



Secretaria de Estado da Formação Profissional e Emprego



# GENDER DIMENSIONS IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN TIMOR-LESTE

Produced with the support of:

**STAGE**

Skills Training for Gainful Employment



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## Gender Dimensions in Vocational Training in Timor-Leste:

### A Supplementary report to the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Impact Assessment Report<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. The Gender Context in Timor-Leste

The Government of Timor-Leste has committed to gender equity principles and sustainable economic development for men and women through its Constitution; National Development Plan; ratification of various international treaties including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); and through the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals as part of its national planning framework. The current plan of the Government of Timor-Leste makes strong statements in relation to gender equality and the place of women in Timorese society.

However as is evident from many reports, achieving the goals of gender equality in Timor-Leste is challenging. The *Timor-Leste Country Gender Assessment* (Asian Development Bank (ADB) 2005: 23) indicates that the factors that contribute to the gender disparity include income distribution, labour force participation rates, unemployment rates (women 1 in 4 compared to men 1 in 7) and women's reproductive responsibilities as primary caregivers. Women's literacy continues to be below that of men at just 42% compared to 60% for men (Timor-Leste Survey of Living Standards (TLSLS); 2007).

Women are less educated than men with just 10% of women over 19 years of age having completed senior secondary school compared to 16% of men. Fewer women have completed junior secondary school (7.6% compared to 9% for men) and more women have never attended school. Education achievement for women is better in the 18-26 age category with 15.1% having completed senior secondary school (15.2% men) and may explain the gender balance in the vocational training impact assessment results where most courses have trainees under 29 years of age (TLSLS: 2007 Table 5.1). The current generation of young women and men are the most educated in Timor-Leste. However this is a small percentage of the overall education levels for both women and men with the figures pointing to a drop out rate of 55% prior to reaching senior high school.

Women's participation in the labour market at 40% is half that of men's (Ministry of Labour and Community Reinsertion (MLCR): 2007). This includes the informal sector where women tend to be concentrated in the lower-income generating activities of handicrafts, tailoring and bakeries. More than 85% of both men and women are engaged in agriculture. Women spend more time on household tasks fetching water, cooking, cleaning, washing clothes and child care (TLSLS: 2007: Table 7.11). These activities place considerable constraint on women's ability to engage in economic activities outside the home. The Regional Women's Congresses 2004 (ABD: 2005) identified lack of time, cultural barriers, difficulty in finding work and lack of mobility as key factors hindering access to new economic opportunities for rural women.

The Regional Women's Congresses also identified a variety of obstacles to women's participation in literacy, adult and vocational training. In addition to those mentioned above they note that a lack of confidence by women and traditional notions that women are less capable than men. Several reports also highlight that women's access to information comes primarily from their husbands and families.

The ability of women and men to participate equally in skills training and the labour market is often determined by the traditional attitudes on the roles of women and men in the society and the family. Timor-Leste is patriarchal society with traditions and customs that favour men. The Oxfam Australia study *Underlying Causes of Gender Inequity in Covalima* (2003) examines gender inequity in all seven sub-districts and is able to present findings that are relevant to rural women. The barriers identified to women's participation in economic activity expand on the list of obstacles recognised by the Regional Women's Congresses. They include access to markets, cultural values that define men's and women's roles in communities, access to education, limited employment opportunities and access to and control of resources. Many of the participants in the survey said they did not have time to participate in skills training because of the expectation that the family and household duties must be done by the woman. There is also a strongly held belief that women who are too successful in education or employment will find it difficult to find a husband. While it is acceptable for women to earn an income from economic activities that are an extension of their role in the family, eg agriculture and handicrafts, constraints are placed on women participating outside the immediate community.

Timorese women and men, especially the youth in urban centres who have been more exposed to the international community with broader views on women's participation in society are more likely to challenge traditional gender roles. However, these young people represent the minority in Timorese society and challenges remain for the vocational training sector to ensure equality of access to skills training and employment opportunities for women and men.

