



**Press Release**  
**8 March 2022**

**Timor-Leste commemorates International Women's Day: Gender Equality and climate change**

On 8 March 2022 each year Timor-Leste commemorates International Women's Day to provide recognition to the contribution made by women in Timor-Leste and also women in other countries.

The theme of this year's celebration is "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow," which recognises the important role of women in meeting significant challenges in the process of national development.

Challenges include climate change which is very serious and could lead to natural disasters and catastrophes in the country.

"JSMP believes that this theme will further encourage the government, especially the relevant ministries, to endeavour to ensure that all people have better living conditions in relation to climate change which has a massive impact on communities, especially on women and children", said Ms. Ana Paula Marçal, Executive Director of JSMP.

The theme for this year reminds all of us about incidents that occurred last year which resulted in many people losing their homes and having to stay in refugee shelters in unsatisfactory conditions, especially women and children, and some refugee camps reported cases involving the sexual abuse of minors. This situation gained the attention of everyone. Because when a disaster occurs that is linked to climate change it will have a massive impact on women and children.

Women in rural areas and also in cities need to be part of the decision making process related to environmental issues and national development. Therefore we continue to take care and ensure that future generations will not suffer negative results caused by actions and the implementation of measures that are not considered environmentally sustainable.

Challenges have created real obstacles that pose a risk to the proper implementation of policies that are gender sensitive and mitigate vulnerabilities, such as poverty

eradication, combatting malnutrition and access to important basic services such as health, education, housing or social security, and others. In facing all of these challenges, women can be counted on as agents of transformation and change in the family, school, workplace, business and community.

Based on JSMP observations in the field, where women in particular have suffered from climate change, it is evident that many women have lost the opportunity for public participation and have also lost materials that are crucial to their day to day livelihood, and JSMP also notes that climate change has a huge impact on children's access to education and also to places that are secure.

To commemorate this important day, JSMP congratulates all women around the world, and particularly women in Timor-Leste, who have sacrificed themselves to protect women's rights to bring about significant change for the lives of the younger generation.

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