

The Inaugural NSW Timor-Leste Forum
14 July 2012

“Building Collaborative Partnerships
for Timor-Leste”



Resource Book for Future Collaboration



Institute for Culture and Society
Sustainability and Social Research Group



Forum Organising Committee

The organising committee consisted of Suzie van Oudorp, Mary Waterford from the Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters, John Telford from the Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee, Jenny Coles, voluntary liaison with the office of Kirsty Sword Gusmão and, from the University of Western Sydney, Gabriela Coronado and Wayne Fallon.

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Contents

Prologue	v
Introduction	1
Keynote Speaker	2
Ms Kirsty Sword Gusmão	
Working Together for Timor-Leste: A New Chapter	
Forum Panel: Trilogue for Timor-Leste: Challenges of international engagement	10
Kaye Schofield	
Professor Damien Kingsbury	
Jude Finch	
Richard Brown	
Forum Workshops: Optimising Australia’s involvement: Supporting education programs in Timor-Leste	15
Workshop 1: Early literacy and the mother-tongue project	18
Workshop 2: Pre-school and primary education	22
Workshop 3: Informal education centres and adult education	24
Workshop 4: Student exchanges: higher education; vocational education and training for trade skills	25
Workshop 5: Educating future educators and other professionals	26
Workshop 6A: Training programs for productive community activities	28
Workshop 6B: Training programs for productive community activities	30
Workshop 7: Health education	32
Workshop 8: Educational infrastructure: School buildings, solar and water facilities, etc	33
Workshop 9: Friendship and finances: the practicalities	35
Reflections on the Workshops	37
Timor-Leste Support/Friendship Groups	
Australian Catholic University	40
Bega Valley Advocates for Timor Leste	42
Biblioteka Ermera, Gleno, Timor-Leste	43
Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee	45
Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters	47
Canberra Friends of Dili	49
Emergency Architects	50
Every Village	52
Kangaroo Valley – Remexio Partnership (KVRP)	54
Kiama-Zumalai Friendship Group	57
Leichhardt Friends of Maliana	58

Manly Friends of Oecusse	59
Marist Asia Pacific Solidarity Office (MAPS)	61
National Library of Australia (East Timor Collection)	62
Nazareth Catholic Community – NOW (Nazareth Outreach Work)	63
Pittwater Friends of Soibada Inc	65
Rotarians Education & Training (RET)	67
Springwood East Timor Support Group	70
Willoughby Friends of Ossu (WFOO)	71
Forum participants	72

Prologue

The genesis for the Forum can be traced to a chance meeting in 2010 when Suzie and Wayne met at a forum hosted by the University of Western Sydney, Equity and Diversity Unit about the Australian Government's past approaches to the provision of international aid. At the time, Suzie and Mary were long-term collaborators on the *Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters Project* ('BMETS'). Gabriela and Wayne were colleagues in the School of Business at the University, with joint research and teaching projects dealing with the work of non-government organisations, NGO relations with business and the capacity for NGOs to support community need.

We were intrigued by the commitment of BMETS, and what the group was able to achieve in Timor-Leste. We knew the country was one of the poorest and newest nations on Earth. It was receiving aid and assistance from a wide range of acknowledged aid sources, such as Australian governments and community groups. We knew that Governmental agencies (like AusAid), non-governmental organisations, international aid bodies and religious organisations were providing many different kinds of support at various levels. We were really unaware of the number of Australian NGOs that were engaged in such significant support of East Timorese communities at a grassroots level.

During 2010 and 2011, Gabriela and Wayne attended two or three meetings with Suzie, Mary and others involved in BMETS, initially with no perceptible outcomes, save for our deep and abiding appreciation of the commitment, determination and fortitude of all those they encountered from BMETS. We began to understand that there was need for a targeted, integrated and collaborative approach to increase the impact of the grassroots aid efforts so as to enhance the local initiatives of East Timorese NGOs and community groups.

That such an apparently loose organisation of 'friends' in BMETS, it seemed to us, could sustain such a significant contribution to communities in Timor-Leste, over so many years, seemed truly remarkable. At one of our meetings with Suzie and Mary, which were more in the nature of informal chats, they spoke of a need to come together with others across New South Wales who are also involved in supporting grassroots communities in Timor-Leste. In retrospect, there might have been some reasonably vague suggestion about the possibility of Gabriela and Wayne collaborating with BMETS to convene a NSW Forum, possibly at the University, for those involved in providing assistance to Timor-Leste.

Time passed, with little communication between BMETS and the academics, until Gabriela and Wayne were invited to another meeting to further consider some of the ideas mentioned in previous meetings. We anticipated meeting up with Suzie and Mary as we had in the past, to talk informally about matters of mutual interest and to hear more of the work of BMETS. But this meeting – in the Mountains Community Resource Network meeting rooms at Lawson – proved to be a turning point in our relationship. When we arrived at this meeting we were surprised to find others in attendance – John Telford, from the Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee, Jenny Coles, who we were told worked closely with Kirsty Sword Gusmão, Maria José de Jesús, the Consulate-General of East Timor

in Sydney and her assistant. It seemed to us we had become part of a committee to organise a forum, without having thought too much about that. Without noticing, we found ourselves being happily carried along in a flow of enthusiasm which seemed to be the natural way in which BMETS achieves its great things.

In a series of meetings it became clear that the collective intention for the Forum was to generate space for dialogue and to facilitate networks for collaborative partnerships between the many organisations that were already contributing to East Timorese communities. This became the aim of the Forum. To stage the event, we were able to obtain support from the Sustainability and Social Research Group and the Institute for Culture and Society at the University of Western Sydney.

In retrospect our early thinking about the significance of the Forum was naive but still idealistic. We were soon challenged by the level of interest and enthusiasm showed by such a wide range of different groups with commitment to Timor-Leste. The Forum did facilitate the exchange of different perspectives and practices, and offered opportunities for those committed to change in Timor-Leste to identify collaborative initiatives. The Forum generated constructive dialogue and debate about future collaborations, notably how best to optimise the many and diverse existing efforts. Importantly, it incorporated the voices of members of the East Timorese community in Sydney, including representatives of the Timor-Leste Embassy and Consulate in Australia and East Timorese students studying in Sydney.

Gabriela Coronado
Mary Waterford
Suzie van Opdorp
Wayne Fallon

27 June 2013

Introduction

On the 14th of July 2012, the Institute for Culture and Society and the Sustainability and Social Research Group at the University of Western Sydney hosted *The Inaugural NSW Forum: Collaborative Partnerships for Timor-Leste* in collaboration with the Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters (BMETS). The one day Forum brought together a number of Australian organisations committed to giving support for the betterment of the people of Timor-Leste.

This Resource Book captures materials and insights taken from the Forum. The success of the Forum can be measured by the enthusiastic response from a variety of Australian philanthropic organisations, support groups and individuals who voluntarily devote their time to raising funds to develop programs in Timor-Leste in partnership with Timorese communities and NGOs. Some 150 delegates participated on the day of the Forum, including academics from 11 Australian universities, representatives of the Australia Timor-Leste Business Council, the Australia-East Timor Association, AusAID, and 31 other organisations including NGOs, East Timor Friendship Committees and local government Councils. This Resource Book includes the text of the address by the keynote speaker, Ms Kirsty Sword Gusmão, as well as the abstracts of presentations by experts at the Forum Panel “Trilogue for Timor-Leste: Challenges of international engagement”. Also included are materials in the form of ideas and reflections of participants at education-focused Forum Workshops, and details of a range of Timor-Leste Support and Friendship Groups. Contact details of participants are also included.

The Forum was also attended by a number of VIP guests. These included His Excellency Mr Abel Guterres, East Timorese Ambassador to Australia, the Labour and Education Attaché to the Embassy of Timor-Leste in Australia, Mr Ismenio Martins da Silva and from the Consulate of Timor-Leste in Sydney, Ms Maria José de Jesús, Consul General, and Fonseca dos Santos Pereira. The VIP guests engaged fully with participants from the different organisations and in particular with a number of Timorese students studying in Australia.

Associate Professor Greg Noble welcomed participants on behalf of Institute for Culture and Society and the Sustainability and Social Research Group at the University. Aunty Carol Cooper, Darug and Gundungurra elder, also a member of the Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters and the Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee, welcomed the participants to country and acknowledged the traditional owners of the land.

A feature of the event was the inspiring presentation by keynote speaker Ms Kirsty Sword Gusmão, former First Lady of Timor-Leste, Goodwill Ambassador for Education, Director of the Alola Foundation and wife of current East Timor Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão. No less significant were the presentations of four guest speakers on the Panel “Dialogues for Timor-Leste”: Jude Finch (Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee and Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters), Richard Brown (Friends of Aileu Project and Chair of the Victorian Local Governments Associations’ Timor-Leste Advisory Group), Professor Damien Kingsbury (Director of the Centre for Citizenship, Development and Human Rights, Deakin University) and Kaye Schofields from AusAid. These presentations provided a foundation for a series of 10 concurrent workshops focussing on education programs in Timor-Leste.

Keynote Speaker

Ms Kirsty Sword Gusmão



Kirsty Sword Gusmão was born in Melbourne, Australia, in 1966. She grew up in Melbourne and Bendigo and attended Melbourne University where she completed a Bachelor of Arts (Honours), majoring in Indonesian and Italian, and a Diploma of Education. In 1991, after working as an Administrative Secretary with the Overseas Service Bureau (Australian Volunteers International), she joined the Refugee Studies Program at Oxford University as Assistant to the Development Coordinator. She travelled to East Timor as the Researcher/Interpreter the Yorkshire Television documentary film “In Cold Blood: The massacre of East Timor”. From 1992 to 1996, she lived and worked as a teacher and human rights campaigner in Jakarta, Indonesia. It was during these years that her work for the East Timorese independence cause intensified and brought her into contact with the independence leader, Xanana Gusmão, who was serving a 20-year sentence in a Jakarta jail and whom she married in July, 2000.

She has lived in East Timor since October 1999 and is the founder and chairwoman of the Alola Foundation which she established in 2001 to address the needs of East Timorese women and their families. Kirsty was appointed by the President Dr. Jose Ramos Horta as Goodwill Ambassador for Education in October 2007. This appointment was in recognition of Kirsty’s tireless efforts to date and to formalize future endeavours in addressing the educational priorities of Timor-Leste. Kirsty is very active in her local community of Balibar, on the outskirts of Dili district, assisting the local pre-school and primary school and conducting vocational training of local women.¹

Abstract

One of the most inspiring, moving and at the same time challenging and exhausting aspects of my involvement in Timor-Leste’s nation building work over the past ten years has been nurturing, encouraging and managing the relationship with friends, supporters, schools, local governments, Rotary and solidarity groups from around the world, but principally from within the Australian community. Inspiring because the goodwill and solidarity of Australians from all walks of life is heartfelt and has fostered enduring friendships and real change in Timor-Leste in ways that bilateral aid programs could only ever dream of.

¹ Adapted from <http://www.law.monash.edu.au/castancentre/events/2008/ksgusmao-lecture.html>

Exhausting because I often find myself in the middle of these relationships, interpreting (sometimes quite literally, often figuratively!) the different needs, day-to-day realities, expectations and understandings of individuals and organizations at both ends of the relationship. In this presentation, I will offer some reflections on the changing development needs landscape of Timor-Leste over the past 13 years, and some thoughts as to the ingredients of positive, mutually-enriching partnerships that build on achievements and experiences acquired to date.

Working Together For Timor-Leste: A New Chapter

Presentation by Kirsty Sword Gusmão

Dear Friends of Timor-Leste

I am delighted and honoured to have been asked to present the keynote address at this very special and important forum. I want to say a big “obrigadu barak” to all those who have worked so hard to put this event together – in particular to Wayne and Gabriela from the University of Western Sydney, to the Blue Mountain East Timor Sisters and to my former PA and friend, Jenny Coles, who had the wisdom to propose this gathering in the first place. The excellent communication, coordination and team work behind the organization of this forum is, in fact, a sterling example of the kind of collaborative partnership for Timor-Leste we are all here to discuss today.

You have all signed up to participate in this forum because of the commitment you share to contributing to the development of our closest neighbour, the small half-island nation of Timor-Leste. The motivations that drive us in our efforts to help Timor-Leste grow and develop from a fragile, post-conflict country to a strong, vibrant democracy may be different, we may have diverging sectoral priorities and different focuses for our work, but we are all united in working towards the same goal. We all want to see the youngest nation in our region prosper and develop the human capacity required to build a better life for its citizens in peace and security. I look forward very much in the course of today to getting to know you and your work better, your experience of the challenges of working collaboratively across cultural and linguistic borders. And to reaching some conclusions as to how we can do what we do for Timor-Leste even better.

One of the most inspiring, moving and at the same time challenging and exhausting aspects of my involvement in Timor-Leste’s nation building work over the past ten years has been nurturing, encouraging and managing the relationship with friends, supporters, schools, local governments, Rotary and solidarity groups from around the world, but principally from within the Australian community. Inspiring because the goodwill and solidarity of Australians from all walks of life is heartfelt and has fostered enduring friendships and real change in Timor-Leste in ways that bilateral aid programs could only ever dream of. Exhausting because I often find myself in the middle of these relationships, interpreting (sometimes quite literally, often figuratively!) the different needs, day-to-day realities, expectations and understandings of individuals and organizations at both ends of the relationship.

From my very privileged position at the epicentre of the work of rebuilding Timor-Leste, and with the bird's eye view of that process afforded by being married to Xanana Gusmão, I have gained some unique insights that mean that I am often looked to by friends in the Australian community for advice and guidance. It is a role that I cherish and take very seriously. Through my establishment of the Fundasaun Alola, I have come to be associated in many Australians' minds with the cause of children's and women's rights and empowerment. The experience of setting up and leading Alola over the past eleven years has been a rich apprenticeship of sorts for me, both in terms of navigating the complex socio-cultural landscape of Timor-Leste as it relates to the lives of women and children, and also in terms of helping friends from around the world to understand and interpret that world and to find a place for themselves in it as friends and partners. But don't let me kid you – even after living in Timor-Leste for the past thirteen years, I am still very often astounded at just how ignorant I continue to be of the complexities of human relations in Timor-Leste!

In this presentation, I will offer some reflections on the changing development needs landscape of Timor-Leste over the past 13 years, and some thoughts as to the ingredients of positive, mutually-enriching partnerships that build on the achievements and experiences acquired to date. I will also share some ideas on where we might turn our attention in the second decade of independence, and how we might align the way we work in Timor-Leste with national development priorities.

