



USAID | TIMOR-LESTE

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Many Timorese have registered land claims through the USAID-supported process. Photo: ARD

OVERVIEW:

Strengthening Property Rights in Timor-Leste builds on past USAID Land Law Programs. Its objectives include: (1) Strengthening land policy, law and regulations; (2) Assisting with survey, registration and titling of land; (3) Implementing land administration and information systems; (4) Developing dispute resolution mechanisms; and (5) Increasing public awareness of land issues.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER:

Associates in Research Development, Inc.

FUNDING PERIOD:

September 2007 – September 2012

FUNDING LEVEL:

US \$10 million

CURRENT PROGRAM:

The project comprises 5 tasks: (1) Public Information and Awareness/ Increased Transparency; (2) Land Policy Laws and Implementing Regulations; (3) Support to a National Land Commission; (4) Land Administration (Cadastral, Registration and Land Titling System); and, (5) Dispute

Resolution, Mediation and Processes for Competing Claims to Land.

The project also ensures that gender issues are adequately addressed throughout all project activities.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Assisted the Ministry of Justice, through the National Directorate for Land, Property and Cadastral Services, to establish the **National Property Cadastre**, opening the way for systematic collection of land claims across Timor-Leste. The Prime Minister launched the National Cadastre in July 2008.
- As of March 2009, **almost 900 private land claims** had been collected and entered into the national database since the activity was launched by the Minister of Justice and the U.S. Ambassador in November 2009.
- Technical support for the Secretariat of State for the Promotion of Equality helped establish a **Gender Land Law working group** composed of government and civil society representatives. Following a series of public consultation workshops to identify issues and develop concrete recommendations to strengthen women's land and property rights in Timor-Leste, the group submitted their recommendations on the draft Civil Code to the Ministry of Justice in February 2009.
- The project helped compile research and recommended policy options for the drafting of the Transitional Land Law, which will clarify land ownership rights in Timor-Leste and allow for the awarding of private land titles.

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