Independent Evaluation

Commission on Cadres of the Resistance
(CAQR)

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Introduction

An external evaluation of the Comissao para os Assuntos dos Qadros da Resistencia/Commission on Cadres of the Resistance (CAQR) was conducted from February 14 to March 8, 2006, by an independent consultant. The overall objective was to examine the effectiveness of the CAQR at the national and community levels with respect to its mandate and objectives. The evaluation also considered the extent to which women and youth had been included in the registration process, the effectiveness of the CAQR’s questionnaire and database, and management structures. Broader issues, including the appropriateness of the CAQR as a response to community concerns and expectations on veterans issues, the impact of the CAQR with respect to stability, and the link between the CAQR and the process of veterans policy development in Timor Leste were also explored. Given the difficulty in quantifying many these issues, the evaluation necessarily focuses more on the quality of the CAQR’s activities and processes rather than an assessment of it’s broader impact.

This Evaluation Report is structured into the following sections. Part One is an Executive Summary providing an overview of the main findings. Part Two provides a background to the evaluation, including methodologies employed and evaluative criteria. Part Three provides a background to the CAQR, including a brief overview of the role of the civilian resistance in Timor Leste. This section places the CAQR in the context of previous initiatives to respond to veterans issues in Timor Leste and recent developments in veterans policy. Part Four provides a brief overview of the structure and methodology of the CAQR. Part Five is the main body of the report, providing an assessment of strengths, weaknesses and limiting factors during each phase of the CAQR’s work. Part Six considers some generic issues including management and coordination. Part Seven, the concluding section, contains recommendations for the future of veterans policy development in Timor Leste and a number of ‘lessons learned’ for other post-conflict countries considering similar processes.

1.0 Executive Summary

Civilian ‘cadres’ and clandestinos (members of the clandestine movement) played a critical role within East Timor’s resistance struggle. They were responsible for internal political organisation and intelligence; they facilitated communication and supported the armed resistance with supplies, logistics and intelligence. Many suffered similar consequences to those in the armed resistance, including torture, rape, arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, and killings.

The Comissao para os Assuntos dos Qadros da Resistencia/Commission on Cadres of the Resistance (CAQR) was established in August 2004 to register civilian cadres of the resistance and clandestinos. It followed on from two previous commissions, the Comissao para os Assuntos dos Antigos Combatentes/Commission on Ex-Combatants (CAAC) and the Comissao para os Assuntos dos Veteranos das Falintil/Commission on Veterans of Falintil (CAVF) which had identified cadres involved in the armed resistance. The initial timeline given for the CAQR’s operations was from September –May 2005, however this was later extended and the CAQR formally concluded in
January 2006 (with some ‘wrap-up’ activities continuing until March 2006.) Funders of the CAQR included the World Bank, Irish Aid, the UK and AusAid.

The main objectives of the CAQR included the development of criteria for defining veterans of the civilian resistance, identifying and registering cadres of the resistance, and creating a database of registered civilian veterans. The CAQR’s methodology involved:

i) A preparation period, during which the draft criteria for defining cadres of the resistance and a questionnaire for registration were developed;
ii) A ‘socialization’ period, during which announcements were made through the public media, and a series of public debates hosted in the districts;
iii) A registration process in all sucos (villages) around Timor Leste. Information contained in the questionnaires was then ‘verified’ for accuracy before being entered into a database;
iv) The public posting of lists of names in each suco in order for names and details to be checked for accuracy.

At the conclusion of its work the CAQR data base contained a total of 36,606 names, of which 9796 are women.

The evaluation finds that the CAQR has largely been successful in achieving its goals. The CAQR developed criteria for the registration of the civilian resistance in a participatory manner, based on community consultations. It then successfully identified and registered cadres of the civilian resistance. It established a database of civilian veterans, to whom recognition is now planned. Significantly, the registration of civilian veterans enabled the contribution of women and youth to be recognised and 25% of names in the database are women. The CAQR conducted its work efficiently, transparently and was well managed. Effectively, it had only 12 months to complete its work, which was less than half the time provided to the previous commission, the CACC-CAVF.1

The registration of veterans of the civilian resistance has been welcomed by community leaders and civilian veterans, and the process is perceived to have been conducted in an independent and transparent manner. The CAQR’s participatory methodology contributed to the legitimacy of its work and will be critical to the long-term credibility of the process, including acceptance of the remaining policy making process that follows from here. The CAQR has been careful not to raise expectations in the community regarding financial assistance, and expectations generally surround recognition from the state rather than financial benefits. Nonetheless, there are community expectations that vulnerable veterans and their families will be assisted financially and it will be important for the government to develop timely policies in these areas.

At a broader level, community leaders acknowledge that the registration of both the armed and non-armed resistance has helped dissipate tensions surrounding veterans’ issues. The process of registration and recognition has reduced community concerns surrounding the question of who may or may not be considered a veteran and silenced those with illegitimate claims. In the longer term, it is

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1 This takes into account the various verification periods of the CACC-CAVF during 2004 and 2005
likely that the recognition of ex-combatants will make a significant contribution to national security and stability. The CAQR’s effectiveness was constrained by a number of factors. Foremost of these was the imposition of an unrealistic time frame, which impacted upon each phase of its work. The registration process was also affected by the difficulty of mapping the complex structure of the civilian resistance, in which ranks and roles were not always clear. These issues, and the fact that the questionnaire used for registrations was extremely complex, resulted in a high percentage of errors being entered into the CAQR database. Many of these errors remain to be corrected.

The CAQR has also had limited effectiveness in influencing the policy development process on veterans issues, including the new veterans law. Indeed, the process of veterans policy development in Timor Leste has generally been characterized by lack of planning and coordination between different arms of the state, and, consequently, has developed in a rather disjointed manner, involving a number of different Commissions, the parliament and the Ministry for Labour and Reinsertion. In retrospect, an overall plan for the development of veterans policies, involving government, parliament, and the Commissions, would have greatly assisted with sequencing and enabled the CAQR to more effectively input into the policy process.

Despite the limiting factors, in comparison to many other nations, the veterans registration process in Timor Leste has been exemplary. The development of a comprehensive database of names will be an important instrument in the development and implementation of veterans policies. Effectively knowing the number of ex-combatants and each one’s personal circumstances will be a step towards the creation of effective and sustainable means of assistance. The creation of a database of ex-combatants and veterans prior to the adoption of legislation, will also lessen the potential for confusion about who qualifies as a veteran at a later date.

The next steps in the process from here will be critical for the long term credibility of the CAQR’s work and the recognition of veterans. The CAQR has recently handed its database over to the newly established Comissao de Consolidacao de Dados/Commission for the Consolidation of Data (CCD), which is working to create a merged database and a combined list of names from the CACC-CAVF and the CAQR. It will undertake a final round of posting and verification of lists and the combined database will then be handed over to the government. The CAQR database still contains many errors which require correcting before planned homage ceremonies are conducted in August 2006. Homage ceremonies that are based on incomplete or inaccurate information will risk undermining the entire registrations process. In addition, once the database is handed over to the government, it will be critical to build government capacity to manage the combined database, to collect outstanding

A brief mention should be made here of the recent violence and political instability that has erupted in Timor Leste following the completion of this evaluation. The violence was precipitated by the sacking of 591 soldiers from the FDTL (in mid-March 2006) who had left their barracks in January and February complaining of poor pay, conditions and ethnic prejudice. This soon escalated into general anti-government protest and violence between ‘Lorosae’ (East) and Loromuno (West) gangs. The situation has tapped into community dissatisfaction with Timor Leste’s government and frustration with the lack of economic opportunities, and poses profound challenges to the country’s future stability and governance. Despite the magnitude of the crisis, it is important to note that the issues that have surfaced do not stem from veterans’ issues or claims. Indeed, it is arguable that the situation could have been even worse if progress had not already been made on veterans’ issues.
information required by the new veterans law and to implement a sustainable and equitable benefits program.

### 2.0 Background to the Evaluation

#### 2.1 Objectives and background to the Evaluation

This external evaluation was conducted between February 14\(^{th}\) and March 8th 2006 by an independent consultant, and funded by the World Bank. The overall objective was to examine the impact and effectiveness of the CAQR at the national and community levels with respect to its mandate and objectives.\(^3\) Within this context, the evaluation was tasked with assessing a number of factors including:

- The inclusion of women and youth in the registration process;
- The effectiveness of the questionnaire and database as tools for identification and registration of individuals, as well as future policy implementation;
- Management structures, including information flow between the districts and headquarters.

A number of evaluative criteria were used to determine notions of inclusion and participation, including: the extent of contact between veterans (including women and youth) and the CAQR; veterans’ level of awareness and understanding of the CAQR’s role and objectives, and their perceptions and level of satisfaction with the process. The effectiveness of the questionnaire and database was determined by number of evaluative criteria including: the level of understanding of the questionnaire amongst CAQR staff; an assessment of difficulties encountered by data-entry staff, and the extent of errors within the database. Management structures were assessed by examining the level and frequency of information flow and contact between Dili and the districts, including frequency of meetings, level and effectiveness of decision making, as well as satisfaction levels of district and Dili staff. A comparison of the timeframes of the CAQR and the previous commissions was also examined to gauge the efficiency of the CAQR’s work in relation to similar processes.

A number of broader issues were also considered in the evaluation including:

- The appropriateness of the commissions as a credible response to public concerns and demands surrounding veterans issues;
- The impact of the CAQR at national and community levels with respect to tensions surrounding veterans issues and with regard to fostering stability;
- The articulation between the CAQR process and the process of veterans policy development;

The ‘impact’ of CAQR was difficult to measure on the basis of strict quantitative measurement. Instead, the evaluation focused on the perceptions expressed by key stakeholder groups regarding the CAQR’s contribution to stability and security.

