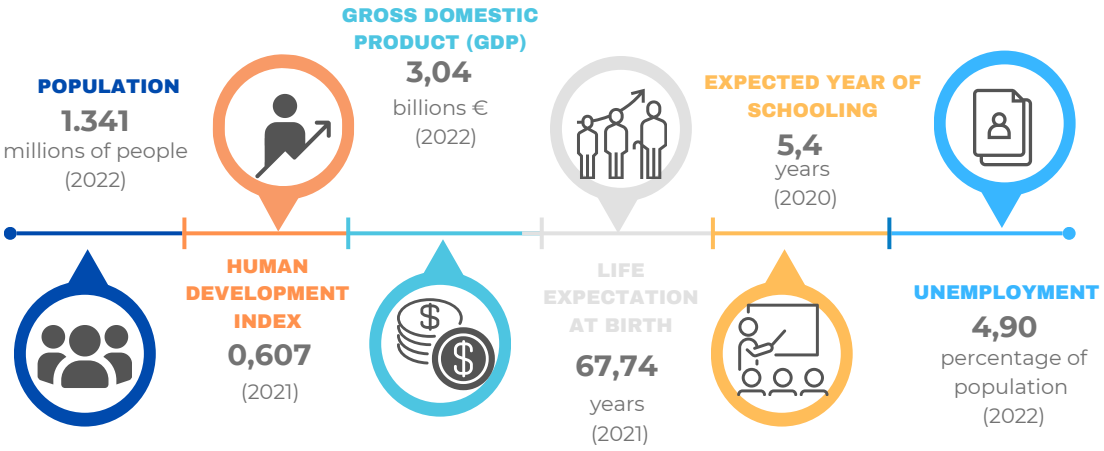
FINAL EVALUATION

STRATEGIC COOPERATION PROGRAM - PEC

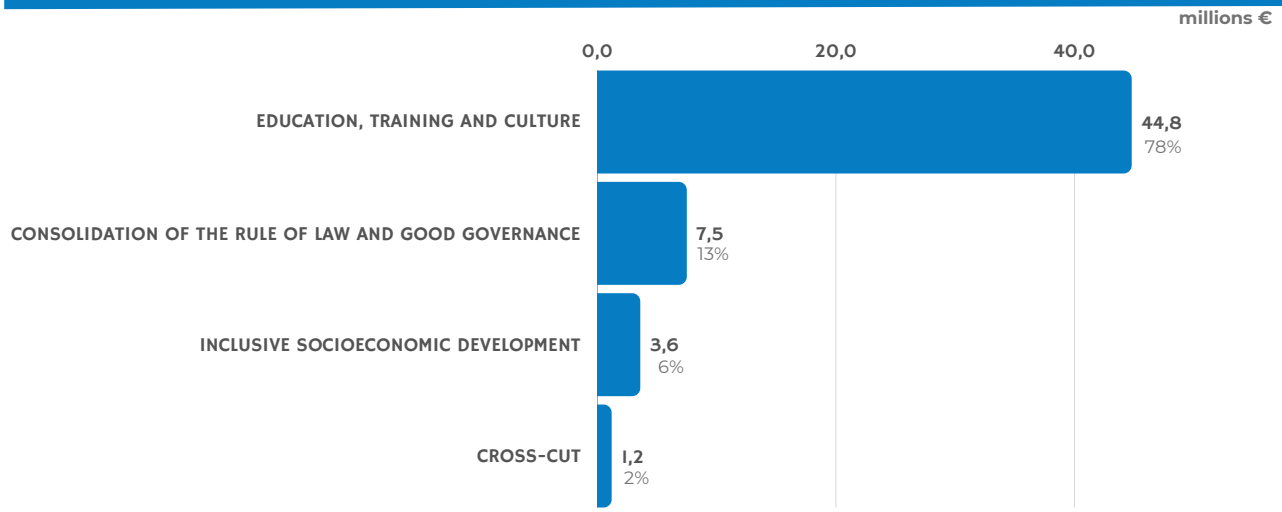
PORTUGAL | TIMOR-LESTE

2019-2023

COUNTRY PROFILE



