusmao	Director General
Secretary of State for Empowerment Policy and Vocational Training	Sra. Ines de Jesus	Technical Professional - SEPFOPE
Secretary of State for Empowerment Policy and Vocational Training	Sra. Alexandrina Verdial	Nasional Director of SEPFOPE
Secretary of State for Empowerment Policy and Vocational Training	Sra. Fernanda Moniz	Technical Professional - SEPFOPE
Secretary of State for Empowerment Policy and Vocational Training	Sr. Joeder F. Madeira	Chief of Department of SEPFOPE
Secretary of State for Empowerment Policy and Vocational Training	Sr. Pedro M de Araujo	Technical Professional - SEPFOPE
Secretary of State for Empowerment Policy and Vocational Training	Sr. Gaudencio dos R	Technical Professional – General Inspector of SEFOPE
Secretary of State for Youth and Sports	Sr. David Tomas de Deus	National Director for Youth and Sports
Secretary of State for Youth and Sports	Sr. Marcos da Costa	Chief of Department for Youth and Sports– Focal point for NAPC
Ministry of State, Coordination of Social Affairs	Sr. Arcangelo Leite	Coordinator of UMAAS - MECAS
Secretary of State for the Support and Economical Promotion of Women	Sra. Argentina Viegas	Technical Professional - SEM
Secretary of State for the Support and Economical Promotion of Women	Sra. Joana Fabiola Laranjinha	Technical Professional - SEM
MOJ –Diresaun Nasionál ba Asesoria no Lejislasaun	Sr. Asis dos Santos	Technical Professional – DNAJL - MJ
MoJ –National Directorate of Human Rights and Citizenship	Sr. Helder Godinho Martins	Chief of Department & Focal point for NAPC
MoJ –National Directorate of Human Rights and Citizenship	Sra. Octavia Lopes Lemos	Technical Assistant DNDHC -MJ
MoJ –National Directorate of Human Rights and Citizenship	Sr. Flaviano Moniz Leão	Director of DNDHC -MJ
MoJ –National Directorate of Human Rights and Citizenship	Sra. Rosa Xavier	Adviser of DNDHC -MoJ
MoJ –National Directorate of Human Rights and Citizenship	Sr. Celito Cardoso	Senior Technical Professional DNDHC - MoJ
Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice (PDHJ)	Sr. Sidonio Soares	PDHJ, Focal Point NAPC

Institution	Name	Position
Prime Minister Office	Sra. Ana Paula Sequeira	Gender-Issue – Support Prime Minister Office
Prime Minister Office	Sr. Salvador da Cruz	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MNEC)	Sr. Licinio M. Branco	National Director for United Nations -MNEC
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation	Sra. Sausia P.S. Martins	MNEC
Ministry of Finance (MOF)	Sr. Joanico Pinto	Chief of Department of Nation Budget
Ministry of Finance	Sr. Lourenço Pinto	Technical Professional - MoF
Ministry of Finance	Sra. Eugenia F. X. Pereira	Technical Professional - MoF
Ministry of Finance	Sra. Antonia Surjany	Chief of Planning, Budget and Evaluation Unit -MoF
Ministry of Finance	Sra. Lucrecia D.J. Sousa	National Director of Statistics and Research - MoF
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit under Prime Minister office (UPMA)	Sra. Brigida Soares	Adviser UPMA -GPM
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit under Prime Minister office	Sr. Eudérico Moain	
Ministry of Defense	Sr. Lidia Pires	Technical Professional
Ministry of Defense	Sr. Martinho Maia Gonsalves	National Director of Policy and Cooperation
National Police of Timor Leste (PNTL) / Tránsito	Sr. Valente Soares	Agent PNTL
National Police Timor Leste	Sr. José Nunes	Agent PNTL
National Police of Timor Leste	Sr. Domingos Gomes	Agent PNTL
National Police of Timor Leste	Sra. Domingas E. Soares	Agent PNTL
National Police of Timor-Leste - VPU Dili	Sr. Pedro A. Martins	Agent PNTL
National Police Timor Leste	Sr. Valente Soares	Agent PNTL
National Police Timor Leste	Sra. Helena das Dores	Agent PNTL
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MNEC)	Sr. Lucinio M. Branco	DONU -MNEC
Commission for the Rights of the Child	Teresa Maria Freitas	TS - CDC
Commission for the Rights of the Child	Madalena Guterres Correia	Senior Technical Professional - CDC
Commission for the Rights of the Child	Miguel MB. Fernandes	Technical Professional - CDC
Commission for the Rights of the Child	Cipriano Guro das Neves	Technical Professional - CDC
Commission for the Rights of the Child	Constantino Lay	Technical Professional - CDC
Commission for the Rights of the Child	Juvito Ximenes	ATA -CDC
Commission for the Rights of the Child	Jesuinha Soares	ATA- CDC
Commission for the Rights of the Child	Natalino Soares	AA - CDC

Institution	Name	Position
Commission for the Rights of the Child	Luizito da Costa	AA- CDC

