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PRESS RELEASE

World Bank Announces New Support for Timor-Leste Road Project

October 22, 2013

In the past, bad road conditions have often prevented patients in rural areas to reach the hospital in time. Rehabilitation of a 110km road will help the hospital's only ambulance to travel faster and save more lives.

Entire Dili-Ainaro road network to be upgraded for faster, safer travel

WASHINGTON D.C., October 22, 2013 – Today the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved a US\$40 million credit and loan, which will supplement its **Timor-Leste Road Climate Resilience Project** to rehabilitate the entire 110km road corridor from Dili to Ainaro.

The road from Dili to Ainaro is a vital link between the north and the south of the country and connects three districts—Dili, Aileu and Ainaro—which jointly account for a third of the country's population.

"Building a better road network is giving more access to services and markets for people in many rural areas," said **Luis Constantino, World Bank Country Manager in Timor-Leste**. *"The project will positively impact the economic development and welfare of the Timorese nation, especially rural populations who are often cut off from opportunities by the lack of the most basic infrastructure".*

The original project focused on delivering emergency repairs along key sections of the road, where road closures were frequent due to flooding or damage caused by heavy rainfall. The credit and loan funding will now enable rehabilitation of the entire road corridor across the three districts.

The new funding will be used for construction works to stabilize slope structures along the entirety of the network, and improve drainage and repair pavements. It will also support feasibility studies and detailed designs for possible future road improvements linked to the Dili-Ainaro corridor.

An emergency maintenance and response system will also be designed to help the Government plan for managing extreme weather events, such as landslides and heavy rain.

"The Government is committed to building a good quality road network that will support equity in national development," said **Mr. Gastao Sousa, Minister of Public Works**. *"The project will scale up rehabilitation of a critical road for the future prosperity of Timor-Leste."*

The project is being implemented by the Ministry of Public Works and is being financed with US\$40 million from the World Bank's IDA (US\$25 million) and IBRD (US\$15 million). The Government of Timor-Leste will contribute US\$47 million to the project.

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