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\(^3\) See Annex A for Terms of Reference for the evaluation
On the basis of the research undertaken, a series of recommendations and lessons learned have been arrived at, which may be applied to similar processes in other post-conflict countries.

### 2.3 Methodologies

A number of qualitative methodologies were employed in conducting this evaluation. These included:

- Interviews with 26 CAQR staff and members, including those based at the national and district level. Interviewees included Coordinators, Commissioners, *Concelheiros* (Counselors), facilitators/interviewers, data entry staff and database designers. Efforts were made to interview both male and female staff.

- Interviews with 25 national-level stakeholders including members of the Government of Timor Leste (GOTL), parliamentarians, donors, UNOTIL staff, NGO leaders and representatives of veterans associations. In addition to exploring the effectiveness of the CAQR process itself, these interviews also explored the articulation between the CAQR process and the process of veterans legislation and policy development in Timor Leste more generally.

- Individual and group interviews with 27 civilian veterans and community leaders at the district level, including district administrators, *Chefe de Sucos* (Village Chiefs) representatives of the church, and youth representatives. Where possible, interviews were conducted separately with men, women and youth. Two districts were chosen for the conduct of interviews: Baucau and Ermera, and in each district interviews were conducted at both the district and subdistrict level. Some additional interviews were conducted in Manatutu at district level only. Districts were chosen primarily to explore differences in the process in different geographical regions. Interviews were ‘semi-structured’ rather than following a strict interview format, allowing respondents to tell their own story in their own words. To ensure that certain topics were covered, an interview guide was used which ranged over a number of broad themes: where people had heard about the CAQR process; why they decided to register; what problems they had encountered in the registration process, and their expectations of the process. At the conclusion of interviews, respondents were asked for their recommendations regarding the future of veterans development policy in Timor Leste.

- A review of relevant documentation, including the CAQR final report, the CAQR database and questionnaire and the draft veterans law.

#### 2.3 Issues arising in methodology

A number of minor obstacles arose in the organization of interviews at the district level that had an impact on the evaluation methodology. For example, interviews in Ermera coincided with a visit by the Portuguese President to Ermera, causing some disruption to the original schedule. In addition, a plan to conduct interviews and focus group discussions in Maliana had to be abandoned due to difficulties in contacting the District Coordinator. Instead, interviews were arranged in Baucau and

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^4 See Annex B for list of interviews
Manatuto; however, these had to be organized at short notice. Interviews in the districts also coincided with the ‘posting of lists’, which meant that CAQR staff were extremely busy receiving the complaints and winding up the Commission’s work, and did not have a great deal of time for arranging interviews.

These obstacles resulted in less interviews being conducted than planned. For example, while, some interviews were conducted with women and youth, these could have been more extensive. Another issue was that of not being able to meet with a focus group of non-veterans. This was to some extent addressed by interviews with community leaders, including Chefe de Suco, district administrators and representatives of the church, who were able to provide a perspective on the community perceptions of the process. Nonetheless, this is an area warranting further research. A separate issue is related to confidentiality. Some interviews were conducted in the houses of CAQR Coordinators, which may have biased the results. On some occasions, CAQR staff were present for part of interviews.

3.0 Background to the CAQR

3.1 Role of the Civilian Resistance in East Timor

Members of the non-armed resistance, including civilian ‘cadres’ and clandestinos, played critical roles during East Timor’s struggle for independence from Indonesia from 1975-1999. Among other functions, they were responsible for internal political organisation and intelligence, facilitating communication, and supporting the Forces de Armadas de Liberacao Nacional de Timor Leste/Armed Forces for the Liberation of Timor Leste (Falintil), with supplies, logistics and intelligence. Many suffered similar consequences to those in the armed resistance, including torture, rape, arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, and killings. The roles played by the civilian resistance varied over the 24 year period, as the character of resistance movement itself underwent a number of changes. Many of those involved in the resistance moved between the armed and the civilian wings at different times.

From 1975-1979, large-scale Indonesian military operations were aimed at destroying the armed resistance led by Fretilin. During this period large numbers of the civilian population lived in the interior with the Resistance. Fretilin retained control of large base areas or ‘liberated zones’. Civilian cadres (‘quadro civil’) were organized by Fretilin cadres in the Resistance support bases (‘bases de apoio’) where they provided basic administration assistance and organized civilian support.

By the end of the 1970’s the large-scale attacks had destroyed many of the liberated zones. Falintil’s numbers, leadership and civilian support base had been decimated and its strategy of fixed base areas

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5 Falintil was the armed wing of the Frente Revolucionaria de Timor Leste Independente/Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin) until 1987 when the Concelho Nacional da Resistensta Mauberel/ National Council of Maubere Resistance (CNRM) was founded to accommodate all political parties that supported independence. At this time Falintil went through a ‘breaking of party ties’ with Fretilin and became the national armed forces under the leadership of the CNRM. See Report of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, Chega! Part 5: Resistance: Structure and Strategy.
- in which the civilian population played a crucial role - came to an end. The Indonesian military had begun pursuing a strategy of separating the civilian population from the armed resistance by holding tens of thousands of surrendered civilians in detention camps and resettlement villages.

In response, in the 1980’s Falintil reorganized itself into a guerilla force, supported by a growing clandestine movement based in Indonesian-controlled towns and villages. The clandestinos provided critical information, supplies and food to the armed resistance. Relying on clandestine cells in the towns rather than a substantial civilian presence living with the troops also gave the armed forces more mobility. The clandestinos frequently suffered as extensively as those in the armed struggle, and were often arrested, tortured, and sometimes executed.

By the late 1980’s, the growing recognition by the resistance leadership that independence would not be achieved through armed struggle alone led to a greater emphasis on the diplomatic struggle. In 1987 the Concelho Nacional da Resistencia Maubere/ National Council for Maubere Resistance (CNRM) was formed to accommodate all political parties and movements that supported independence. The CNRM aimed to be a movement of national unity, focusing on the armed front in the forest, the clandestine front in the villages and the diplomatic front in the international arena.

In the early-mid 1990’s, as East Timor became increasingly open to the outside world, clandestine leaders gave more attention to organizing protests, demonstrations and contacts with the foreign media, both in Dili and in Jakarta. Students, who had begun attending universities in Indonesia, increasingly became drivers of the clandestine movement. Clandestine leaders continued to closely coordinate their activities with the Falintil leadership. After reforms instituted by Indonesia in 1998, both Falintil and the clandestine networks gained in numbers. In 1998 the Concelho Nacional da Resistencia Timorese/ National Council for Timorese Resistance (CNRT) replaced CNRM as the overarching body of the resistance. The armed front and the clandestine front merged.

In 1999, the Indonesian Government under the leadership of President Habibie, agreed to hold a referendum about the future of Timor. When faced with the choice between becoming an autonomous province within Indonesia or becoming an independent nation, 78.5% of Timorese voted in favour of independence. During the referendum and the ensuing campaign of violence committed at the hands of militia (trained and financed by Indonesian security forces) Falintil was cantoned in Aileu and remained so until the force was demobilized in early 2001.

### 3.2 Background to the establishment of the CAQR

The CAQR is one of a series of processes established to tackle the dissolution of Falintil and the registration of veterans. This section describes the background to the establishment of the CAQR and recent developments in the area of veterans policy development.

#### 3.2.1 The Falintil Reinsertion Assistance Programme

The first programme in East Timor’s post-conflict period concerned with veterans issues was the Falintil Reinsertion Assistance Programme (FRAP), implemented between January and December 2001. Funded by the World Bank and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the objective of FRAP was to
contribute to the stability of East Timor by assisting the social and economic reintegration of just over 1300 former Falintil soldiers, who were being demobilized, into civilian society. The beneficiaries were those Falintil veterans who were either not chosen for, or decided not to join, the new defense force, the FDTL. The year-long programme consisted of four phases: registration; discharge from cantonment; initial reinsertion grant disbursement; and reintegration, which included provision of tools, training and sub-grants to assist beneficiaries to establish sustainable income-generating activities.

The processes of demobilization and recruitment of FDTL proceeded smoothly and an independent evaluation of FRAP found that the program had been largely successful in achieving its objectives. However, to some extent, FRAP constituted a short term response that did not address a range of social and political concerns surrounding veterans, their recognition, and their role in the independent Timor Leste. A key issue was that FRAP was designed to benefit only those who had been serving members of Falintil in 1999 rather than all veterans of the resistance. The identification of veterans from earlier eras – including 1975-1979 – was not attempted as no documentation existed on Falintil membership during its 24 years of struggle (and would have been difficult to gather during the chaotic environment of 2000 – 2001.) In addition, several hundred young men had joined Falintil only in 1998 or 1999 and the community tended to view this group as less deserving than those who had served for longer periods earlier in the struggle. More problematic were community concerns that the FDTL recruitment criteria were not transparent and based on an incomplete list of names. These issues, alongside historically-based internal tensions within Falintil, contributed to the growth of ‘ex-Falintil’ veterans groups, which emerged in the newly independent Timor, creating challenges for the new government.

From January 2001, a number of associations purporting to represent veterans’ issues began to actively register members, stage political rallies and undertake military drills. Some had questionable or ambiguous motives, and proved susceptible to political manipulation. An essential problem was the lack of a definition as to who was or who was not a veteran.

3.2.2 The CAAC-CAVF

As a response to the lack of transparent and established criteria about who and who is not a veteran, along with the growing influence of veterans groups and demands for recognition, the President of Timor Leste announced the establishment of two new commissions: the Comissao para os Assuntos dos Antigos Combatentes/Commission on Ex Combatantes (CAAC) and the Comissao para os Assuntos dos Veteranos das Falintil/Commission on Veterans of Falintil (CAVF) on 9 September 2002 to identify and register veterans in a transparent manner. The decision to identify veterans drew upon article 11 of the Constitution of Timor Leste, which calls for ‘valorisation’ of veterans of the resistance. The CAAC was given responsibility for identifying ex-combatants of the period 1975-
1979, while the CAVF was charged with identifying Falintil veterans during the period 1981-1999. The two Commissions effectively operated as one organisation. Initially the Commissions were given until August 2003 to complete their work, however this timeline was extended until March 2004. By the time of its conclusion, the CAAC-CAVF database contained a total of 36,959 names.

