

CEPAD



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CEPAD

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MEDIA RELEASE

Timorese people have the capacity to overcome conflict

CEPAD's National Forum validates the findings from 6 months of research on resilience

Dili, Timor-Leste – On Thursday 19th February, the Centre of Studies for Peace and Development (CEPAD), organized a National Forum on sources of resilience for peace. The event concludes six months of nationwide consultations in the context of Frameworks for Assessing Resilience (FAR) project.

This initiative by INTERPEACE aims to better understand and assess resilience in relation to peacebuilding and is currently being piloted in Timor-Leste, Liberia and Guatemala. The event was attended by over 80 representatives of the country's 13 districts, as well as key stakeholders from the national level.

"We can't keep thinking of obstacles [to peace], of how difficult this is. It's time to start talking about what makes us strong," said **Jose Guterres, Programme Manager at the National Directorate of Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion, Ministry of Social Solidarity**. The Frameworks for Assessing Resilience initiative recognizes the capacity of Timorese people to overcome conflict.

Echoing this sentiment, **João Boavida, CEPAD Executive Director** added: "We, as the Timorese people, have the strength, process and capacity to help ourselves, to leave conflict behind and build peace. And with this, we will contribute to how national and international actors conduct peacebuilding programmes in Timor-Leste."

Through a consultative process, the CEPAD team was able to identify four main elements of resilience in Timor-Leste: culture, leadership, religion, and law and security. Each of these elements has the potential to prevent and transform conflict.

Participants also prioritized the areas CEPAD should conduct further research on: (1) traditional conflict resolution mechanisms and how they relate to formal law, (2) the relationship between the

state and citizens, and (3) the role of religions in conveying peace messages. These themes will form the basis for the work of the National Working Group that will be set up in the coming month by CEPAD. Its role is to explore how resilience can be strengthened and to recommend a context specific approach to assess progress towards peace.

About the Centre of Studies for Peace and Development

The Centre of Studies for Peace and Development (CEPAD) is a Non-Governmental Organization in Timor-Leste founded in 2008. It contributes to breaking the cycle of violence and creating a climate in which Timorese can identify and address priority issues in a non-violent and durable manner.

About Frameworks for Assessing Resilience

The Framework for Assessing Resilience (FAR) is a two year programme created by Interpeace and funded by SIDA, to develop tools that deepen the understanding of resilience in conflict affected societies as defined by the population. It focuses on the positive capacities that contribute to resilience rather than sources of fragility of a country. In its first phase it engages local populations in defining and assessing resilience for peacebuilding. Currently this new project is being implemented in Timor-Leste, Liberia and Guatemala.

About Interpeace

Interpeace is an independent, international peacebuilding organization. It was initially established by the United Nations to develop innovative solutions to build peace. Today it supports locally-led peacebuilding initiatives in over 21 countries across Central America, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

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