

**DILEMMA OF AGRICULTURAL SUBSISTENCE IN TIMOR-LESTE:  
ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR  
REFORESTATION COFFEE PROJECT OF SUSTAINABLE  
AGRICULTURE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

***Abstract***

Timor Leste has deeply concerned regarding the structural impact of the global market that establishes anti-deforestation regulations after Paris Agreement in 2016. The main objective is economic sustainability needs to be balanced with ecology through this reason needs assistance from ADB funds to strengthen the coffee production base readjusted according to the Paris 2050 agreement, especially export issues to the global market. The theoretical approach in this research, dominated by the perspective of International Political Economy approaching the structural impacts of the economic-political system and how the State of Timor-Leste's institutional capacity to modernize agriculture, especially coffee production, which has potential for state income. The research methodology is addressed from primary and secondary data to approach relevant institutions and the research will directly use purposeful sampling data collection techniques (determine the main authors/policy makers).

**Keywords: ADB, Reforestation, Sustainable Agriculture, Coffee, Timor-Leste**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a financial bank that provides loans and equity investments for development projects in member countries. The bank also provides technical assistance to projects and programs to promote capital investment for development. The bank was established in August 1966 under the auspices of the United Nations ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) and ADB's headquarters are currently located in Manila, Philippines. ADB is also a financial institution that aims to promote economic growth and regional cooperation, especially in underdeveloped countries.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has a vision of a prosperous, inclusive, resilient and sustainable Asia and Asia Pacific. ADB provides assistance to partner countries through loans, technical assistance, grants and equity investments to promote social and economic development to maximize the development impact of its assistance by facilitating political dialogue, providing and mobilizing financial resources including credit, commercial and export funds. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) supports projects in developing member countries that create economic impact through public and private sector operations with the primary mission of reducing poverty in Asia and the Asia-Pacific.<sup>1</sup> Since the beginning of the 21st century, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been 40 partner of regional countries

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.adb.org/who-we-are#:~:text=The%20Asian%20Development%20Bank%20\(ADB,extreme%20poverty%20in%20the%20region](https://www.adb.org/who-we-are#:~:text=The%20Asian%20Development%20Bank%20(ADB,extreme%20poverty%20in%20the%20region)

in Southeast Asia, South Asia and East Asia. The largest beneficiary countries include Indonesia, the People's Republic of China, India and Pakistan.<sup>2</sup>

On 13 July 2020, the Government of Timor-Leste through the Minister of Finance signed an agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The agreement focuses on the development of a project to improve livelihoods for producers in the agroforestry and coffee sectors. The project is implemented in four (4) years while the program is led directly by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, with the support of the Timor-Leste Coffee Association or *Asosiasaun Kafe Timor-Leste*(AKTL), achieving the government's goals, established in the National Coffee Sector Development Plan during 2019-2023. The government invested US\$38 million in six main areas, namely: research and development, production and productivity, quality and value addition, market access, domestic consumption and tourism, and sector management coordination.

## ANALYSIS AND DISSCUSION

Coffee production is very important for the economic growth of Timor-Leste, especially the communities in Aileu. Coffee is the largest agricultural export, and playing central role with nearly one-third of households in Timor-Leste depending on coffee for income. In 2019, Timor-Leste launched the National Coffee Sector Development Plan 2019-2030 with support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Timor-Leste Coffee Association. The plan aims to improve productivity, quality to access the global market and create jobs and increase domestic income for families (kafekultor).

According to the direction of the Minister of Agriculture of Aileu municipality as the population concerned with agricultural life through horticultural activities and coffee farmers agriculture is the main source of livelihood for approximately 80% of Timor-Leste, as farmers have access to sustainable products. Subsistence and commercial producers face significant constraints, including limited access to low-income quality and limited access to markets.<sup>3</sup>

"Coffee culture" is an agricultural activity with the purpose of coffee products or coffee production activities that are developed by various means through the field of production, industry and benefit coffee consumers. Coffee farmers come in different forms depending on the type of coffee for production and according to the reality of each coffee property in the production field. Coffee products are very important to Timor-Leste especially the coffee growing community in Aileu due to the main export sector of farmers and also becomes a strong income for the coffee growing community through the dynamization of crucial activities such as buyers and exporters.

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<sup>2</sup><https://www.britannica.com/money/Asian-Development-Bank>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.usaid.gov/timor-leste/developing-agricultural-communities>

Government has developed partnership with USAID supporting coffee production in Timor-Leste through the establishment of the Timor Coffee Cooperative (CCT) program which is the largest coffee export in Timor-Leste. CCT involves nearly a thousand workers, mostly women and they not only export coffee but also add other high-value products.