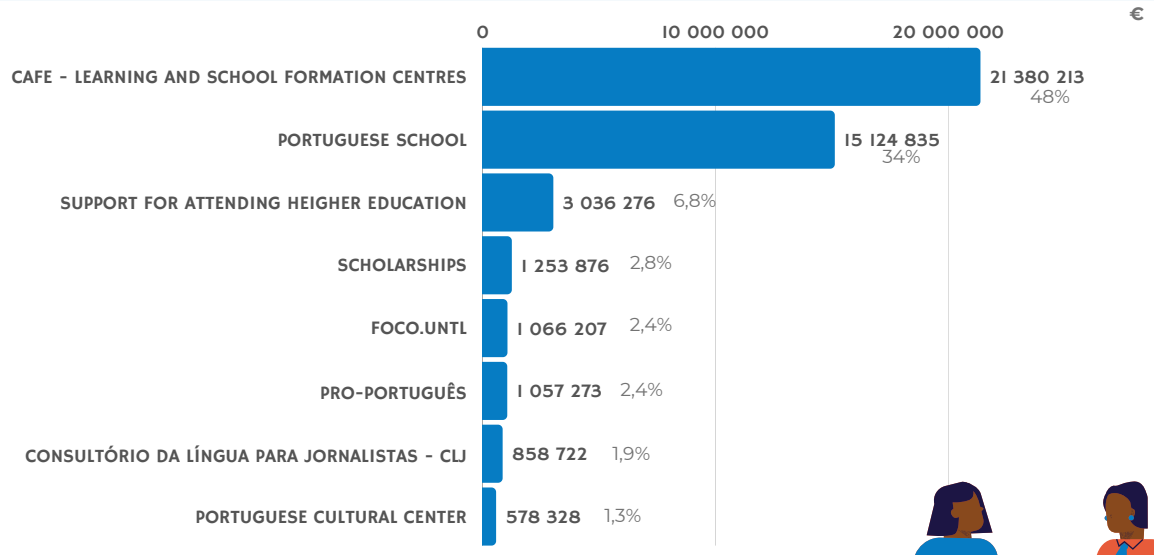
PRIORITY AREAS OF INTERVENTION



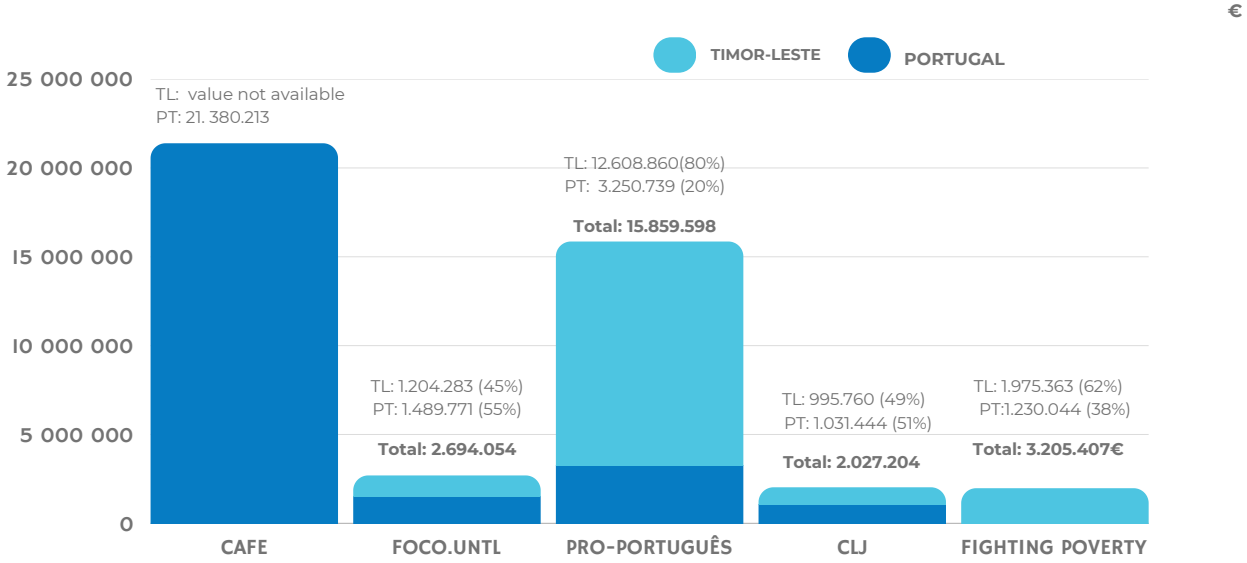
INDICATIVE BUDGET: 70,0 millions €

Execution 2019-2022: 57,1 millions € (82%)