An independent evaluation of the CAAC-CAVF funded by UNDP and the World Bank concluded that, despite some management challenges, the CAAC-CAVF was generally successful in achieving its goals of identifying, registering, and creating a database of veterans and ex-combatants to whom recognition would be granted. Significantly, the Commissions were successful in gaining the participation of veterans’ organizations in the registration process. There was also acknowledgement by community leaders that the process had contributed to stability in post-independence Timor-Leste. By conducting a transparent registration process for veterans, the CAAC-CAVF has also assisted in reducing community tensions surrounding the question of who may or may not be considered a veteran and silencing those with illegitimate claims to participation in the armed resistance.

A key issue that arose during the CAAC-CAVF process was that it had not recognized cadres of the civilian resistance and clandestinos, including women and youth. Very few women registered with the CAAC-CAVF as the process was restricted to those who were formally part of the armed structure, and women had generally been part of the civilian structures. The contribution of youth to the resistance through the clandestine movement was similarly not recognized. The importance of recognizing civilian veterans was also a key issue raised by the community during public consultations. CAAC-CAVF’s final report reflected these views and recommended that, to aid stability and to avoid presumptions of injustice and discrimination, members of the civilian cadre and clandestine resistance be given equal opportunity to be registered and to be recognized by the state. This was a view shared by many donors. The CACC-CAVF presented its final report to the President in June 2004 and this was then passed to the Parliament, which used the report as the basis for developing a new veterans law.

3.2.3 The CAQR

In response to these issues, on August 31, 2004, the President announced the creation of a new Commission: the Comissao para os Assuntos dos Quadros da Resistencia/Commission on Cadres of the Resistance (CAQR). The initial timeline provided for the CAQR’s operations was September 2004–May 2005, however this was later extended (and the CAQR had funds to continue some ‘wrap-up’ activities until the end of March 2006.) Following a preparation phase, during which funding was sought, the CAQR was formally launched by the President of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste on January 24, 2005. The CAQR’s donors included the World Bank, Irish Aid, the UK and Ausaid. The objectives of the CAQR were:

9 The Commissions were funded by UNMISET, Irish Aid, UNDP, USAID, the World Bank, Secretary of State for Labour and Solidarity, United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden and the IOM
10 Following its formal closure, a number of CAAC-CAVF staff continued until March 2005 to verify names in the database
11 Final Report of the Activities of the CAAC-CAVF
13 Only 13 women registered with the CAAC-CAVF and these 13 names have not been included in the final list of names
14 See ‘CAAC-CAVF Final Report’
To develop the definition of a veteran of the civilian resistance and the criteria for the resistance;
- To document the structure of the civilian resistance;
- To identify and register cadres of the resistance (including civilian cadres, political prisoners, the youth and the deceased/killed);
- To create a database of registered civilian veterans.\textsuperscript{15}

The mandate of the CAQR, like the CACC-CAVF before it, was confined to registering those who were ‘cadres’ of the resistance. Cadres included those who held identified positions of responsibility within the official structure of the resistance movement, rather than ‘members’ who assisted the resistance movement from time to time.\textsuperscript{16}

\subsection*{3.2.4 Veterans Law Development}

In July 2004, the National Parliament decided to establish a Commission of its own – the Ad Hoc Commission to Evaluate the Report on the Affairs of Falintil Ex-Combatants and Veterans (the Ad Hoc Commission) to analyze the final report of the CAAC-CAVF and produce a report with recommendations for the purpose of developing a new veterans law.\textsuperscript{17} At the end of July 2005, the Ad Hoc Commission completed a draft of the law, which was then considered by Parliament’s Committee A before being submitted to the plenary. The veterans law was approved in March 2006.\textsuperscript{18}

One of the key purposes of the law is to recognize the contribution of veterans who fought for national independence through the provision of medals and certificates, and to provide special protection for those disabled, and the orphans and widows of those who died, during the struggle for independence. The scope of the law encompasses those who were involved in the armed front, clandestine front and diplomatic front. Some benefits will only be applicable to those who were engaged permanently (full time) in the struggle for a certain number of years (which in practice will exclude many civilian veterans and members of the clandestine movement.)\textsuperscript{19}

Overall, the law creates conditions for the transparent and equitable implementation of measures for recognition and sustainable benefits. It recognizes it will not be possible to give financial assistance to all veterans. It has attempted to navigate the path between being overly prescriptive and overly general by spelling out the rights and conditions of veterans clearly and leaving some room for the government to define policies.\textsuperscript{20} In comparison to other countries, Timor Leste has spelt out detailed

\textsuperscript{15} See ‘Terms of Reference for the CAQR’
\textsuperscript{16} The rationale for this was that there needed to be some closure. If all those who were involved in the resistance were recognised, it would encompass a significant proportion of the country. In addition, the President of Timor Leste, Xanana Gusmao has acknowledged the special role played by the cadres in the leadership of the resistance, stating, ‘without the people the cadres can do nothing……sometimes without a leader the people do not find the way’, Max Stahl interview with Xanana Gusmao
\textsuperscript{17} See ‘Pay Tribute to the Falintil Ex-Combatentes and Veterans’, Report by the Ad hoc Commission to Evaluate the Report on the Affairs of the Falintil Ex Combatentes and Veterans, December 2004
\textsuperscript{18} Draft-Law no. 1/3, National Liberation Combatants Statutes
\textsuperscript{19} See Annex C for more detail on the Veterans Law
\textsuperscript{20} Interview with Anildo da Cruz, Parliamentary Adviser, 2 March
provisions on social protection. Nonetheless, a great deal of work remains to be completed by the government to develop policies and procedures to regulate the law. These issues will be discussed in the concluding section of this report.

### 3.2.5 Establishment of the CCD

In order to respond to the requirements of the Veterans Law, the President of Timor Leste announced the creation of another commission, the Commission for the Verification of Data (CVD), in September 2005, to complete the verification of names and ranks of those in the CAAC-CAVF database. On January 31, 2006, the CVD was reconstituted as the Comissao de Consolidacao de Dados – Commission for the Consolidation of Data (CCD) The CCD was given a mandate of three months from February 1 – April 30, 2006, to bring together the CAQR and CACC-CAVF databases and to produce a joint list of all names which will be posted back in the communities for a final round of verification. This is important as it was believed that many people participated in both the armed resistance and the quadro civis at different times. In March 2006 these names were taken back to the districts to be corrected. There are currently around 74,759 names in the combined databases, and, surprisingly, at this stage it appears that only 83 names are duplicated in the databases.

The staff of the CCD include the former General Coordinator of the CACC-CAVF, 16 commissioners and 130 members, recruited from both members of the CACC-CAVF and the CAQR. The CCD has also retained 5 data entry operators from the CAQR who report to one coordinator. The CCD also has ten counselors, a number of whom were former CAQR counselors.

### 4.0 The CAQR’s Structure and Methodology

#### 4.1 Structure

Once operational, the CAQR had a presence in each of East Timor’s thirteen districts, and its structure included offices at the national, district and subdistrict level. At the national level, the CAQR had 32 members, including 28 men and 4 women, representing civilian veterans, FALINTIL-FDTL, youth, and women’s organisations OMT and OPMT. Members were selected by the President. In addition, an Officer Manager appointed by the President was responsible for the day-to-day management of the Commission. In terms of technical staff, the CAQR recruited a finance office, a database expert, 3 administration officers, a logistics chief and three drivers.

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21 For example, the law provides a Survival Pension (art 23) for orphaned children of Veterans; it provides for scholarships to attend secondary school or university for orphaned children of Veterans (art 23); it provides for free medical assistance to who have been physically or mentally incapacitated (Art 20) ; it provides for prosthesis paid by the State for veterans who are physically incapacitated (Art 20)

22 In actual fact, the original CAAC-CAVF coordinators kept on working after March 2004, and then were joined by 18 former commanders at the end of 2004. All of them kept on working until at least April 2005, and then commenced again as the CVD in Sept 2005.

23 Organizacao Popular de Mulher Timor (OPMT) / The Popular Organisation of East Timorese Women and the Organizacao Mulher Timor (OMT)/Organisation of East Timorese Women
At the district and subdistrict level, the CAQR was comprised of 294 staff representing veterans of the civilian and armed resistance, the youth and women’s organisations OMT and OPMT. These included: 26 CAQR members at district level, including 13 district coordinators and 13 administrative staff members, 65 sub-district coordinators and 203 facilitators/interviewers. District coordinators were also members of the National Commission (although subdistrict coordinators were not.)

The CAQR also had 10 advisers or counselors, selected by the President, and comprising representatives of FALINTIL-FDTL and veterans of the armed and civilian resistance.

4.2 Methodology

The methodology undertaken by the CAQR involved a number of key phases. These included:

- A preparation period, from September 2004 – February 2005, during which CAQR Commissioners and Counselors developed draft criteria for cadres of the civilian resistance and developed a draft of the different phases of the civilian resistance from 1975-1999. The Commission also began to develop a draft questionnaire for registering cadres;
- Following the receipt of funding, the Commission commenced a period of socialization from January 31 to February 10, 2005, during which time it hosted a series of public debates in the districts;
- A process of registration for civilian veterans was conducted from March 16 - May 16, 2005, in all sucos around Timor Leste. Information contained in the questionnaires was then ‘verified’ for accuracy before being entered into a database;
- The public posting of lists of names in each suco in order for names and details to be checked for accuracy.

