

A GENDER PERSPECTIVE AUDIT OF THE SECOND ROUND OF THE 2007 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF TIMOR-LESTE

The gender perspective audit of the 2nd Round of the 2007 Presidential Elections held on 9 May 2007 is conducted under the following themes:

1. Legal text enabling the 2nd round of the presidential elections
2. Electoral Administration Bodies
3. Voter Registration and Voter and Civic Education
4. Presidential Candidate's Political Platform
5. Electoral Observation
6. Media Monitoring

LEGAL TEXTS

1. The legal text enabling the 2nd round of the presidential elections is Law No. 7/2006. It states in Article 11 Election Criterion n.2:

“Where no candidate obtains more than the half of the validly expressed votes, a second voting shall be held.”

2. In Article 11 Election Criterion n.3, it states:

“Only the two candidates obtaining the highest number of votes shall be eligible to stand in a run-off election, provided they have not withdrawn their candidacies.”

3. The language in both n.2 and n.3 of Article 11 Election Criterion is gender neutral.

ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION BODIES

4. For the 2nd round of the 2007 presidential elections, the National Electoral Commission (CNE) promulgated a significant regulation which allows disaggregated data on the number of woman and men coming to vote to be recorded at the polling station.
5. Regulation No. 160/CNE/IV/07, REGULATION ON POLLING AND RESULT TABULATION PROCEDURES FOR THE SECOND ROUND OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, Article 16, g) reads as follows:

“The identification officer shall:

- g) Write down the voter registration card number or the voter's name and his/her Timorese passport number, as well as the voter's gender, in the electoral operations minutes."

6. The Electoral Gender Advisor and Assistant continued their effort to collect the sex disaggregated data of the polling staff employed by Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration (STAE) which was incomplete when the gender audit of the 1st round of the presidential elections was compiled. STAE did not have this information available then in its computer database in headquarter in Dili.
7. The overall data should now read:

DISTRICT	TOTAL NUMBERS OF BRIGADA	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL NUMBERS OF POLLING STAFF	MEN	WOMEN
<i>AILEU</i>	34	31	3	197	140	57
<i>AINARO</i>	23	21	2	180	133	47
<i>BAUCAU</i>	66	55	11	38?	23?	15?
<i>BOBONARO</i>	54	38	16	335	230	105
<i>COVALIMA</i>	31	24	7	205	103	102
<i>DILI</i>	50	34	16	587	355	232
<i>ERMERA</i>	54	48	6	380	233	147
<i>LIQUICA</i>	27	14	13	185	140	45
<i>LAUTEM</i>	39	33	6	245	165	80
<i>MANUFAHI</i>	33	24	9	?	?	?
<i>MANATUTO</i>	32	28	4	180	165	15
<i>OECUSSE</i>	25	24	1	205	135	70
<i>VIQUEQUE</i>	36	35	1	250	191	59
TOTAL	494	409	85	2987	2013	974

From the chart, it is noted that overall, women constitute only 17% of the brigadas. A breakdown by the districts reveals, at the low end of less than 10%, Viqueque (3%), Oecusse (4%), Aileu and Ainaro (9% each). Less than 20% are Ermera (11%), Manatuto (13%), Lautem (15%) and Baucau (17%). And above 20% woman brigadas composition are the districts of Covalima (23%), Manufahi (27%), Bobonaro (30%), Dili (46%) and Liquica (48%).

As for the overall percentage of women in relation to the total number of polling staff, it is 33%. A breakdown by district reveals the following: At the low end is only one district Manatuto (8%). This is followed by Viqueque and Liquica (24% each), Ainaro (26%), Aileu (28%). And above 30% are Bobonaro (31%), Lautem (33%), Oecusse (34%) and Baucau and Ermera (39% each). At the high end are Dili (40%) and Covalima (50%). At least 7 districts have 30% or more women as

polling staff. (Note that the data for Baucau is probably incorrect and the data for Manufahi is lacking.)

