

Nation-building across the Urban and Rural in Timor-Leste

CONFERENCE REPORT

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Mayra Walsh, Damian Grenfell, Janurio Soares,
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Anna Trembath

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'Nation-building across Urban and Rural Timor-Leste' provided an opportunity for East Timorese and people from around the world to reflect, discuss and debate the nation-building process in Timor-Leste since 1999. In this context, nation-building in Timor-Leste is taken to mean the many different attempts since 1999 to ensure the political, economic and cultural integration of the population to fulfil the ambition of self rule.

Ten years after the 1999 vote for independence, this conference considered how nation-building is being experienced and responded to across urban and rural communities in Timor-Leste. Broadening the discussion beyond that of 'state-building', at the core of the conference was a consideration of the myriad ways the new republic has been 'built'. Here 'nation-building' considers not only in terms of policy and programmatic initiatives but also grass roots experiences and perceptions of how Timor-Leste as a nation is seen and understood. For this reason, the majority of participants were East Timorese representatives from across the districts, allowing them to share their stories of nation-building.

At this conference, nation-building was discussed in terms of what appears to be one of the most significant characteristics of contemporary Timor-Leste, namely the sharp distinction found between the urbanized capital and the rural communities where the majority of the population live. Dili has emerged as the centre for economic and political power in a way that is extraordinarily disproportionate with the remainder of the country, while rural areas often remain highly isolated and continue to be dominated by subsistence agriculture.

The distinction between the 'centre' and the 'periphery' is found in everyday discourse in Timor-Leste, where it is the norm for people to speak in oppositional terms about 'Dili' and the 'foho' (literally meaning mountain but used to refer to non-urban communities). The disparity in access to services— running water and electricity, communication networks, adequate roads and transport, schooling and health—are among the more obvious differences alongside a lack of access to paid work or opportunities for business development.

While acknowledging the sharp distinctions, the conference looked beyond assuming a straight forward urban/rural disconnect as participants sought to understand how this relationship impacts nation-building. This conference explored how rural communities have actively responded to the challenges of nation-building on their own terms. Secondly, the conference attempted to consider the ways in which the urban and the rural in Timor-Leste interconnect with one another, not just in terms of the movement of people or economic interaction, but also in terms of how national identity and culture is understood and projected. Most importantly, the conference provided a unique opportunity to hear the voices of East Timorese civil society.



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Foreword

This conference and report come at a landmark time in the history of our small nation. Ten years ago, on 30 August 1999, our people voted in a referendum for self-determination in the face of great challenges and in an atmosphere of fear and tension. Today, we are the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, one of the newest countries in the world. While we continue to face great challenges, we are also moving towards developing a strong democracy and a dynamic society.

In this context, I was honoured to present the opening keynote address at the Nation-Building in Timor-Leste across the Urban and Rural: Reflecting on Ten Years of Independence conference in Dili, July 2009. This conference brought people from our local communities together with those working at national and international levels to discuss issues related to nation-building in Timor-Leste. People attended from all districts of Timor-Leste, and many speakers from local communities spoke on panels together with representatives of civil society and government. Some people had to travel a long way to attend, and everyone took time from their lives and work to participate because they saw this important conference as a priority. These participants included people from many different countries around the world, some of whom I have known for many years, and who were with us during the 1970s, the most difficult time of our struggle. We welcome their contribution to the conference.

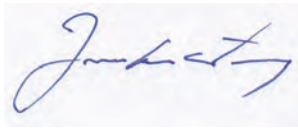
The questions considered by participants at the conference are crucial to how we develop together. What type of nation-building process do we want to work towards in the future? How can we better understand the relationship between the urban and the rural in Timor-Leste? How are issues such as health, infrastructure development, local governance, and security impacting on our local communities? What are the key considerations in contemporary debate around gender equality in Timor-Leste? There are no easy answers to these questions, however, they are deserving of our time and consideration, and our new nation greatly benefits from this lively debate. This contributes to the vision that people have for their country, for their community, and for their family.



Jose Luis Guterres

There was a key message that came out of this conference. We must develop the entire country, not only the towns and the places where the government is, but everywhere. When we talk about urban and rural areas, we must remember that many of us who are in Dili have come from the mountains. Our land, our birthplaces and our ancestors are in the mountains. Indeed, the majority of the population of Timor-Leste live in rural areas. The nation-building process in Timor-Leste needs to happen everywhere, not just in the cities or the towns that are growing quickly. This is hard work; it takes a lot of energy and resources. It must be done over the long term and with involvement of a wide range of people.

The future will not be easy, there will be challenges, but with our continued contributions together we can implement programs and establish a country that will make our heroes who died in the struggle for independence proud. The development of this country is not just in the government's hands, or in the hands of the state. It is up to all of us to contribute to nation-building.



Jose Luis Guterres
Vice Prime Minister, Timor-Leste

1. Introduction

In August 1999 the East Timorese population voted in a referendum for self-determination, the results of which had a momentous impact on the small half-island nation. Ten years on from that vote for independence, a group of 200 people gathered together in Dili to reflect on the process of nation-building in Timor-Leste over the last decade. The conference was held from 8 to 10 July 2009 at the St John Paul II Centre in Comoro; a beautiful setting on the western outskirts of Dili. As the conference's title suggests, the overall focus was on 'nation-building' in the context of the relationship between the 'urban and rural', particularly with a focus on the level of political and economic development of Dili in comparison to many other communities in Timor-Leste. Underpinning these two main themes were a set of sub-themes, namely gender, justice, peace and security, and development and governance.

The idea for a different kind of conference came originally from a very strong sense that many people in Timor-Leste have little opportunity to participate in debates that are affecting the development of their communities and nation. Public debate in Timor-Leste remains overwhelmingly dominated by either Dili-based elites or foreigners. In a very small way this conference sought to challenge this tendency by ensuring a space for East Timorese who have had limited opportunity to participate in public debate. As part of the attempt to do this, the conference aimed to limit to 25 per cent participants from countries other than Timor-Leste (both those attending and those presenting), and for half of the East Timorese attendees to be from communities beyond Dili. These limits were made in an attempt to ensure firstly that non-Timorese did not dominate while still having an opportunity to test their ideas in front of an East Timorese audience, and secondly to ensure a good representation of East Timorese from across different districts rather than just those living in the capital.

RMIT University's *Timor-Leste Research Program*, based across the Global Cities Institute and the Globalism Research Centre, made the decision to collaborate with local and international partners so as to open up the conference to a wider variety of participants. We considered it important to bring together those who are involved practically in the nation-building process with those whose work it is to research it. The aim then was to deliberately combine different ways of understanding nation-building and bring these into tension with one another. On the one hand, practitioners will often say that academics' work is too abstract. On the other hand, academics can feel frustrated by perceived lack of analysis from practitioners. This means that there can be awkward moments and tensions when the two come together, but we feel that this is better than having the two kept in isolation from one another. When we learnt that two other conferences may also be held at that time we considered withdrawing. However, on speaking with the organisers of the other conferences, we felt that the nation-building conference had a distinct enough set of objectives and approach that made the conferences complementary to one another.

RMIT's two principal partners were Australian Volunteers International (AVI), which facilitates the work of Australian volunteers with a range of local organisations throughout Timor-Leste, as well as the NGO Forum (or FONGTIL) in Dili, which is the 'umbrella' body for all non-government organisations in Timor-Leste. An application by these three organisations to AusAid resulted in the bulk of the conference funding. In addition, Charles Darwin University provided a range of important support functions, including successful applications to the Australia-Pacific Research Network and to Airnorth to help fund student participation from overseas, and Caritas Australia provided funding for travel to Dili for East Timorese participants, which was pivotal to the overall success of the conference. There were also a range of other organisations that gave support, such as the United Nations and Concern Worldwide, as well as different community groups and networks that sponsored the attendance of representatives.

The attempt to draw in East Timorese who had not necessarily attended a conference before meant that an enormous amount of work had to be undertaken face-to-face at a community level. In addition to television, the radio, internet and newspapers, it was imperative that the conference team could disperse information to some of the many communities that don't have access to such technologies and resources. As such, staff from AVI, FONGTIL and RMIT, and conference partners such as Caritas, ensured that information was dispensed in every district. In the earlier months of 2009, over 150 meetings were held with local organisations, networks and community groups across the country so as to ensure as large a representation as possible.

Registrations for the conference were collected during the socialisation process and right up to the conference, as were applications of those who wished to present. Of those who applied to present, 12 East Timorese were selected to attend four days of training in Dare in June 2009, a month prior to the conference. Training was provided on topics such as research skills, the structuring of arguments, the use of evidence, as well as presentation expertise. During the training, all presentations were extensively workshopped and every participant presented a shortened version of his or her paper. In addition, the training developed a sense of collegiality between the group as a whole and gave many of the presenters a chance to meet one another prior to the event.

The demographics of the panellists represented the true spirit of dialogue among all levels of the community as per the objectives of the conference. Of the 36 presenters in total more than half were women. There were 26 presenters from Timor-Leste, some of whom were presenting for the first time while others were far more experienced. The 10 non-Timorese presenters also came from a range of countries, including the USA, Brazil, Australia, Portugal and Scotland. Conference participants came from nearly 20 different countries, and organisational representation included international organisations and universities, the United Nations, as well as members of the East Timorese government and civil society.

The conference itself was organised into panels of three to four speakers who presented together on the same theme. These sessions were run either in plenary where all



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participants heard the one panel, or split between two panels running as simultaneous sessions. Each presentation was strictly limited in terms of its time so as to ensure that there were as many questions and discussion as possible, and this proved to be a very fruitful aspect of the conference. In addition to the panels, there were two sessions where conference participants broke into groups based on the conference themes. This was in an effort to provide all people with a chance to speak and share. Each group was asked to formulate a list of recommendations in relation to their theme. These ideas were presented back to the conference as a whole and elicited much discussion and debate. They are listed here in this report. The conference also saw the launch of reports, an exhibition of East Timorese paintings and photography, as well as stalls, music and dance.

The demographics of the panellists represented the true spirit of dialogue among all levels of the community.

This report was put together in the months following the conference. Each person who presented at the conference was given several invitations to write up their presentation for publication in this report. We greatly appreciate the many presenters who took up this opportunity, who despite heavy workloads and logistical challenges saw this report as a great opportunity to further share their ideas and experiences. All the articles in English, Portuguese, Tetun and Indonesian went through a formal editing process with assistance where required, with Januario Soares and Annie Sloman coordinating articles from Timor-Leste, and Damian Grenfell, Mayra Walsh and Victoria Stead assisting with articles from other countries. We have also included comments made by participants on their feedback sheets and the recommendations that came out of the conference workshops. In all, this was a time-consuming process, but one we feel was important. We hope that you find this report of value.

Damian Grenfell and Mayra Walsh, RMIT University



2. Conference papers

Establishing Safe Houses in Timor-Leste

Maria Zulmira Alves, Caritas Australia

Timor-Leste has been independent for only 10 years. As such, development programs that respond to gender-based violence are a priority issue for this nation. The area of work that Caritas Australia undertakes is to support the survivors of violence through three safe houses in the districts of Oecusse, Baucau and Suai, and one *fatin hakmatek* (or calm place) in Dili.

Caritas Australia, through the Community Peace Building and Family Violence Prevention Program, has had an opportunity to present and disseminate our experiences working on the safe houses that have been established through a small project called '*Apoiu ba Sobrevivente*', or 'Survivor Support'. This project was established as a response to gender-based violence issues. It promotes gender equality through the establishment of safe houses and 'calm places' to attend to the needs of survivors of gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence and domestic violence.

Caritas Australia's strategy involves working with partners so that the program is sustainable into the future. When Caritas Australia's work is finished, the partners can continue and can undertake the work themselves.

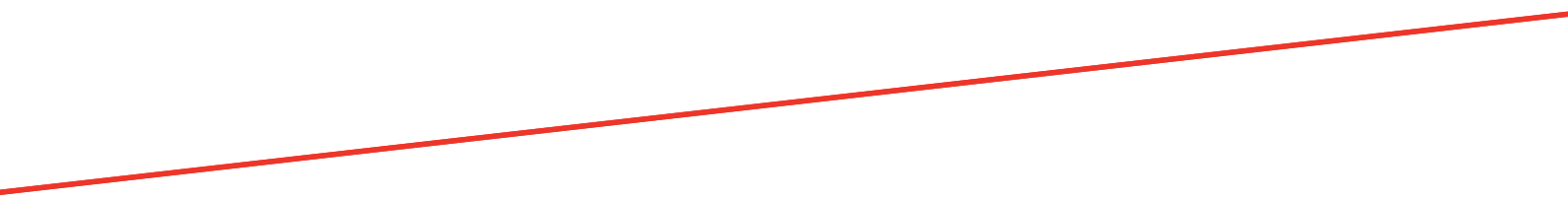
When Caritas Australia first began this project establishing safe houses, we started by conducting research in order to analyse the situation and to identify local partners who could be in charge of the safe houses. The results of this research identified four local partners including *Organizasaun Baucau Buka Hatene* (BBH) from Baucau, *Forum Peduli Wanita Oecusse* (FPWO) from Oecusse, *Madres Salele* in Suai and the *Fatin Hakmatek* (or Calm Place) run by PRADET in Dili. These partners all have experience working on gender-based violence issues in their own district and sub-district.

The victim support project provides operational funds to ensure that safe houses can provide communities with access to information through activities. These activities include, for example, producing and disseminating pamphlets that promote the safe houses, running talk shows on television and community radio in the districts, holding workshops and seminars that can deepen information provided to communities, and giving small financial support to survivors.

Caritas Australia has established a work network called Community Family Violence Prevention Network (CVPN) — Caritas Australia Partner. Caritas Australia has also established a referral network in



Maria Zulmira Alves



the districts that works together with the safe houses, stakeholders, Ministry of Solidarity (MSS), and the police's Vulnerable Person Unit (VPU) in order to create good referral mechanisms for cases and to prevent duplication of work on gender-based violence issues. This has occurred through regular meetings to share information and ideas, and coordinate work and appropriate support.

The safe houses are functioning well. However, the capacity of the program's partners needs to be extended. Presently they are focused on the functioning of the safe houses themselves. Skills regarding how to accompany survivors and provide counselling are also required. In order to facilitate this capacity building, in 2008 Caritas Australia took three of the safe house partners to attend a comparative study program in Jakarta, Indonesia. They conducted a visitation and received training on counselling techniques, creative communication, counselling traumatised survivors, and capacity development. The objective of this comparative study was to help increase their understanding, share experiences and develop courage to continue the work of the safe houses.

Caritas Australia's safe houses truly respond to the needs of survivors. Most of the cases involve sexual violence and domestic violence. The total number of cases dealt with through the safe houses in 2009 was 24. Through PRADET's *Fatin Hakmatek* another 115 cases were recorded in 2009. In the safe houses, victims of incest are most frequent, with suspects including fathers, uncles, cousins and grandparents. When survivors turn to the safe houses, many of them are already between three and seven months pregnant.

The safe houses attend to a survivor for a relatively short time, with the maximum period usually two weeks to one month. The survivors come from *suku* and *aldeia* in remote isolated areas that don't have access to information. Cases that are referred to the safe houses often come through the *xefe-suku* and *xefe-aldeia*, the VPU police and the victim's own family members who accompany them. This suggests that these communities are beginning to have courage to speak out about their problems and to find a solution. However, sometimes it is difficult when the suspect is a father who has done this to his own child.

The customary way to deal with such problems of violence is still used in some districts, taking the approach 'that it's better just to be quiet, if we take the case to court we will embarrass our family or the community will isolate the family'. The reasoning behind this is not to help the survivor, but actually to violate the rights of the survivor so they cannot speak out about their problem. Sexual violence and domestic violence cases are crimes and must be processed according to the legal system. Whoever is a suspect must be reported to the police so they can be arrested. When we tolerate the actions of the suspect, this means we are not valuing the dignity of women as human beings.

The work of the safe houses is an important part of contributing to the national development of Timor-Leste's support for victims. Caritas Australia is a non-governmental organisation that works to extend the work of the Timor-Leste government to promote and strengthen women's dignity and to provide assistance to victims through safe houses in districts and sub-districts. Work on gender-based violence issues is not just the responsibility of women, it also requires the participation and strong support of men, so that we can reduce the number of cases of violence against women. We need to work together to campaign for gender equality, to achieve justice, peace, security and good governance in Timor-Leste.

Nation-building and the 'Resurgence of Custom'

Susana Barnes¹

In this paper I would like to consider the nation-building process in Timor-Leste in the light of what some scholars and observers of Timor-Leste have called a 'resurgence of custom'.² I draw on ethnographic research conducted in the village of Babulo, Uatolari sub-district, Viqueque district to explore the values and beliefs underpinning 'customary' institutions in Timor-Leste and the potential implications of the continued importance of these institutions for the nation-building process.³ I acknowledge that anthropological research is by nature interpretative and microscopic. Therefore, a study of one particular locality or community cannot or should not be extrapolated to make statements about a whole group, people or a nation. However, when compared and contrasted with similar studies it helps us identify patterns of behaviour and enables us to reflect on broader issues.⁴

Since 1999, communities across Timor-Leste have been engaged in the process of rebuilding sacred houses which were destroyed or abandoned at the time of the Indonesian military invasion. Many individuals and families consider the ritual reconnection with their ancestors—through the laying to rest of the dead and disappeared, the rebuilding of symbolic structures such as the *uma lulik* (sacred house), and renewed participation in communal ceremonies—as an indispensable step towards restoring the 'proper order of things' after war and displacement. The time, effort and resources involved in rebuilding sacred houses is more than just the reaffirmation of self-esteem after centuries of colonialism and military occupation. It is the highly visible manifestation of a continued commitment



Susana Barnes

1 Susana Barnes is currently enrolled as a PhD candidate in Anthropology at Monash University, Australia. Research for this paper was undertaken as part of a National Australian University inter-disciplinary anthropological-legal study on customary land tenure systems in Timor-Leste. Her research interests are East Timor ethnography, customary land and resource tenures, ritual and religion, social transformation and state and society. Email: Susana.M.Barnes@arts.monash.edu.au

2 M. Anne Brown, 'Security, Development and the Nation-Building Agenda: East Timor', *Conflict, Security and Development*, vol. 9, 2009, pp. 141-164; David Hicks, 'Community and Nation-State in East Timor', *Anthropology Today*, vol. 23, 2007, pp. 13-16.