Let me start with a bit of snapshot as to where we are today in Timor-Leste. As you know, just last week parliamentary elections were held in an environment of political peace and calm. This is no mean feat in a country where many citizens continue to associate politics and the democratic process with strife and violence of the kind that erupted after the historic vote for independence in 1999. The peaceful conduct of the presidential and parliamentary elections this year is testimony to the political maturity of the East Timorese people and to the extreme importance they attach to peace and stability as a precondition of development. Nobody wants a return to the violence and upheaval of 2006 – even if the political crisis of that year was perhaps an important lesson for the nation, the costs were high at the level of individual lives and also in terms of Timor-Leste's standing on the international stage. Internecine strife doesn't win you any friends, and I am conscious that we lost the trust of many of our supporters that year.

Six years on, Timor-Leste is on its feet again and brimming with confidence.

There were many tears shed in May this year as Timorese from all walks of life celebrated the 10th anniversary of independence in the company of Governor-General Quentin Bryce and Indonesian President, Bambang Susilo Yudhoyono, and reflected together as a nation on a decade of triumphs, trials, achievements and the road ahead. A sight that left a lasting impression on me from the 20 May celebrations was that of thousands upon thousands of young people walking home into Dili from Tasi Tolu where the festivities took place. Anywhere else such a concentration of youth would give rise to the odd eruption of anti-social behaviour, and the orderly and respectful manner in which the procession of young people filed along the road, many arm in arm and singing joyfully along the way, was a sight for sore eyes.

Today Timor-Leste enjoys a fast-growing economy, in fact one of the most dynamic in our

region. To quote my fellow presenter at this forum, friend and respected academic, Damien Kingsbury: "The UN Development Program's human development index (HDI) shows that Timor-Leste has gone from being next to the bottom of the development scale in 2000 to improving by around 20%. Almost no other country has developed so much over that time. Life expectancy, under 56 years as recently as 2005, is now over 62 while infant mortality has declined from being the world's worst at 24% in 1980 to around 8% in 2005 to 4.5% now. Any infant mortality is always too high, but there is no doubting that a cut of almost half is heading in the right direction."

In July last year we saw the launch of the National Strategic Development Plan. It lays out a strategic vision or roadmap for the nation's development across all sectors over the next 20 years, and is the result of my husband trapesing across the country from east to west to consult with the people in all 65 sub-districts on their priorities. It is an important document for all of us who are partnering with Timor-Leste, and I have brought copies with me to share with you all. It sets forth some of the key challenges across all sectors, from economic development to health and education, and proposes achievable solutions within manageable time-frames.

In 2012 our little nation is forging ahead in fighting poverty and corruption, to name just two of the scourges of a new, post-conflict country. Timor-Leste has developed the skills and wherewithal to articulate its needs and priorities and is even leading the way on the global development stage! Small Timor-Leste leads the g7+, a grouping of some 17 nations representing some 350 million of the world's poorest and most vulnerable citizens, including Nepal, Liberia, the Solomon Islands and South Sudan, our younger sibling in the family of newborn nations. At the MDG Summit in New York in September 2010, the g7+ countries said in a statement: "External mandates and ideas can no longer be imposed on our countries, on our regions and our peoples. We believe that good international partnership begins with mutual respect."

I might add a few additional ingredients of effective partnerships, including good coordination and communication, mutual understanding, a willingness to listen to and engage with local communities and local organisations and a commitment to long-term goals. When you are dealing with a legacy of 500 years of colonial rule followed by 24 years of a brutal military occupation, there is a handicap of trauma, under-development and disempowerment standing in the way of rapid results and quick-fix solutions. Human capacity / mentalities require many years if not an entire generation to change, and so only the most patient and persistent partners will see their efforts rewarded in concrete improvements to the quality of people's lives.

I cannot stress enough how important having a deep understanding of one another, one another's priorities, culture, language and state of development is. As a lifelong student and learner of languages, I know well what a window into another society language ability offers, and I believe that a great deal of what I have personally achieved in Timor-Leste in terms of popular trust, acceptance and access is the result of my mastery of all of the important languages of the country.

I want to share with you the story of a particular program of the Aloia Foundation – the Friendship Schools Project – which was conceived with the best intentions of fostering friendship and understanding and promoting an exchange of ideas and experiences

between students and school communities in Australia and Timor-Leste. The project got underway in 2003 and the demand for a link with an East Timorese school was great at the Australian end, demonstrating the huge font of goodwill and solidarity that existed towards Timor-Leste in the euphoric post-independence phase. A total of some 100 schools were connected over the next five years or so, and some strong and enduring friendships created, with letters, school albums, stories and resources shared across communities in the two countries. Nevertheless, as a project the FSP was really an idea ahead of its time. From the outset, we found ourselves coming headlong against the different set of expectations, aspirations, experiences and needs of schools, students and teachers at the two ends of the relationship.

From the outset we wanted to emphasise that this project was as much about sharing the commonalities in the experiences, hopes and dreams of young people in Australia and Timor-Leste, as it was about the notion of Australian school communities helping East Timorese schools with funds for infrastructural needs and materials. Nevertheless, the reality for the majority of schools in Timor-Leste at that time was that it was extremely difficult to find pleasure in the arrival of a parcel of letters, drawings or photos from your buddies in Australia when your school roof leaked in the rainy season, when only a fraction of your classmates had a desk and a chair at which to sit, when your teacher lacked the skills and training to embrace the importance of cross-cultural understanding, and when the letters of your Australian counterparts related a story of privilege and prosperity too foreign to resonate with children at that time. I relate this story because it highlights how all of our efforts to assist Timor-Leste to rebuild need to be carefully situated in context, both time and place. I am not criticising anyone other than myself in raising doubts about the appropriateness of the FSP program at that particular time – the project was my baby and one I am proud of, but she was premature! Perhaps Alola might consider reviving the program in 2020 when maybe, just maybe, the conditions in schools and in society in Timor-Leste might mean that there is a neater match of needs and priorities with Australian schools.

Now to the matter of coordination, communication and the maximising of scarce and valuable resources. I have seen a lot of waste and duplication of efforts over the years as governments, NGOs and other partners have scrambled to carve out a hallowed space for themselves on the development scene. In defining priorities and designing programs, too often our development partners, as donors are today referred to, often bypass the state agenda and fail to be mindful of the needs of ordinary East Timorese. I am talking principally of bilateral donors, many of which emerged on the scene with fixed and inflexible views as to how Timor-Leste society could progress most rapidly. More than 8 billion dollars of international aid money was spent in our country between 2000 and 2007, and yet poverty had increased by a minimum of 15%. There was very little to be seen for this massive expenditure in terms of infrastructure development or an improvement in the basic conditions of life for the majority of citizens. The reason is, of course, that the bulk of those 8 billion dollars didn't even reach Timor-Leste's coffers, they didn't go through our systems to strengthen our capacities or align to our programs and service delivery. Most of the money was spent on technical assistance, frequently sourced from the donor nation itself. Having said that, some development partners such as AusAID are making some changes to the way aid is delivered by exploring direct partnering opportunities with credible East Timorese NGOs.

NGOs, local government and community organizations, sometimes considered small-fry development partners for their relatively small budgets, have arguably left an indelible mark on East Timorese society by dint of their grassroots orientation and a commitment to engaging with local communities. The model of community-to-community support called 'Friendship' groups was born in 1999 when my old friend, now Ambassador to Canberra, Abel Guterres decided to explore how local government and community groups might take a role in rebuilding Timor-Leste from the district or village level up. The work of these friendship groups, today numbering over 40 has been extremely effective in providing concrete solutions to priority needs articulated by the people on the ground in Timor-Leste. Schools, community centres, water and sanitation systems have been built, agricultural projects and capacity building initiatives are just a few of the impressive results that friendship groups can hold up with pride. But we need to ensure that the local governments and community groups driving these programs inform themselves of the work of other organizations striving for good outcomes in the same geographical area or in the same sectoral area. In a country where close to half of the population continues to live in extreme poverty, waste and duplication of efforts is a tragedy that hurts our people.

In an era of global economic downturn, we are going to need to become ever more resourceful and creative if we are to continue to raise money in support of our work and to keep Timor-Leste on the radar. The end of the UN mission later this year will also cause some international attention to be diverted away from Timor-Leste, and onto other stages of war and vast need, including Syria, Afghanistan and Burma. Timor-Leste's former president, Dr Jose Ramos-Horta, was a larger than life figure who had an international profile by virtue of his talents and his vast network of friends in high places from all around the world. I am conscious that our newly elected President, Taur Matan Ruak, is not as well known by the international community, but his statesmanship and standing in the eyes of ordinary East Timorese should not be underestimated. Taur Matan Ruak is a man of the people and of the struggle for independence, having led the armed struggle as commander of Falintil for a number of years and most importantly throughout the period of the popular consultation of 1999. It was his leadership and that of my husband that averted a national catastrophe in the wake of the announcement of the result of the ballot in favour of independence.

Taur Matan Ruak is determined for the country to gradually reduce its dependence on foreign aid and to build the confidence of the people in their own ability to provide solutions to their everyday problems. In a meeting with him recently, Taur Matan Ruak spoke to me of his plans to initiate a range of schemes involving community members making voluntary contributions to funds in support of small loans for women entrepreneurs and for scholarships.

Another challenge we face in terms of keeping Timor-Leste on the international radar is that a nation grappling with the routine business of rebuilding can never hope to capture the attention and imagination of the world's media in a way that a country newly arisen from the ashes of conflict and violence can. I never forget the words of renowned Australian children's author, Mem Fox, when she visited the Alola Foundation a few years ago. She said "if only Peace was more interesting"! No news is good news, and good news doesn't make it into the news as a rule. If we are to keep Timor-Leste and her needs in the public conscience here in Australia and beyond, we need to amaze and inspire with the power of our solidarity

and the reciprocal benefits our work generates.

Earlier I made reference to some examples of where Timor-Leste has progressed by leaps and bounds since independence, including rapid economic growth. At the crux of our development challenges lies education, however, not least because some 60% of our population are aged 18 years and under. All of you who have visited Timor-Leste would have been impressed by the multitudes of children and young people in evidence in public places throughout the country. Providing our young with adequate opportunities to gain a quality education and eventually a job is one of the greatest challenges facing our nation's leaders and civil society organizations alike. We are struggling to find work for the 15,000 people who enter the job market each year. By 2024 the numbers of job-seekers will be twice that.

As Goodwill Ambassador for Education and as a mother, I appeal to you to keep our enormous needs in the education sector front of mind as you consider appropriate interventions in Timor-Leste into the future. Whether it is a scholarship opportunity, a traineeship or other initiatives promoting the building of capacity in one or another area, education offers Timor-Leste a shortcut out of poverty and underdevelopment like nothing else. Improvements in the quality and delivery of basic education – defined as the first 9 years of schooling in our national context – promise to help Timor-Leste reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) across all sectors, including improved maternal and child health and gender equality. A child born to a literate woman is twice as likely to survive past age five. By investing in women's literacy and education, particularly girls' education, then, we are also contributing in a significant way to child survival.

I would urge you, then, to make education and capacity building a focus of your efforts in the coming decade, keeping in mind the ripple effects it has into other sectors. A particular passion of mine over the past four years or so has been Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE). How can the friends of Timor-Leste contribute to the work of promoting pride in local culture, including language, and to developing learning resources in our mother tongues? I look forward to sharing more details in the workshops to follow this afternoon.

In the interests of improving our communication and coordination, I would urge you to collaborate with Katrina Langford in Melbourne who is working on a new website, *Timor Projects*, which aims to share information about current activities and projects in Timor-Leste and the organisations involved.² It will be searchable by district, project category (health, education, etc), project name, and organisation name. The pro-forma is available for collection and completion here today. If your work in Timor-Leste is focused on a particular geographical area, I have a USB with me which contains vital data from the 2010 Census by Suku – it contains important statistics on maternal and child health, school enrolment, agricultural production etc. I would be happy for you to copy the relevant data – but be warned that it is in Tetun since it was designed to be given back to the communities from where the data was collected for their own strategic planning at the local level.

² Note that this new Timor Projects website was launched in September 2012 at www.timorprojects.org

Friends, it is my sincere hope that the deliberations we will undertake today will not end here. The conversation as to how we can improve our coordination and collaboration needs to be an ongoing one, and perhaps out of this meeting today we might consider creating a permanent forum of some kind. I personally would like to commit to continuing to work with you, perhaps assisting you with advice on appropriate Timorese NGOs and other local groups with whom you might build partnerships in future, perhaps through continuing to provide you with advice, moral support, encouragement and motivation to keep on keeping on for Timor-Leste. Let's face it, ours is often thankless work, and when you are working cross-culturally the scope for misunderstandings and mistakes is huge. Timor-Leste is undergoing an unprecedented period of rapid social, economic and cultural change – we need to be constantly reassessing and reviewing and adjusting our expectations of the East Timorese, and indeed of ourselves.

Perhaps a future permanent forum of NSW Friends of Timor-Leste could look to formalising relationships with the Ambassador, and who knows we might even be able to aim to organise a conference or gathering in Dili in the near future.

Finally, for your friendship and solidarity may I once again say a hearty “obrigadu barak”. I look forward to seeing you in Timor-Leste.

Forum Panel

Triologue for Timor-Leste: Challenges of international engagement

An important part of the forum was the presence of Ms Kirsty Sword Gusmao as the Keynote Speaker and the forum panel discussion *Triologue for Timor-Leste: Challenges of international engagement*. Its purpose was to create a space for new dialogues between organisations and community groups that had experienced the challenges of and developed expertise in collaborating with Timor-Leste communities. The panel included exchange of different perspectives and practices, and offered the opportunity for those committed to change in Timor-Leste to identify collaborative initiatives between government aid agencies, researchers and community organisations currently involved in the provision of aid in the country.