8. These percentages are reflective of conventional society where it is accepted that there are less women in leadership positions. However, STAE could have made a special effort to recruit competent women and achieve gender parity for the brigadas.
9. On 20 April 2007, the Court of Appeals found the request to proclaim the 9 April 2007 Presidential Elections submitted by presidential candidates Francisco Xavier do Amaral, Fernando “Lasama” de Araujo and Lucia Maria Brandao Freitas Lobato to be baseless. These presidential candidates made 13 allegations but none involved gender.
10. The EAS of UMMIT, during its debriefing session on the 1st round of the presidential elections held on 19 April 2007, invited the Electoral Gender Advisor (EGA) to conduct 4 training sessions in Gender and Elections to 64 UN advisory staff to CNE and STAE. To emphasize the importance of collecting sex disaggregated data, the EGA began each session by asking the participants to mark their attendance and sex in the attendance sign-in sheet – to the amusement of the participants! In total there were 34 women and 30 men.
11. A portfolio comprising of six documents forms the basis of the training. The 6 documents are (1) A gender perspective audit of the presidential elections of 9 April 2007, (2) A gender audit of the law enabling the national parliament elections of 30 June 2007, (3) An evaluation of women’s participation in the 1999, 2001 and 2002 elections by Milena Pires, (4) Partial achievements of Timor-Leste’s women, (5) A theoretical underpinning for gender perspectives in UN documents and (6) A few useful gender-based terminologies.
12. As can be seen from the hand-outs, the training was intended to give the participants a comprehensive grasp of the law and history of Timor-Leste on gender and elections as well as a theoretical grasp from UN documents, in particular, CEDAW, the SC resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security in post-conflict societies and SC resolution 1704 that established UNMIT where it calls for gender mainstreaming. Hence the training not only scrutinized Timor Leste (CNE and STAE) but also submitted the UNMIT’s EAS to a gender audit where it was concluded that EAS was lacking in gender sensitization training as well as in gender parity with respect to the number and senior positions occupied by men and women.
13. An essential goal of the training was to prepare the participants with the knowledge that the forthcoming parliamentary elections will see a 25 % quota of seats reserved for East Timorese women and for them to monitor the elections from this gender perspective.

VOTER REGISTRATION AND VOTER AND CIVIC EDUCATION

14. As for voter registration, there is nothing significant to report since only 30 days elapsed between the 1st and 2nd round of the presidential elections and no voter registration took place between the two events. STAE's press release of 11:00 hour on 9 May 2007 in Dili put the total number of registered voters at 524,073 men and women. The sex disaggregated data collected on polling day has not been released as yet.
15. With respect to paragraph 36¹ of the Gender Perspective Audit of the 1st round of the presidential elections of 13 April 2007, the following corrections are in order: UNDP did not describe the matter as a "controversy," but only informed that some CNE members said that the original words in the song were discriminatory to men in general and not specifically discriminatory to the male candidates.
16. Furthermore, the audit of the 1st round omitted to inform that UNDP had tried to ensure that women were visible in all the voter education material produced for STAE. For e.g., the voter shown marking the ballot and having her finger inked is a woman. UNDP also produced a poster specifically encouraging women to speak out.
17. The corrections to paragraph 35 of the audit of the 1st round of the presidential elections, where it referenced that there was only 1 woman out of 13 from UNMIT as advisory support staff to STAE, will be made when they are available.

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES' POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

18. The 2 candidates for the presidential run-off were Francisco Guterres - Lu-Olo and Jose Ramos Horta. Gender issues were almost absent during their campaigns.
19. On 27 April 2007, RTTL organized a debate between the 2 presidential candidates that was broadcast live by both the television and radio channels. However, gender as a subject in itself was not addressed directly. Both candidates spoke on poverty

¹ With respect to gender perspectives, UNDP - who produced the material for voter and civic education - informed of a controversy over a song urging women to exercise their vote. This was construed by the male members of CNE to denote that women should vote for the woman presidential candidate and therefore discriminatory against the male presidential candidates. This incident was collaborated by CNE Commissioner Maria Angelina Lopes Sarmiento who was the only person and woman commissioner to support the song in its original form. SOMET observer, Ms. Santana Soares pointed out that, although the song was amended to include men, the amended version cleverly reversed the stereotyped gender roles. In traditional Timorese society, it is men who speak out and women who reflect, while in the song, it is women who speak out and men who give their reflections!

and poverty reduction which obliquely touched upon gender in so far that domestic violence was raised as an example of a serious obstacle to poverty reduction.

