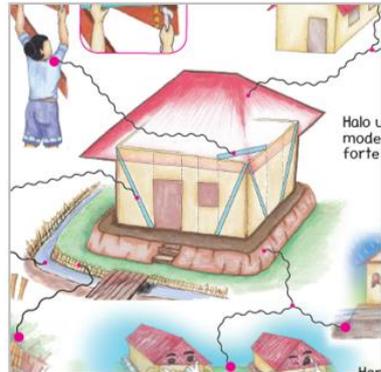


CARE Timor-Leste Dili Flood Response Program 2021 Evaluation Report

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1.1 Program Introduction

Heavy rains across Timor-Leste from 29 March to 4 April 2021 resulted in flash floods and landslides particularly affecting the capital Dili and the surrounding low-lying areas. Responding to the floods, CARE Timor-Leste mounted a rapid emergency response with ECHO funding and proceeded to develop an integrated shelter strategy responding to the acute needs of those affected by the floods.

CARE supported the families who were impacted by implementing an innovative program of community-led recovery projects rehabilitating and repairing the community infrastructure, an emergency distribution of food and other essential items in line with the findings of a consultative gendered shelter assessment. In parallel, CARE played a key role in the development of a national Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign around safer home construction that included distributing a shelter IEC campaign through CARE's longstanding educational Lafaek magazine.

This support directly benefitted 203 vulnerable households through emergency distributions, 2,500 people living in 10 Aldeias in Manleuana through community infrastructure projects and 103,000+ households across Timor-Leste reached with safer home construction information included in the Lafaek community magazine.

2.1 Evaluation Design

2.1.1 Evaluation Objective

This end-of- project evaluation process will focus on capturing nuanced, qualitative, and disaggregated data that best describes the narrative of change this program has engendered. This follows on the gendered shelter assessment that began this project with a similar focus. This focus on a qualitative over a quantitative approach to data collection reflects the community-led ethos of the project whose impact cannot be so easily captured in project outputs or household surveys but rather (if the project has been successful) the intangible and communal benefits gained by community coordination, cooperation, and achievement.

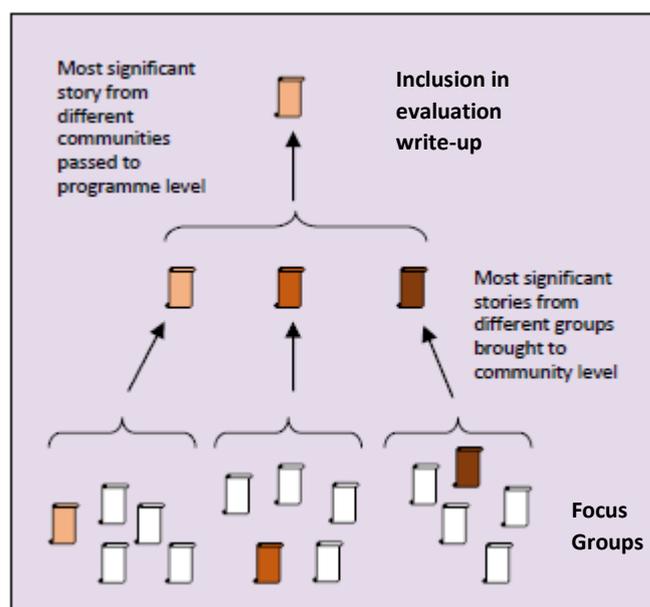
2.1.2 Most significant change methodology

The design of this evaluation is inspired by the ‘most significant change’ methodology. This methodology was adapted based on the aspects that best suited the project, context, timeframe, feasibility and budget. This evaluation follows a community-led evaluation process where processes, and feedback mechanisms have just as much a focus on feeding back to communities as the implementing organisation and donor.

2.1.3 Evaluation methodology

1. **Organise and facilitate meetings of the various disaggregated focus groups. (See Focus Groups below)**
 - a. **Explain the purpose of the evaluation.** This should include an explanation of the proposed methodology, the types of personal statements / stories we are attempting to obtain and how we will use them to evaluate the project, advocate for the successful elements of approach and improve programming in the future for others.
 - b. **Collect and transcribe ‘statements of change’ from each group.** Statements should be personal contributions from individuals. Statements should be based around ‘domains of change’ and focus on, though not be limited to, the change that CARE’s intervention has brought. Where appropriate seek consent to use photos, first names and testimony for the purpose of humanising the evaluation. **(See Domains of Change below)**

2. **Organise and facilitate a finalisation meeting with the larger community**
 - a. **Community to prioritise the most significant themes / topics that emerged through their discussions and a review of the statements of change collected.** Facilitate a meeting of the wider community and feedback the best statement of change collected by the focus groups allowing the community to prioritise most significant themes / topics that best describe the change that has taken place as a result of the project activities or otherwise.
3. **Feedback all data for writeup.** Feedback the wider data collection of 'statements of change' and the prioritisation of the most significant themes / topics to the writers of the evaluation.