At the conclusion of its work the CAQR database contained a total of 36,606 names. This figure includes the names of 9796 women, or 26.76% of the total number in the database. The breakdown of information by length of involvement in the resistance shows that the majority of veterans are of those involved in the resistance from between 1-7 years. A relatively small number – 464 – were involved in the civilian resistance for between 15-24 years. A breakdown of veterans by length of involvement, including numbers of women, is as follows:

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24 District coordinators were nominated by the President, while subdistrict coordinators/facilitators were recruited by the district coordinators.

25 This number is slightly less than the number in the CAQR’s final report. This is because, due to problems in the data-entry process, there was duplication of some names.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Length of involvement</th>
<th>Total Number of Civilian Veterans</th>
<th>Number of women included</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>15-24 years</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>8-14 years</td>
<td>4102</td>
<td>946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1-7 years</td>
<td>23,301</td>
<td>6,548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political prisoners</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,037 (includes both cadres and non cadres)</td>
<td>898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died or disappeared</td>
<td></td>
<td>3260</td>
<td>734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>36,160</strong></td>
<td><strong>9796</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The breakdown of civilian veterans per district is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baucau</td>
<td>3839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dili:</td>
<td>4267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ermera</td>
<td>4234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manatutu:</td>
<td>2656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same/Manufahi</td>
<td>1646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ainaro</td>
<td>2361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aileu</td>
<td>1807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oekussi:</td>
<td>2327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viqueque:</td>
<td>3210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquica</td>
<td>2313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Palos</td>
<td>2308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobonaro</td>
<td>2837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covalima</td>
<td>1855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>35,660</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

26 A breakdown of political prisoners by phase is not possible as the database does not define prisoners by phase.
27 Again, the discrepancy this figure and the total number of names in the database is likely to be due to duplication of names during the data entry process.
28 These numbers include political prisoners.
29 There is a slight discrepancy between the total number obtained by adding those in each district (35,660) and the total number in the database (which is 36,606). This is because at times, database operators neglected to enter the name of the district into the database together with an individuals information.
5.0 **Strengths, Weaknesses and Limiting Factors**

5.1 **Preparation and Socialisation**

Following its establishment in August 2004, CAQR counselors and national commission members conducted a number of preparatory activities in preparation for funding applications. CAQR Commissioners developed an action plan and budget by CAQR and the director of the President’s office facilitated a meeting for donors, during which several donors stated their commitment to support the CAQR. The single biggest donor to the CAQR was the World Bank. The following table provides an overview of funding to the CAQR:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Amount (USD)</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| World Bank     | 500,000      | First tranche: May 2005  
                |               | Second tranche: August 2005  |
| Ireland Aid    | 133,000.00   | December 2004      |
| United Kingdom | 90,000.00    | February 2005      |
| AusAID         | 66,716.00    | March 2005         |

The preparation period afforded an important opportunity for the CAQR to plan its work and develop an initial action plan and budget, internal regulations and terms of reference for CAQR members. The office was provided with 6 computers and office furniture from UNMISET for these initial activities. The CAQR also commenced the development of draft criteria for those who could be considered civilian ‘cadres’, and began to map and identify the structure and phases of the resistance from August 20, 1975- August 30, 1999. It produced an elaborate ‘structure document’, which is one of the first comprehensive attempts to map the structure of the resistance movement. The structure outlines the various organs and ranks during the many different phases of the resistance, and covers national structures right down to the suco and aldeia (hamlet) level. The criteria and structure were discussed by national commission members and counselors, who then commenced discussions on the development of a questionnaire. In December 2004, CAQR District Coordinators (who were each from the district they were chosen to represent) returned to their districts to recruit district vice-coordinators, administration staff, sub-district coordinators and facilitators/interviewers.

On January 24, 2005, following the disbursement of funding, the CAQR was formally launched through a press conference by the President of Timor Leste. The CAQR then commenced a phase of ‘socialisation’ of its activities in the community and initiated a series of public debates which focused on the draft criteria for cadres of the resistance. CAQR members were deployed in 5 teams to cover the five regions in Timor Leste, and organized public debates between January 31 and February 10, 2005 at the district level. Each debate ran for around 2 days and over 100 people from each district were invited to each event. Participants were drawn from the district and sub-district level, and included community leaders, youth representatives, women’s representatives, and civilian cadre. In
CAQR Final Evaluation Report, May 2006

many districts, well over 100 people participated. The total number of participants in public debates across the country was 1346 people, of whom 35% were women.  

In addition to public debates, the CAQR’s program of socialization included the production of around 10,000 pamphlets containing information about the mission of the CAQR. These were distributed to those in the districts via Chefe de Sucos and other community leaders. For a non-literate audience, the CAQR distributed information via TVTL, Radio Timor-Leste, newspapers, Community Radio, announcements via the church, local leaders and key resistance figures.

5.1.1 Learning Lessons from the CAAC-CAVF

In the early stages of its work the CAQR had the significant benefit of being able to draw on many lessons from the CAAC-CAVF. All of CAQR’s members (aside from the General Coordinator) had previously worked for the CAAC-CAVF. The CAQR improved upon a number of methodological issues including the incorporation of sound planning and budgetary processes, and was greatly assisted in this process by a very competent Office Manager.

A significant methodological improvement was the formulation of the criteria for recognition of civilian veterans prior to the design of the database and registration process. This was in contrast to the approach adopted by the CAAC-CAVF, which began by developing the questionnaire and database, then collected data, followed by a process of consultation and the development of criteria and classifications. The rationale was that this sequencing would prevent people from exaggerating their length of service as they would not know what the classifications were.  

The problem with this approach was that it produced criteria that were not reflected in the database or questionnaire, such as disability and economic vulnerability. In contrast, the CAQR commenced by developing a draft structure, criteria and questionnaire, which was then taken out for community consultations. This added transparency to the process and enabled the public to be consulted prior to the development of the criteria. It also had a number of other advantages including greater efficiency in the data gathering process and stronger links between the criteria, the questionnaire, and the database.

5.1.2 Public Participation

A particular strength of the CAQR’s approach that contributed to the transparency and legitimacy of the process was the organisation of public debates prior to commencing the registration process. The public debates attracted widespread participation of men, women and youth, demonstrating the high level of community interest. The main issues of discussion were the structure of the resistance and the criteria for classification as a cadre of the resistance.  

Another frequently raised issue was why only ‘cadres’, rather than ordinary ‘members’ of the resistance movement, could register. As noted above, the mandate of the CAQR was restricted to registering ‘cadres’ rather than ordinary ‘members’

30 Figures taken from the CAQR final report. Names of participants were collected by CAQR staff at each public debate.
31 While the rationale was a good one, the CAAC-CAVF could still have achieved the same result by setting the criteria beforehand but leaving the classification until the end of the registration process.
32 The CAAC-CAVF had also conducted very large scale consultations – 8,000 people in 24 different locations over the span of a month.
33 Interviews with Miguel Manatelo, Vasgo da Gama, and district CAQR Commissioners
34 Ibid
of the civilian resistance. Some community members argued that ‘members’ contributed and suffered as much as cadres and that a focus on cadres only would be discriminatory. There was a general community agreement that veterans should be classified and recognized according to their length of service. Community members also stressed the importance of recognizing those who died in combat or on the battlefield, as well as those who died in prison, disappeared, or died due to health reasons while performing clandestine activities (including those killed by Falintil.)

The public debates enabled the community to have a voice in the development of the system of criteria and classification to be applied to veterans and cadres of the resistance and to the structure of the clandestine front. The CAQR took this process seriously, and the results of the public debates were carefully analysed before deciding upon the classification of veterans.  

5.1.3 Time Limitations

The main problem encountered during the socialization phase was the lack of time, making it difficult to reach all sections of the population. According to the CAQR’s original timeframe, socialization was planned from October 2004 – December 2005, prior to the public debates, however this proved to be overly ambitious as funding had not yet been received. The CAQR revised its schedule in order to begin socialization in January 2005, concurrently with the public debates. Despite the CAQR’s efforts, inevitably, there were some remote communities who did not receive information, in particular those living in inaccessible areas without radio coverage and those who did not own radios. A number of CAQR staff reported that many had not heard about the CAQR until much later in the process, either during the registrations phase, or towards the end of the process.

5.2 Registration phase

Following the socialisation period, the CAQR analysed the results of the debates and finalized the criteria for who should be considered a cadre of the civilian resistance. A draft questionnaire to register civilian veterans was then developed, and was finalized following debate and discussion by members of the national Commission. Prior to the commencement of the registration process, a two day training of trainers was conducted for members and interviewers at the district and subdistrict level. On the first day, members of the national commission briefed participants on the issues covered by the questionnaire, and, on the second day, participants were given a test on filling in the questionnaire.

The registration process was conducted from March 16-May 16, 2005, in all sucos around Timor Leste. Prior to collecting registrations, the facilitators visited each suco for approximately one week, during which time they placed radio announcements on community radio, held discussions with Chefe de Sucos, organized announcements in the church about the dates for the registration process. They then returned to conduct the registrations. In May 2005, due to the fact that many cadres had not yet registered, the CAQR decided to initiate a second round of registrations from June 16- July 16, 2005. Even after this extension, many cadres had not yet registered. The CAQR presented a report to the

35 See ‘CAQR Final Report’ for a discussion and analysis of issues arising in the public debates
36 This issue was raised by virtually all CAQR staff interviewed
37 Interviews with district CAQR Commissioners and Facilitators
President requesting more time for registrations. This was approved, and the registration process was extended for a third time, for 15 working days, from September 1-17, 2005. At the conclusion of the third registration period, the total number of questionnaires distributed amounted to 43,033. Of these, 39,980 had been returned to the national secretariat.  

5.2.1 Commitment of CAQR Staff

The registration process has, on the whole, run very smoothly, and the district commissioners and facilitators played an important role in its success. Despite limited resources and many logistical challenges, CAQR staff visited each suco and made an effort to reach those who were ill, elderly and disabled by going directly to their houses. Travel by foot or by horse was often required to reach remote sucos, particularly during the wet season when roads were often washed away. CAQR staff were also highly disciplined in terms of not raising community expectations of future assistance, and instead, focused on recognition as the most important outcome of the process. This is reflected in community expectations of the process, which are discussed below.

