



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Corps Project Delivers Clean Spring Water to East Timor Villagers

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Honolulu District Public Affairs

(LOTAN VILLAGE, EAST TIMOR October, 28, 2004 – NR-04-04) - Previously existing murky water used by the residents of the remote East Timor border village of Lotan for drinking water has now been replaced with clean spring water thanks to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Providing the 650 residents clean drinking water has been a priority need for the East Timor government for many years as the village has a history of water-borne disease problems such as cryptosporidium (diarrhea), Shigellosis (dysentery) and Hepatitis A.

The Corps of Engineers, working in conjunction with the Australia Agency for International Development in the Community Water Supply and Sanitation Program of the East Timor Water Authority, recently completed the six-month project which consisted of providing a gravity drinking water system from a water spring at a 1,200-foot elevation through seven kilometers of galvanized steel pipe placed down a mountain side. An additional three kilometers of plastic pipe was placed in the village area with 12 water taps.

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2-2-2 LOTAN VILLAGE

In Dili, East Timor, Alan Smith of AUSAID recommended the Lotan Clean Water and Sanitation Project for U.S. Pacific Command consideration because it had a very high priority locally due to the water born disease data and because it met the PACOM funding requirements. The Water Authority also suggested the project was earmarked for success largely because much of the preliminary public and community support effort had already been completed for the project by AUSAID.

In October 2003, U.S. Pacific Command funded a water resources evaluation by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to find and evaluate a potential water resources project for a humanitarian assistance U.S. Pacific Command contract project in the remote border area near West Timor, Bobonaro District.

Hydraulic Engineer Jim Pennaz from the Honolulu Engineer District and Project Manager John Emmerson from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pacific Ocean Division coordinated the project investigation efforts. \$127,000 in U.S. Pacific Command funds was made available for the project. Pacific Command, through its funded humanitarian assistance program for the Pacific Region and USACE recommendations, selected Lotan Village as a viable candidate for humanitarian assistance.

PACOM approved the project in November 2003 with U.S. Army Pacific USARPAC- awarding the contract March 10, 2004 to local East Timor company Uma Fatu Hata / TransHose. Site quality assurance visits by Jim Pennaz and John Emmerson were accomplished in March, June, August and September of 2004.

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3-3-3 LOTAN VILLAGE

A Non-Government Organization women's group, Organisa Mulher Timor sponsored the project and contracted with the East Timor Water Authority to provide "in kind" local materials like sand and aggregate for the concrete and community labor. The NGO group was organized by CWSSP to provide education and training to local villagers in sanitary procedures and to facilitate the community labor needed to install the pipe materials and other system components. By utilizing community labor, the cost for the critically-needed clean drinking water project was minimized. A clean spring source was found on a mountain slope with adequate capacity to provide the volume of drinking water needed. The spring was fenced off and developed to prevent animal waste contamination from surface water. During the dry season, the new water supply provides 6,800 gallons of water per day - three times the minimum daily drinking water requirement.

Villagers hauled all materials - such as pipe, cement and aggregate - seven kilometers up the mountain to an elevation of 1,200 feet. The project also provided training for the Timorese people in basic hygiene, and installation, operation and maintenance of the drinking water supply gravity pipe system, insuring sustainability of the improvements beyond the initial investment.

Additionally, five pressure break tanks were placed along the piping leading to a 6,000 gallon overnight storage tank in the village and 12 community water taps. A new community sanitation system includes 125 toilets with septic tanks.

A dedication ceremony held Oct. 20, 2004 was attended by the U.S. Ambassador to East Timor, the Honorable Joseph Rees, the Australian Ambassador to East Timor and the Minister of State for Timor Leste.