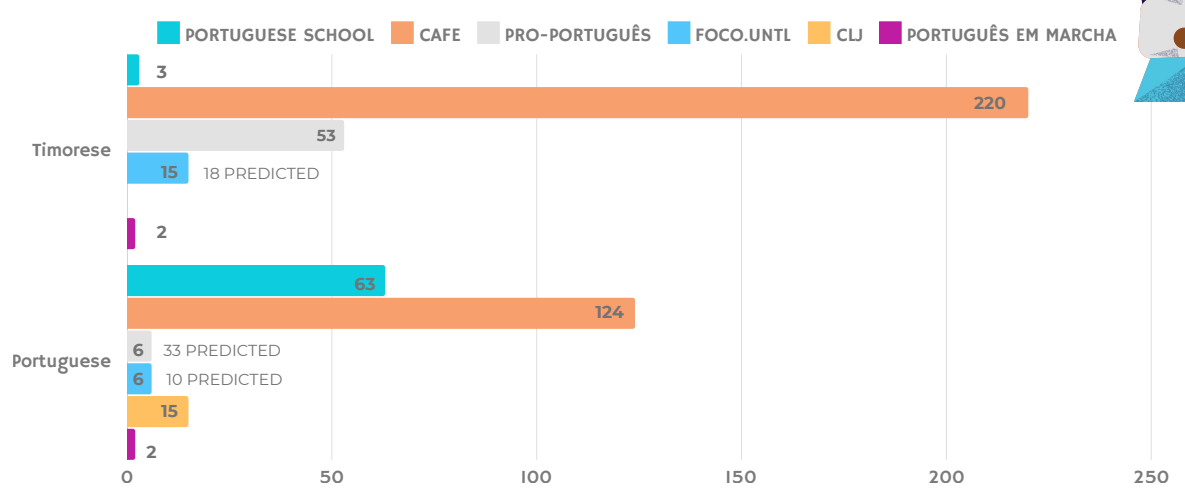
PROJECTS AND ACTIONS IN EDUCATION SECTOR TRAINING AND CULTURE



PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED UNDER COFINANCING BY PORTUGAL AND TIMOR-LESTE



TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN PROJECTS 2022



TOTAL: 293 +216 = 509 Teachers/Trainers

TIMORESE PORTUGUESE

CONCLUSIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

RELEVANCE

C1. The intervention developed within the framework of the PEC was relevant, given that it remained aligned with Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030 (PED 2011-2030) and based on dialogue between the partners, addressing the country's foreseen and unforeseen needs, planning and implementation that would benefit from a more frequent evaluation practices of the projects.

C2. There was a strengthening of Timor-Leste's financial responsibility in the education sector, showing growing ownership.

R1. (C.1) Given the importance of evaluation for the effectiveness of aid, as expressed in the Portuguese Cooperation Strategy 2030, to ensure Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, and Sustainability, especially in the Education, Training, and Culture sector, which absorbs 78% of the total PEC funding, it is recommended:

1. External joint evaluation of the CAFE and FOCO.UNTL projects.
2. Impact evaluation of the Portugal/Timor-Leste cooperation in Education and Training.

COHERENCE

C3. Among the ongoing projects in the education sector, although interventions complement each other across all educational levels, with informal and sporadic approaches, no formal complementarity was identified that could leverage resources and results, limiting effectiveness.

R2. (C.3) Given the lack of formal coordination between projects, particularly in the Education sector, it is suggested to design a strategy for the qualification of the Timorese education system and to strengthen proficiency in Portuguese, implemented by creating complementarity and synergies to maximize resources and results.
This includes identifying Portuguese Higher Education institutions already working in Timor-Leste to establish partnerships.

R3. (C.3) Considering the importance of sharing experiences between projects, creating mutual learning, and increasing the visibility of Portuguese Cooperation's intervention in the education sector, it is recommended to create initiatives complementary to the *Jornadas Pedagógicas* (Pedagogical Days) promoted annually by UNTL/Portuguese Language Centre, a unit that could increasingly take on this responsibility.

R4. (C.3) Considering the different levels of knowledge and experience of the cooperation context and of the Timorese reality, it is recommended that a training programme be organised for professionals taking part in cooperation projects, particularly those involved in projects in the education sector.

EFFICIENCY

C4. Formal coordination with international actors working in Timor-Leste is sporadic, compromising harmonisation, although the dialogue is maintained through participation in donor meetings promoted by the Timorese authorities.

R5. (C.4) Given the importance of donor coordination for harmonization of actions and maximizing results, it is recommended that, in the Education sector, cooperation there be coordination with other development partners complementing the actions of Portuguese Cooperation.

CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS
5. The PEC has a Results Monitoring Matrix and a Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Monitoring Matrix, but it does not quantify indicators, nor does it present baseline data and annual targets, which restricts the ability to gather evidence on the results and impact of Portuguese Cooperation.	**R6. (C.5 e 6)** For the implementation of Results-Oriented Management, it is recommended to use the Logical Framework and Results Monitoring Matrix for PEC monitoring, through the quantification of indicators and targets, and their monitoring. Additionally, unify the Project Documents of all interventions by incorporating the logical framework, with baseline data, indicators, and targets. Also, standardize reporting through the adoption of an appropriate technical and financial reporting model for results-oriented management.
C6. The PEC monitoring mechanisms do not allow for systematic data collection nor the desired monitoring for results-oriented management. Likewise, the interventions in implementing the Programs, Projects and Actions (PPA) intervention present distinct monitoring and reporting procedures, particularly those implemented by sector ministries, which constitute an obstacle to monitoring and evaluation.	
C7. Difficulties persist in coordination between different actors, particularly the Portuguese Cooperation Center in Dili, Camões I.P. Headquarters, project coordination teams, and Timorese partners. These problems are accentuated in projects implemented directly by Camões I.P. in co-financing with Timor-Leste.	**R7. (C.7)** Considering the problems identified in monitoring, Timor-Leste and Portugal should jointly define the model and procedures for monitoring Portuguese Cooperation, oriented towards results. The MNEC-TL, as coordinator of aid to Timor-Leste, should have a more active role, whereas Portugal should delegate greater decision-making power to the Portuguese Cooperation Center in Dili, in accordance with Decree-Law 48/2018 of June 21.
C8. There were shortcomings in risk management and mitigation measures due to the absence of risk analysis at the PEC level, differentiated practices in the PPA, and lack of understanding and clarification of the concept among cooperation actors, highlighting misalignment with best practices and European recommendations in this area.	**R8. (C.8)** Given the shortcomings identified in risk management, it is recommended that this practice be strengthened by including it in the PEC and PPA programming procedures.

EFFECTIVENESS

C9. The PEC financial execution rate stood at 82% (as of December 31, 2022), with the most expected results achieved across different PPA interventions, despite the impact of COVID-19 control and prevention measures.	**R 9. (C.10)** In alignment with Timor-Leste's Foreign Aid Policy, which identifies Education as a priority sector for support by Cooperation Partners, it is recommended to continue prioritizing Education. Namely, by expanding the Portuguese Cooperation's interventions at the Pre-School level, given its impact on learning the Portuguese language, as well as on values, attitudes, behaviors, and social and cognitive skills, which enhance the knowledge to be acquired in subsequent levels of Education and amplify the potential for engagement and impact within the educational community.
C10. It can be stated that Portuguese Cooperation, despite shortcomings, contributed to Timor-Leste's national development effort in sectors integrated as priorities in the PED 2011-2030, particularly in Education, which absorbs 78% of the overall amount of the PEC. It is considered that more investment in Preschool Education would bring significant benefits, enhancing interventions at the basic and secondary education levels.	

C11. Regarding the allocation of human resources, the projects in the Education sector, namely FOCO.UNTL and PRO-Português faced constraints due to increasing difficulties in recruiting Cooperation Agents with suitable profiles and continued delays in salary supplements by Timorese authorities, impacting effectiveness and efficiency.

R10. (C.11)
Given the constraints identified in the recruitment of Cooperation Agents, particularly for education and training actions, it is recommended that Decree-Law No. 49/2018 of June 21 be updated to qualify the contractual conditions for Cooperation Agents.

R 11. (C.11) Given the continued delays in the payment of salary supplements due by the Timorese authorities, it is recommended that Camões I.P. cover the full salary of the Cooperation Agents assigned to its projects, holding the Timorese authorities responsible for paying a monthly allowance to support installation and housing costs.

SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

12. The impact of the CAFE project is recognized, accounting for 37% of the PEC's overall funding, with an increase in the number of schools, students, Timorese teachers, and geographic coverage. However, the absence of rotation of teachers trained by CAFE to other schools prevents other educational institutions from benefiting, reducing the expected impact.

R12. (C.12) To expand the impact of CAFE's actions, it is necessary to rotate Timorese teachers assigned to the project to other schools, maximizing the resources invested.

C13. The CAFE, PRO-Português, and FOCO.UNTL projects have trained a group of Timorese trainers and teachers, providing an effective response to the need for teacher qualification in Timor-Leste, which, with the appropriate legal and institutional framework, represents a significant opportunity for the sustainability of these actions.

R13. (C.13) To ensure the sustainability of training actions for Timorese teachers and trainers, it is recommended to approve the Teacher and Trainer Career Framework, ensuring that the training received by each Timorese professional leads to tangible outcomes, particularly through career consolidation/progression and salary increases.