5.2.2 Community Participation and Expectations

Civilian veterans have welcomed the CAQR registration process and have been pleased at the opportunity to register. Amongst community leaders, there is widespread acknowledgement that the contribution of the civilian cadres and clandestinos is as important to recognize as the contribution of the armed front.  

CAQR Commissioners reported some initial suspicion of the process from some members of the community that names were being collected for a political party, campaign or ‘project’, however this abated as more information was provided. The fact that nearly 40,000 names are contained in the database is testimony to the level of community enthusiasm for this process.

According to community leaders, the registration process is perceived to have been conducted transparently, competently and without bias, which is extremely important for the long term credibility of the process, particularly as it will form a basis for the future policy development. Civilian veterans interviewed for this evaluation understood that the CAQR’s mandate was limited to registrations, and their expectations generally surrounded ‘symbolic’ recognition from the state (for example, a certificate or medal), rather than material assistance. When asked why the process was important, many explained that it was important to provide historical record of their contribution to the struggle that could become part of the ‘story of Timor Leste’, and could be shown to their children and grandchildren. Some also emphasized the importance of public recognition, including having a seat of distinction in ceremonies on which historic dates are celebrated.

Despite the emphasis on symbolic recognition, a number of interviewees stressed the importance of economic assistance, particularly for vulnerable veterans, including the disabled, widows, orphans and

38 There is a slight discrepancy in this number and the total number of names in the database, which is 36,606. This is because of some confusion at district level in which some questionnaires which had been returned to districts for completion were bundled together with those which had not been sent to the National Commission for checking. This caused some issues of duplication of names and invalidly filled questionnaires.
39 Interviews with community leaders and veterans in Baucau, 27th February, Ermera 22nd February
40 Interview with Miguel Manetelo and Vasgo da Gama, 12th February
41 Interviews with veterans in Baucau, 26th February, and Ermera, 22nd Feb
42 Ibid
The need to create economic opportunities for veterans and not just a passive system of benefits was also stressed by some veterans. Another concern raised was the importance of recognizing the contribution of ordinary ‘members’ of the resistance in addition to cadres, who also sacrificed a great deal to the struggle. While these community concerns do not reflect upon the CAQR’s work, they do indicate that it will be important for the government to prioritise the development of policies to address vulnerable veterans and other vulnerable sections of the population in the near future.

5.2.3 Participation of women and youth

While some RENETIL members viewed the process as important for the purposes of creating an ‘historical record’ of the resistance, others felt it was not ‘necessary’ to register. Some RENETIL members were concerned that it was discriminatory to focus only on the ‘cadres’ and not the ordinary ‘members’ of the resistance movement. Some RENETIL members believed it was more important to focus on programs that improved people’s capacity, through schooling, courses and training, than to provide medals, and that recognition should focus on the contribution of organizations rather than individuals. It is interesting to note that a number of other highly educated former civilian cadres, including those who are now NGO leaders, parliamentarians and diplomats, did not register with the CAQR. Like those in RENETIL, the primary reason appears to be that many felt it was not ‘necessary’ to register; they had already gained sufficient recognition and opportunities.

5.2.4 Participation of Political Parties and Veterans Groups

The CAQR is generally perceived by the community to have been non-partisan and independent; consequently, most political parties have participated in the process. CAQR staff reported some}

43 Interview with female veteran in Baucau, 26th February
44 This was raised by a number of interviewees, including community leaders and civilian veterans themselves.
45 RENETIL (the Resistencia Nacional dos Estudantes de Timor-Leste/National Resistance of East Timorese Students) was established in 1988 and was comprised of East Timorese students studying at Indonesian universities.
46 Interview with Jose Neves, Secretary General, RENETIL, 8th March
47 Interviews with Agio Pereira, 2 March; Francisco Branco, 6 March; Joaquim Fonseca, 8th March
48 In the district of Ermera, some community leaders explained that some FRETILIN members were not registering as the process was not FRETILIN-run. However, this appears to have been a minor issue.
minor disruption of the process from members of CPDRDTL and ASDT in a number of districts.\textsuperscript{49} In some cases, these groups attempted to prevent other cadres from registering.\textsuperscript{50} To counter these problems CAQR Commissioners made an effort to meet with the leaders of these groups in the districts and on the whole, the disruption caused by these groups appears to have been relatively minor. The potential for these groups to prevent others from registering also appears to have waned as more information was provided about the process.

Significantly, the CAQR has also been successful in gaining the participation of veterans’ organizations. Representatives of organizations including AVR and FVF stated that their members had all registered, either with the CACC-CAVF or the CAQR.\textsuperscript{51} The AVR representative complemented the CAQR’s work, noting that the process had been impartial and transparent.\textsuperscript{52} Drawing these groups into the process (and into the previous CACC-CAVF) has been an important demonstration of the state’s responsiveness to veterans concerns and has helped to dissipate community tensions around veterans’ issues. A number of community leaders noted that the destabilizing potential of groups purporting to represent veterans had notably lessened during the life of the Commissions.\textsuperscript{53}

\textbf{5.2.5 Limited Time}

Limited time was the principal issue affecting the registration process and was raised by virtually all CAQR staff. As noted above, the registration process was extended twice to provide additional opportunities for those who had not yet registered. However, even given these extensions, it is clear that many people who still wish to register have not done so.\textsuperscript{54} CAQR staff also explained that many people had recently heard about the debate on the veterans law in parliament, and were only now approaching the Commission to register their names, when it was too late.\textsuperscript{55}

\textbf{5.2.6 Logistical and resource constraints}

Not surprisingly, logistical and resource constraints had a significant impact on the registration process. Each sub-district was issued with only one motorbike, which meant that facilitators were often reliant on their own means of transport. In addition, the registration period commenced during the rainy season which created added difficulties in reaching remote sucos with poor roads. In many

\begin{itemize}
\item CPD/RDTL is the Portuguese acronym for the Committee for the Popular Defense of the Democratic Republic of East Timor. It is a group that traces its origins and ideological lineage to FRETILIN. It is considered by many as a ‘radical’ organisation as its members refused to acknowledge the legitimacy (and authority) of the UN or their administration of East Timor during the transition. In stead, its members hold the 10-day-long period of independence declared in November 1975 was the definitive date of independence. ASDT is the Portuguese acronym for the Social Democratic Association of East Timor. It is the official party of CPD/RDTL
\item Interview with Manual Mantelo, Tuesday 12th February, Interview with Criado, Wednesday 15th February. This issue was also raised by a number of CAQR staff.
\item Interview with Association of Veterans of the Resistance (AVR) 2nd March, Falintil Veterans Foundation (FVF), 21st February
\item Interview with AVR representative, 2 March
\item Interview with District Administrator of Baucau, 27th February, interviews with veterans in Baucau and Manatuto, 26th, 27th, 28th February
\item This was a perception shared by many district CAQR staff and community leaders. For example community leaders in Railaku sub-district estimated that 25% of eligible people within their suco had not yet registered.
\item This was raised in a significant number of interviews with CAQR district staff
\end{itemize}
instances, facilitators were forced by weather conditions to walk. In Lautem, Baucau and Manatuto districts the registration process also coincided with the Conselho de Suco, Suco and Aldeia elections which caused the registration process to be delayed.

### 5.3 Verification

To ensure the accuracy of the information collected on the questionnaires, the CAQR undertook a process of ‘verification’ of information gathered from April – October 2005. This involved a number of stages. At the first stage, data was reviewed at the district level. District coordinators reviewed data collected by staff in the subdistricts. Wrongly filled in questionnaires were sent back to the subdistrict level to be amended, while correct questionnaires were sent to the national level, where they were reviewed and corrected by national CAQR Commissioners. Again, at this level, wrongly filled in questionnaires were sent back to the districts to be verified, while correct ones were entered into the database. The most common mistakes were names filled in incorrectly, incorrect ranks and mistakes regarding length of service. Some people had also forgotten their date of birth and this section was left blank.

In July 2005, the CAQR established a database and commenced a training program for data-entry operators. Thirteen data entry operators were employed from August – November 2005. The contracts of the data-entry operators were later extended to January 7, 2006 to complete remaining questionnaires. Five have gone on to work for the newly established CCD.

#### 5.3.1 Information checked at a number of levels

A strength of the CAQR’s verification process was that information was checked at a number of levels, including subdistrict, district and national levels. This was a significant improvement on the CAAC-CAVF process, which had been more centralized. By the time information was received by data-entry staff it had already been checked a number of times. The devolving of verification tasks also contributed to the efficiency and thoroughness of the process, as information was checked and corrected closer to its source.

#### 5.3.2 Complexity of Questionnaire

The questionnaire developed for the registration process was lengthy and complex. Each questionnaire was divided into nine different time periods or ‘phases’ of the resistance.’ In each phase in which a veteran had participated, information was required about a person’s Commander, position, rank, function, territorial division, along with the names of witnesses who could confirm this information. Detailed information was also required about the circumstances of capture or surrender and time spent in prison. The rationale for this complexity was that it would prevent people from inventing or exaggerating their length of service. For example, ‘witnesses’ could be consulted if necessary to confirm the veracity of a person’s claim.

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56 Interview with Edie Bowles, 20th February
The complicated nature of the questionnaire, did, however, result in a number of problems. A key issue was the length of time required to complete it. Although they had received training, CAQR facilitators explained that one questionnaire could take between 1-2 hours to complete (depending on the length of a person’s involvement in the resistance.) The complexity of the terminology used also created difficulties for registrants with low literacy skills and for facilitators with limited formal education. Much of the terminology used was in Portuguese as many terms do not exist in Tetum (the *lingua franca* of Timor Leste.)