Forum Panel: guest speakers

Kaye Schofield – Principal Sector Specialist for Education, AusAID

Professor Damien Kingsbury – Director, Centre for Citizenship, Development and Human Rights, Faculty of Arts-Education, Deakin University

Jude Finch – Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters and Former AVI Timor Leste

Richard Brown – Project Coordinator, Friends of Aileu Project

Kaye Schofield



AusAID: Supporting Better Learning Outcomes in Timor-Leste

Kaye has had a distinguished career in education spanning more than 40 years. She held senior roles in schools and tertiary education before her appointment as CEO of the South Australian Department of Employment and TAFE and subsequently CEO of the South Australian Department of Labour, Public Works and Administrative Services. In 1994 she founded her own research consultancy firm and in that role led many influential state, national and international inquiries and Ministerial reviews. These included a 2008 review for Prime Ministers Rudd and Gusmão of Australia's assistance to employment and skills development in Timor-Leste and serving for three years as Team Leader of the Program Monitoring Group for the Timor-Leste Police Development Program. In 2010 she was appointed as a special adviser to AusAID on Pacific Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

As Non-Executive Chair and subsequently Executive Chair and CEO, she led the establishment in 2010-2011 of the first national regulator for the vocational education and training sector - the Australian Skills Quality Authority. She has held many significant non-executive positions including Chair of the NSW Board of Adult and Community Education (1998-2006); Member, Vocational Education & Training Development Group of the Xanana Vocational Education Trust (2006-2008); Trustee, Dusseldorp Skills Forum (2000-2005) and Member, NSW TAFE Commission Board (1998-2010).

Kaye's contributions to education have been recognised through a number of awards: an Honorary Doctorate of Education from RMIT University; the 1999 Australian College of Education Medal for services to education; the 1994 National AUSTAFE Award for Educational Leadership in TAFE; and Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Technology Sydney.

Abstract

This presentation will outline AusAID's education support in Timor-Leste, including some achievements and lessons learned as well as the direction for the new program. It will also refer to AusAID's approach to partnerships and collaboration in supporting education in Timor-Leste, with emphasis on some key challenges.

Professor Damien Kingsbury



Friends as well as Neighbours

Professor Damien Kingsbury holds a Personal Chair and is Director of the Centre for Citizenship, Development and Human Rights in the Faculty of Arts-Education at Deakin University. Prof. Kingsbury is the author or editor of more than two dozen books and a significant number of book chapters and journal articles. His main area of research is on political and security issues in Southeast and South Asia, in particular Indonesia, Timor-Leste and Sri Lanka. In 2005, Prof. Kingsbury was advisor to the Free Aceh Movement in the Helsinki peace talks, which ended three decades of conflict. In 1999, 2007 and 2012, he led observer missions to Timor-Leste's ballot for independence and for subsequent elections.

He is a frequent commentator for and contributor on regional political affairs to domestic and international media, as well as writing articles and reviews for journals and other publications. Prof. Kingsbury is a regular contributor on Tuesday mornings on ABC774's Jon Faine program, discussing international affairs.

He is member of the Balibo House Trust board, covenor of Friends of Balibo, and member of the Friends of Baucau.

Abstract

In 2000, the now Timor-Leste Ambassador to Australia, HE Abel Guterres, and Cr Rae Perry, initiated a 'Friendship Cities' program between Timor-Leste and Australia. That program has since blossomed and now includes over 50 'friendship' relationships between Australian and Timor-Leste communities. Indeed, at a 'Friendship' conference held in Maubisse in 2010, President Jose Ramos-Horta said that he wanted to see a Friendship relationship between every *suco* in Timor-Leste and every local government area in Australia. While that may remain an ambition, the Friendship relationships have proven to be enduring, in terms of on-going people to people contacts, local grass-roots projects, a continuing commitment to Timor-Leste's consolidating democracy and in a wider sense of Australia-Timor-Leste solidarity. This presentation will discuss how these novel community to community links have underpinned the formal bilateral relationship and have helped to secure a long-term positive bilateral relationship between the two countries and their peoples.

Jude Finch



Working Collaboratively on the Ground

Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters, Former AVI Timor Leste

Born in New Zealand and still hanging on to the passport, Jude's working life has focused on community work in different terrains in Australia. Despite education in the liberal arts and training as a librarian, Jude started her work career in a neighbourhood centre in Maroubra. Since then she has held many positions within the community sector at local, regional and state levels as well as local and state government in the capacities of manager, community development worker, mental health and consumer advocate and health worker. The circle perhaps completed, she now manages the Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre.

Jude is one of the founding members of the Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters and a long time participant in the Blue Mountains Friendship Committee. These involvements have included many trips to East Timor and most recently, a year working as an AVI in Hatobuilico and Dili. Jude is fortunate to have a loving partner, four children and two grandchildren as well as one old dog. Yoga, swimming and bushwalking sustain a commitment to East Timor, family and community (not sure this is the right order!)

Abstract

The Blue Mountains have held a friendship relationship with the remote sub-district of Hatobuilico for the last 7 years. How best to describe Hatobuilico? At the foot of Timor's highest mountain, Mt Ramelau, Hatobuilico is stretched through isolation from Dili and through its own complex terrain and road network, extreme cold, perilous dependence on small farming, limited educational options and poverty. Government does not look their way often. We glance their way and we see breathtaking natural beauty, warm, generous people and possibilities to enhance opportunity. Members of the Blue Mountains committee, demonstrating their commitment and at great personal cost, have visited Hatobuilico each year – sometimes a long stay of 3 days, on occasions in and out in a day. The people in Hatobuilico, those who were in the know, attempted to make sense of these people who were not able to stay long enough to be known as well as this odd friendship idea and the sometimes resources that followed. Everyone did their best. With the opportunity for one of their members to spend a year in Timor and with Hatobuilico a good half of the project, the Blue Mountains now has a first hand, deeper and more layered understanding of the nature of this friendship. This presentation will describe the experience of deepened connection between Hatobuilico and the Blue Mountains, talk about what was and was not achieved during this time and attempt to draw out what connection might mean for Timorese people and for us here.

Richard Brown



The Friends of Aileu - A Case Study

Richard Brown is the Project Coordinator of the Friends of Aileu Project. He is also Chair of the Victorian Local Governance Associations' Timor-Leste Advisory Group.

Abstract

The Friends of Aileu is a project linking Moreland and Hume City Councils and the Aileu District Administration in a long-term friendship relationship. Established in 2000, the relationship is based on the principles of 'mutual respect, cooperation and local decision-making'. The development of the relationship and planning and implementing projects funded by the Friends of Aileu and its partners has involved dealing with a range of issues including managing expectations of stakeholders, different models of project management, accountability to donors, and program evaluation. Some of these challenges are explored in relation to education training initiatives supported by the Friends of Aileu.

Forum Workshops

Optimising Australia's involvement: Supporting education programs in Timor-Leste

Workshop 1: Early literacy and the mother-tongue project

Workshop 2: Pre-school and primary education

Workshop 3: Informal education centres and adult education

Workshop 4: Student exchanges: higher education; vocational education and training for trade skills

Workshop 5: Educating future educators and other professionals

Workshop 6A: Training programs for productive community activities

Workshop 6B: Training programs for productive community activities

Workshop 7: Health education

Workshop 8: Educational infrastructure: School buildings, solar and water facilities, etc

Workshop 9: Friendship and finances: the practicalities

Introduction

A Key component of the Forum was the involvement of participants in the Workshops organised around education in Timor-Leste. The different workshops specifically brought together ideas, experiences, concerns and aspirations around the programs supported by Australian friendship committees, community groups and NGOs. The Workshops employed a common set of overarching objectives, as a strategy for creating a space to share experiences, promote networks and to build potential partnerships, all with the aim of optimising the support that is offered Timorese communities. The aim of the workshops was to identify and discuss key issues that participants recognized as significant from their experiences of supporting formal education, community development and training programs in Timor-Leste.

The workshop planning was a collaboration between the UWS researchers and BMETS, and drew on their previous experiences of similar events. They identified some important challenges and opportunities worthy of consideration when seeking to optimise the benefits of the support provided by Australian organisations. In that sense the preparation of the workshop activities (and the Forum itself) were structured around some general concerns

for surfacing issues that might hinder the effectiveness of Australian contributions to Timorese communities.

1. To raise awareness of the impact of intercultural understandings (and misunderstandings) in different areas of education.
2. To learn collectively from the experiences of participants for generating better approaches to deal with the challenges of supporting education in Timor Leste.
3. To identify organisational strategies for optimising communication between Australian NGOs/ Friendship community groups and Timor-Leste NGOs and supported communities.
4. To identify potential innovations (programs, activities, etc) for improving support for the betterment of Timorese communities.
5. To build collaborative partnerships in Australia for more integrated and coordinated work with Timorese NGOs and communities.

Initially, the Workshop preparations included some concerns around the pressing questions: How aware are Australian supporters of what is culturally appropriate for Timor-Leste communities? How do they manage the intercultural tensions emerging in the design and delivery of their support? How are the language barriers managed to ensure good communication and engagement with Timorese communities? How does overseas knowledge respond to local needs and demands? What are the key obstacles encountered in the Australia/Timor-Leste inter-organisational relationships (e.g. communication, reporting, multiple accountabilities, technology access; recipient selection processes)? How can collaborative partnerships be made sustainable for the future?

After brainstorming these questions we identified 10 workshop topics, organised around the 2012 Forum theme: Education. This theme is understood broadly to include specific formal education programs as well as training activities that support adult life-long learning. The themes of the workshops related to NGOs and the involvement of community groups, thus representing some of the core areas of support provided by Australian groups and those that were perceived to be significant for Timor-Leste. In the Workshops, eight areas of education were covered and, due to participant demand, an additional topic was proposed to focus on the practicalities of delivering support from Australia.

From attendees' participation in the Workshops, the Forum aimed to generate constructive dialogues and debates about how best to optimise the multifarious existing supporting efforts. In that way the workshops aimed to promote the sharing of ideas and experience between Australian NGOs, community groups, government aid bodies and academics working with Timor-Leste NGOs and communities.

The first Workshop was the *Early literacy and the mother-tongue project*. This was proposed by Ms Kirsty Sword Gusmão with her personal interest in receiving feedback on a pilot mother-tongue project that was launched in 2012 in selected schools, where the predominant language of the community was different from the official languages (Tetum and Portuguese). A discussion document to inform this Workshop was provided by Ms Sword Gusmão (see pp 18-19).

The remaining Workshops were planned around common issues with a specific focus on different areas of education. These included: *Pre-school and primary education; Informal Education Centres and adult education; Student exchanges: higher education; vocational education and training for trade skills; Educating future educators and other professionals;* Two workshops on *Training programs for productive community activities (eg. agriculture, handicrafts, tourism); Health Education, and Educational infrastructure: School buildings; solar and water facilities, etc.* Finally the tenth workshop was on *Friendship and Finances: The practicalities.*

All Workshops were allocated one designated facilitator (or pro bono professional facilitator) who assisted in the facilitation of the rich conversations around the areas of common interest, specific experiences and new ideas. The reporting of these exchanges was organised around *Culture and language Issues, Challenges* encountered in the delivery of support and *Enablers* to enhance the partnerships. Reproduced below is the information captured at these Workshops using butchers paper to record participants' discussion. These records of the rich discussions were used to generate an image produced with wordle software (<http://www.wordle.net/create>) to capture a reflective impression of the Workshop reports (see page 37 following).

Workshop 1: Early literacy and the mother-tongue project

Discussion document: Timor-Leste National Commission for UNESCO – Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education Pilot Program (Kirsty Sword Gusmão)

In order to sector, assist the Ministry of Education to address some of the important challenges of the education including school drop-out, grade repetition and low levels of teacher education, in April 2010 the Komisaun Nasional Edukasaun or National Education Commission, led by Ms Kirsty Sword Gusmão, set about establishing a Language in Education Working Group to commence drafting a national language in education policy. Some 18 individuals, including Ministry of Education officials, members of the Church and civil society organizations, contributed to the exercise which enjoyed the technical advice of two international experts, Dr Carol Benson of the University of Stockholm and Professor Joe Lo Bianco of Melbourne University. The national Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) policy³ was presented officially in the form of a public debate in Dili in February 2011, and whilst some reasonable questions were raised in relation to implementation timetables and the challenges associated with the dearth of available written materials in many of the country's local languages, the policy was generally greeted with enthusiasm and support by teachers and policy-makers. The policy document recommended conducting a pilot MTB-MLE program in a limited number of schools across 3 districts as a means of gaining direct, first-hand experience of the opportunities and challenges posed by teaching and learning in L1. Pre- and post-pilot surveys would be undertaken in order to measure outcomes and, in the case of demonstrated improvements in learning outcomes, to advocate for an eventual shift in national language in education policy and practice.

In response to a rising tide of criticism of the policy and misinformed debate on MTB-MLE at the national level, the Timor-Leste National Commission for UNESCO launched the Rede ba Promosaun Edukasaun Multilinge or Repete 13⁴ (Multilingual Education Promotion Network) in October 2011. The Network is comprised of some 18 national and international agencies and representatives of the Ministry of Education and other government departments, including UNICEF, CARE, the Timor-Leste Coalition for Education and PLAN Timor-Leste.

In an election year (2012), a forum organised by the Repete 13 to discuss the benefits of MTB-MLE in promoting social inclusion and Education for All was disrupted by a vocal group of opponents of the policy and proposed pilot program representing the Timor-Leste

³ English, Tetum and Portuguese versions of the MTB-MLE Policy for Timor-Leste can be downloaded from the following site: http://www.scribd.com/doc/49147952/MOTHER-TONGUE-BASED-MULTILINGUAL-EDUCATION-FOR-TIMOR-LESTE-NATIONAL%2%A0POLICY?in_collection=3046404

⁴ See the Repete 13 Facebook group for a series of postings and photographs relating to the MTB-MLE Pilot Program. <http://www.facebook.com/groups/259530127424520/>

Teachers' Union and civil society organizations. The opponents of MTB-MLE claimed that the use of mother tongue in basic education posed a threat to national unity, and the ensuing polemic generated much public comment, both for and against learning in L1, in the national media for some weeks following the 27 January forum. Regardless, the Ministry of Education reiterated its support for the pilot program, and a first round of teacher training and community education went ahead in Lautem district in March this year. Further training of teachers in pilot schools has also been conducted in Manatuto and Oecusse, with participating teachers, district education authorities and parents embracing the initiative and urging continuation of the work to build the capacity of educators to understand and implement MTB-MLE effectively. Some 15 teaching assistants drawn from the school communities have been recruited and trained to assist with implementation of the pilot, and further training incorporating community publishing workshops are planned throughout 2012.