The adapted 'most significant change' methodology this evaluation followed

2.1.4 Focus group selection

The selection of focus groups closely mirrored the selection of groups consulted during the original Gendered Shelter Assessment. The population was disaggregated into these different groups to ensure the perspectives of women and other intersectional groups were captured.

- Local Leaders (Previously captured through KIIs)
- Women
- Men
- Youth
- Elderly
- Disabled

The project team facilitated 12 separate groups from the various project communities. The project team completed around four focus group sessions per day over a period of three days until that stage of the process was complete. The project team aimed to complete all disaggregated focus group discussion in around three days. Participants should include a mix of those directly involved in projects and those who were indirectly impacted by project activities.

2.1.5 Domains of Change

Domains of change are the suggested categories of discussion with focus groups to guide collection of stories of change. Facilitators used this list to ask questions, suggest discussion and encourage statements of change. Focus groups were also free to suggest their own domains of change and take their conversations in the direction that most made sense to their reflection.

- Changes in the quality of peoples' lives
- Changes in organisational culture
- Changes in the way villagers interact with each other
- Changes in community resilience
- Changes in safety or protection
- Changes in gender dynamics or women's empowerment
- Changes in feelings of pride or dignity
- Changes in technical knowledge

3.1 Evaluation Implementation

Evaluation activities took place from the 9th – 13th of December 2021 at the Manleuna Village. The evaluation process was conducted through a series of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), using the Most Significant Changes Techniques to facilitate different themes of discussion, exploring any changes the community might have witnessed from their perspective. This included discussion around changes directly / indirectly influenced by project interventions but also made space for stories of change outside the scope of the project.

Community members invited to participate in the FGDs were carefully selected to make up a set of inclusive and sex / age disaggregated groups. These groups were mainly composed of those reached through CARE project activities, either from the initial consultation, mobilizing groups or the communities who were participated in the implementation project. Aside from these participants a group of local leaders were also invited to stand witness to the testimonies of their fellow community members as well as provide their own thoughts and observations on the changes observed in their community.

There were 12 groups of FGDs gathered (an extension group of the initial gender and marker assessment). Among the groups, 2 groups are from the people with Disabilities and 2 groups of the local authority. Technically the participants are coming from all Aldeia within the project implementation area.



Women's Group 3 attending FDGs of Evaluation process



Local Authorities and Village Leaders attending FDGs of Evaluation process



Women's Groups of PWD attending FDGs of Evaluation process

4.1 Evaluation Result

4.1.1 Collection and processing of results

During the initial evaluation FGDs, the facilitator prompted discussion amongst participants using prompt questions aligned with the domains of change. These discussions were facilitated to encourage the sharing of views and perspectives as well as develop a common understanding on the changes that might have happened in the community, through the implementation of the ECHO Project. The data collector transcribed these views and perspectives shared in the FGDs and they were then recapped to community members in a follow-up meeting whereby the gathered community prioritised the themes and ideas that they deemed the most significant – most significant to their own reflection, for feeding back to CARE and for feedback to ECHO. Below is a summary of the main themes that arose through this process in order of priority and the testimonies from members of the community that best reflect these ideas.

4.1.2 Prioritised main themes of discussion:

1. The flood impact and community-led response have changed attitudes around flood risk and a sense of responsibility for the future
2. Community-led interventions have made community members feel more resilient and protected from the future flooding
3. The community felt a strong sense of collective action, ownership and pride around the projects they managed and implemented
4. The community highlighted women's engagement and participation in all stages of the program
5. All other points highlighted by the community

4.1.3 Community statements ordered by the prioritised themes of discussion:

1. The flood impact and community-led response have changed attitudes around flood risk and a sense of responsibility for the future



Lusitania de Jesus from Aldeia Lidun during the age 17-30 woman focus group discussion

“We thank CARE and ECHO, as through the project they supported us to be able to establish four waste disposal in our Aldeia. The waste disposal have being made available and **it’s our duty now to helps our community to raised their awareness** and make them understand the risk of throwing the rubbish everywhere.”