Coffee production in Timor-Leste faces challenges such as old coffee from coffee trees and lack of adequate treatment, but with development plans and international support hope to reforest coffee so as to increase production to get better income for farmers especially those with coffee farming profession.

The National Coffee Sector Development Plan 2019-2030 in Timor-Leste with support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Timor-Leste Coffee Association, aims to improve productivity, quality and access to the world market. The plan aims to double coffee production by 2030, increase coffee export income, rehabilitate coffee plantations and provide training to farmers and modernize the coffee sector through coordination with the private sector and donor agencies and research on planting materials and experiments to plant new coffee varieties.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Report of Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), Coffee is the most widely traded tropical product, with up to 25 million farming households globally accounting for 80 percent of world output. Production is concentrated in developing countries, where coffee accounts for a sizeable share of export earnings, and provides a key source of livelihood for households. European Union and the United States of America are the largest consuming and importing markets.<sup>4</sup>

Asian Development Bank Report on National Coffee Sector Development Plan Timor-Leste 2019-2030, The coffee industry is a central part of Timor-Leste's economy, society, and history. Coffee is the most important agricultural cash crop in Timor-Leste, providing income for almost 20% of all house-holds, business opportunities for processors, traders, and retail coffee shop owners, and significant export earnings for the country.<sup>5</sup>

Sustainable Organic Coffee Prospects and Coffee Transaction Costs Chain in Timor – Leste(2025), This study aims to look at the strategic development of sustainable coffee as a family economic asset in improving the welfare of coffee farming families and the impact of transaction costs on the basic price received by farmers, the impact of which is not satisfactory in the motivation for innovation in developing coffee farming businesses. In addition, to see the factor of institutional involvement of coffee in terms of existing coffee institutions in developing the coffee agri-business sector in Timor – Leste, based on the standards of coffee in regional and global market.

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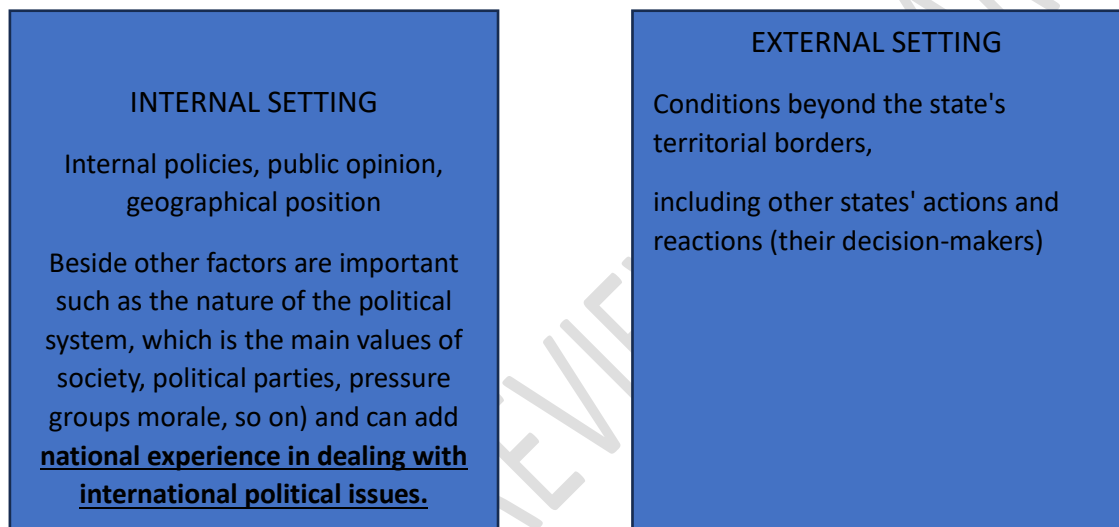
<sup>4</sup><https://www.fao.org/markets-and-trade/commodities-overview/beverages/coffee/en>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/linked-documents/51396-001-sd-02.pdf>

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS

Foreign Policy Decision Making (1954) introduced by Richard Snyder, in External factors influence internal to determine their input before going through the process to reach a decision (Internal Setting & External Setting).<sup>6</sup> *Foreign Policy Decision-Making*, edited by Richard Snyder, H. W. Bruck, and Burton Sapin, is one of the foundational works of the subfield of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) in the field of International Relations (IR).<sup>7</sup>