Workshop Recommendations/Key Points:

- How can we support emerging Timor-Leste insights into valuing mother tongue and culture?
 - Many levels – local, policy, political will – encourage production of books in local language by local community.
- How can we in Australia contribute to promoting mother tongue as a path to early literacy development and maintenance of cultural identity?
 - Network, special interest group for all interested in this issue, especially in keeping up with progress of Kirsty Sword Gusmão's pilot project.
- How can teacher education move towards child-centred learning through understanding of children's language, cognitive and social development?
 - Apply understanding from mother tongue projects in other countries (eg Cambodia, Philippines), review evidence papers and apply to Timor-Leste-specific settings.

Mother tongue and early childhood literacy – the goal is to ensure that by Year 3 literate in one language.

Teacher training – how can teacher education change to focus on children's learning through understanding of children's language and social development?

- More in service for teachers,
- Essential resources go to the school with training, otherwise resources not used.
- In service for teachers to use books, to read books in a way that children will gain understanding,
- Focus has been teaching teachers Portuguese, but needed to focus on methodology.

We learned about the role of Linguistics in helping communities to write their languages into agreed text. The project of book making in mother tongue is crucial in this process.

We discussed the role groups have to encourage cultural heritage projects.

What is your interest in this workshop? What brought you here?

- Interest in Mother tongue
- Education, more effective delivery
- Literacy, great interests in literacy
- English as a Second Language
- Oecussi is holding a trial of literacy with mother tongue (from a Friend of Oecussi)
- Salvia friends – films and teaching, how to help kids re friendship relationship – what is helpful and what is counterproductive.
- Issues of language.
- Linking St Vincent de Pauls' , information and work of Blue Mountains volunteers,
- Publishing
- Library in Malian was mostly English books. How to change this.
- UNESCO 2009 National Education Commission, consultative body

Introductory questions:

- a) How can groups such as the Friendship Committee contribute to promoting literacy in mother tongue achieve literacy in early years of school?
- b) The issue of whether children should be taught in their first language is related to colonialism. The first language is associated with backwardness instead of being a right...
- c) If Australians cannot put their will towards mother tongue in Australia, how can we possible act? Deep concern about the NT education decision to not use mother tongue. What kinds of mechanisms can be put into place to enable best practice and sound education practice to continue. (remove ideology)
- d) How can the results of the mother tongue and literacy trial (currently in three areas in Timor-Leste) get out to other districts? Issues of dissemination and higher level support, helps those who are interested in supporting mother tongue at local level.
- e) What is going on for teacher education?
- f) What is the most effective way for a small group to act e.g. Friends of *Oecussi* – perhaps in encouraging local tourism based opportunities, there could be requests for local culture documentation in children's books and with local language songs?
- g) Is it a good idea to teach English? Friendship Groups are often asked to do this. Answer could be that Grade 7 plus is good as this is in line with curriculum.
- h) How can we understand issues better? Is it a good idea to take books in Tetun? What is the best way to help?
- i) Need money and technical linguistic skills and expertise.
- j) Range of languages used in the classroom? Teacher will often discuss and translate materials/information into mother tongue but all written in Portuguese. Children write down without understanding.
- k) What is the time frame for getting all languages into print? This depends upon political will.

1. How do we manage cultural and language realities?

- a) Work with Timor-Leste partner organisations to understand this more.

- b) Find out which Timor-Leste organisations are working in this arena: e.g. Alola Foundation.
- c) Understand more about the history of language in Timor-Leste. Note that the teaching of Tetun was banned in Indonesian times.
- d) What is the status of Indonesian today in Timor-Leste. Still has an important role to play. Note that the number of speakers is decreasing as Indonesian is not taught at school. Timor-Leste students often attend Indonesian universities as this is cheaper and more accessible than other countries.
- e) Understand and learn from other mother tongue projects in other countries – and review to apply to specific conditions of Timor-Leste. For example, in Cambodia CARE, an Australian Aid agency is funding mother tongue projects with evaluation. The mother tongue projects in the Philippines are being expanded and PNG is deeply exploring this issue.

2. What are the challenges?

Rise of use and teaching in Tetun challenges the mother tongue retention (ironically)

- a) Need more linguistically skilled people – and the linguist who will work with a community to develop orthography (writing the words) that is acceptable to that community.
- b) Much research indicates that when you learn one language well then you can use/learn another easily. How to share this research?
- c) Timorese students will need to manage in many languages: Portuguese and Tetun (official Government languages), and then English is often language for employment.
- d) Book making/ writing in mother tongue languages develops relationship with local community, shows respect for the home culture and language.
- e) The colonial way strongly discouraged use of mother tongue and many do not have written form. How can the status of mother tongue languages be increased? Does the use of music help?
- f) Challenge of two or more mother tongue languages spoken at the school. It is clear that separate classes not wise, easily seen as segregation and leads to discrimination. Suggestion is to survey parents and children to determine answer. In this situation, Tetun least discriminatory, but a community decision essential.
- g) What is the impact on those families wanting to send children to school? Are there measureable changes for students that parents can see?
- h) Using the home language enables more parents to engage in education of their children from pre-school onwards. Challenge of involving parents.
- i) How can we in Australia recommend or support mother tongue programs when in Australia we are not teaching in mother tongue.
- j) What are the learnings from elsewhere in the world and how did those countries proceed? Can there be adaption of another model from elsewhere.
- k) Concern about how Australian groups can support, help but not interfere with decisions of partners in Timor-Leste on whether to join with this program...How do we support emerging Timorese insights into valuing mother tongue literacy? If there is not political will in Timor-Leste in relation to the trial, then is this where we need to start? Is this our role (we think not)

3. What are the enablers that make the work go well?

Can we teach English (as our partner groups often want this).

Create/support scholarships for Timor-Leste students in linguistics.

- a) Our friendship groups could talk with Timor-Leste partners on how we can support local culture, local knowledge, and languages in small gentle ways. Ask if we can record songs and stories in their languages. Requesting this creates pride.
- b) We can share the loss of languages in Australia and show what this has meant for indigenous Australians.
- c) We can work at many levels, local, policy and political will.
- d) Groups could fund community publishing workshops (with cameras, and drawings) - note that in one day created 6 books with words and drawings. Supported by NGO Many Hands International.
- e) Technical support with Voice translation.
- f) This question relates to potential innovations, and collaborative partnerships.

Additional Enablers

- Support community book making and recording of mother tongue language, research.
- Use radio - translate soap operas into local language to increase status of local language.
- TV content.
- Friends of Timor-Leste through their connections could encourage support and contribution to cultural diversity and the making of books.
- Anya Detain, National Library of Australia, is undertaking video recording of Fatlike women's stories. Wants to connect more. With Karin Langsford translating.

In Conclusion:

More networking and 'hooking-up: all those interested and concerned about these issues. Suggest that Friendship Committee on-line information could be undated. Those visiting Timor-Leste could come back and report, keep in touch with Kirsty Sword Gusmão work, establish special interest group.

Workshop 2: Pre-school and primary education

Recommendations/Key Points:

- People need training (parents, teachers, volunteers, grandparents) as mentors.
- Enable local people, parents included, to become educators.
- Better coordination and dialogue – among local people, NGOs, government, to reach positive results as per Timor-Leste goals.
- More networking among supporting groups – build tighter connections between friendship groups.

1. How do we manage cultural and language realities?

- Local people as cultural advisers.
- Employing local people.
- Incrementing skills of local people.
- Consider stage of Timor-Leste education, much diverse from Australia stage of education.
- Experiencing democracy and human rights – positive.
- Receiving – taking on board feedback from Timor-Leste.
- We understand/realise that the individual may change much quicker than the system of education.

2. What are some of the challenges?

- Multiple languages – early start – success, late start – lack of success.
- Availability of translation.
- Teachers need more preparation to educate.
- Transporting is hard in Timor-Leste.
- Geographic isolation of communities.
- Access to school (one way) may take three hours walk.
- “Everything” is a priority.
- How to better utilise volunteer teachers? How to promote them?
- Inconsistency in teachers’ payments.
- Need to do what government is elected to do – eg. pay teachers.
- Being equitable when paying for services for community.
- Language barriers (from our side).
- Communication in and out – may break down or be “bad”.
- Resources in all the languages.

3. What are some of the enablers that make our work go well?

- Local men and women teaching local language.
- Association – bridging to “next step” schooling – Aborigines experience shared with Timor-Leste (as in strategies to increment culture).
- Linguistic pattern standards – have value/chance in Timor-Leste.
- Record (somehow) spoken languages.
- Parents are keen in having children educated; supporting and getting involved.
- Local trained people – mostly – will go back to their own village to support people they know in the place they belong to.
- International attention, agreements, partnership – can work.

Workshop 3: Informal education centres and adult education

Recommendations/Key Points:

- Australian support for Timor-Leste to be totally ethical and a set of guidelines for ethical practices be produced and distributed, which recognises respect for self-determination, culture, language and appropriate support.
- A conference like this current conference be set up each year:
 - Responsibility to be rotated to different groups; or
 - A different university to be given prime responsibility each year.
- Set up a national database of all groups in Australia which are supporting Timor-Leste.

1. How do we manage cultural and language realities?

- Have interpreters.
- Train interpreters – create employment (an ethical obligation).
- Record your trip using local film crew.
- Allow lots of time to pick up cultural differences/acceptable behaviours.
- Get advice from locals on culture at each place.
- Allow Timorese to choose language.
- Admit when you don't know.
- Learn from Timorese in Australia.
- Get appropriate interpreters for Timorese in Australia.
- Next conference – find ways to get Aust-Timorese at next conference.
- Contact ETSA (East Timorese Student Association) and Aust-Timor Leste Business Council.

2. What are some of the challenges?

- How to distribute funds.
- Language.
- Media – short-term focus.
- Institutional resistance – galvanise sympathetic staff members.
- UN and other agencies pulling out.
- Oil money.
- How to link in with local Timor-Leste community.

3. What are some of the enablers that make our work go well?

- Starting to include Timor-Leste history in Australian curriculum.
- Sister Susan Connelly.
- Jenny Coles.
- Annual conferences.
- Special working groups.
- Special event around referendum independence dates.

Issues

1. Rotary Youth Leadership Association

- a. Two in Timor-Leste – one this year.
 - b. Trained Youth Leaders in Timor-Leste.
 - c. How can we link in our trained leaders with adult education or other programs?
 - d. Plan international DVD.
 - e. Link with Friendship City groups.
2. Taking group of young people → Triloka.
 - a. Building and joining in adult education programs.
 - b. Adelaide Friendship Group.
 - c. Friends of Baucau (Vic).
 3. Sponsoring two students – Oecusse.
 - a. How much do you influence their choice of subjects?
 - b. Do you stipulate that they stay in Oecusse?
 4. How best to support Timorese people outside of Dili?
 - a. Without taking people out of their local area.
 5. How to prevent well-intentioned Australian groups from reinventing the wheel?

Workshop 4: Student exchanges: higher education; vocational education and training for trade skills

Recommendations/Key Points:

- Pastoral care –student support in Australia
 - Use of the Introductory Academic Program
 - Mentoring
 - Support from Timorese community
 - Student association
 - Role of the embassy/consulate (educational).
- Standardised English training/testing, language/cultural preparation:
 - Tetum training for friendship groups
 - Coordinated approach to pre-departure for students.
- Facilities, money.

1. How do we manage cultural and language realities?

- Australian students in Timor with limited language and cultural understanding – purpose of sharing knowledge.
- Timor students in Australia – different levels of language skills/preparation.
- Different circumstances for English language qualification.
- Timor-Leste adopting Australian standards.
- Australian NGOs/providers not aware of standards/programs (why they are being provided).

2. What are some of the challenges?

- How to expose them to the language and culture.
- English language skills – institutions need awareness.

- Cultural adjustment.
- Social isolation/communication with family.
- Cost of living, education materials. Some have to pay \$300 for English test.
- Translating competencies, standards and implementing them.
- Better communication between Australian NGOs and providers.

3. What are some of the enablers that make our work go well?

- Mentoring/small groups. Social involvement with academic staff.
- English bridging courses.
- Role of friendship groups. Role of Timor-Leste Students' Association.
- How to access second-hand books. Survival tips.
- University liaison officer. Mentor.
- National University of East Timor (UNTL) English Institute.

Interests

- Curriculum revision.
- Language of instruction.
- Training of lecturers.
- Pastoral care:
 - Expanding support for education.
 - Support for students in districts.
 - Student exchange.
- Trade skills – how?
- Media arts, representation of history.
- Facilities/science.
- Competency standards.
- Funding.
- Support for Timorese students in Australia.
- Tailor-made programs.
- Inter-institution collaboration.
- Marketing of success stories.

Workshop 5: Educating future educators and other professionals

Recommendations/Key Points:

- Government policy and management in Australia and Timor-Leste.
- Equal opportunity and access for all in Timor-Leste.
- Sustaining the momentum for the development of education in Timor-Leste (and in Australia) - succession planning.

1. How do we manage cultural and language realities?

- Why the question?
- How do we find out realities?
- Was this a right or wrong decision?
- Learn from the experiences of other groups
- Find out from Timorese what their requirements are. (Time)
- Capturing learning (methods).
- What do they want us to do?
- Finding out the unknown in Timor.
- Communicating with the Timorese people to understand.
 - Benchmarking for educating educators.
 - Meeting our needs and not their needs.
- 2003 UN Survey – shows what they want.
- Training the art of teaching according to local contexts.
- What do we need in order to educate. Western education system?
- Understand how to work in this environment.
- No assuming – language assumptions.
- Learning from your mistakes – how to offer support without being instructive.

2. What are some of the challenges?

- Communication breakdowns – information.
- Regional communication in Timor.
- Postal service.
- Government spending and budget allocations.
- Cultural diversity.
- Value of teaching and education.
- Deficiency in education – mathematical understanding.
- Remedial education.
- Cultural prohibition of failure.
- Government aid (distribution of aid).
- Developing a suitable training system.
- Setting standards for teaching and teachers.
- Closing schools for 3 months for teaching language to teachers.
- Organisational/Government management.
- Mother-tongue teaching is a challenge.
- Employment – confusion with language and ability.
- Facilities – electricity, water, telecommunication, technology etc.
- Immigration.
- Bureaucracy – Australia.
- Educational resources – teaching methods.

3. What are some of the enablers that make our work go well?

- Relationships you develop with Timorese and other groups in Australia.
- Valuing two-way communication/knowledge.
- Learning on a daily basis in Timor.
- Pushing boundaries.