20. A proposal by the women groups to hold another presidential debate on gender issues on 5 May 2007 could not be scheduled due to lateness of the proposal and prior commitments of Ramos Horta on that date.
21. The only interesting event, gender-wise, was a press release by Lu Olo on 4 May 2007 on prioritizing female literacy, in which he acknowledged that;

“Literacy is not just about reading and writing, but about empowering women to assert themselves politically and economically. It is also generally agreed the literate women are less likely to be victims of domestic violence, which is a major problem in all post-conflict societies.”

Lu Olo also proposed establishing a women’s unit in the Office of the President to help reinforce female literacy and other needs of women on the national development agenda.

22. UNMIT’s UNVs in the districts reported that the pattern observed in the first round of the presidential campaigns continued to apply during the 2nd round in that women were present at the political rallies of the candidates but in less number than men and passively listening. This was so despite STAE’s voter education on the ground, for example in Souro Lua, lautem, encouraging a more active participation from women. Women were also not prominent in organizing these events.
23. However, Manatuto reported an exception. A Fretilin rally during the week ending in 28 April 2007 was characterized as “very sensitive to gender.” Almost 40 % of attendees were women, both young and old. Women also assumed the key organizational roles for the event, as well as turning out to prepare the place and food.
24. Ironically, while women were less conspicuous at the political campaigns, they formed the majority at voter education sessions in clinics and during market days. Manatuto reported that women comprised most of the members of the voter education teams. They also form 50% of the participants at voter education sessions, which in some areas, highlighted the importance of women’s participation in the elections
25. As for gender issues raised or their omissions during the 2nd round of the presidential campaign, Oecussi reported that the people seemed to care solely about local issues such as road improvements and more food supply.
26. In Ainaro, Ramos-Horta addressed issues of education and rural development but not from gender perspectives. Likewise with Ramos Horta’s campaign in Ermera on 5 May 2007, even though 2 women representatives spoke at the event. In

Baucau, the female presidential candidate of the 1st round campaigned for Ramos Horta. Lucia Lobato reportedly did not raise gender issues. Neither did she do so during her endorsement speech for Ramos Horta in Maliana on 4 May 2007.

27. Manufahi reported that gender issues such as social care for widows and programmes to eradicate domestic violence were raised. Bobonaro presented an interesting list of women's expectations from the next president, as follows:
 - to resolve refugee/IDP problems and to rebuild damaged homes;
 - to stop fighting among the various groups;
 - to solve food shortages;
 - to establish universities at district levels;
 - to have adequate staff, equipment and medicine in hospitals and clinics;
 - to construct new roads and ensure electrical supply;
 - to ensure consideration of women issues by the new government and participation of women in all levels of decision-making in the new government.

28. The feel from the districts, through informal and random interviews with women in public places and through civic education sessions, was that they would participate in the 2nd round of the presidential elections. Few of the women interviewed belonged to church or women's organizations (OMT / OPTM) or political parties. However, some women were not aware that there would be a 2nd round but when told, they expressed that they would go to vote. It was observed that women were interested and excited to participate in the presidential run-off of 9 May 2007.

ELECTORAL OBSERVATION

29. As with the 1st round of the presidential elections, a large number of national and international observers were on hand.

30. International observers came from 30 groups and totaled 288 persons. However, the International Observer Coordinator of UNDP Project "Support the Timorese Electoral Cycle" did not provide the gender breakdown to these 288 persons. The gender breakdown for international observers during the 1st round of the presidential elections was 34% women – if that can serve as any guide.

31. STAE's press release of 9 May 2007 listed 2014 national observers of which 756 were women, i.e., 38%.

32. STAE's press release also specified that there were 195 women electoral supervisors for Francisco Guterres Lu Olo out of 1409 i.e., 14%. For Jose Ramos Horta, there were 189 women electoral supervisors out of 1387, i.e., 14% too.