Source: Analysis and create by Author

The study of foreign policy decision-making seeks to understand how states formulate foreign policy. It views foreign policy as a series of decisions made by particular actors using specific decision-making processes. Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin (originally published in 1954) is a foundational work in foreign policy decision-making. It proposes a focus on how individual human beings, acting on behalf of states and organized into groups and state institutions, make decisions.<sup>8</sup> External factors influence internal factors, such as the determinants of the input and the process of determining the outcome. Snyder's theoretical approach is fundamental to examining the institutional processes by which the Timor-Leste government adjusts its political decisions in response to global issues such as climate change and how it adapts its internal capacities and resources responding its economic potential sustainably.

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<sup>6</sup><https://www.centerfs.org/files/2022/12/7-Vol.5-No.10e-189-217.pdf>

<sup>7</sup>[https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9780230107526\\_1](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9780230107526_1)

<sup>8</sup><https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780199743292/obo-9780199743292-0269.xml>

response to global issues such as climate change and how it adapts its internal capacities and lack of resources for sustainability of sustainable development.

## **GREEN THEORY**

The environmental crisis over the decades has been more discussed in International Relations. Climate Change, Ozone Minimization, Degradation in Biological Diversity, Pollution and Waste management have become environmental issues regarding to the impact of the environmental crisis. The issue of environmental destruction has established in the agenda of the international forum formally in 1972 at the United Nations (UN) forum held in Stockholm, Sweden, during which the forum discussed the problem of pollution and climate change.<sup>9</sup>

In Green theory, the environmental crisis becomes a crucial issue in the basis of the main thought, in the variation of behavior or human activities and these consequences examines Green theory emerged as a critique of the traditional radically human-centered theory of international relations that assumes the existence of the environment. Green theory versus anthropocentrism is an understanding that focuses on humans (Dyer, 2020).

Understanding ecocentrism became one of the main concepts in Green theory. Ecocentrism is an understanding that focuses on the environment or ecology. Green theory exists to construct and understand how the environment, economy, and nation (Dyer, 2020).

## **CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)**

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Business ethics is implemented according to standards that regulate companies' compliance with the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).<sup>10</sup> While the State or foreign investors have the freedom of equal opportunity (license from the state) to implement production activities (business), must be responsible for ensuring environmental sustainability and social impact on society

In general, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the commitment or responsibility of a company to society and the environment. Based on the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) Corporate Social Responsibility can be defined as "Continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as

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<sup>9</sup>[https://repository.uksw.edu/bitstream/123456789/26598/3/T1\\_372018108\\_BAB%20II.pdf](https://repository.uksw.edu/bitstream/123456789/26598/3/T1_372018108_BAB%20II.pdf), 06/10/2024.

<sup>10</sup><https://www.unido.org/our-focus-advancing-economic-competitiveness-competitive-trade-capacities-and-corporate-responsibility-corporate-social-responsibility-market-integration/what-csr>

of the local community and society at large” contribution to the construction of the economy and the quality of life of workers and families and the society (Marnelly, 2012).<sup>11</sup>

In Article 9, Constitution of Republic Democratic of Timor-Leste recognized International Law.<sup>12</sup> The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, 1969 International Convention on the Recognition of a State which, under international law, has a duty to comply with the treaty it has ratified. Timor-Leste has ratified Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, an international agreement governing treaties between states Article 26: *pacta sunt servanda*: obligation to cooperate and comply.<sup>13</sup>

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Internal Factor to Implementing CALIP

There are several factors of coffee reforestation projects through the Coffee Agroforestry Livelihood Improvement Project (CALIP) program. The following factors that influenced the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to support Timor-Leste, especially the municipality of Aileu, Laulara Administrative Post, to implement the coffee reforestation project through the CALIP program:

#### a. Climate change

Climate Change is a condition that refers to changes in temperature and climate patterns, which change irregularly. Climate change impacts planet earth and human multidimensional life. This impact is a very significant global phenomenon and requires concrete action to prevent and sustain human life and planet earth. CALIP also criteria with a vision to continue to conserve production according to the guidance of European Union regulations that require producers to make imported production with conditions "eco-friendly" means these products free from the process of deforestation.<sup>14</sup>