- “If you don’t try, you can’t win”.
- Perseverance.
- Courtesy and being civilised. Your friends do not forget you.
- Opportunity to do what is good or right.
- Long-term vision.
- Sustainable structures.
- Succession planning in Australia and in Timor-Leste.
- Never promise what you can’t deliver.
- Linking students – connecting.
- Cross-cultural training programs.

Issues

- Training – trainers trained to be trainers. Recruiting teachers to train. Including all staff (equal opportunity).
- Language – underpinning of language.
- Resource development.
- DET/DPFE (Department of Professional Formation and Employment) - Policy development.
- Management and organisation in these Departments - Government management.
- Input sustainability and succession planning.
- Relationships between Timorese Departments and Australian Departments - Government policy.
- Competence building – remote districts, access - equal opportunity.
- Curriculum development - training.
- Schools – universities, career choices.
- Communication – consolidation.
- Pre-education- professional training.
- Mother-Tongue - first language.
- Employment - availability, equal opportunity.
- Poverty.
- Farming - Agricultural Science.
- Education in the household amongst family - equal opportunity.
- Training location.
- Human rights - equal opportunity.
- Discipline.
- Confidence.
- Restrictive decision-making relating to welfare and education by Australian Government - Government policy.

Workshop 6A: Training programs for productive community activities

Recommendations/Key Points:

- Language
- Culture – appropriateness
- How do we best work with the Timorese (government, communities) to ensure we have the most impact?
- Discussion:
 - Form committees
 - Work with partners/NGO forum
 - Timor projects website - coordinate

1. How do we manage cultural and language realities?

- Language.
- Body language.
- Traditional practices.
- Need for long-term commitment.
- Learned-dependency as a restraint to self-sufficiency and home-grown solutions.
- Listen.
- Practice respect.
- Humour.
- Issues of trust in complex relationships between Australian partners, Timor-Leste based NGOs and local communities.
- Importance of developing cultural competence to practice appropriately in our relationships with Timor-Leste people.

2. What are some of the challenges?

- Need to be realistic about the difference in resources and the resulting likelihood of theft etc.
- Lack of experience in practising entrepreneurship.
- Transport, condition of roads.
- Communication challenges.
- Costs of moving money/lack of efficiency in transferring funds.
- Expense and lack of airlines flying to/from Timor-Leste.
- Need for multi-lingual resources, interpreters, translators.
- Import/export.
- Lack of availability of interest-free loans.
- Banking is difficult outside major centres.

3. What are some of the enablers that make our work go well?

- Learning Tetum.
- Building networks and partnerships from local community – to researchers – to district administrations – to government to work to build sustainable agriculture practices.
- Make needs-based.
- Long-term commitment.
- Respecting ownership of local people, listening.
- Train-the-trainers.
- Coordinated, networked effort around training linked to accreditation with RPC.

- Build and exchange contacts/registration from today.

Issues:

- Creating links between artisan-made products and products attractive to Western markets. Two-way process of appreciating unique beauty of hand-made crafts/arts.
- Making and designing products to meet local needs.
- Dangers of encouraging Western commodified Hotel tourism and implications for Timor-Leste.
- Day tours/short stays potential increasing tourism – need for infrastructure.
- Potential for cultural/historical tourism and importance of promoting appropriate tourism.
- Voluntary tourism potential – to provide service not just buy holiday.
- Tourism and hospitality / Timor-Leste style.
- Coordinated approach to informal, community-based training and education. Link to agricultural, art-based economic and tourism opportunities.
- Youth leadership training/mentorship.
- Sustainable agricultural practices - environmentally, culturally.
- Issue of burning/land clearing/risk of erosion. Need to address unsustainable agricultural practices.
- Issue of how to get knowledge of sustainable agriculture practices.
- Appropriate food storage.
- Problem of push to introduce Genetically Modified seed.
- Incentive to encourage rice production.
- Appropriateness of crops – loss of indigenous crops being replaced by imported seeds.
- Consistency of approach/governance of agriculture.
- Potential of musical instrument-making as an industry to generate income.
- More training on how to make products for Western markets.

Workshop 6B: Training programs for productive community activities

Recommendations/Key Points:

- Training programs for productive community activities (agriculture, handicrafts, tourism)
- Integration of projects with broader development needs
- Integration of individual projects with other projects
 - networking
 - learning from existing models and experiences
 - information hubs
 - co-ordination of activity to avoid duplication and have sustainable projects
- Community-based and owned training
 - whole communities should be involved in their own development via training in agricultural or volunteer tourism
 - avoiding individual benefits and ensuring community benefit
 - village-level training

- helps generate projects that are community led with appropriate support
- helps to create projects in which Timorese benefit from sales/initiatives
- expectations management is part of creating successful community-based projects.

1. How do we manage cultural and language realities?

- For some industries (tourism), English required.
- Volunteers need cultural briefing assistance to be culturally appropriate.
- Find local relationships/facilitators:
 - Trust, legitimacy;
 - Network, exchange information.
- Translators – huge expense. Is it practical to learn Tetum?
- Build trust so that there is sharing about true cultural realities (may take time to emerge).
- Nepotism.
- Trust is reciprocal.

2. What are some of the challenges?

- Communication.
- Building relationships.
- Gender issues – how can we hear all voices, not just dominant voices?
- Being open to cultural differences.
- Different values of time – things happen slowly.
- Temptation to impose Western culture – cultural imperialism.
- How can we usefully support feminism within local cultural context?
- Wealth distribution/inequality – how do we manage social jealousies?
 - Build skills/self-reliance.
 - Not charity/handouts.
- Sustainability of projects.
- Technology is changing culture.

3. What are some of the enablers that make our work go well?

- Resources (money, time).
- Empathy.
- Compassion.
- Expertise.
- Networks.
- Timor Government can be quite accessible.
- Start from where they are at.
- Listen to what people want – bottom up, community led.
- Patience/resilience – long-term commitment.
- Show models of successful development elsewhere.
- Communication – text, Facebook.
- New technologies.

- Forum for discussions/build networks.
- Share our expertise/experiences.
- Advocacy – getting the message out.
- Timorese who are in Australia – ask for help, network with them.

Interests/Issues

- Women’s support/empowerment.
- Vocational education.
- Tourism – ethics, new resource of income, community-based.
- Sustainable agriculture/practices.
- Water.
- Self-sufficiency through agriculture.
- Child mortality.
- Horticulture education – food security, kitchen gardens.
- Roads/infrastructure.
- Crafts:
 - Transfer of culture;
 - For women→independence.
- Small business – sustainable/traditional.
- Fish farms.
- Economic development – market access.

Workshop 7: Health education

Recommendations/Key Points:

- Develop the Village Health worker model throughout the country.
- Incorporate traditional healers. Teach them to be health workers so they can identify when other help is needed.
- Need to use a holistic approach.
- “Health education is life education”.

1. How do we manage cultural and language realities?

- Take into consideration spiritual and cultural traditions when developing health education programs.
- Pictures versus written programs.
- Education on public health.
- Empowerment of women in health education, change behaviour.
- Community garden for families and connect with each other.
- Developing modules for education program.
- Village health worker support (local level).

2. What are some of the challenges?

- Networking in Australia and Timor-Leste.
- How do we co-ordinate organisations with projects in Timor-Leste?

3. What are some of the enablers that make our work go well?

- Commitment to projects.
- Long-term way Timorese think taken into consideration for projects.
- When do we “let go”?
- Developing relationships.
- Courses/projects must serve East Timor needs, not others.
- Work with traditional healers to educate.
- Programs need to be holistic.
- Health education is life education.

Workshop 8: Educational infrastructure: School buildings, solar and water facilities, etc

Recommendations/Key Points:

How to make it happen in Timor-Leste through -

- Project management (quality plus):
 - Maintenance
 - Design
 - Stakeholder involvement/support
 - Meet Needs
 - Training and empowerment
- Processes to build relationships:
 - Relationships at all levels
 - Allow time
 - Right connections: government, community, other
 - Using Australian networks
 - Need project champion on the ground
- Unique to Timor-Leste:
 - Rain water
 - Infrastructure (bandwidth)
 - Technical issues
- Cultural:
 - Embrace diversity
 - Awareness

1. How do we manage cultural and language realities?

- Pre (long) visit familiarisation (eg. 1 week).
- Search out local contacts and expertise.
- Person in organisation with relationship to Timor-Leste.

- Timorese “on the ground” translator essential.
- Ongoing relationship.
- Church provides key contacts/links.
- Do the Timorese know how to say no? Is it the answer that they want you to hear?
- Building trust.
- Communication - how?
- Long-term relationships.
- Complex community structure.
- Enablers:
 - Cultural awareness
 - Spending time with people
 - Connection with local people
 - Dispute resolution in a culturally appropriate way
 - Speak the language
 - Earn respect

2. What are some of the challenges?

- Allow the Timorese to make the basic decisions.
- Recognise the various local decision makers and ensure they are in favour of the project. For example, in education there are three levels – national, regional, local. Catholic Church involvement in education.
- Allow for sufficient time for communications.
- Must have a “champion” for your project on the ground.
- Timorese land ownership issues must be addressed.
- Lack of reliable water supply.

3. What are some of the enablers that make our work go well?

- Church.
- Translator.
- Local builders/professionals.
- Form relationship with villages/local government/council.
- Australian groups working together.

Interests and Issues

Water	Coordination and communication, sharing knowledge.
Educational facilities for learning	Coordination and communication, sharing knowledge.
IT: Internet as a resource. On-line education delivery. On-line training delivery internationally	Opportunity of fibre delivery to Timor-Leste.
Learning outcomes	Developing long-term project for delivery by Rotary Club Cultural.
Looking for water-less toilet technology	How to make it happen in Timor-Leste? Not enough water. Storage needs alternative

	technology.
Educational infrastructure	Duplication, lack of coordination of people. Isolation – no English. Community committee in Timor-Leste broken down. Execution of project difficult.
How design impacts on community	Girls cannot go to school because no toilets.
Delivering water supply	Prioritisation effectiveness, new ideas.
Recognise issue of toilets in schools	Maintenance. Delivery method – should we support Timor-Leste delivery of projects.
Empowerment	Training part of project delivery, on ground validation of projects needed.

Workshop 9: Friendship and finances: the practicalities

Recommendations/Key Points:

- Need for list of possible government and non-government funding sources for Timor-Leste community projects.
- Lobby NSW Local Government Associations to fund a position to support NSW-Timor-Leste Friendship groups.
- Assemble electronic “How to Guide of Banking and Financial Systems” for Australia-Timor-Leste Friendship groups and like others working with Timor-Leste communities.

1. How do we manage cultural and language realities?

- When in Timor-Leste using a Timorese as an interpreter.
- Making contact with Catholic priests and nuns in communities and districts in Timor-Leste and recognising different controls of different Dioceses across different districts.

2. What are some of the challenges?

- Changing signatories on Timorese bank accounts.
- Accessing bank statements from Dili if your Friendship group is in a district area.
- Bank fees to withdraw money from ANZ Dili from ANZ Australian bank too high – impractical.
- Encouraging communities to set up their own systems and be accountable for them, in distribution of monies received and accounting for budgets back to their local community representatives.
- Understanding the power structures:
 - District administrator
 - Sub-district administrator
 - Chefè
 - Traditional owner
 - Religious

3. What are some of the enablers that make our work go well?

- Working with a partner that has Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status - given by Australian Tax Office only. Eg. Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific has DGR status – 10% retained when money returned, also interest.
 - Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA draws up individual contract, Memorandum of Understanding, with partner group.
 - Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA – 5% commission, no interest, pay into Timorese account only
- ANZ Dili – has no relationship with ANZ Australia.
- Setting up an ANZ account in Dili.
- Linking with Rotary for your project – infrastructure support on ground in Timor-Leste.
- Letting Timorese partners work out details of managing withdrawals. Eg. One friendship group has three signatories – none of which is a direct recipient.
- Direct deposit from Australia into Timorese accounts - \$35 charge and exchange rate →quick and direct.
- Community setting up their own Credit Union – taking charge, setting up own building and accounting procedures.
- 24 Australian Volunteers International funded for Timor-Leste from AusAid:
 - Only currently IZ
 - Friendship and other groups should apply to AusAid for Australian Volunteers International to work on related projects
- East Timor Community Assistance Scheme – submit applications to AusAid. AusAid Rudd Review – transparency, outcomes.

At the same time there was recognition of the need for Australian organisations to engage directly with and to visit the communities that receive their support. These organisations need to develop at least basic linguistic capabilities to communicate in the languages of Timor-Leste. In practical terms and in view of the multilingual complexity of the country, there was support for the notion of learning Tetum which, as the official native language, plays a role as the *lingua franca* in many regions. Similarly, there was attention on the lack of advice regarding what to expect and how to behave in culturally appropriate ways when visiting the country. Visitors need to understand Timorese cultures, and be alert to the problems of imposing Australian understandings of developmental needs. There was a proposal for the production of a cultural guide for engaging with Timorese communities.

Other gaps were also identified: these included practical issues such as the IT limitations in the country, the lack of infrastructure (transport and roads) and the difficulties of conducting financial transactions and engaging with financial institutions.

NSW Timor-Leste Support/Friendship Groups

An important aim of the Forum was to facilitate collaboration between different organisations already working to support groups, communities and projects in Timor-Leste. To fulfil this aim all participants were invited to provide information about the activities of their organizations in Timor-Leste by preparing a one-page document. This was intended to be the basis for engaging with others during the Forum and beyond. In this way, participants were able to build up possibilities for collaboration to create an integrated work

Australian Catholic University

Bega Valley Advocates for Timor Leste

Biblioteka Ermera, Gleno, Timor-Leste

Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee

Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters

Canberra Friends of Dili

Emergency Architects

Every Village

Kangaroo Valley – Remexio Partnership (KVRP)

Kiama-Zumalai Friendship Group

Leichhardt Friends of Maliana

Manly Friends of Oecusse

Marist Asia Pacific Solidarity Office (MAPS)

National Library of Australia (East Timor Collection)

Nazareth Catholic Community – NOW (Nazareth Outreach Work)

Pittwater Friends of Soibada Inc

Rotarians Education & Training (RET)

Springwood East Timor Support Group

Willoughby Friends of Ossu (WFOO)

Australian Catholic University

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Details/description of the Association, Organisation or Friendship Group:

The Institute for Advancing Community Engagement (IACE) has been established by the Australian Catholic University (ACU) to advance the development of mutually beneficial and sustainable community engagement.