3 I would like to acknowledge the collaborative nature of this research and the invaluable assistance of key informants from the community of Babulo, and the hamlet of Darlari in particular. For a more complete description of origins, precedence and alliance in Babulo see Susana Barnes, 'Origins, precedence and the social order in the domain of the Mane Hitu', in McWilliam, Andrew and Traube, Elizabeth, eds, *Land and Life in East Timor*, ANU Press, Canberra, forthcoming.

4 Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* / by Clifford Geertz, Basic Books, New York, 1973.

to forms of sociality structured around 'house'⁵ membership and networks of alliance and reciprocal exchange among house members.⁶

Customary institutions are invariably entangled with *localised* understandings of social and spiritual order. Nevertheless, there are striking similarities to be found between the customary institutions described in this case study from Babulo and other communities across Timor-Leste.⁷ Particularly within rural communities, networks structured around house members provide the foundation upon which social relations are negotiated, contested and constructed. Almost 80 per cent of the population of Timor-Leste continue to live in rural areas, and rely upon various forms of subsistence agriculture as their principal livelihood strategy.⁸ In a political economy based on agriculture it is common for individuals and groups to have an interest in controlling the land. However, in a labour intensive subsistence environment, it is equally important to find ways of co-operating and sharing the land.⁹ In rural communities in Timor-Leste, then, status and the networks of sociality amongst house members are often inextricably linked to claims to land and natural resources.

In the community where I conducted fieldwork, individuals and families identify strongly with their house and continue to rely on networks of reciprocal exchange as a means of supporting their livelihoods. House membership generally consists of agnatically related male kinsmen, their in-married spouses and children. The focus of ritual relations among house members is the *uma lulik* (sacred house) in which ancestral sacra are stored. House membership entails a number of entitlements and obligations. Obligations range from dietary restrictions to the use of family names and the provision of goods and services to other house members, or related houses. Entitlements include the spiritual protection of the ancestors, access to land and natural resources, and the opportunity to draw on reciprocal relations in time of need.

Houses are related to one another either by kinship or marriage. Houses related by kin are classified as *kaka* (older) or *wari* (younger) in relation to one another. The members of 'older' houses are considered to be more closely related to the common ancestors of the group and therefore have authority over 'younger' houses. Houses related through marriage are classified as *oa-sae* or *uma ana* (wife-takers and wife-givers). Socially, wife-giver houses have a higher status than wife-takers on the basis that wife-givers are vital for the continuation of a wife-taker lineage. Marriage establishes a bond between two houses involving the reciprocal exchange of goods and services through time. Historically, marriage has also been used as a means of negotiating access to land and natural resources and forming political alliances between house groups.¹⁰

Members of diverse house groups living within *suku* Babulo acknowledge the claims of specific houses to 'origin' or 'first settlement' within a particular territory or domain. The eldest members of these 'origin' houses are sometimes referred to as *rea bu'u* (keeper of the land, or spirit of the land) or *bu dato* (grandfather lord). The 'keepers of the land' claim stewardship over areas of land and natural resources by virtue of their relation to the founder ancestors originally responsible for having 'controlled' or 'tamed' these resources. They are the highest ritual and moral authority in their domain, and their authority is sustained by their knowledge of the behavioural norms and ritual practices passed down from the ancestors from one generation to the next. These norms and practices regulate

5 The 'house' in Timor Leste is both 'a social construction and a ritualised focus for the articulation of social relations and exchange among house members', Andrew McWilliam, 'Houses of Resistance in East Timor: Structuring Sociality in the New Nation', *Anthropological Forum*, vol. 15, 2005, p. 28.

6 McWilliam, 'Houses of Resistance in East Timor'.

7 Susana Barnes, 'Origins, precedence and the social order in the domain of the Mane Hitu'.

8 *Results of the 2004 Census of Population and Housing*, Timor-Leste, National Statistics Directorate

9 Thomas Reuter, ed., *Sharing the Earth, Dividing the Land: Land and Territory in the Austronesian World*, ANU, Canberra, E-Press, 2006.

10 Susana Barnes, 'Origins, precedence and the social order in the domain of the Mane Hitu'.

all aspects of collective ritual relations within and between houses living on their ancestral lands. Elders describe the knowledge bestowed on them by their ancestors as both a privilege and a burden. Through this knowledge they have become the privileged intermediaries between the 'light' and 'open' world of the living and the 'dark', 'hidden' world of the ancestors. However, this knowledge also means they are bound to 'serve' the community—regardless of whether or not they receive its support in return—in order to ensure its continued protection and prosperity.

'External' or political authority in Babulo is embodied in members of the senior houses of an in-migrant warrior (*asuwain*) clan. Informants suggest that this clan emerged as political leaders in the area by threat of force and through strategic marriage alliances with local 'origin' houses. The jurisdiction of this group includes members of all houses pertaining to the *suku* of Babulo. Senior members of these houses describe their role in terms of local governance in relation to the state. In the past this entailed specific duties and responsibilities regarding the settlement of local disputes, the collection of taxes and the recruitment of labor for colonial or state programs. Today, candidates for the position of *xefe suku* continue to be drawn from houses belonging to this clan. People from the *suku* of Babulo continue to view the role of the *xefe suku* as intermediary between the local community and the state, and between the community and 'external' parties such as national or international non-governmental organisations.

Across Timor-Leste 'customary' relations and institutions have played a critical role in providing communities with a sense of stability and continuity in the post-independence environment. This has been particularly the case in rural areas, such as Babulo, where the presence of national level 'state' institutions has been weak, and where the legitimacy of local level 'state' actors is embedded in local or 'customary' institutions.¹¹ However, it would be incorrect to presume that the continued attachment to 'customary' practices and beliefs reflects an inherent conservatism within rural communities. 'Customary' institutions are contemporary manifestations of local practices and beliefs, and are also embedded within their wider social and political context. They are constantly being shaped by their dialectical engagement with 'new' values, beliefs and forms of sociality.

Despite the challenges of geography and communication rural communities are not completely isolated from national events. They display a deep commitment to participating in the nation-building process, which is exemplified by the high levels of turn out for 'official' visits, local and national elections, and by the willingness to participate in nation-wide programs such as the National Census. The resilience of 'customary' institutions—and continued attachment to the forms of sociality that these institutions give rise to—draws attention to the way in which shared values and beliefs serve to bind communities together. If the nation-building process in Timor-Leste is to be successful I would suggest that the national leadership must find ways of incorporating the positive values that underpin 'customary' institutions—such as service, mutual respect of societal norms, and social interdependency—into the institutions of the state. As one informant suggested, 'This is why we fought for our right to *ukun a'an* (self-determination). To manage our affairs according to our local customs and beliefs'.

11 David Hicks, 'Community and Nation-State in East Timor'; Tanja Hohe, 'The Clash of Paradigms: International Administration and Local Political Legitimacy in East Timor', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 569-589, 2002; Elizabeth G. Traube, *Cosmology and Social Life : Ritual Exchange Among the Mambai of East Timor*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1986.

The 'Nation-building across the Urban and Rural in Timor-Leste' conference provided a good opportunity to discuss my work experiences and to hear about the experiences of other nations. During the conference I also got ideas, feedback, and new suggestions regarding the preoccupations of my female and male colleagues, a vision for the future of safe houses, and a new strategy to respond to gender-based violence.

During the gender presentations we heard from presenters about the problems from local women's organisations, including from the districts. According to the experiences that were shared, women in rural areas in general think that gender is a foreign concept and gender is only about women. This suggests that some of our female colleagues in rural areas do not yet understand what gender is about. The preoccupations that were shared during presentations shows that women's development in rural areas is moving slowly compared to women's development in urban areas. It is true that women in rural areas have less access to information, and also fewer opportunities.

A significant benefit of the conference was that we could listen to the voices of women from rural areas, hear about their participation and the development of their understanding about the work being conducted in the area of gender. The presenters explained about the difficulties and the realities of their everyday lives in their districts and also in Dili. From this we could look for a way that we can work together to create and provide good opportunities for women in rural areas.

One part of the conference was focused on the Timor-Leste government, suggesting that in order to strengthen development in rural areas we must fix the roads, bridges, electricity and clean water, and these projects can become part of the government's program so that those communities can play a part in the national development of Timor-Leste in the future.

It is hoped that in the future Timor-Leste will consider the ideas and principles identified during the discussions so that gender equality is promoted even further. It must be assured that women and children will have protection, support, and maximum attention from the government and civil society so that gender-based violence issues are dealt with in an atmosphere that protects people's independence and restores their dignity.

Maria Zulmira Alves, Caritas Australia

I strongly congratulate all involved. The ability for people to ask questions and have opportunities to express their views, issues and suggestions has been a highlight. I also felt each speaker and subject matter was given enough time for the participants to gain important insights and learnings.

Participant

Very good combination of 'academic' papers and 'grass-roots' input. I especially valued the strong representation from NGOs and the districts.

Participant

Make available to participants copies of speakers' presentations. This will enable greater listening and avoid 'writers cramp'.

Participant

Nation-building across Rural and Urban Timor-Leste: The Formation of Political Community

M. Anne Brown¹²

One of the challenges for westerners such as myself talking about nation-building in Timor-Leste is that it demands reflection on ourselves. It requires us to think more deeply about what political community means, and about the models of the state and of state-building practice that the international community are promoting, not only in Timor-Leste, but across the world. These are questions we all need to confront and we have vital things to learn from each other.

There has been an extraordinary effort on the part of educated East Timorese and the international community to build a progressive, modern state in Timor-Leste. This effort has focused almost entirely on ‘the machinery of government’: a bureaucracy but also a formal legal system, an electoral system and so on. While a good bureaucracy is important, this focus overlooks something profoundly significant, and may in the process unintentionally deepen divisions within the country. What is overlooked are the relationships between government and society which actually make up national political community. Many of the ideals embedded in the idea of a modern state, or a participatory, accountable political community, are effects of the relationships *between* government, social institutions and people. It is not ‘in’ government, or law and formal regulation alone, that accountability is possible, that political norms and ethics take root, that legitimacy is established, or that a more inclusive participation beyond that offered simply by elections becomes possible. A political community is much more than the machinery of government, just as law and justice are much more than police, courts and a body of laws.

In Timor-Leste state-building practices have approached the state as a set of structures that can be delivered, like a product. There is an important role for institutional transfer, and much that Timor-Leste can learn from the accumulated experience of others concerning state operation. Nevertheless, the complex networks of social practice and exchange that underpin democracy and legitimacy are not reducible to products that can be delivered and expected simply to work. When the state is reduced to a set of key institutions and the relationships that make up political community or nation are overlooked, state-building becomes a ‘technical’ exercise undertaken by experts instead of being the heart of politics—politics as the slow, difficult processes by which



Anne Brown

¹² M. Anne Brown is a Senior Research Fellow at the Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Queensland, and a member of the International Society for Science and Religion.

people work on how to live together. A gulf is created between government and its new, technical version of social order, and the forms of authority and values underpinning communities. This weakens potential for participation and representation and erodes the legitimacy and effectiveness of government.

While the focus of state-building in Timor-Leste has been on central institutions, these institutions have little capacity for outreach beyond Dili and often little connection with community governance practices operating on the ground. Formal state-building processes have largely overlooked the role of customary and community life as sources of governance, order and meaning. Intensified devolution processes have been planned to counter centralisation and strengthen links between government and population. This is an important development, but the challenge will be in how devolution operates in practice, and whether it works from the understanding that local culture is 'backward' and must be ignored or grasps it as a form of participation and meaningful order to be engaged.

While state-building has been underway in Dili, in rural areas the governance provided by extended family structures and other community and customary structures continues to form the basis for much social order, food security, and local justice processes. There has been a vigorous resurgence of cultural practices, evident in the rebuilding of *uma luliks* and the negotiation of *tarabandus*. The *uma luliks* (sacred houses), referring to both the actual buildings and the extensive clan networks, are one of the primary sources of order. The process of re-building the physical *uma lulik* brings together hundreds of people across the extended family, and involves laying to rest those who died during the past decades and re/building relationships within the clan. This is one way that people are endeavouring to make peace with the world—to make the path back to order, to deal with the heavy burden of the past, to restore community. This is peace-building and needs also to be understood as potentially a fundamental element of nation-building in Timor-Leste.

The resurgence of *tarabandus*, a local compact governing relations between people and between people and nature, provides an example of the flexible, pragmatic and dynamic nature of customary forms, as some regions have used them to respond creatively to local social, economic and environmental problems. *Tarabandus* are also an area where there has been constructive interaction between government agencies and local communities concerning resource management in some regions. Bureaucracy is very important at this juncture because it is often local bureaucrats, or local NGOs, who are undertaking the practical linking between formal government and community practices. Decentralisation policies have underlined the need for the central line departments



Conference launch. Damian Grenfell and Jose Luis Guterres, Vice Prime Minister, Timor-Leste.



Registration

and the new municipal departments to work together to manage complex local issues. Perhaps this could be a three-way exchange, drawing in not only the newly-structured local governments but also customary authorities. There is great potential for slow, messy but creative interaction between different governance mechanisms, even though they can also conflict. This process of exchange, however, needs to be acknowledged and worked with.

Customary approaches are often criticised as narrow, patriarchal and non-egalitarian. They can be all those things. They are, however, widespread and widely understood practices embodying forms of social, political and ethical community that make sense to people. As such, to exclude them is an act of disenfranchisement that is unlikely to open a path towards liberal institutional models of political community. Customary practices that are damaging towards women, for example, should not be ignored but engaged. The resurgence and reshaping of custom shows people rebuilding their own communities. Processes of customary governance in communities are far from enough upon which to build a state or a national political community in the contemporary world. Forms of customary governance are developed around and best suited to smaller groups; the cultural forms which such governance processes take vary considerably across the country; there are traditional practices that need to be challenged; and a modern state ultimately involves a fundamentally different structure. Nevertheless, the process of building a political community that works for people, and which has stability, involves engaging with people's sense of meaning, order and value.

Despite the prominence of electoral processes in the new state architecture, the marginalisation of community governance and value systems weakens the potential for participation, accountability and the linkages between government and population upon which democratic, or just legitimate government turns. State-building efforts that leave aside local cultural forms of governance may be unintentionally undermining social cohesion and introducing new forms of division and disenfranchisement. The danger is that this will build at best a technocratic, authoritarian state, rather than a democratic, participatory one.

The relationships that will make up an East Timorese democracy are still taking shape. Customary practices, which shape significant dimensions of life for much of the population, need to be part of this, even if to be argued with. This need not be a matter of changing structures, but of undertaking the slow, difficult but essential work of building strong connections between different forms of governance, exchange between different value frameworks, and bridges between government and communities. In this way the process of state-building will be the process of building a shared political community.

Gender and Nation-building

During 10 years of independence, East Timorese women have organised themselves and transformed into groups and organisations that situate themselves in the Women's Network (*Salurik Rede Feto*). The women's network has 18 member organisations. The members contribute to the nation-building process through the programs and projects they run on education, politics and social-economics.

East Timorese women use strong advocacy tools. One of these tools is the Platform of Women's Action, and this occurred through the Women's National Congress that has already been conducted three times. The first congress was run in July 2000, the second in July 2004, and the third congress was run in September 2009. There were representatives from women members of *suku* councils, members of women's networks, women who work in agriculture, young women, veteran women, disabled women, businesswomen, civil society and women activists.

Some of the results from the first congress were a quota requiring that 30 per cent of parliamentarians must be women, a draft domestic violence law, national women's day and women representatives on the *suku* councils, in government and the private sector. The results of the platform of action from the Women's National Congress became the key for implementing advocacy that influences the politics of the government and other institutions.

The participation of women in national development is important for nation-building. This nation can say it is prosperous when it achieves equality.

Gizela de Carvalho, Feto iha Kbiit Servisu Hamutuk



Gizela de Carvalho

Invaluable experience. Some of the translations were vague and the essence of some questions were not captured. Very well organised with a great mix of presenters. Very current and applicable information.

Participant

I welcomed the many first-hand accounts from the districts. The State and Church appeared to be absent from the conference and would have liked to see both and hear of the good and bad which people are experiencing. Thought the main moderator Fernando was excellent.

Participant

This was an excellent conference because it was Timorese led, or at least had high Timorese participation. As a researcher I learnt a lot from all sessions, particularly Timorese opinions about governance. The gender debates are still a bit stagnant though. Could have more of an emphasis on rights. How to implement Government of TL's commitment to rights.

Participant

National Identity Gives Soul to Nation-building

Fernando da Costa, Dili

National development in Timor-Leste necessitates critical questioning. When we want to move past a range of challenges in this era of globalisation we must begin by asking ourselves: who are we as a nation? And what do we, as people of Timor-Leste, want to achieve? This article is an effort to respond to these two questions, and also investigate how the nation-building process can progress. This article will focus particularly on three important ideas. First it will look at the initial creation of the name Timor, followed by a discussion of 'maubere', and finally it will talk about the Tetun language. This article will apply a cultural perspective, particularly using the Cultural Diamond method that notes a link between four things: first, cultural objects as symbols, beliefs, principles and practices; second, creators of culture as organisations or institutions that produce or distribute cultural objects; third, recipients of culture as people who are impacted by their experience of cultural objects; and finally, the social world as the context of cultural creation and cultural customary experience.¹³ According to Griswold's explanation, the Cultural Diamond method holds that these four corners are inextricably linked. This method is based on cultural sociology theory. This article is limited to analysis of the creation of identity that was formed from the Portuguese colonial time until now.



Fernando da Costa

'Timor' Identity

The basis of national identity is a collective feeling of belonging to a specific nation, with its own symbols, traditions, sacred places, ceremonies, heroes, history and territory.¹⁴ This is an important idea that encourages us to know about the birth and existence of Timor. We can ask, what makes us Timorese? What is the spirit of Timorese society? However, we must begin with the question that asks what is this name 'Timor', and how has it been used until now?

