



Press Release
18 March 2024

The administrative structure of Oemolo Sub-Village, Oecusse, receives information from JSMP about the Formal Justice Process

On 22 February 2024 JSMP provided information about access to formal justice to the Sub-Village administrative structure and also community members in Oemolo Sub-Village, Lifau Village, Special Administrative Region of Oecusse-Ambeno (RAEOA) for the Community Security Support Program (PASK).

The aim of providing this information is to increase the knowledge of the sub-village administrative structure and community members about how to access formal justice and to ensure disputes and other cases are resolved in the sub-village based on the formal laws that are applicable.

“JSMP believes that the session to disseminate information to the administrative structure of the sub-village and community members in Oemolo Sub-Village can help increase the knowledge of members of the administrative structure from the sub-village as well as community members about the formal justice process which is part of a Memorandum of Understanding between Lifau Village and JSMP through the community security support program, to respond to concerns raised by the Sub-Village Chief and community members in a JSMP assessment, which was part of JSMP’s collaboration with Lifau Village,” said Ms. Ana Paula Marçal, Executive Director of JSMP.

The training materials focused on definitions about the law and who has to respect the law, definitions of crimes, types of crimes, types of penalties and how to process criminal cases that are public in nature as well as semi-public crimes and what the Sub-Village administrative structure can do to help community members to resolve their disputes in the sub-village. Also, the materials covered how civil cases are dealt with through the formal justice system and the work of the referral network in relation to legal aid for victims of gender based violence (GBV).

After JSMP presented the materials, the local authorities and community members conveyed their concerns about the implementation of the Law Against Domestic Violence (LADV) whereby men are most often guilty but

often their actions are the result of provocation from women who don't control the way they speak, both at home and in public places. JSMP stated that it is not permissible to commit a crime in response, but there are other ways to respond, for example sitting down together to discuss the matter. If a crime occurs involving a wife and husband, or child and father or mother, or a person who is economically dependent, according to the Law Against Domestic Violence, this is considered to be a public crime, therefore any person who sees or knows about an incident can make a complaint to the police or the Public Prosecution Service.

Also, community members asked about the four types of domestic violence and the high number of cases in Timor-Leste and what the courts will do to reduce the number of cases characterized as domestic violence in the future? In response, JSMP explained that the four types of domestic violence are physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence and economic violence, and based on JSMP monitoring at the courts, crimes of domestic violence are prevalent.

Also, the courts have their own strategy to prevent criminal acts in the future. If a minor assault is committed and it is a first offence, the court will consider the application of a suspended prison sentence, which means that the defendant does not go to prison, however during the period of suspension he must not commit another crime, and if he commits another crime then the suspended prison sentence imposed by the court in the previous matter will have to be served, and the new criminal matter will be tried. Also if there are aggravating circumstances that cannot be tolerated by the court in accordance with the law, for example repeated criminal acts, then to prevent crime the court has to send the defendant to prison, so that the defendant can rehabilitate his behaviour in prison, to avoid committing such acts in the future and also to educate others not to commit crime.

The Oemolo Sub-Village Chief, Mr. Adelino Nono, and community members who participated in this training, stated that the dissemination of information by JSMP is very important because it can help them understand how to resolve their cases through community justice and how to take their cases to be processed through formal justice.

29 people participated in this activity to disseminate information, namely 11 women and 18 men. The participants comprised the Lifau Village Chief, Village Police Officer (OPS), the Oemolo Sub-Village Chief, male and female delegates, female youth leader, PAAS, neighbourhood chief, customary elder, trainee student from UNPAZ and some community members.

This training 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.

For more information, please contact:

Ana Paula Marçal

Executive Director of JSMP

Email: ana@jsmp.tl

Telephone: (+670) 33238883 | 77040735

Website: <https://jsmp.tl>

info@jsmp.tl