

PROJECT PROFILE

Supporting Economic Activity and Growth in Timor-Leste Through Agriculture



PROJECT NAME

Avansa Agrikultura

CLIENT

USAID/Timor-Leste

PRIME CONTRACTOR

Cardno Emerging Markets USA, Ltd.

PARTNER ORGANIZATION

Resonance, HIAM Health, the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture/Texas A&M AgriLife Research

COUNTRY

Timor-Leste

TIME PERIOD

Jun. 2015 – Aug. 2020

Challenge

In Timor-Leste, many rural communities face poverty, natural resource degradation, food insecurity, and under-nutrition. Smallholder farmers often lack critical agricultural services, inputs, and supplies, and they struggle to access markets for their products. Most are unable to move from subsistence farming to profitable commercial production in order to increase their incomes.

Farmers can increase their productivity and crop quality through access to appropriate agricultural training and to quality farming inputs. Meanwhile, connections to new buyers can help farmers grow their commercial farming enterprises. Together, training, linkages to agricultural inputs, and access to new markets can help farmers improve their livelihoods and food security.

Solution

Resonance is a partner on USAID/Timor-Leste's Avansa Agrikultura project, a horticulture value chain activity that aims to increase productivity in farming, production, processing, and distribution

of vegetables, fruits, and legumes. The project works to stimulate and support increased economic activity and growth in targeted rural communities and districts in Timor-Leste. To do this, Avansa Agrikultura focuses on improving production practices; the functionality of farmer groups and associations; market linkages; and access to quality agricultural inputs and services, including access to finance. Resonance provides private sector engagement and market linkage support across key horticulture value chains in order to form meaningful and sustainable connections between farmers, input suppliers, and output buyers.

Key Results

Resonance supports private sector engagement and market linkage activities through its in-country staff and strategic advisory support. Resonance's Dili-based team develops and supports agribusiness partnerships between farming communities and input suppliers or output buyers.

Key Resonance activities include:

- Through a Rapid Partnerships Appraisal, our team scoped and assessed 13 private sector partnership opportunities for the project.
- Our team has assisted in the development of 22 partnerships with buyers and collectors to facilitate greater farmer access to markets.
- Our team led an Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Assessment to evaluate the feasibility of introducing an electronic market information system for smallholder farmers and buyers in Timor-Leste.
- We conducted a Meteorological Data Assessment to leverage meteorological data frameworks for increasing agricultural productivity.
- We executed Export Opportunity Analyses to identify potential agricultural commodities for export.
- We have supported an access-to-finance activity that includes the development of a cost-share mechanism between two input suppliers, a micro-finance institution, and farmers in order to help farmers access agricultural technology.
- We also support monitoring and evaluation activities for Avansa Agrikultura, including technical assistance for the project's data collection system, the creation of a data collection dashboard, and the creation of agribusiness surveys.

- Resonance is conducting a Demand and Market Systems Analysis for agricultural inputs and services to farmers in Timor-Leste. The recommendations in this report will help Avansa Agrikultura design and implement sustainability measures for key project activities and will help USAID address remaining gaps in agricultural inputs and services in the future.

Resonance's in-country staff and strategic support have contributed to the high impact of the Avansa Agrikultura project:

- Over 32,000 farmers have applied new technologies that are steadily improving farm productivity.
- Over 6,500 young people have been trained in life skills including entrepreneurship, agricultural production, natural resource management, and nutrition.
- Through market and agribusiness linkages, partner farming households have increased earnings to an annual average of \$2,454, considerably higher than \$235 a year in the baseline year.