If we use the Cultural Diamond logic to explain the creation of the name Timor the creator established the name Timor as a cultural object. This cultural object has been transmitted to everyone inside this territory who are active recipients of this cultural object. The context of the formation of Timorese identity is the interaction between Timorese inside the territory with people from other countries. This interaction with people from other countries confirms one's identity as a Timorese person. Before everyone

¹³ G. Wendy, *Culture and Societies in a Changing World*, Thousand Oaks, Pine Forge Press, California, 1994.

¹⁴ M. Guibernau, *Nation Formation and National Identity*, btng, rbhc, vol. xxxiv, no. 4, 2004, pp. 657-682.

used the name Timor, there already existed a strong culture based on different ethnicities including Mambae, Makasae, Bunak, Kemak, Tetun, Galolen and others. Each of these lived as separate social groups. They produced cultural significance or cultural objects that were limited to their own group. These social groups form what some people say is a nation that expresses a shared common feeling, history, culture, and also share leadership power.

Roger H. Soltau's definition explains that a nation is an instrument whose function is to regulate communal problems on behalf of the population.¹⁵ This definition shows that ethnic groups that regulate themselves as communities can be categorised as nations. According to a different definition, these social groups should be called ethnic groups. However, Timor's experience shows that these social groups are more than ethnic groups. The reason for this is that the social groups that exist in Timor have rules that regulate relations among people internally, and they also have a person who is responsible for those rules. They also have regulations for people themselves to manage their relationship with natural resources and the environment, a person who holds a political position and speaks to different social groups, and on top of this they have someone who governs everything that has been discussed above (such as a *liurai*—king). When the ethnic line is opened up to another ethnic group, for example a Mambae person marries a Makasae person, they also create further regulations for this relationship. These relationships tie together peoples customs from one ethnic or social group to another. According to this idea we can categorise the nation at that time as including primordial and cultural ways of thinking. Small nations are tied together through language, sacred objects, marriage relations, sacred places and other regulations.

When business people came from Portugal, China and Indonesia and missionaries and the Portuguese military entered Timor, social interactions between people who lived within the territory called Timor increased. These increasing interactions enriched the culture and complicated internal relations in each social group. However, it must be recognised also that national sentiment in some ethnic groups continued to exist, some of this sentiment was lost, some of it was adapted, some was born anew in line with the changes of the time, situation and social interactions. The communal sense of being a Timorese person was strengthened during the Portuguese times, occurring through war, conflict and education. Other developments that occurred include the names Timor-Leste, Timor Portugal and *Timor-Timur*. The changes to the name show the existence of power and influence that cultural creators make through ideas that change indigenous peoples consciousness.

¹⁵ M. Budiarto, *Dasar-dasar ilmu politik*, Pt. Gramedia Pustaka Utama, Jakarta, 2001.



Conference audience



Dance Group Le-Ziaval

‘Maubere’ Identity

Social, economic and political change produces new creators and new cultural principles. Political change in Portugal, the Carnation Revolution, opened up an opportunity for the creation of anti-imperialist culture inside Timor-Leste. Consciousness regarding self-determination was shared through different political socialisation processes. An important cultural object in the struggle for independence was the concept of ‘maubere’. The concept of *maubere* was created by Fretilin to refer to the people of Timor-Leste living under colonial and imperial oppression. According to Barbedo Magalhaes, *maubere* is a Polynesian word.¹⁶ *Mau* means person, *bere* means big, so read together it means ‘big person’. In the Mambae language, *mau* means ‘man’ and *bere* means ‘right’ or ‘correct’, so together it is ‘right man’. However, the history of the struggle states that this concept was used by the Portuguese as an insulting term to suggest that Timorese are ‘uncivilised and ignorant’ people. Before 1975, Timor-Leste’s people removed this negative meaning and used the term *maubere* as a symbol of resistance. Finally, the *maubere* concept was popularised through Fretilin who sought to defend the struggle for independence. Fretilin took this concept and used it to dignify East Timorese workers who served Portuguese and Chinese bosses. That the *maubere* people left the leadership of their colonial and imperialist employers signifies that their conscience was liberated into a self-determination consciousness.

The context of the creation of *maubere* itself is very valuable because many people feel within themselves that the term *maubere* truly reflects a society of people who have suffered. The *maubere* concept was eventually institutionalised in the *Conselho Nacional da Resistencia Maubere* (The National Council of Maubere Resistance). This term has overcome ethnic barriers, particularly in terms of language. For example, both Makasae and Mambae people use the term *maubere* to refer to themselves during the struggle. It has also overcome religious barriers. Even Catholic, Muslim and Protestant people use this term without a problem. For the new generation, the term has overcome political party barriers because members of both Apodeti and UDT do not have a problem using this concept.

The creation of cultural objects remains strong and secure when it faces strong resistance from cultural opponents. Opposition to the *maubere* concept did not only come from Indonesia, but also from within Timor-Leste itself. One example is the UDT party’s opposition to the name CNRM. However, the *maubere* concept remained significant and continued to grow in the consciousness of the individual. Each person in Timor-Leste who participated in the struggle for independence gives significance to this concept.

‘Tetun’ Identity

Another important part of our identity that ties us with our lives from year-to-year is the Tetun language. Tetun is a variation of the word *tetu*. The meaning of *tetu* is to be balanced, of which the plural is *tetun*. The creator of this cultural object, Tetun, was a collective group whose origin is Tetun-Terik and Tetun-Belu. Some anthropologists have said that this language was also the king of Wehali’s language. Tetun language is a cultural object which adapts well to its recipients. Interaction with business people from Java, Maluku, and China has further developed the Tetun vocabulary. Utilisation of Tetun language became even more popular when the church popularised the language through their ritual ceremonies. However, before this, Fretilin had already popularised Tetun through literacy education in the bush. Tetun became the language that all East Timorese use in meetings, political correspondence, campaigns, music and history. The development of Tetun through the struggle for independence

16 A. Arenas, ‘Education and Nationalism in East Timor’, *Social Justice*, vol. 25, 1998.

became an identity that made East Timorese different from Indonesians.

Since independence, Tetun has continued to be an important language in Timor-Leste. Tetun is praised in the RDTL Constitution as the national and official language, together with Portuguese. On the other hand, we can see that after the 2006 crisis, the influence of Tetun was strengthened. Speaking fluent Tetun could save your life during a crisis such as in 2006. Tetun served as a means of security at that time as its use meant that people didn't know who was *lorosa'e* (from the east) or *loromonu* (from the west).

A study by Hattori, Gomes, Ajo and Belo regarding the ethno-linguistic situation in Timor-Leste shows how different languages are used in Timor-Leste.¹⁷ According to their results, the Catholic Church uses Tetun and some dialects as their liturgical language. In the education system, schools use mainly Tetun and Indonesian to teach, however, they also sometimes use local languages and Portuguese. This is compared with government whose official documents mainly use Portuguese and some Tetun.¹⁸ To add to the results of this study, we can see that Tetun is dominant in the local media, however, there is also some in Indonesian, Portuguese and English.

Even though Tetun is used in all institutions, priority is still given particularly to the development of Portuguese language, especially within the government. Political documents, law and a range of administrative correspondence are written in Portuguese. Tetun remains of secondary use in public communication. This often makes it difficult for young people to advance their knowledge, talents and authority. Insufficient investments into Tetun language development threaten the national identity of the East Timorese nation now and in the future.

Strengthening the Nation

Formally we are already independent. But what is the fundamental spirit of this independence? This is the principle question of nation building. When there is an international intervention in a country that does not yet have a state, international institutions, particularly the United Nations, apply general concepts from one place to another. Often they apply neo-liberal values which gives particular attention to liberal democracy and economic development. The nation that the international institutions want to create is a nation that is the same as what they have 'painted' already on their map. So the interventions are often measured by things such as establishing systems for domestic political institutions that are



AVI and FONGTIL staff at the conference



Display of goods by local organisations

17 R. Hattori, M. Gomes, F. Ajo and N. Belo, 'The Etnolinguistic Situation in Timor-Leste', *International Graduate Student Conference Series*, no. 20, 2005.

18 *ibid.*

secure, democratic, responsible, transparent, effective and efficient.¹⁹ Their presence in Timor-Leste is also as the creator of a new culture for the nation and the state. They have created a culture like that in other countries and tried to introduce it in Timor-Leste.

The nation-building process that exchanges an old system and replaces it with a new system both technically and socially will have a social and political impact. When we accept the establishment of systems for modern political institutions often we attempt to deny ethnic social capital that for many years has been maintained with harmony by people who have managed their relations with one another. We just trust that the creation of a modern nation, with its occidental systems, is like a medicine that helps to progress everyone's lives in the nation-building process. We treat the process of gaining independence as an illness that needs to be cured with the medicine of democracy, law and order.

The fundamental principle of nation-building is building community; not individual communities just in the *suku* or *aldeia*, but a community in the nation. In the case of Timor-Leste we are 'building a nation' and 'strengthening a nation' at the same time. The nation was already constructed during the struggle for independence. It is not, however, complete. This nation is not just imagined, as Anderson suggests in his thesis *Imagined Community*.²⁰ Thus we attempt to further strengthen the nation that has been constructed in order to securely establish social, political and economic change. Even more important in the nation-building phase is to continue to share with each other what ties and binds East Timorese to each other. This includes our identity as *maubere*, Tetun language and other cultural practices.

Conclusion

Timor-Leste, *maubere* and Tetun are the soul of the nation. These three things are linked in terms of history, society, culture and politics. Often people interpret national identity as merely political action, thus not really placing importance on the impact that strong national identity can have on economic development. National identity provides light to the process of strengthening the state and developing the economy. A nation-state that doesn't have a national identity is like 'a blind horse' that knows how to walk but doesn't know where it is going.

Djafar, an author from *The Jakarta Post*, writes that 'national identity gives motivation, and becomes a catalyst for a national development process that is clear and has uniform objectives.'²¹ National identity helps to break down cultural barriers between social groups, ethnicities and religions. Thus national identity helps to break down discrimination, reduce inequality and open up opportunities. These are fundamental questions for national development. It is very important that there is public space, such as conferences or public discussions, to begin to think and seek to understand what can unify all East Timorese.

One's identity as an East Timorese person that was created and has been developed over many years cannot just be forgotten. Identity as an East Timorese person, as *maubere* and as someone who speaks Tetun is fundamentally important to the nation-building process. This argument is a rebuttal of Josh Trindade's argument, outlined in his report, that the construction of identity based on the resistance was a contentious matter in the 2006 crisis.²² Identity that was developed during the resistance time and other types of positive social identity are the 'soul' of our identity in the time

19 A. Belloni, 'Rethinking Nation Building: The Contradiction of Neo-Wilsonian Approach to Democracy Promotion', *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, Winter/Spring 2007.

20 B. Anderson, 'Imagining East Timor' *Arena*, April-May 1993, pp.23-27.

21 Budi Akmal Djafar, 'National Identity, Prerequisite for Growth', *The Jakarta Post*, 24 September 2009.

22 J. Trindade, *An Ideal State for East Timor: Reconciling the Conflicting Paradigms*, 2007.

of independence. Universal principles such as democracy are also important, however, are not as significant as traditional principles that must be given a place. Many nations have become unstable nations because the positive principles from their traditions were not given a place in the new modern government. Timor needs to preserve and unite traditional and modern principles so they can coexist throughout the continuing nation-building process.

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Challenges of Building a New Nation

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Like the world knows, Timor-Leste overcame a process of struggling for independence over a long time. The process was decided through a referendum during which East Timorese, and the whole world, lacked certainty with regards to the concept of 'accept or reject special autonomy'. This was the voting choice offered by the Republic of Indonesia President B.J. Habibie for the referendum, as approved in New York through the UN Security Council on 5 May 1999. It was called the Tripartite Agreement between Indonesia and Portugal, with the UN as mediator. East Timorese themselves didn't know what would happen when they rejected special autonomy or chose independence. The majority of East Timorese concentrated on working on the campaign for how to win independence in the referendum.

Having just achieved success in the referendum, Timor-Leste faced a new situation that significantly affected the community's life. The UN mission received responsibility for preparing the new government of Timor-Leste. While the UN controlled the process its ability to fulfill this task is questionable. East Timorese themselves did not know what the UN was doing, or how to form the new East Timorese government, and especially how to use the foreign languages in circulation, understood only a little.

Timor-Leste entered a difficult situation with many types of problems that defied its development as a sovereign country. Some of the problems that can be identified here include that all basic infrastructure was either damaged or not functioning, infiltration of pro-autonomy militia, insufficient human resources in all sectors, the problem of reintegrating ex-Falintil, difference of ideas between leaders from old and new generations, the marginalisation of the young generation in terms of language, and a mentality of corruption, collusion and nepotism that has carried on from the former machine of the Indonesian state. I will discuss these problems in this article.

The impact of lack of basic infrastructure has meant that all activities are centralised in Dili, from access to education, health and employment. The districts began with nothing. Rural communities had difficulty finding money, sometimes not obtaining a single dollar in a whole month. There were also problems regarding the infiltration of pro-autonomy militia from 1999 until 2001 who made the mobilisation of employment opportunities in rural areas difficult so communities continued to live in traumatic situations.



Henrique Cesario da Costa

The problem of scarce human resources can be seen in the example of health. There are not enough doctors, nurses or midwives sufficient to attend to the patients. In rural areas mothers and children die because they don't receive sufficient health treatment. In the education sector, there are not enough school teachers who are prepared to teach students in Portuguese. There are difficulties for school teachers regarding teaching education material well. Even further, when the UN mission in Timor-Leste worked from 1999 until 2000, the World Bank wanted to establish basic or primary education and did not give importance to education from pre-secondary to university. The World Bank's position at that time was unjust, and forced young East Timorese to show once again their spirit of nationalism in order to establish pre-secondary education using just a diploma model, and universities with only an undergraduate bachelor degree. A volunteering initiative eventually began and finally the UN mission, through the World Bank, recognised and supported this.

Beyond education, there are many other problems. In the agriculture sector, much of the agricultural land wasn't well utilised by the farmers because there was insufficient technical support and there were no processes to sell local agricultural produce. The ex-Falintil problem began with the formation of the Timor-Leste Defence Force (F-FDTL) in Aileu in 2000. Some of the ex-Falintil members and commanders, although they had already been selected, chose to leave because many of their other comrades were not chosen to enter the regular forces.

Difference of ideas between leaders from the old generation also created big challenges for Timor-Leste's nation-building process. Sharp words were used in opposing one another such as the concept 'guerrilla or traitor'. These became a weapon for the separate sides to argue each of their concepts regarding building a new nation. This also showed up between leaders of the 1975 political parties who opposed one another. Difference of ideas between Xanana and Fretilin leaders was very strong when the Fretilin party discussed their opinions on nation-building. This increased when Fretilin removed their seats from the Council of National Timorese Resistance (CNRT) on 9 August 2000 which was fundamental in establishing the concept of separating out the Group of Exclusive Diaspora, and the Group of Guerrillas and In-country Resistance. Different policy ideas between leaders of the old generation resulted in a dark history for Timor-Leste between 2006 and 2008 that seriously affected the social economic life of East Timorese people and will not be forgotten from generation to generation.

Problems relating to language have resulted in young people being marginalised from the nation-building process in Timor-Leste. As everyone knows, during the occupation the majority of East



Discussion group formulating conference recommendations



Report back from group work on recommendations

Timorese received an education using Indonesian language (and some did not manage to complete their study because of their participation in the struggle for independence). Since independence, a problem of marginalisation has occurred depending on what language is spoken. Social injustice and discrimination between East Timorese also impacts the economic opportunities for groups of people.

Beginning with the East Timorese public administration process, the majority of East Timorese people who have the opportunity to work are those who are like the old machine from the Indonesian occupation, that are acquainted with working in the public sector. During Indonesian times, maladministration practices such as corruption, collusion and nepotism became like a tradition that was planted and grew within the old machine. Since independence these old machines are functioning again in the public sector to accelerate public administration work across all sectors. Those mentalities of bad administration, such as corruption, collusion and nepotism, are increasingly practiced in workplaces. In a context where systems for controlling and inspecting work that are weak and unable to detect cases of bad administration, such practices are sustained and reinforced. When such problems are detected nothing is done to change the situation because political influence serves to protect these bad administrative practices. This occurs through direct and indirect action from the leaders who seek to defend their political positions that could be undermined by the revealing of malpractice.

Based on the negative experiences of the old machine, in the real context of Timor-Leste we can see that there are cultural aspects which advantage bad administrative practices. This can be seen in traditional ceremonies that demand men (husbands) use their salaries. Women (wives) also in some situations demand their husbands to practice mal-administration so that they can attend to their lifestyle and cultural ceremonies.

These problems have been big challenges for the process of building the new nation of Timor-Leste from 1999 until 2009. Problems such as these enhance social injustice and social-economic marginalisation for East Timorese people. This can open up the possibility of national instability for Timor-Leste as a sovereign nation, which could then lose its confidence as a member of the international community.

If using simultaneous translations, they must be good. Perhaps to help translators, all presenters need to give scripts to translators to at least tip them off regarding the direction of talk. Presenters need to be coached to go slower for translators.

Participant

I think there is an opportunity to build on the analytical side of presentations in the future rather than simply focusing on descriptive presentations of the issues. I really enjoyed attending this conference and very much appreciated the huge effort put in to integrate a range of participants.

Participant

Working Together with Local Leaders to Strengthen Community

Francisco da Cunha, Caritas Australia

The 2006 crisis that occurred in Timor-Leste is an important lesson for East Timorese to be brave in the way they approach the post-conflict nation-building process. This crisis resulted in the destruction of many things that had been built. It also left us all with sadness as we witnessed the actions that tore apart our collective results from nation-building. At the same time, good opportunities appeared before us to undertake creative interventions to provide solutions or responses to this crisis.

