

La'o Hamutuk

Mid-Year Report

January – June 2006

Contents

Situational Background	1
Objectives.....	2
Program Activities	3
Publications.....	4
Radio Program.....	4
Public meetings.....	5
Areas of Investigation.....	5
Natural Resources	5
Multilateral Institutions	6
Bilateral Assistance	6
Rural Development	7
Justice.....	7
Security.....	7
Networking	8
Human Rights Monitoring Network (RMDH)	8
Popular Education (Dai Popular)	8
Core Group	8
Global Partnership for Armed Conflict Prevention (GPPAC).....	8
Conflict Prevention Organization Network	8
Personnel.....	9

Situational Background

Indonesia's 24-year occupation of Timor-Leste was horrific, causing the deaths of more than 100,000 Timor-Leste people. In 1999, the Indonesian military and their militia proxies launched a wave of terror and devastation before and after the vote for independence. In response, the international community established the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).

During the subsequent eight-month "emergency period," many international organizations came to Timor-Leste. These multilateral, governmental and non-governmental agencies provided desperately needed resources and expertise, but coordination was often poor, and many international workers were insensitive toward local needs and capabilities. Combined with errors and systemic weaknesses of UNTAET, the World Bank and other organizations, these factors led to

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numerous problems. Some decisions taken during that time, particularly regarding the military, police and justice, were poorly thought through and returned to haunt the people of Timor-Leste this year.

On 20 May 2002, sovereignty passed from the UN to Timor-Leste's elected government. Foreign governments, international financial institutions, and multinational corporations continue to play major roles. Billions of dollars have been spent on aid projects, and international advisors are throughout the government, but much remains unreconstructed and widespread skills shortages remain.

Much international money spent in Timor-Leste continues to bypass local government processes. Foreign companies dominate telecommunications, the oil industry and other key sectors. International financial institutions remain influential. Although Timor-Leste and Australia have reached an interim compromise on maritime resources, long term economic independence remains precarious, relying on petroleum under the Timor Sea outside of Timor-Leste's control.

Powerful international forces will continue to buffet this small, new nation for the indefinite future, and the people of Timor-Leste continue to need and want the information, research and monitoring *La'o Hamutuk* provides. Our radio program reaches the entire nation; our *Bulletin* has a circulation larger than any Timor-Leste newspaper (in addition to its large readership via email and the web); our global connections have no parallel in Timor-Leste. People in Timor-Leste civil society, government, and international agencies tell us that *La'o Hamutuk's* work is still essential, and we expect to continue for many years.

The security crisis that escalated in Dili and throughout the country since April significantly impacted our staff and our work, motivating us to modify some of our priorities. This is discussed further below.

Objectives

The principal objective of *La'o Hamutuk* is to increase the Timor-Leste people's knowledge about and participation in the reconstruction and development of their country. We are implementing this with the following Strategic Goals:

- To monitor, analyze and provide information on the development of Timor-Leste, and to help make that process more just and responsive to Timor-Leste needs and desires.
- To empower the people of Timor-Leste, especially women, to participate more effectively in the development process.
- To facilitate relationships between the people of Timor-Leste and international solidarity networks, providing information on alternative development models.
- To increase communication and understanding between the people of Timor-Leste and international institutions and donors.
- To advocate for improvements in transparency, economic and social justice, human rights and democracy.
- To help Timor-Leste learn about and avoid the pitfalls of globalization, petroleum dependency and export-oriented "free market" economic policies.

- To strengthen *La'o Hamutuk's* effectiveness and internal organization.

Program Activities

This section describes activities which *La'o Hamutuk* carried out during the reporting period to achieve our objectives.

In late 2005, we planned to increase the capacity of *La'o Hamutuk* staff in research and writing skills during 2006. For several months during the first half of this year, we two Indonesian activists came to work with *La'o Hamutuk*, helping with organizational issues and providing in house training. Together with our trainers, we set up research and writing guidelines. We also held discussions among staff on issues that we research, sharing information and analysis.

We have actively developed our work on gender issues, in collaboration with national and international women's organizations, including UNIFEM, Fokupers and Rede Feto. *La'o Hamutuk* is involved in discussions and workshops concerning increasing the role of women in politics. These resulted in recommendations to improve the election law, such as a 30% quota for women representatives as a way to increase women's participation in political parties.

We changed our plan to send a representative to the Asia-Pacific Congress for Women in Politics in Manila, but one of our staffers participated in a training in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in January to increase our knowledge and analysis on gender development.

