



JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME
PROGRAMA MONITORIZASAUN BA SISTEMA JUDISIÁRIU

Press Release
25 January 2023

JSMP signs an MoU with Village Authorities in Uma Ana-Ulu Village for the Community Security Support Program (PASK)

On 13 January 2023, JSMP together with leaders from Uma Ana-Ulu Village, Venilale Administrative Post, Baucau Municipality, who were represented by the Uma Ana-Ulu Village Chief, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on JSMP's Community Security Support Program (PASK) with specific activities to monitor the dispute resolution process through the community justice system in Uma Ana-Ulu Village. Also, this program aims to ensure harmony between community justice and formal justice.

This MoU is valid for the period of 13 January 2023 until 10 January 2024 with the possibility for extension, depending on the agreement of the two parties.

"We are grateful to the village chief and all of the authorities for being willing to collaborate with JSMP in the future to facilitate and further improve the community justice system that has existed to date. Also, the aim is to ensure that information is provided to the community about the progress of cases taken to the formal justice system and at the same time to also raise the knowledge of village leaders about the applicable law," said Ms. Ana Paula Marçal, Executive Director of JSMP.

Mr. Octavio de S. Belo, as the representative of the Administrator of Venilale Administrative Post, said that he was happy that JSMP chose Uma Ana-Ulu Village as a target village to improve the judicial process and he was willing to collaborate with this process, and therefore he urged the village authorities to collaborate with JSMP. The representative of the administrator also urged JSMP to expand this program to other villages who are also facing similar challenges.

The Judge Administrator of the Baucau Judicial Court of First Instance, the Honorable Jumiaty Maria Freitas, in her speech was very grateful to JSMP for its initiative to create this program because she believes that if this program is properly implemented it will help to reduce the work of the courts because some cases don't need to be taken to court. Furthermore, the courts have limited human resources and now there is no mobile court. Therefore, she urged the village authorities and also community members from Uma Ana-Ulu Village to collaborate and utilize this opportunity. The

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judge urged village authorities to adjudicate matters fairly, especially in relation to compensation for victims because it has been noted that often compensation in community justice processes is not given to the victim, but rather to the family of the victim.

The representative of the Office of the Public Defender, Sidonio M. Sarmento, said that JSMP's program is really important because it can help public defenders with their work in relation to disseminating information about the role of public defenders and how the community can access justice.

Meanwhile, Mr. Marcos de S. Soares, the representative of the Venilale PNTL Post Station Commander, said before traditional prohibitions were put in place in Uma Ana-Ulu Village, community members often took their problems to the police, however after 2012 when traditional prohibitions were put in place the community members didn't go to the court as much because often their cases were resolved by the village authorities. Therefore, the commander and his team are willing to collaborate to improve these systems.

The ceremony to sign this MoU was attended by Mr. Octavio de s. Belo, as the representative of the Administrator of Venilale Administrative Post, Baucau Municipality, Sidonio M. Sarmento, representative of the Office of the Public Defender, Mr. Marcos de S. Soares, Venilale Post PNTL Commander, Ms. Hildegardis Wondeng, Representative from the PASK/TAF Program, and also attended by sub-village chiefs, customary elders, representatives from the Community Policing Councils and female and male delegates from Uma Ana-Ulu Village.

In this activity JSMP is working with The Asia Foundation, through the Community Security Support Program (PASK) which is financed by the New Zealand Embassy to conduct research on the effect of community justice to resolve disputes in the community.

Through this program JSMP has met with Village Leaders including authorities and customary elders in 9 villages and five municipalities, namely Baucau, Covalima, Ermera, Aileu and the Special Administrative Region of Oecusse-Ambeno. In the end JSMP and The Asia Foundation chose the option to conduct monitoring in four villages, namely Samalete Village, Railako Administrative Post, Ermera Municipality, Oges Village, Maucatar Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, Lifau Village, Pante Makasar Administrative Post, Special Administrative Region of Oecusse-Ambeno, Uma Ana-Ulu Village, Venilale Administrative Post, Baucau Municipality.

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