Community engagement is the process through which the University brings the capabilities of its staff and students to work collaboratively with community groups and organisations to achieve mutually agreed goals that build capacity, improve well-being, and produce just and sustainable outcomes in the interests of people and their communities in the hope of a better tomorrow.

Focus

IACE's focus on community engagement is the *Beyond Today* agenda which aims to create a real sense of hope and belief in a better tomorrow. The three key themes that IACE focuses on are:

- Beyond Disadvantage – reaching out to the disadvantaged and marginalised people in our society and those most in need;
- Beyond Borders – participating in action for change beyond our national boundaries;
- Beyond Differences – promoting community engagement enriched by inter-faith and inter-cultural understanding.

Beyond Today Programs

Beyond Today current programs include:

Beyond Disadvantage

Provide education for homeless people (Clemente Australia), Indigenous initiatives, and programs for the Sudanese Community and Mt Druitt Community.

The Clemente Australia program is a collaboration between ACU, Mission Australia and St Vincent de Paul. The program was launched in 2003 and to date, more than 100 people have been involved in this university education focused initiative with some graduating at the Certificate, Degree and Masters Level.

Beyond Borders

IACE is currently working in East Timor with four organisations and the Instituto Católico para Formação de Professores (ICFP) to develop quality educational and institutional capacities in East Timor. The first 97 primary teachers graduated across November 2006 and October 2007. Currently, there are 278 students enrolled in the Bachelor of Teaching course. Student retention rates are extremely high at more than 96%. ACU, through IACE, is also working with a wide range of people in various countries including the Philippines and on the Thai-Burma border.

Beyond Differences

IACE believes engagement creates understanding and tolerance. By inviting everyone to the table, IACE is working to bring understanding of the needs of all constituents. Programs include work with youth, cross-generational constituents, and community leaders in programs including Indigenous Programs as well as Young Muslim leaders in IACE's Beyond Today Leadership Programs.

BEGA VALLEY ADVOCATES FOR TIMOR LESTE

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<https://www.facebook.com/Bega-Valley-Advocates-For-Timor-Leste>

Details/description of the Association, Organisation or Friendship Group:

Since 2004 the Bega Valley Advocates for Timor-Leste has had a friendship agreement with the people of the Barique-Natarbora subdistrict in Manatuto district, on the south coast of Timor-Leste.

Over the past nine years our support has moved from addressing immediate welfare needs, to responding to community requests for development and training projects and assistance in accessing local infrastructure grants.

In 2012 funds were used to:

- assist women's development and focuses on capacity building, skills training and infrastructure,
- provide professional development for teachers, teacher training scholarships and school supplies,
- build community toilets and wells.

In 2013 a teacher's resource and training centre has been established in a partnership between BVATL and the Natarbora Education Commission. Further teacher training and health workshops have been organised and community ventures are being supported.



Biblioteka Ermera, Gleno, Timor-Leste

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Website:www.bibliotekaermera.org/

Details/description of the Association, Organisation or Friendship Group:



Main library building in Gleno nearing completion, May 2011

The Ermera Library Project is about setting up a public library service to help raise literacy levels in the Ermera District, Timor-Leste. The Biblioteka Ermera runs a number of programs, to help provide access to information and create a love of reading.

Dan and Beth Gilfillan are two Australian volunteers who have guided the establishment, building and running of the library at the request of the local Administrative Council. From the very beginning, initially working out of one school room, they have approached this project with enthusiasm and imagination. From visits to new mothers in the hospital, to

starting the concept of village and home libraries in more inaccessible areas, they are energetically spreading the availability of, and desire for literacy out into the community.

Highlights from the past year include:

- the official opening of the Gleno library and a visit from President Ramos Horta;
- publishing three books including writing a guide for parents on reading with their children;
- opening a second library branch in Hatolia where renovations are in progress at the moment;
- starting up mother and baby reading groups.



Beth running a reading session in the temporary library before the new one was completed.

Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee

Contact information:-

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Website: www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/yourcouncil/easttimorfriendship/

Blue Mountains City Council (BMCC) established a friendship relationship with the sub-district of Hatobuilico in 2005, with then Mayor Jim Angel visiting to formally sign the Friendship Agreement in 2007.

Hatobuilico is one of the four Sub-Districts of Ainaro District. It is located inland south west of capital Dili, at an altitude of 2,400m above sea level on the slopes of Mount Ramelau (2,963m). The area is very beautiful and has great tourism potential, particularly in walking tours. It is 100 kms from Dili, a six hour drive over rocky roads. It was the site of the first national Music Festival in 2010.

The Friendship Committee is made up of local community members. Over the years a Committee has formed in Hatobuilico to manage the relationship and resources. BMCC provides \$11,000 annually from which 50 scholarships are funded for young people from the area to attend high school and University in Dili. The criteria for these scholarships is set by the Hatobuilico Committee and monitored by the community.

In 2010 the Friendship Committee partnered with the Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters to organise and run the Blue Mountains Trek for Timor. In the process \$61,000 was raised for Hatobuilico community identified projects including establishment of a Senior High school and a Community Adult Learning Centre in Hatobuilico. BM Trek for Timor 2012 will build a Primary School in the small village of Taureme and continue to fund teacher's salaries in the newly established Catholic High school. This event is being run again in 2012.

www.trekfortimorbm.org.au

Projects to date:

- Completion of the Hatobuilico Community Centre in partnership with Bright Rotary
- Solar panels on the Community Centre
- Facilitated planning processes
- Establishment of *Hatobuilico Centro Rekursus Formasaun* Adult Learning Centre including employment of two staff. The centre runs training programs including Tour Guiding, computer and IT, agriculture, English classes. An East Timor Community

Assistance Scheme (ETCAS) grant in 2012 will enable this to operate as a mobile program across the three sucos.

- Resourcing of Taureme School with furniture and building materials
- Contribution to the building of a Secondary School - previously students had to leave the area for Dili or Maubissi to finish school.

In 2011/2012, a Friendship Committee member was employed as an Australian Volunteer International (AVI) to resource these projects. This enabled the friendship to become a real partnership and progressed the relationship exponentially. Strategies are now more embedded in local priorities and the commitment clearly long term from both sides. And there is significant learning about what is achievable.

Tourism is being assisted with an emphasis on encouraging visitors staying more than one night to climb Mt Ramelau and to use local guides. A website was developed for the area <http://hatobuilico.com/>, signage improved, guide training and a booklet of walks, downloadable from <http://hatobuilico.wordpress.com/walks/>. Since this, there have been several groups come to the area from Australia.

BM Hatobuilico Friendship Committee encourage members of other friendship committees to build in a visit to this beautiful area when planning you journey to Timor-Leste. There are excellent guesthouse options with meals provided. The walks rival any in the world and can be done at easy to difficult levels.

Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters



Contact 1: Suzie van suzie.vanopdorp@gmail.com 0415 689 935
Opdorp

Contact 2: Mary marywaterford2@gmail.com 0403 257 519
Waterford

Website: www.bmets.org.au

Description:

The Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters (BMETS), established in 2004, consists of about 25 women volunteers from the Blue Mountains community. The group is auspiced by the Mountains Community Resource Network (MCRN).

BMETS aims to improve the lives of women in East Timor by contributing to the ongoing leadership and empowerment of East Timorese women through developing sustainable projects that directly benefit East Timorese women and fostering partnerships and friendships between women in the Blue Mountains and women in Timor-Leste, recognising the unique role of women in building Timor. Because we are a small community-based organisation we can respond in an immediate and direct way. We contribute to APSC-TL infrastructure & scholarships as well as many small projects. We fund our projects through fund-raising events in the Blue Mountains such as garage sales, book sales, raffles, street stalls, etc. We also attract donations and have an arrangement with Union Aid abroad APHEDA to provide donors with tax deductibility status. Since 2004 we have raised over \$500,000. Our practical approach to our work has earned us support across the Blue Mountains and beyond.

Partnerships with Women's Organisations in East Timor: In 2004 we established a partnership with the Asia Pacific Support Collective Timor Leste (APSC-TL), signing a formal Memorandum of Understanding in 2012. Under the umbrella of APSC-TL and with support from BMETS, Beba Sequeira, Odete Belo and Laura Abrantes undertake community development work in Dili and the rural areas of Timor-Leste such as Bugoro, Suai, Maliana and Hatobulico. Beba and Laura provide BMETS with ongoing advice about the issues facing Timorese women, their needs and potential opportunities for BMETS to further its vision in Timor Leste. In 2011/2012 a BMETS volunteer was based at APSC-TL as an Australian Volunteer International (AVI) doing capacity building.

APSC-TL works on a wide range of projects; some are funded by BMETS whilst others occur independently of BMETS. They support and monitor scholarships, support and resource other women's advocacy groups and projects. As part of their rural work, Beba and Laura work with Mana Kassian and the Women Veteran's Centre in Bugoro. As a result of this work a number of pre-school classes have been established in Bugoro and 3 pre-schools established, currently with 92 children enrolled and 6 volunteer teachers.

BMETS funded the production of "Secrecy: The Key To Independence" which was published in Tetum and English. "Secrecy" records the stories of women veterans of the Timorese struggle for independence. "Secrecy" was produced by Beba Sequeira and Laura Abrantes who travelled East Timor collecting women's oral histories from the district areas. BMETS launched the book with Beba and Laura at the NSW Parliament House and the Sydney Writers Festival in May 2012.

Other areas of work:

Blue Mountains Trek For Timor: The Trek for Timor has been a major joint undertaking between BMETS and the Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee. The Trek was modelled on the Kangaroo Valley Trek for Timor held in 2009 & 2011. In 2010 the Trek raised \$61,000 for projects including establishment of a Senior High school and a Community Adult Learning Centre in Hatobuilico. BM Trek for Timor 2012 will build a Primary School in the small village of Taureme and continue to fund teacher's salaries in the newly established High School.

Scholarships: 58 scholarships established for young women in East Timor.

Support of the work of Kirsty Sword-Gusmão: BMETS has supported the work of the Alola Foundation, specifically the Alola Mother and Baby packs promoting maternal and infant health. More recently BMETS has contributed directly to Office of the First Lady welfare fund which provides direct relief to families experiencing severe hardship and project manages school buildings. In 2012 we are resourcing the Mother Tongue Literacy pilots.

Library and Literacy projects: BMETS has supported a number of literacy, library and learning projects across Timor in the past twelve months. We have provided funds to the Library project in Ermera, and to the Maliana Library where a BMETS member was an AVI.

Working with other East Timor support groups in Australia: With the establishment of the Hunter East Timor Sisters, BMETS has worked on joint events and "HETS" have raised funds which they contribute to BMETS supporting joint priority projects, particularly scholarships.

Building our Friendship Relationships in East Timor: BMETS members undertake regular self-funded trips to East Timor to sustain their relationships, ideas and enthusiasm. BMETS has also had a number of volunteers in East Timor undertaking projects identified by our Timorese partners.

Canberra Friends of Dili

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Details/description of the Association, Organisation or Friendship Group:

Canberra Friends of Dili (CFD) encourage mutual educational, cultural and business connections between the capitals of Australia and Timor-Leste; and promote the Canberra Dili friendship city relationship.

The aim of CFD is to promote awareness of the rich and varied culture of Timor-Leste while assisting it to continue developing as a newly independent nation. The following Educational partnerships initiatives are examples of work undertaken:

- Establishing the Friendship School Project Council Canberra. Through this initiative, five ACT schools provide opportunities and resources for students to learn about their counterpart schools in Dili, and to contribute to the educational work of The Alola Foundation Friendship School Project Dili;
- Fostering one-to-one relationships between schools in the ACT and Dili, to promote the teaching of English as a second language and programs for youth development;
- Supporting Timor-Leste students studying in Canberra, through educational partnerships between the Institutes of Technology in Canberra and Dili, as well as through the support of individual students and their organisation.

More information:

Visit the Canberra Friends of Dili page at the ACT government websites:

www.cmd.act.gov.au/communication/cir/dili/friends

www.cmd.act.gov.au/communication/cir/dili

Emergency Architects

emergency architects australia

contact: EAA Director Richard Briggs
richard.briggs@emergencyarchitects.org.au
or visit www.emergencyarchitects.org.au

Who we are

Established in 2005, Emergency Architects Australia (EAA) is an international, not for profit organisation affiliated with partner organisations in France and Canada. EAA is a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development Code of Conduct and has tax-deductible status for overseas aid projects.

What we do

EAA supports communities in their rebuilding after disasters and emergencies of natural or human origins and assists communities realise long term, sustainable development goals. EAA also broadens the professional skills and humanitarian outlook of Australian professionals through community engagement training and collaborative in field project implementation.

Our recent achievements

Solomon Islands

- In partnership with village communities and Partnership Housing Australasia EAA assisted in the construction of over 60 latrines
- EAA designed and built prototypes of school related buildings for the Solomon Islands Government, resulting in the construction of over a 100 school buildings and teachers houses (2007-2010).
- EAA instigated educational initiatives aimed at improving construction standards in 70 village communities in Western District Solomon Islands (2007-2008)

Papua New Guinea

- In partnership with UNHCR, EAA assisted in the construction of a series of 'spring collection boxes' to secure potable drinking water for refugee communities in PNG's western province (2011-12)

Indonesia

- In partnership with EA France and funded by Australian Red Cross, EAA managed the delivery of 240 houses in Sigli, Aceh following 2007's tsunami.

Australia

- EAA designed a temporary village for the Kinglake community and provided pro bono design services to assist the construction of Narbethong's new community hall after the 2009 Victorian Black Saturday bushfires
- EAA provided damage assessments and workshops to over 1000 families following Queensland's 2011 floods.

How we work

EAA draws upon the knowledge and expertise of our staff, members, partners and volunteers to deliver accountable and effective aid. EAA works with local communities to assess needs and develop capacity. This approach ensures that communities gain ownership and form a long term interest in the success of their projects. Committed volunteers enable us to provide our high level professional services at a minimal cost.

Why?

Many communities in the Asian Pacific region struggle with the basics of life; access to clean drinking water, sanitation, food, security and shelter. Support of EAA enables Australian companies and organisations to make a significant contribution to the security and economic development of the Asian Pacific region.