33. In an attempt to raise gender awareness in electoral observation activities between the 1st and 2nd rounds of the presidential elections, the EGA requested the kind offices of National and International Observer Coordinators of the UNDP Project “Support the Timorese Electoral Cycle” to disseminate to all national and international observers, Chapter 7 of **Women and Elections: Guide to Promoting the Participation of Women in Elections (UN, 2005)** which provides a quick reference guide to assist headquarters and field-based actors from the United Nations, Governments and civil society working to promote greater participation of women in electoral processes in post-conflict countries. This source can be obtained on <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/index.html#pub>
34. Positive response to the above was received from ANFREL² which informed that it was incorporating sections of Chapter 7 into its website. SOMET³ advised that it revised its observation form for the 2nd round of the presidential elections to pay more attention to gender issues. UNIFEM also welcomed the resource material.
35. Gender perspectives were, nonetheless, generally absent from the reports of the various national and international observers.
36. Komeg, the largest national observation coalition, produced a detailed report which touched on problems of manipulations, harassments and intimidations but without gender bias to them.
37. The European Union’s report has a sub-heading “Participation of Women,” where it observed:

Women participated in all aspects of these elections, although, as in the first round, their participation does not match their numbers in the population. EU EOM observers estimated that women made up approximately 25% of the audiences at the 28 campaign rallies that they observed. At polling staff level, EU EOM observed 38% women, with women being the chairperson in 16% of cases.

UNMIT has appointed an electoral gender advisor, who has made efforts to raise the profile of gender issues, carrying out training and producing a gender audit of the first round of the presidential elections. Voter turnout will be disaggregated by gender for the first time in these second round elections, due to the inclusion of a male/female box to tick on each polling station’s list of voters. This is a simple measure that produces useful information as to how much of a gender gap there is.

MEDIA MONITORING AND GENDER PERSPECTIVES

² Asian Network for Free Elections

³ Solidarity Observer Mission for East Timor

38. This second report assesses the developments of issues that were raised in the 1st round of the presidential elections. A vital concern is how gender (women in this context) transpired in the media during the period of the 2nd round when the woman presidential candidate has been eliminated in the 1st round.

A NON-HIT MAKER DOES NOT MEAN A NON-IMAGE MAKER: CNE SPOKESPERSON MARIA ANGELINA LOPES SARMENTO.

39. This 2nd round of the presidential elections marked the rising star of Ms. Sarmento as the active spokesperson of CNE while Rev. Martinho Gusmao's public appearances dwindled.
40. It is to be recalled that during the 1st round of the presidential elections, Fr. Gusmao received wide press coverage. His press statements were scoops and headlines. But the full blast of the media upon him did not denote a positive image of CNE. Rather CNE was negatively projected as non-credible.
41. Fr. Gusmao caught the media's attention with his sensational remarks. To quote, but a few: Fr. Gusmao analogized the electoral law to that of a chopped chicken (ayam potong) – his colorful contribution to the electoral press vocabulary. Exchanges of personal disagreements with STAE director Thomas Cabral ran for almost one week in the press. His assertion that CNE had no budget competence brought a retort from Member of Parliament Joaquim, dos Santos that he should read the electoral law first. In response to MP Jacob Fernanda's complaint that CNE was one-sidedly focusing on Fretilin's electoral violations, Fr. Gusmao responded that he would go to prison in defense of his statements against ex-prime minister, Mari Alkatiri. When the issue of inserting symbols in the ballot paper was raised at the last minute before the 1st round of the presidential elections, Fr. Gusmao yelled that this would delay the elections since the printing of the ballot papers had began – which was not true. But most controversial was the airing of his personal view that he would throw in his vote for Fernando "Lasama" de Araujo for which he was strongly condemned by the international press. However, the national press did not catch on here.
42. For the 2nd round of the presidential election, Ms. Sarmento assumed the role of CNE spokesperson. She did not make headline news but this was not negative to CNE. Rather it was positive for CNE's image as she refrained from creating public confusion.
43. She tactfully handled the allegation that Thomas Cabral intentionally locked the premises of STAE to prevent CNE commissioners Manuela Leong Pereira, Dulce Vitor and Arif Abdullah Sagan from doing spot checks. She gave Mr. Cabral the benefit of the doubt that perhaps he did not do it on purpose. She avoided questions that were not addressed to her in her official capacity as CNE spokesperson. When wrongly quoted in the front page of Suara Timor Loro'sae as saying that "Alkatiri is

