

Strengthening Social Inclusion and Nutrition in Timor-Leste

KEY INFORMATION

SECTOR	Nutrition and Social Inclusion	
LEAD PARTNERS	Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste	
DURATION	August 2025 – July 2028	
PROJECT LOCATION	Timor-Leste (Liquica and Viqueque Municipalities)	
TOTAL BUDGET EU	EUR	665,000
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DATE	29-01-2026	

Background

Timor-Leste, a young nation that became independent in 2002, faces significant challenges. A major problem is malnutrition, particularly stunting in children under five, affecting nearly half of them. Stunting is more common in rural areas and leads to long-term issues like delayed mental development and poor school performance, affecting the country's future productivity. Maternal health is closely linked to child nutrition, with high rates of anemia and underweight women in reproductive age contributing to low birthweight infants, creating a cycle of malnutrition. This ongoing problem keeps communities trapped in poverty due to its lasting impact.

The Strengthening Social Inclusion and Nutrition in Timor-Leste (SSINTL) project targets the first 1,000 days of life, aligning with global plans to prevent undernutrition, improve maternal and child nutrition, and support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG2 on ending hunger and improving nutrition, and SDG5 on gender equality.

Since 2020, Timor-Leste has intensified efforts against malnutrition with its Consolidated National Action Plan for Nutrition and Food Security. This plan focuses on key priorities across various sectors, such as health and agriculture, to enhance nutrition and food security. It aims to effectively use resources, address gaps, and increase investment. The SSINTL program complements this by aligning with the National Health Sector Nutrition Strategic Plan to focus on improving nutrition throughout life, especially during the crucial early days of a child's life.



Project Details

The project aims to fight malnutrition by changing behaviors and improving access to health services for mothers and children in Liquica and Viqueque, Timor-Leste. It focuses on pregnant and lactating women and children under two, aiming to improve their nutrition through specific actions.

The project uses community programs to improve health and nutrition practices among these groups. It supports government health plans and aims to improve communication and coordination at all levels. Key actions include revitalizing Mother Support Groups and teaching mothers about eating nutritious foods during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

To aid financial independence, families will join Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC). Support groups will be set up for fathers, husbands, and grandmothers to encourage shared responsibility for family health.

Participants will learn to grow and process nutritious foods and receive counseling on health and nutrition, including how to access community services. Arrangements will be made to ensure timely health referrals for mothers, children, and their families.

Health workers and community volunteers will be trained to follow nutrition supplementation protocols for mothers and children, promoting best practices. Monthly meetings will teach good nutritional habits for young children, and quarterly events will boost nutrition awareness.

Improving water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) is another important part of the project, including small upgrades and repairs to community facilities to create healthier surroundings. Volunteers will be trained to advise parents on health and nutrition effectively.

The project is set to benefit 4,315 individuals in specific areas known as sucos, which include:

- Makadiki and Uabubu in the Viqueque Municipality
- Uatuboro, Uatovou, Guiso, and Gugueur in the Liquica Municipality

These six sucos are served by seven health clinics, ensuring access to essential health services for the participants.

CONTACT DETAILS

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Expected results

The project aims to achieve several key results:

- **Improved Maternal Health:** Pregnant and breastfeeding women adopt essential health and nutrition practices and access related health services more effectively.
- **Strengthened Family Support:** Family members actively support healthy behaviors for mothers and children.
- **Enhanced Parental Knowledge:** Parents gain practical knowledge on child health and nutrition, leading to improved childcare practices.
- **Increased Caregiver Engagement:** Caregivers consistently apply recommended health and nutrition practices for children.
- **Better Child Health Service Access:** Children benefit from improved availability and utilization of health services through parental and caregiver support.
- **Effective Health System Coordination:** Health information is efficiently shared between national and local levels, enhancing service delivery.
- **Community Ownership:** Local leaders demonstrate commitment and actively support maternal and child health initiatives.

The project will reach around 4,315 people by forming 269 groups in six areas. These include:

- **120 Community Volunteers:** Trained in health, sanitation, and community support.
- **285 Pregnant Mothers:** Receive nutrition help and home visits.
- **825 Parents:** Learn through training and visits on health for young kids.
- **1,110 Fathers:** Join community training sessions.
- **825 Grandmothers:** Get training to support family health.
- **60 Volunteers:** Learn to build and maintain clean water and sanitation facilities.
- **1,100 SILC Members:** Get training to improve farming and business skills.

PROJECT PARTNERS



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