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Timor-Leste projects

Water and sanitation program at schools in Maliana Sub District

Emergency Architects Australia identifies the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 7c as a major challenge:

'Halve by 2015, the proportion of people in Timor-Leste without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.'

In 2011, Emergency Architects Australia (EAA) began its response to the urgent need for improvement in basic water and sanitation facilities in Timor-Leste. Focusing on the Maliana Sub District, EAA propose to develop a water and sanitation program in schools, which is essential to improving children's health and increasing attendance rates for females. To do that we need assistance both in Timor-Leste and here in Australia.

Next steps

We would like to form partnerships with key organisations working in water and sanitation, education and health, to establish a greater level of coordination, expertise and knowledge to ensure the success of this proposed water and sanitation program. We request your support, whether it be financial or volunteering to help with the program's development.

The proposed program

EAA aims to build and improve upon existing water and sanitation facilities in Maliana Sub District school by school, as well as integrating within the program hygiene education and maintenance of the water and sanitation facilities. With best hygiene practices encouraged in schools, especially in primary schools, the students can take their new habits home into the Sucos and Aldeias to improve the health of communities.

Assessment of 13 public schools

In conjunction with the Ministry of Education and Culture for Timor-Leste and the Maliana Leichhardt Friendship Committee, EAA have completed assessments of existing water and sanitation facilities at 13 of the 24 public schools in Maliana Sub District. The results showed the dire lack of even basic facilities in many schools throughout the District.

Water and sanitation pilot project

To establish an efficient way of building water and sanitation facilities in Timor-Leste and assess the costs of these projects, EAA designed and implemented a pilot project at Odomau District Primary school in Maliana with support and funding from Friends of Maliana and Sydney Rotary groups in Roseville and Northbridge. This invaluable support allowed the project to be run as a community build, giving greater ownership to the end users and encourage ongoing maintenance. EAA's goal is to use this project as a basis for the design and implementation of similar projects at other schools in the Maliana region.

Get involved today

by

- Becoming a member
- Being a sponsor or make a donation
- Being a volunteer helping EAA develop here in Australia and overseas
- Offering assistance to EAA projects in Timor-Leste

www.emergencyarchitects.org.au

emergency architects

australia

Support for the water and sanitation pilot project in Maliana by:



Rotary clubs of Northbridge and Roseville NSW District 9680



Friends of Maliana Sydney Secondary College, Blackwattle emergency architects australia



Every Village

Contact information:

Contact 1: Paula Halvorson/ 0403142166/ halvorsons@msn.com

Contact 2: Perry Halvorson/ 0402594883/ halvorsons@msn.com

Website: www.every-village.com.au

Details/description of the Association, Organisation or Friendship Group:



“Every Village” started in 2011 when, after a few short term building trips, we came across the amazing craft work being made and sold by the locals in East Timor and recognised the need to provide a larger international market for them to sell these products. We exist as a not for profit organisation, with all proceeds going to existing education and health programs being run in East Timor.

At Every Village, we have spent some time in East Timor researching the organisations already providing jobs and producing high quality products and also some smaller more remote groups. By doing this in person, we can assure our customers that the items they are buying are directly supporting jobs and income for local Timorese families, and that workplaces are safe and comfortable. We liaise with these groups in person and to a lesser extent via email to stock the various craft items to sell here in Australia. We take these products to weekend craft markets across Sydney and also sell through our website www.every-village.com.au.



Kangaroo Valley - Remexio Partnership (KVRP)

Contact information:

Contact 1: Libby & Paul Turnock (02)44651357 turnockl@westnet.com.au or turnockp@westnet.com.au

Contact 2: Lynne Dooley & Lynne Keevers 4464 1152

Website: www.kvrp.org.au

Details/description of the Association, Organisation or Friendship Group:

After the destruction and killing which swept East Timor in September 1999, a small group of Kangaroo Valley residents felt a need to do something. A partnership was discussed with an East Timorese village and the Kangaroo Valley - Remexio Partnership (KVRP) was formed. Remexio consists of a main village (about 25 kms south of the capital, Dili) and a number of satellite villages. Beyond these are scatterings of smaller communities, difficult to access, rarely visited and with progressively poorer standards of living.

The KVRP is a "bottom up" or "grass roots" approach to helping the East Timorese help themselves. We hope to assist the East Timorese achieve dignified living through health, education, justice and ecologically sustainable industry. We selectively try to help in ways that are different from those of the UN and other NGOs. We try to foster long-term personal relationships with East Timorese people and actively encourage this approach in others. We have pursued a multitude of small, personal and usually integrated activities. Being substantially self-funded, and consistent with our philosophy, our material contributions have been small such as the provision of sewing machines, netball courts and tertiary scholarships. Then in 2009, discussions with Remexio community leaders resulted in KVRP undertaking the challenge of funding a Village Lighting Project, initially for the benefit of three of the most remote communities. This project is now in its 4th year of operation and is funded by a biannual event, hosted by KVRP in Kangaroo Valley. The event is a 50km trek, which has raised almost \$200,000 since 2009. The project has installed 854 small solar systems in households throughout Remexio. The project is committed to sustainable principles and has now trained 36 Timorese in the installation and maintenance of the solar systems, and established 4 management committees to oversee the project in the 4 key Sucos. The next stage of the project is to support the region establish a cooperative in order to leverage the money that is collected from each participating household.

The Village Lighting Project aims to improve the living standard of people living in three very remote communities in the Remexio district of East Timor. Kangaroo Valley has had a village-to-village partnership with Remexio since May 2000. The Village Lighting Project is its most ambitious project to date.

Last year, as a result of the Trek for Timor challenge, KVRP was able to fund 524 lighting systems. We have installed these lights in three different communities in the Remexio region. We hope to extend the village lighting project into new communities with the proceeds from the Trek for Timor challenge in 2011.

A representative of Kangaroo Valley who participated in the roll-out of the project in mountain-top communities in 2010 described the experience as humbling and wonderful - "...seeing a light go on in a house for the first time is truly fantastic". Few other aid groups work in this area, and only a handful of people visit these communities in the wet period.

Houses in the village are traditional in design, with a single door and no windows, so they are very dark inside. The Lighting Project replaces inadequate and polluting light sources with solar-powered lighting. Currently, and only if householders can afford it, houses are typically lit by kerosene in small discarded paint tins, or sometimes candles, producing a flickering light, which causes eyestrain and produces particulates.



Adequate lighting makes a real difference to the lives of everyone, especially students. Each household will receive a system consisting of a small solar panel, a controller, a battery and three energy-efficient light bulbs, in return for which they will contribute to a community fund for the system's upkeep. Maintenance training and skills transfer are essential elements of the scheme. The cost to recipients should be about a quarter of what they currently pay for kerosene. This is significant in a country deemed the poorest in Asia.

Our partner organisation is a not-for-profit called Alternative Technologies Association (ATA). ATA sources and installs the solar systems for Kangaroo Valley, at cost, using volunteers from Australia, and Timorese from the villages who will be trained to assist in the installation and to carry out the bulk of the ongoing maintenance. Together with KVRP, ATA has successfully introduced the systems into about 10 villages, with very positive feedback (for instance, women are freed for other tasks during daylight hours, no longer having to complete all their indoor work before the sun sets and allowing children to study at night).

In 2009 the cost of one system, although expected to be \$150, came in lower as the cost of solar panels throughout the world has decreased. Future systems will be upgraded with greater battery capacity and are expected to cost about \$160-\$200. Additionally, we intend to fund a greater level of spare parts to be held in East Timor. Each household pays \$10 upfront at installation and a monthly fee of \$2.



In 2011 we extended the project into more villages in Remexio. We are now working in 2 more Sucos and have installed 854 systems to date. We hope to install and retrofit another 480 systems during 2012-13.

Kiama-Zumalai Friendship Group

Contact information:

Contact 1: John Littrich (02 4234 3001; littrich@tgp.com.au)

Contact 2: Peter Stuckey (02 4232 3416; stuckey.sue@gmail.com)

Contact 3: Sandra McCarthy (02 4232 0420; sandram@kiama.nsw.gov.au)

Website: www.kiama.nsw.gov.au

The Kiama-Zumalai Friendship Group: The Friends of Zumalai

Zumalai is in the remote South West of East Timor (Timor-Leste), a little inland from the coast and about 120 kilometres (but a 6 hour drive!) from the capital Dili. There are about 30 villages and 17,000 people in the district. Zumalai village is the main village and the key market town in the area. There is little in the way of infrastructure and limited access to electricity. Clean water is difficult to access and many of the people suffer from poor nutrition and diseases such as malaria. Being close to the border with Indonesian West Timor, the area suffered badly in the civil and political unrest in 1999 following the vote for independence.

In about 2001, people from the Kiama area began to be involved in projects to help support the people of Zumalai and, after a visit by a group of Kiama people to Zumalai in 2004, it was resolved to try and form an ongoing partnership between the two communities. In 2005, Kiama Council resolved to form a community friendship arrangement with Zumalai and the Kiama-Zumalai Friendship Group – The Friends of Zumalai - began to take shape.

Since that time, the group has worked to raise awareness of the challenges faced by the people of Zumalai and to also raise funds to support projects in Zumalai such as emergency food aid, student scholarships and the installation of solar panels in the Zumalai clinic for power and lighting. The group has also hosted visitors from Zumalai and other parts of Timor-Leste in Kiama and met with East Timor's Counsel General. In May 2009, a delegation from Kiama including Mayor Sandra McCarthy, Councillor Neil Reilly and Parks and Environment Manager, Peter Stuckey, travelled to Timor-Leste to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in relation to the community friendship.

Leichhardt Friends of Maliana

Contact: <http://www.leichhardt.nsw.gov.au/Community-Issues/Other-Issues/East-Timor-Support>

The Friends of Maliana group is a partnership project between the communities of Leichhardt Local Government Area and the people of Maliana west of Dili in East Timor.

The Friends of Maliana Committee is made up of Leichhardt Councillors, community activists and representatives from the Sydney Secondary College all deeply committed to helping the East Timorese people achieve a better life.

The Group meets when necessary to discuss strategies for fundraising and to plan projects that help the community of Maliana. The group also organises market stalls and other fundraising activities assisting raising money for the following:

- Rebuilding & refurbishment of a library & community centre in Maliana – opened 2000;
- Supported an AVI Library Development Officer 2011 2012
- Continually restocking of the library with books in Tetum, Portuguese, English & Bahasa Indonesian – ongoing;
- Provided training for East Timorese librarian & staff – ongoing;
- Provided wages for 2 local staff for over 4 years – ongoing;
- Supported Veteran Women’s Weaving co-op through purchase of tais (woven) products for sale & fundraising – ongoing;
- Supported the sale of East Timor coffee as fundraiser - ongoing;
- Sponsored art & music workshops in schools in Maliana & Dili;
- Supported Arte Moris Free Art school & National Sound & Film; Archive -training students in art & media studies ongoing;
- Sponsored Tekee Media Music project – transcription & recording of traditional East Timorese music for use in schools.

Manly Friends of Oecusse

Contact information:

Contact 1: Dr Judy Lambert; Ph 02-9949 3521(ah), 9948 7862(w);
email: twswombat@optusnet.com.au

Contact 2: Ms Anne Lanham; Ph 02-9977 8830 or 0427 787 833;
email: anne<dion0106@bigpond.com>

Website: www.mfoo.org

Details/description of the Association, Organisation or Friendship Group:

Manly Friends of Oecusse (MFOO) is a community-based organisation committed to building an enduring friendship through genuine partnership between the people of Oecusse in East Timor and the people of Sydney's Northern Beaches. The group works to raise awareness about East Timor and to identify and support key community-based projects led by the people of Oecusse.

Our work is intended to support and enhance at community level, the formal Friendship Agreement signed by Manly Council and the District of Oecusse in 2008.

Formed in 2008, MFOO conducts a monthly stall at the Manly Village Markets, and from time-to-time holds film nights, music events, dinners and other fundraising events. Bunnings barbecues supplement the funds with which we support:

local clean water and food self-sufficiency programs in the villages in Oecusse.



We also provide some assistance to Fr Richard Daschbach's Topu Honis refuge, to help his students go on to tertiary education and are about to provide some equipment to the Oecusse hospital.



Since we formed, six of our members have visited Oecusse and we've hosted visits from the leaders of our village food and clean water projects. Another group of four members is currently preparing for a visit to our friends in Oecusse.

Manly Friends of Oecusse members are pleased to be able to get to know the wonderful people in East Timor's most remote and challenging area and to share our culture and theirs.



**Manly Friends of Oecusse Inc.
East Timor Community Support Group**



Marist Asia Pacific Solidarity Office (MAPS)

Contact information:

Allen Sherry, Executive Director.

(07) 3512 9800/ 0448 762 702, al.sherry@marists.org.au

www.maristsolidarity.net.au/maps

Details

Marist Asia Pacific Solidarity Office (MAPS) is an Australian based solidarity office of the Marist Brothers who have worked in Timor-Leste since 2001. MAPS has a broad outreach to young people and their families through projects in formal education, non-formal education, development and community based initiatives.

The initial core business of the Marist Brothers in Timor-Leste was the establishment of a Teacher Training College in Baucau (ICFP). This college awards degrees validated by Australian Catholic University (ACU). From this project has developed; a schools renovation program, partnership with local NGOs such as 'Katilosa' working with those with disabilities, locally established youth, sport, cultural and study centres, and also some small technical training facilities.

All the projects partnered by MAPS have been initiated by Timorese people and focus on the Baucau and Viqueque regions.

National Library of Australia (East Timor Collection)

Contact information:

Contact 1: Anya Dettman/(02) 62621248/adettman@nla.gov.au

Website: <http://www.nla.gov.au/asian/east-timor>

Details/description of the Association, Organisation or Friendship Group:

The National Library of Australia actively collects a variety of materials from and about Timor-Leste, including books, journals, newspapers, ephemera and government publications.

There are good historical collections on Portuguese Timor and a substantial collection relating to the Indonesian province of Timor Timur. These materials include Indonesian government publications, statistics and reports. A special feature is the steadily growing collection of ephemera relating to Timor-Leste's elections.

Some recent publications are acquired by acquisitions trips to Timor, and we also welcome donations of material not already held. We are always happy to assist with reference enquiries relating to our collection and to Timor-Leste, or to receive suggestions for new acquisitions.

