

Timor-Leste's MDG-F Advocacy & Partnerships

Timor-Leste is one of the nine MDG-F focus countries which shall have additional support to elaborate and implement a ***national advocacy action plan*** on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

A full National Campaign on the MDGs will be launched only once the government-chaired National Steering Committee for the MDGs is operational, so as to lead the campaign. The campaign will have to be preceded by a revision of the targets and timelines for achievement of the Goals. The Government has recently announced that the Steering Committee will be set up before the end of 2009.

Strategic Goal:

The overall strategic goal is to:

Accelerate progress on the MDGs by de-mystifying the MDG and raising awareness on the strong link between Timor-Leste's aspirations and the MDG.

Timeline: 2010 – 2012

Key Outcomes:

- Increased awareness and support for the MDGs among policy makers and among government workers; and
- Increased engagement with, and appreciation of MDG among Timorese families.

Context:

The Timor-Leste National Advocacy Action Plan is anchored on the following context:

1. Timor-Leste is a country in post crisis and transition period. Timor-Leste is in a unique position as one of the newest nations in the world. It has had a history of violent struggle for independence and succeeded in restoring independence in 2002. The civil strife in 2006 negatively impacted on some of the progress achieved by this small nation state with just over a million citizens. Its currently fragile situation is that of harnessing efforts towards the nations' development while also addressing issues that caused the conflict and humanitarian crisis of 2006.

2. The Government has expressed commitment to the MDGs, but concrete links to the MDG targets are not yet part of the national development priorities. The broad challenge it faces is expressed by Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao. "As a latecomer, we are very much aware of and prepared for the daunting challenges we have to tackle to achieve the MDGs." In the absence of a national development plan, the annual National Priorities mechanism has served as the basis for national planning and budgeting, as well as guide to the international partners of Timor-Leste including the UN since 2007. However, there are no clear linkages between the MDGs and the national priorities yet. The country is in the process of articulating its national development strategy under the leadership of the Prime Minister. In his preface to the 2009 MDG Report of Timor-Leste, the Prime Minister tacitly committed to include the MDGs in the National Development Strategic Plan for the country, "the preparation of which will begin this year under my leadership."

3. **The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2009-2013)** was developed by the UN agencies with joint participation of UNMIT, the Government of Timor-Leste (RDTL), and NGOs/INGOs/CSOs. Under the overarching objective of supporting the consolidation of peace and stability, and in line with the MDGs, the UNDAF has three outcomes: UNDAF Outcome 1 on democratization, outcome 2 on poverty reduction and disaster risk management, and outcome 3 on basic social services. The two MDG-F joint programmes are cross-cutting all three UNDAF outcomes with specific focuses on UNDAF outcome 3. It will contribute to the country's development efforts on MDGs.

4. **UNDAF M&E working groups were established to support the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the UNDAF and MDGs in Timor-Leste.** Based on UNDAF framework, three M&E working groups were established in early 2009. The main purpose of these M&E Groups is to provide technical oversight for the consolidation of the M&E reports relating to UNDAF outcomes and provide support for the implementation, M&E for the UNDAF outcomes, to facilitate collaboration among main partners, including UNCT agencies and others; and to build strong constituency of stakeholders around the issues concerned.

The UNDAF M&E working group will also provide inputs into the design of the MDG joint programming or monitoring strategy, including provision of technical input into the formulation and implementation of UN MDG joint programming or joint monitoring involving Government as well as facilitating linkages with Timor-Leste DevInfo. This proposed MDG-F M&E action plan will support the M&E working group to achieve this result.

Regarding awareness raising on the MDGs, a set of MDG advocacy television-radio spots has been prepared and will be aired this year. The UN Communications Group is the internal (UN) coordination mechanism to plan and execute advocacy and campaign initiatives. The group will be instrumental in the implementation of this strategy.

Timor-Leste is currently implementing two joint UN programmes. With funding from the MDG Achievement Fund, the UNCT is implementing the joint UN programme focusing on nutrition in line with MDG 1, and the joint programme on gender equality in line with MDG 3. Both joint programmes have a strong awareness-raising component regarding the importance of the MDGs.

Communication and information dissemination systems are not yet adequate. Media infrastructure is weak and access to media is very low. Local media is composed of 1 national television and 1 national radio; 16 community radios; 3 national dailies; 1 weekly bilingual newspaper and 1 English paper.

