



**Asian Forum on
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Policies and e-Strategies**
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Timor-Leste – Country Report



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The Asian Forum on ICT Policies and e-Strategies is organized by UNDP's Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme under the auspices of the United Nations ICT Task Force, with support from the Ministry of Energy, Communications and Multimedia, Malaysia, and the Government of Japan.



The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Public Works is lead by Minister of TC&PW, Mr Oviedo de Jesus Amaral, one Vice Minister, two Secretaries of State and two General Directors.

ICT (Information and Communication Technology) issues are under the responsibility of the Director General of Transport and Communications.

Seven Departments have been placed under his authority, as follows :

1. Telecommunications
2. Postal
3. Information and Technology
4. Land Transportation
5. Sea Transportation
6. Civil Aviation
7. Meteorology

HISTORY OF ICT IN TIMOR-LESTE

Timor-Leste occupying 24,000 square kilometres on the eastern half of an island in the Timor Sea between Indonesia and Australia, Timor-Leste has a population of approximately 800,000 people living in 13 District Capitals.

Since the referendum held on September 2000 all ICT Services were destroyed in Dili Capital and other districts in Timor-Leste. During the UNTAET period in Timor-Leste telecommunications services were operated by Telstra and the United Nations Organization. At the same time ETPA (East Timor Public Administration) with the support of International Staff conducted a survey for the preparation of an International Tender for BOT. In the tender process we got support and assistance from ADB and ITU who provided some consultants for this tender preparation.

BOT (Build Operate and Transfer) means that the new operator will install Telecommunication Network Service in Timor-Leste according to the terms of reference included in the tender.



Processing International Tender for Telecommunication in Timor-Leste needs time: Nearly 2 (two) years have been required to find bidders and nominate the winner for the BOT project.

The Concession Contract was signed between PTI (Portugal Telecom International) as the winner of this International Tender and the Republica Democratica de Timor-Leste on 19th July 2002.

PTI (Portugal Telecom International) as a winner for this BOT tender has created a new company Timor Telecom in Timor-Leste to do this difficult job in this new country in the 2nd millennium.

After the contract had been signed, the new operator had to provide a telecommunication mobile network system within 4 months for five big districts and after 13 (thirteen) months the operator had to provide mobile and fixed lines telephones in all country of Timor-Leste.

CURRENT SITUATION OF ICT IN TIMOR-LESTE

Telecommunication services are operated by Timor Telecom as a new company that was created by PTI (Portugal Telecom International) the main winner for International Tender in Telecommunication. With Head Office in Dili, Timor Telecom has the exclusive operation of services pertaining to fixed and mobile telephones, data, leased circuits, transport of diffusion signal and international links of all these services. It also explores the Internet Service. According to the concession contract signed on July 19, 2002, the exploration concession of telecommunication operation in Timor-Leste, was attributed to Timor Telecom for a 15-year period.

At present, mobile telephone services are already operated in 5 Districts (Dili, Baucau, Suai, Lospalos & Oecussi) and fixed telephone in Dili capital.



As already planned mobile telephones services will be available in all Districts by the end of October 2003. Meanwhile the network for fixed telephone is also under construction in parallel in each District.

The national network telecommunication will be inaugurated on 28 November 2003 for all Timor-Leste. After that Timor Telecom will install the rest of the Infrastructure in the country such as SDH transmission backbone, local network, thus offering more services to a growing number of customers.

Currently, there is a public radio broadcasting service (RTL) in Dili Capital and all districts, radio community in some districts and Television of Timor-Leste (TVTL) in Dili Capital. They will be extended for other districts in the future.

The Government has prepared hits own Data Center network in providing internet-based facilities for government services with a 512 kbit/s bandwidth, to be increased to 1 Mega for next fiscal year 2004. Government is looking also in providing PABXs network for its own network.

All activities in telecommunications sector are now under the control of the Government. The Government has established a regulatory body named "ARCOM" (Autoridade Reguladora das Comunicações). It is an organization under the authority of MTCOP (Ministry of Transport, Communications and Public Works) which is responsible for all telecom activities such as frequencies management, tariff control, telecommunication policy, licensing, quality of service, etc.

ICT CHALLENGE IN TIMOR-LESTE

Technical constraints:

- Power limitation otherwise Timor Telecom has to provide a generator in each site.



- All telecommunication equipment had to be installed in containers because all buildings had been destroyed.
- No transmission backbone in place.
- No local ICT Manufacturer

Human resources is a big challenge for the government and in particular for Timor Telecom. At present, there are minimum human resources with the capabilities to explore ICT issues in Timor-Leste.

The Government is seeking the opportunity to develop the capacity of ARCOM staff in order to regulate the operators such as Timor Telecom and the ISPs in providing services with the appropriate quality of service, and the best price for its customers.

Another challenge is to educate the people in using ICT facilities.

CONTENT AND APPLICATION

The first priority in Timor-Leste will be to provide e-Government services taking the opportunity of the current reconstruction of the country. Master plan will be setup soon in order to provide the necessary guidelines to all concern the players.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

For the moment there is no specific framework for the regulation of internet-based services. This issue will be addressed through the definition of a regulatory framework to be setup during year 2004.

Government has issued recommendations to some ISPs such as Timor Telecom, ETC (East Timor Communication) and i-NET in order to start providing basic services to Internet users.



IMPACT OF ICT IN TIMOR-LESTE

If we educate the people in using those ICT facilities I believe that the growth of ICT-based services in Timor-Leste will boost the national economy.

Civil society will get more information when easy access to ICT facilities such as fixed telephone, mobile phone, Internet, radio and television is spread over the country.

ICT will give a big advantage to Timor-Leste for developing its links with other countries and making its market more appealing for potential investors.