Beginning in April, violence and fear escalated in Timor-Leste, especially in Dili. This conflict emerged out of events and decisions which occurred in Timor-Leste over the last six years, which had manifested themselves since February. It has created a serious condition of insecurity for the people of Timor-Leste. Many people became victims in this conflict by losing their houses, losing their families, and/or being displaced from their homes. Many *La'o Hamutuk* staff members spent weeks or months living in camps with other Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), a very difficult situation for them personally and for the organization, making it difficult for us to carry out *La'o Hamutuk* activities as planned. At the same time, as a civil society organization which conducts monitoring and independent analysis, we have transformed some of our work to monitor humanitarian relief.

As the crisis escalated, in June *La'o Hamutuk* submitted extensive recommendations to the United Nations Security Council and Secretary-General about issues the UN should consider as it designs its next mission in Timor-Leste. We also made several interventions in meetings with Mr. Ian Martin (the envoy of Secretary-General Kofi Annan), as well as meeting with the Independent Commission of Inquiry sent by the UN to investigate violence in April and May.

Publications

We published one *Bulletin* in April analyzing the CMATS treaty signed by Australia and Timor-Leste last January, and including an article by then-Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri responding to previous *La'o Hamutuk* articles about oil dependency, our response to the Prime Minister, some other reports, and an editorial on the report by the CAVR Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

We are finishing a *Bulletin* which analyzes the mandate of the Joint Task Force (the international military force invited into Timor-Leste at the end of May), and the role of the Joint Task Force in restoring peace in Timor-Leste. We will write another analysis on the mandate and responsibilities of the new UN Mission.

We are preparing a *Surat Popular*, our popular education page, about the petroleum fund, and plan others on other issues.

We continually updated our website, www.laohamutuk.org, with reports, statements and press releases. By the end of the reporting period, approximately 480 people were visiting the website every day, more than double the number of visitors at the beginning of 2006.

Radio Programs

Our public issues interview/discussion program continues to be broadcast weekly on Radio Timor-Leste, which reaches the entire country. During the crisis we focused our broadcasts on relevant issues, interviewing different people to share their points of view and analyses, although we were not able to broadcast in May and June due to the crisis. Our programs during the reporting period included:

- **Jungun Ianfu:** Perkumpulan HAK's research on sexual abuse by Japanese military in Timor-Leste during World War II. Guests: Amado Hei (human rights lawyer and Eriko (Japanese activist)
- **The CMATS Treaty with Australia.** Guests: Manuel Tilman (National Parliament) and Justino da Silva (NGO Forum)
- **Agriculture Rehabilitation Program** – interviews with community people in Carau Ulun village where the program has been carried out
- **NGO representation on the Petroleum Fund Consultative Council.** Guests: Justino da Silva (NGO Forum) on how NGOs representatives were selected, and the selected people Thomas Freitas and Maria Dias
- **International Women's Day**
- **CAVR Report**
- **Civil society demonstration against sexual violence by Indonesian military in Passabe (Oecusse).** Guests: Isabel Ferreira (Adviser for Human Rights to Prime Minister) and representatives of Fokupers who organized the demonstration
- **The Statute for lawyers,** in conjunction with the Judicial Systems Monitoring Program
- **Transformation of Falintil into F-FDTL.** Guests: Aniceto Neves (Perkumpulan HAK) and Justino da Silva, (NGO Forum)

- **Development Partners (Donors) Meeting.** Guest: Maria Angelina Sarmento from the NGO Forum
- **Opening of the Institute for Popular Education Training Center in Bucoli.** Speech by Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri and interviews with local people

Public meetings

During the first six months of 2006, *La'o Hamutuk* organized public meetings, attended by civil society, media, government officials, students and others:

- **Truth and Friendship Commission.** Speakers: Felicidade Guterres (Truth and Friendship Commissioner), Nelson dos Santos (General Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and Jose Luis Oliveira (Director, Perkumpulan HAK). Moderator: Tiago Sarmento (Judicial System Monitoring Program)
- **Final report of CAVR.** Speakers: José Estevão (CAVR Commissioner and member of TFC staff), Aderito Soares (human rights attorney). Moderator: Guteriano Nicolau (*La'o Hamutuk*)

Areas of Investigation

La'o Hamutuk's research and monitoring work is divided among four principal teams. In addition, we have investigated some other issues in response to the current crisis. This section discusses our main foci during the reporting period:

Natural Resources

La'o Hamutuk has actively monitored Timor-Leste's development of natural resources since 2001. In January, we met with George Soros and Joseph Bell of the Open Society Institute, who worked on developing the Petroleum Fund law in São Tomé e Príncipe. A few weeks later, the governments of Timor-Leste and Australia signed the CMATS (Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea) Treaty to share the proceeds of the biggest reserve of natural gas in the contested seabed area, called Greater Sunrise. We analyzed the agreement, sharing our findings through national and international media and solidarity networks. We also sent a letter to all political parties in Parliament, urging that they reject the treaty for renegotiation. *La'o Hamutuk* wrote an article on CMATS for *Multinational Monitor* and provided most of the information for several others, including one in *Dollars and Sense*.

