



Picture: Oxfam Timor-Leste

Project-Evaluation Report Open the Book (OtB), Oxfam Timor-Leste

June 2018 until July 2021

Dili, July/August 2021
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Abbreviations

OtB	Open the Book
CGT	Core group Transparency
ARC	Asosiasaun Rede Covalima
RFTL	Rede Feto Timor-Leste
REINO	Rede Informasaun Oekuse
ADTL	Associasaun Defisiensiia Timor-Leste
RHTO	Ra'es Hadomi Timor Oan
MDI	Matadalan Institute
PwD	Persons with Disabilities
MSSI	Ministry of Social, Solidarity and Inclusion
MPW	Ministry of Public Works
ZEEMS	Special Economic Zone in Oecusse (Zona Ekonomiku Espesial iha Munisipiu)
PNDS	National Program for village development (Programa Nasional Dezenvolvimentu Suku)
DNAP	Disability inclusion National Action Plan
NAP	National Action Plan
GBV	Gender Based Violence
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
ToT	Training of trainers

1. Introduction

This report is the outcome of the evaluation of Oxfam Timor-Leste's Open the Book (OtB) project. The report reflects the findings, conclusions and recommendations from the project's main partners, stakeholders and the evaluation team.

Currently the Open the Book project finalized the first three-year project and is designing a follow-up Open the Book project, using the findings from the evaluation as lessons learned.

So, the purpose of this evaluation is to help future design and planning of the project and to increase the projects quality in the second phase. The evaluation looks at the performance of the project in the last three years and evaluates its relevancy, effectivity, efficiency, impact, sustainability and cross-cutting issues.

The evaluation was executed in July and August 2021, by a national consulting company, Centru Sover, who formed a team, led by international consultant Hilly Bouwman, supplemented with national consultant Celso da Fonseca.

1.1 Project Background

"Open the Books: Promoting Good Governance and Social Accountability", is a project under Oxfam Timor-Leste's Inclusive Development Pillar (previously called the Land and Inclusive Development Program). This project focused on strengthening civil society coordination and understanding and ability to analyze, monitor and influence policy, transparency and social accountability in Timor-Leste through monitoring and influencing the state budget at both national and municipal levels, focusing in Oecusse and Covalima.

This project began in June 2018 and has ended in July 2021. In the first project year the project focussed on sharing of knowledge and capacity building about the state budget and inclusive budgeting for gender equality. In this phase it worked with five partner organizations; the Timor-Leste Women's Network Rede Feto (RFTL), The Covalima civil society network Asosiasaun Rede Covalima (ARC), The Oecusse civil society network Rede informasaun Oekuse (REINO), Monitoring and research Institute, Mata Dalan Institute (MDI) and the Timor-Leste social accountability network Core Group Transparency (CGT). After this first year, the project observed a lack of inclusion of disability organizations in the advocacy for inclusive budgeting and in the second and third year of the project, Oxfam and the partners decided to focuss on the inclusion of disability organizations in the project and sharing knowledge about disability inclusion challenges. In this period, it first added Disabled Person's Organisation (DPO) Raes Hadomi Timor Oan (RHTO) in 2019 and secondly, Timor-Leste's Disability Network, Associasaun Defisiensiencia Timor-Leste (ADTL) in 2020.

The project worked towards the following outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Poor and vulnerable men, women including those living with disability have increased capacity to influence policies and programs that impact on their lives.
- Outcome 2: Strengthened capacity of target CSO networks to undertake coordinated and evidence-based influencing and monitoring of state budget processes and programs.
- Outcome 3: Strengthened capacity of CSO networks to undertake and incorporate gender analysis and disability inclusion into their work.
- Outcome 4: Key government decision makers have improved knowledge and awareness of the impact of key budget and program decisions on poor and vulnerable men, women including those living with disability.

1.2 Context in Timor-Leste

While Timor-Leste, as a young developing country, has made significant progress in state building since restoration of independence, its key human development indicators remain among the lowest in the Asia region. The country's prospects hinge on prudent and effective use of revenue from off-shore petroleum production to finance needed investments in physical and human capital, and institutions.

However, in recent years major State investments in large scale infrastructure has given rise to concerns regarding the level of transparency over how these funds are disbursed. There are ongoing concerns that investments in physical infrastructure have been made at the expense of investment in human development and social services to address key poverty issues facing the most marginalized groups.

As Timor-Leste's oil reserves dwindle the need to enhance transparency and accountability over national budget development and management is heightened. A strong civil society can lay a crucial role in demanding accountability and transparency. But it must be recognized in Timor-Leste that civil societies' capacity and resources needs to be strengthened - as well as ensuring the most vulnerable people, including women and persons with disabilities, have a voice in this process. The Open the Books project aims to address these issues.¹

COVID-19

At the time of the writing of this report, Timor-Leste is facing COVID-19 for one year and a half year. In Since March 2020, the government issued a government policy of the first state emergency with (decree-law No. 3/2020) on locking down the country, especially Dili, to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Starting in March 2021, a sanitarian corridor has been established around Dili, preventing anyone from coming to and going out of Dili and some other municipalities. These situations have caused many people to lose their business or their pending work, and many organizational projects were challenged in their implementation and had to change their strategies.

In May 2021, the government started a vaccination program, and for people with two vaccinations, it became possible to travel to the district. Similarly, the schools are opening, and Universities are starting to teach face-to-face again; however, the Delta variant of COVID-19 enters Timor-Leste and creates new risks for citizens and may lead to another lock-down in the coming period.

This COVID-19 situation is affecting many organizations and their projects, especially when working with the government, organizations encounter many challenges and delays, since government offices have been mainly closed and ministries have been occupied with the issues around COVID-19. Currently there is not much space and time within the government to focus on any new topics.

Organizations have to consider this COVID-19 as the new reality and design new projects, with this situation in mind. In other words, more local mobilization, and capacity building, more video and online training, providing online working means to the districts, etc. But difficult internet and telephone connections and a shortage of smartphones with district stakeholders make it hard to implement any programs in the municipalities.

