



OFFICE OF LOCAL SUSTAINABILITY

Leading USAID's locally led development efforts

February 2020



PHOTO CREDIT: USAID/TIMOR-LESTE

The Timor-Leste Mission Local Works Team met with young leaders for a pilot listening session.

Timor-Leste: Listening for Youth Engagement

With 70% of its population under the age of 30, Timor-Leste is one of the youngest countries in the world. However, many youth lack the opportunities, voice, and power to contribute to their country's sustainable development. The [Local Works](#) program in Timor-Leste will identify the priorities of the country's youth population and support youth in leading productive lives where their voices are heard. Last month, the

[Office of Local Sustainability](#) (E3/LS) met with the Mission's Local Works team to map youth stakeholders and plan for a listening tour across all 13 municipalities of the country. "Listening" is a locally led development methodology in which development practitioners and local actors engage in intentional and open-ended conversation around a topic. It creates the space for mutual learning, building trust, and identifying local priorities. On January 23, the Mission welcomed nine young leaders from diverse youth organizations in Dili, the capital city, for a pilot listening session. Participants said they were happy to participate in a candid discussion about the lives and challenges of youth in their country.



PHOTO CREDIT: EQUAL EXCHANGE



Mexico: Boosting Biodiversity and Reforestation

In Mexico, [Small Project Assistance Program](#) (SPA) funding supported a partnership with a Peace Corps Volunteer, a community land organization, and the National Forest Commission of Mexico to promote reforestry, medicinal plants, and biodiversity.

Working in an arid region prone to forest fires, this project has already had several major accomplishments, including: renovating a tree nursery with over 39,000 pine trees; holding a series of medicinal plant workshops for the community; constructing a new medicinal plant garden for demonstrations; and establishing a biodiversity monitoring program with five local university students.

The project is expanding, with a neighboring land organization hoping to join the partnership and requests coming in from the community for more medicinal plant workshops. Plus, the tree nursery has an additional 20,000 pine trees ready to reforest more than 25 hectares of land.

Mexico: Increasing Youth Engagement in Coffee Cooperatives

E3/LS implementing partner [Equal Exchange](#), in partnership with [Finca Triunfo Verde](#), an agricultural cooperative in Mexico, has identified innovative ways to practice inclusive development in the USAID-funded [Cooperative Development Program](#) (CDP). The cooperative represents 507 small coffee producers throughout the Chiapas mountains, a region where coffee rust has destroyed coffee crops and further marginalized youth by reducing economic opportunities.

With CDP assistance, the cooperative introduced new crop varieties, diversified production, and capitalized on new financial instruments to help members recover yields lost to coffee rust. To better integrate unemployed youth into the cooperative, Equal Exchange provided technical assistance in coffee and honey production, soil health, agroforestry, and gender integration.

This support inspired a group of young farmers to create their own model farms last year. To further incentivize their interest in coffee production, the cooperative began providing them with monthly stipends. By the end of the program, the cooperative plans to distribute low-interest loans to these young farmers, allowing them to purchase their own land or invest in their farms.

Transitioning to Locally Led Development

“Stopping As Success: Transitioning to Locally Led Development” (SAS), an E3/LS [co-created research initiative](#), is a three-year USAID funded collaborative learning project which aims to provide positive examples and guidance for how international development actors can foster locally led development, either through successful and responsible transitions out of projects or via relationships with local partners. SAS has produced 20 case studies of transitions in 13 countries, and more than 20 resources and practical tools to inform transition processes for international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), NGOs/civil society organizations (CSOs), and donors. Visit the project's [redesigned website](#) to check out case studies and tools for a range of international development audiences.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPDATES

From the Field

- E3/LS staff traveled to Kosovo to support the evolution of the Mission's [Local Works](#)

program planning and design. E3/LS staff facilitated the development of USAID/Kosovo Local Works team's initial learning agenda and program plan. This program focuses on addressing socio-economic cohesion issues of marginalized populations engaged in informal recycling collection by strengthening recycling systems. Staff participated in a stakeholder workshop with the local private sector, marginalized communities, and municipal government staff to surface gaps, challenges, opportunities, and solutions to inform future Local Works activities' design and learning agenda.

- In January E3/LS staff supported USAID/Malawi in co-creation workshops with three local consortia, responding to the Mission's [Local Works](#) locally restricted Broad Agency Announcement (BAA). This BAA addresses the challenge of citizen agency and donor dependency by supporting locally owned and led development initiatives. Awards from this process will align with the Mission's new strategic emphasis on supporting, co-creating, and co-developing with a new cadre of Malawian organizations, helping to ensure that USAID's work is rooted in local culture and communities.
- A [Local Works](#)-funded program in Malawi is also celebrating a major milestone: for more than two years, USAID has supported implementing partner [World Connect's](#) work in Malawi to foster locally led development. To date, World Connect has partnered with communities in Malawi to launch 116 projects. Through Local Works, World Connect is investing more than \$500,000 in a broad range of local organizations and projects - from piloting portable solar energy in schools, to supporting women and girls through cooperatives.
- E3/LS staff traveled to Azerbaijan to support the Mission's [Local Works](#) program planning. The program will convene stakeholders from the private sector, civil society, and government to promote locally led, multi-stakeholder development to support professional and business associations in Azerbaijan. It will contribute to economic growth and civic engagement objectives. E3/LS staff met with Mission colleagues, other U.S. Embassy representatives, and local stakeholders to inform initial Local Works activities and theory of change development.

Locally Led Development Opportunities

- USAID's [Local Works](#) program is now accepting Letters of Interest from Missions. Local Works is the Agency's flagship program to advance locally led development and empower local actors to take the lead in solving their own development challenges. It provides resources to Missions to expand and deepen relationships with local actors. USAID Missions are invited to submit short Letters of Interest by April 8, 2020. It closely aligns with other Agency priorities, such as the New Partnerships Initiative (NPI). In fact, you may want to consider making Local Works a component of your Mission's NPI plan. [Click here](#) for application guidance and to learn more.
- USAID/Vietnam announces a new funding opportunity, "[USAID Local Works for Environmental Health](#)." The Mission is seeking applications from Vietnamese organizations to address environmental health-related issues. This program aims to change behaviors that cause environmental pollution and harm human health.

What We're Reading

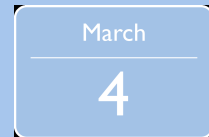
- USAID: "[Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting Fosters Local Ownership and, Ultimately, Better Results: A Review of the Evidence](#)"
- Local Systems Practice: "[Guide to Listening for Program Design](#)"
- Center for Global Development: "[How We Can Score Development Agencies on Evaluation and Learning Systems](#)"
- Cooperatives Europe: "[Good practices in international cooperative development: Why creating a knowledge sharing culture is key for international cooperative development work](#)"
- CDA Collaborative Learning Projects: "[All the Evidence We Need: Research to Support the Operationalization of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability](#)"

- USAID: "[Self-Reliance Learning Agenda](#)" (recently updated with new tools)

Staffing

- E3/LS is hiring! Learn more about opportunities with the Office:
 - [Mission Support Program Analyst](#)
 - [Training Coordinator](#)
 - [Knowledge Management and Learning Specialist](#)

SAVE THE DATE



Local Works Webinars (**For internal USAID staff only*)

[Join one of two webinars](#) to learn more about Local Works 2020:

- Session 1: 8:00 - 9:00 AM ET
- Session 2: 8:00 - 9:00 PM ET



Find out more
about our office!



Learn more about
locally led
development
**For internal USAID staff*



Questions?
Send us an
email