



International  
Labour  
Organization



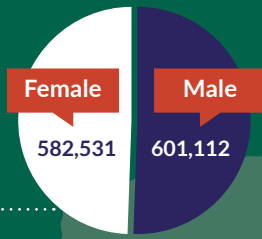
# The ILO in Timor-Leste

# KEY FACTS AND FIGURES



**Population**  
(2015 Timor-Leste Census)

**1,183,643**



**GDP per capita**  
(2017)

**US\$ 2,104**

	Total	Male	Female
Labour force (2015)	<b>717,553</b>	360,217	357,336
Labour force participation rate (2015)	<b>56.1%</b>	66.0%	46.2%
Employment to population ratio (2015)	<b>53.4%</b>	62.5%	44.2%
Unemployment rate (2015)	<b>4.8%</b>	5.2%	4.2%
Youth (15-24 years) labour force participation rate (2015)	<b>23.8%</b>	25.9%	21.7%
Youth (15-24 years) unemployment rate	<b>12.3%</b>	14.0%	10.3%

## RATIFIED CONVENTIONS

Since becoming the 177<sup>th</sup> member states of the ILO in 2003, the Government of Timor-Leste has worked closely with the ILO, making some notable improvements in the world of work. The country has ratified six out of the eight ILO fundamental conventions which include:

- C.29 Forced Labour Convention, 1930
- C.87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948
- C.98 Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949
- C.100 Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951
- C.111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation Convention), 1958
- C.182 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999

Following the restoration of its independence in 2002, Timor-Leste is establishing itself as a young democracy. Timor-Leste has made significant progress since independence. It is now a politically stable country and improvements have been made across several socio-economic indicators, and several public sector institutions have been established. Timor-Leste still faces challenges to building a healthy democracy, and a diversified economy in the context of fragile and nascent institutions, as well as limited human capital in terms of skilled labour.

Timor-Leste is one of the least-developed countries in Asia and the Pacific. Its economy is based around agriculture and poverty remains high. The country faces huge challenges in improving infrastructure, creating jobs for its large youth population, building a skilled labour force and diversifying the economy.

The Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan (SDP) 2011-2030 is a key national development plan and serves as the main tool for the operationalization of the government's strategy. The SDP covers four pillars: (1) social capital, (2) infrastructure development, (3) economic development and (4) institutional frameworks.

## THE ILO - WHO WE ARE

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the United Nations agency for the world of work. Devoted to advancing social justice, it promotes a Decent Work Agenda based on four strategic pillars: rights at work, decent employment opportunities, social protection and social dialogue.

It is the only public international organisation which is tripartite, where workers and employers enjoy equal rights with governments in representation and decision making. Together they set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes upholding decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and dignity for all.

Created in 1919 as part of the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I, the ILO became the first specialized agency of the UN in 1946. It received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969 and today is recognized as the world's authority on the world of work, offering over 100 years of knowledge, experience and achievements.

# THE ILO IN TIMOR-LESTE

The ILO together with the State Secretariat for Vocational Training and Employment (SEFOPE) on behalf of the Government, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Timor-Leste (CCI-TL) and the Timor-Leste Trade Union Confederation (KSTL) developed the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for Timor-Leste. The role of the DWCP is to translate the mandate in Timor-Leste's context as ILO's contribution to the achievement of the SDP 2011-2030.

The 2nd Generation of the DWCP has been developed for the period of 2016-2020 with the following priorities and outcomes:

- **DWCP Priority 1:** Employment Promotion and Social Protection
- **DWCP Priority 2:** Rural Socio-economic Development
- **DWCP Priority 3:** Good Labour Market Governance Institutions

Promotion of gender equality, tripartism, social dialogue and institutional capacity building are mainstreamed throughout the DWCP priorities.

## Current areas of work

Under the framework of the Decent Work Country Programme, several projects have been initiated, and are contributing to social and economic development in Timor-Leste. While ILO has been involved in many interventions in Timor-Leste including job creation and employability, promoting social dialogue between the tripartite partners to address labour issues and socio-economic concerns, supporting the formulation of policies for social security reform, promoting sustainable development- especially in rural areas, building the capacities of ILO constituents, focusing on law and policy advice, advocacy, knowledge sharing, training as well as pilot implementation activities, current areas of work include:

### The Road for Development (R4D) Phase II – R4D Support Program (R4D-SP)

The Roads for Development Program (R4D) is the Government of Timor-Leste's leading rural roads program. R4D is implemented by the Government of Timor-Leste (GoTL) through the National Directorate of Roads, Bridges and Flood Control (DRBFC) of the Ministry of Public Works (MPW). The overarching rationale and goal of R4D is: *'Women and men in rural Timor-Leste are deriving social and economic benefits from improved rural road access'*.