2. Scope and methodology of the evaluation

2.1 Scope of the evaluation

Purpose of the evaluation

The objective of the evaluation, is to look at how the project improved the partner organizations or individuals in the organization's capacity for advocacy towards and monitoring the government state

¹ Open the Books Project brief, Oxfam Timor-Leste, 2018

budget and inclusive budgeting. Specifically, on gender and disability inclusion. As well as advocacy and monitoring of other relevant government policies and agencies towards transparency and inclusion.

The evaluation will specifically look at:

- The projects performance and identify the challenges and lessons learned for the project.
- Findings towards the relevancy, effectivity and efficiency, impact, sustainability and cross-cutting issues.
- Recommendations for improving the OtB project's mechanisms and implementation approach.
- Resources and references to the Oxfam team, for the improvement of the project design in phase two.

Evaluation questions

- How did the project contribute to inclusive budgeting in Timor-Leste?
- Did the project achieve the expected project outcomes and indicator targets?
- How was the collaboration between the project and the partners, in relation to the coordination and communication? How did the direct partners and key stakeholder receive the projects interventions? Where they relevant?
- What is the effectivity and impact from the project towards inclusive budget advocacy for persons with disabilities? Is the OtB approach effective and what is the impact?
- Challenges in relation to OtB's implementation (as well intern and extern), like challenges for the Oxfam team in relation to the project design, approach and coordination and the challenges in relation with the working environment, coordination and monitoring for the partners.
- Opportunities, lessons learned and recommendations form the projects implementation and stakeholders.

Target group

The target group of the evaluation consisted of the Oxfam OtB projectleader, The Economy and Climate Justice Manager, project team members of the seven direct project partners, ARC, REINO, CGT, MDI, RFTL, ADTL and RHTO, and three stakeholders of the project partners who have been involved in project's activities; local leader of the village Matai in Covalima, ex-Disability Ambassador of Ministry of Public Works and the former Chief of Department for Disability Programming from MSSI.

In total 11 Key informant Interviews were executed.

2.3 Methodology of the evaluation

Methodology

Because of COVID-19 restrictions it was chosen to use only desk review and key informant interviews (KII) as methodology for the assessment. The assessment only covered a qualitative data collection and analyses. A former planned focus group discussion was not implemented, because of social distancing concerns.

For desk review, project documents, reports and review of publications in Oxfam's and partners' facebook were assessed, and the KII's were held with the Oxfam OtB project leader, the seven project partners and three project stakeholders.

Tool's development

Two sets of guiding questions have been designed by the evaluation team, which, have been double checked by the Oxfam Timor-Leste OtB team. One set of questions for the direct project partners and one set for project stakeholders. The guiding questions follow the log frame and the key questions of the project. The questions were designed in English and directly translated during the interviews, since the language capacity of the surveyors was sufficient to direct translate.

Data collection

All Key informant Interviews were executed from Dili, from the consultant companies' office, and apart from ADTL and RHTO all were interviewed by telephone interviews. This because of COVID-19 restrictions, and personal agendas of the stakeholders.

All interviews were undertaken in Tetum, the national language of Timor-Leste.

The interviews were recorded and notes were taken. Data transcripts were made in English from each interview and used for further analyzation of the findings.

Limitations

Some limitations, had influenced the data collection and should be taken into account while interpreting the findings.

- Due to partners limited time, and COVID-19 restriction for social distancing, it was not possible to organize a FGD with the project partners. Instead, the partners were interviewed separately and mainly by telephone interviews.
- Face-to-face interviews were limited because of COVID-19 restrictions.

3. Assessment findings

The findings of the evaluation are divided in three main sections, which represent the evaluation criteria; 3.1. Relevancy, 3.2. Activities, impact, effectivity and cross-cutting issues and 3.3. Needs, Challenges and Recommendations. In each section findings from the project partners, the project partner's stakeholders and general findings are explained.

3.1 Relevancy

Project partners situation and challenges before the project

MDI and CGT

Before the OtB project, MDI and CGT were already working with Oxfam and other partners like, La'ó Hamutuk, in the area of research and advocacy activities in relation to the State budget and the monitoring of mega projects, like ZEEMS projects in Oecusse and the oil and gas related project Tasi Mane in Covalima. They had already extensive knowledge about the state budget monitoring and implementing researches and monitoring related to the government's mega projects. They were already training their partner NGOs on monitoring of the state budget.

Together with Oxfam, MDI and CGT identified a gap in capacity for advocacy and monitoring about the mega projects in the municipalities, Covalima and Oecusse themselves. Local organization's capacity is very low when it comes to understanding of state budget and the mega projects and secondly the local partners have no means for implementing awareness building activities with the communities and local government.

Before the project started MDI and CGT were not aware of the concept of inclusive budgeting and had no specific knowledge on gender and disability inclusion. Thus, they did not practice any actions in its activities that promoted the inclusion of women or People with Disabilities. Even worse, MDI's and CGT's research and project staff are all men, women within the organization are only working in administrative functions. And the organizations had no specific policy to promote capacity building of women or People with Disabilities as project staff.

ARC and REINO

ARC and REINO started to know Oxfam from the advocacy program for Rede Ba Rai (National Land rights network), for advocacy and defending of the rights of the citizens who got forced eviction.

Before OtB, ARC and REINO were already working as voluntary partners with Oxfam, for executing of local monitoring and advocacy about the Tasi Mane project in Covalima (ARC) and ZEESM projects, like the airport, bridge, hotel, etc. in Oecusse (REINO).

They are both small organizations, with very little resources and knowledge for program design, research development, developing monitoring tools and advocacy programs. Before OtB, they mainly implement monitoring and socialization activities that were initiated and designed by partners like MDI, CGT and Oxfam.

Both of the organizations are 100% male led. In terms of knowledge, REINO and ARC did already have some basic knowledge on the state budget and monitoring of the mega projects, but never heard about inclusive budgeting and monitoring and had no knowledge about inclusion of women and People with Disabilities in general and in government activities.