Caritas Australia, through their program *Hari'i Dame* (Peace Building), decided to work with local leaders (*xefe-suku*) in Dili district to reinforce their capacity to strengthen each of their communities and promote practical action to strengthen community, resolve conflict and build peace from within their own community. The work undertaken involved reinforcing the local leader's capacity to strengthen their community and promote practical actions towards strengthening communities in ways that come from the community itself.

The work mechanism that was used involved making an assessment of eight *suku* in order to choose a positive and negative *suku*, through the use of a survey that involved the *suku* counsel, *lia nain* (keepers of the word), youth and representatives of women and men. After the assessment we chose two *suku* with which to run a dialogue so the community could look for their own mechanisms to strengthen local peace. Once this was completed the Caritas program sent the *xefe-suku* to conduct a comparative study tour in Indonesia so they could receive training, do visitation and make direct comparisons on the ground about the training that they were running. Upon return from Indonesia we also supported the *suku* with a small amount of funding so that they could implement their mechanisms for peace building that they had decided during the *suku* dialogue. The peace building mechanisms that were implemented were run by the communities themselves and their focus was on the capacity of young people.

This program also established a network to run monthly meetings during which information is shared and progress of each of the activities is checked. The results of this program have been that small projects have been run in 16 *suku* that are focused on peace building among youth at the *suku* level. Also 36 young people have attended training about administration and finance so they can support the administrative systems of the *suku*. To further reinforce the capacity of local leaders a training was facilitated about leadership, motivating the community, peace building and conflict resolution. Finally there was a forum established so that local leaders, particularly the *xefe-suku* and *suku* council members, can meet together on a monthly basis to discuss and exchange ideas, and this space provides a place for them to advocate for supporting their other colleagues.



Francisco da Cunha

The Past and Future of Justice in Timor-Leste

Chiquito da Costa Guterres, Secretariado Post-CAVR

Transitional justice is a term that academics use for activities that attempt to respond to human rights violations which have occurred widely and systematically in a nation. Usually we hear this term in the context of nations that have recently come out of a period of conflict such as Timor-Leste. For 25 years Timor-Leste lived through a period of political and armed conflict. This began with the internal conflict between Fretilin, Timor-Leste Democratic Union (*Uniao Democratica Timor-Leste*—UDT) and other parties and was quickly transformed into an international conflict when Indonesia invaded Timor-Leste on 7 December 1975. The occupation of Timor-Leste ended in 1999 when Indonesian troops left the territory and United Nations forces arrived.

In the first year of the Indonesian invasion of Timor-Leste there was a large military campaign that resulted in the murder of many civilians. After 1982 there were not many military operations like previously, however, Indonesian intelligence, military and police used violence, intimidation and torture to destroy East Timorese people's hope for independence. When the Indonesian troops left Timor in 1999 they and their groups (militia) undertook a program of destruction and violence throughout Timor. This program included forced relocation of many civilians from Timor-Leste to West Timor.

The new East Timorese nation had to begin from nothing, creating new state institutions, re-establishing infrastructure, building social relations, planting food and raising animals in the aftermath of the destruction caused by the Indonesian regime in 1999. After the emergency phase, the leaders began to think about how to once again strengthen the destroyed relationships through reconciliation and establishing justice processes for past crimes as a way to prevent further conflict between East Timorese. People began to think about how to cure the wounds that East Timorese had experienced.

Timor-Leste is a nation in transition. During the Indonesian occupation, the military was the strongest, soldiers who committed crimes were not punished, people had no freedom to speak their mind. Now it is a democratic nation in which the people choose their representatives and East Timorese themselves are leading the government.

The transition process of 10 years saw many challenges. Perhaps it was difficult for people to trust the state because during the Indonesian times the state was responsible for violating their rights. Perhaps people felt frustrated because the members of the Indonesian regime who were involved in murdering their families are still free. Perhaps the victims feel that they need justice. Perhaps



Chiquito da Costa Guterres

people are afraid to look into the past because they think this could create new problems. Transitional justice is the way to help resolve problems of the past.

Transitional Justice

Transitional justice attempts to help victims of violations who are injured and to build a nation that promotes non-violence, reconciliation and a culture of peace. The main objective of transitional justice is to prevent further conflict. This can include activities such as seeking the truth about the conflict, providing reparations or helping the victims of human rights violations, investigating criminals who violated people's rights, and building the capacity and formation of state institutions to prevent further abuse of power in the future.

Before victims and suspects can reconcile, before a case of crime against humanity can be taken to the tribunal, and before the state can create policy to end conflict and establish peace, the truth must be known about the conflict and the human rights violations that occurred. We must know what happened, who suffered and who was responsible for the violation. At the base level, people want to know for example: who tortured their family? Why did they conduct this torture? And how does the suspect feel about their behaviour? Can they accept each other or not? At the national level, the government needs to know how and why violations occurred so that they can make concrete decisions about stopping these violations happening again. So it can be said that often after a conflict, an investigation into the violations in order to find the truth is the first step in the transitional justice strategy.

Finding the truth about the conflict is also important so that people, in the future, cannot lie about what happened in the past. For example, the Indonesian military continue to say that they did not do anything wrong in Timor and also that in 1999 they did not support the militia. We all know that this is not right, so it is important to conduct research and develop documentation so that in the future new generations of East Timorese and Indonesians can understand what is accurate regarding their own history.

Searching for the truth must be an ongoing process. It may be said that research or other initiatives that look for information about the East Timorese political conflict represent part of the truth seeking process. For example, someone could return to their *aldeia* and ask people there about their experiences during the conflict, and write it down. This is part of truth seeking; writing Timor-Leste's history.

Truth Commission

Often recently independent nations establish a Truth Commission that investigates the past conflict and identifies causes and reasons for the conflict, determines what human rights violations occurred, who were the victims and who was responsible for the violations. In the case of Timor-Leste, the state established two Truth Commissions. The first was the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR, according to the Portuguese acronym), and the second was the Commission for Truth and Friendship (CVA).

CAVR is a commission whose role is independent and impartial and is mandated according to UNTAET regulation no.10/2001 that was consecrated in Article 162 of the RDTL Constitution. For the duration of its mandate, CAVR found the violations that occurred were violations against East Timorese people's right to self-determination, forced displacement, political trials, famine, torture, murder, illegal detention, as well as violations of the law of war such as murdering prisoners or burning people's source of food, sexual violence and violations of children's rights to education, culture and others.

Why is there a Truth Commission? Because a range of human rights violations occurred against civilians in the past. Why did these violations occur? Because political leaders used violence to obtain power, the international community gave priority to their relationships with Indonesia rather than supporting Timor's right to self determination, there was no mechanism for accountability in the security forces so they could violate human rights with impunity, and there were no institutions which could provide protection for the people except the Catholic church. The tribunal and the government were also dominated by the Indonesian military and people were not free to express their opinions, including through demonstrations.

The report called *Chega!* recommends many initiatives or measures to respond to the wrong-doings that occurred in the past. Over 200 recommendations are made to prevent the recurrence of conflict and human rights violations in Timor-Leste, guaranteeing that state institutions are accountable to the people and also promote democratic values based on the right of law. CAVR recommends many measures to guarantee that East Timorese are free to exercise their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. For example, CAVR recommends that defamation should not be a crime.

In December 2004 Indonesia and Timor-Leste agreed to establish the bilateral Commission for Truth and Friendship (CVA). CVA's objective was to establish the truth about human rights violations in Timor-Leste and reinforce reconciliation and friendship between these two countries. CVA also had a duty to make recommendations that were focused on exposing the truth, making sure that human rights violations will not be committed again, and promoting reconciliation and friendship.

CVA submitted its final report on 15 July 2008. The CVA report recounted details of human rights violations that occurred during 1999. It also found that the National Indonesian Military (TNI) had an institutional responsibility for the violations that occurred in 1999. CVA made recommendations regarding how to respond to these violations, including reparations for the victims, establishing a documentation centre, a human rights formation program, and creating a centre that is mandated to investigate missing persons and children who were separated from their parents.

Formal Justice

Justice, or accountability for a crime, is important because it is a message from the community to the suspect or the person involved in the crime that they must be held responsible in a tribunal for their actions. If people understand that the community won't accept them if they commit a crime, people will think it is better to not commit destructive acts. In turn, this can help create a peaceful community.

Justice for human rights violations like the ones that occurred in Timor-Leste is extremely complicated. Many people think that this justice involves taking people to a tribunal. This is true, however, what about a situation in which there are thousands and thousands of crimes? What if the suspect is unknown? What about if the crimes occurred 30 years ago?

Our formal judicial and tribunal systems are based on the assumption that the majority of people follow the law, and that just a few people will commit crimes. Thus, as this conflict involved a great many crimes, the tribunal perhaps does not have the capacity to manage all the cases. Furthermore, as a nation that has recently experienced conflict and where the tribunal system is new, the general population may not really trust the tribunal because previously—for instance during the Indonesian time—the tribunal was not independent and was only used to judge people who were involved in the resistance.

There is also the problem that the crimes occurred 10 or 20 years ago, making it difficult to obtain adequate evidence. If there is a murder case the victim's grave would need to be exhumed in order to determine how they died. This requires judicial resources as well as a specialist and specific

investigation that is dedicated solely to the trial of human rights violations, because for many cases detailed skill is required regarding for example international rights and specialist forensic knowledge.

While there are these difficulties, there can and must be justice for the victims. These difficulties do not mean that there cannot be justice or that we just give amnesty to people in Timor. However, creative measures are required and many resources must be committed in order to achieve justice. In Timor the government created two justice processes for past crimes, these processes are not perfect however they assist the process.

Reconciliation and Reparations

CAVR's mandate includes seeking the truth and promoting reconciliation and reception. In order to achieve these objectives, CAVR conducted a process called 'Community Reconciliation'. This was a justice process that occurred at the local level, not in a tribunal, however, it was registered at the tribunal level. This process could only be applied to crimes that were not considered serious in the 1999 context, such as burning down a house or being involved with militia. Serious crimes could not be included in this process.

CAVR recommended that the United Nations should continue to be in charge of decisions which were to be taken to the tribunal, however this did not occur. CAVR also recommended that important cases that occurred during the whole period of the conflict must be investigated, not just cases from 1999.

According to international law, people who are victims of human rights violations have a right to reparation. Reparation is not like a pension—money is not just given to people—it must involve a concrete measure to attempt to reduce the victim's suffering such as a student scholarship, health assistance or psychological treatment. Reparations also include a symbolic act such as giving medals or valuing people, building a monument or holding a ceremony such as which occurred on 12 November 2008. Victims have a tendency to want compensation for their suffering and gratitude from the state for what they contributed during the conflict more than anything else. Reparations are one way to provide compensation.

To ensure that reparations are meaningful, they must be in a form in accordance with what victims feel is needed to deal with their physical and psychological suffering. This means that victims must be involved in the preparation of a reparations program. The impact of violence is not the same for each individual. For some victims, one type of reparations is very important—such as rediscovering the bones of their lost family member—while another person may



Conference banner



Discussion group debating conference recommendations

prefer economic reparations. Thus the reparations program must be flexible in order to resolve the impact of violence on people's lives in a variety of areas such as health, education, housing and identify documents. This way it will ensure that the reparations program truly fulfils the victims' different needs.

A large problem is defining who will receive reparations and whether the state even has sufficient resources and infrastructure to conduct a reparations program. For example, if in the future the national parliament approves a reparations program in Timor the program may need to be initially limited to the most vulnerable victims and focused on symbolic or collective reparations. While CAVR and CVA have recommended a reparations program, the national parliament has yet to discuss the two reports. If the plenary approve the CAVR and CVA reports, parliament could create a law regarding reparations.

For example, CAVR and CVA recommended that the East Timorese state strengthens accountability mechanisms in the police and military in order to improve their understanding of human rights. CAVR also recommended that political parties make a commitment to non-violence and that the Timor education system teach Timor's history and human rights. CAVR and CVA made recommendations regarding how we can all work together and create a society that is based on peace, respect for human rights and democratic values.

Past and Future

How are most people demanding justice? There are many messages from the community level, particularly from victims demanding justice and reparations that they have not received. These two reports are now in parliament (as of September 2009). They were to be debated in 2008, however, this was cancelled twice. Perhaps people feel allergic to speaking about Timor-Leste's past. They think that this will create problems or new conflict. However, I think that Timor-Leste's past has positive power. It can be used to strengthen national unity and create a commitment to protecting human rights. How should we respond to these demands? The *Chega!* and CVA reports must be debated, the state needs to establish a new institution to work together with the government and civil society to be responsible for the implementation of relevant recommendations from *Chega!* and CVA, and there needs to be a decision from the Prosecutor-General to take the Serious Crimes Investigation cases (SCIT) to court. Now these two reports are in the parliament's hands, what are we doing and how can the international community help this process? Education and dissemination needs to be deepened, using networks to strengthen advocacy including community-based organisations and victims, to give courage to the leaders so discuss the *Chega!* and CVA reports and help implement the relevant recommendations.

The future is the implementation of *Chega!* and CVA's recommendations by the national parliament and a decision regarding the new institution and the provision of reparations. However, this is all in the parliament's hands. We continue to have hope because they are the hands and feet of the people. The parliament must listen to the survivors and hear the peoples' suffering that is written in *Chega!* and the CVA reports.

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The 'Nation-building in Timor-Leste Across the Urban and Rural' conference was a good opportunity for Caritas Australia to share experiences about our project with local leaders as well as to hear about the experiences of our colleagues regarding the actions they took to respond to the 2006 crisis. This conference was also a good opportunity for East Timorese to discuss the challenges of and results that we have managed to achieve from the nation-building process. This conference was different from other conferences because it gave opportunities to East Timorese to prepare to be presenters at an international conference. This was a very positive aspect and provided new experiences to people, particularly our East Timorese colleagues.

Looking at the presentations by three speakers in the governance session, this conference has given opportunity to participants to discuss issues and topics regarding governance in three aspects. The first presentation looked at the national level. It discuss the political strategy for decentralisation which will be met when the municipal system is implemented, and considerations regarding the role of traditional leaders in this new system. The second presenter focused on experiences in Baucau district. They discussed the situation that has occurred when the decentralisation system is implemented successfully. The third presentation focused on local level governance, which is much closer to the community and has more links and interaction with the people. This looked at experiences of the capacity of local leaders through a Caritas Australia project to support the local leaders in Dili district.

From the experience of this conference, in the future Timor-Leste needs to consider several key points when establishing an improved system of governance. The current system of government must also be considered, particularly governance that is based on tradition and resistance. There needs to be a mechanism established to consider the role of these things in the new system, particularly in a decentralised system that has established municipalities. This point is important in order to harmonise the systems that the people, particularly those in rural areas, already know and use, so that we avoid confusion and divisions that can appear because of the existence of other leaders who are currently in the community. Opportunities to build on the local leader's capacity to undertake their role well are important to establishing a new governance system that is participatory and close to the people, and that responds to people's needs.

Finally, this conference provided an opportunity for each group or presenter to speak and present their experiences and the results that they have found, and also to hear about other people's experiences and results. At the same time we could compare together and we could better understand the link between our work and the larger vision for governance.

Francisco da Cunha, Caritas Australia

It was a great experience. Strong Timorese participation, and great to see them asking the 'tough' questions of the Vice PM etc.

Participant

Would like to see 'who' is presenting' what' before I make a decision to come along (like a conference brochure). This would be very helpful. Would like more dialogue processes like the 'world café' process to deepen the inquiry and integrate the learning much deeper. Fantastic job to everyone involved. A great opportunity to meet people, hear a rich diversity of perspectives, learn new aspects of Timorese society, and to bring to the surface new opportunities for the future. Thank you.

Participant

Women in Rural Areas Don't Have Access to Formal Justice

Fransisca da Silva, Justice System Monitoring Programme

JSMP's report from 7 April 2004 says that 'women victims do not receive sufficient treatment and police don't give enough attention to this problem, also there are many cases in which the victim is a woman, however, there are not enough resources to manage cases that are already registered.' From this we can see that East Timorese women do not have access to formal justice. Another factor in the ineffectiveness of formal justice for women is that women often refuse to speak openly about their problem when the case is taken to the attorney. There are two indicators that help to explain women's lack of access to justice. First, women in the districts do not understand about formal justice. Second, there are women who understand, however, they refuse to use the formal system. From this we need to look at why people refuse to use the formal system, what the solution is, and finally, some recommendations.

Formal justice needs to be a system that is fair and right for the victims. We speak about women's rights in general, but this is not easy for East Timorese women to obtain. In a democratic state based on principles of the state and rights, the right to justice is fundamental; a right that we cannot ignore in any circumstances or for any reason. The application and realisation of the law and justice is a principal objective of a state based on democratic rights such as Timor-Leste. However, what happens to women in Timor-Leste? And how can development progress when there are many people not living in peace? What do East Timorese women do when they have a problem? And how do women resolve problems before it goes to the formal justice system?

Timor-Leste's patriarchal culture is a big obstacle for East Timorese people in our globalising world. As such, many people frequently think back to past sayings such as 'men take wide steps and women take narrow or short steps'. These words have come an East Timorese custom that is entrenched and difficult to change. Thus this has a significant impact on peoples everyday lives, particularly women.

According to the reality I have observed, when domestic or sexual violence occurs often our communities want to resolve the problem using the *biti boot* (large mat) method. This signifies that the problem is resolved at the *suku level*, and the *adat* (customary law) elders will run the arbitration ceremony. *Biti boot* often results in women not receiving anything because there is no justice for the victim in this process.

When JSMP began to undertake socialisation about women's



Fransisca da Silva

rights, various points came up. Firstly, women in the districts don't know about formal justice. We at JSMP found four reasons that help us understand this situation. In the first instance, many programs about formal justice have reached the district level, but have yet to reach people in more rural communities. Secondly some women did not really involve themselves in some of the training programs. Thirdly, some women received information but did not pass it on to other women. Lastly, there is the situation in the household; for example, how women divide their time to look after children, cook for the household, wash the clothes, and sometimes assist their husbands in agricultural production. All of these things together make it difficult for women and wives unable to make decisions in terms of the things that they may want to achieve.