## **2. Results of training – Findings from the 2008 TVET Report**

Ensuring equal access and benefits from vocational training and education is one of the key missions of the Secretariat of State for Vocational Training and Employment (SEFOPE). SEFOPE has over the years worked to improve the quality of skills training in Timor-Leste. The 2008 TVET Impact Assessment Survey represents an effort to review and identify the impact of vocational training with particular attention to the numbers of trainees at the commencement of the course, graduates of the training courses, graduates employed in the formal labour market, graduates who improve their primarily in the informal sector, graduates who are unemployed and graduates who enter university. Data was collected in November and December 2007. Three questionnaires were developed and conducted with training providers (21), recent graduates of selected courses (418) and employers (20) identified by the training provider as partners in training.

While the TVET Impact Assessment Survey Report sufficiently addresses the different experiences of men and women within the training system and the results of

the training, this gender supplementary report seeks to highlight key gender dimensions and recommendations so as to facilitate follow up. Specific emphasis is given to the outcomes of training courses, the general training environment, the courses offered and selected by trainees, equality of access and sexual harassment.

## **2.1 Employment/improved income**

### **2.1.1. Training providers**

Training providers reported 40% of traceable graduates<sup>2</sup> find employment or improve their income as a result of training. Better outcomes were reported for women (26%) than men (14%). However the employment outcomes for women are mainly concentrated in the lower income generating areas of the informal economy. The employment or improved income results from training centres in the districts (47%) are far better than those in Dili (14%) indicating the relative success of the community-based livelihood and agriculture courses such as fish drying, blacksmith, bead making and mulberry leave cultivation and production.

The table below shows the breakdown of the results reported by training providers on traceable graduates with the percentage of female traceable graduates.

<b>Traceable graduates</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of traceable</b>	<b>% Female</b>
Gained work/increased income	105	195	300	40%	65%
Enter university	16	36	52	7%	69%
Unemployed	207	192	399	53%	48%
<b>Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Table 01</b>					

From an examination of the training courses offered by the providers and the reported numbers who gained employment or increased their income, it can be deduced that the majority were not in waged employment but in the informal low income generating activities of livelihood, local product and agriculture. More than two-thirds (67%) of those who gained employment in the technical trade areas, IT/office skills, hospitality or sewing are women. The technical trades areas attracting predominantly male trainees, report low employment outcomes yet these are the areas that could be presumed are most in demand in infrastructure projects initiated by the government or the private sector.

Evident from the survey is the lack of strong links between training providers and employers and this is reflected in the poor waged employment outcomes. In the current climate of a shortage of skilled labour it would be expected that employers particularly in the construction industry would be waiting for trainees to graduate. However it appears that few employers consider vocational training courses a reliable and constant source of skilled employees.

### **2.1.2 Graduates surveyed**

The survey of graduates from training courses shows that of the 418 trainees (55% female) interviewed, 93 found employment after graduation (54% female) and 137 reported improved income after completing their courses (53% female). Allowing for possible overlap between the two groups approximately 50% of the graduates found work or experienced income improvement (53% female). Of the 277 who gained employment or improved their income in the districts, 69% are women.

### **2.1.3 Employers**

Of the 20 employers surveyed nine have employed a total of 31 graduates (5 female and 26 male) of vocational training courses with one being a construction company that employed 12 male graduates. The employers reported that the competency of the graduates was generally below the level required for the workplace but 16 reported that the graduates had good work attitudes. Of the five women employed, four were in hospitality and one in office administration. All the male graduates except one (hospitality) were employed in technical trades.

## **2.2 Training Providers**

### **2.2.1 Institutional Environment**

The survey examined the environment created when analysing the sex-disaggregation of the staff, both managers and trainers and the sex of trainees attracted to particular types of courses offered. The 21 vocational training providers reported a total of 55 managers (30 men and 25 women) and 170 trainers (99 men and 71 women). Fifty-two percent (11) of the providers have predominantly male staff and 24% (5) each for predominantly female staff and mixed staff. Overall, 43% of the managers and trainers are women and 57% men. Four of the training providers have all male staff and have courses in the technical trade areas. The two providers with all female staff have courses in livelihood, sewing and IT/office skills. Two training providers have all male managers and all female trainers and one has a female manager and male trainers. Positive role models amongst the managers and trainers for young women who aspire to leadership positions or to undertake courses in non-traditional skill areas for women must be encouraged through affirmative action in leadership and staff development programs.