RFTL

RFTL's activities outside of the OtB project, are related to advocacy, socialization and training on women rights and GBV, in the political, social and economic areas. **They have been working closely with UNWomen and SEII on the issue of women rights, especially women participation in the political decision making process, of rural women and potential women, including working with its members in the related areas.** Before the OtB project RFTL had not yet joined a project in the area of inclusive budgeting. **They have a long term partnership with Oxfam on other projects. But the partners in the project are new partners for RFTL.**

Before the OtB project, RFTL was not involved in the monitoring and advocacy of the government's mega projects in Oecusse and Covalima, and thus women rights were not specifically addressed in any of these activities.

Before the OtB project, RFTL's knowledge on state budget monitoring was very limited and they never heard about the concept of inclusive budgeting, left alone knew how to advocate for it. In relation to state budget monitoring, RFTL never felt the capacity or opportunities to provide meaningful feedback on the state budget design.

Additionally, RFTL, before the OtB project, had not specifically considered and addressed inclusion of women with disabilities in their programs.

RHTO and ADTL

RHTO was part of the design process of the OtB project and has contributed to the project design document. But They were actively included in the project from 2019. ADTL was included later in the project, in 2020, when the OtB team and Oxfam realized that the disability organizations needed to be more represented in any inclusive budget negotiations and also when they realized that the knowledge on disability inclusion with all the partners is minimal.

RHTO was already working with Oxfam since 2016, on other inclusive projects, and already discussed advocacy topics like, land rights, agriculture, environment and accessibility and made Oxfam aware to use the Washington Group questions for data collection. ADTL is new to Oxfam and was introduced through RHTO.

Both organizations have always been active in socialization of the society and advocating with the government for the rights of PwD. Before the OtB they mainly focussed on advocacy for the ratification of the UNCRPD. A long and tough process, which is constantly strained with the unstable government situation. Until the project they never advocated in the area of state budgeting.

Before joining the OtB project, both organizations did not have specific knowledge about the monitoring of the state budget and the concept of inclusive budgeting and how this can help their advocacy.

Project Partner's stakeholder situation before the project

MSSI, MPW and local leader Covalima

Former Disability Ambassador of the Ministry of Public Works, when he started his job, did not know anything about disability inclusion or the concept of inclusive budgeting.

At first, I didn't understand what my job as an ambassador for PwD within my ministry meant. But because of the training from RHTO and ADTL, I learned how to program and budget for inclusive activities.

The former Chief of Department for Disability programming from MSSI, mentions that before the OtB project ADTL and RHTO have been active in advocacy for the rights of PwD. Monitoring of government activities and state budget had not yet been a topic. Inclusive budgeting was an unknown terminology and Ministries did not yet use this concept.

MSSI had initiated Disability Ambassador Positions within each ministry to advocate for inclusion of PwD in each ministry. But the ambassador's knowledge and willingness or capability to allocate budget to the implementation of inclusion was lacking. Although each ministry has a National Action Plan (NAP) for disability inclusion (initiated by MSSI and **under the support from PhD, to be approved by the council of ministers, DNAP draft 2021-2030**), only few ministries have foreseen in the necessary budget to implement the NAP. RHTO and ADTL led a training about inclusive budgeting to these ambassadors, which they could not have done without the guidance of OtB.

Local leader from the village Matai in Covalima, Joao Gusmao, mentions that before the project they did not know anything about the specific rights and issues of women and PwD and did not take them into account when PNDP programs were implemented or when the mega-projects were threatening their livelihood. They had no knowledge about inclusive programming and budgeting.

3.1.1 Relevancy of the project

The lack of knowledge about analysing and monitoring state budget and inclusive budgeting, and in relation to this, the lack of knowledge within advocacy and monitoring organizations and within the government stakeholders, about gender and disability issues in general made this project very relevant to the project's partners and their direct stakeholders.

Relevancy towards state budget and inclusive budgeting

Knowledge of monitoring and advocacy about the state budget and inclusive budgeting in Timor-Leste is limited to a few national operating organizations in Dili, under which Oxfam, MDI and CGT. Many other organizations lack confident and academic skills and knowledge to take on advocacy on this topic. There is lack of insight in the importance of the monitoring and advocacy towards the state budget, in relation to the implementation of governments promised activities and how the state budget can become an advocacy and controlling tool for gender and disability inclusive programming. In other words, lack of awareness of the mechanism that actual budget allocation is the only way to achieve implementation of programs.

The relevant organizations from the disability sector were not included in state budget advocacy and thus had no tools to make stronger cases towards the government. Actually traditionally, they focussed on the advocacy of the rights of Persons with Disabilities by focussing on the ratification of the UNCRPD, a process that was stuck in negotiation because of the political impasse since 2017. Approaching advocacy of the rights from a budget point of view, opened new channels for implementing inclusive programming with the government.

Stakeholders like local leaders and government officials were not knowledgeable and aware of the disability inclusive budgeting. They did not realize that for the implementation of actual inclusive actions (like creation of accessibility, promotion of inclusion), an additional or specified budget is needed.

Relevance towards inclusive programming in Mega-projects

Until OtB, inclusion of PwD and women's rights in the implementation of the mega projects in Oecusse and Covalima, was not addressed. There was no awareness of issues like land-rights and accessibility in relation to women's and PwDs rights, left alone budgeting for inclusive actions.

Local advocacy and monitoring organizations like ARC and REINO had no knowledge on inclusive budgeting and on the challenges of women and PwD in Timor-Leste and specifically in relation to these mega-projects.

Local stakeholders did not have specific gender and disability inclusion issues on their minds when implementing programs, either not knowing about, or forgetting the issues, in daily practice.

3.2 Activities, impact, effectivity and cross-cutting issues

3.2.1 Activities

Capacity building of OtB partners

As a part of shared learning, Oxfam, with the help of the partners provided training to the OtB partners about advocacy, analyses and monitoring of the state budget, about inclusive budget and about disability issues and inclusion. The trainings were facilitated by Oxfam, but provided by the partners who had the specific knowledge on the topics.

In the first year, opportunities for comparative studies with experienced example organizations in other countries were provided and later a connection was made online, between CIP (an International advocacy organization) and RHTO and ADTL for PEER learning.

