



Hali Ba Dame Association (HABADA)

Promoting Community Security and Peacebuilding Initiatives

Biennial Report 2024–2025



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Cover photograph: The PNTL Covalima District Commander delivering opening remarks at the Community Security Training in Covalima, 2024.

1. Introduction

Hali Ba Dame Association (HABADA) was established in February 2024 and during the reporting period (January 2024 to December 2025) worked with communities, civil society organizations, and state institutions to strengthen community security and promote sustainable peace through dialogue, education, training, monitoring, and advocacy, HABADA supported local leaders, empowered youth and women, and strengthened trust between communities and authorities (in particular the National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL)).

This Report presents HABADA as a mission-driven organization. It explains how HABADA's vision, mission, and statutory objectives guided its activities and institutional development during 2024–2025.

2. The History of HABADA

Hali Ba Dame Association (HABADA), meaning Tree of Peace Association, is a national NGO established on 14 February 2024. HABADA believes that human security is essential for improving the quality of life in Timor-Leste. It works to build peace and reduce insecurity together with the PNTL.

In the first six months, HABADA focused on setting up the organization and creating key materials, including a brochure and a PowerPoint presentation. The team also held meetings with state institutions, community leaders, and other NGOs to introduce HABADA and its work.

HABADA applied to become a member of FONGTIL, which helped strengthen its connections with other civil society organizations in Timor-Leste.

HABADA follows its Constitution, which sets out its goals, values, and ways of working. The Constitution guides planning, decision-making, and reviewing activities. All work done during this period is checked against these goals.

3. HABADA's Vision, Mission and Objectives

Vision: Empowering all Timorese people to live and thrive in a peaceful and secure environment

Mission: HABADA collaborates with communities, civil society organizations, and state institutions to ensure that all individuals enjoy their rights as citizens, in line with human rights principles and the laws of Timor-Leste. HABADA advocates for local voices to be heard at municipal and national levels.

Core Objectives as stated in its Constitution:

- Strengthening trust between communities and state authorities at the local level
- Promoting harmonious coexistence, mutual respect, and collective problem-solving
- Ensuring communities are informed about risks and able to protect life and security
- Empowering communities to address challenges through dialogue and mutual understanding

4. HABADA's Methodology and Approach

Timor-Leste faces ongoing local conflicts and challenges in community–police cooperation. HABADA works closely with community groups, civil society organizations, and governmental institutions to

address these issues. HABADA uses a community-based approach, including stakeholder consultations, practical exercises, and media outreach.

HABADA:

- Works alongside local community groups
- Advocates with state institutions to ensure community voices are heard
- Strengthens police governance and effectiveness at the local level

Human Security: HABADA engages communities through dialogue and education to identify concerns and develop responses across economic, educational, health, environmental, personal, community, and political areas.

Police Governance: HABADA promotes policing that follows the law, upholds human rights, and builds public trust.

H3 Strategy:

- Hakbesik: Direct engagement and building trust
- Hatutan: Learning and dialogue through practical exercises
- Hametin: Strengthening community capacity for self-governance and resilience

Techniques: Group discussions, threat mapping, role-play simulations, and stakeholder analysis.

5. Training Workshops Implemented

Table: Participants in Training Workshops implemented by HABADA in 2024 and 2025

Municipality	Sub-District	Village	Date	Participants			Supported by
				Male	Female	Total	
Covalima	Tilomar	Lalawa	23 October 2024	31	31	62	GASC
Covalima	Suai	Debos	24 October 2024	17	3	20	GASC
Bobonaro	Maliana	Holsa	19 November 2024	26	28	54	GASC
Bobonaro	Balibo	Balibo	20 November 2024	30	23	53	GASC
Bobonaro	Maliana	Saburai	29 April 2025	35	13	48	DAP
Manatuto	Manatuto	Youth Centre	15 May 2025	17	13	30	DAP
Covalima	Suai	Suai Loro	17 June 2025	22	21	43	DAP
Covalima	Suai	Beco	26 June 2025	22	13	35	GASC
Covalima	Tilomar	Maudemo	26 June 2025	20	17	37	GASC
Bobonaro	Balibo	Cowa	16 July 2025	26	12	38	GASC
Bobonaro	Maliana	Ritabou	17 July 2025	17	13	30	GASC
Manatuto	Laleia	Rai-rui	23 October 2025	35	17	52	GASC
Manatuto	Laklubur	Batara	24 October 2025	29	17	46	GASC
Baucau	Laga	Soba	29 October 2025	31	28	59	GASC
Baucau	Vemasse	Vemase	30 October 2025	35	13	48	GASC

