



Asia-Pacific Regional Youth Call to Action 2024



Timor Leste

Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Eradicating Poverty in Times of Multiple Crises: The Effective Delivery of Sustainable, Resilient and Innovative Solutions in Asia and the Pacific with Young People at the Forefront

SDG 1: NO POVERTY

Timor-Leste is experiencing very high levels of extreme poverty, hunger and child malnutrition as well as low levels of formal education. It was revealed that East Timor only made 2389.3 GDP in 2022 which is the lowest compared to the other countries (World Bank, 2022), and 42% of the population is living in poverty (The Borgen Project, 2020). In addition, Borgen (2017) claimed that 41 percent of Timorese live on less than \$1.25 per day, and especially in rural areas, still lack basic human rights, such as clean water and sanitation. Poor water access and sanitation makes people sick, as well as limits children's ability to learn. These impacts disproportionately affect women and children, as they are usually the ones who must fetch water and children are more susceptible to disease. Many children in Timor-Leste still do not receive enough nutritious food.

According to the 2016 DHS, child wasting has been increasing and stunting remains high. Childhood malnutrition and undernutrition can lead to chronic lifelong health problems, impact educational outcomes and limit the child's opportunities later in life.

Key Recommendations for SDG 1:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and poverty in all its dimensions for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day.
2. Ensure that all men and women, particularly the poor and vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership, and control over land and other forms of poverty, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology, and financial services including microfinance.



SDG 2: ZERO HUNGER

Though East Timor is an independent country, hunger is still a major problem. According to the Global Hunger Index, East Timor is positioned 112th out of 125 countries. World Vision Australia affirmed that food insecurity is the main cause of hunger in East Timor. Climate change and old farming methods are the main contributors to hunger. The Government of East Timor (2023) said that 300,000 people experience high levels of food insecurity. Due to the food insecurity in East Timor, 50% Children under five years old are categorised stunted and 11% as wasted (World Vision, 2017).

Key Recommendations for SDG 2:

1. Reduce hunger and ensure access to food for all people, particularly the most poor and the most vulnerable, to ensure quality, nutritious and sufficient food at all times.
2. Eradicate all forms of malnutrition, including achieving in 2025, internationally agreed on targets for child delay and growth in the last five years, and meet the nutritional needs of adolescents, pregnant women, and children everywhere.

SDG 5: GENDER EQUALITY

In Timor-Leste, women and girls experience high rates of gender-based violence (GBV), and violence against children is also pervasive. The 2019 'Unseen, Unsafe' report estimated that 87% of Timorese children—or more than 612,000 boys and girls—experience physical or emotional violence at home. Strong social norms dictate gender roles and cultural practices that often result in gender inequality, which is a key driver of GBV. Women and girls in Timor-Leste experience high rates of GBV, particularly Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and family violence. A recent evaluation study of a WVTL, reported that over 70% adolescents and youth think a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstances. 59% percent of women aged 15-49 who have ever been in a relationship have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by their partner. Neglect is also a serious issue in

Timor-Leste, especially for children with disabilities: 72% of persons with disabilities have never attended school.

Key Recommendations for SDG 5:

1. Eliminate any and all forms of discrimination against all women and girls in all their diversities.
2. Eliminate any and all forms of violence against women in public and private places, including human and sexual trafficking and other types of exploitation.

SDG 13: CLIMATE ACTION

Timor-Leste is in the final stages of preparing a National Climate Change Policy. This policy will define objectives and a vision for addressing climate change and will provide the necessary mandate for the (NAP). Several issues will be integrated into Tarabandu (traditional customary rules) including: water conservation, water use management, and climate risk reduction. Due to the context of Timor-Leste, many sectors like agriculture, water, infrastructure, biodiversity and ecosystem, disaster risk and health are those that have been considered as vulnerable sectors for climate action. The UNDP Timor-Leste in partnership with the Government of Timor-Leste and funding from the Green Climate Fund (GCF), is implementing the project "Safeguarding Rural Communities and their Physical Assets from Climate Induced Disasters in Timor-Leste". The main objective of the project is to safeguard vulnerable communities and their physical assets from climate-induced disasters, mainly floods, landslides, erosion, and droughts. It aims to address existing institutional, financial, and legislative barriers, increasing the climate resilience of vulnerable small-scale rural infrastructure. The main activities of the project include climate risk information system development, construction/rehabilitation of 130 units of climate-smart small-scale rural infrastructure (rural roads, irrigation systems, water supply, and flood protection), and catchment management through an eco-based approach. All the activities are complemented by strengthening policies and regulations and through capacity building. The project

targets 175,840 direct beneficiaries, an estimated 15% of the total population in six disaster-prone municipalities of Liquica, Aileu, Ermera, Baucau, Lautem, and Viqueque.

SDG 16: PEACE, JUSTICE, AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Social inclusion is a component that leads to transparency and prosperity for all people to access social life in a country like Timor-Leste, namely access to education, economics, law, culture, religion, access to opportunities and does not lead to discrimination in various forms of class, race, education level, ethnicity etc. However, the real condition that occurs in Timor-Leste is that rural communities or vulnerable communities have not been handled effectively by government institutions when they are undermined, so that inclusiveness and diversity in Timor-Leste do not meet the requirements for peace, justice and strong institutions.

Organisations need the capacity and empowerment to be able to be involved in curriculum screening activities in order to gain opportunities to gain experience from other countries for integrated overseas scholarships and empowerment activities.

In addition, almost 300 children do not have access to education and instead help their families sell on the roadside because the family economy is not sufficient to support their children in accessing education. Furthermore, government regulations are insufficient.

Key Recommendations for SDG 16:

1. Significantly reduce corruption in all its forms, violence and mortality rates across the country.
2. Develop the effectiveness, responsibility and transparency of institutions at all levels.
3. Guarantee that all institutions are responsive, inclusive, participative and representative at all levels.
4. Ensure public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national law and international agreements.

SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Timor-Leste's capacity to carry out collective activities with this domestic partner is that the private institutions and civil society within the country are being encouraged to achieve the development of the country in all sectors, especially the productivity sectors and the sectors that are currently very vulnerable. In addition, Timor-Leste has international partners starting with agencies, NGOs and global partners working together to strengthen the country's development from the base to the sub-regional level. Global partners have the quality of professional services to help Timor Leste's problems and to reduce the problems of the 17 SDGs targets by 2030 for all to access everything in an equal and transparent manner.

Key Recommendations for SDG 17:

1. Increase the collectivity of international partners in order to invest in the vulnerable sectors where there is currently a need to pay strong attention to achieving progress that is positive for communities.
2. Set up strategic national plans by working with private organisations and institutions for the future, to implement activities related to partnership for the goals through global cooperation.

The APFSD country and sub-regional briefs were developed through collective discussions and engagements between youth advocates at the APFSD Youth Forum in Bangkok on February 15-17, 2024. The Timor Leste drafting team was led by Antero Pinto Pereira and Cesaltina Pereira de Carvalho. Overall supervision was provided by the ARROW Call To Action team.



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