CGT and MDI provided mentoring to ARC, REINO, RDTL, RHTO and ADTL on the topic of state budget and inclusive budget monitoring and advocacy.

Designed or improved tools and implemented researches

Monitoring plans for inclusive budgeting and advocacy were developed, but the monitoring tools are not ready yet.

The OtB partners have designed a collective advocacy slogan "sura ho hau (count me in)"

And researches were undertaken in the area of

- RFTL: job-creation for women in relation to the ZEEMS projects.

Activities to third parties

The partners have constantly monitored, together with the communities, the implementation of the mega-projects, the state budget and inclusive budgeting and RHTO has implemented an accessibility audit of the government constructions and buildings.

Advocacy took place on national, municipality and community levels, by use of socializations to the communities and local leaders in Covalima and Oecusse about inclusion of women and PwD in the mega projects and PNDS program, through meetings with the members of parliament, secretary of state and other relevant government institutions (SEII, MSSSI, Public Works, national committee on women's affairs) including the president and prime-minister to talk about inclusive budgeting. Through involvement in the development of the PwD-NAP 2021-2030. And the partners had organized a meeting with Timor-Gap, to defend the rights of the community members, including PwD.

Training has been provided to the Government Disability Ambassadors (coordinated by MSSSI) about disability issues and inclusive programming and budgeting.



A national seminar about the implementation of accessibility in public buildings was organized by RHTO and ADTL together with the OtB partners, specifically targeting the Ministry of Public Works.

Campaigns were implemented to share information about gender and disability inclusion to the society, like socializations, community radio or facebook by the local organizations in the municipalities. In Dili the partners organized Tv talk shows (ADTL, RFTL, RHTO), radio shows, shared their messages on social media like facebook and organized a joint press conference. Together with other partners, awareness material for inclusion was developed.

3.2.2 Project impact

Impact on project partners

Training

The partners ARC, REINO, RFTL, RHTO and ADTL have enhanced knowledge about advocacy and monitoring of state budget. Their knowledge has grown from none at all to basic, in a sense that they understand the principles and

structures.

All partners have gained basic understanding and capacity about inclusive budgeting. This was a new concept to all of them. And after training, together, with combined expertise they are able to provide

“We understand now how to advocate for disability rights and issues, using the mainstream topics in the state budget.”

inclusive budget trainings to third parties, like government stakeholders, member organizations and communities and use the knowledge for advocating for the state budget to be inclusive. Like RHTO says; “We understand now how to advocate for disability rights and issues, using the mainstream topics in the state budget.”

All the Initial project partners, who are non-disability organizations, mentioned that the trainings from RHTO and ADTL and working closely together with them, has opened their minds about disability inclusion issues. RFTL has become more aware of their role in advocacy and monitoring of the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities in their programs and with the government programs.

Advocacy

The impact on the project partner’s advocacy activities was that, advocating together made them stronger, together they had access to more stakeholders and meetings to make their voices heard. The partners learned how to include disability related advocacy into the state budget mainstream topics and are now alert to always point towards inclusiveness for all.

Monitoring

Due to the project, MDI and CGT have become more aware of inclusive monitoring and research, **the impact of OtB made them aware of including Persons with Disabilities in their monitoring system. A simple positive step that they have started with, is using Washington Group questions in their general monitoring tools.** They have not yet developed templates of inclusive monitoring tools.

ARC, REINO, ADTL and RHTO, due to the support of the other project partners, were able to monitor on inclusive budgeting and implementing of the mega projects and PNDS projects in the municipalities. They need the MDI and CGT to help designing the monitoring tools. But they learned this new skill about monitoring.

Impact on Stakeholders/beneficiaries

Important government stakeholders have become more aware of the importance for inclusive budgeting, in order to achieve inclusion in programs for Persons with Disabilities. They opened their minds and start to think about how they can make sure that inclusion for Persons with Disabilities is assured in their programs.

The disability ambassadors of the ministries (under MSSI coordination), because of the training from RHTO and ADTL, have a better understanding of the challenges of PwD and in how they can play a role in more inclusive programming and budgeting. The trainings gave them a better understanding of their role as ambassador, since before the training, many of them had no idea what was expected from them in this role.

Community leaders in the municipalities have become aware of the rights of PwD, their challenges and how they are excluded and that the community has a role in including PwD. They have become enthusiastic about the topic and spread the word also to other community leaders.

Some results of the projects partner's activities

In the municipality level, in Covalima and Oecusse, the socialization about inclusion of persons with disabilities, towards the communities and community leaders is received well and more community leaders are asking for socialization in their communities. The socialization focused on the disability and gender inclusion in the PNDS activities and as a result the community started to think about inclusive building and created ramps in the public places.

The impact of the socialization about inclusive budgeting is less effective though, as the community leaders have no influence on how their budgets are designed. Budgets are designed in the national level and secondly the community leaders are dependent on the municipality administrator to send their requests and demands to the national level.

The socialization in Covalima resulted in a meeting of the community representatives with a representative of the project company for the implementation of the highway, to discuss the problems of the new highway for the community and for PwD and the arguments were heard and solutions and adjustments to the road construction were made.

In Oecusse, Rede Feto undertook research about the benefits of the ZEESM project on women and children in RAEOA. In this research they found that community members, particularly women, were not getting work opportunities in project's implemented under ZEESM. For those above 30 years old age the majority recognized the presence of ZEESM but were disappointed with leaders that were responsible for the project, because of lack of job opportunities provided, and the project having little contribution to money circulating among community members. Many community members said they were not satisfied with the project because in order to get a job one has to show a 'red card' meaning they have to be involved in a political party. These findings by Rede Feto were important measures of good governance from a community's perspective. Rede Feto launched this report in RAEOA and worked with community and other partners to look at to use the report for influencing.

The Gender Responsive Budgeting Working Groups, under the lead of RFTL, submitted a joint submission on gender based budgeting and specific gender analysis of the budget to the Grupu Mulher Parlamentu Timor-Leste (GMFTL – the Women's Parliament Group) and the national parliament. This submission had a positive response from Commission F and the GMPTL. Parliamentarian and Commission F members said that nearly all the recommendations were discussed with the relevant ministries and they will continue to bring those to debates in the National parliament.