The concept of “Ecological Cost” is also a reference for the project. This concept is the cost to prevent the environment, maintenance activities to do "Pruning" (cut coffee), coffee growers to cut coffee CALIP also offers seedlings such as, *Samtuku* Tree, Coconut Tree, Avocado, Vanilla, Pepper *Durian Chenke*. Distribution nurseries located in Fatukeru Ermera, distribution based on the needs of coffee growers, so continue to reforest the forest to ensure its sustainability. In addition to the distribution of nurseries, awareness to coffee growers to continue planting trees to sustain a friendly environment. In addition to climate change, the program is also aligned with ADB's 2030 operational strategy on poverty. Thus, starting in

<sup>11</sup>[https://repository.uksw.edu/bitstream/123456789/26598/3/T1\\_372018108\\_BAB%20II.pdf](https://repository.uksw.edu/bitstream/123456789/26598/3/T1_372018108_BAB%20II.pdf), 5

<sup>12</sup> Constitution Republic Democratic of Timor-Leste, Article 9

<sup>13</sup> “Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties

1969”, [https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/1\\_1\\_1969.pdf](https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/1_1_1969.pdf)

<sup>14</sup>intervista, CALIP, office, 04/10/2024

2022-2023 CALIP has offered nurseries with Arabica coffee, Arabica coffee phase, Robusta coffee, Cenke, Pepper, Vanilla, *Ai-Samtuku* and others with a total of 9,610 nurseries to coffee growers in Laulara.<sup>15</sup>

**Tabel 1.1.**

**Distribution of Plants in Postu Administrativu Laulara 2022- 2023:**

| Characteristic of Plants | Suku Madabeno |              | Suku Kotolau |              | Total |
|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------|
|                          | Madabeno 1    | Madabeno 2   | Kotolau 1    | Kotolau 2    |       |
| Kafe Arabika             | 1600          | 1500         | 300          | 400          | 9.610 |
| Kafe Arabika Fase        | 1000          | 500          | 1000         | 1800         |       |
| Kafe Robusta             | -             | -            | -            | -            |       |
| Cenke                    | 300           | 300          | 250          | 200          |       |
| Pimenta                  | -             | -            | -            | 200          |       |
| Baunilla                 | 100           | -            | 100          |              |       |
| Ai-Samatuku no Ai-seluk  | 40            | 50           | 30           | 30           |       |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>2.500</b>  | <b>2.800</b> | <b>1.680</b> | <b>2.630</b> |       |

## **b. Economic Factors**

Based on the August 2024 CALIP summary, the Coffee Sector is the largest non-petroleum export in Timor-Leste, and the growth of Coffee with 38% of all Coffee Growers. However, most coffee areas are old coffee and need replanting and rehabilitation and most coffee farmers are not consistent in applying good practices to production. There is an opportunity to "boost" the potential and quality of coffee that we have, investment in the coffee sector can increase economic growth so as not to be too dependent on oil. Economic diversification and coffee productivity require strong investment, improve transportation lines, improve good infrastructure, and qualified human resources to carry out effective extension services to develop knowledge, skills and practices to increase the productivity of the coffee sector.<sup>16</sup>

CALIP also partners with ACT (Cafe Timor Association) with the "Marketing and Communication 5 years" program. Facilitation of Market Networking through events such as

<sup>15</sup>Intervista sr. Tobias dos Santos, extension worker (MAPPF), Laulara, 4 Agosto 2024

<sup>16</sup>Intervista, CALIP, Office, 4 Agosto 2024

the Timor Coffee Festival in 2021-2022 to build networking to develop relationships with international partners and exporters. This is in line with the ADB Strategic Plan 2030 which improves the business environment and increases income. To achieve stability of quality and quantity in the coffee sector requires the empowerment of coffee farmers' capacity to become a significant factor to increase the design of coffee farmers' productivity with technical and knowledge variations.<sup>17</sup>

### **Project Management Structure for the Implementation of the CALIP Program (Coffee Agroforestry Livelihood Improvement Project)**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a financial bank that provides loans and equity investments for development projects in member countries. The bank also provides technical assistance to projects and programs to promote capital investment for development. ADB's Strategic Plan 2020-2030, to guide ADB's efforts to meet the needs of the region by 2030.

