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**The Role and Sustainability of East Timorese NGOs  
'How Long Can They Last?'**

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for the degree of Master of Public Policy  
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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*

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## GLOSSARY

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

	Indonesia's equivalent of NGO)
MAFF	: Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries
MPR	: Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People's Consultative Assembly)
NGO	: Non Governmental Organisation
NGOLU	: 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 Timorese (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
UNMISSET	: 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

