



**Concept Note**  
**Comprehensive Journalism Training**  
**Press Council- UNDP LEARN**



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

**Project Name: *Comprehensive Journalism Training: Media in the Timor-Leste Electoral Cycle***

**1. Organizers**

Timor-Leste Press Council, UNDP Electoral Programme (LEARN Project), RTTL

Possible Partnership: UNESCO

**2. Time frame**

February 2018- July 2018 for 6 months

**3. Background**

Currently, it is widely recognized in Timor-Leste that there is a large scope to improve the quality of journalism in the country. The media is often said to be the fourth pillar of a democracy—alongside the government, parliament, and judiciary—and it has a pivotal role to play in a healthy, functioning democratic system. Particularly when it comes to political journalism in an electoral cycle, the media can play an important role in deepening democracy in important ways. It can help promote a political debate and keep a government accountable to an informed citizenry, and can play several roles in the political process, including a ‘watch-dog’ role to monitor the political process, contribute to political education, and prevent violence.

The Press Council of Timor-Leste and UNDP electoral programme (LEARN project) aims to strengthen political journalism in Timor-Leste and to further democracy and development with a focus on improving the capacity of the country’s journalists serving in key media actors such as print, broadcast and

online, and encouraging widespread political engagement.

The Press Council of Timor-Leste and UNDP have been working with the journalists in different areas including the developing of the Media Code of Ethics in an Electoral Process, trainings for journalists, the program Political Parties meets the Press, specific training for radio journalists etc. During the project "Political Parties meets the Press", it proved that journalists had some spaces to improve critical thinking on social and political matters, and utilizing data and evidence. Thus, the Press Council and UNDP proposed a comprehensive tailored-made capacity development initiative to the national media not only to strengthen the capacity of journalists to report political affairs for mass dissemination, but also to ensure that journalists have the necessary background knowledge of the social matters and democratic systems to ensure accurate reportage of a particular political development, or undertake necessary analysis to produce an informed programme or news articles during the electoral cycle.

#### **4. Objective**

The proposed Comprehensive Journalist Training program will develop innovative approaches to stimulate an open, diverse and self-sustaining media sector that provides Timorese citizen with platforms for engaging in informed dialogue to encourage accountability and development.

- 1) Journalists enable to think critically for political and social affairs based on evidences utilizing primary and secondary research and enhance the background knowledge.
- 2) Journalists improve professional journalism skills and provide accurate and balanced news and reports to citizens through pluralistic media in print, broadcast and online.
- 3) Journalists participate in interactions with political parties and politicians to talk on political and social issues in Timor-Leste in a real TV debate, and Timorese citizens are better informed on political and social affairs through these TV debates.

## 5. Methodology

In order to gain a deeper learning, the following four components will be taken in to account:

**Motivational context:** intrinsic motivation, participants need to see both learning goals and learning processes as relevant to them, to feel some ownership of course and subject.

**Learner Activity:** participants need to be active not passive, deep learning is associated with doing rather than passively receiving, that is the reason this program will include both theoretical sessions and practical sessions.

**Interaction with others:** discussion with peers requires participants to explain their thinking, this, in turn, can improve their thinking and journalistic abilities.

**A well-structured knowledge base:** the starting point for new learning should be existing knowledge and experience. This programme will try to have a clearly displayed structure and should related to other practical knowledge and not presented in isolation.

The proposed methodology combines participatory adult education techniques with distinctive activity based approach. It acknowledges the importance of building local electoral administrative capacity consistently with the diversity of experiences and operational environments of the participants, thereby encouraging dialogue, sharing of knowledge and participation in real TV programme debates

This comprehensive journalism training will be composed of four (4) components, respectively on

- 1) critical thinking on social and political matters;
- 2) professional journalism skills;
- 3) on-site observation and interviewing; and

4) TV debates with politicians.

### **1) Critical thinking**

This module will enhance the journalists' critical thinking by discussing social and political matters with other participants and facilitators. Through this exercise, the participants will improve the background knowledge about social and political issues such as education, health and gender equality, among others, critical to cover political journalism specially in the electoral cycle. This module will also provide journalists about the importance of secondary research and usage data from various documents by international organizations, government, and researchers etc. Therefore, the participants will deepen their knowledge not by assumption but evidence and data. The journalists will be able to present their knowledge and understanding of social and political affairs during the live broadcasted TV debate with politicians every 2 weeks.

### **2) Professional journalism skills**

In this module, journalists will acquire their theoretical/practical knowledge and understanding of journalism. This training will be delivered by international specialists as well as local specialists focusing on each specific topic. This session will cover from the technical skills of journalism such as interviewing, developing stories, and journalists' ethics, and some important concepts including gender, social media, court reporting etc. After the completion of this module, journalists will attain comprehensive understanding on journalism.