The second result of evaluating the socialisation process is that some women have an understanding about their rights, however, they refuse to use the formal justice system if they experience violence. JSMP has found several reasons to explain why women armed with knowledge about rights and the justice process continue to resist taking their cases to the tribunal. First, women are economically dependent on their husbands. This has an impact in that women are scared to take their problem through the formal justice path because in the end their husbands could decide to divorce them. For example, many women in Timor don't have a right to access education because according to tradition men have more of a right to continue their study and receive a formal education. Because of this men continue to sustain and look after the family, women can't educate themselves and when it is time for them to marry there must be a bride price. This bride price is decided according to what the mother and father want, so it also affects the woman's life inside their home. Second, many women continue to think that violence against women (domestic violence or sexual violence) is not a crime and it is considered normal behaviour. If a case like this is received, many prefer to resolve it according to traditional justice. Third, the distance between the tribunal and where people live is very far. Fourth, where the police are located is very far away from where the community live. Five, people don't have money. Six, women are scared of men and won't speak out to anyone so the behaviour continues.

The recommendation that can be taken from the ideas explained here is that the state needs to create conditions in which they can respond to the situations of victims and their children. The state must quickly approve a law about domestic violence, and socialise information about the rights of women and access to formal justice in rural areas.

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Socialisation process in Maliana with FONGTIL District Liason Officer Maliana



Januario Soares and Annie Sloman conducting training with conference participants in Dare, June 2009

A Reflection on Ten Years of Nation- and State-Building in Timor-Leste

Carmeneza dos Santos Monteiro

The nation- and state-building endeavor in Timor-Leste continues to be coloured by challenges. Development processes, particularly the establishment of the main institutions of government and the establishing of a collective identity for the East Timorese people, have not been easy. Here I would like to discuss the development process and the challenges of building the Timor-Leste nation-state, by looking firstly at the terminology of 'nation' and 'state' and what nation-building and state-building entail; and secondly through discussing how the processes of nation-building and development have been undertaken by the UN (through UNTAET, the UN Transitional Administration of East Timor) and by the East Timorese themselves. Thirdly, I will examine the challenges encountered in nation- and state-building and development in Timor-Leste, through a development lens.

'Nation' and 'state' are frequently treated as interchangeable terms, however, they have very different meanings. As Martin Griffiths and Therry O'Callaghan explain, the term 'state' refers to the institution that claims sovereignty over a territory, that has the power to govern the people of that territory, and that also has 'currencies, postal services, police, and (usually) armies'.²³ In large part their definition follows Max Weber's account of the state as,

...an organisation composed of numerous agencies led and coordinated by the state's leadership (executive authority) that has the ability or authority to make and implement the binding rules for all the people as well as the parameters of rule making for all other social organisations in a given territory, using force if necessary or have its way.²⁴

While definitions of the state are varied, most have in common a shared understanding of the state as 'a social group that occupies a defined territory and is organised under common political institutions and an effective government. The state exercises sovereign power within its borders and is recognised as sovereign by other states in the international system'.²⁵ With regard to the nation, the term refers to groups of people 'claiming common bonds like language, culture, and historical identity'.²⁶ Urmila



Carmeneza dos Santos Monteiro

23 Martin Griffiths and Terry O'Callaghan, *International Relations: The Key Concepts*, Routledge, New York and London, 2002, p. 209.

24 Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1988, p. 4

25 Griffiths and O'Callaghan, *International Relations*, p. 20.

26 *ibid.*

Phadnis and Rajat Ganguly note that scholars have used the term in many different senses and to denote many different things.²⁷ Earnest Baker's definition of the nation is cited by the two as follows:

A nation is a body of men, inhabiting a definite territory who normally are drawn from different races, but possess a common stock of thoughts and feelings acquired and transmitted during the course of a common history; who on the whole and in the main, though more in the past than in the present, include in that common stock a common religious belief; who generally and as a rule use common language as the vehicle of their thoughts and feelings; and who, besides common thoughts and feelings also cherish a common will, and accordingly form, or tend to form, a separate state for the expression and realisation of that will.²⁸

These various explanations of the two terms—state and nation—allow us to distinguish between the processes of state-building and nation-building. From the description above, state-building can be understood as the process of creating the necessary institutions of a state in order to govern an independent territory. This process is currently underway in Timor-Leste. Nation-building, meanwhile, proceeds from the state-building, and is a process of locating the collective identity of a people. This can draw upon culture, language and history.

The departure of the Indonesians after the August 1999 referendum had significant implications for the East Timorese nation and its people. First and foremost, it marked the moment of separation with Indonesia. Secondly, it threw the new nation into chaos through systematic and widespread destruction across the country perpetrated by the Indonesian military and their militias in the absence of institutional authority.²⁹ Thirdly, the East Timorese people shared the proud moment of seeing the success of the long struggle for the restoration of independence. Fourthly, the status of Timor-Leste was elevated from that of the 27th province of Indonesia, to that of a nation-state. The achievement of this new status was both a defining moment and a challenging one. The dream of self-determination was gained, and the road to forming a new nation began.

Under the 5th of May agreement, the United Nations was made responsible for preparing Timor-Leste as a new nation-state if the options for autonomy were rejected at the referendum.³⁰ When they were, the UN Security Council issued a resolution to establish a mission in Timor-Leste—known as the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET)—to assist with the preparation for the restoration of full independence in 2002.³¹ The state-building project in Timor-Leste was led by the UN and involved a number of UN agencies, but also involved many other players including international development agencies, international financial institutions and local and international NGOs.³²

Despite its critics, the unprecedented state-building project in Timor-Leste achieved its aim, with the restoration of independence on 20 May 2002. Those critics, mainly from civil society organisations, had challenged the transitional government for been too centralised.³³ While I accept that the transitional government was not perfect, however, I would point to the fact that UNTAET had, within

27 Urmila Phadnis and Rajat Ganguly, *Ethnicity and Nation Building in South Asia*, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p. 19.

28 *ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

29 Alkatiri, Mari, Opening Remarks. Cooperation with Timor Leste, Iwaki Auditorium. Melbourne, 16 June 2005.

30 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1246 (1999), UNSC, 11 June 1999.

31 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1272 (1999), UNSC, 25 October 1999.

32 Sue Downie, 'UNTAET: State-Building and Peace-Building in East Timor', in Damien Kingsbury and Michael Leach, eds, *East Timor: Beyond Independence*, Monash University Press, Melbourne, 2007, p. 29.

33 B. Moxham, *State-making and the post-conflict city: integration in Dili, disintegration in Timor Leste*. Working paper, London School of Economics and Political Science. Crisis States Programme, series 2, no. 32, 2008.

the 33 months from October 1999 to May 2002, successfully met its expected objectives: the basic political, administrative and legal institutions of the Timor-Leste nation-state were established. At the political level, the National Consultative Council (NCC) was created, later replaced by the Constituent Assembly and then transformed to the National Parliament we have today. At the administration level, the civil service academy and the police academy were established and public servants were recruited. On the legal side, the judicial service commission and the prison service were also created. These developments show that the UN and the East Timorese people had, in that time, successfully established the foundational institutions required for a proper state system in Timor-Leste. These foundations, however, needed continuing works and improvements.

The transfer of power on 20 May 2002 to the East Timorese marked the first time in the history of the country that it was to be self-governed. While the power to rule was formally handed to Timor-Leste, the experience and practical capacity to rule properly was absent. Hence, international assistance was required, including both financial and human resources, to help ensure the survival of the new nation-state. Approximately USD 3.6 billion of foreign aid was invested in Timor-Leste between 1999 and 2006.³⁴ It consisted of USD 1.7 billion of voluntary contributions from UN member states to fund the UN missions³⁵ in the country. Bilateral and multilateral donors contributed another USD 1.9 billion in both humanitarian and development assistance. Despite this significant and continuing support, however, the processes of nation- and state-building in Timor-Leste have not been immune from challenges.

Timor-Leste's development has, since the restoration of independence, been continuously coloured by political violence and instability. Seven months after the restoration of independence, its integrity was challenged by urban riots in December 2002, which led to the burning of the then-Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri's house.³⁶ In 2005, catholic institutions in Timor-Leste organised a three-week long demonstration in Dili against the government's decision to make religious education in schools non-compulsory. Despite these challenges, though, Timor-Leste was still upheld as a success story for the UN, on par with Kosovo.³⁷ This view was expressed in many occasions and reports. For example, in April 2006 the World Bank background paper for Timor-Leste's development partner meeting reported that the country had taken 'impressive strides in building the foundation of state and implementing the National Development Plan'.³⁸ The International Monetary Fund and the United Nations Development Program reports shared similar views.³⁹

34 Susan Soux, David Gairdner and Sigurd Marstein, eds, *Review of Development Cooperation in Timor Leste: Final Report*, Oslo, Scanteam Analysts and Advisers, September 2007, p. 14.

35 United Nations Transitional Administration East Timor (UNTAET), October 1999-May 2002; United Nations Support Mission in East Timor (UNMISSET), by SC resolution 1410 (2002), 1480 (2003) and 1580 (2004), 2002-2005; United Nations Office in Timor Leste (UNOTIL) by SC resolution 1599 (2005), 2005-2006; and United Nations Mission in Timor Leste, (UNMIT), by SC resolution 1704 (2006),), 2006-present.

36 Reyko Huang and Geoffrey C. Gunn, 'Reconciliation as State-Building in East Timor', *Lusotopie*, 2004, p. 29.

37 James Traub, *The Best Intentions: Kofi Annan and the UN in the Era of American World Power*, Farrar Straus & Giroux, New York, 2006.

38 World Bank, *World Bank Background Paper for the Timor Leste Development Partners Meeting*, World Bank, Dili, 2006, p. 1.

39 International Monetary Fund, *Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, IMF Country Report No. 05/247, 2005; United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2006: Timor Leste: The Path Our of Poverty*, UNDP, 2006, <http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Timor-Leste/Timor-Leste%20HDR%202006.pdf>. Accessed, 6 May 2009

However, this optimism faltered following the 2006 crisis. The event that cost the lives of more than 30 people and the displacement of more than 100,000 people⁴⁰, fundamentally challenged the integrity of the UN 'success story', and its future prospects. Sharp controversies emerged amongst scholars and analysts of international institutions. Scholars such as Ben Moxam and Tim Anderson pointed to foreign intervention as the main cause of the crisis.⁴¹ Others such as Damien Kingsbury highlighted weakness in East Timorese political leadership, including poor policy decisions.⁴² Other scholars, such as Josh Trindade, argued that lack of consideration for Timorese culture and tradition was the main cause of the problems.⁴³ Still again, observers such as the International Crisis Group blamed the crisis on the lack of institutional capacity and the failure of the state to consolidate reforms in the security sector.⁴⁴ While all these arguments have merit, it is not my intention here to take sides.

Instead, I want to examine the challenges of nation-building in Timor-Leste through a development lens, and suggest that poverty, low and uneven development, as well as the uneven distribution of resources, cause conflict within the country and will continue to present a security threat to the processes of nation- and state-building in Timor-Leste. Firstly, poverty, marginalised economic status and unemployment lead to great grievances, particularly in a society such as Timor-Leste, which has recently experienced great devastation and loss of wealth. Timor-Leste has sound development policies at the centre of its nation- and state-building, however, unfortunately, those policies are talked about more than they are seen in practice. The focus on one area of development, such as institutional building, sidelines and diverts attention from other important sector such as social, economic and justice development. Hence, the state is unable to respond to the needs of the poor and marginalised people.

In addition, the unbalanced distribution of resources between rural and urban communities leads to greater urban migrations. This, in turn, leads to a development focus on the centre, and generates unmanageable population growth in urban areas. This development bias in favour of urban areas presents a number of problems to the state- and nation-building processes. Firstly, it deepens the disparity among the citizen of the nation, which can lead to internal security threats such as demonstrated in April and May 2006. Secondly, the sense of national unity is erodes when there is no longer common interest among the people, or when the common interest is overshadowed by competing individual need of survival. Finally, the unbalanced distribution of resources in itself undermines the notion of good government as it has the potential to fuel corruption within governmental institutions.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing the needs of even development and equal distribution of resources if conflict is to be avoided. The East Timorese people lost everything during the occupation, and in 1999 particularly, including wealth. It is important not to let the poor people of Timor-Leste lose their sense of pride. There is a growing feeling amongst them of losing their status, and this sense of inequality and injustice is a primary cause of social conflicts. While the poor might have no ability to lead the riots or conflicts, they can be easily manipulated and employed by political leaders to achieve their own objectives. Allowing the continuation of large numbers of poor and young unemployed in Timor-Leste poses a danger to the future stability of the country.

40 International Crisis Group, *Resolving Timor-Leste's Crisis*, Asia Report No. 120, October 2006.

41 B. Moxham, *State-making and the post-conflict city: integration in Dili, disintegration in Timor Leste*; Tim Anderson, 'Achievements of a "Failed State"', *New Matilda*, 14 June 2006.

42 Damien Kingsbury, 'Political development', in Damien Kingsbury and Michael Leach, eds, *East Timor: Beyond Independence*, Monash University Press, Melbourne, 2007, pp. 19-26.

43 Josh Trindade, 'An Ideal State for East Timor: Reconciling the Conflicting Paradigms', paper delivered at Democratic Governance in Timor-Leste: Reconciling the National and the Local Conference, Charles Darwin University, Darwin 7-8 February 2008.

44 International Crisis Group, *Resolving Timor-Leste's Crisis*.

Development in Timor-Leste

Leopoldina Joana Guterres, Baguia, Baucau

This article will discuss the definition of development, types of development and differences between development in urban areas and rural areas. It will also examine the problems and difficulties that are faced in rural areas and suggest some solutions. The word 'development' itself means to create something that does not exist yet, and to change or get rid of something that is not good in order to create something that is good and new. In general there are two types of development. The first type is physical development and the second is mental or spiritual development. Normally when we speak about development the focus is on physical development such as building a house, school, health centre, sanitation, roads, bridges and other infrastructure; however, often we forget to undertake mental development such as providing education to the population about how to respect infrastructure, natural and human resources. For example, a tank is built and connected to the water at a particular point. However, because we don't provide education to the people, the taps may be taken apart and lost. Sometimes also people destroy the pipes or make a hole to stop the water. Also we can build a market but if we don't provide education to people about the function of the market, then some people could use it as a goat and pig enclosure. Also sometimes people have capacity or are specialists, however, because they belong to different political parties a person may not be placed in a position that is appropriate to their role or type of work. This signifies that we do not look after the human resources that we already have and do not develop resources that a person has. Often we also forget to provide cultural education to our people to protect our culture.

There is a significant difference between development in urban areas and rural areas in Timor-Leste. These differences are as follows. In urban areas there is access to communication and information networks, however, in rural areas there is not. We must walk for two or three hours to access communication and information networks. In urban areas there are roads, bridges and transport that are good; however, in rural areas there are not. In urban areas there is access to clean water and electricity, however, in rural areas the use of candlenut oil and petrol to burn lanterns at night continues. People must collect water, carrying it for two or three hours to be used in the home, even though during the wet season water is just wasted. In rural areas there are also no markets that can distribute local products to people. In rural areas there is no health assistance in times of emergency. Often people who are seriously ill die before they arrive at the hospital or health centre. During times of emergency traditional nurses



Leopoldina Joana Guterres

provide assistance to patients but they don't have modern medical instruments. In rural areas there are no schools buildings that are in good condition and there is no postal system and bank. Urban areas have access to work and have opportunities for personal development in terms of education and economics. In rural areas, however, people continue to live predominantly from agriculture and subsistence farming, thus nutrition is not very good and health suffers.

Although people in rural areas have many various and significant difficulties, those people also push themselves to contribute to development in our nation of Timor-Leste. There are some things that will encourage them to undertake development in rural areas. There are people who are key actors in the community and provide motivation to their community so they understand about development. If there is no motivation then development won't progress. There are funders or benefactors who can provide help, establish and run rehabilitation programs for some schools, establish sanitation and conduct capacity-building training. All of the population make sacrifices to listen to each other, respect each other, understand each other, be transparent with one another, trust each other and think cleverly about how to organise and work together in order to undertake development. For example, the sacrifice of walking up and down mountains in the rain, wind and heat, wading through rivers to communicate with each other to create plans and programs for development. They don't just sit down and ring or call each other on the telephone. It's a big sacrifice to just carry construction materials on your head, on a pole, in your arms and on your shoulders, such as sand, cement, iron, wood and other things that are taken up to the top of the mountain or to places where there is no access by road, to build a school, sanitation for clean water and other things. If the community didn't make sacrifices such as these, they would still be living in places that are extremely isolated. There is also another example regarding being transparent with one another. When there is a project that has been approved, don't begin to make plans about how the money can be quickly entered into your pocket; but sit together as a group or community and discuss the program to bring it into being and also talk about the quality of the project.

Considering the extensive suffering that people in rural areas face, we ask the government of Timor-Leste to pay attention to development in rural areas such as repairing roads and bridges from the district to the sub-district and opening up roads from the sub-district to the many *suku* and *aldeia*. Distribute access to electricity and communication networks to rural areas. Create sanitation for clean water in rural areas because the people are suffering a lot regarding water in the dry season. Establish markets for communities in rural areas and also school buildings for the students. When we have access to good roads, communication networks, electricity, sanitation and clean water, good quality health assistance, sufficient conditions in the schools and good government then we can feel that we are independent. However, at this time we the people in rural areas don't yet feel that we have independence, even though there has been independence for 10 years. The reason for this is that our people's lives have been the same throughout the Portuguese colonial times, the Indonesian invasion and integration. There is no difference. We have been burning candlenut oil and petrol from back then until now. Our local products are also just carried on our heads and shoulders, which means it doesn't get distributed because there is no road and transport. We don't have information and communication like in urban areas.

We the people in rural areas have contributed much to our nation but our own state is not yet aware of its people in rural areas. I think that based on what is written in this article, we hope that soon the government will pay attention to us, the people in rural areas, according to what we criticised and have requested.