Lusitania de Jesus from Aldeia Lidun
Woman groups ages 17-30

“In general, the ECHO project is really good and help us a lot, but one thing I wanted to highlight from our Aldeia is the waste disposal. It has **helped our community to realize** that the throwing rubbish across not in the waste disposal place is provoking a very high risk of the flooding.

It is not easy things to happen immediately that **everyone must have that level of awareness**. It takes time but what I have seen in my area is that the people is now aware that the risk of high flooding were impacted due to our own attitude.”

Pedro Ataide do Rego from **Aldeia Lemocari**
Men groups ages 17-30

“Our waste disposal is newly established. Before constructing these projects all the rubbish used to be thrown in the river making the floods worse and more dangerous. We knew it was not the right things to do, but we did not have options. Now we have 5 waste disposals in my Aldeia from the ECHO project which will be helping our communities to throw away their rubbish accordingly. **It is my duty as chief of Aldeia to make sure that people use it well to protect them from any future flooding situation.**”

Chief Estaquio Tilman from **Aldeia Lemocari**
Local Leader

“The April flooding and the recent ECHO project seen through the value of it’s collective works have made us make us aware that **our own attitude in throwing away rubbish and individualistic behaviors of only doing things on our own, have shifted**. We need to work together; we have realized that we have to lead the change for ourselves.”

Community Member

2. Community led interventions have made community members feel more resilient and protected from the future flooding

“The recent raining was also huge although not as heavy as April one, but there was no flooding in our Aldeia. It means that **we are more resilience now** compare to the previous one. There must not be any single contribution/interventions to that, but of course the ECHO waste disposal building project is one of the big contributions of not having a big flooding impact because there is not many rubbish throwing across compare to the previous situation”

Judith de Sousa Oliveira from **Adleia Badiak**
Woman groups ages 17-30

“We feel that we are **more secured and more resilient now** compared to the April Flooding. This is because the drainage has now been cleaned and repaired. We saw that the water have now flew within the drainage compare to the previous one where the drainage was full of mud, rubbish and other waste. It’s now looking normal and the recent raining have proved that we were not flooded”

Pascoela Esquera from **Aldeia Lidun**
from the age group of 30-60 (woman)

“Because the waste disposal works were undertaken locally in our community, we learned a lot. Many [Humanitarian] projects came with bigger providers/company and provided ready made products, but **the ECHO project were really engaged our local technical people and craftsmen to develop something for ourselves.**”

Chief Estaquio Tilman from **Aldeia Lemocari**
Local Leader

“During that period of the project implementation, we learned some new techniques. That happened because all [projects] were undertaken by our local craftsmen to support us all. From these works, **we learned many new techniques from each other and that is good for us all.**”

Community Member

3. The community felt a strong sense of collective action, ownership and pride around the projects they managed and implemented

“The community project really **belongs to us**. We have to take care of it because those constructions and cleaning are for us.”

Community Member

“We collectively work here. Man and woman working together. There were 10 people as a mobilizer groups (five woman and five men) and with the rest of the community, **we are collectively working together.**”

Community Member

“Our drainage actually connects 3 Aldeias directly from beginning to end. So, if we were not able to work together and clean it up together we at the lowland area will be impacted by the others, therefore during our work, we paid attention to each other and specially to the other 2 Aldeias above asking them to make sure that future floods do not bring rubbish as well as flood waters and mud.

We knew we should not work alone, because we if cleaned our own without support of the above Aldeias, it would not have solved the issue. Therefore, we worked together and did the cleaning process together. That’s why when we discussed with CARE about our determined priorities, this drainage cleaning project became the joint plan of 3 Aldeias”

Domingas H. Viana from **Aldeia Mane Mesak**
Womens groups ages 30-60

4. The community highlighted women's engagement and participation in all stages of the program

“Woman had a big participation during the community construction project. It was not only men who were working; it was we, the woman, who were also involved. We supported the men in cooking during construction, but we also did drainage clearing by ourselves. We got inside the drains and we helped clean them up. It is for our community and for our protections and resilience for the future”

Pascoela Esquera from **Aldeia Lidun**
Womens groups ages 30-60

“It was huge work, but we saw the women are also strongly participating alongside the men. They were included in taking the mud from the drainage and pushing carts with full of mud and throwing out. They really make a full participation during the implementation period.