provocative,” she moved at once to correct the error with her original statement that “The Fretilin campaign in Manatuto uses provocative words” and so nib any controversy in the bud. Ms. Sarmento also corrected the press and TVTL’s projection of her as the second spokesperson of CNE, implying that Fr. Gusmao is the first spokesperson, by reminding them that they both have equal competencies and alternate in this function depending on their schedules.

44. It would be unfortunate if this treatment of Ms. Sarmento is due to a stereotyped hierarchical perception of gender, youth and size in the media – she is the youngest CNE commissioner and a tiny soft-spoken woman.
45. Of note is the development that Ms. Sarmento was listed as the only spokesperson by CNE for its series of press conferences at the Election Media Center in the wake of the second round of the presidential elections. Could this be read as an indication of CNE’s awareness to promote gender balance and that persistent and continued gender imbalance in a post-conflict society is sure recipe for internal conflict to be re-ignited?
46. Ms. Sarmento is now acknowledged as a person in her own rights when she was quoted in an international press as pleading for a violence free poll: “All Timorese people can contribute to changing the mentality of violence.”
47. Ms. Sarmento may not be a hit with the print media but she definitely projects a positive image of Timorese women.

WHAT’S UP WITH THE WOMAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE WHEN SHE IS OUT OF THE SECOND ROUND? LUCIA LOBATO.

48. Lucia Lobata finished fifth of the 8 presidential candidates in the 1st round – not a bad record for the youngest and first ever female presidential candidate in Timor-Leste’s first independent democratic elections.
49. She joined with defeated presidential candidates Francisco Xavier do Amaral and Fernando “La Sama” de Araujo in requesting the Court of Appeals to annul the first round of the presidential elections on grounds of irregularity. But the Court of Appeals ruled against them.
50. She next threw her weight behind Ramos Horta in the 2nd round of the presidential elections. The news reported that she was always present at his campaigns. However, the relevant question is: did she engender Ramos Horta’s campaigns with her endorsement? Unfortunately for Timor Leste and its women, she did not seize this opportunity to advance the gender agenda.

A TOUGH POST NEEDS A TOUGH BOSS: ANA PESSOA

51. Ana Pessoa, the Minister for State Affairs, stole the limelight when she called on STAE director Thomas Cabral to correct himself and change his attitude. At the same time, she noted that voter education was deficient: the people could not understand the electoral process or the criteria to apply in choosing their presidential candidate.
52. In turn, Ana Pessoa was herself called to task by presidential candidate, Ramos-Horta, who allegedly threatened to have her sacked for alleged manipulation of STAE. To the Timorese press' credit, it treated this discord between these two persons totally on the professional plane.
53. During the ceremony to distribute ballot boxes, Ms. Pessoa called on the STAE district directors not to be afraid of the "Malae" (foreigners) since the United Nations was invited into the electoral process to provide surveillance over STAE. She also called on the press to play a constructive, not destructive role, through accurate and exact reporting of events in the field. (Timor Post)

WHERE IS KIRSTY DURING THE SECOND ROUND?

54. The press packaged the First Lady, Kirsty Sword Gusmao as the "Mother of the Nation." She campaigned on eradicating corporal punishment in schools and at home. And she highlighted decreasing poverty as a means to decrease domestic violence. (Timor Post & Jornal Nacional)

REDE-FETO PRESS RELEASE

55. On 2 May 2007, REDE-FETO released a press statement for the second round of the presidential elections as well as the parliamentary elections that was disseminated through radio and TV. It was translated into 4 local dialects - Fataluco, Makasae, Mambae and Baekeno – an attempt to respect diversity and achieve the broadest reach among women of other tongues apart from Tetun.
56. REDE FETO appealed to women to use their vote intelligently to make a difference. Women should scrutinize the political platforms of the presidential candidates to evaluate their defense of women and children's interests as assured by stability, peace and love for the nation. Women should furthermore demand accountability from the elected candidate to make good on his electoral promises. (REDE FETO press release)