The questionnaire also contained more information than was ultimately required by the database. For example, the names of witnesses listed were not entered (and nor was information cross-checked with witnesses to verify its accuracy due to the time required to do so). Other information, including whether or not a person was carrying a weapon at the time of their arrest/surrender was also not required (largely as a result of copying the CAAC-CAVF questionnaire.) Another limitation in the questionnaire was the limited space provided to enter multiple periods of arrest. There was space for only one period of detention in each ‘phase’ of the resistance. If a person was detained more than once during a particular phase, information on the subsequent periods of detention had to be written in a separate section on ‘observations’, creating difficulties at the data-entry phase.\(^57\) In retrospect, field testing the questionnaire with a sample group of veterans prior to the registration process, could have helped to improve and simplify the questionnaire.

### 5.3.3 Data Entry

Despite the extensive verifications process, the complexity of the questionnaire inevitably had an impact on the data-entry process. Much information in the questionnaire remained unclear by the time it reached the data entry phase. Data entry staff explained that they were often required to ‘read between the lines’ in order to interpret the information.\(^58\) This increased the potential for erroneous data entry. The key problems encountered by data entry staff included difficulties in deciphering handwriting, incorrectly entered information (including confusion about date of birth), confusion about dates of participation in the resistance, and lack of clarity about ranks and functions. Of these, the section pertaining to ‘rank’ created the greatest confusion. It was often left blank or was confused with a person’s ‘function’. In order to enter a person’s ‘rank’, data entry staff were required to select from a long list of possible ranks (around 3000 possibilities for the final phase of the resistance), which increased the potential for confusion and error. The effectiveness of the data entry process was further impacted on by logistical issues including frequent electricity blackouts.

Despite these difficulties, the data entry process proceeded with relative efficiency. As problems arose, data entry staff discussed them with Commissioners, and weekly meetings of the data entry staff took place where these issues were thought through collectively. As a general rule, data entry staff entered between 35-50 questionnaires per day (however, during the final stages of the CAQR’s work, this number increased to around 100 per day).

### 5.3.4 The database

\(^{57}\) Interview with Miguel Manetelo, 12\(^{th}\) February

\(^{58}\) Interview with CAQR data entry staff, 17\(^{th}\) February
The CAQR’s database has a number of important features. Data can be disaggregated by phase, which allows the tracking of multiple roles that one person played, including when they were captured or surrendered, during each of the phases of the resistance. However, an issue is now arising in the merging of the two databases by the CCD. The design of the CAAC-CAVF and CAQR databases is completely different, in part as they were designed by different people. In retrospect, it would have made sense for the CAQR to have utilized the same database expert from the point of view of consistency and due to the need to merge the data-bases into one in future.

There are a number of gaps in the CAQR database with respect to the requirements of the new veterans law. For example, when the database was originally designed it did not include information on ‘social matters’. This information was added in much later, in October/November 2005, once parliamentary discussions began on the draft law. The database now includes a section for the entering information on a person’s living standards, including whether they have access to electricity, their capacity to work, whether they have remarried, their level of education, and mental and physical disabilities. This information, however, remains incomplete. Another gap is that the names of widows and dependents cannot currently be located by searching for the name of a deceased veteran.

The government will need to do a great deal of work to complete this information in order for the law to be implemented.

5.3.5 Complexity of the Clandestine Movement

In many respects, the problems encountered in the registration and data entry process reflect the general complexity of the clandestine structure during East Timor’s resistance. In contrast to the armed resistance, which had a relatively clear structure with ranks and functions that were generally well-understood, the clandestine movement by its very nature, was secretive, complex and amorphous and thus far more difficult to identify and map. During the early years of the resistance struggle in particular, small clandestine groups evolved spontaneously without a common strategy, worked independently and made their own contacts with the FALINTIL commanders in the interior. Some civilian veterans interviewed explained that they did not necessarily know the rank that they had held, others stated that they had held more than one rank at one time and that their roles frequently changed. The fact that the CAQR has identified 3000 different ranks for the final phase of the resistance is an indicator of this complexity. The very attempt to map this structure should be acknowledged an achievement in itself.

5.4 Posting of lists and Reception of Complaints

Following the entry of information into the database, the CAQR performed a process of ‘posting the lists’. This involved a two week period in which lists of names, durations and ranks were posted publicly at the suco level (generally at the office of the Chefe de Suco), during which time people had

59 Interview with Joao Capitolino, 24th February
60 For example, the database currently includes the names of only 2 disabled people
61 The list of those who have died currently only brings up the name of that individual who has died, not their dependents.
62 A number of interviewees raised this point; interviews with Agio Pereira, 2 March; Joaquim Foseca, 8th March; Criado, 12 February; Jose Neves, 8th March
63 See CAVR Report, Part 5, Resistance, Strategy and Structure, p 42
64 Interviews with veterans in Baucau, 26th February, Manatuto, 28th February
an opportunity to check their names and information. Those who had registered had an opportunity to complete a form correcting their information or a confidential letter of ‘protest’ about others’ information. The process of corrections was generally conducted by Chefe de Sucos, with assistance from the CAQR facilitators, who moved between sucos. The remaining two weeks was set aside for lists to be brought into Dili and for information to be corrected in the database.

At the time of this evaluation, complaints/corrections had been received from 9 districts, amounting to a total of 10,950. The majority involved corrections to personal information, including spelling of names, incorrect ranks and duration of service. In some cases, names had been omitted from the lists or had been sent to the wrong suco. Very few complaints involved protests about others. The following table provides a list of corrections received per district:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Complaints received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bobonaro</td>
<td>2617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufahi</td>
<td>669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ainaro</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ermera</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lautem</td>
<td>2241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dili</td>
<td>663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aileu</td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viqueque</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manatuto</td>
<td>3253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,950</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.1 Participatory process

At the time of the evaluation, the CAQR was in the midst of posting the lists and the consultant was able to observe this process in the districts of Ermera and Baucau. The posting of lists has been an important phase of the process, as it has enabled data entered into the database to be checked and corrected in a public and participatory manner. This has arguably enhanced the perception of transparency of the process and contributed to its legitimacy in the eyes of the community.

The fact that 10,950 letters of correction had been received by the CAQR suggests that people took the process of corrections seriously. However, the number of corrections received represents more than one quarter of the total names in the database, which indicates that there was a high margin of error within the registration and data-entry processes. It could also indicate that, as the registration process progressed, more civilian veterans became interested in participating.

5.4.2 Logistical problems: lists not posted

In addition, the general list of names did not contain the duration of time spent in prison. This could be viewed on a separate list of political prisoners.
From the perspective of transparency, the concept of having lists publicly posted in each *sucu* was a good one, and CAQR staff did their best to coordinate with *Chefe de Sucos* to ensure that this occurred. However, in reality a number of logistical problems have affected public access to the lists. In a number of *sucu* offices visited, lists had not been publicly posted, and according to district CAQR staff, this was a common problem. Some *Chefe de Sucos* were concerned about lack of security or poor weather destroying the lists, and had taken the lists to their homes for safekeeping. In some cases, the lists were too long to publicly post in the *sucu* office. The lack of public posting of lists made it difficult for people to check their details. Houses of the *Chefe de Suco* were not always centrally located and, as *Chefe de Sucos* had a number of tasks to do, they were rarely in their offices or homes. The fact that people had to check their details in the *Chefe de Suco*’s house also made it difficult for people to view the names of the entire *sucu* to make complaints about the claims of others.

### 5.4.3 Issues of Impartiality

Some veterans and community leaders were concerned that the management of the ‘posting of lists’ by *Chefe de Sucos* detracted from the transparency and impartiality of the process. Some were concerned that *Chefe de Sucos* may choose not to prioritise the process if they felt it was too time consuming. Others were concerned that *Chefe de Sucos* did not understand how to help people correct their information. Indeed, *Chefe de Sucos* did not receive any formal training by the CAQR so this may have been the case. Veterans tended to wait for the CAQR facilitators to visit their *sucu* to help them complete correction forms. However, the limited two week period and the fact that, during this phase, facilitators had been reduced from four to two per subdistrict meant that facilitators were unable to spend sustained periods of time in each *sucu*.

### 5.4.4 Reluctance to ‘protest’ about others

The opportunity to protest about others claims theoretically added a mechanism for checking the veracity of claims, however, in reality, very few protests have been received by the CAQR office. Although protests were confidential and letters of protest were given directly to the facilitators, there appears to have been a reluctance to protest about others exaggerated claims. Some veterans interviewed expressed a view that it is not Timorese ‘culture’ to protest about others and were concerned that it could create problems for personal relationships in future. These issues were compounded by the fact that *Chefe de Sucos* had management of the lists, adding to concerns about lack of confidentiality and difficulties in accessing the list.

### 5.4.5 Limited Time

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66 This issue was raised by CAQR staff in all districts visited: Ermera, Baucau and Manatutu, and was confirmed by national CAQR staff

67 This was observed in Ermera district

68 Issue raised by CAQR staff member, Quelekai subdistrict, Baucau, 26th February

69 Concerns raised by community leaders and veterans in Ermera, 23rd February and confirmed by discussions with CAQR district staff

70 Interviews with community leaders and veterans, Ermera, 23rd February, and Manatuto 28th February

71 Ibid, and confirmed by discussions with CAQR district staff

72 Community leaders/veterans in Manatuto, 28th February
Again, limited time was raised as the key issue during the period of posting the lists.73 A number of veterans explained that they had not yet checked their information or had not yet corrected it, either because they had not heard about the ‘posting of the lists’, or they had not had time to check their information. Many were preoccupied with other work, including planting their fields, and due to the problems of access to the list described above, were not always able to find time.74

6.0 Other Issues

6.1 Management

The management of the CAQR has, on the whole, been perceived by key stakeholders to be competent and efficient. This was greatly enhanced by the work of the Office Manager who ran the CAQR Secretariat and provided operational support to the Commissioners and staff. The Office Manager was responsible for instituting a number of important internal practices, including training, monitoring and evaluation processes, planning and development of work plans, and donor liaison.75 For example, a training of trainers was conducted for CAQR staff at the district and subdistrict level prior to the commencement of the registration process, which greatly assisted in developing the skills of staff in completing the questionnaires. The CAQR national commissioners also conducted two monitoring exercises during the registration process in all districts and subdistricts. District coordinators were required to attend monthly evaluation meetings in Dili and to provide monthly reports of their work, including their financial expenditure, to the national office. District staff interviewed for the evaluation expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the management of the organisation.