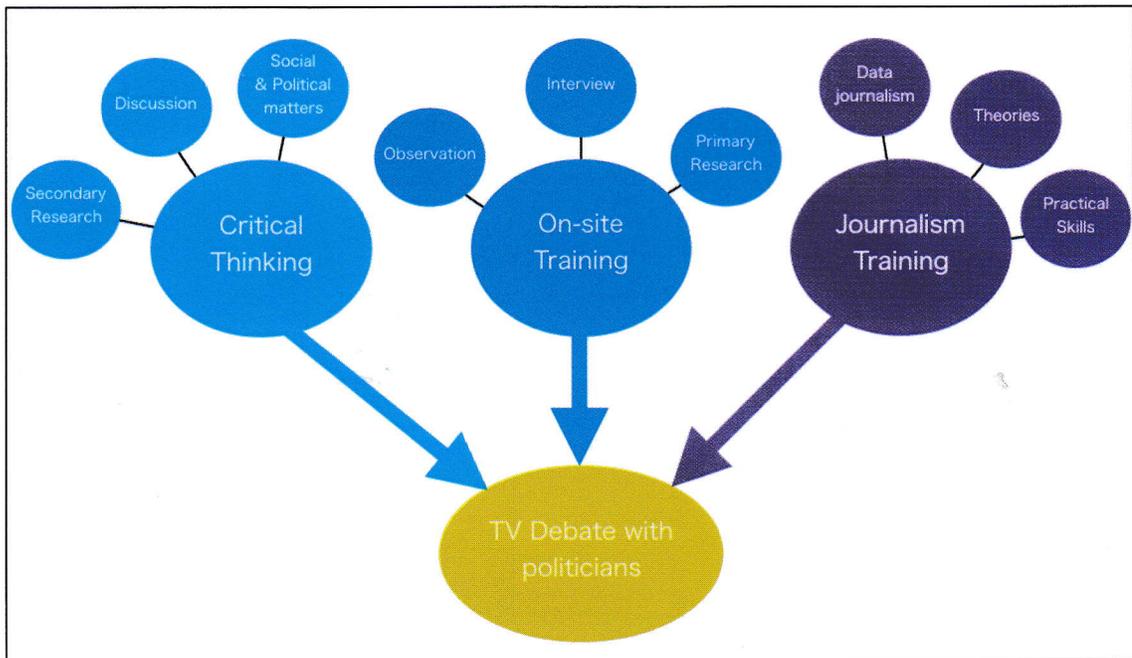
### **3) On-site observation/interview**

This session will enable journalists to understand the significance of primary research. Journalists will visit a specific site related with the topic of the debate. For example, when the topic of debate is education, journalists will visit a high school to observe the facilities of the school, students and how classes are organized. Also, journalists will interview teachers, students, and the head teacher to find out challenges, obstacles,

recommendations to the government etc. The Press Council will mainly facilitate and give advice to journalists on what to observe, how to raise questions and accumulate interviews etc.

#### 4) Debates between journalists and political in a TV station

This session will be conducted every two weeks after completing the above 3 sessions. Then journalists will be equipped with background knowledge and understanding of the topic. Through the other sessions, journalists will prepare the results of primary and secondary research and will be able to ask critical questions to politicians. It will be an opportunity for journalists to present their enhanced knowledge and will provide confident to the journalists to discuss social matters in a constructive manner.



**Graph 1: Overall picture of the comprehensive training**

#### 6. Duration

The total duration of this training will be for 6 month period and every week has two modules.

## 7. Participants

- Maximum 20 Journalists will be participated in this training. Small groups trainings have become more popular as a means of encouraging participants learning. Some participants may not actively participate and speak up in a group that begins to be get bigger than 20 members and in addition facilitators would find it hard to assess participation by individual members in groups with numbers greater than this. This number (20) should provide an opportunity for the participants to obtain a deep understanding of the material and more effective to participate in discussion and interactive sessions.

This project will be focused on **active journalists** -currently working in local media- as they will be immediately able to utilize the skills and knowledge learnt from the training at their workplaces including print, online, and broadcast. As a result, Timorese citizens will be able to obtain more accurate and balanced information during the electoral cycle.

- Participants from communities radios  
Community radios' media practitioners are also encouraged to take part in this critical thinking training as they stationed close to communities in which they go on air. Three participants from three community radios expected to get involved in this training representing the community radios. Due to geographical reasons, only Community radio of Matebian, Community Radio of Tokodede and Community Mauloko's journalists will be in selection process to be trainees for the referred training.

Participants from municipalities, namely the community radios' journalists will be provided with Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) by the organizer, UNDP comprising \$ 30, 00 per day for both meals and transport. Apart from this, UNDP also covers accommodations for the community radios' participants during their staying in Dili for the

training.

## 8. Modules

NO.	PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM	CRITICAL THINKING MODULE
1	Interview techniques	Poverty
2	How to develop stories	Health
3	Social Media	Education
4	Data Journalism	Unemployment of youth
5	Ethics for journalists	Gender equality
6	Media law & court reporting	Economics
7	PR Communication for journalists	Environment
8	Video Journalism	Mega Project
9	Community Radio Journalism	Security
10	Gender Journalism	Infrastructure

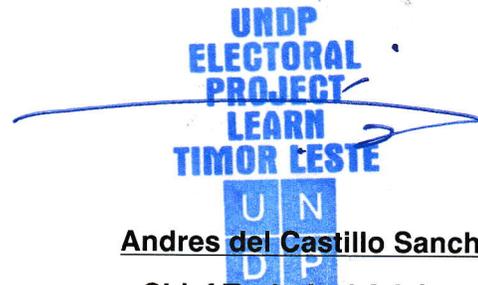
This concept note is made to help facilitate cooperation between the Press Council of Timor-Leste and UNDP Timor-Leste for implementing all the mentioned activities.

Dili, February 20, 2018



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