For the last couple of years, the Timor-Leste and Australia, together with oil companies, have been discussing whether the LNG Plant to process Sunrise gas would be built in Timor-Leste or in Darwin, Australia. Woodside Petroleum has done a study on the cost to the oil companies of bringing the LNG to Timor-Leste. *La'o Hamutuk* has begun our own research: if the LNG plant comes to Timor-Leste, how can we minimize the costs and maximize the benefits for the people of Timor-Leste? In addition to local and national economic development, we are looking into economic, social, environmental, political, economic and human rights impacts of the project. To guide the project design and implementation, we formed an advisory committee with members from local civil society organizations concerned about oil and gas issues. Our research involved interviews with government officials, oil companies, experts, NGOs, community leaders and grass-

roots people. We also brought in two foreign consultants with expertise in economics and engineering, who came to Timor-Leste for two weeks in May. We conducted a field trip to Baucau, Lautem (Com, Los Palos and Lore) and Viqueque (although our plan to go to Beaco was prevented by road conditions). We are currently completing the research and writing the report.

We continued to update our OilWeb CD-ROM and monitor the first bidding rounds since independence for offshore oil and gas acreage, both in Timor-Leste's undisputed maritime area and in the Joint Petroleum Development Area. In addition, we followed developments in the *Oceanic Exploration v. ConocoPhillips* lawsuit, and kept journalists informed on all these issues.

During July and August, staffer Guteriano Nicolau will give a presentation on bilateral assistance to Timor-Leste at the University of Brasilia, followed by a trip to New York and Washington to meet with institutions and organizations working on petroleum issues, as well as strengthening *La'o Hamutuk's* relationships with sister organizations in the United States. In October, staffer Santina Soares has been invited to Oslo by the Norwegian government to participate in the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative conference; she will also attend the International Forum on Oil, Human Rights and Environmental Reparation in Coca, Ecuador, organized by the Oilwatch Network.

Multilateral Institutions

We organized a few meetings with the Country Manager of the World Bank to discuss their policies for poverty reduction. We also attended a meeting with World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz when he visited Timor-Leste, and gave some suggestions about the World Bank's programs in Timor-Leste.

We conducted research on the World Bank-administered Agricultural Rehabilitation Project in Manufahi, Liquiça, Bobonaro and Dili. This research began in January, but we have decided to postpone publishing it because the current situation has diverted people's interest to other issues.

We provided information and briefings to numerous journalists and visitors to Timor-Leste, including a Just Coffee fair trade delegation from the USA. In addition, Australian Professor Helen Hill led our staff through a valuable discussion on concepts of development that are broader than increasing cash income.

Bilateral Assistance

During last six months, we have begun researching Vocational Education, as we had planned. We have interviewed representatives from the two bilateral donors to this program (Brazil and Portugal), the International Labor Organizations, the Ministry of Labor and Community Reinsertion, and numerous program participants.

However, we had not completed our report when the conflict in Dili began to worsen, diverting our concentration to humanitarian and human rights issues. We will complete this report after the situation has calmed down, when readers will be able to give it attention.

Rural Development

We began research on the OCAP program in Oecusse, through Internet and other references, and conducted interviews with officials in Dili. We had planned a field visit to Oecusse, but unfortunately the current situation does not allow this, so we will do it in the future.

Justice

We continue to work actively with the Timor-Leste National Alliance for International Tribunal, joining with them to urge the public release of the CAVR report.. We did some campaigning, public meetings, radio programs and analysis on the final report of CAVR. We also had several national and international media interviews about this issue. *La'o Hamutuk* opposed the government's proposal to criminalize defamation. As inadequate justice is a major factor in the current crisis, we expect to continue researching these relationships.

Security

In response to the escalating crisis, we created an additional area of research related to security and the presence of the international Joint military Task Force. We are monitoring the performance of JTF, in terms of their role to prevent violence and to re-establish security. We also analyzed the Status of Forces Agreements which specify the mandates and privileges of the JTF, and posted them on our website. From April on, we gave numerous interviews to international media looking for information about the confusing, evolving situation. In late May and early June, one *La'o Hamutuk* staffer was in New York, where he was a guest on a half-dozen radio talk shows all over the United States. As the UN Security Council and staff wrestled with what to do now, we drew lessons from our six years of research to recommend that they not repeat the same mistakes, advocating throughout the process of defining the next UN Mission in Timor-Leste.