The 10 counselors and the 32 national commissioners also played important roles in the governance of the CAQR, including making representations to the President when timelines and budgets required revision. They also debated the definitions, criteria and the questionnaire were able to make crucial decisions about these issues.

6.1.1 Donor Liaison

The CAQR had a good relationship with its donors, and provided them with regular updates of its progress.76 The majority of donors played a ‘hands-off’ role in the CAQR’s work, in part as there was a confidence that the Commission was being well managed.77 The World Bank was by far the most hands-on of donors. The CAQR and donors greatly benefited by the Bank’s consultant, who played a pivotal role in maintaining the CAQR-donor relationship, providing advice and conducting outreach to other actors and institutions.78

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73 Issue raised by all district CAQR staff and veterans
74 Interviews with veterans in Ermera, 23rd February, Baucau, 26th February, and Manatuto, 28th February
75 Interview with Edie Bowles, 20th February
76 Interview with Edie Bowles, 20th February, Elizabeth Huyens, 18th February, Tina Redshaw, 20th February
77 Interviews with Peter Ellis, 17th February, Tina Redshaw, 20th February and Carol Hannon, 8th March
78 Ibid
6.1.2 Staffing

This high degree of commitment of CAQR staff to their work was acknowledged by community leaders and civilian veterans. Many acknowledged that district staff went out of their way to reach isolated sucos either on foot or by horse, and operated with minimal resources and many logistical constraints.

The criteria for the selection of District and Sub-district Commissioners required that they should be people who were formerly members of the armed or civilian resistance, they should be of high moral standing and responsibility, and with a knowledge and influence within the community where they were to be stationed. These criteria generally worked well and those recruited were respected in their districts, had an understanding of the resistance movement, and an ability to organize and reach people using former resistance networks. These were important skills given the limited time frame for the Commission’s work. However, one issue with this criteria was that some staff lacked professional experience and formal education, which created difficulties, for example, in interpreting the questionnaire.

A requirement of the recruitment criteria for CAQR staff was that 40% should be women. In reality it proved difficult to meet this target, primarily because the work of facilitators required frequent and extensive travel, often by foot. This made it difficult for women, particularly those with families. Nonetheless, the CAQR did manage to achieve 25% women amongst its staff. There was less gender balance amongst the national commissioners (and as these were direct appointments of the President the CAQR had no control over the selection) and only four of the thirty two national members of the CAQR were women.

6.1.3 Decentralised decision making

Where possible, CAQR decision-making was devolved to the district level. District Commissioners were given a high degree of autonomy for managing staff and organizing the process in their district. The decentralized structure contributed to the efficiency of the CAQR’s work and the sense of responsibility amongst district staff for their work. The decision making structure was another improvement on the CAAC-CAVF process, in which decision making had been very centralized.

6.1.4 Communication

Despite the logistical and resource constraints, the CAQR maintained regular communication between national and district offices. The regular evaluation meetings for district coordinators, and the monitoring exercises, assisted in the regular identification and resolution of problems emerging in the process. Weekly meetings for data entry operators also assisted in ironing out problems in the interpretation of questionnaires. Staff found these meetings valuable. Regular meetings and

79 Virtually all veterans and community leaders in Ermera, Baucau and Manatuto expressed this appreciation.
80 Interview with Miguel Manetelo, 12th February
81 Interview with Bi-Soy, 16th February
82 Ibid
83 Interviews with CAQR Coordinator, Ermera, 22nd February, CAQR Coordinator Baucau, 26th February, and CAQR Coordinator Manatuto, 28th February
monitoring were also conducted at the district level by district coordinators with their subdistrict coordinators and facilitators.

6.1.5 Systems

The national CAQR office carefully numbered and filed questionnaires for easy access. District offices were required to keep a ledger with the names, dates of registration, suco and aldeia of residence, and former position of those who registered. A ledger was kept showing the number of questionnaires distributed to each subdistrict and the number that had been returned.

6.2 Lack of Coordination

The lack of planning, information and coordination between the Commissions, the Parliament, the Presidents Office and the Government, has affected the development of veterans policy generally. Unfortunately, for reasons of timing, the Ad Hoc Commission responsible for the development of the draft veterans law, did not have access to the CAQR’s final report during its discussion. This meant that when the Parliament commenced its debate it had little information about the CAQR’s work. While discussions on the law drew on the results of the CACC-CAVF, the results of the CAQR were given little consideration. In retrospect, an overall plan for the development of veterans policies, involving government, Parliament, and the Commissions, would have greatly assisted with sequencing and enabled the CAQR to more effectively input into the policy process.

The evaluation found that there was a general lack of understanding of the CAQR amongst parliamentarians and members of the government involved in veterans issues. For example, it is notable that the Parliament did not invite the CAQR to address it during its discussions on the draft law. Despite invitations from the CAQR to the Parliament to view the database, only one parliamentarian took up this offer, and this was towards the end of the plenary debate. Another somewhat controversial development was an announcement by the Ministry for Labour and Community Reinsertion in November 2005 that its office would be commencing the payment of subsidies to 36 veterans of the residence (now 39). This announcement was criticized by the President’s office and donors alike, who were concerned that the government was using its own list and criteria rather than deriving them from the veterans commissions or waiting for the law to be passed. Many felt it would undermine the transparent and participatory process of identification being conducted by the Commissions.

There is a perception held by some members of government that the process of identifying veterans has taken a long time. Indeed, in retrospect, it may have been more efficient and effective to combine the CAAC-CAVF and the CAQR into one linked process. Yet, this sense of impatience also derives from a lack of understanding of the complexity of the registration process, and the importance

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84 Although the CAQR was able to exert some influence through the Office of the President.
85 Interviews with Parliamentarians, 6 March, Interview with Director, National Office of Veterans and ex-combatants, 16th February
86 Interview with Manuel Manetelo, 12th February, Vicente Guterres, 6th March
87 Interview with Edie Bowles, 20th February
88 Interviews with Minister for Labour and Community Reinsertion, 16th February, Chief of Staff Office of the President, 2 March
of this process being conducted independently and transparently if it is going to develop a definitive list acceptable to the community.

### 6.3 Lack of Strategy for Influencing Policy Process

While the CAQR should not be blamed for the overall lack of coordination on veterans issues, it could have been more proactive in developing a strategy for influencing national decision makers. It had good access to the Office of the President and was able to exert some influence in this way, but it did not have as good a relationship with the Parliament and Office of Veterans Affairs, which may have limited its ability to influence the development of the law.

### 6.4 Time Limitations

A key limitation pervading each phase of the CAQR’s work was the unrealistic timeframe imposed upon it by the Office of the President. The Presidential decree issued on August 31, 2004, gave the CAQR an initial timeframe from September – May 2005, effectively 9 months to complete its work. This was clearly inadequate, particularly given that the first tranche of donor funding (from Ireland Aid) was only received in December 2004. It was also a much shorter timeframe than that given to the CAAC-CAVF. It was necessary for the CAQR Office Manager to approach the President’s office a number of times with requests for an extension of time and a revised budget. As discussed above, time constraints have affected all phases of the CAQR’s work – from socialization, to registration, to finalizing of the lists. At this stage, there are still large numbers of errors in the database, and despite the ‘posting of lists’, many people have not yet corrected their information. The next steps will be crucial in addressing these outstanding issues and in ensuring the credibility of the CAQR’s process.

### 7.0 Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

#### 7.1 Conclusions

In contrast to many other nations, the registration process of both armed and civilian veterans undertaken in Timor Leste has been exemplary. A key strength of Timor Leste’s process has been the incorporation of community consultation and the participation of veterans groups. The development of a comprehensive database of names is also a significant achievement that will become an important instrument in the development and implementation of veterans policies.

Within the broader community, the registration of both armed and non-armed resistance has been welcomed. By demonstrating that the state is responding to veterans concerns, the Commissions have reduced community tensions surrounding the question of who may or may not be considered a veteran.

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89 A number of other nations have faced significant problems in the registration and recognition of veterans. In Guinea-Bissau and Zimbabwe, for example, the number of registered liberation fighters and veterans decades after independence was significantly higher than at independence. In South Africa, attempts to create a database of veterans have come after the adoption of recognition and assistance measures. See World Bank pension reform primer.
and silenced those with illegitimate claims. In the longer term, it is likely that the recognition of veterans will make a significant contribution to national security and stability.

The CAQR improved upon the CACC-CAVF’s methodology in a number of ways. A key strength was the decision to conduct public consultation on the criteria prior to registration. Public participation in the process has been high and has included a significant percentage of women and youth. The CAQR is perceived by the stakeholders interviewed in this study to be independent and transparent. In addition, CAQR staff have been careful not to raise expectations of financial assistance. These factors will be critical to the long term credibility of its work.

The imposition of unrealistic timeframes on the CAQR’s work impacted upon its thoroughness, and has meant that at the time of the handover of the CAQR database to the CCD, it still contains a large number of errors. In retrospect, a longer timeframe would have enabled many of the errors during registration and verification to have been corrected. A simpler questionnaire would also have improved the accuracy of the registrations.