Map: The municipalities and sub-districts where HABADA worked in 2024 and 2025



6. Media Engagement and Outreach

HABADA worked to raise public awareness and share information about community security through different media channels. This included newspaper articles shared on its Facebook page, press releases shared to Committee B of the National Parliament (which handles Defence, Security, and Foreign Affairs), and courtesy meetings with the representative of the PNTL Commander, the National Directorate for Community Conflict Prevention, the Cabinet for Support to Civil Society (GASC), other NGOs, and community leaders.

Table: Media activities HABADA carried out in 2024 and 2025:

Year	Press Conferences	Radio Talkshows	Interviews by Media (Newspaper & TV)	Total Reports
2024	1	-	17	18
2025	5	10	14	29

These activities helped expand public understanding of HABADA and encouraged shared responsibility for community security, even for work outside of funded projects.

7. Key Achievements and Results in 2024 and 2025

HABADA's interventions strengthened local leadership, built trust with authorities, and reinforced community-led structures, including Community Policing Councils (KPKs) and youth peace committees.

Results Achieved:

- Strengthened community leadership and conflict mediation skills
- Empowered youth and women as peacebuilding agents
- Improved trust and collaboration with authorities and the PNTL
- Contributed to reduced localized conflicts and stronger community cohesion

Key Achievements:

- 655 participants engaged (262 women, 393 men)
- 13 villages received structured community security training
- 3 municipalities hosted youth peacebuilding workshops
- Media engagement through radio, social media, and online articles extended outreach beyond direct participants

8. Challenges and Lessons Learned

Challenges:

- Logistical difficulties in remote areas
- Initial mistrust among diverse youth groups
- Limited communication coverage

Lessons Learned:

- Strong community leadership and culturally sensitive approaches improve participation
- Partnerships with authorities and PNTL are essential
- Continuous youth engagement and media outreach enhance impact

9. HABADA Staff and Volunteers

Current Staffing

HABADA is a new organization with a small core team of four staff based in Dili. One staff member works as a consultant. All activities in other municipalities are planned and coordinated from the Dili office.

Future Organizational Reach

In the future, HABADA plans to expand across the country through regional teams based in key municipalities:

- **Team 1 – Dili:** Dili, Atauro, Manatuto, RAEOA (Oecusse)
- **Team 2 – Bobonaro:** Bobonaro, Ermera, Liquiçá
- **Team 3 – Baucau:** Baucau, Lautém, Viqueque
- **Team 4 – Suai:** Covalima, Ainaro, Manufahi

These teams will help HABADA carry out activities in their local areas and strengthen connections with communities.

Note: This section presents HABADA’s intended national reach while being transparent about current staffing. As the organization grows, additional staff and volunteers will support regional activities.

HABADA core team, Dili office, 2025



Mr. Abel Amaral
Executive Director
Officer



Mr. Francisco Regu Bere
Program and Outreach Officer



Mrs. Joanina dos Santos
Admin and Finance

10. Government and Community Implementing Partners

HABADA acknowledges the valuable contributions of our local partners in achieving the results described in this report.

Our thanks to:

- PNTL – District Commander
- Local government authorities
- Religious leaders
- Local ONGs partners
- Community leaders and the Suku council members
- Community Policing Councils
- Youth leaders (men and women)

11. Funding Partners

HABADA acknowledges the financial contributions of our donors which have enabled us to undertake activities in 15 villages in 2024 and 2025.

