



JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME
PROGRAMA MONITORIZASAUN SISTEMA JUDISIÁRIU

Press Release
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Students at the Baucau Commerce and Economics Public School received training for the first time about the rights of the child and the formal justice system

On 18 January 2019 the Judicial System Monitoring Programme (JSMP) held training at the Baucau Commerce and Economics Public School about the rights of the child and access to the formal justice system according to international instruments and national law. This training was attended by students from grades 1, 2 and 3 with a total of 30 participants, comprising 20 girls and 10 boys.

This training covered issues about rights of the child, access to formal justice, guarantees for the rights of the child in accordance with international law, specifically the Convention on the Rights of the Child and national laws that protect these rights, and also types of crimes the constitute crimes against children in Timor-Leste and the Law Against Domestic Violence.

In addition, JSMP also showed a film about the role of the judicial authorities such as the role of the courts, the public prosecution service and the office of the public defender.

“JSMP is concerned and always demands for everyone to pay attention to the rights of the child and how to protect and promote children's rights as provided for in the Constitution as well as international laws adopted by Timor-Leste. This obliges everyone, including the family, society and the State to look after children and to make sure there is no discrimination against children”, said the Executive Director of JSMP, Luis de Oliveira Sampaio.

During this training the participants raised issues about infanticide or abandoned children because these cases have been happening a lot recently. They also asked questions about cases of children being neglected when their parents separate, or marry another person.

In response to the questions raised by the participants during the training about cases of infanticide or abandoned children, JSMP explained that pursuant to Article 31 of the Penal Code a man who gets a woman pregnant can also be a co-author, meaning that when a case of infanticide occurs, not only the perpetrator is investigated, but it is also necessary to investigate the co-author, as the person who has convinced, influenced or via any other means has forced the perpetrator to commit this crime.

In relation to cases of neglect, JSMP clarified that the Public Prosecution Service defends the rights of the child in prosecuting parents to make sure that they provide food support to their children. Article 225 of the Penal Code sets out the obligation to provide food support to a child or person who needs food assistance, as well as other relevant conditions to satisfy their needs. Therefore, even if the parents are separated, the law protects children so they can have access to food assistance through the court. Also, it is possible to process such cases through the civil procedure to request parental responsibility pursuant to Article 1787 of the Civil Code.

The Director of the school, Mr. Deonizio Thomas Ximenes, during his opening speech expressed his gratitude to JSMP for visiting many public and private schools in Baucau District and at the sub-district level, and for selecting his school and disseminating information about the rights of the child and access to the formal justice system. He asked for JSMP to continue this activity every year because since this school was established no other organisation has provided any information in this way.

During his closing speech Mr. Ximenes again expressed his appreciation and gratitude to JSMP for allocating a full day to disseminate specific information to students about the rights of the child and access to the formal justice system. He acknowledged that to date they have only heard about the rights of the child but did not receive enough information about how to protect children in accordance with legal instruments that exist in Timor-Leste and have been adopted by Timor-Leste. He promised that the 30 students who received this information will pass on the information to other students who were not able to participate in this activity.

This training was made possible due to the financial support of the Canadian Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia.

For more information, please contact:

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