ADB's vision is to achieve a prosperous, inclusive, resilient and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, as well as to strive to eradicate poverty. ADB will take a differentiated approach to the following groups of regions: Fragile and conflict-affected situations: Institutional reform, development and governance, essential infrastructure and social services, targeted social assistance, efforts to build resilience, address conflict cases and promote reconciliation and reconstruction, small developing states; Adapting to climate change, environmental sustainability and seeking to manage risk, connectivity and access, institutional strengthening, strengthening to improve the business environment and promoting growth will be led by the private sector. Low-middle income regions: Clean and inclusive infrastructure, social services and civil protection, sustainable urbanization, structural transformation and public sector reform. High-middle income regions: Access to capital markets, institutional strengthening and development of demonstration projects, private sector operations, regional public goods, climate change, urbanization, regional cooperation and integration, and large elderly populations.<sup>18</sup>

Based on the needs and criteria of the ADB Strategic Plan 2030, Timor-Leste is a country that meets the criteria and becomes a target for implementing the ADB plan. Therefore, ADB's support since independence has focused on infrastructure and institutions to open the door to sustainable development. ADB is expanding its profile to support government efforts to foster an environment conducive to private sector development and economic diversification.<sup>19</sup> The implementation of the coffee reforestation project by ADB has had a positive impact on coffee farmers to ensure sustainability. The mechanism to implement the project is ADB through the CALIP (coffee and Agroforestry Livelihood Improvement Project).

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<sup>17</sup> Intervista Asistencia CALIP (Coffee Agroforestry Livelihood Improvement Project) office, 04/10/2024

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.adb.org/where-we-work/timor-leste>

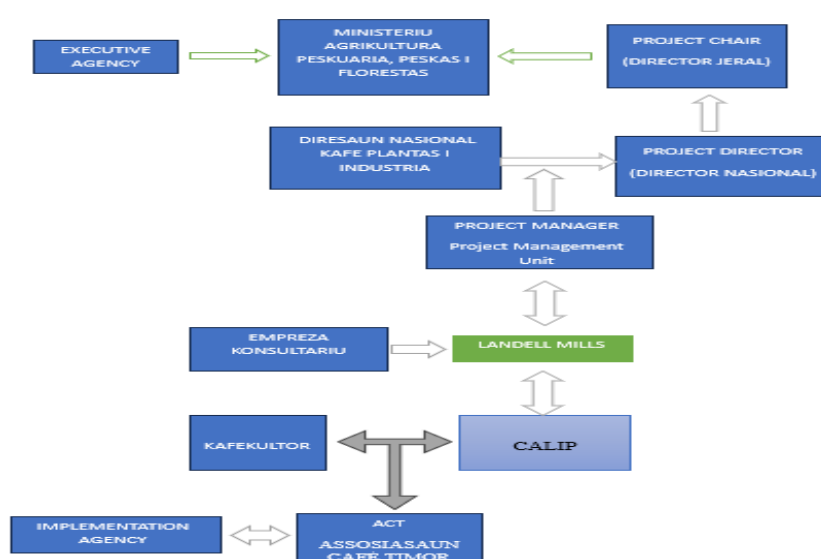
<sup>19</sup> <https://www.adb.org/documents/strategy-2030-prosperous-inclusive-resilient-sustainable-asia-pacific>

On July 13, 2020 ADB and the Government of TL signed an agreement with a total of three (3) million to support 2,000 coffee farmers in Aileu, Ainaro, Bobonaro, Ermera, Liquica and Manufahi for Good Agricultural Practices and access to finance, while pushing coffee quality to the market line. "The coffee and Agroforestry Livelihood Improvement Project", is an innovative project to improve the substance of coffee growers. This project will underpin the implementation of the coffee sector development plan, and become a new model for delivering training to coffee farmers. These coffee farmers will receive training on Good Agricultural Practices for coffee cultivation and production. The project will also empower industry management that improves the quality of coffee in the market in line with ADB's 2020-2030 strategic plan operational priorities to address poverty and inequality reduction, promote rural development and food security.<sup>20</sup>

In the agreement ratified in the project with 3 million CALIP (Coffee Agroforestry Livelihood Improvement Project), the budget refers to grants from the government of Japan through ADB handed over to the government of Timor-Leste. However, must follow the corridor of ADB owner is Consultant forms, an independent company that is contracted and meets the criteria that ADB wants, Landell Mills is a company that won the 2021 tender to implement the Coffee Agroforestry Livelihood Improvement Project. The project is based on ADB requirements. The project must have packages (3), the budget allocation is not for these packages. However, budget allocation also to establish PMU (Project Management Unit), PMU constructed to see the intervention and implementation of the project.

