

JSMP holds first consultation on the preparation of draft Tara-Bandu rules in Naimeko Village

On 31 July 2024, through the Community Security Support Program (PASK), the first consultation was held on the preparation of draft Tara-Bandu rules for Naimeko Village at the village hall in Naimeko, Pante-makasar Sub-Region, Special Administrative Region of Oecusse-Ambeno (RAEOA).

The aim of this consultation was to hear information about cultural practices for resolving conflict, as well as ideas and suggestions from the administrative structure and community members so that JSMP can facilitate the preparation of draft Tara-Bandu rules for Naimeko Village to be used to resolve conflict amongst community members in the aforementioned village or for community members in other villages who have committed an infraction in the territory of the aforementioned village.

During the opening ceremony of this consultation the Naimeko Village Chief stated that no Tara-Bandu rules have been in place for a long time. From Indonesian times until now Naimeko Village has not had any written Tara-Bandu rules and to date community members have resolved their problems in accordance with customs that are practiced by community members in this village and therefore he expressed deep gratitude to JSMP for initiating this consultation to prepare Tara-Bandu rules for Naimeko Village. The Village Chief also asked the participants to actively participate in the discussion and share their experiences, so that the facilitators (JSMP) can use this information to prepare written rules to provide guidance on how to attend to or resolve problems affecting community members.

During this consultation the participants managed to discuss and approve important issues such as the aim of Tara-Bandu, scope, definitions, community rights and obligations, sacred houses, sacred water and sacred objects, protected areas, issues about those who offend against peace and stability, acts of theft or people damaging goods belonging to people or the State, damaging a person's good name, infidelity, no responsibility for children and a discussion on changing the costs for traditional resolution which was previously US\$15.00 at the neighbourhood level, US\$25.00 at the sub-village level, and US\$50.00 at the village level, so that there would be an increase at the neighbourhood level to US\$20.00, and the same fee of US\$25.00 at the sub-village and a reduction at the village level to US\$30.00, however these fees are not applicable to victims.

After discussing and approving the aforementioned issues, the participants agreed to further discuss other issues on another occasion because of time constraints.

During this consultation there were 37 participants, comprising 4 women and 33 men. The participants included the Village Chief, Sub-Village Chiefs, customary elders, delegates, neighbourhood catechist, the Village Police Officer (OPS) and community members from Naimeko Village.

This activity was conducted by JSMP through the Community Security Support Program (PASK), through collaboration with The Asia Foundation (TAF) which is financed by the Embassy of New Zealand in Timor-Leste.

