Partnership for Sustainable Agroforestry (PSAF)

The challenge

In rural areas of Timor-Leste, employment opportunities are rare. As a result, especially youth and members of other marginalized groups, struggle to make a living. In order to improve those people's living conditions as well as their future prospects, the Timorese Government, the European Union (EU) and the Government of Germany agreed to promote rural employment through a co-financed project named “Partnership for Sustainable Agroforestry (PSAF)”. The joint project is co-financed by the EU through the EDF 11 and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Objective

The objective of the project is to provide an opportunity to marginalized people, in particular young men and women in rural areas, to benefit from better employment opportunities in the agroforestry systems of Timor-Leste. The agroforestry sector has a high economic potential, which is hardly being exploited at the current stage. Building on a jointly developed, conflict-sensitive and participatory planning approach, the project aims to: (i) increase the production and productivity of the agroforestry systems; (ii) strengthen the capacities of actors along selected agroforestry value chains; (iii) improve the market access for selected agroforestry products (e.g. fruits and vegetables, raw and processed wood products); and (iv) improve the institutional and organizational framework for the promotion of agroforestry.

Our approach

In addition to increased levels of employment and income, the most important expected outcomes of the project are:

- Improved food security for at least 4,000 households through an increasing supply of agroforestry products (est. 22,800 beneficiaries);
- Sustainable promotion of businesses along the relevant value chains;
- Creation of long-term assets for farmers in the form of wood; and
- Improved resilience of rural communities to the impacts of climate change.

In support of the Government-led process of decentralization and in order to ensure a particularly close collaboration with rural communities, the project will be implemented through a decentralized project office located in Baucau.

Current status

The project is currently in its one-year inception phase, during which important aspects of its implementation are being defined. To this end, a series of workshops was held, the first one of which was a national-level workshop conducted in Dili in April 2018. At this workshop, all stakeholders were informed on the project concept and outline, and ideas on its operationalization were shared and discussed. A second regional-level workshop was subsequently held in Baucau in May 2018. During this workshop, criteria for the selection of the target sucos (village) were defined jointly with the stakeholders from all four target municipalities. In
addition, ideas as well as information on conditions for and opportunities of working with the private sector were shared. Based on the elaborated selection criteria, the 40 target sucos were identified by the partner, so that in August 2018 a last series of workshops could be held – one in each municipality – introducing the project to the municipality-, administrative post- and suco-level stakeholders as well as initiating an exchange on the sucos’ potentials and challenges in relation to the project. One last national-level workshop with potential cooperation partners is currently being planned. At this workshop, first activities will be prepared and coordination ensured, while implementation is scheduled to commence in autumn 2018.

Focal Municipalities

Manatuto, Baucau, Viqueque and Lautem.