



Press Release
Covalima Municipality
27 February 2024

JSMP expands the Community Security Support Program (PASK) in Maudemu Village

On 20 February 2024 JSMP held a ceremony to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the authorities in Maudemu Village, Tilomar Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, for a period of six months in 2024.

“JSMP is very grateful to the Maudemu Village Chief and the entire village structure for wanting to collaborate with JSMP regarding the implementation of the Community Security Support Program in Maudemu Village, and JSMP considers this program to be crucial, because JSMP previously managed to implement this project with several villages and this collaboration has produced results that has assisted some communities, especially regarding the revision of Tara-Bandu Rules and these communities have knowledge about their cases that are being processed through formal justice and legal proceedings”, said Ms. Flora Soriano Menezes, the Coordinator of the Legal Research Unit and the Advocacy and Training Unit of JSMP.

The Administrator of Tilomar Administrative Post, Mr. Venancio Sarmiento, in his speech stated that the program to be implemented by JSMP and Maudemu Village is a new one and is important for the communities, because to date the communities have faced problems and after cases have gone to trial the communities don't know about proceedings, therefore he requested for the village chiefs and village councils to collaborate with the JSMP team for the next six (6) months, because this program gives benefits to communities, in particular because they can gain knowledge about their right to access formal justice.

A representative of the Tilomar Post Police Station Commander, Mr. Agostinho Maia, in his speech stated that as a Village Police Officer (OPS) in Maudemu he is proud and happy with this program and is ready to collaborate with the JSMP team for the next six months to facilitate and support communities in Maudemu Village, in particular regarding how they can access formal justice and the importance of providing training and awareness raising for communities based on what was agreed by the two parties, because many communities don't yet have knowledge about how to access formal justice.

Also, the Maudemu Village Chief in her speech stated that she was very happy with the presence of JSMP in her village because this can support the communities to access formal justice because for 15 years under the guidance of the Village Chief there has not been an NGO or State Institution that has implemented a program like the one implemented by JSMP, therefore she requested for the entire village structure to cooperate with

JSMP to properly implement this program to provide benefits to the community.

This program has the aim of helping the local communities and stakeholders in the national justice system to improve links between systems and also to improve fair justice and for everyone to have access at the community level, with activities such as:

1. Observing the process of community based dispute resolution and conducting local research
2. Providing information to help review Tara-Bandu Rules
3. Sharing information about the progress of cases from the police, the courts, the prosecution service to specific villages
4. Advocacy to further improve the links between communities and formal justice
5. Sharing information about access to the formal justice system
6. Will introduce a Case Log for village councils and Village Police Officers (OPS) about how to fill out case forms

During the ceremony to sign this Memorandum of Understanding, JSMP was represented by Ms. Flora Soriano Menezes, the Coordinator of the Legal Research Unit and the Advocacy and Training Unit of JSMP, and Maudemu Village was represented by the Village Chief, Ms. Maria Fátima.

The ceremony to sign this Memorandum of Understanding was attended by the Administrator of Tilomar Administrative Post, Mr. Venancio Sarmento, a representative of the Tilomar Station Commander, Mr. Agostinho Maia, the Maudemu Village Chief, Ms. Maria Fátima, and seven (7) Sub-Village Chiefs, customary elders, delegates, representatives of female and male youths, mediators from the posts from the Ministry of the Interior and journalists.

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

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