As a result of advocacy under the OtB project (together with other advocacy activities), the Ministry of Public Works has produced a Ministerial Diploma on the accessibility of all government buildings for people with disabilities. Providing guidelines for disability accessibility to all public and private

construction. This is a first step in acknowledgement of accessibility issues in public spaces. Nevertheless, the diploma is only a political commitment, and not as strong as a government decree law.

With the help of the OtB partners (amongst others) a new national action plan for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, has been developed, including the inclusive budgeting. This NAP will be a lead document for advocacy for the rights of PwD and for implementation of the actions in programs and budgets.

As a result of this advocacy, MSSJ together with the DPOs are currently discussing the installation of a national council of disability, if this council is formed it will be accelerating the monitoring and advocating towards the government about disability inclusive programs.

3.2.3 Project's effectivity

When comparing the projects activities and impact to the outcomes, it can be stated that the project has been effective, even though it was severely challenged by COVID-19.

Seen the results as in 3.2.2, the project has achieved many goals.

- Outcome 1: Poor and vulnerable men, women including those living with disability have increased capacity to influence policies and programs that impact on their lives;
 - It can be stated that OtB partners RHTO, ARC and REINO are contributing most to direct community socialization targets. Socializations were challenged during COVID-19 lockdowns, with which specifically Covalima and Oecusse encounter the most challenges towards COVID-19, as being boarder areas. This means that since March 2020 hardly any face-to-face community socializations have taken place. Before that time, communities were well involved in the project and used their new knowledge about the mega-projects to stand up for their rights.
- Outcome 2: Strengthened capacity of target CSO networks to undertake coordinated and evidence-based influencing and monitoring of state budget processes and programs:
 - The CSOs ARC, REINO, RFTL, RHTO and ADTL have enhanced knowledge about state budget and inclusive budgeting advocacy and monitoring. Although their knowledge on creating monitoring tools or initiating researches is still limited. Trainings were effective and appreciated by the partners, as well as comparative studies.
- Outcome 3: Strengthened capacity of CSO networks to undertake and incorporate gender analysis and disability inclusion into their work;
 - From the assessment it is observed that the OtB network partners, have learned a lot about disability issues and how to include these in their monitoring and advocacy, but as for gender analysis, it is mainly RFTL who focused on this topic and other partners still felt that they lacked knowledge about gender balancing in their monitoring and advocacy.
- Outcome 4: Key government decision makers have improved knowledge and awareness of the impact of key budget and program decisions on poor and vulnerable men, women including those living with disability;
 - According to the findings of the assessment, decision makers have indeed gained knowledge and awareness of the impact of budget and program decisions on the lives of the vulnerable citizens, in specific women and persons with disabilities. Government stakeholders and other decision makers have mentioned to understand the challenges and promise to make changes. Although they have started with some actions, like applying the Diploma for accessible building with the Ministry of Public Works, The DNAP 2021-2030, these actions are not yet transferred to laws and have limited committing influence. Also the DNAP draft shows that only Ministry of Education has

allocated a specific inclusive budget. Other ministries are not yet up to this level. Processes are slow and are subject to political changes. On-going advocacy is needed.

3.2.4 Cross-cutting issues

Although the project OtB was all about inclusion of women and PwD, it was significant to observe that the non-women or disability-oriented partners (ARC, REINO, CGT, MDI) were totally not inclusive in their daily practice. Except for RFTL, RHTO and ADTL, the project partner organizations themselves are not gender balanced or even women friendly. REINO, ARC and CGT exist completely out of male staff and in MDI the female staffs are only working in administrative positions. No women are working in research or project staff positions. Awareness on international trends on gender balanced researching, monitoring and advocacy (presenting always men and women in a team) is not build, as well as the added value of project mixed teams. During the trainings and sharing of experience of the project, the organizations have become more aware of this issue, but have not yet been able to implement a concrete plan for more gender balance and disability accessibility in their organizations.

On the positive site, ARC and REINO in the municipalities did work as one team with the RHTO field staff and also experienced as added value and cross-learning. And advocacy on national level for inclusive budgeting was done always in partnership with RHTO and/or ADTL. As RHTO's motto mentions; *"Nothing about us without us"*.

The specific issue of women and girls with disabilities was not yet addressed in the project and needs still more training and information sharing.

3.3 Needs, Challenges and Recommendations

3.3.1 Needs

CGT and MDI state that specific monitoring systems for inclusive budget monitoring still need to be further developed. They recommend for Oxfam to provide a specific training for this, or to connect to an international partner for sharing of experience and knowledge.

All the partners mention that they have learned a lot about disability issues and inclusion. But they still feel that their knowledge on gender issues is limited, especially on the cross-cutting area of women and children with disabilities. This topic needs more training and sharing of knowledge and experience.

All partners acknowledge that, although they have learned a lot about state budget and inclusive budgeting issues, still more training and guidance is needed for them to become confident and of full understanding of the processes of detailed analysing, monitoring and advocacy of the national budget. As RFTL mentioned, "We cannot do the monitoring of inclusive budgeting/state budget alone, as we do not have enough understanding of it". The main challenge for the partners is that analysing and monitoring of this topic needs academic political skills and level, which most of them do not have at hand. CGT and MDI have the skills, and provide mentoring, but understanding this topic 100%, means a dedicated person with a academic knowledge level on politics and state budget. Which is what is lacking with the other partners. So they are able to do some lower level socialization (transfer of knowledge that they learned) and simple analyses, but they are not capable for initiating advocacy based on multi-level analyses. Apart from mentoring on project level, it is necessary for the organizations to receive external guidance at the moments when the state budget needs to be analyzed. CGT might not have enough people available to serve all partners, as they will need that guidance all at the same moment.

"We cannot do the monitoring of inclusive budgeting/state budget alone, as we do not have enough understanding of

RFTL acknowledges the need for more data, reports and researches related to women and girls with disabilities. This can be as well international as national data. RFTL recommends providing more training about research and data collection.