R14. (C.13) For the same purpose, Temorese authorities should also promote mechanisms to integrate Timorese professionals into national institutions, particularly those trained within the scope of projects and beneficiaries of undergraduate, master's, and doctoral scholarships, as agents of change and trainers for their peers.

C14. Through FOCO.UNTL, there has been significant progress in the scientific preparation of UNTL teachers in the areas of assessment and certification of Portuguese language skills, positioning its Portuguese Language Centre as the entity that can take on this role in Timor-Leste with increasing autonomy.

R15. (C.14) Recognizing the development of the Portuguese Language Centre at UNTL, it is recommended that it increasingly assume a central role in Timor-Leste in research and the production of scientific knowledge, validation of teaching materials, and certification of language proficiency. This should benefit not only UNTL itself but also other governmental and civil society entities. To this end, it should be provided with the human and financial resources necessary to autonomously fulfil its leading role as the scientific-pedagogical support for cooperation projects related to the Portuguese Language.

CONCLUSIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

C15. The FOCO.UNTL project also produced a set of audiovisual resources that were not initially planned for teaching Portuguese, but had a significant impact on the younger audiences. This action aligns with Timor-Leste's investment in audiovisual teaching resources under the Eskola Ba Uma Project (School at Home).

R16. (C.15) Recognizing Timor-Leste's investment in audiovisual educational resources and the impact of those produced under FOCO.UNTL, it is recommended that, in a future cycle, the production of audiovisual resources for teaching the Portuguese language as a planned activity, as well as non-formal education activities, be highly relevant for fostering familiarity with the language.

C16. The positive results of the *Consultório da Língua para Jornalistas* (CLJ) project in Portuguese language and journalism training, in close collaboration with Timorese media, are recognized. However, the lack of a partnership with an educational institution in this area hinders the certification of the training and reveals the absence of an exit strategy.

R17. (C.16) Considering the need to consolidate and ensure the sustainability of the training actions promoted by the *Consultório da Língua para Jornalistas (CLJ)* project, it is recommended to establish a partnership with UNTL - degree in Social Communication, the only Timorese institution with training and certification competencies in the scope of this project.

C17. The cooperation between the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Security of Portugal (MTSSS-PT) and the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion of Timor-Leste (MSSI-TL) continued a highly consistent and impactful work in the social sector, contributing to the establishment of the Social Security Reserve Fund and the creation of the Social Security Portal, with a significant impact on Timorese society.

C18. Cooperation in the agriculture/ agroforestry sector through the Quinta Portugal Project, despite recognized efforts to increase the agroforestry center's value and train farmers and technicians, still operates with minimal human and financial resources. A clear strategy is needed to address the country's needs and harmonize actions with other development partners seeking synergies.

R18. (C.18) For the continuity of cooperation in the agroforestry sector, it is recommended, as in the evaluation of the previous PEC, to conduct a diagnostic study of this area, analysing the positioning of Portuguese Cooperation concerning the multiplicity of development partners in the agricultural and agroforestry sectors.

C19. Cooperation in the Justice and Technical-Police sectors, highly relevant to Timor-Leste's development strategy, relies excessively on advisory services and specialized technical assistance, which perpetuates difficulties in ownership and sustainability.

R19. (C.19) To ensure the necessary sustainability of cooperation in the Justice sector, it is recommended to implement a project in partnership with the UNTL Faculty of Law and/or the Legal Training Centre of Timor-Leste to promote the progressive autonomy of Timorese legal professionals. In this regard, the presence of Portuguese higher education institutions already supporting UNTL in this domain is particularly relevant.

C20. Cooperation in the Social and Sovereignty sectors includes a significant training component, but the limited Portuguese language proficiency of many Timorese professionals remains a barrier to training and knowledge transfer, reducing impact.

R20. (C.20) Recognizing that Portuguese Cooperation has a significant training component, and that the persistent difficulty in the Portuguese language proficiency of many Timorese professionals is a barrier to knowledge transfer, it is recommended to reinforce cooperation in the Portuguese Language through UNTL's Portuguese Language Center and capitalize on professionals trained under various projects and scholarship beneficiaries.

C21. The PEC theoretically integrates commitments and topics from international agendas, such as SDGs, gender equality promotion, Human Rights, and support for vulnerable groups, which are present in the discourse of both Portuguese and Timorese cooperation actors. However, no explicit guidelines for their application in the PPA were identified, making their effects less visible and difficult to measure.

R21. (C.21) Recognizing the absence of specific indicators in the PPA sensitive to gender equality, Human Rights, support for vulnerable groups, and the SDGs, it is recommended to develop indicators and targets that allow an assessment of the contribution of Camões I.P. to these cross-cutting issues.