The courses can be divided into three categories according to the sex-disaggregation of the trainees: courses attracting mainly women (10 courses with 95% women), courses attracting mainly men (13 courses with 92% men) and gender neutral courses (7 courses with 48% women). The trainees follow traditional gender patterns in course selection.

The courses attracting women account for 33% of all graduates; they are:

- sewing (4 courses)
- IT/office skills (2)

- livelihoods (1)
- local product (1)
- hotel and restaurant management (1).

The courses attracting men are all in the technical trade areas and they account for 23% of all graduates. The courses are:

- carpentry (3 courses)
- plumbing (3)
- mechanics (2)
- electrical (1)
- masonry (1)
- blacksmith (1)
- construction (1)
- welding (1).

The gender neutral courses account for 44% of all graduates; they are:

- IT and office administration (4)
- agriculture (2)
- livelihood (1).

There are three training providers that only accept women trainees for all courses offered. The courses offered at these centres are sewing, hospitality, IT/office skills and livelihood. There is no training provider that accepts men only although Claret Training Centre and Don Bosco Training Centre have courses in mechanics and carpentry that are for men only. There are also providers that do not exclude women but women are either not selecting the course or not meeting the selection criteria (in some cases written entrance tests) in the traditionally male orientated courses.

### ***2.2.2 Qualifications of staff***

There are no standard minimum qualifications applied for trainers in Timor-Leste and the highest level of qualification of staff ranges from pre-secondary to university. Of the 55 managers the ratio of men (70%) and women (68%) with either a university degree or a vocational education qualification<sup>3</sup> is almost equal. Of the 170 trainers, 70% of the men and 51% of the women have either a university degree or vocational education qualification. When comparing the qualifications of all managers and trainers, the percentage of women with university, vocational education or technical secondary school qualifications is 63% compared to 89% for men. Women with just a secondary school or pre-secondary certificate are at 36% compared to 11% of men.

The survey results indicate that there is more opportunity for men to gain a vocational qualification in the technical trade areas. Anecdotal information suggests that many of the male trainers have gained their qualifications from the long-standing Salesian institutions of Don Bosco Training Centre and Escola Tecnica Don Bosco Fatumaca. There have been fewer opportunities for women to gain technical qualifications however the Salesian sisters have an active program of sending successful graduates for further study in Indonesia before returning to teach in their institutions. Following a thorough audit of trainer qualifications and their relevance to the area of training,

INDMO could create staff development opportunities for women trainers to improve their qualifications and open up other areas of potential training for women.

The survey did not ascertain from which training institution the trainers had earned their qualification or its relevance to the trainers' teaching responsibilities. The work experience of trainers in the industry sector in which they are training will also require monitoring to ensure that trainers meet the industry standard themselves and constantly update their knowledge and skills in line with current practices and requirements.

### ***2.2.3 Dili and the districts***

Seven of the training centres are in Dili and 14 in the districts<sup>4</sup>. The majority of courses in Dili focus on the technical trade areas and IT/office administration and attract more men than women trainees. Women make up 60% of the trainees in the districts and 38% in Dili. The courses in the districts with predominantly women include drying fish, hotel and restaurant management, sewing, local product, livelihood and IT/office skills. The courses attracting predominantly women are conducted by six different training providers: Roman Luan in Atauro, Centro Treino Integral e Desenvolvimento and Escola Tecnica Profisional Santa Maria Mazzarella in the Baucau District, Centro Formasaun Informatica e Costura and Susteran ADM in Lautem and Claret Training Centre in Cova Lima. All except Roman Luan provide boarding facilities and Claret Training Centre is the only one with both male and female boarding facilities, the other four have boarding for women only. The providers with boarding facilities are all managed by Catholic Church religious orders. Of the training providers surveyed Claret Training Centre provides the only boarding facilities for men in the districts and Don Bosco Training Centre for men in Dili. No training provider in Dili has boarding facilities for women.

