Timor-Leste
Road Climate Resilience Project

Improving the lives of rural people in Timor-Leste through sustainable and climate resilient roads.

Providing better access to hospitals, schools and markets through road rehabilitation.

Improving the quality and climate resilience of roads to prevent closures.

Training government staff in road maintenance and emergency responses to increase road structure sustainability.

Background
A lack of maintenance and repairs since the country’s independence in 2002 has led to the poor condition of most of Timor-Leste’s road network. Despite minor works on the main road between Dili and the Indonesian border with West Timor, as well as emergency repairs to areas damaged by landslides, a survey conducted in 2009 found that the vast majority of the road network was no longer repairable.

General road failures and frequent landslides means it is often impossible to negotiate the roads, particularly during the rainy season. This is not only caused by the effects of the weather, but also by a lack of maintenance and poor design, with many roads lacking drainage capacity and sound foundations. As a result of the road conditions, communities are becoming increasingly isolated, vehicle operating and freight costs are growing, and journey times are rising.

About the Project
The Timor-Leste Road Climate Resilience Project is investing in the existing road network to improve its climate resilience. The project focuses heavily on the rehabilitation of the Dili-Ainaro Corridor. This 110km road corridor serves as a vital cross-country link between the north and the south of Timor-Leste, connecting the districts of Dili, Aileu and Ainaro — or 32 percent of the country’s population.

Overall, the project will benefit residents of rural areas, whose incomes and access to vital services are directly impacted by the condition of the road. With improved roads, hospitals and schools will be more accessible and farmers will be able to improve agricultural production through better contact with local and regional markets.

The project has four key components:
1. Development of Climate Resilient Road Infrastructure
   This component will invest in key infrastructure to reduce the impact of high volume and intense rainfall. Physical works include improving drainage structures, adding pavement and installing other environmental resilience measures along the corridor. The works will be carried out in two phases: phase one will deliver urgent road infrastructure repairs to sections in the poorest conditions, while phase two will ensure overall road improvement.

2. Climate Responsive Maintenance and Emergency Planning and Response Systems
   This will ensure the sustainability of road infrastructure investments through routine and emergency maintenance, and emergency planning and response systems.

3. Project Support and Training
   Under Component three, support will be provided to the Project Management Unit. There will also be a training program for the Ministry of Infrastructure, other government staff and contractors aimed at improving skills related to maintaining mountainous roads and enacting emergency responses.

4. Feasibility Studies and Detailed Designs
   This will include carrying out feasibility studies and detailed designs of selected road segments linked to the Dili-Ainaro Corridor.

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Implementing Agency: Timor-Leste Ministry of Public Works