

Towards integrated water management solutions for water and food security in Timor-Leste



Key details

Location

Timor-Leste

Duration

Start Aug 2025

End Feb 2027

Budget

AUD 462,462

Commissioned organisation

University of New South Wales

Partners

Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e; Permatil Global - Permatil Timor-Leste

Project Leadership

Prof Greg Leslie

ACIAR Research Program Manager

Dr Todd Sanderson

Program

Social Systems

Project code

SSS/2025/110

Research need

This small research activity aims to develop and implement nature-based, integrated water management solutions to enhance water and food security in Timor-Leste.

Timor-Leste faces significant challenges in both water and food security, which are critical for the nation's overall development as well as human wellbeing. In rural areas, only 80% of the population has access to basic drinking water services. Scarcity of water availability and storage infrastructure also directly impacts agricultural productivity, which underpins food security. The country experiences high levels of food insecurity, with around 25% of the population at crisis levels.

This research activity responds to a direct request from the President of Timor-Leste and aligns with the Consolidated National Action Plan for Nutrition and Food Security. The project will build local capacity in social science and hydrological research methods to objectively monitor and evaluate the efficacy of community-driven initiatives in catchment management for improved water and food security. The project will contribute to the development of resilient and sustainable water and food systems, ultimately improving the livelihoods and wellbeing of rural communities in Timor-Leste.

