



Press Release
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Covalima Municipality

Training participants in Beiseuc Village are concerned with the long time it takes to process criminal and civil cases

On 27 February 2020 JSMP held training on Democracy and Access to Formal Justice in Beiseuc Village, Tilomar Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality.

The training participants included members of the village council, the community and representatives from women's groups. There were 31 participants, comprising 12 women and 19 men.

“This training is a way of increasing the knowledge of members of the village administrative structure and the community about relevant materials and issues relating to their daily tasks in the legislative and justice sector. This is a mechanism to promote the work of members of the village administrative structure to further contribute to national development at the village level,” said Casimiro dos Santos, Acting Director of JSMP.

The training materials presented during the training session covered democracy, the role of sovereign organs in Timor-Leste, public participation in the law making process and how to access formal justice in Timor-Leste. In addition, JSMP also presented information about the role of Judges, the Public Prosecution Service, Public Defenders, Private Lawyers and the Police.

In the question and answer session the community members and village council of Beiseuc conveyed their concerns about criminal and civil cases taking too long.

“As a rural community we have some concerns about criminal and civil cases taking too long to be processed. The victims affected by crimes really want proceedings to be speedy. When it takes a long time to process criminal cases this can also affect the victim's memory of the facts relating to the incident,” said Saturnino Cardoso Maia, Beiseuc Village Chief.

In addition to this concern the community and members of the village council were also really concerned about written notifications from the court being given to the police to notify the parties but in the end the police give them to the village because the police have no transport to deliver the notifications to the parties. However, sometimes these notifications are also just kept at the village centre because of the significant distance between the village centre and the homes of the parties. The participants felt that these issues could also contribute to delays at the court.

The Village Chief, Mr. Saturnino Cardoso Maia, in his speech stated that he was very appreciative of JSMP for approving the request of Beiseuc Village to hold the training in their village. The material provided by JSMP is very important and relevant for their daily duties as members of the village council.

The Village Chief acknowledged that community members in Beiseuc Village really need information about the topics provided by JSMP, because to date the community has encountered many problems. These problems relate to criminal and civil cases including murder, domestic violence, divorce and other cases. Therefore this training can increase the knowledge of members of the village administrative structure and the community, so they will have better knowledge about the mechanisms for processing their cases through the legal system.

During the closing ceremony JSMP also asked the participants to pass on the information they were given to other community members who did not attend the training. Therefore, this information could be passed on to everyone in Beiseuc Village. JSMP also asked them to respect the rights of others in accordance with the principles of democracy and to respect the laws in force when they are involved in a criminal case as a victim or suspect and reminded them that they should adhere to the legal process and they need to collaborate with justice to have their cases resolved through the existing formal justice system.

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