United Nations' Values and *Suku* Traditions: Appearance and Reality

David Hicks⁴⁵

In an article published in *Anthropology Today* two years ago I remarked on the danger to Timor-Leste of the weak conjunction between Dili and the districts in respect of the values that define their respective jural and political ideologies and institutions.⁴⁶ In this brief paper I follow up these conclusions in proposing a line of research which would provide the government of Timor-Leste and the international agencies presently working in the country with a body of reliable and substantial information regarding this issue. This would put policy decisions the Timor-Leste government might wish to make regarding the harmonisation of the 'modernising' values advanced by the United Nations and embraced by the government, on the one hand, and the traditional values of the *sukus*, on the other hand, on a considerably firmer basis than at present.

That an issue exists is suggested by a number of informative studies which point to a severe dislocation between the foreign values promoted by various international agencies, most prominently the United Nations, and Timorese traditional values.⁴⁷ The disjunction between these two contrasting sets of values is especially evident in the United Nations' attempt to incorporate certain political and jural values into local societies, even though they are at odds with local *adats*. The justification for this, of course, is to satisfy the desire of certain *malae* (foreigners) to impose upon local communities notions they find compelling—among the most popular currently being gender and age equality. Thus, in the political field, in spite of *adat* traditions which specify that *suku* councils should consist exclusively of elder males (*katuas*), international ideology has invented three set-aside seats especially reserved for women and young persons of both sexes. On the face of it these foreign values appear to have triumphed, but, as the aforementioned studies and my own research suggests, in at least some *sukus* political power and jural authority



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46 David Hicks, 'Community and Nation-State in East Timor', *Anthropology Today*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2004, pp. 13-16.

47 Tanja Hohe, 'Justice without Judiciary in East Timor', *Conflict, Security and Development*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2003, pp. 335-357; Tanja Hohe and Rod Nixon, *Reconciling Justice: Traditional Law and State Judiciary in East Timor*, report prepared for the United States Institute of Peace, January 2003; Sofi Ospina and Tanja Hohe, *Traditional Power Structures and Local Governance in East Timor: a case study of the Community 'Empowerment Project'*, Études Courtes 5, Geneva, Graduate Institute of Development Studies, 2002.

continue to be exercised in the traditional manner. Here, local acceptance of the United Nations system is more apparent than real.

This being so, one obvious line of research is to compare *sukus* according to the degree to which they have assimilated these new concepts and determine why disparities—should these indeed be discerned—exist. Here, I would like to suggest six of the most likely factors involved.

1. Communication: in other words, a *suku*'s proximity to Dili. One might reasonably postulate that the more geographically accessible a *suku* is to United Nations' headquarters, the greater influence the latter would have.
2. Political party affiliation: Whether a *suku* inclined to follow the policies of the current government or one of its rivals might also help determine the acceptability of the new values, with district and sub-district administrators choosing to promote or impede the current government's (United Nations') agenda.
3. The PNTL and F-FDTL: The National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL), the inspiration for which comes from UNTAET and which is an instrument of the government, is a relatively newly-created institution. In the years since its establishment it has, in general, received less respect in *sukus* than has the National Defence Force of Timor-Leste (F-FDTL) which developed under Indonesian occupation in the local communities and is regarded by them as a 'home-grown' institution. Communities where the F-FDTL presence is dominant may be more inclined to adopt the politico-judicial values and institutions of the government and United Nations, than those where the less-respected PNTL predominate.
4. History: A comparative analysis of the impact the Portuguese and Indonesian administrations exerted upon the *sukus* has yet to be made, and little is known about why some local communities may have been more responsive towards assimilating new notions than others. It seems possible, though, that local attitudes developed during both colonial periods may be shaping contemporary inclinations towards either assimilating or repelling those Western values and institutions currently being introduced into the *sukus*.
5. The role of the Catholic Church: In many local communities the Church is accorded more respect than any other supra-*suku* institution.
6. The role of *suku* chiefs and *liurais* (kings): Across Timor-Leste, these figures continue to exert significant influence at the local level.⁴⁸ This is especially interesting as an index of acculturation, since one might suppose that a *suku* which elected as chief a man who belonged to a traditionally privileged *liurai* family might be more inclined to be sustained by local *adat* and look to it to provide justice rather than the foreign alternative. The converse might apply in a community that elected someone from a non-*liurai* family.

Whatever the relative weight of these factors, we need to know considerably more than we do at present about what exactly is taking place in the clash between the two value systems in the *sukus*. What, for instance, do ordinary flesh-and-blood women and men there—not 'stakeholders' or 'representatives'—really feel about living lives fashioned to suit the values of outsiders? We may find a disparity between reality and illusion, as I witnessed in Viqueque sub-district during the mid-1960s. A stock response of *suku* folk to what was demanded of them by agents of the external authority of the period, but which they judged to be at variance with their accustomed mores, was to acquiesce in some form or another at the same time as remaining loyal to their own collective identities as inheritors of what they understood to be age-old traditions.⁴⁹ In promoting the cause of westernisation the United Nations, accordingly, needs to be able to distinguish a genuine 'conversion', as it were, from a merely asserted assurance of compliance. If it cannot, its agents may discover after they leave Timor-Leste for good, that the values and institutions they laid so much stock in promoting proved to have a short shelf-life in the *sukus*.

⁴⁸ See, for example, The Asia Foundation, *Law and Justice in East Timor: A Survey of Citizen Awareness and Attitudes Regarding Law and Justice in East Timor*, The Asia Foundation, Washington, 2004.

⁴⁹ David Hicks, *Tetum Ghosts and Kin: Fertility and Gender in East Timor*, 2nd edition, Waveland Press, Illinois, 2004.

The Challenge of Building an Inclusive Justice Movement in Timor-Leste⁵⁰

Lia Kent⁵¹

Over the last 10 years, numerous reports and articles have underscored the imperative of developing Timor-Leste's formal justice sector, strengthening justice institutions and responding to the crimes of the past to provide a firm foundation for building the new nation. My paper takes a slightly different angle by considering the nation-building contribution of Timor-Leste's civil society movement for justice. I highlight that, by advocating for 'justice' for past human rights violations, civil society organisations are playing a significant role in contesting 'official' nation-building discourses, and are contributing to the imagining of an alternative nation-building vision grounded in the need to acknowledge the experiences of ordinary people during the conflict. I then reflect on challenges that are emerging for the justice movement as a result of the government's current nation-building priorities, and, more broadly, in a context in which many East Timorese have experienced 'structural' violence or everyday violence.⁵² In response to these challenges I suggest some ways in which certain organisations within civil society might consider broadening the scope of their efforts to become more inclusive of individuals' and communities' diverse experiences of harm.

Introduction

Prominent Timorese non-government organisations (NGOs)—together with networks of international human rights NGOs—have over the last decade actively advocated around the need for 'justice' for serious crimes committed throughout the Indonesian occupation and during and immediately following the referendum of 1999. United by the phrase 'no reconciliation without justice', they have argued that prosecuting perpetrators of crimes against humanity and war crimes, and recognising the harms committed against victims, is essential for Timor-Leste's nation-building process.



Lia Kent

50 This paper draws on fieldwork conducted for my PhD thesis during 2007 and 2008 on the social effects of Timor Leste's transitional justice process, in the districts of Suai, Liquica, Lautem, and Dili.

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52 See for example Philippe Bourgois and Nancy Scheper-Hughes, 'Introduction: Making Sense of Violence', in Philippe Bourgois and Nancy Scheper-Hughes, eds, *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, Blackwell Publishing, 2004, pp. 1-32; Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights and the New War on the Poor*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2005; Johan Galtung, 'Violence, Peace and Peace Research', *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 6, no. 3, 1969, pp. 167-91.

In recognition of a need to more effectively coordinate their efforts, in 2002 a number of NGOs, Church representatives, victims' families and students formed the East Timorese Alliance for an International Tribunal. The network has continued to advocate for the establishment of an international criminal tribunal for Timor-Leste, similar to the tribunals established for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, to try those most responsible for the violence in Timor-Leste, among them senior members of the Indonesian military.⁵³ The network is active at the international and regional levels, where it lobbies the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council (formerly the UN Commission on Human Rights), builds connections with the international solidarity movement and key international human rights organisations, and networks with other victims' rights organisations across Asia. Within Timor-Leste, the Alliance has lobbied the national government on the need for a strong and impartial justice system, drawing links between the failure to hold perpetrators of serious crimes to account and the creation of a culture of impunity in the present. Recently, based on a growing acknowledgement that the focus of NGOs on prosecutions has not always represented and addressed victims' practical material concerns—the desire expressed by many of those who have been victimised for the state to '*tau matan ba ami*' (look after us)—justice advocates have begun to broaden their advocacy efforts to encompass the question of victims' reparations.

Timor-Leste's justice movement provides an important challenge to 'official' nation-building discourses of the political leadership. A key aspect of this official discourse has been a focus on 'the future' rather than 'the past', and is embodied in the leadership's continued emphasis on ideas of reconciliation-as-forgiveness, development, and the pragmatic need to build diplomatic relations with Indonesia. Another related strand invokes the need to remember and commemorate a triumphal or glorified version of the past, in which the role of the resistance struggle is central, and East Timorese are collectively described as 'heroes.' This vision is reflected in the government's current focus on valorising those who played leadership roles during the armed or clandestine resistance movement through the provision of medals and pensions, and is also embodied in official approaches towards commemorating the past.⁵⁴ For example, the date of the Indonesian invasion of Timor-Leste, 7 December 1975, is officially remembered as 'National Heroes Day'.

⁵³ International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and International Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

⁵⁴ See also Michael Leach, 'Valorising the Resistance: National Identity and Collective Memory in Timor Leste's Constitution', *Social Alternatives*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2002, pp. 43-7.



Mayra Walsh and Damian Grenfell conducting training in Dare, June 2009



Socialisation in a remote school outside Maubisse, April 2009

In contrast, however, there appears to be a significant disjuncture between this 'official' nation-building discourse and the experiences and views of those who describe themselves as *povu kiik* (small people/ordinary people). Many of these people, outside of the power centre, regard the official acknowledgement of and response to the harms of the past as vital to resuming everyday life and imagining a collective future.⁵⁵ Many express views that, because of their experiences of oppression and suffering during the Indonesian occupation, and their lack of formal involvement in the resistance struggle, they do not identify with the label 'hero'.⁵⁶ In this context the civil society justice movement is contributing to the imagining of an alternative nation-building vision that is grounded in the need to acknowledge the experiences of ordinary people who have been marginalised in the drive to project a unified, reconciled and forward-looking Timor-Leste.

Challenges for the Justice Movement in a Context of Structural Violence

Despite the critical role of the civil society justice movement in challenging official discourses, it is also important to reflect on some emerging challenges, particularly in the light of current government nation-building priorities. Since the 2006 'crisis' the East Timorese government—with the support of international donors—has been providing financial assistance to different interest groups, including both those who are perceived to be political threats and those who fit with the government's own preferred nation-building narratives. In a quest for stability, the government has provided cash handouts to 'petitioners' (those military officers who joined the Alfredo Reinardo rebels in 2006), families of police officers killed by the military in 2006, and those who were internally displaced, in addition to pensions for veterans. These initiatives have created resentment in the community amongst those who feel they have 'missed out'.⁵⁷ In this context an issue that arises in relation to the justice movement's current campaign for reparations is that 'victims' could potentially become another group in society, competing with other disadvantaged and marginalised groups for scarce state resources. Indeed, I recently heard comments on national radio in Timor-Leste from a prominent member of a widows organisation, who suggested that in order to receive state assistance 'it's better if we 1999 victims just organise ourselves and go and live in a refugee camp'.⁵⁸

Compounding the potential for competition is the reality that East Timorese people experienced years of 'structural violence' during the Indonesian occupation.⁵⁹ Differing from direct forms of violence such as murder, rape or torture, structural violence encompasses the *systematic* form of violence that is caused by social structures or social institutions when individuals are prevented from meeting basic needs such as food, housing, health care and water.⁶⁰ In contrast to the acute, short-term suffering of direct violence, structural violence is manifested and made real in the long term, chronic and 'everyday' experiences of 'infant mortality, slow starvation, disease, despair and humiliation', which frequently remain 'invisible or misrecognised' due to our tendency to view such forms of violence as part of the status quo.⁶¹ Under the Indonesian occupation, structural violence was evident in the

55 Fieldwork observations in Suai, Liquica, Lautem and Dili, 2007 and 2008.

56 *ibid.*

57 *ibid.*

58 Comment heard on 20 July 2008.

59 See for example Farmer, *Pathologies of Power*; Bourgois and Scheper-Hughes 'Making Sense of Violence'; Joseph Nevins, *A Not so Distant Horror: Mass Violence in East Timor*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2005; Joseph Nevins, '(Mis) representing East Timor's Past: Structural-symbolic Violence, International Law, and the Institutionalisation of Injustice', *Journal of Human Rights*, vol. 1, no. 4, 2002, pp. 523-540; Elizabeth Stanley, *Torture, Truth and Justice: The case of Timor-Leste*, Routledge, London, 2009.

60 Galtung 'Violence, Peace and Peace Research'.

61 Bourgois and Scheper-Hughes 'Making Sense of Violence', p. 2.

widespread and chronic experiences of poverty, malnutrition, maternal mortality, illiteracy and fear that were part of the fabric of everyday life, and was often experienced on a continuum with 'direct' forms of violence, such as disappearances, torture and killings. This 'everyday' violence was caused, or exacerbated by, the discriminatory structures and policies of the Indonesian occupation, which were designed to control the population, destroy social bonds and cohesiveness in communities, and foster distrust. Although arguably as debilitating as direct forms of violence, structural violence experienced on an everyday basis has been given far less attention.⁶²

The effects of structural violence continue to have ramifications in post-conflict Timor-Leste, which, according to the United Nations Development Program's most recent Human Development Report, remains amongst the poorest countries in the world.⁶³ Health standards are still very low, partly because many people cannot get ready access to health services, and life expectancy is estimated at only 55 and a half years. Half the population does not have access to safe drinking water and 60 per cent do not have adequate sanitation. Currently 64 per cent of the population suffers from food insecurity, which is especially prevalent in the rural areas, where many households go short of food between the lean months from November to February. Literacy rates are also very low, and much worse amongst women, with almost two-thirds of women aged 15 to 60 years illiterate compared with less than half of men.⁶⁴ In this context, where structural violence has pervasive, debilitating and ongoing effects, and in which the current government has its own priorities for distributing scarce state resources, there is potential for 'victims' of direct violence to come into conflict with other marginalised groups in the struggle for resources, and for conflict to emerge amongst different *kinds* of victims.

Towards a More Inclusive Justice Movement?

The context of structural violence in Timor-Leste offers a challenge to the civil society justice movement to think more deeply about what 'justice' requires, and to reflect on whose interests are being represented in the justice debate and who is excluded. In this section I offer some reflections on these issues. In doing so, however, I acknowledge that many justice advocates are already grappling with many of these issues.

⁶² See also Nevins, *A Not so Distant Horror* and Stanley, *Torture, Truth and Justice*.

⁶³ United Nations Development Program, 'The Path Out of Poverty', *UNDP Human Development Report Timor- Leste 2006*, available at: http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/nationalreports/asiathepacific/timorleste/TIMOR_LESTE_2006_en.pdf, accessed 16 September 2009.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*



Alex Gusmão, following the launch of RMIT University's 'Understanding Community' Report



Francisco da Silva receiving his training certificate, Dare, June 2009

Over the last 10 years, Timor-Leste's justice movement has evolved significantly from an initial preoccupation with the violence of 1999 to an increasing recognition of the need to address the multifaceted and often complex forms of violence experienced by people throughout the 24-year Indonesian occupation, which also included violence perpetrated by the resistance movement. Allied to this is a burgeoning awareness that NGOs have tended to speak 'on behalf' of victims rather than strengthen the political voice of the victims themselves. Furthermore, there has been acknowledgement that those victims who have been involved in national level advocacy have tended to be members of an 'elite' group who are well-educated, live in accessible areas, have links with human rights NGOs, and do not necessarily represent the diversity of forms of harm experienced during the conflict.⁶⁵

In response to these concerns, NGOs have focused greater attention on supporting victims' own advocacy efforts, including by providing support for the establishment and ongoing activities of local victims' groups at the district, subdistrict and *suku* level. The recent national 'Victims Congress' held in Dili in September this year—in which NGOs assisted one hundred and 50 victims and their families from around the country to come together to discuss the formation of a National Victims' Network—is an example of the possibilities that are emerging from grassroots victims' advocacy.⁶⁶

Beyond the level of national level advocacy, NGOs have begun to augment their support for local efforts to remember and make sense of the violent past, such as the building of monuments and the commemoration of past massacres. In the district of Liquica, local community members have, with the support of NGOs, recently constructed a small 'Angel' monument behind the Liquica church, to commemorate the massacre of 60 people on the 6 April 1999 by the Besi Merah Puti (Red and White Iron) militia group, and a mass is now held here every year. Last year, NGOs assisted the local community in Kraras, Viqueque, to commemorate the 1983 massacre of three hundred members of the village; while in Ainaro, an inauguration of a new monument to commemorate the Maununu massacre recently took place.⁶⁷

The value of these efforts is that they foster local communities' own attempts to remember, mourn and make sense of past violence in ways that may not fit in with the government's nation-building priorities or the advocacy priorities of civil society organisations. Collective and locally-connected forms of remembering the past also have the capacity to encourage forms of connection amongst individuals who have experienced different forms of harm, rather than competition grounded in struggles for resources. While not without its own politics and power struggles, the local level is where the reconstruction of ordinary life and the imagining of a collective future is necessarily taking place, through the re-establishment of relationships and social bonds that were fractured during the Indonesian occupation, the rebuilding of *uma luliks* (sacred houses), the reburial of loved ones who died during the conflict, and the conducting of ceremonies to put their spirits to rest.⁶⁸

While NGOs have gone part of the way towards building an inclusive justice movement, they could go further by more explicitly considering the structural or everyday dimensions of violence. NGOs' advocacy for the need to acknowledge individuals' experiences of torture, killing and rape has been a critical means of challenging the forward-looking priorities of the leadership, yet it also has the potential to miss the long-term, chronic nature of suffering under the Indonesian occupation, and to exclude the many less visible experiences of inequality, poverty and malnutrition that were, and continue to

65 Interview with staff member ICTJ, Dili, July 2008.

66 See Lusa, *Victims Congress in Dili: No Amnesty for Human Rights Crimes*, 2 September 2009.

67 Interview with staff member Yayasan Hak, Dili, July 2009.

68 Veena Das, *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2007. See also Anne Brown, 'Security, Development and the Nation-Building Agenda: East Timor', *Conflict, Security and Development*, vol. 9, no.2, 2009, pp. 141-64.

be, experienced by a significant number of East Timorese. It does not, for example, take sufficient account of the experiences of widows whose husbands or children died during the Indonesian occupation due to a lack of food or medicines, which may have been exacerbated by Indonesian government policies of forced relocation, nor does it acknowledge the frustrations of many East Timorese who perceive that the conflict denied them an education, and hence restricted their capacity to earn a living. Reflecting upon these multifaceted and 'everyday' experiences of suffering could potentially lead to the development of links between the campaign for 'justice' for past crimes and the ongoing issues of social injustice that are a legacy of the Indonesian occupation. Connections could be made, for example, between the current campaign for victims' reparations and the need for accessible and affordable basic education and health services for all, which could help to foster a more inclusive justice movement that encourages solidarity between victims and other disadvantaged groups.