Everyone was working voluntary for the community spirit, the ECHO project provided funds for lunch through our mobilizer team from our Aldeia, and we all cooked for each other. **The women supported not only in cooking the food but also worked a lot in cleaning the drainage and the other manual tasks.”**

Jaimito Ximenes from Aldeia Manleuana
Men group ages 30-60

“During the construction period, **the woman from each aldeia were well involved**, not only in the drainage cleaning and drainage repairing but also during the construction of the waste disposal”

All local authorities' joint statement

5. Other points highlighted by the community

On inclusion of persons with disability:

One waste disposal was placed closed to our house. As people with disability, I have able to throw the rubbish in the waste disposal which are closed to my house. **Thanks to the project I don't have to walk a long distance** or neglect to think where I should through my household rubbish.

Maria Sonia from Aldeia Efaca

We the people with disability, **we are not able to take on the hard work, but we were involved** in the groups works, preparing food and support to who did the cleaning part. We think it's important for everyone to work together.

Community Member

From the beginning of the project, through the consultation process, we were there. As people with disability, our involvement from the beginning was important and in fact, the decision of establishing the waste disposal and drainage cleaning was taken forward considering our suggestion too.

Community Member

On timeliness of ECHO/CARE intervention:

"We think that although it was very short time, **[The CARE/ECHO Intervention] came at a time when we need the extra support to make ourselves protected and ready** for any future flooding, because we never know, when it would happen again"

Village Chief

On attitudes between neighbouring communities

As community member, we call attention to each other; we do not want our community to be heavily flooded again. That is why for the people who are living in the mountain, or in the higher area, **all must be realize that they are not alone. They have people surrounding them; who are also insecure to the flooding.** Therefore, the attitude towards each other is important, especially on making sure that we are not throwing the rubbish everywhere, should not cutting the tree everywhere. They should think of the other people in the low line area

Sonia M. F de Jesus from Aldeia Badiak

On ambitions around community preparedness

Apart from the ECHO interventions through the community project, **we as the local leaders have to be more alert now of the rain situation.** This is something as our call to do and we have requested our community members to prepare and be more ready. For example, we ask the community if they have some local materials, they should work together to use to prepare a protection in front of their house. They consider its important because not everything have to come from the government or agencies.

Chefe Aldeia Lisbutac, Alcino Guterres

5.1 Summary of Findings

This evaluation followed a methodology that aimed to produce qualitative results that represent the views of participating community members as described and prioritised by the communities themselves. To that end while a summary of findings can be composed in this section, the true learning from this evaluation should be taken from reading and interpreting the community feedback directly. Nevertheless, a review of the evaluation results from the writer's point of view can be seen to point towards some of the following high-level results:

- The direct positive impact of intervention projects and activities (e.g., clean drains, functioning waste management systems)
- An increased focus on emergency preparedness and risk awareness of communities brought about by the discourse and cooperation the different activities provoked.
- A sense of ownership and community pride around the program activities as a result of the highly participatory model of implementation followed by CARE.

While the Focus Group discussions were open to exploring all narratives of change both from within and outside of the CARE-ECHO program, the community focused on discussing and prioritising narratives of change related to community-led infrastructure projects. This meant the community chose not to evaluate in detail the results of the emergency distributions of food and other essential items.

While not reviewed directly through this evaluation it can be stated based on partner post-distribution monitoring the IEC material produced and distributed through Lafaek Magazine successfully reached, and was used by, a wide audience of affected rural households across the country. In addition, CARE played a key role in developing the National Safer Shelter Manual that was accepted and distributed nationally by the inter-agency technical working group. CARE played a leading role on the technical design of this national shelter module on how to build a safer and accessible house along with the other INGOs and Government partners.

In addition, having successfully concluded the community-led project, the ECHO Project Manager was able to present the project implementation and lessons at the ECHO Regional Humanitarian Forum (EHF) and Asia/Pacific Shelter Forum with the specific theme on "Community Driver Shelter Approach in Timor-Leste Flood Response", highlighting the successes of the project and the lesson learned from it. CARE Timor-Leste and CARE's Global Shelter Team continue to coordinate to share the story and lessons learnt from this project both within the CARE confederation and more broadly across the humanitarian shelter sector globally.