Perhaps the single biggest weakness of the CAQR has been its lack of strategic thinking about how to influence the policy development process. Veterans policy development in Timor Leste has in general been characterized by a lack of coordination between different arms of the government. The process of recognizing veterans in Timor Leste has developed organically and in a fairly disjointed manner, with a number of different Commissions created to recognize different aspects of the resistance. This has created confusion and has led to perceptions amongst some members of the government that the process has taken a long time. In retrospect, the development of an over-arching plan for the veterans policy development from the outset, involving different arms of the state, would have significantly assisted the process. 90 This could have included a combined registration process for members of the civilian resistance and the armed resistance. This would have been more efficient, particularly as many cadres moved between the civilian and armed resistance at different times. 91 The lack of coordination means there are now many gaps with respect to the implementation of the new veterans law that the government will need to complete.

7.2 Recommendations for the Timor Leste Process

In Timor Leste, there are now community expectations that the registration of veterans will lead to recognition in some form. The President has recently announced two ‘homage’ ceremonies – one for the 20 August and another for 30/31 August, which will recognize veterans of the armed and civilian resistance. Yet, while timely recognition is important, it is critical that recognition is based on accurate information. Recognition ceremonies that are based on incomplete or inaccurate information will be extremely damaging to the credibility of the Commissions.

90 For example, it would have helpful to have had had an understanding of the general requirements of the law before the Commissions were established (although this was perhaps unrealistic at the time.) The Commissions could then have developed the criteria based on public consultations and conducted the registrations. Information on social matters, economic vulnerability could also have been collected by the Commissions.

91 Interestingly, the number of duplicated names in the two databases at the time of the evaluation was only 83. This could also reflect that those doing the registering had an existing of those already registered.
As noted above, the newly established CCD is now working to create a combined list of names from the CACC-CAVF and the CAQR and to undertake a final round of posting and verification of lists. It is crucial that the CCD is able to complete the verifications process effectively before the homage ceremonies. In order to do this, adequate staff and security will be required to ensure that lists are publicly posted. Unfortunately, the timeframe provided to the CCD (effectively 1 month) is unlikely to be feasible to complete this exercise. To do so, the process of verifications will need to be broken down into manageable parts. Sensibly, the CCD has decided not to deal with names with protests against them at this stage. They will be left for a future process. Given the large numbers of errors still in the database, the CCD has also decided to focus initially on finalizing the lists of those needed for the August ceremonies, rather than attempting to verify all the information in the databases. Once the combined data-base is handed over to the government it will be important to build the capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Reinsertion to manage the database, complete outstanding information required for the implementation of the law.

Timor Leste’s new veterans law is generally sound, and attempts to avoid the problem of defining benefits too widely. In comparison to many other nations, it has succeeded in navigating a path between recognition of veterans and sustainability. While it defines the rights of veterans clearly, it gives wide scope to the government to develop policies, particularly regarding the amount and modalities of payments of benefits. According to the Government’s Budget Office, the government will not have financial difficulties in implementing the law. Nonetheless, some provisions of the law are likely to be costly, and care will need to be taken in developing sustainable policies. The government’s lean national budget will preclude large scale financial projects to assist veterans. Moreover, in a context in which one in five people live on less than one dollar per day, it will be critical to ensure that policies on veterans benefits are sustainable and proportionate to other population groups. There may be problems of disparity and perceptions of inequity amongst the broader population if the government decides to set the level of benefits for veterans significantly higher than the average living wage. In addition, the development of social protection policies to benefit other vulnerable sections of the population - including widows, orphans and disabled members of the community who are not ‘veterans’ – is vital.

The following are recommendations for the future development of veterans policy in Timor Leste:

- **Completing the Verifications Process Effectively**

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92 Interviews with Duarte Viana, 2nd March, Theresa Almeida Costa, 24th February
93 A common problem faced by many countries is that the type and amount of compensation provided to veterans may not bear a relationship to long term financial sustainability or proportionality vis a vis other population groups. See World Bank Pension Reform Primer
94 Interview with Richard Neves, Antonio Freitas, Government Budget office.
95 For example, article 21 relating to alternative pecuniary compensation is is likely to have significant financial implications.
96 The national budget has been rising each year, and the proportion of donor financing is steadily reducing. The budget for FY06 was 120 million a year, of which donors financed about 8%. The budget for FY07 will be 200 million, of which donors will fund about 5%.
97 World Bank Country Assistance Strategy for Timor Leste, FY 06-08, 15
98 According to the World Bank Country Assistance Strategy FY 06-08, Timor Leste, in 2001, one in five people lived on less than one dollar a day and two in five lived below the national poverty line.
It is critical that verification of information contained in the CACC-CAVF and CAQR databases is completed prior to the conduct of homage ceremonies. Recognition ceremonies that are based on incomplete and incorrect information will be extremely damaging to the credibility of the Commissions. To complete the process effectively, verification needs to be broken down into manageable parts. Given the complexity of the civilian resistance, and the extent of errors in the database it may also be necessary to confine homage ceremonies in August to those involved in the armed resistance and conduct homage ceremonies for the civilian cadre at a later date. The other option may be to confine this year’s homage ceremonies to those who served 15 years or more.

- **Security for the Lists**

In order to enable the finalizing of lists for the August 2006 homage ceremonies to be completed effectively, it will be essential that there is security for the lists at the *suco* level, and that lists are monitored to ensure they are publicly posted. The CCD should not rely upon the *Chefe de Sucos* to facilitate the process of corrections. Adequate staff should be employed at the subdistrict level to enable the process to be conducted thoroughly.

- **Outstanding information still required**

A large amount of information required for the implementation of the law has not yet been collected. This includes information regarding widows, dependents, orphans, and the disabled and economic vulnerability. This will not be the focus of the CCD but will be handed over to the government. This information will need to be built by the government in order to draw up a comprehensive picture of where the vulnerabilities are. It will also be vitally important to build the capacity of the government to manage and develop the database.

- **Sustainability of Benefits**

The law currently provides benefits to a relatively small group of veterans and broad scope is given to the government to develop policies in relation to the amount and modalities of payment. It will be important to ensure that any policies developed are sustainable and proportional in relation to other population groups to avoid perception of discrimination. Allied to this, it will be important that the government focuses on general social protection policies for vulnerable groups who are not veterans, for example widows, orphans and the disabled and those who were ‘victims’ of the war to avoid perceptions of discrimination.

### 7.3 Lessons Learned

A number of lessons from Timor Leste’s experience may be beneficial to other post-conflict countries considering similar processes:

- **Public consultation and participation**

Public participation has been a notable strength of the CAQR. The CAQR incorporated community consultation into the development of the criteria for civilian veteran registration and undertook
comprehensive outreach efforts throughout the process. Significantly, the CAQR was also successful in gaining the participation of organizations purporting to represent veterans, and drawing them into the process. The CAQR was also careful not to raise expectations amongst the community regarding financial assistance. The participatory methodology and attention to outreach means there is widespread understanding and appreciation for the work of the CAQR amongst veterans and realistic expectations of forms of recognition. These factors are likely to contribute to the long term credibility of the process. These are important factors for consideration in the development of similar processes.

- **Pro’s and cons of recognizing the civilian resistance**

A key strength of Timor Leste’s decision to recognize ‘civilian’ as well as armed members of the resistance is that it has enabled the contribution of women and youth to be recognized. Both groups played significant roles during the resistance, yet would not have been acknowledged if the process had been confined to the armed front. At the same time, the secretive and fluid nature of many ‘clandestine’ movements makes them extremely difficult to map and identify. This complexity needs to be borne in mind. Care needs to taken during the planning stages to think through the challenges involved in recognizing civilian structures and the most effective means of targeting particular groups, including women and youth.

- **Database and Questionnaire**

Another key lesson from the veterans registration process in Timor Leste is the value of establishing a database of names. The merged CACC-CAVF and CAQR database will become an important instrument for future policy development. Effectively knowing the number of ex-combatants and their personal circumstances is the first step towards the creation of effective and sustainable means of reintegration and assistance. The creation of a database of ex-combatants and veterans prior to the adoption of legislation will also lessen the potential for tension and confusion about who qualifies as a veteran at a later date, an issue that has occurred in other veterans processes. A key problem with the CAQR’s database, as noted above, is that it contains a high degree of errors. Future processes should consider the development of a less complicated questionnaire, to reduce the potential for erroneous data entry.

- **Policy Coordination**

The importance of policy coordination in the development of veterans policy is another important lesson from Timor Leste. In Timor Leste, veterans policy was developed in a fairly disjointed and organic manner, involving a number of different commissions and arms of the state. The result was a process that took longer than necessary, and a new veterans law that contains many ‘gaps’ in terms of information required for its implementation. The importance of a coordinated approach to veterans issues that involves planning, sequencing of activities, and data collection that is systematic and targeted, cannot be overemphasized. It is also important that veterans policy development takes place within the context of an assessment of the needs of other vulnerable groups who are not veterans, to avoid perceptions of discrimination and inequity.

- **Accuracy and Completeness of Data**
Timor Leste’s experience demonstrates the need to ensure that the data collected is accurate and complete before recognition ceremonies are conducted. Timor Leste’s leadership rightly acknowledges the need for timely recognition ceremonies to be organized to meet community expectations and to reduce tensions, however, the evaluation cautions that there may be a high level of community dissatisfaction if ceremonies are not based on accurate and comprehensive information. As discussed above, recognition ceremonies that are based on incomplete information could be counterproductive, and could damage the credibility of the registration processes, possibly leading to further grievances and tensions, by those who believe they have been ‘left out.’

- **Time and Resources**

As discussed throughout this report, an unrealistic timeframe and inadequate resources impacted on the effectiveness of the CAQR’s work during each of its phases. This lack was particularly apparent during the final ‘verification’ phase, when the CAQR’s staffing levels were reduced. The importance of a realistic time frame, adequate staffing and security for future registration processes, to ensure thorough data collection and verification processes, cannot be overestimated.
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