Conclusion

By continuing to call attention to the need to acknowledge and address the painful past, Timor-Leste's civil society justice movement provides an important challenge to the government's nation-building discourses, which, in their promotion of a triumphal and forward-looking vision, have excluded the experiences and stories of many 'ordinary people'. Advocacy for an international criminal tribunal to try those responsible for crimes against humanity and war crimes has been a critical strand of civil society's work for justice over the last 10 years, along with the more recent focus on victims' reparations. By reflecting on whose voices are being heard within advocacy campaigns, attending to the ongoing effects of less visible forms of everyday violence, and supporting collective, local level, efforts to remember and make sense of the past, NGOs have the capacity to strengthen the justice movement and foster an inclusive, transformative and 'bottom-up' vision of the nation.



Conference training in Dare, June 2009



The conference included exhibitions of paintings and photography from Timor-Leste.

Food Security in Timor-Leste: Lessons from Archaeology⁶⁹

Nuno Vasco Oliveira⁷⁰

Timor-Leste's economy today relies mostly on subsistence farming practices, involving diverse food products from diverse origins. This paper draws on archaeological research conducted in Timor Leste over the period 2004 to 2008, and argues that communities have historically relied on agricultural diversity, rather than exclusivity, to ensure their food security. Amongst the most widely distributed crops today are maize (*batar* in Tetun) and cassava (*ai farinha*), both of which originated in the American tropics and were introduced to Timor with the first European colonial contacts beginning in the sixteenth century. Many fruit and nut trees, such as palms, coconut (*nu*), canarium (*ai kiar*), breadfruit (*kulu*) and pandanus (*heda*), as well as different types of yams (*kuan*, *uhi* and *kumbili*) and taro (*talas/keladi*), and famine foods such as the sago palm (*rombia*), are widely used and may have been so for the past few thousand years. Rice (*hare*), now a staple of Timorese diets, was first domesticated in eastern Asia and introduced to Timor within the last 4,000 years, although it is suggested here that it probably did not become an important part of Timorese diets until after the first colonial contact.

Existing historical records, together with new information gathered from archaeological investigations concerned with the last 10,000 year period, suggest that Timorese communities have long relied mixed-cropping systems as the basis of their farming practice. The first major crops in such systems were probably tuber and tree crops, with some local beans dating from the last 2,000 years. These mixed-cropping systems were complemented by hunting. Prior to the introduction of the first animal domesticates such as the pig, dog and chicken, around 3,500 years ago, this would have been a very impoverished practice yielding mostly bats and rats. The collection of shellfish would have been much more important, with shellfish evidently abundant in all excavated archaeological sites in Timor, even those dating back to the earliest human occupation period over 40,000 years ago. Significantly, even though its introduction was documented by the first Europeans in the sixteenth century, rice is not present in any of the archaeological sites investigated.



Nuno Vasco Oliveira

69 The findings in this paper are drawn from my PhD thesis. For a more extensive account, go to <http://palaeoworks.anu.edu.au/Nuno.html> where the whole thesis is available in English.

70 Nuno Vasco Oliveira is an archaeologist. He currently works as an adviser on cultural heritage management in the State Secretariat of Culture, Ministry of Education, Timor Leste. In 2008, he completed his PhD at the Australian National University, looking at prehistoric plant management systems in Timor from an archaeobotanical perspective. He can be contacted at nuno.oliveira@anu.edu.au

The investigation conducted in Timor-Leste between 2004 and 2008 aimed at recovering charred plant remains from excavated archaeological sites in the Baucau, Baguia and Lospalos regions. Comparative analysis was made between the archaeobotanical specimens and modern reference material (plant remains) collected at the sites, which were later charred in a laboratory. Both the modern and archaeobotanical charred plant remains preserve features which allow for comparison of their morphology (general shape) and anatomy (the way the plant cells are arranged). Such comparison enables inferences to be made about the presence or absence of certain plants, and their possible uses by human communities, in various moments in time. Amongst the most interesting results from this research project, I would highlight the following:

- The absence of rice or indeed any other cereals from all archaeological sites investigated, except for possible evidence of Job's Tears (*dele*) which are known to be used for beads but not as a food source in Timor;
- The presence of beans dating back 2000 years, including possible specimens of coral tree bean (*ai dik di'na/ai dik fuik*);
- The presence of various fruit and nut trees in the last 10,000 years, and of yams and possibly taro in the last 3,000 years;
- Evidence of a continuous record of burning, possibly indicating slash and burnt practices in front of one of the sites investigated in Baucau (Bui Ceri Uato Mane, a rock shelter in the Oso Ua/Uaisa, Kaisido area). This finding emerged from phytolith investigations on soil samples recovered from the excavations, carried out by Carol Lentfer.

These results suggest that, historically, communities in Timor-Leste relied on a diversity of plant food resources to complement their diets. This was certainly for a variety of reasons, amongst which is a very unreliable pluvial regime (referring to periods of excessive rainfall); generally long dry seasons throughout most of the country; and the absence of large game and of animal domesticates until relatively recent times. The absence of rice and other cereals in the excavated charred plant remains suggests that they were historically not an important part of Timorese mixed-cropping systems, and in spite of their having been introduced to the country long before, they have probably only been farmed on a significant scale in the period following the first colonial contact. Indeed, the new data suggests a continuum of food plant exploitation practices over several millennia with no major changes registered until the last 500 years, after the first European contacts. Traditionally associated with cereal agriculture and the intensification of food production, the use of slash and burn practices for land clearance



Excavation by Nuno Vasco Oliveira at Bui Ceri Uato Mane, near Baucau



Removing charcoal from excavation

may indeed be much older. Comparing the phytolith record with the results of the charred plant remains in Baucau, there seems to be a case for suggesting that such burning practices were associated with agro-forestry and the use of forest resources, rather than with cereal agriculture.

Ultimately, what this investigation suggests is that the past may offer an important lesson for the present. In a context generally marked by long dry seasons and unreliable rain regimes, communities have long learnt to prepare for hard times, usually by diversifying their plant management systems and diets. The replacement of mixed-cropping approaches by single-crop systems, such as rice production, seems to be a much more modern trend initiated by the Portuguese and especially developed during the recent Indonesian occupation. While there is certainly scope to improve rice production in Timor-Leste, the archaeological record shows that farming practices have traditionally been based on diversity rather than exclusivity. The agricultural knowledge behind mixed-cropping systems has been important for achieving food security for Timorese families. Large-scale investment in the development and importing of single-crop systems, including cash-crops, risk the loss of such agricultural knowledge. This may prove fatal when new 'bad times' return.



Collecting modern plants

Wonderful, innovative conference that gave a voice to the people of the districts who usually lack access. Congratulations on pre-conference support to first-time presenters. Bring on the proceedings—so many good presentations that I want to read in full.

Participant

More 'white-boarding'/break out groups to garner local knowledge. A separate conference on economic development on what each district can offer and how they would like to develop, if it all.

Participant

Urban Development in Timor-Leste

João Soares Reis Pequinho, Forum Tau Matan

This article will emphasise the connection between urban development and housing rights. From the perspective of Timor-Leste, these two things interact in a way that is interlinked with the concept of urban development and the quality of life of urban communities.

In Timor-Leste, one disaster is the urban development program that uses policy language rather than technical language. Timor-Leste does not yet have any policy on urban planning, does not yet have any policy on housing and doesn't have a master plan. This means that although many things are discussed, the objectives are never reached. The national objective that is written in the constitution (see article 6) guarantees social justice, promotes development in all sectors and guarantees women and men have the same opportunities. The point of view of *Forum Tau Matan* (FTM) is that the state needs to create housing policy, urban planning policy, create a master plan and other things. This is important as the government needs a pathway with a clear vision in order to fulfil some of the nation's objectives. It is also important that the state allocates general budget to the sectors that are important and a priority.

This article also emphasises that the housing situation in Timor-Leste is a disaster. Why? After the restoration of independence on 20 May 2002, there were many efforts from all sectors, including the international community, to improve the human rights situation in-country. Despite this, the living conditions of the general population remained poor. The condition of the community's housing can be used as a general measuring tool to describe that rural development in Timor-Leste has not seen any significant change. The 2005 Sector Investment Program (SIP) shows that of the total number of houses in urban areas only 58 per cent are made from permanent materials, 82 per cent of houses in urban areas in Dili don't have 24-hour access to clean water, 24 per cent of urban houses in Dili don't have toilet facilities, and also 40 per cent of houses in the districts don't have access to toilet facilities.⁷¹ After releasing the results of the Popular Consultation on 30 August 1999, the pro-Indonesia militia movement destroyed approximately 68,000 houses (or 40 per cent of the total houses that existed at that time), leaving many people living in destroyed or scorched houses, much property and documents were lost.⁷² Housing is an essential part of development that guarantees each person's dignity. Adequate housing is not just about a roof, pillars and foundations. Housing is essential for people to live with good health, satisfactory psychological condition, privacy, physical and psychological protection, and with the ability to engage in social activities that encourage human relations. The final development is that housing must be considered an economic function that guarantees that people can undertake commercial activity.

The 2006–2007 crisis left approximately 150,000 people displaced from their homes, and 5,000 houses were burnt down or destroyed during this conflict.⁷³ The government has responded to this situation through providing compensation funding of between \$500 and \$4,500 for each house that was registered as having been damaged during the crisis.⁷⁴ This social compensation funding program successfully returned the displaced population back to their houses. Despite this, however, there were many cases of fraud during the verification process, particularly regarding allegations of corruption that suggest rural development is still facing various challenges.

Good urban planning requires an injection from leaders who want to begin by reorienting the focus of urban development policy. Through changing the orientation from horizontal to vertical

⁷¹ Minister of Planning and Finance, *Overview of Sector Investment Programs*, Timor-Leste April 2005.

⁷² *ibid.*

⁷³ International Crisis Group, *Timor-Leste's Displacement Crisis*, *Asia Report No. 148*, 31 March 2008, p.2.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, p.13.

development and reorganizing towards a way of working that requires collaboration between government ministries, international agencies for development, civil society and the private sector. This needs to be undertaken with commitment, the key value being equal distribution and sustainable planning. The role of the individual and institutional leaders is important to establish and agenda to develop urban development policy and look for support to guarantee its implementation.

National policy regarding housing is the key guarantee that there is a strategy in place to ensure that every person or family can access adequate housing. There is a general vision that a policy on urban planning and housing is the key to fulfil the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the national development plan of Timor-Leste. This communal vision has become the way to manage the international communities budgeting policy in Timor-Leste. The international community, through the United Nations agencies and cooperative funding bodies, financially support Timor-Leste with the objective of rural development and often emphasise rural development in Timor-Leste in line with the MDG objectives.

In closing, it needs to be emphasised that the vision for the future is that rural development progresses at the same time as urban development, ending with decentralisation of administrative roles and responsibilities. Thus, housing must be a priority agenda that the government needs to integrate with different municipal administrations. Despite this, there has been no policy or integrated program regarding rural development, no policy on basic security issues with particular emphasis on increasing the quality and quantity of varieties of local produce, and there has been no national policy on housing. If the government doesn't pay attention to these things Timor-Leste will continue to go down a development path that has no certainty with regards to where or how it will finish.

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Launch of RMIT University's 'Understanding Community' Report



Presentation by Dinorah S. X. Granadeiro

The Road Problem in Manufahi District

Domingos Rodrigues, Manufahi

In Manufahi district there is a significant problem with roads. The majority of them are in disrepair and are difficult to use. The road problem in Manufahi district affects several things: it is difficult to travel quickly to places that are far away, it is difficult to get access to public transport, the community uses a lot of time walking to places and sometimes must sleep by the road. All these things have an impact on the economy, education, health, security and development in Manufahi district.

The road problem makes it difficult for the community to access the market. Communities in the mountains or in the *suku* find it challenging to take the local produce quickly to the market in Dili. Much of the community in the districts, particularly in rural areas, have various potential ways of earning a good income each year. However, because of the infrastructure problem, particularly the bad roads, it is difficult for the community to access markets. Local produce that is available every year does not have any value if it cannot reach the market because people don't have good access to transport.

Health has also become a big problem because of the bad roads. This makes it difficult for people to take emergency cases quickly to the health centre. It's difficult to attend to people who are sick, and women who are about to give birth. It is indeed difficult to access the clinic or health centre there. This results in many people dying.

Another problem that occurs from the bad roads for those who live in rural areas is that it is difficult for companies to get tenders or to have access to new construction projects. This has an impact on the construction of school offices, clinics, the *suku* headquarters and clean water. There is no progress regarding these things. The road problem also affects the circulation of transport that could access these development processes. Experiences shows that in some *suku* in Manufahi district, the development and construction process can not be realised because of infrastructural problems, particularly the roads. These problems have occurred in *suku* such as: Taitudak-Manus, Aituha, Orana, Mindeilu, Grotu, Bubususu and Fahinehan. For example, last year there was a problem that occurred with the *suku* offices in the whole territory of Manufahi district because there was no transport. Also when the community at the base level went to get access to clean water in their *suku*, it was difficult for them to carry the water bottles back, using valuable time on ensuring that they had access to water.

There are many other problems created when a road is in disrepair and when bridges that can no longer be used, such as the impact on education. Every year there is always a case of a child being swept away in a river when they are on their way to school because there is no bridge, or it has fallen down. When the rivers are high, parents who live in the mountains also cannot take food to their children who board at their schools. Finally, when we consider security, this is also a significant threat because of the



Domingos Rodrigues

bad roads. If there is a problem in a *suku*, such as people fighting or burning down houses, it is difficult for the police to go quickly to the place where the incident occurred.

From these things we can see that the condition of the roads has many impacts on the communities everyday life in rural areas. Perhaps for some people problems such as roads is just a small issue. However, for people who live in these places, this point is extremely important. Considering this from the point of physical development, particularly roads in remote areas or generally in *suku*, the East Timorese state must pay attention and improve development, particularly in rural areas.

I think that the themes of the conference are important and relevant to the situation faced in Timor-Leste. These themes were thought-provoking for us East Timorese. It began with the government, civil society and all communities across Timor-Leste who revised and thought back on what is moving forward and what is not, and reflected on the benefits and challenges of this. I also noted that this conference involved people from all 13 districts as presentors/panelists and participants. I think that the system that was used was very good because its objective was to promote those of us from the districts and sub-districts. There have been many conferences run in Timor-Leste with many different themes, however, when I have participated I have noted that many of the participants are from Dili, and the panellists are also from Dili (national level) and overseas. However, I think that this conference is the first of its kind in Timor-Leste, that has involved us from the districts as panellists or presenters.

This conference has also provided great benefits for all East Timorese, government, and civil society together with international agencies as we have looked at the future of Timor-Leste. Like we all heard during the conference, the questions that came from the participants show that in the future the government needs to repair it's systems and mechanisms so that everyone can have access to what is good and right. This conference provided a way that all people could participate and develop in order to contribute to the nation-building process. This conference is also a way of showing us how to develop our nation-building in Timor-Leste across the urban and the rural.

I am a presenter who has received encouragement from RMIT University together with the NGO Forum (FONGTIL) to become a panellist at this conference. I thought that I couldn't be a presenter at this conference. When I went up to the plenary session table I felt scared. However, I could, and I participated in the plenary session until it finished. I managed to respond to the questions from participants according to what I know and my capacity, and this shows that I can.

Upon reflection on my participation I made lots of friends, friends who come from other districts such as Dili, Aileu, Ainaro, Bobonaro, Baucau, Liquica, Lospalos, Viqueque, Suai, Same, Oecusse and Ermera. I was the only one from Manatuto District. I feel sad because until today we in Manatuto are not yet ready to move forward in order to develop ourselves and participate in the nation-building process. Based on this reason and the conditions there I represented the community, in particular the women of Manatuto. I ask you all to come to our homes to give motivation and courage to us so that we can prepare ourselves, so that we can also move forward together with our colleagues to participate in, and contribute to, nation-building.

I hope that in the future there are opportunities to go to the international community so that we can reflect with the international community about our perspectives on nation-building. I also hope that in the future civil society works closely with the international community in co-operation with the RDTL government to manage the challenges we are facing today.

Eugenia Neves da Costa, Manatutu

Local Government Reform in Timor-Leste: Challenges of Democratic Empowerment and Good Governance

Dennis Shoesmith⁷⁵

The government of Timor-Leste has introduced laws in 2009 that are intended to progressively decentralise a range of public services that presently are controlled by a highly centralised state system.⁷⁶ Existing districts and subdistricts will be replaced by a single tier of municipalities governed by municipal assemblies and run by mayors, a new executive position. At the *suku* (village) level, the legislation changes the composition and responsibilities of *suco* councils and the election and role of the *xefe-suku* (village chief). Local government reform is critical for the building of democratic consensus in Timor-Leste. Democratic engagement in local governance is not only desirable; in the case of Timor-Leste, it may well be essential for the viability of the state.

