The Role and Sustainability of East Timorese NGOs

‘How Long Can They Last?’

Domingos Soares

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ABSTRACT

Since its independence from the Portuguese and Indonesia, East Timor has had political and humanitarian support from various international organisations, gradually leading to the formation of East Timorese Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

This thesis argues that “East Timorese NGOs’ roles for a full engagement in the development process of East Timor are unsustainable.” The reason is that they lack the financial foundation to attract substantial support from international donor organisations. In addition, they have grown competitive amongst themselves. Therefore, dependency undermined sustainability.

Sustainability espouses the idea that in the long term, income or welfare can be maintained only if the capital-stock from which it is drawn (financial sources from which the East Timorese NGOs had drawn) does not decline.

Independent from government, an NGO works with and within the community towards common goals. Development is therefore a progression of positive changes quantitatively and qualitatively, whereas dependency comes from an unequal international relationship between two sets of countries: the metropolitan core and the periphery. East Timorese NGOs are dependent in two ways: financial and human resources dependency. While East Timor NGOs had played colossal roles during their existence, they had also relied heavily on donors’ support.

This study is supported by reasoned evidence in the form of information and data obtained through descriptive qualitative research methodology (including the systems theory approach), encompassing the following methods: in-depth and email interviews, and participant observation.
Dedication

to the one who waits for the pilgrim's return
even in the despondency of your dreams
there is a place in my inner sanctum for
Eujenia Maria Lidya Fernandes
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During the struggles to acquire education, I put my hopes and wishes solely on God The Almighty. His guidance, in keeping me healthy and on the straight and narrow covered with obstacles and demands, leaves me in perpetual gratitude. Without this blessing beyond all human understanding, an international student - who has left whanau (Ruma-Ralam) behind to joust in the academic arena of a foreign land - could never have survived the ordeal.

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Michael and Marilyn Payne of Wanganui have made New Zealand a second home, a deed which gives special significance when looking back.

This work is also dedicated to uncle Pio Soares and my sister Adelia Soares who are both no longer with us.

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<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMCAP</td>
<td>Ainaro and Manatuto Activation Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apodete</td>
<td>Associacao Popular Democratica Timorense (Timorese Popular Democratic Association)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASDT</td>
<td>Associacao Democratica Timorense (Timorese Social Democratic Association)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AusAID</td>
<td>Australian Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUSTCARE</td>
<td>Australian Caring for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVI</td>
<td>Australian Volunteers International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPM</td>
<td>Badan Perwakilan Masyarakat (Community Representative Board)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIDA</td>
<td>Canadian International Development Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIVPOL</td>
<td>Civilian Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNRM</td>
<td>Conselho Nacional da Resistencia Maubere (National Council of Maubere Resistance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNRT</td>
<td>Conselho Nacional da Resistencia Timorense (National Council of East Timorese Resistance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPJ</td>
<td>Commission of Peace and Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRS</td>
<td>Catholic Relief Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWS</td>
<td>Catholic World Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETADEP</td>
<td>Ema maTa Dalan ba Progresso (East Timor Action for Development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETTA</td>
<td>East Timor Transitional Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fretilin</td>
<td>Frente Revolucionaria de Timor Leste Independencia (Front Revolution for East Timor Independence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROs</td>
<td>Grassroots Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRSOs</td>
<td>Grassroots Support Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOF</td>
<td>Head of Mission Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICRC</td>
<td>International Committee of the Red Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INGOs</td>
<td>International Non Governmental Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interfet</td>
<td>International Force East Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KOTA</td>
<td>Klibur Oan Timor Ass'wain (Sons of the Mountain Warriors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDCs</td>
<td>Less Developed Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPM</td>
<td>Lembaga Pengabdian Masyarakat (Institute of Community Service)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSM</td>
<td>Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat (Self-reliant Community Institutions -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indonesia's equivalent of NGO)

MAFF : Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries

MPR : Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People's Consultative Assembly)

NGO : Non Governmental Organisation

NGOLUM : Non Governmental Organisation Liaison Unit

NPOs : Non Profit Organisations

NZAID : New Zealand Agency for International Development

NZODA : New Zealand Overseas Development Agency

OCHA : Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (UN)

Oxfam : Oxford Committee for Famine and Relief

PCDP : Participatory Community Development Program

PKF : Peace Keeping Force

PPSDM : Pusat Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia (Centre of Human Resources Development)

PT : Perseroan Terbatas (Company)

RTK : Radio Timor Kmanek

RTL : Radio Timor Leste

SCDF : Social and Community Development Fund

Trabalhista : The labour Party

UDT : Uniao Democratica Timorense (Timorese Democratic Union)

UN : United Nations

UNAMET : United Nations Mission in East Timor

UNDP : United Nations Development Program

UNICEF : United Nations Children and Education Fund

UNMSET : United Nations Mission Support East Timor

UNTAET : United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor

USAID : United States Agency for International Development

WCC : World Council of Churches

WFP : World Food Program
MAP OF THE EAST TIMORESE NGOs ACTIVITIES

Location of NGOs' activities
A. Ermera  B. Maubara  C. Manatuto
D. Lospalos  E. Viqueque  F. Suai
G. Same  H. Bobonaro (Atabae and Balibo) I. Atauro  J. Oecusse
K. Baucau  L. Ainaro

Research Sites
1. Dili
2. Lospalos
3. Atauro