New safe house to address physical and sexual violence in Baucau

Psychosocial Recovery and Development in East Timor (PRADET) is building a Fatin Hakmatek (Quiet Place) in Baucau for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. It will provide services to the municipalities of Viqueque, Los Palos and Baucau.

Construction of Fatin Hakmatek Baucau will begin in September with funding from the Embassy of Japan.

The builder will be a local Baucau Company called Torres Novas Unipessol Lda.

Fatin Hakmatek will be built on the site of the old Baucau hospital which is due to be transformed into a maternity hospital in the coming year.

Fatin Hakmatek will be a one-stop-shop for people experiencing physical or sexual abuse.

Doctors and senior midwives in Baucau, Los Palos and Viqueque carry out medical forensic examinations so that appropriate medical treatment is given and that details of the injuries are documented. This is to ensure that victims receive comprehensive medical care and that the circumstances leading to their injury are properly noted and can be used as evidence in court to obtain convictions against perpetrators.

Fatin Hakmatek Baucau will initially provide emergency medical and social care, as well as short-term accommodation and will organise legal assistance with the Women and Children’s Legal Aid Service (ALFeLa).

It is known that victims of domestic violence often return to violent relationships. Fatin Hakmatek must therefore provide long-term support that enables them to change their circumstances. Staff at Fatin Hakmatek work in partnership with other services to source longer term accommodation and provide ongoing care to those in need.

The new Fatin Hakmatek will provide an important service to the local community. Similar facilities in other municipalities have led to a significant increase in the reporting of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. As well as helping communities feel safer and address violence, the facility will also help PRADET to identify those in need and ensure they receive proper treatment.