All organizations expressed the inspirational value of comparative studies and recommend having more comparative studies and contacts with international organizations.

Especially member organizations like ADTL, ARC, REINO and RFTL need more budget and support to train their stakeholders/beneficiaries in the municipalities, in disability issues, specific issues of women and girls with disabilities and inclusive budgeting training. Even ToT or easy to use templates for them to use in their socializations.

3.3.2 Challenges

CGT adopted the vision, that when they advocate for gender balance and disability inclusion, they themselves need to set an example and create balance and inclusion within their organization. But it is a challenge for them to do so, as their means are limited and currently their office is in a second floor, which makes it not accessible. Others, like RFTL have implemented ramps to their building, or want to become more inclusive, but do not know how.

Although the entire advocacy that is undertaken, inclusion of disability is still a topic that is mostly not prioritised in government and even society in general. With still so many development challenges in the country to address, the government will always be occupied with other matters. On-going advocacy will be always needed.

It is difficult as monitoring organization to get access to the process of state budget drafting of the state institutions. The ministry departments only include the NGOs and monitoring organizations very late in the process, giving them very little time to analyse the draft budgets, causing that many times, the organizations are too late with their comments and revisions and their input is not included in the state budget plan.

The political problems since 2017 are making any advocacy difficult. Ministers are being changed quickly and have very political agendas. They act on popularity, which makes them promise a lot but not guarantee any implementations. Ministerial departments are also challenged because of this situation and suffer quick overturn of the staff and lack of budgets to implement any new plans. Secondly, because of this impasse, the DPOs and their international partners have still not been able to persuade the government to ratify the UNCRPD; Timor-Leste is one of the few countries in the world that did not ratify the UNCRPD. By ratifying the UNCRPD, the DPOs would have a stronger ground for their advocacy.

COVID-19 strained all project partners in the implementation of the project activities. Especially monitoring and training activities, as well as joint advocacy activities were difficult to implement. In this period, the government was difficult to reach, or just not available for information sharing. Online activities amongst the partners were difficult, as the partners in the municipalities Covalima and Oecusse did not have good internet connections and no smartphones. As well as the partners RHTO, RFTL and ADTL had difficulties with the use of the online platforms as a communication means, which led to just not using them.

The project partners had only small budgets to implement the OtB project. For instance, like RHTO had one dedicated coordinator in Dili, but no budget to provide to the field-based officers in the municipalities, which meant that they could not dedicate their work to the inclusive budget socialization of communities and thus, only had a small reach. Local organizations ARC and REINO were challenged in their means for transport, as they need to travel a lot when doing their advocacy to the communities, but the organization had only one motorbike available.

3.3.3 Recommendations

As a test-case for good governance, help the partners of the project with implementing the processes to become a gender balanced and disability inclusive organization themselves. This test-case can serve to identify the actual challenges for inclusive governance for organizations and to create a guide for achieving gender balance and disability inclusion for any organization. A guide including the policies that need to be in place, how to guarantee the implementation of the policies, accessibility solutions and templates. Preferably to be completed with a certificate for inclusive organizations.

Analysing of the national budget and discussions about inclusive budgeting are exercises that ask for academic level, highly skilled and experienced researchers. Most project partners (besides MDI and CGT) do not have these persons or skills in-house. Investigate how the project partner's OtB network can create a sustainable mechanism to complete each other's skills. Like lending staff to each other, provide mentoring or organize group sessions to analyse the state budget. The problem will be that everyone will be busy with analysing the budgets at the same time. Therefore a more cooperative mechanism to analyse would be helpful.

To help the partners and their members to work more inclusive and to keep up the level of inclusivity, provide them with templates, examples, libraries of good examples. Create an OtB online platform where data (researches), templates and good practises and a chat option are being shared.

All partners mentioned that they still feel uncomfortable with online working. RFTL did not embrace training through zoom, ADTL, RHTO, ARC and REINO have lesser knowledge in how to turn the use of internet to their profit (as in finding templates, inspiration or data)

With a future with COVID-19 in mind, and also a worldwide cultural change towards more online working, Oxfam should focus on building capacity of the partners in not-face-to-face communication, meetings, training and advocacy methods. Same time their capacity in internet use for advocacy (to find worldwide inspiration, information and support) could be raised.

When supported by Oxfam, as part of the program they could be given access to smartphones, tablet or laptops and internet. Oxfam could provide an online and real time library with examples, researches and inspiration and with instruction manuals. And provide trainings about how to search data, templates and comparative studies on the internet and how to use this information in your daily practise.

For sustainability of the existence of project partners ARC and REINO, who completely rely on Oxfam support, their capacity should be built on fundraising, proposal writing, etc. in order for them to become less dependent.

Since government stakeholders constantly change their positions, an on-going mechanism should be built and guaranteed for on-going advocacy and training to the government stakeholders. Like a connection to the MSSl Disability Ambassador's workgroup and the provision of yearly training and refresher workshops. The monitoring for inclusive budgeting should be integrated in this workgroup, controlled by the DPO control group. Or like guaranteed support for the field-based officers of RHTO in the municipalities, who can continue their advocacy to the communities. Other mechanisms should be found for other stakeholders. Think of a mechanism within PNDS and the mega project implementers.

MSSl recommends to use the PwD-NAP 2020-2030 as a basis for inclusive budgeting advocacy towards all the ministries. All ministries have committed to this NAP and can be held accountable for it. So DPOs and others can start with the NAP achieve inclusive budgeting and programming.

Be more aware of specific costs for each of the partners to implement activities for the OtB. Each organization will have their different challenges, so try to open their minds and help them to create an

innovative budget according to actual needs. Looking at the needs for transport, communication, online tools, trainings, templates and social media designs. And when working with disability organisations, also the project should be aware of inclusive budgeting, meaning to allocate budget for disability specific costs, like paying for an assistant or sign language translator, higher transport costs, assistive devices or more time needed to implement activities. Again, set an example and show others how to do it.

