

TO'OS BA MORIS DI'AK

Quarterly Newsletter for the TOMAK Program

October 2017



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INTRODUCING TOMAK

Welcome to the first quarterly newsletter for TOMAK (To'os ba Moris Di'ak, or Farming for Prosperity), a 5-10 year agricultural livelihoods program supported by the Australian Government in Timor-Leste.

This newsletter series provides a snapshot of our assessments and approaches, as well as our work with partners and communities. It outlines where and how we are collaborating with other initiatives and programs, and highlights key challenges that we are trying to overcome. It will also feature key stories and developments from the field, including both achievements and learnings.

TOMAK works with and through local and national partners, and we will introduce these important partnerships throughout this newsletter series.

TOMAK has two linked objectives:

1. Improve **food security** & household **nutrition** for farming families, and
2. Support the development of **commercial agriculture** in Timor-Leste

The target area for the first phase of TOMAK is 66 suku located in inland areas of Timor-Leste with reasonable agricultural potential. These suku are located in 3 municipalities - Bobonaro, Baucau and Viqueque.



PRODUCTS WITH POTENTIAL



Baucau
Bobonaro



Bobonaro
Viqueque



Viqueque
Baucau



Baucau
Bobonaro



Bobonaro
Baucau

TOMAK is working with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) to help farmers improve production of a number of agricultural products.

The program started with an investigation into products (or value chains) with the most potential to increase income for farmers. As part of this assessment, TOMAK considered the work of previous and existing agricultural programs (to avoid crowding or duplication), the nutritional value of different produce, and the role of women in various aspects of production, processing and sale.

From a 3-step assessment process, a number of value chains were selected for initial support. These include onions (red onions and other onion varieties), mung beans, peanuts and red rice. TOMAK is establishing demonstration plots (demplots) and associated Farmer

Field Days for these crops to help farmers select the best varieties, learn new techniques, and incorporate time-saving technologies such as drip irrigation.

An additional assessment into the potential for smallholder pig production showed reasonable local demand for a fresh pork market if production and sale prices can be lowered. TOMAK is now working with MAF to develop a pilot project exploring cost-effective diets and rearing practices, building on the work of previous pig projects.

TOMAK will continue exploring the market potential of agricultural products, as we learn more about these and other value chains.

The TOMAK value chain analyses and the smallholder pig production assessment are available on the TOMAK website [here](#).

THIN MARKETS



A key challenge is finding market opportunities for farmers to sell their produce. The private sector for agricultural products in Timor-Leste remains thin, and local producers often struggle to compete against cheap imports. TOMAK is responding to this by remaining flexible and open to emerging opportunities, and collaborating with other programs such as the Market Development Facility.

PROMOTING THE ROLE AND VOICE OF WOMEN FARMERS



Dinorah Granadeiro (centre) and the Rede Feto secretariat.

Rede Feto is a national network of women's organisations and a key voice in advocating for women's rights, representation, and justice at the national level. The network includes women's organisations from rural areas that support women agricultural producer groups.

Through a partnership with TOMAK, Rede Feto is deepening its engagement with women producers, with a particular focus on agricultural production, market access, and nutrition. Earlier this year, Rede Feto organised a national conference on women's empowerment, nutrition and market systems. The conference facilitated key organisations to come together, build skills and knowledge, and improve their collaboration and networks.

"Some of our members work directly with communities in this sector but they face issues that require technical support and greater understanding of their market options," says Dinorah Granadeiro, Executive Director of Rede Feto.

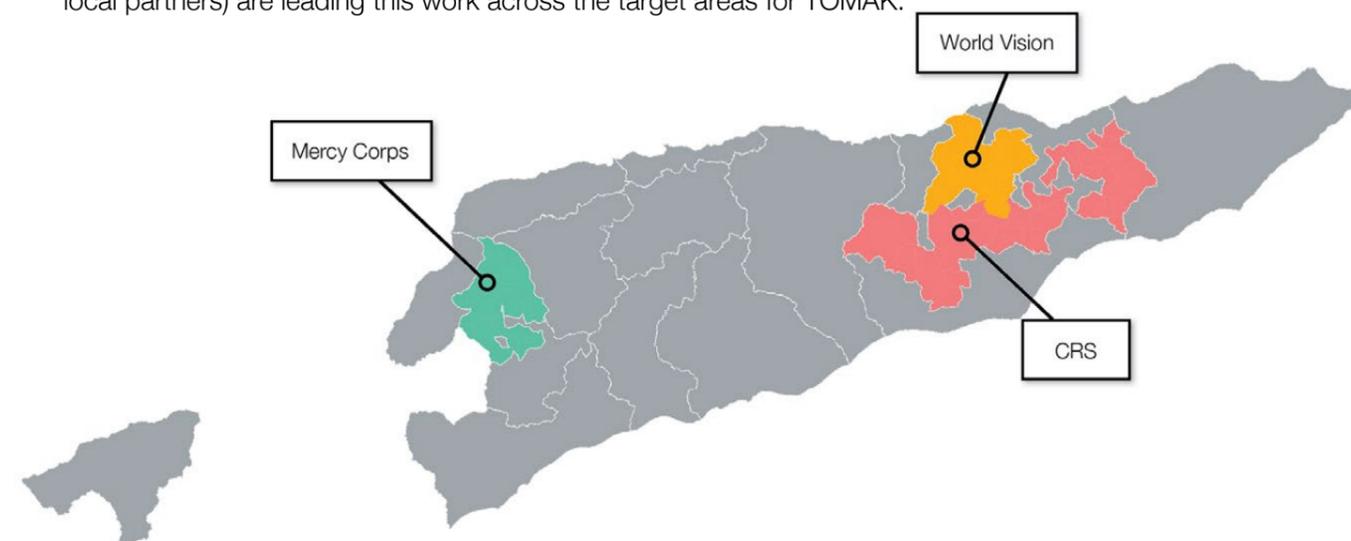
TOMAK is now providing Rede Feto with follow-on support to facilitate field exchanges between women producer groups, encourage greater networking and collaboration, and develop advocacy and engagement strategies in agriculture, nutrition and markets. This ongoing cooperation is helping foster a strong relationship with Rede Feto and building enthusiasm among women's organisations and producer groups. "We are very proud to work with TOMAK," says Ms. Granadeiro. "The program has given us not just financial support but the support of its experts, so that we can improve Rede Feto's work in the agricultural sector."