While these training providers offer opportunities for young women in remote areas to attend training in a situation that is safe and secure the relevance of most courses to the demands of the labour market is seriously lacking. A number of young women have received scholarships to attend the training courses. There are just two predominantly women's skills courses in Dili; basic computer skills offered by the Centro Juvenil Padre Antonio Viera and the sewing course offered at Senai Training Centre.

### ***2.2.4 Courses offered***

Training providers offer courses in skill areas and geographic locations where they have the physical and human resources to deliver. While the majority of female trainees chose their course because it would help them find a job, the second highest reason for women was that they liked working in the activity. Counselling to training providers on the job market in their training area and stronger links with employers could help overcome the mismatch of demand and supply. Greater course selection for women with skills linked to the requirements of the formal labour market must also be explored.

### 2.2.5 Selection criteria

Training providers were asked about course selection criteria and given the following options: minimum education level, gender, age and geographic location. The providers were not asked about marital status as a criterion for course selection but one Dili based NGO only accepts single women and men into its courses. Only one Dili based IT centre has no specific selection criteria for trainees with entrance based on the ability to pay the required fee.

Twenty-four courses have an age criteria, seven have a gender criteria, six a geographic location and 15 a minimum education level. Courses overwhelmingly target the youth in the 15 to 29 year age group with just three courses taking trainees to age 45. The seven courses with a gender requirement are four female only and three male only. The female only courses are livelihood, local product and sewing and all are with Church institutions that have female only boarding facilities.

Cross referencing the training provider minimum education level with the highest educational level of the graduates surveyed it is reported that in courses requiring below secondary level education, 83% of trainees have at least one level higher than the requirement. Overall 76% (53% women) of the trainees have a minimum of senior secondary level education. Six courses have senior secondary school as a minimum educational requirement. This fact needs further investigation and provides a barrier to women and men who are less educated and have limited opportunities to improve their skills. It is particularly an indirect barrier to women who overall are less educated and have lower literacy rates than men particularly for those over 26 years of age and live in the rural areas.

### 2.2.6 Completion rates and traceability of graduates

The 21 training providers reported a total of 1186 trainees (600 women and 586 men) across 30 courses. The completion rate<sup>5</sup> for all courses is 84% (1001 graduates), with women (89%) having slightly higher results than men (80%). The providers reported 75% (751) of the graduates' outcomes traceable; 56% of the traceable graduates are women. The providers in the districts have a significantly higher traceability rate of 93% compared to 45% for Dili.

The table below shows the figures and percentages for the outcomes of the predominantly men's courses, predominantly women's courses and gender neutral courses of the traceable graduates.

	Total Graduates			Traceable graduates													
				Completion rate	Gained work / improved income			Entered university			Unemployed			Total traceable			
	M	F	Total	%	M	F	%	M	F	%	M	F	%	M	F	Total	%
Predominantly women	20	311	331	94%	14	131	52%	0	29	10%	0	107	38%	14	267	281	85%
Predominantly men	213	21	234	70%	47	4	30%	1	0	0.60%	108	9	69%	156	13	169	72%

Gender neutral	235	201	436	88%	44	60	35%	15	7	7%	99	76	58%	158	143	301	75%
Total	468	533	1001		105	195	40%	16	36	7%	207	192	53%	328	423	751	75%
<b>Table 02</b>																	

The results indicate that some young women use the additional skills gained in vocational courses to improve their chances of gaining entrance to university. It is not known if this is in preference to gaining employment but it is against the trend in many developed countries where more people move from university to a vocational training course rather than moving in the other direction.

### ***2.2.7 Equality of access, discrimination and sexual harassment***

There is, in general, recognition among training providers that women and men should have equal access to vocational training courses. There are 76% (16) of training providers that did not think it was more difficult for women to undertake vocational training. Of the 24% (5) who thought it was more difficult for women, 4 are in the districts and 1 in Dili. Training provider staff in the districts would be well aware of the limited education level of most rural women and their difficulty in gaining support for time away from their traditional reproductive role to attend training. Of the five providers who identified the difficulties for women, two have courses that attract predominantly female trainees; two predominantly male trainees and one gender neutral. The reasons given by the providers are: home responsibilities (2), security (2), limited courses (1), the work was heavy (1) and costs of training (1). (Multiple responses permitted).