In order to build more female researchers and project staff capacity, start with involving female internships or Persons with Disabilities internships within the more capable partners. Or have exchange of staff for some projects/activities.

Create awareness of the value of mixed teams for a better performance. Also mixed teams are needed to set examples to the beneficiaries during socialization, monitoring and advocacy. Having female researchers in the field, will decrease the stigma and will open the community's minds about capacity of women.

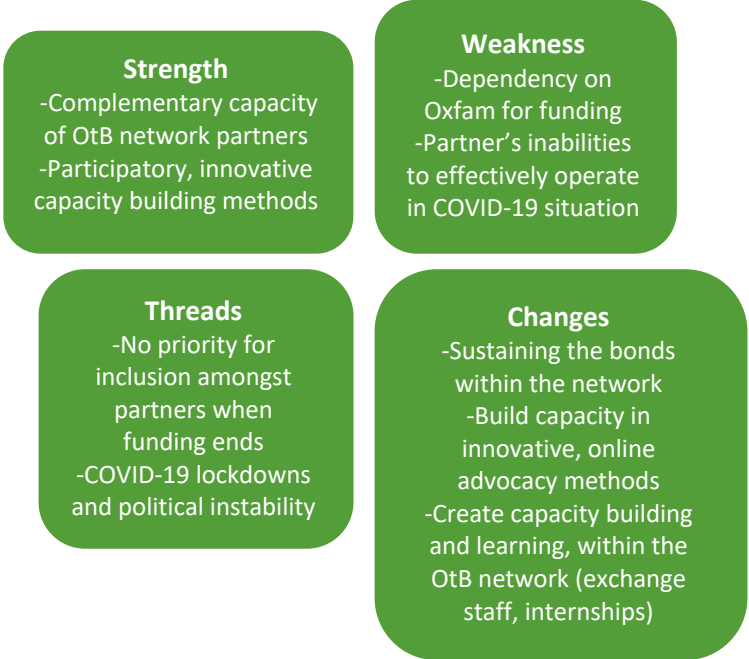
4. Concluding

The program is experienced as friendly and learning to the project partners. Capacity is built and the network between the partners helps in future activities. The inclusive budgeting activities have resulted in better understanding amongst the stakeholders and in the implementation of some inclusive actions.

Nevertheless:

- State budget and inclusive budget advocacy and monitoring is a complicated topic, which is not easy to learn and adapt. It needs academic level thinking, which is not always available in the project partner's organizations, or the capabilities are not yet developed. In this perspective it is important to be aware of the on-going need of each other's expertise in advocacy on inclusive budgeting. It is more logical that while still building capacity, expertise should be shared and the partners need to be committed to each other to provide this on-going support. A mechanism for supporting each other should be built (including allowing internships within each other's organizations)
- A lot of awareness amongst the project partners has been created, but actual monitoring tools have not yet been developed for inclusive budgeting. As well as lasting collaboration mechanism between the partners are not developed.
- A start in advocacy is made, but partners and stakeholders need to learn that disability inclusion is not just about the physical adjustments like ramps and assistive devices. It is also about awareness of rights, change of attitude, giving priority and opportunities, supporting the caretakers, etc. More advocacy is need to take the next step in creating awareness of disability inclusion.
- Project partners are not ready to enter in a new area of communication and information sharing, using not- face-to-face methods. Capacity in innovative advocacy of the project partners is still very low, for which they were out of business during COVID-19 lockdowns. Use of social media, radio, television, websites, blogs, whatsapp groups, SMS-ing, communication platforms and the internet in itself are new ways for learning and reaching stakeholders/beneficiaries, but are not yet internalized by the OtB partners.
- It is unsure whether the project partners will still work together after the project would be closed (even after a phase two project) and they all return to their daily business or the next project. Look at how the activities of the OtB, especially the built network of the project partners can become a sustainable mechanism.

The qualities and future opportunities for the OtB project are combined in this conclusive SWOT analysis.



Attachment

Attachment 1: Data collection tools

KII question guide for project partners

These questions have been formalized in order to find the projects progress in relation to its outputs and indicators and in order to find its relevancy, effectivity, efficiency, impact, sustainability and cross-cutting issues like gender and disability inclusion.

It is merely a topic list to guide the interviews and assure important topics are covered. Additionally, each partner will be asked to share their specific monitoring data of the project results.

Name, f/m, Organization, Position

Situation of the partner at the start of the project:

- What structural advocacy towards government and socialization of the community did you do before the OTB project started? Did you have a budget/mandate for it?
- What activities did you do in relation to the state budget and inclusive budgeting before the project with Oxfam started?
- Did/do you also work with other partners/donors on these topics? Which donors and which partners and what are cross-cutting areas?
- What were your challenges/difficulties before the project?

Capacity:

- Before Oxfam approached you for this project, what was your knowledge about the state budget and inclusive budgeting in relation to your advocacy and socialization activities?
- What guidance (mentoring) did Oxfam provide to you and what training/capacity building did you get from OXFAM or other partners? (public engagement/ communication skills)
- How many comparative study visits, workshops, seminars, reports and other activities focused on sharing learnings across partners were organized?
- What tools for monitoring and data analysis on state budget did you revise or develop to promote inclusive and participatory approaches? How often do you or any other stakeholders use these tools? Are the tools relevant?
- Do you feel that the capacity building activities from Oxfam were relevant for you? Explain how? What new information did you learn?
- What did you learn about gender analysis and inclusion in your work and how did you change your processes and activities accordingly?
- What did you learn about disability inclusive analysis in your work and how did you change your processes and activities accordingly?

OtB Project design:

- How was the project design process? Were you involved by Oxfam in the design process of the project? How?
- How did you create your own activity plan for this project? Did Oxfam help you? Did you involve your stakeholders in the design?
- What budget were you provided with to implement the project (per year)? Was a specific staff budget appointed? What were your challenges towards the budget in relation to expected outputs and in relation to organizing your work?
- How did you organize the team? (how many team members, how many percent of their time, was there a dedicated team?) Was this effective? How does that relate to the budget that you were provided with?

