



REPÚBLICA DEMOCRÁTICA DE TIMOR-LESTE
Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management

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PRESS RELEASE

Same Market Inaugurated by MSATM Minister

Vendors in the Same Market in Manufahi were presented with a new market building on Friday, February 20, during a ceremony attended by Minister of State Administration and Territorial Management Arcângelo Leite. The building was officially handed over to the Same Market Management Committee from the Manufahi District Assembly, which voted to build the new market as part of Manufahi's 2008 budget for the Local Development Programme.

During his remarks, the Minister explained that the credit for the new market goes to the people and the authorities in Manufahi District. "The Ministry of State Administration started the Local Development Programme in 2005. This programme is run by the Ministry, with a budget from the Ministry, but it is a new and unique programme because the community makes the plans and the decisions about this budget. The central government will never, and cannot, interfere," said the Minister during his remarks at the inauguration.

The Local Development Programme establishes local assemblies that have the authority to allocate and manage an annual budget for infrastructure projects. Proposals for projects are solicited from the community or district sector departments, and after a technical review of the proposals, the assembly votes on which projects to fund based on district priorities.

The Same market was identified as an important need for the community because the existing market building was overflowing with vendors. "Some people said they were selling out in the sun, some said they were selling out in the rain, and some people said they had no place to sell. We can now begin to respond to this problem, bit by bit," said the District Development Officer Jose A. da C. Braz, during the inauguration ceremony.

Mrs. Alcina da Costa, a vendor at the Same market, explained why local vendors felt they needed a new market. "We had no place [to sell things], so we would try to earn our living on side of the road. They built this new market because the old market was not wide enough," she said.

During the ceremony, Minister Leite explained that the Local Development Programme is not just about projects, but about the decision-making the process and mechanisms. “The programme tests a few aspects of the decentralization process such as community-level planning, and how to make proposals and decisions. For the Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management, the most important thing is that this program has high participation from the community through the local leadership. Through their participation we find out what are the most urgent needs of the community,” said the Minister.

“Our colleagues in Manufahi have once again shown to everyone, and especially the Government, that even with a small budget, they are capable of building a project that will benefit many people and is of good quality. As we move forward and the Government begins the decentralization process, in the areas of planning and managing a budget you have already shown us a very positive sign,” said Dr. Leite.

In 2008, the Manufahi District Assembly received a US \$177,000 budget, which it voted to allocate to 16 projects, one of which was the new Same market. The investments made by the Manufahi District Assembly in 2008 focused on education (34%), roads and irrigation (25%), markets (20%), agriculture (13%) and other projects (8%).

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