Less than half of the training providers do not take any special action to support women's entry into vocational training courses. Of the 38% (8) that do take special action to support women's entry into vocational training courses, the most common action is to promote courses to women. Only one provider reported having a quota of places for women and the two government providers (with courses attracting predominantly male trainees), reported giving preference to women in the selection process. Of the eight providers taking action, four have predominantly male trainees, three are mixed and one all female trainees.

Separate toilet facilities in training institutions address privacy concerns and increases women's comfort level. While the quality of training facilities was not surveyed, training centres were asked to report on toilet facilities for males and females. Seven providers do not have separate toilet facilities for men and women and of these six institutions have gender neutral courses. Acceptable sanitation standards for all training providers must be addressed and included in basic institutional accreditation standards.

Four providers reported they had received complaints of 'language or physical contact that did not show respect' and three took action in the form of discussions with all parties. The complaints were mainly inappropriate language with two reporting inappropriate physical contact. The graduates section (7.3) below provides more detail in relation to harassment experienced, but not reported, by the graduates. It is not unusual for sexual harassment to go unreported and it is important that this question

was asked both of the training centre management and the graduates probably for the first time for all respondents.

Training programs on discrimination and sexual harassment for staff could be coordinated by the Gender Unit of SEFOPE. Such training must include policy and procedure development, systemic discriminatory practices, inappropriate behaviour and complaint handling processes. The training providers' management must examine inherent discrimination in selection practices and develop policies consistent with government and international standards to eliminate such practices. As part of their induction program, trainees should receive information on sexual harassment, discrimination and the provider's complaint resolution process.

## 2.3 Graduates of training courses

### 2.3.1 Course selection

The ratio of male to female trainees was almost equal. A total of 418 trainees were interviewed, 55.5% women and 44.5% men and they represented 20 courses. Slightly more than half of those interviewed are from Dili. Course participation of the trainees follows closely traditional gender lines. There are a few exceptions with female participation in the electricity, masonry and carpentry courses.

The graduates surveyed had attended the following courses:

Course	Female	Male	Total
Local product	39		39
Hospitality	24		24
Sewing	20		20
Bakery	8		8
Livelihood	38	2	40
Office Skill	35	18	53
IT	10	6	16
Hotel and Restaurant Management	6	2	8
Business Administration	15	11	26
Computer basic	27	24	51
Electricity	3	10	13
Mulberry leaf Cultivation and production	3	16	19
Masonry	2	16	18
Carpentry	2	33	35
Agriculture		1	1
General construction		4	4
Plumbing		6	6
Welding		6	6
Blacksmith		13	13
Mechanics		18	18
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>418</b>
<b>Table 03</b>			

### ***2.3.2 Education levels***

As reported in 6.5 Selection Criteria above, 76% of the graduates surveyed had started their course with at least a secondary school qualification including 6% who had already attended university. Given that just 13.1% (10.1% women) of the population 19 years old and more have completed senior secondary school and 1.6% university (TLSLS: 2007: Table 5.1) the vocational training system is catering to the best educated, read mostly men. Sixty-nine percent of the population have not completed primary education but they are represented by just 13% (62% women) of the graduates of vocational training. The large numbers of unemployed young people means that it is the best educated amongst them who are able to take advantage of the limited training places. The written entrance test required by several training providers also means that it is the most skilled who gain entry. Again, the existing training courses menu and the selection criteria pose indirect barriers for women to gain

This issue warrants serious reflection by the vocational training providers and must be considered by INDMO when identifying priority sectors for new skills training courses.