Nazareth Catholic Community - NOW (Nazareth Outreach Work)

Contact information:

Contact 1:

Michael Dahl - Director (08) 8406 5011/0438 560 003

michael.dahl@nazareth.org.au

Contact 2:

Jan Bate - Community Services Manager (08) 8406 5045/0417 870 524

jan.bate@nazareth.org.au

Website: www.nazareth.org.au

Details/description of the Association, Organisation or Friendship Group:

Nazareth Catholic Community (NCC) is a community of welcome, connecting faith, family and education. Located in the western suburbs of Adelaide, NCC is comprised of an R-12 College, Early Childhood Centre, surrounding parish communities and Integrated Community Services that are designed to meet the diverse community needs, both within and beyond the Nazareth Catholic Community.

Our Strategic Plan goals and aspirations cover Catholic Identity, Education, Community and Stewardship. As part of our Plan, NCC has initiated the Nazareth Outreach Work (NOW) program. The initiative has grown out of our commitment to foster our Catholic identity through outreach.

Currently, our outreach work operates locally, nationally and internationally, supporting the identified needs of those connected with our programs. One of the major initiatives of our NOW program is the outreach work we are beginning with Triloka Village, in the Baucau District of Timor-Leste, 120km from Dili. Our Timor-Leste program is in partnership with Rotary International, as well as 2 of our local Rotary groups in the western suburbs.

A group of 9 young recent graduates and 5 staff/adults will travel as volunteers to Triloka Village in late November 2012 to undertake a number of identified projects and implement several health and education programs. As well as connecting with the Timor-Leste community, we see this opportunity for our young people as a progression from school based social justice activities to wider community involvement.

This year will be our first immersion into the community, however a community commitment is in place to continue our outreach work and to annually meet the needs of the Timor-Leste community. A goal into the future is to provide a re-immersion experience for the people of the Triloka Community. The following projects have been identified as particular needs within the Village and as such the volunteers will be working on:

- Painting and refurbishment of classrooms at the local schools
- Providing desperately needed resources and equipment for the local schools
- Raising funds (\$20,000) to rebuild the Mother and Children Birthing Clinic (fundraising will be ongoing)

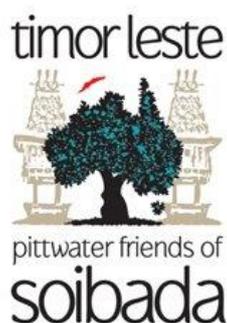
In order for the group to undertake this work a container has been organised to be shipped and arrive in time for our volunteers in November. The container will be filled with the necessary resources and equipment for the local school, basic medical supplies and 'family packs' including items such as books, blankets, pencils and paper, re-chargeable or solar flashlights and appropriate clothing.

In addition to the project work to be undertaken at the local school, our volunteers will be working with the local community to teach English and assist with sports coaching as well as providing women's health and education support.

A range of fundraising activities are taking place across the year within the community and by the volunteers, these include a major quiz night, dinners, a golf day, community BBQ's and Parish soup nights.



Pittwater Friends of Soibada Inc



Contact information:

Contact 1: Tamara Sloper Harding, Chairperson
(02) 99188317/0403226699/tamara.harding@bigpond.com

Contact 2: Klaus Sandles, Secretary
ksandles@ozemail.com.au

Website: www.pittwaterfriendsofsoibada.org
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_1fPJdFpKM

Face Book: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pittwater-Friends-Of-Soibada/162612300466694>

Details and description of Pittwater Friends of Soibada

Pittwater Council signed a Friendship Agreement in 2010 in accordance with the guidelines of Timorese Government under the Friendship Movement Act Statement of Principles for Local Governments Working in Timor-Leste. It provides a structured basis for Pittwater Community to assist and support the people of Soibada to improve not only their daily lives but also to create sustainable programs for future development of the community. Any projects to be undertaken must be determined by both the Soibada Community and the Committee of Pittwater Friends of Soibada (PFOS). Guidance will be sought from Government Agencies and NGOs.

The Pittwater Community's commitment to assisting Timor Leste began in 1999 when they supported the now chairperson of Pittwater Friends of Soibada, Tamara Sloper Harding, who deployed with International Force for East Timor (INTERFET). The link was formalised a couple of years ago at Maria Regina Primary School. With the support of Pittwater Catholic Parish, local churches of all denominations, Rotary, community groups and that of Pittwater Council it has since grown to encompass the wider community.

In 2011 a project plan was developed in consultation with the Soibada community. The initial focus is on sanitation and education. This will begin with reconstruction of the school toilets and education programs for the community with the assistance of Timorese run NGOs. Appropriately trained local educators, nutritionists and other medical staff are being placed for liaising with the community of Soibada, not just geographically, but also linguistically and culturally. HIAM Health is presently being funded by PFOS to run their nutrition and home gardening programs in Soibada. Volunteer medical and teaching personnel from Pittwater will regularly visit Soibada to mentor the locals. Eventually a

community centre and market place will be constructed. Micro finance and the establishment of small business is also high on the agenda.

PFOS assistance proposals can be divided into three categories and several projects will run in parallel.

1. Construction and physical improvements to existing facilities. (Toilets and classroom floors.)

2. Community development and education.

Scholarship Program for senior high school in Dili -There are no years 11 and 12 in Soibada.

Use of local NGOs for education.

Teachers – to assist/train the teachers

Books – in Tetum and in English

Doctor – the clinic is empty and could accommodate volunteers and a medical “mentor” program

Blankets and Ponchos

Weaving and handicrafts

Small business development

Concept for building maintenance

3. Major Construction Project

Community Centre

Pittwater’s sister village of Soibada is very remote, and breathtakingly beautiful, high in the mountains in central Timor. It was originally built by the Portuguese. It has few resources and was devastated by past occupation by Indonesian and militia groups and subsequent turmoil following Independence. There are no bridges to Soibada, so during the rainy season the town is completely cut off. The community have been very proactive yet need support to increase their health, well-being and capacity. Pittwater community is helping to provide that support for local projects and to build skills that will contribute to the long term independence and sustainability of the village. The people of Soibada have access to resources and tradesmen qualified to restore the old damaged buildings of the school. It is a much better use of resources for us to employ local tradesmen and use local products. This way we assist in stimulating the local economy by providing jobs and giving them the means to help themselves. Thus, restoring their dignity and giving the people a sense of ownership of the facilities that we fund.

This relationship is about far more than raising funds and doing charitable deeds (although, this is already proving very successful). It is about the growth of lasting friendship and sustainable development. It is about empowering the people of Soibada to resurrect their own village and their lives. The future of Soibada is bright and full of promise. With community support PFOS will change the future for the children of Soibada and Timor-Leste by helping them to help themselves. The goal is not to make the change, but to facilitate the change so that it comes from within the Soibada community. We must enable the people to help themselves and restore the dignity that has been stolen from them during years of oppression. They need ownership of any project and the impetus for change must be internal.

Rotarians Education & Training (RET)



District 9680

Rotarians Education & Training (RET)

RET Contacts:

1. **Theo Glockemann – RET Chairman** on 99806842 or theogeo@bigpond.net.au
2. **Lyn Davies, RET Secretary** on 0429951068 or davieslyn@msn.com

The **RAWCS Project 67 Team**, working with the Rotary Club of Dili, Timor-Leste and Rotary District 9550 has established a Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) program. The concept of **RET** came about when we understood that our support for Timor-Leste could be just so much more effective if our efforts were coordinated. Also, working together across the six Rotary International Foundation areas of Focus – Peace and Conflict Resolution or Prevention, Water and Sanitation, Maternal and Child Health, Basic Education and Literacy, Disease Prevention and Treatment, Economic and Community Development programs we can significantly increase our ability to “make a difference” to the lives of people in Timor-Leste.

BREAKING NEWS!!!!

*Rotarians, Education & Training (RET) and Woodside Energy Limited on behalf of Sunrise Joint Venture Participants (Sunrise JVP) are working on an agreement to provide \$41,000 sponsorship for the program: **Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) Timor-Leste in 2012.***



Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) Timor-Leste A second RYLA Program was held in Dili from 8 to 15 August 2011. The future is bright for the 85 East Timorese participants and their facilitators. Many alumni have gone on to demonstrate even more commitment to community service, further education and employment in both Timor-Leste and overseas.

RYLA Timor-Leste 2012 - Casa de Reitiro St Ignatio, Dare

2 to 8 September 2012 * APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

**CONTACT: Eddie Pinto at doliili04@hotmail.com or
ryla.timorleste@gmail.com**

**or Angelo Raveane in Sydney, Rotary Club of Crows Nest at
angelo@hotline.net.au**

- **A NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY** Theo Glockemann and senior Rotary officers have been meeting with Pro-Vice Chancellor Professor Gail Whiteford and her team at Macquarie University to develop some exciting programs. One initial project is a mentoring system where Macquarie students will be linked up with University students in Dili as part of their degree program. **CONTACT:** Theo Glockemann, Rotary Club of Thornleigh at theogeo@bigpond.net.au
- **TEACHERS FOR TIMOR** The Rotary Club of Glenhaven has continued to work with Australian Catholic University (ACU), through the Institute for Advancing Community Engagement (IACE), to support the successful 'Teachers for Timor' project training for hundreds of teachers at the Teacher's College in Baucau. **CONTACT:** Helen Games – Rotary Club of Glenhaven at helengames@hotmail.com



Teacher at work



Library staff

- **BIBLIOTEKA ERMERA** Beth & Dan Gilfinnen, in Gleno, have built a library and trained library workers to give the whole community access to books. Ermera is an area the size of the Blue Mountains without a single bookshop. This library and six branches provide the chance for all citizens to get close to books and gain information and education. Once the library is fully established it is hoped that management will be taken up by the National Library of East Timor. **CONTACT:** Anne Rands at arands@bigpond.net.au
- **TOILETS IN SCHOOLS** A new approach to establishing toilets in all schools in Timor-Leste is being discussed by our **RET** Team with advice and support from other organisations such as the Timor-Leste Department of Education, Mana Kirsty Sword Gusmão's Education Ambassador Program, Emergency Architects Australia and Rotary Action Groups. We are keen to link with the many groups already working in Timor Leste. **CONTACT:** Graeme Davies, Rotary Club of Kincumber at gradav@ozemail.com.au

- **HEALTH MATTERS:** A new committee led by Ian Bittner is following up with support for a range of Health needs in Timor-Leste. Ian and his team have access to equipment and expertise to share. **CONTACT:** Ian Bittner, Rotary Club of Epping at ibittner@nsccahs.health.nsw.gov.au

Springwood East Timor Support Group

Contact information:

Contact 1: Dennis Farrar/ 47517096/fazhouse@bigpond.com

Contact 2: Chris Gorman 47541160 chrispamgorman@optusnet.com.au

This group commenced in 1996 as a lobby group urging Indonesia to cease its persecution of Timorese nationals. The group increased its activities after calls for practical support from the Sisters of St Joseph and particularly following a talk in the local catholic parish by WWII veteran, Paddy Kenneally. In 1999, as in many communities throughout Australia there was great outpouring of support following the destructive actions of Indonesian troops as they left East Timor. People from the Mid and Lower Mountains communities made a heartfelt response to the call for goods, food and clothing to be sent to the people of East Timor.

As the Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission was well known to some members, it was natural that support for its efforts developed. This support still continues today across a number of their initiatives in health and education (including teacher training). Others still being supported today are Dr Dan Murphy's Bairo Pite Clinic, Topu Honus Orphanage in Oecussi, the Alola Foundation, and the individual work in the villages by Mr Aries de Almeida who develops biogas fueled electricity, and provides educational opportunities and material support to the poorest of the poor.

Because of the success of our main fund raising event, an annual Trivia Night, the group has been able to assist in the supply of many donated goods through the generosity of local businesses and Blue Mountains residents. At different times funds have been raised via concerts, sales of Timorese products, raffles and dinners. The donations to East Timor have included three vehicles, a tractor, pushbikes, clothing, computers, school and hospital supplies and medicines, building materials, sowing machines and other household goods and implements. Transport of this equipment and supplies has been possible because of continuing generous support from some community minded national transport firms. The focus of the current efforts still remains at educational and health initiatives.

There has been on average 55-60 pallets per year delivered since 1999. In the early years, 12 shipping containers filled with donated products from businesses. Schools and parishes from the three Sydney Dioceses were also involved and this effort continues to grow through contact with people from all over the country.

In addition, nearly \$90,000 has been channelled to these and other projects.

Some members of the group have travelled to East Timor offering their expertise while learning first-hand about conditions there. We remain a small group buoyed by the unfailing Mountains community support for our humble efforts and are driven by the ongoing needs of our nearest neighbours.

Willoughby Friends of Ossu (WFOO)

Name of Association, Organisation or Friendship Group:

Contact information:

Contact 1: Rosemary Bekker / 0410545585 / info@friendsofossu.com

Website: www.friendsofossu.com.au

Details/description of the Association, Organisation or Friendship Group:

The Willoughby Friends of Ossu (WFOO) is a community group formed to foster friendship, support and cross cultural exchange at a grass roots level with the people of Ossu, Timor-Leste. WFOO is part of the Australian network of friendship associations with Timor-Leste, providing an important role in the democratic future of the country, creating opportunities for the people of Ossu and the residents of Willoughby, Sydney, Australia.

Ossu is a sub-district of Viqueque located in the mountainous region of central Timor-Leste. It is a 6 hour drive from Dilli. Ossu consists of 9 sub-villages or “sucos”, each with a village chief, - chef de suco.

Since 2006, WFOO has worked to assist the community of Ossu with various projects through various fundraising initiatives and awareness raising. It currently employs a local Timorese project co-ordinator to implement these projects and activities.

Some of our on-off and ongoing projects include: Restoration of the community centre – “Uma Maun Alin” (Friendship House) which provides a meeting place and centre for computer classes; Involvement and assistance with the Seeds of Life Project which assists local landholders to maximise their agricultural outputs; Delivery of computer and english classes; Assistance to local Timorese artists to study and exhibit in Australia; Repair of water pipes to assist over 500 villagers; Assist with supply and distribution of computers and printers; Supply of sports equipment and team uniforms for soccer and basketball; Training in Tetum language for local Ossu teachers in Dilli.

WFOO is now working to introduce and promote clean-burning cookstoves to the community of Ossu. Clean-burning cookstoves will have major health benefits and reduce the amount of firewood used.

(For example, this may include geographic scope of projects, successes, challenges, fundraising, future goals/activities, history, publications, etc)

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