



JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME  
PROGRAMA MONITORIZASAUN BA SISTEMA JUDISIÁRIU

**Press Release**  
**Dili Municipality**  
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**JSMP accompanies trainers from Comoro Village to facilitate training on gender equality, human trafficking and gender based violence for other community members**

On 12-13 October 2023 JSMP accompanied trainers from the Comoro Village community to provide training on Gender Equality, Preventing and Combatting Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Human Trafficking, including also the work of the Referral Network for the village administrative structure and community members in Comoro Village, Dom Alexo Administrative Post, Dili Municipality.

This training was part of a two (2) year program entitled “*Prevention and Response to Human Trafficking, that is Community Based, Gender Responsive and Survivor Centred (2023-2024)*” which is funded by the Government of Timor-Leste through the Ministry of Interior and implemented by UN Women Timor-Leste in partnership with JSMP. Through this program, JSMP has provided training three (3) times to more than eighty community members in Comoro Village.

The village trainers who provided this training have participated in the Training of Trainers (ToT) from JSMP on relevant materials. The aim is to pass on information to other community members to increase their knowledge and also to ensure the sustainability of this program.

*“JSMP really appreciates the ability and capacity of the Comoro Village community trainers to facilitate this training really well. It is hoped that the materials shared by the trainers over the two days can increase the knowledge of participants so they can contribute more effectively and efficiently to preventing and combatting human trafficking and GBV in the village and also across the entire territory of Timor-Leste,”* said the Executive Director of JSMP, Ms. Ana Paula Marçal.

Ms. Ana Paula Marçal also thanked the Comoro Village Chief for effective collaboration and cooperation to carry out these activities successfully and hopes that this collaboration will continue in the future.

A representative of the Comoro Village Chief, Mr. Tiago Sarmiento, as a customary elder from Golgota Sub-Village, in his speech thanked JSMP for accompanying and supporting the village trainers to pass on important information to other community members who have not yet received information about these relevant issues. This village representative believes that the information obtained during the two days of training is very important. He said “I heard information about GBV that women should not be discriminated against based on their gender and the law prohibits such behaviour. It is really important for the participants to respect this in the family and to pass on this information to other communities who did not attend the training so that they have knowledge because often it happens in our village. Also, regarding information about cases of human trafficking, sometimes these activities happen in the community and people use a range of methods such as telling lies about working overseas etc, therefore I ask the participants to pass on this information to other communities so that they have knowledge so that we can work together to prevent crimes of human trafficking in the village”.

During this training the participants asked some questions such as why is domestic labour categorised as a crime of human trafficking? Some companies recruit people and say that they are

going to work in Portugal, is this legal or not? How can we identify if a case involves a crime of human trafficking or not, and does human trafficking only happen between one nation and another nation, or can cases that occur in our country also be considered as human trafficking? What sentences are imposed on those who commit crimes of human trafficking? How can we prevent crimes of human trafficking? If a minor is involved in prostitution, is this categorised as a crime or not?

In relation to these questions, JSMP responded that domestic labour can be categorised as a crime of human trafficking when it fulfils the elements of a crime of human trafficking. For example, a person engages in recruitment and tells others that they will receive a good salary and other benefits, but this is not the reality (it's only lies)). Workers work without a contract, work overtime, are not paid for the work they perform and are not given the salary promised and other methods such as taking all of their personal documents.

In relation to recruitment from companies to go and work in Portugal, it depends on the case. If a company recruits workers through a legal process because the agency is registered and carries out public recruitment to provide proper access and if the employment matches the job description and the payment matches the vacancy, then this is not categorised as human trafficking. However if the workers arrive in Portugal and their employment doesn't match the vacancy or if they perform other work, for example prostitution or other forced labour with a small salary or against the norms, or some of them are not given a salary, and their personal documents are withheld, then these workers can be considered victims of the crime of human trafficking. These acts provide benefits to a company or a person who conducts the recruitment and are considered as human trafficking.

In relation to the question if human trafficking can occur in the country or not, JSMP responded that crimes of human trafficking can also happen in the country and most involve crimes of sexual exploitation, the sale of bodily organs and forced labour, domestic labour etc.

In relation to sentences applied for crimes of human trafficking, JSMP explained that Article 163 and Article 164 of the Penal Code set out crimes of human trafficking with sentences of between 5-20 years in prison, and aggravation with sentences of between 12-25 years in prison.

Lastly, the question about the involvement of children in prostitution activities, the Penal Law sets out child prostitution in Article 175 that states that any person who practices an act of exploitation against a minor aged less than 17 years is punishable due to aggravation if he/she takes advantage of the person's vulnerability or as otherwise provided in the law. However, it depends on the case, if the child is involved in prostitution, even if he/she provides consent, however at that time is involved in this activity and the elements of Articles 163-164 of the Penal Code are fulfilled, then it will be considered a crime of human trafficking.

In addition to these responses, JSMP also increased the knowledge of the participants about human trafficking by showing them a short video about how human trafficking is normally practiced by traffickers in relation to recruitment mechanisms that tend to be based on lies, threats, use of force, and taking advantage of people's vulnerability to provide benefits to persons, groups or companies who perform the recruitment.

Furthermore, JSMP also provided examples about cases of human trafficking monitored by JSMP in the courts, and in these cases it was proven that the acts described in the charges fulfilled the elements of crimes of human trafficking.

There were 30 participants in this training, comprising 20 women and 10 men. There were three people with disabilities, namely 2 women and 1 man. The participants included ordinary members of the community, youths and students.

For more information, please contact:

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