### ***2.3.3 Harassment and concerns during training***

Reports on sexual harassment are commonly underreported and this is born out by the graduates' response to questions of behaviour that 'does not show respect'<sup>6</sup>. Just two trainees said they reported inappropriate language to the provider management who took action. Most reported either doing nothing or discussing the incident with their friends. However, sixteen respondents (11 female) said they had experienced inappropriate behaviour by other trainees and 60 (36 female) reported inappropriate behaviour by trainers. There were seven graduates (4 female) who reported inappropriate behaviour by both trainers and trainees which means that 69 graduates (16.5%) have experienced harassment while undertaking skills training. This is a serious level of unreported incidents and warrants immediate attention and action. It is particularly disturbing to see the abuse of the powerful position of the trainer but sadly not uncommon in situations where trainers have inadequate qualifications for their position.

The concerns of male and female graduates while attending training were different. For male trainees the overwhelming issue was getting a job after the course finished. This was also a concern for females however they were almost equally concerned about paying course fees and family responsibilities. The second highest concern for male graduates was failing to meet family expectations. Just two graduates (1 female) said they did not feel safe at the centre. The overwhelming concern of finding employment is not surprising and the obstacles are highlighted in the plethora of reports on the economic and social situation of Timor-Leste. The young women and men who gain places in vocational training courses must be made aware of the labour market trends and skill requirements so that course selection may be targeted to realistic employment outcomes. This is particularly so for women who are not engaged in the waged employment skills courses.

### **2.3.4 Payments**

Slightly more than half, (53%) of all trainees, paid for their training courses. However, of the 53% paying trainees 37% were female and only 16% male. Female trainees who had paid for their courses were slightly more successful in finding jobs than trainees from non-paying courses (54% against 46%). For male trainees it was reversed with only 33% of trainees from the paying courses securing jobs against 67% from non-paying courses. The same gender imbalance is also shown in the data of trainees who reported income improvements after training. A large majority of trainees, male and female, mentioned ability to pay for the course and concern about being able to find employment as their biggest worries during the training period. The system, as it is, provides no assurance of success to the trainees before spending a comparatively large amount of money to enter a training course. Of the trainees who reported income improvement after the course, 58% were graduates who did not pay for their courses.

## **2.4 Employers**

### **2.4.1 Equal employment opportunity**

Of the 20 employers interviewed 90% are satisfied generally with the work done by women. The two employers not satisfied have concerns about women's reproductive role and the time this takes from work. Exactly half the enterprises have employed 31 graduates (84% male) of vocational training courses. The employers were equally divided into those who felt the skills of the trainees were appropriate for the task and others who believed the skills were relevant but below the level required by the workplace.

Companies confirmed that they pay equal wages to female and male workers. Sixteen employers (80%) also confirmed that they would like to see more "participation of women in work that is traditionally done by men." Their suggestions for increasing women's job roles were:

- Giving more opportunities for women to attend non-traditional courses (5)
- Have an agreement with employers to take more women (6)
- Promote equal employment opportunities for women and men (3)
- Set up a percentage of jobs for women (1)
- Change public mentality on traditional role of women (2).

### **2.4.2 Work experience**

All the employers surveyed have taken trainees of vocational training courses for work experience. The trainees are from eight different training centres representing 12 courses. Nine (45%) employers took only female trainees; four in office administration and five in hospitality. Eight (40%) took only male trainees all in either the construction industry or automotive. Three (15%) took both female and male trainees; two in hospitality and one in office administration. None of the employers who took trainees for work experience reported the skills of female trainees were inappropriate, two said the skills were relevant but below the level required by the

workplace. Four employers with male trainees reported the skills were appropriate and three that the skills were relevant but below the required level.

Sixty percent of employers reported regular visits by training centre staff during the placements. Three of the providers conduct courses for women only and one predominantly women. The third provider had all male trainees placed in the work experience program.

The survey did not ascertain the reporting mechanisms of the employers on the performance of the trainees but the data suggests reflection and action by the providers on the opinions of the employers could improve the relevance of training courses to the needs of their industry sector.

