



JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME
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JSMP starts the first campaign to prevent Human Trafficking and Gender Based Violence (GBV) in the Batugade border area

On 20 October 2023 JSMP organized the first campaign to prevent human trafficking and gender based violence (GBV) at the Village Hall in Batugade Village, Balibo Administrative Post, Bobonaro Municipality.

This campaign activity 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 a plan to conduct another campaign in addition to Batugade, Bobonaro Municipality, and this campaign will be carried out in Dili Municipality and possibly in Covalima Municipality and also the Special Administrative Region of Oecusse-Ambeno.

This campaign activity takes the form of a drama demonstration whereby the narrator and actors are community mobilizers from the Batugade Village community who were previously provided with training and relevant materials by JSMP on human trafficking and GBV. The drama demonstration tells a range of stories about how an East Timorese person becomes a victim of human trafficking in the neighbouring country of Indonesia. The main actors in the drama demonstration are the victim, the traffickers, the mother of the victim and a good friend, the village chief, the Timor-Leste National Police (PNTL) and the immigration police, a social worker and a civil society representative and a judge.

The aim of the human trafficking campaign activity is to alert and remind the public in general and the communities along the border area, especially in Batugade Village, about what is human trafficking and GBV, and also how to identify and prevent it.

“JSMP really appreciates the Government of Timor-Leste for giving top priority to the issue of human trafficking and also for placing confidence and financial support in national and international partners to share information and increase public knowledge through training and the campaign to more effectively and efficiently prevent and combat human trafficking, because of the socio-economic circumstances and geography of Timor-Leste which cause many East Timorese people to be vulnerable to human trafficking,” said the Executive Director of JSMP, Ms. Ana Paula Marçal.

The campaign activity to prevent human trafficking and gender based violence was officially opened by Mr. Januario Moises, Batugade Village Chief, and was accompanied by the Executive Director of JSMP, Ms. Ana Paula Marçal, a Representative from UN Women, Ms. Alexandra Axelsson, the Batugade Immigration Police Commander, a Representative from the Batugade Police Station, a Representative from Customs and a Representative from the Border Patrol Unit (UPF).

The Director of JSMP in her opening speech said that this campaign activity can further increase the ability and knowledge of the community, youths and administrative structure about Human Trafficking and GBV in Batugade Village, so they can effectively contribute towards efforts from the

Timor-Leste Government to prevent and combat Human Trafficking and GBV, therefore JSMP believes that this campaign is a means to prevent crimes of Human Trafficking and GBV in Timor Leste.

The Batugade Village Chief in his speech thanked JSMP for organizing these important activities in his village, including training and the campaign. He said that the training activity for the village administrative structure and the community in general can help community members gain an understanding about human trafficking and can give them sufficient knowledge about how to identify and prevent crimes of human trafficking. The Village Chief also said that this training activity on human trafficking was very important, therefore as a local authority he will continue to ask for the Government and agencies to continue supporting this activity in areas where there is the possibility that crimes of human trafficking can occur.

The representative from UN Women, Mr. Jeremias Batista Gomes, told those invited to participate in this program that UN Women received budget support from the Government of Timor-Leste through the Ministry of Interior and through a partnership with JSMP for the implementation of activities to prevent crimes of human trafficking, because in reality crimes of human trafficking continue to occur in Timor-Leste and also around the world. The activity to prevent crimes of human trafficking is a joint venture with JSMP and focuses on the municipalities, especially the border areas such as Bobonaro, Covalima, Oecusse and Dili. This activity is aimed at helping communities to identify signs of crimes of human trafficking and to engage in prevention.

Also, the Immigration Police Commander in his speech spoke about the role of immigration in relation to the prevention of crimes of human trafficking in accordance with the Organic Law on Immigration. The organic law also assigns a role to immigration to raise awareness in schools, in villages and areas where it is difficult to access information, especially information about how the community can help identify and report cases of human trafficking to the relevant institutions, including the immigration police.

The Immigration Commander also said that to date crimes of human trafficking are occurring, however our communities lack information and knowledge to identify and report cases to the village authorities and police authorities and he acknowledged that crimes of human trafficking will most likely occur along the border area, therefore he asked for community members, youths and students to help collaborate with the immigration police so that they can conduct investigations and immigration is always ready to provide support in situations faced by communities and to take cases of human trafficking to be processed in accordance with the existing law.

The invitees and participants in this campaign activity included a representative from the Ministry of Interior (Immigration and Investigations Directorate), a representative from the Balibo Post Administrator, Timor-Leste National Police (PNTL) from Batugade Station, the Batugade Migration Commander, the Border Patrol Unit (UPF), a representative from Customs, a representative from the Timor-Leste Commercial National Bank (BNCTL), members of the village administrative structure, community members, youths, members of the LGBTIQ+ community, persons with a disability and students.

This campaign activity finished with the distribution of certificates to community mobilizers who for 4 days participated in training on human trafficking and how to identify and engage in prevention, and also presents were given to children who performed a dance to animate the campaign activity. The certificates were distributed by the Executive Director of JSMP and Ms. Alexandra from UN Women. The presents were given to the children by the JSMP Program Manager, Mr. Casimiro Dos Santos and the invitees.

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