La'o Hamutuk is an active member of the Human Rights Monitoring Network (RMDH) which monitors human rights violence together with the office of Provedor. For two weeks after the 23-25 May crisis we focused on the humanitarian situation, security and the arrested people in IDP camps and community. Based on the results of our monitoring, we provided recommendations and suggestion to Site Liaison Support (SLS) and interagency groups which provide support and interface between the international community and the IDPs, and also to the government.

Our joint monitoring group has had meetings with various agencies, including the Joint Task Force and International Police, to discuss security and to give suggestions to improve the effectiveness of the Joint Task Force.

We also helped facilitate family reintegration. In the joint monitoring, our staff focused on gender-based violence, referring several such cases to agencies including Fokupers, Rede Feto and PRADET.

Networking

Part of *La'o Hamutuk's* strategy of advocacy is to work with other organizations with similar programs to strengthen our shared influence. In this regard, we have been involved with several networks during the reporting period:

Human Rights Monitoring Network (RMDH)

This network was created in early May 2006, and involves organizations which monitor human rights and justice, including Perkumpulan HAK, JSMP, Fokupers, Forum Tau Matan, student groups, Protestant church organizations, Rede Feto and *La'o Hamutuk*. During the current situation, RMDH has been monitoring the violence, producing non-partisan reports which attempt to reject rumors and describe what actually happened. As a member of the network, *La'o Hamutuk* began by gathering information about the violence on 28 April and related events. Since May, RMDH, in conjunction with the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice, has been monitoring all issues related to the current crisis, including food, security and other needs for Internally Displaced Persons in Dili and the districts, the justice system, and security in the communities.

Popular Education (Dai Popular)

At the beginning of 2006, we tried to stimulate more activity for Dai Popular, including sharing information from the previous exchange with Cuba. However we have not been able to follow up because members of the network were busy with their own programs. However, we did provide organization to send a Dai Popular representative to the Cuba Solidarity conference in India, and published his report in our *Bulletin*.

Core Group

The objective of this network is to monitor the overall national budget, including oil and gas revenue. Its involves several organizations with relevant programs, including *La'o Hamutuk*, Luta Hamutuk, NGO Forum, Oxfam Australia, Perkumpulan HAK, Verupupuk (a grass roots organization in Lospalos), Mata Dalan Institute (MDI) and student groups.

We have conducted discussions with community people in Aileu, Suai, Same and Dili, at which *La'o Hamutuk* gave presentations on the Timor Sea negotiations. We also had several meetings with the Director of the National Budget to discuss the execution of the 2005 budget and the proposed budget for 2006.

Global Partnership for Armed Conflict Prevention (GPPAC)

This is a new project, in coordination with groups in other Southeast Asian countries. We set up a program for community level dialogue in the Becora, Bebonuk and Comoro neighborhoods in Dili.

Conflict Prevention Organization Network

This network was established in February 2006 to bring together organizations which have programs to prevent conflict. We are defining the structure and terms of reference, and appointing two people to work in the secretariat. However, since the crisis we have not been able to meet to discuss activities.

Personnel

During the first half of 2006, *La'o Hamutuk* included the following staff with the following areas of work:

Full-time throughout the reporting period

- **Maria Afonso.** Representative to the Alliance for International Tribunal, justice monitoring, and finance. *La'o Hamutuk* decided not continue her contract at the end of this reporting period.
- **Alex Grainger.** Multilateral and bilateral assistance research, personnel, finance, fundraising and organizational coordination.
- **Yasinta Lujina.** Bilateral assistance monitoring, rural development research, personnel, finance and *Bulletin* coordination.
- **Inês Martins.** Rural development research, public meetings, radio program and organizational coordination.
- **Guteriano Nicolau.** Natural resources and budget monitoring, and computer support.
- **Santina Soares.** Natural resources monitoring, bilateral assistance research, fundraising and public meetings.

During part of the reporting period, or part-time

- **Bella Galhos.** Multilateral assistance and radio program. After eight months with *La'o Hamutuk*, Bella decided to leave to be active with a political party.
- **Titi Irawati.** In-house training on writing and editing, as well as organizational issues, finishing in May. Originally from Indonesia, Titi remains in Dili and continues to help *La'o Hamutuk* as a volunteer.
- **Nugroho Kacasungkana.** An Indonesian activist based in Dili, Nug provided in-house training on issue development, research and organizational structure throughout the reporting period.
- **Charlie Scheiner.** Natural resources, justice, UN lobbying, and administrative support. Charlie worked in Dili from February through May, and from New York at other times.
- **Lidia Tindle.** Rural development, GPPAC and crisis response. Lidia arrived in Dili from the U.K. to join *La'o Hamutuk* in late April.