The first Phase of the Program from March 2012 to March 2017 was co-funded by the Government of Australia (GoA) and the Government of Timor-Leste (GoTL) with technical assistance provided by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Following the success of Phase I, the GoA agreed to continue to fund technical assistance for a second phase (April 2017 – March 2021). This technical assistance programme is called Roads for Development Support Programme (R4D-SP) which focuses on capacity development of public and private sectors and is implemented through the ILO. R4D-SP's ILO technical assistance team is embedded in DFRBC and works in line with the structure of MPW, and DRBFC in particular. Under phase II, the GoTL has committed to fully fund all capital works, provide budgets for operational costs and provide adequate staffing.

Expected End of Program Outcomes of the project are:

- GoTL is effectively managing rural roads at national and municipal levels;
- Improved rural road access to selected rural communities; and
- Increased skills, employment and income in selected rural communities.

### Enhancing Rural Access Agro-Forestry (ERA Agro-Forestry) Project

The ERA Agro-Forestry is a component of the Partnership for Sustainable Agro-Forestry (PSAF) between the Government of Timor-Leste, the European Union (EU), Germany and the International Labour Organization (ILO), which will contribute to peaceful, inclusive and sustainable development in Timor-Leste, through improved rural access, the creation of employment, economic and domestic revenue opportunities through agro-forestry development, and a durable reduction in food insecurity and malnutrition in rural areas.

ERA Agro-Forestry has a specific objective to implement a capacity building and labour-based programme to rehabilitate and maintain rural roads in order to improve access to agro forestry areas. This will in turn lead to more employment and economic opportunities for local populations. ILO supports the Ministry of Public Works' Directorate of National Roads Bridges and Flood Control (DNRBFC) and Municipalities, to strengthen local training institutions and build capacities within local construction companies.

The ERA Agro-Forestry Project is a four-year project (June 2017 – May 2021) that links to another component of the PSAF that is implemented by GIZ and builds upon the success of its predecessor, the ERA project (2011-2016).

Expected outcomes of the project are:

- **Improved market access:** rehabilitation and maintenance of at least 90km of rural roads servicing targeted agro forestry areas, providing economic opportunities for private businesses and communities, by fostering market linkages, as well as work opportunities for communities.
- **Improved skills of construction companies and local authorities:** Improved skills of at least 40 construction companies and municipality management of rural roads where the programme is active, including capacity building of local training institutions, construction companies and government, central and local authorities responsible for public work in rural areas.

### ACTION/Portugal (Phase 2): Strengthening of the Social Protection System

The first phase of the ACTION/Portugal project, which began in September 2015 and ended in December 2018, followed the objectives of the CPLP Member States in the areas of Labour and Social Affairs, reaffirmed in the Declaration of Tíbar (approved by the Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs of the Member States of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) in Tíbar - Timor-Leste): "To reiterate the commitment to promote social policies, namely active employment measures, with a focus on youth employment as well as extension of universal social protection, gradually implementing national social protection floors, in line with Recommendation No. 202 of the ILO".

During ACTION/Portugal first phase, the ILO supported the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion (MSSI) for approval of the General Social Security Law (Law 12/2016) which creates the first contributory social security scheme in the country, and providing technical assistance to the implementation of the new scheme. The ILO also supported the MSSI in the an Assessment Based National Dialogue which provided the foundation for the development of the Timor-Leste's National Social Protection Strategy 2018-2030, which was finalized in late 2018 and now awaits Government approval.

Under ACTION/Portugal Phase II (January 2019 – December 2021), work will continue to support the implementation of the Social Security Law, and will support the implementation of the National Social Protection Strategy, which include the extension of contributory and non-contributory measures of Social Protection for all.

# Decent work: a key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals



**“Decent work is not just a goal – it is a driver of sustainable development”**

Guy Ryder, ILO Director General

By embracing the three dimensions of sustainability – economic, social and environmental, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a once-in-a-generation chance to make a change and improve the lives of billions, leaving no one behind.

At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while working to preserve our planet.

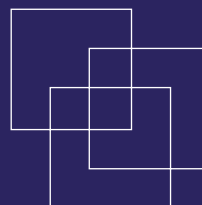
The importance of decent work in achieving sustainable development is highlighted by Goal 8 which aims to “promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”.

Putting decent work at the heart of economic policy-making and development plans will not only generate jobs but also lead to more robust, inclusive and poverty-reducing growth. It is a virtuous circle that is as good for the economy as it is for people, and one that drives sustainable development.

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