Women producer groups visit Kmanek supermarket to learn about their business model as part of a National Conference organised by Rede Feto.

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE NUTRITION FOR FARMING FAMILIES

TOMAK is applying nutrition-sensitive agriculture approaches to improve the availability, diversity and reliable supply of nutritious food. We are supporting social and behaviour change activities designed to influence household nutrition-related behaviours. Three Lead NGOs (supported by a consortium of community-based local partners) are leading this work across the target areas for TOMAK.



TOMAK's nutrition work focuses mainly on the following behavior themes:

- Household nutrition;
- Infant & young child feeding and care;
- Maternal nutrition;
- Household decision-making, responsibilities and male involvement

This work is guided by a recently developed Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) strategy that articulates the intended audiences and key behaviours that will be promoted through TOMAK under each behaviour theme. The strategy also describes specific approaches that will be used to create change.

The **key behaviours** described in the strategy start

with promoting a **targeted** set of feasible practices that will be monitored and revised over time. Key behaviours take into consideration what audiences are *already* doing (e.g. mothers are able to make decisions around what vegetables to prepare for family meals) and attempt to prioritise and focus on key practices that audiences are *not* doing and which could have a significant impact on household nutrition.

TOMAK recently completed stakeholder consultations in its three implementation municipalities and is now integrating feedback into the SBC strategy. By working with Lead NGOs and their local partners, TOMAK aims to build off existing relationships and experience at the community level in its efforts to change household level behaviours.

COMING UP NEXT

Mung bean harvests from demplots in Bobonaro & Viqueque (Partner: MAF)

Onion harvests from demplots in Baucau & Bobonaro (Partner: MAF)

Case study research (ongoing) into **women's experiences negotiating land use** for agricultural purposes (Partners: Rede ba Rai & OHM)

Focus group discussions with agriculture students in Bobonaro to explore motivations & desire to stay living & working in rural areas.

Establishing **peanut demplots** in Baucau and Bobonaro (Partner: MAF)

First round of **business training with farmers** in Baucau, Bobonaro & Viqueque (Partner: IADE)

Final report from **farmer entrepreneur study** (Partner: IADE). Preliminary findings already available.

National visioning workshop: Increasing **visibility & leadership of women** in the agriculture, nutrition & market sectors (Partner: Rede Feto)

Strengthening MAF chicken vaccination campaign & **integrating nutrition materials & activities** to increase consumption of local eggs and meat. (Partner: MAF)

Nutrition-sensitive agriculture training with NGO and government partners.

FARMING AS A BUSINESS

To move from subsistence to commercial agriculture, farming families need the skills to manage their farm as a business. In partnership with Timor-Leste's Institute for Business Support (IADE), TOMAK has developed a 3-module training program to teach the basics of business to female and male farmers. A set of 3 manuals guides IADE trainers through practical activities and real life examples they can use to introduce key concepts to farmers, including supply and demand, value chains, planning and record-keeping. Lessons and activities have been designed for use in low literacy settings.



TOMAK facilitated a 3-day training of trainers (ToT) with IADE in September 2017, focusing on interactive facilitation techniques to use with farmers. IADE will begin training farmers in TOMAK's target areas in November 2017.

The 3-module training guide 'Agribusiness: A Path to Prosperity' is available through IADE for use by government, NGOs, and other agencies.

For more information about TOMAK, please visit www.tomak.org or contact info@tomak.org.

 TOMAK Timor-Leste

 TOMAKTimorLeste

TOMAK is a 5-10 year agricultural livelihoods program supported by the Australian Government in Timor-Leste. TOMAK is implemented by Adam Smith International in partnership with Mercy Corps.

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