FOCUS ON WOMEN IN WORLD PRESS DAY DURING THE 2ND ROUND

57. MP Maria Paixao (PSD) commended the national press for its function, during the five years of independence, to inform the people of the government's action. She emphasized the priority to be accorded to an autonomous press. (STL)

58. On the contrary, MP Joseva ALveras Pereira Soares (Fretilin) assessed that the press had made no significant development. She called on media managers to improve the quality of writing in both news and opinion sections and to educate the people in critical analysis of current situations. (STL)
59. The Executive Director of Fokupers, Rosa Maria de Sousa, used the occasion to call on the press to help educate and promote the role of women in development. (STL)

THE RECONSTRUCTED VOICES DURING THE 2ND ROUND

60. The plea of the small people to the presidential candidates can be heard indirectly through the following press reportages:
61. When the Virgin Mary's statue visited Akadirhun, Dili, its inhabitants appealed to the Virgin Mary to intercede for the children, who are the future of the nation, to be able to go to school in a violence-free environment, and for youth not to be drunk or to engage in violence. (Timor Post)
62. Milena, who recently obtained a B.Sc. in Biology, felt that it was not easy to pursue her studies when the daily preoccupation was "rice and green beans." She worried that the security situation would deteriorate as election day approached and requested the presidential candidates for assurances. To her, the president must solve the refugee problems. (STL)
63. Sister Magdalena spoke of structural violence with regard to the 2006 crisis where youth were involved. She explained that it is an indirect form of violence that is permitted in the culture and permeates the political and economic systems. It occurs when education and health opportunities are denied. (Timor Post)
64. Maria, a street vendor, expressed happiness that the price of a kilo of rice had gone down. She was now assured that her children would be able to eat. (STL)
65. Shelly, 28, from Maliana complained that the price of rice sky-rocketed during the 2006 crisis and this made her choked in her throat when she ate it. (Timor Post)
66. Filomena, 45, urged the leaders to accept the result of the elections whether they win or lose, otherwise there would be endless violence and small people would be the victims. (Jornal Nacional)
67. Rosa, a domestic violence survivor, observed that concern on gender issues had grown in Timor Leste. There are now women leaders like Lucia Lobato who was endorsed by PSD for the presidential elections, signaling that women had equal

capacity as men. However, domestic violence remained high in Timorese society and she hoped that a law on it would be passed soon. (STL)

68. Alisa, 21, who lives in a refugee camp in Comoro would give her vote to the future of her country and hoped that the new president can provide a house and job. (Duetch)

TWO MALE CANDIDATES IN 2ND ROUND: IS GENDER PART OF PLATFORM?

69. Maria Olandina Caerio, a woman activist and former legislator, was quoted by an international news agency as saying diplomatically that no matter how stark the differences between the Lu Olo and Ramos Horta, they were both proven nationalists and the people were aware of that.
70. However, Ramos Horta missed the opportunity to engender nationalism during the second round. For a Nobel Peace prize laureate, he did not highlight gender or women's issues which are crucial factors for peace in a post-conflict society.
71. Lu Olo, on the other hand, came up with a press release on female literacy campaign (see earlier section of this audit) and memorialized the contribution of women to nationalism by acknowledging that many courageous women were in the 24 years resistance within FALANTIL and that it was now their duty to ensure that all women (wives, mothers, sisters and daughters) were now respected and treated as equals. (AFP)

END

Report⁴ prepared by

Juliette Chinaud, Electoral Gender Advisor,
assisted by Rhian Alfuentes Tuzon Media Monitor
and Idalina Da Silva Electoral Gender Assistant.

UNMIT, Dili, Timor-Leste
17 May 2007

⁴ Juliette Chinaud bears full responsibility for this report and welcomes feedback and corrections to it at chinaud@un.org or dasilvai@un.org.