Our thanks to:

The Cabinet for Support to Civil Society of the Government of Timor-Leste (GASC)
The Direct Aid Program of the Australian Government (DAP)

12. Annual Accounts for 2024 and 2025

	2024	2025
	US\$	US\$
Income		
Balance in bank accounts as of 01 January	\$0	\$0
Grant from DAP		\$13,440
Grant from GASC	\$8,940	\$15,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$8,940	\$28,440
Expenditure		
Community education and training workshops	\$2,800	\$5,200
Travel to communities and accommodation for HABADA staff and volunteers	\$1,840	\$10,950
Media and communications		\$1,340
Payments to staff, volunteers and consultants	\$3,700	\$6,450
HABADA administration costs	\$600	\$4,500
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$8,940	\$28,440
Balance in bank accounts as of 31 December	\$0	\$0

13. Sustainability and Future Directions

HABADA's work during 2024–2025 focused on strengthening local structures and leadership so that activities can continue after external funding ends.

Sustainability

- Community Policing Councils (KPKs) are active in several villages and continue to support dialogue and help resolve local conflicts.
- Youth peace committees established through these initiatives remain active and lead small, community-based peace activities.
- Community members have improved their skills in preventing conflict, resolving disputes, and working with local authorities and the PNTL.
- Good working relationships with municipal authorities, village leaders, and the PNTL help ensure that activities can continue.

Future Directions

- In 2026, with further support from GASC, HABADA will continue working in the same municipalities: Baucau, Bobonaro, Covalima, and Manatuto, to build on the results already achieved.
- Activities will focus on supporting KPKs, strengthening youth peace committees, and improving cooperation between communities and local authorities.

- Expansion to additional municipalities, such as Ainaro, RAEOA (Oecusse), and Viqueque, will be considered if additional funding becomes available, while maintaining strong results in the current operational areas.

14. Conclusion

HABADA's initiatives during 2024–2025 show that community-led approaches strengthen security, build trust with authorities, and empower youth and women as peacebuilders. Over 650 participants engaged, 3 youth peace committees were established, and collaboration with PNTL was reinforced. Despite limited staff and funding, activities were effectively delivered, demonstrating HABADA's capacity to scale initiatives and contribute to long-term peace, social cohesion, and resilience in Timor-Leste.

15. Photographic Record of Projects Implemented

Community Security Monitoring and Advocacy (Oct–Nov 2024: Donor - GASC)

- **Villages:** Balibo and Holsa (Bobonaro), Lalawa and Debos (Covalima)
- **Activities:** Monitoring PNTL budget allocations, workshops with 189 participants (85 women, 104 men), gender-inclusive dialogue

Security Training in Balibo, 2024



Security Training in Holsa, 2024



Security Training in Lalawa village, Tilomar Sub dsitrcit, 2024



Security Training in Debos village, Suai, Covalima, 2024



Youth and Community Engagement for Peacebuilding (Mar–Aug 2025: Donor - DAP)

- **Workshops:** Saburai (Bobonaro), Suai Loro (Covalima), Youth Center (Manatuto) with 121 (47 women, 74 men) participants
- **Outcomes:** Peacebuilding Training Manual developed, youth-led peace committees established

Activities in Saburai



Activities in Suai Loro



Activities in the Youth Centre in Manatuto



Community Security Training (May–Oct 2025: Donor - GASC)

- **Sessions:** 8 sessions, 345 participants (130 women, 215 men)
- **Focus:** Risk mapping, conflict assessment, mediation techniques, collaboration with police, reinforcing Community Policing Councils (KPKs)

Security Training in Tilomar and Suai Sub Districts, Covalima



Security training in Balibo and Maliana Sub Districts, Bobonaro in 2025



Security training in Laga and Vemassee Sub District, Baucau in 2025



Security training in Cairui and Laclubar Sub District, Manatuto in 2025



16. Contact details

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