While overall access to media remains relatively low, influential individuals including policy makers, are particularly sensitive to local media reports. Development of materials in the country is relatively costly since there are limited printing and production houses. Access to various forms of communication is highlighted in the table below:

Media / Communication Access	National Percentage	Rural Percentage	Urban Percentage
Mobile Phone Access	12	4	35
Radio Access	25	24	31
Television Access	16	4	46

There is a growing civil society and NGO involvement in development work. There are many NGOs working in the field of development and human rights but with limited scope and reach. The Government structures at sub-national level need additional support for outreach programmes regarding the MDGs.

The Plan:

This Advocacy and Communication Plan supports the current UN joint programmes, and will pave the way to a national MDG campaign. The budget is for US \$210,000 across 3 years.

The Advocacy and Communication Plan aims to make specific stakeholders increase their awareness and support for the MDG.

The priority stakeholders are:

- Policy makers and government technocrats/bureaucrats so that they can appropriately articulate national targets in line with the Government's commitment in achieving the MDGs.
- NGOs and civil society so that they can influence the citizens and communities articulate their aspirations for a better life, of which many of the elements are akin to the MDGs, e.g. good health and nutrition of children, education of children, stable livelihoods, sufficient and secure food sources for the family, safe pregnancy and delivery for mothers etc.
- Families and communities so that they can express their dreams and aspirations and see the link between these essential aspirations and the MDGs, following their lobbying efforts with their Government.

This initiative/plan will cover the issues in both Joint programmes implemented in Timor-Leste.

OVERALL STRATEGIC GOAL

Accelerate progress on the MDGs by de-mystifying the MDG and raising awareness on the link between Timor-Leste's citizen's aspirations and the MDG.

Strategy Outcomes	Outputs	Indicative Activities	Year 1 \$ 000	Year 2 \$ 000	Year 3 \$ 000	Total \$ 000
I. Increased awareness and support for the MDGs among policy makers and among government workers	MDG Materials					
	Awareness materials produced (brochures, information notes, newsletters, human interest stories, TV spots, radio spots) and distributed along appropriate channels.	Materials development and disseminated focusing on partners: policymakers and the government.	35	10	10	55
	Media Participation					
	Establish alliances with media to regularly cover	Organize media workshop & field visits to	3	3	3	9

	development stories/issues on MDGs and related goals (particularly briefings already held by UNFPA, UNIFEM, IOM, and UNICEF)	programmes Partner with UNMIT Public Information Office (PIO) for capacity building of media to focus on MDGs				
	Key dates and events					
	Key dates and events are used to raise awareness and link the advocacy efforts of various national actors including UN, private sector, civil society and government	Hold sessions/discussions around the MDGs on UN Day (24 October)	2	2	2	6
		Note: Additional activities/ special days already planned/ budgeted for by other UN Agencies.	0	0	0	0
	United Nations Communications Group and Coordination					
	UN Communications Group provides a platform for joint communication, advocacy and mobilization in line with One UN and MDGs	Agencies to share/ set up list of media contacts that have been trained on the MDGs/ development issues.	0	0	0	0
		UNMIT PIO to make the MDGs the focus of their regular TV and radio shows	0	0	0	0
		Integrate MDG into government-sponsored talk shows				
II. Increased engagement with, and appreciation of the MDG among Timorese families	Support to citizen engagement and civil society					
	Citizen groups/networks have been strengthened to have more effective participation in MDG policy and practice.	Offer briefings to NGOs on the MDGs (e.g. during the NGO Forum meetings)	0	0	0	0
		Extend work ongoing with key partners for advocacy and communication around the MDGs, particularly on gender-based violence (GBV for the Gender Joint Programme (JP) JP.		3	3	6
		Organize special events with two Universities to raise awareness about the MDGs.	3	3	3	15
		Family-level materials on MDGs developed and disseminated		14	14	28
	Support to Local Governments					

	Strengthened dialogue between local governments and civil society groups as it relates to JP goals and MDGs	Organize dialogue sessions and briefings with the newly elected municipal leaders/ District Administrators	0	3	3	6
		Integrate MDGs in the planned sensitization of District Food Security Committees	0	0	0	0
	Documentation and knowledge sharing					
	Innovative and promising cases are highlighted and used to facilitate learning, scaling up and advocacy.	Identifying and writing up of case studies	0	5	5	10
	Partnerships					
	Wide range of partnerships has been established in support of the MDGs.	Meetings with church and other leaders on key messages to support the MDGs, in view of their strong role in Timor-Leste.	2	2	2	6
	Coordination					
	Coordination of advocacy activities done effectively.	Hire 1 staff with communication experience and strong coordination skills	25	25	25	75
		TOTAL	70	70	70	210