Hierarchically, the one responsible for PMU is the Project Manager because the project goes to the coffee direction to the national director, so the national director is the director of the project and has general rights, general rights such as project chairs and to the Minister. The following is a table of onograms for the management of the CALIP program implementation project and the management of project funds:

#### Framework for project management:



<sup>20</sup><https://www.adb.org/projects/51396-001/main#project-stories>

The first package is to increase capacity for coffee production and agroforestry system and this package of projects empowers the distribution and production system of plantation materials and pilots a new model of extension services for coffee farmers. This is achieved through the development and implementation of improved protocols for nursery selection and nursery management. Established "multi-variety trial" and "10 on-farm technical trials" to test different variations and techniques and offered training programs on improving productivity and "Climate smart agriculture" to more than 2000 coffee farmers from Aileu, Aileu, Bonaru, Libonaru, Erquica and Manufahi.<sup>21</sup>

The second package is "Improved quality and market linkages" that to improve the quality of the market line of the project helps create a treaty with partners to design and implement a project to develop coffee quality to line the market. This project is achieved through the design and implementation of national classification, supporting the organization of the Timorese coffee festival competition and barista training, and finally the development and implementation of the coffee market industry.<sup>22</sup>

The third package is 'Improved sector management and coordination' that develops sector management and coordination through the project supports to empower management on information and supports sector coordination through knowledge sharing sessions to achieve through strengthening coordination between the secretariat of the National Sector Development Plan (NCSP) , design and implement an information management system for coffee farmers, finally implement a platform for sharing knowledge from the coffee sector.<sup>23</sup>

## **IMPACT OF ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Human capacity empowerment is an important factor that drives the economic growth of a country. The capacity of coffee farmers to become machines for the coffee sector, the first phase of increasing productivity coffee farmers needsto accessing knowledge relevant to the cultivation and production process to result in good quality and quantity, ADB through CALIP conducts training based on the existing coffee cycle.

The CALIP program facilitates the following types of training:

### **i. PRUNING (cutting)**

In this type of training, facilitators demonstrate the process of harvesting old coffee beans in a sustainable manner.

### **ii. Nursey Management (Seed Management)**

In this phase, the trainers guide the coffee farmers to prepare the seeds with the right process.

### **iii. Plantation Management**

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<sup>21</sup>Interview of CALIP Assistance (Cofee Agroforestry Livelihood Improvement Project) office, 04/10/2024

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, interview CALIP,office, 04/10/2024

<sup>23</sup>Interview of CALIP ASsistance (Cofee Agroforestry Livelihood Improvement Project) office, 04/10/2024

Plantation management is a type of training that CALIP facilitates to help coffee farmers learn how to grow good coffee.

iv. Harvest and Processing (Collecting and Processing)

In this phase, the facilitators share knowledge to the coffee farmers on how to harvest better through the right and sustainable process.<sup>24</sup>

**Table 1.2.**

**Training for human capital in Laulara administrative post 2022-2023:**

|       | July-September | October-November      | December-January        | May-July                  |
|-------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Tinan | PRUNING        | NURSERY<br>MANAGEMENT | PLATATION<br>MANAGEMENT | HARVEST AND<br>PROCESSING |
| 2022  | 2.011          | 1979                  | 1.903                   | 1.995                     |
| 2023  | 1.992          | -                     | 1.971                   | 1.996                     |

The effectiveness of the CALIP project (Coffe Agroforestry Livelihood Improvement Project) through a long process starting from the mobilization of research to know the nature of the field to be implemented and the process of convincing coffee growers. The CALIP intervention was punctuated by offering training to coffee farmers, initially very low coffee farmer participation. However, the effectiveness of the training some coffee farmers are aware of the effectiveness of the cultivation process, harvesting and the quality and quantity process of the good harvest results of 500 hectares and its income in the market also increased to \$ 3.05 per kilo.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to the issue of unemployment indicates to people who do not have the opportunity to work and are looking for work. Although researchers have certain data on the number of unemployment in Laulara Post, but, from observation noted that the involvement of young people in CALIP (Coffe Agroforestry Livelihood Improvement Project) services and some responsible for the execution activities of CALIP program in the villages and the majority of each group led by young people to facilitate training, training and extension. These young people are called lead farmers. The issue of gender equality is also an important part and aligns with ADB's strategic plan between women and men in terms of opportunities and human rights, so that they can update and participate in political, legal, economic, educational and security activities. women's participation in coffee farming is also a target of CALIP.

<sup>24</sup>Jonal CALIP, Produz 15 Agustu 2023, asesu husi asitensia CALIP, Office, 2024.

<sup>25</sup>Reabilitasaun kafé iha Aileu hatudu rezultadu dí'ak - TATOLI Agência Noticiosa de Timor-Leste

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