Domestic Violence Training for VPU and PNTL Officers

125 officers from the Vulnerable Persons Unit (VPU) and the National Police of Timor Leste (PNTL) from the municipalities of Viqueque, Ermera, Baucau, Dili and Suai are participating in training organized by Psychosocial Recovery and Development in East Timor (PRADET), the Women and Children’s Legal Aid Service (ALFeLa) and the Senior Officers of the VPU. The training is being funded by the Timor Leste Police Development Program (TLPDP) which is part of the Australian Federal Police.

The training aims to educate officers on the definitions of and extent of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse in Timor Leste. It will then provide the legal framework for responding and then the VPU will train officers in responses on the ground.

The VPU and PNTL are central to enacting the law against domestic violence here in Timor. They are the frontline workers who are the main referrers to services such as Fatin Hakmatek. Given this role it is important that they have this opportunity for training. This training provides social and legal information but also trains in appropriate responses when presented with very difficult domestic circumstances in families and violence in communities.

The Objectives of Training are:

- Increase the knowledge of officers of the prevalence of gender based violence in Timor Leste; the impact on particularly vulnerable groups such as children, people with disabilities and people who are victims of human trafficking;
- Increase the skills of officers in interviewing children, taking statements where domestic violence has occurred, gathering evidence from crime scenes, standard operating procedures, providing victims with access to justice;
- Receive input from other legal professionals such as ALFeLa, Prosecutors, Judges and / or JSMP on the law and the application of the law

Psychosocial Recovery and Development in East Timor (PRADET) became a national NGO in 2002 and now provides psychosocial services for people who have experienced trauma, mental illness, domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse abandonment, trafficking, imprisonment and torture.

ALFeLa aims to help women and children in Timor Leste to have access to the formal justice system through; Legal assistance, Legal education and Advocacy.