

Women Underrepresented in Leadership Roles in East Timor

Tuesday 24 April 2018, by [QUINTÃO Paulina](#) (Date first published: 16 April 2018).

The number of women in leadership roles including as part of the executive in the public sector is still low according to the December 2017 data from the Integrated Public Administration and Management System (SIGAP), of the Public Service Commission.

The reports showed that there was a total of 1452 members of the executive within public administration (general directors, national directors, chiefs of departments and chiefs of sections) in the public administration and of those only 317 were women (22%) with the majority being men (78%).

The Deputy Justice and Human Rights Ombudsmen (PDHJ), Jesuina Maria Ferreira Gomes said several factors limit women's mobility to reach leadership roles in public institutions in Timor-Leste.

She said that often men lack trust in women workers compared to male workers because women have many other concerns including during menstruation, during pregnancy and after child birth, which affects their ability to perform at work.

"I always say that to promote women's participation, men should understand a women's condition in particular about reproductive health," she said during a training of facilitators to promote women and female youth participation in the political parties, organized by women in Dili.

She also encouraged women to plan their families adequately to they have a good balance between their career and their family life and don't have to choose between them.

Across public administration there is a total of 33,499 personnel out of which 11,659 (35%) are women and 21,840 are men (65%).

Meanwhile, the Director of the Women's Movement Timor-Leste (MOFFE), Yasinta Lujina said women's organization are struggling with advocating the creating of a balance between women and men's participation in the labour market across all sectors.

The urged the government to look at gender balance across public administration and develop policies that allow and encourage more women to apply for positions.

"The government needs to look at the policy of recruitment because many times announcements encourage women to apply, but without a mechanism to facilitate women's access including a quota system for women," she added.

Another problem often questioned by the public is the issue of nepotism and jobs for relatives and friends that makes it more difficult for women who do not have the right contacts to get a position.

She appealed to the Public Service Commission (CPS) to ensure the recruitment process is impartial.

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