### 3. Analysis and response

The results of this survey indicate that women have slightly higher participation rates, completion rates, traceability and better outcomes in terms of waged employment or increased income and university entrance. This result reflects the trend of improved educational attainment for the current youth and women in particular. However nationally for those aged over 19 years the rate for secondary school completion is just 10.1% for women and 16% for men. It is significantly higher in urban centres compared to rural areas with only 5.9% of women in rural areas completing secondary school. The *Timor-Leste: Survey of Living Standards* shows that since 2001 there has been an increase in women completing senior secondary education compared to a decrease for men (TLSLS: 2007 Table 5.3). Participation in vocational non-formal training in the 18 – 26 years age group is equal for men and women at 0.1% (TLSLS: 2007 Table 5.22).

The results of the Vocational Training Impact Assessment survey could point to the work done over the last 5 years to improve the participation of women in education. The vocational training centres operating prior to 2000 were predominantly conducting skills training in the technical trade areas; one centre conducted training in livelihood skills. There are several scholarship programs to support women's education particularly for young women in isolated locations. In its efforts to address the unequal access of men and women to vocational skills training, the SEFOPE has strategically used the Vocational Training and Employment Fund to support women's vocational training and employability. Access to the Fund is tied to presentation of quality training plans with equal access to men and women which has been successful in serving women who were mostly uneducated.

The training centres (Claret Training Centre and World Vision) that demand 50% female participation in their courses make an active contribution to gender equality in vocational training. There are also a higher proportion of women in training courses in the districts which had boarding facilities for the trainees providing a secure and less troubled environment for training.

Another important consideration is the timing of the TVET Impact Assessment. During 2006-07 there was a violent political and social crisis in Timor-Leste. This saw over 150,000 people flee their homes to take refuge in what became, Internally

Displaced Persons (IDP) camps primarily in Dili but also in the districts. The violence and unrest were centred in Dili but impacted nation-wide. Several training centres became places of refuge for the IDPs but in particular Don Bosco Training Centre in Dili that at one time was catering to over 15,000 refugees. The crisis affected, and continues to affect, all people, but many young men in Dili have been considerably disrupted by displacement and violence.

While the female trainees performed better they continue to attend traditional gender determined courses and were also well represented in the mixed courses of IT/office skills and agriculture. No training institution has made serious efforts to get females into traditional male dominated courses. While limited in scope this survey shows a few women in non-traditional female skill areas. This may indicate that given the opportunity, more women would be interested in crossing the occupational gender barriers if the right conditions existed for them to do so. It is also important to explore other areas of training that would provide waged employment or sustainable income generation for women

#### **4. Recommendations**

##### ***4.1 Skills Trainers - Strengthen women's participation in leadership and staff development***

Opportunities could be created for current and emerging women leaders in vocational training to discuss the establishment of the regulatory body Instituto Nacional de Desenvolvimento do Mão de Obra (INDMO) and the impact of training and course selection for young women. This group could ensure that female trainers who are less qualified than male trainers have staff development opportunities in their relevant industry and in courses such as the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. Women have an important responsibility as role models in leadership positions in training centres and must play an active role in all aspects of INDMO and its Special Sub-Commissions.

INDMO should integrate as part of its gender equality mainstreaming strategy an increase in the number of women trainers and training centers' managers. Dedicated resources shall be available to support career development programmes for qualified women trainers.

##### ***4.2 Training courses - Broaden skills training options for women and men consistent with labour market demand***

While women trainees recorded better results than men on most scales the course selection options for women need to be addressed. As the survey results show women are over represented in low income-generating areas with limited waged employment opportunities in the formal labour market. An investigation into broader course options for women consistent with the labour market demands must be undertaken. This would require long term planning as training centres would need to have the physical and human resources to conduct such courses. Establishing initiatives such as targeting a percentage of the under-represented sex into non-traditional areas could establish a support base and provide encouragement. Single sex courses could also be

trialled particularly in skills with stronger employment outcomes such as electrical installation and maintenance. These trainees must also be linked with employers from the beginning of the training and undertake on-the-job training following graduation.

There are two courses (hospitality and IT/office skills) that are predominantly women and have stronger employment outcomes. These courses could be strengthened to improve the waged employment outcomes for more women and provide a model for skill development in new areas that are consistent with demand and identified as priorities in government programs and the private sector. Examples of such programs include sport and recreation, personal services, early childcare services, IT maintenance and servicing, solar power installation and maintenance, environmental management including reforestation and horticulture.