OtB Activities:

- What activities have you planned under this project? In the year 2018-2020 (state budget) and in the year 2020-2021 (inclusive budget)
- What stakeholders were target to your activities? How did you select them?
- What activities did you actually implement and which stakeholders did you reach? Explain changes in plan or why you were not able to implement some of your activities.
- What material did you use to socialize and advocate? What presentations, slides, research-data, reports? Did you develop any evidence-based data yourself? Do you miss tools or data for effective advocacy for inclusive budgeting in the future?
- How many forums, media, dialogues and campaigns did you organize (monitoring data of # of involved community representatives from the target groups gender and disability)
- How many digital campaigns, media or public awareness materials did you publish related to inclusive development (i.e., transparent budgeting).
- Can you provide monitoring data for your activities per year? Like # of stakeholders (disaggregated by male, female, disability), which stakeholders (list of interviews/government meetings, impacts of the activities?)

Communications/collaboration:

- Did Oxfam organize inter-partner collaborations, meetings or learning? What and how many? What was the effect of them? Did it lead to more collaboration with other project partners? What kind of coordination?
- How did you work together with the other project partners? In the start and later?
- Have you undertaken activities together with other project partners? coordinating and working together on priority issues targeted by the program (i.e., cross visits, joint statements or activities, regular meetings, strategic plans).
- How was communication between the partners, about the division of stakeholders? About approaching stakeholders? Was a communication system in place? (WhatsApp group, forum...)
- How was communication with Oxfam? What was good, what could be better?

Impact:

- How is the Oxfam project and activities helping you more or differently from other partners/donors to implement your advocacy activities?
- What specific actions were you able to do under this project that you were otherwise not?
- How did you measure the impact of your activities with your stakeholders/participants? What was the impact on them? Did you do pre-post assessments? Needs assessments? Did you practice the Theory of Change?
- What was the impact of socializations of community members, on the capacity to influence policies and programs that impact their lives and their knowledge of rights and law? How did community members use their increased knowledge in practice? Did they claim their rights after the socializations? Any case studies?
- What was the impact of advocacy towards government policies and programs? Did the stakeholders use their new knowledge to change their policies? Did they change their budgeting towards more inclusive budgeting? What achievements have been made? How many % of the change is due to the project's efforts? Explain.
- What specific skills and/or knowledge did you and your organization learn from the project?

COVID19:

- How did COVID19 effect your project planning? Did you make any changes?

- How was the communication with Oxfam around COVID19 challenges? Were they flexible towards changes, did they help you to adjust your project activities?
- Oxfam helped you to focus on media-campaigns. How was this helpful to you? What did you learn from it? Do you think the media campaigns had impact? How, what? Will you use this knowledge in the future and how?

Sustainability, needs for second phase:

- What are the successes from this project? Main achievements towards advocacy goals and what are major achievements for your one organization?
- What increased knowledge, gained from the project, will you continue to use in the future?
- Will you continue some partnership (with the 6 other partners) from the OtB project in the future?
- What challenges, difficulties/ lessons learned did you encounter? What solutions worked well for you?
- What do you want to achieve in a second phase of the project? What advocacy and what socialization do you want to do? What topics do you want to address?

Who was the most significant stakeholder for your activities? Can you arrange a meeting with this group or person? We want to identify the impact of the project on the actual stakeholders and agents of change.

KII question guide for the project partner's stakeholders

These questions have been formalized in order to find the relevancy, effectivity, impact and sustainability of the project's activities with stakeholders.

Each of the seven project partners is asked to provide one or two important stakeholders, who were subject to their project activities. We expect to interview mainly government stakeholders or civil society stakeholders.

Name, f/m, Organization, Position

Relation to the project/partner:

- What is your relation to the project or partner (one of the seven)? Which partners in the project approached you?
- What is your relation to state budget and other advocacy activities?
- How and by who were you approached for participating in the OtB activities?
- Was the objective of the project (OtB) explained to you in a clear, easy to understand way? How? What was unclear?
- Do you think your participation in the project is relevant for the project's objective? Why?

Activities from OtB:

- What kind of activities did the partner share with you? How were you involved in the design and organization of the activities?
- Did they provide seminar, public audience or specific meeting on the issue of gender and disability inclusive budgeting together with you?
- In the activities, what topics and issue were mainly provided to you about inclusive budgeting?
- What challenges were encountered in the organization of the project partners activities?
- Were the activities fitting to your needs for capacity, knowledge and information on the area of state budgeting and inclusive budgeting?

Impact:

- Before the project, were you already aware of the concept of and issues around gender and disability inclusive budgeting? What were the issues according to you? How did you include gender and disability inclusion in your budget plan?
- What was your knowledge about rights and laws in relation to gender and disability inclusion, before the project activities?
- After receiving capacity building activities from the partner, how has your knowledge changed? What knowledge have you gained?
- Have you changed your actions after you joined any activity from the project partner? Done things differently? Implemented new knowledge? Undertaken actions?

Government stakeholders' specific questions:

- After receiving socialization, training or public audience, do you feel that inclusive budgeting was lacking in your department, cabinet or ministry?
- Do you understand the importance of inclusive budgeting in the state budget?
- How do you now design inclusive budget into your department, cabinet or ministry?
- How did you change your policies/programs?
- During the project, did you collaborate with other stakeholders from the government and civil societies, like NGOs and community, on the issue of inclusive budgeting? How did the project help in establishing these collaborations and relations?
- Due to the project, did you involve the civil society in the design of an inclusive budget program?
- How did you provide information transparently to the civil societies about the implementation of the inclusive budget relate to your program?

Sustainability:

- How will you continue to use the new gained information and knowledge in future activities and programming?
- How will you assure that your staff in your department remains to be gender and disability sensitive in the budget planning?

Recommendations:

- What challenges did you encounter during the implementation of the project partner's activities?
- What lessons are learned from these challenges?
- What were best practices, for improving inclusive budget in your department, cabinet or ministry, from the project's partners activities? Which activities do you want to elaborate on and which not?
- What recommendations do you have to improve inclusion/ inclusive budget in your community, department, cabinet or ministry?