Comprehension of key terms

Community Action Planning

- Community Action Planning (CAP) is principally a process for local communities to identify issues affecting their local community and agree a plan of action to achieve improvements. These issues can be many and varied and may include infrastructure, land ownership, occupation, income and livelihood, and health and education. The CAP process seeks to empower local communities to become active partners with the Government in the development of their areas.

Community Development Association

- A Community Development Association (CDA) is essentially an organization comprising community members who have identified a local community as elected by the community. The CDA is primarily responsible for assisting the community to formulate and implement the CAP.

Community Contracts

- A key tool in the implementation of a CAP is the issuance of community contracts. These agreements formalize commitments between the local community (represented by the CDA) and the partner agency, which for the Dili CUS team, is the Dili Communities Unit representing the Government.

The Community Contract Process

- Once the full budgets for each of the priority projects have been clearly identified by the local project team, they can then be developed into community contracts for specific types of activities. The project team devised three types of contracts to meet the differing needs of engaging services: community contracts, private contracts and government contracts.

The community contract process in the pilot phase of the project included a simplified process. From the budget worked out in the CAP process the project team was required to prepare a draft contract for a specific work package based on discussions in the survey. The contract was in the form of a simple contract presented in Telum (the local language) first as a draft for discussion. Once reviewed by the CDA and any modifications made to it it is presented to the community for signing. The contract is signed in triplicate by a number of people to ensure transparency that no coalition has taken place. Signatories are: 1) the CDA chairperson, 2) the CDU project manager, 3) the CDA organizing secretary or the CDU treasurer and 4) 5) are two witnesses. Where the contract is for works by a contractor outside of the community e.g. government or private contractors, then there is an additional signatory. Once all signatures are on the document a copy of the contract is placed on the community notice board.

Upon completion of all works associated with the contract, the works of the contract are assessed by the CDA and the project team. If agreed that is has all been completed to the satisfaction of all parties then the contract is passed on to the funding agency with a cover note from the project team requesting payment.

Community Action Planning

- Piloting the CAP process in the four local communities in Dili (Alicrim, Au-Hun, Sao Jose and Boamorena) by following the step-by-step process laid out in the CAP. The team was able to partner with the newly formed Community Development Associations to implement a range of small-scale community infrastructure projects. CAP forms part of an integrated approach to the establishment of a comprehensive housing and urban development program for Timor Leste.

The facilitators identified and presented key findings from the community survey and explained to the community that will be asked to identify what they individually believe are the top three most significant infrastructure issues facing the local community. The active participation of the community in the piloting process empowers the community to feel actively involved. The results are then used to develop a community action plan and a CDA is appointed to represent the community (represented by the CDA) and the partner agency, which for the Dili CUS team, is the Dili Communities Unit representing the Government.

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