B. UN agency

Institution	Name	Position
United Nations	Knut Ostby	UN Resident Coordinator
UNICEF	Desiree Jongsma	Representative
UNICEF	Rene van Dongen	Deputy Representative
UNICEF	Gizela M. Silva	Child Protection Officer
UNICEF	Nuno E. Goulart	Education Officer
UNICEF	Sandra Gusmao	Education Specialist
UNICEF	Jacinto Belo	Child Protection Officer
UNICEF	Antonio Gomes	Communication Officer
UNICEF	Carla Quintão	Health Specialist
UNICEF	Toshiko Takahashi	Chief Social Policy PME
UNICEF	Christina Milson	Child Protection Officer
UNICEF	João da Costa	M&E Officer
UNICEF	Maria Paulina Goncalves	Nutrition Officer
UNICEF	Andreza Guterres	Child and Adolescent Participation Officer
UN Human Rights	Amelia de Araujo	Human Rights Officer
IOM	Jacinto Amaral	Senior project Assistant Counter Trafficking Unit
IOM	Chris Wilson	Volunteer Staff

C. National / International NGO

Institution	Name	Position
World Vision TL	Paulo Soares	Technical Specialist ECCD.
PLAN International	Ramalho Barreto	Child protection Manager
ALOLA Foundation	Maria Evelim	Manager of Advocacy programme
FOKUPERS	Mercia Lopes	Manager of Creche FOKUPERS

Institution	Name	Position
FCJ DOM BOSCO	Madalena P. Baptista	Director of FCJ
Casa vida	Kathevinc	Manager
Casa Vida	Sujana Ximenes	Programme Officer
PRADET	Lourensa das Neves	Programme Officer
ALOLA Foundation	Lizete Noura	Programme Officer for Mather and Child health
ALOLA Foundation	Arlinda Barros	Programme Officer for Mather and Child health
ALFELA (legal Assistance for Women and Children)	Marcia Siquera	Intern and legal Coordinator
ALFELA	Eliezeria A. F.C.C	Lawyer
ChildFund	Bernice Rodlan	National Director for ChilFund.
ChildFund	Alcina Nunes	Communication officer
ALFELA	Merita Correia	Director of ALFeLa
ALFELA	Olinda Cardoso	Programme Manager

D. Media

Institution	Name	Position
Radio & Television Timor-Leste	Aniceto Leite	Reporter TVTL
Radio & Television Timor-Leste	Antonio Dias	National Director of TVTL
Radio & Television Timor-Leste	Constancia Viera	Reporter
TV Education of Timor Leste	Vasco Alves	Reporter
TV Education of Timor Leste	Moises Cardoso	Reporter
TV Education of Timor Leste	Luciano Cipriano	Reporter
TV Education of Timor Leste	Vitoriana Soares	Reporter

E. Students

Institution (Name of school)	Name	Position
EBF. Budin	Bernadina Pereira	Student
EBF.1-2 Uatunau	Recardina Dimingas de Sousa	Student

Institution (Name of school)	Name	Position
EBF. Budin	Bernadina Pereira	Student
Colegio S. Pedro S. Paolo	Odelia da Luz Vargas	Student
Colegio S. Pedro S. Paolo	Melena Amaral Sarmento	Student
EBF. 1-2 Liquica	Zezinho MS. Pinto Mau	Student
EBF. Flexa	Deonia Amaral Pacheco	Student
EBF. Budin	Maria Lolita Martins	Student
EBF. Budin	Natalino Pina Pereira	Student
EBF. Maumeta	Carla da Costa	Student
ESCA - STOR	Fidelio Mesquita Soares	Student
ESC. São Paulo	Baquita Trindade	Student
ESC. São Pedro	Christiano de Araújo	Student
ESC. Canossa	Salvador Verdial da Silva	Student
ESC. 10 de Dezembro	Nelson Gaio Baptista	Student
ESC. 4 de Setembro	Salvador da Silva	Student
EBC. Akadiruhun	Marcelina de Jesus Almeida	Student
ESG. 10 de Dezembro	Manuel Maia	Student
EBC. Farol	Cecília de Jesus Pinto	Student
ESC. São Pedro	Francisco Xavier	Student
ESC. São Pedro	Guilhermino da Cruz	Student
EBC. Farol	Basilio Barreto	Student
EBC. Akadiruhun	Jonevio da Costa Seng	Student
ESC. Canossa	Filomena F. Coutinho	Student
ESJ. 4 de Setembro	Ezequiel Brites	Student
EBC. Farol	Isabel de Fátima Martins	Student
ESC. São Paolo	Levina Faria Ximenes	Student
ESC. Finantil	Julião Boavida da Silva	Student
ESG. 10 de Dezembro	Ilidia E. de Jesus	Student
ESG 4 de Setembro	Merinha F. Cardoso	Student
EBC. Akadiruhun	Octaviana Maria Barros	Student

F. Others

Institution	Name	Position
N/A	Henry Ruiz	International Consultant for NAPC
N/A	Augustinho Caet	National Consultant for NAPC

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