This survey has shown that women are attracted to training courses in the district in traditionally female skill areas that also provide boarding facilities. Further investigation could be undertaken through focus group discussions with the current trainees to ascertain the importance boarding facilities for women and the reasons women choose these courses. New areas of training with stronger links to the existing labour market areas must be investigated as a priority.

The pronounced gender-determined vocational training choices of men and women will need to be further reviewed and appropriate intervention identified and implemented. Cooperation among SEFOPE, INDMO, and training providers to broaden a range of skills training courses for women, increase their participation, and further improve enrolment of women in work experience and internship programmes will be necessary. The goal of such cooperation would be to ensure that more women in both the district and Dili are able to take courses that respond to labour market demands. Making these courses available in the districts and ensuring that training arrangements and requirements such as selection criteria, duration of the courses, and career counselling for women are recommended.

### ***4.3 Ensure institutional policies and procedures enable equality of access***

Training providers need to be encouraged to develop a range of training courses so that they can attract both men and women. While in general existing courses are open for men and women's enrolment, there exist a range of indirect barriers which discourage and/or disqualified women to attend the courses. These barriers are for example use of entrance examination to measures prospective trainees' literacy proficiency, course duration, lack of separate toilets for men and women, and lack of women trainers within the training institutions, thus a virtual absence of role models. Some of these barriers could be removed quickly provided that there are sufficient financial investments for the tasks. Some are social and structural issues, e.g., trainees' education backgrounds and lack of women trainers. For these, both long-term and short-term interventions are necessary. Some pre-training tutorial arrangements can help prepare women for the entrance examination. But a system wide effort to ensure women's attendance in the general education and delayed marriage will allow women to have necessary qualifications to attend a broader range of training course.

SEFOPE and training institutions shall review the policies and procedures in the development of training courses, training institution management, and trainee recruitment process. Use of a gender lens in such a review will make detectable the direct and indirect barriers and thus enable design of appropriate interventions.

#### ***4.4 Policy and procedures concerning sexual harassment***

The absence of formal policy, staff sensitivity training, established procedures for complaint handling, and dissemination of policy and procedures to trainees with regards to harassment, of all natures, requires attention at the highest levels. There are inherent practices that discriminate against both women and men who are less educated and married and trainees who have faced sexual harassment while undertaking training courses.

The low reporting of sexual harassment cases from both training providers and trainees does not indicate the level of abuse as it evident from the responses of graduates. Training in sexual harassment, equal opportunities and complaint resolution could be offered to all training centre staff and form part of the induction program for trainees. The Gender Unit of SEFOPE could undertake to offer such training under the guidance of INDMO.

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<sup>1</sup> This report is a supplement to the 2008 Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Impact Assessment Report. The data contained in this report relies on the same survey results as the Impact Assessment but provides a more detailed analysis of the gender dimensions in vocational training in Timor-Leste.

<sup>2</sup> Traceable graduates from the training providers' assessment are the total number of graduates less those where the provider does not know current status of the graduate, be that

employed/improved income, unemployed, attending university. A total of 1186 trainees started courses surveyed, 1001 graduated and 751 are traceable by the training providers.

<sup>3</sup> Some trainers have attended trainer's courses in Indonesia or the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment in either Dili or Australia. These courses are at a higher level than the Vocational Technical Secondary School Certificate.

<sup>4</sup> Dili includes the Centro Nacional de Emprego e Formação Profissional, Tibar that is located in the Liquica District but services trainees mainly resident in Dili. While Atauro is part of the Dili District the two centres there are included in the District percentages.

<sup>5</sup> The total number of trainees (1186) compared to the number of graduates (1001).

<sup>6</sup> SEFOPE staff spent considerable time finding appropriate language for this question as there was no Tetun equivalent for 'sexual harassment'. The two questions were 'When you were doing the course did a trainer/another trainee ever use language or physical contact that did not show respect to you?'