As the political collapse of 2006 demonstrated, Timor-Leste is a fragile state, and potentially a failed one. Given that the national leadership clearly does not have the capacity to impose political order by force, government must rely on a democratic consensus. The evidence is that this does not yet exist. What Joel S. Migdal has called 'normative solidarity'—the identification of the people with a national community⁷⁷—has not developed in Timor-Leste. Local communities are deeply divided over their perception of the legitimacy of the current government.⁷⁸ A successful decentralisation program involving genuine local decision-making and the delivery of needed public services would significantly build 'normative solidarity'; a failed program will further undermine it. This paper offers a preliminary assessment of the opportunities and risks of the model of decentralisation set out in the legislation and the reforms that are to be introduced starting with the *suku* elections in October 2009 and the first four municipal elections in December.



Dennis Shoesmith

⁷⁵ Dennis Shoesmith is Associate Professor of Politics at Charles Darwin University. He has been a consultant in Timor-Leste with the United Nations (2000-2001) and with USAID (2004) and was an occasional adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation there in 2005-2006. His current research is concerned with democratic governance and political reform in Timor-Leste.

⁷⁶ Fragile as it is, the state is highly centralised. Under the constitutional model adapted from Portugal, the system of a single national electorate with no local electorates gives members of parliament little encouragement to be accountable to specific local demands. Government activity has been concentrated in the capital, Dili. The adoption of Portuguese as the official language of government disengages a population who don't understand Portuguese.

⁷⁷ Joel S. Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001, p. 5.

⁷⁸ A recent study by Higashi confirms that there is no democratic consensus yet established in Timor-Leste. The study found a partisan divide with regard to the legitimacy of the current AMP government. Large majorities in western districts where the AMPs supporters are concentrated accept the government as legitimate; while large majorities in eastern districts, where Fretilin is supported, deny the legitimacy of the government. Daisaku Higashi, *The Challenge of Constructing Legitimacy in Peacebuilding: Case of Timor-Leste*, Centre of International Relations Working Paper no.48, March 2009.

Background to the Reforms

Local government reform in Timor-Leste is driven by the constitutional requirement for the decentralisation of public administration. This is one of the fundamental principles set out in the Constitution, and it recognises the need to overcome the limits of a highly centralised but low capacity state system in order to respond to local needs that until now have been neglected. Both the Fretilin government led by Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri and its successor, the Parliamentary Majority Alliance (AMP) government led by Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, have recognised the importance of local government reform. In this they have been strongly encouraged by international development agencies, and the current model of local government reform is the outcome of collaboration between the East Timorese Government, the Government of Norway, Irish Aid, UNCDF and the UNDP. Engaging local communities in democratic local government, however, is a major challenge in Timor-Leste, and since independence in 2002 political leaders have struggled to establish not only a working democracy but a functioning state.⁷⁹ The focus of international donor attempts to rescue Timor-Leste from state failure has been on reconstructing central state institutions such as the national parliament and the ministries, the judicial system and the national police.⁸⁰ At the same time there has been a parallel international concern with promoting democratic governance. This has involved programs such as the strengthening parliamentary democracy project conducted by UNDP.⁸¹ In this context the local government reforms implemented in 2009 signal an attempt to correct the preoccupation with the centre, and to recognise the critical role of the 'periphery' in state-building.

This notion of a centre and periphery within the East Timorese state is employed by David Hicks, who describes the 'hegemonic nature' of the central state, detached from the great majority of



Question from the audience



Every paper at the conference had a simultaneous translation.

79 The country has experienced major political crises, including threatening episodes of armed rebellion, the attempted assassination of the president and prime minister, and violent communal conflict. In this, the East Timorese have been subjected to a pattern of violence and incipient state failure that has occurred in almost half the world's new post-conflict states. See Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler and Måns Söderbom, *Post-Conflict Risk*, Centre for the Study of African Economies, Oxford, 2006 and Paul Collier and Nicholas Sambanis, *Understanding Civil War: Evidence and Analysis*, World Bank, Washington, 2005.

80 This is discussed by Andrew Rosser, 'Rebuilding Governance in Failed States: The Case of Timor-Leste', in Wil Hout and Richard Robison, eds, *Governance and the Depoliticisation of Development*, Routledge, London and New York, 2009, pp. 169-172.

81 United Nations Development Programme, *Strengthening Parliamentary Democracy in Timor-Leste*, Project Document, UNDP, Dili, 2006.

East Timorese located in the 'periphery'.⁸² Seen from the local community in the *suku*, the state and its central government must appear mostly remote and indifferent. About half of the East Timorese population lives below the upper poverty line and a third below the extreme poverty line. Poverty actually significantly increased between 2001 and 2007, reflecting the stagnation of the non-oil economy.⁸³ For the large majority of rural subsistence farming communities, civil society assumes local, East Timorese forms.⁸⁴ The state in Timor-Leste then suffers from a cultural as well as a political dichotomy.

The Program for Decentralisation in Timor-Leste

The Fretilin government began working on a framework for local government reform in 2003 but only began to move to implement the program in 2006. The political crisis of that year and the change of government following the 2007 elections interrupted the process. After reconsidering the model, the AMP government released policy guidelines in March 2008 that set out the basic model to be established by legislation.⁸⁵ Three laws were drafted and approved by the Council of Ministers in February, 2009. The legislation varies in some significant respects from the model set out in the March 2008 policy guidelines, and consists of a Law on Administrative and Territorial Division, a Law on Local Government, and a Law on Municipal Elections. It should be noted that these are decree laws drawn up by the Council of Ministers and not laws initiated by the National Parliament (although in this case the laws were submitted to the National Parliament for approval after passing the Council of Ministers). In June 2009 the Law on Local Elections was finally submitted to President Horta for promulgation, who considered a veto but ultimately referred the law to the Court of Appeal for a judgement on the constitutionality of its electoral provisions. On 7 July 2009 the Court upheld the constitutionality of the law.

The decentralisation program identifies three main objectives. The first of these is to 'promote the institutions of a strong, legitimate and stable state across the territory of Timor-Leste'. The second is to promote 'opportunities for local democratic participation by all citizens'; the third to promote 'more effective, efficient and equitable public service delivery for the social and economic development of the country'.⁸⁶ The key operational question regarding the new model is which level of government will perform which tasks? This is the issue of 'functional assignment', the division of responsibilities and functions between levels of government. A clear and proper assignment of governmental functions between national and municipal and *suku* actors is essential. Lack of clarity and inadequate support and autonomy for sub-national actors will cause confusion, duplication and little or no actual decentralisation of decision-making and service delivery.

Within the legislation, decentralisation is defined as a policy 'undertaken to transfer powers and responsibilities from the central authorities to sub-national (regional and local) offices and officials'.⁸⁷ Different models of decentralisation involve different degrees of a transfer of actual powers. Devolution

82 David Hicks, 'Centre and Periphery in Contemporary Timor-Leste', paper delivered at the Nation-Building across Urban and Rural Timor-Leste, Gender, Peace, Security, Development and Governance, Dili, 8-10 July, 2009.

83 World Bank and Directorate of National Statistics, *Timor-Leste: Poverty in a Young Nation*, Dili, November, 2008, p.3. That most East Timorese have experienced declining living standards since independence makes the spreading issue of corruption a source of serious public disaffection.

84 Customary law and local adjudication of disputes continue to operate and while this provides a social support, the localisation of identity has its costs. The communal violence of 2006-2007 revealed that social identity is still determined less by membership of the national community than by older, local loyalties.

85 Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management, *Decentralization and Local Government in Timor-Leste, Policy Orientation Guidelines for Decentralization and Local Government in Timor-Leste*, Dili, March 2008.

86 *ibid.*

87 República Democrática de Timor-Leste, *Law Proposal no. ---/08* as of August, Law on Local Government, Article 2, definition of terms. The model merely involves transferring some functions from the centre to officials still attached to central ministries of agencies. This model by itself transfers no rights and responsibilities to municipal assemblies or *suco* chiefs and councils. Delegation involves the transfer of at least some central government responsibilities to municipal government but under the regulatory control of Dili.

is the form of decentralisation in which power and responsibilities, in specific policy and service areas, are transferred to local government. This is political or democratic decentralisation where actual decision-making and control of a budget are taken over by local elected representatives.⁸⁸ In this case, municipal assemblies are granted the competency to 'approve plans and budgets covering the sectors for which they have been assigned responsibility'.⁸⁹ What this will mean in practice will depend upon the detail set out in subsidiary laws that will be needed to define the role of the municipalities.⁹⁰ What is planned is 'customised decentralisation' — case-by-case decisions about the role of municipal assemblies that possibly may vary from one to the other. The key issue will be control of budgets. Municipalities appear to have no authority to impose taxes, and will be dependent upon budgets granted (and controlled by) the government.⁹¹ It remains to be seen what degree of autonomy the central line ministries and the Ministry of Finance, in particular, will be prepared to concede.

Building Normative Solidarity?

To what extent will the reforms promote 'normative solidarity'? The Law on Municipal Elections, approved by the Council of Ministers in February 2009, installs a proportional voting system and requires that candidates for election must appear on political party lists.⁹² This will necessarily entangle the municipal assemblies in national party politics and introduce national political rivalries into municipal politics. The legislation, unlike the model proposed in 2008, removes representation on the municipal assembly of representatives of the *sukus* through indirect election.⁹³

The local government reform program provides a critical opportunity to engage the people of Timor-Leste in democratic governance in a way that has been denied them in a centralised and fragile state system. To a significant degree, the great majority of citizens do not inhabit the political domain of the nation-state. The evidence is that many are alienated from the state, question its legitimacy, and seek identity in local domains. The new system is one that will be phased in through a process of 'customised decentralisation' and it is not yet clear what the final model will be. But the weakening of the proposed 2008 model in the introduced legislation, and the injection of national party politics into the municipal election process, is discouraging. Mismanaged, the new municipalities pose the risk of imposing simply another layer of potentially inert bureaucracy and patronage politics on local communities; and creating new, regional elites of potentially corrupt municipal politicians.

88 This was the model broadly proposed in the *2008 Policy Orientation Guidelines for Timor-Leste*. Changes to the proposed model in the 2009 Law on Local Government make the commitment to democratic devolution far less certain.

89 República Democrática de Timor-Leste, *Law Proposal no. ---/08* as of August, Law on Local Government, Article 8:a

90 Miguel de Crvalho, Director of the National Directorate of Local Government and Territorial Management, quoted in 'Devolution or Delegation: Eight Ministries Discuss how to Transfer Function to Municipalities', *Local Governance Monthly Bulletin*, vol. II, Edition III, March 2009.

91 *Comments on the Draft Decentralization Laws of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste*, The Asia Foundation Timor Leste, prepared for The Committee A, National Parliament, 31 March, 2009.

92 Lei Eleitoral Municipal (Municipal Election Law), Draft, Council of Ministers, 18 February, 2009, Articles 11, 12, 13. The decision was for closed, not open, party lists, denying voters the right to elect preferred individual candidates. Party lists must include at least one woman for each set of three candidates.

93 This was set out in the *Policy Orientation Guidelines for Decentralization and Local Government in Timor-Leste*, 2.2.1, March 2008. The legislation also removes the proposed right of the *sukos* to submit policy issues to the municipal assemblies.

Social Conflicts and the Ethic of Reciprocity in Timor-Leste⁹⁴

Kelly Silva, University of Brasilia

Introduction

My objective in this short text is to analyse the discourses that marked certain political disputes between the East Timorese elites since the restoration of independence, with the aim of identifying one of the moral principles that runs across them. From an approach of the narratives that structured the dimensions of the 2006 crisis, the collision between the Fretilin government and the Catholic Church in 2005 and the presidential election in 2007, I suggest that an ethic of reciprocity is structuring the Timorese contemporary political culture. In such a moral economy, suffering serves to underpin unity. By an 'ethic of reciprocity', I mean the expectation of conduct anchored on the maxim of necessary compensation for goods and services made available by diverse social agents. Society can be built or restored upon this ethic.



Kelly Silva

The 2006 crisis

Diverse analyses of the 2006 crisis have indicated the complexity regarding its actors and their entanglements (Harrington 2007; Devant 2008; Scambary 2009). Its origins date back to the history of East Timorese resistance against the Indonesian occupation and the disputes that followed the conquest of the country's independence, whether in the domain of institutionalised policies or in the practices of daily sociality amongst the population of Dili. For the analytical aims herein proposed, I take on two speeches considered fundamental in their ramifications: 1) that conveyed by the petitioners in which it was suggested the existence of discrimination within F-FDTL; 2) the speech of then president Xanana Gusmão in July 2006. The importance of such speeches came not only from their content but also from their disruptive power given the effects they produced.

Part of the 2006 crisis was triggered by protests from approximately one-third of the F-FDTL contingent made up by men of *loromonu* origins. The petitioners—as they were called a posteriori—stated being victims of discrimination within the organisation in function of their regional origins. They reported then that some of their colleagues and superior commanders—of *lorosa'e* origin—claimed that the *loromonu* had not fought or

94 I would like this text to be taken as a summary of arguments duly explored in the article 'Reciprocity, recognition and suffering: Political mobilisers in Independent East Timor', published in No. 5.2 of the *Virtual Brazilian Anthropology* and available through the following link: http://www.vibrant.org.br/downloads/v5n2_silva.pdf

suffered as much as the *lorosa'e* for the cause of independence, something which supposedly justified the restricted access to career promotions for the *loromonu*. The president's first public reaction to such a speech was marked by the assertion that the resistance's past should not be taken into consideration in the organisation's dynamics. Notwithstanding, many of the narratives elaborated subsequently with the aim of controlling the crisis proposed that the engagement of the populations of *lorosa'e* and *loromonu* origin in the resistance struggle had been equanimous, so that there was not nor should there be any unequal treatment.

Leaving aside for now the issue of the likeness of such speeches, it is important to note that in the narratives that sought to legitimise the petitioners' quest, as in those that sought to answer them, the logic of reciprocity was self-imposing. From the petitioner's side, the ethic of reciprocity was that which gave sense to the supposed discrimination that victimised them. Among the state authorities, there was denial of such discrimination suggesting that there was no reason for it given that every Timorese, from east to west, had engaged themselves equally in the resistance.

Subsequently, on June 22, 2006 and having taken sides with the petitioners, Xanana Gusmão went on television and made a powerful speech. In response to the results of Fretilin's congress in which Alkatiri and his group's leadership had been re-established, Xanana brought to the public events that had marked the resistance's history. He stated then that those who controlled Fretilin had in recent times returned from abroad. These figures, having spent the occupation years studying in Mozambique, were, according to Xanana, more interested in occupying leadership positions than dealing with ordinary people's suffering. He contrasted such figures with himself, who fought the resistance in the jungle. He also attributed to Fretilin's leadership statements extremely degrading to sectors of the population. In this context, Xanana repeated that the *loromonu* personnel in F-FDTL were being looked upon as 'sons of militias'. Xanana was promoting the spread of the perception, politically exploited a few years back, that those leading the government insulted, offended and disrespected the people. They did not value in the same way the whole population's commitment in the resistance against the Indonesian occupation, having instead benefited themselves from their condition as exiled.

The experience from exile among those who at the time occupied Fretilin's leadership was used by Xanana as a great political mobiliser to weaken them. This experience was symbolically transmuted into an indicator of illegitimate privilege given the supposed lack of gifts by the same towards nation-building, in the form of suffering and sacrifices. To the Fretilin returnees is also attributed the lack of correct recognition of the sacrifices



Balbina and Carmenesa Moniz Noronha with the 'Understanding Community' report



The RMIT team with community representatives launching the 'Understanding Community' report

made by the whole population, something which the alleged positive discrimination by the *lorosa'e* personnel in F-FDTL would be indicative of. The ethic of reciprocity is structuring in such political disputes. It is by its means that Xanana seeks to mobilise support to weaken Fretilin's leadership, undeserved of the position occupied by reason of not having suffered during the occupation as him and other compatriots had suffered.

Education and Election

In 2005, facing the government's project to turn religion into an optional subject, the highest levels of the Catholic Church's hierarchy in Timor-Leste presented their institution as the true trustee of the population's torment during the Indonesian occupation. In this context, they sought to weaken the government's proposal by suggesting that the most powerful group within it, the returnees from Mozambique under the leadership of Mari Alkatiri, had not suffered next to the people and was, therefore, illegitimate.⁹⁵

It was also the moral economy of the gift that structured the quest for votes in the Timorese electoral campaigns of 2007, during which the suffering operated as a unit of value, a source of fundamental political legitimacy. A common trace of the candidates in campaigns was the constant reference to the suffering (*terus*) and difficulties (*susar*) of the East Timorese, in the past and present. In such contexts, Timor-Leste was emerging, above all, as a political community of suffering. The evoking of suffering appeared during the campaigns in association with calls for correct recognition, which the vote should be an expression of. In this context, the candidates sought to objectify their respective trajectories of pain and sacrifice, especially during the Indonesian occupation, as symbolic capital that filled them with dignity, and which entitled them to receive the trust (*fian*) and the people's votes.

Conclusion

A significant part of the ethnology produced about the populations that inhabit the social and political boundaries of what we call today Timor-Leste highlights the centrality of the principles of allegiance and reciprocity in various dimensions of the dynamics that shape their social lives (Fox 1980). Through such perspective, the configuration of repertoire that marks the above discussed disputes can be seen as the actualising effect of this ideology. In this process, the clashes for access to the modern state institutions are structured by means of the transmission of values dear to the universe of villages, creating conditions for the actualisation of the same. However, such phenomenon does not occur without creative action. The scenarios produced means of the meeting of modern morality and the ethic of reciprocity in Timor-Leste are, therefore, being invented and awaiting future analysis.



Frederica Rosa and Raquela Rosa Belo welcoming conference participants



Markito Cardoso and Teresa de Jesus Fernandes

⁹⁵ Silva, Kelly C. 2007. 'A Bíblia como Constituição ou a Constituição como Bíblia?' *Horizontes Antropológicos* v. 13, pp. 213-235. Available at the following link: <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/ha/v13n27/v13n27a10.pdf>

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'The Last Resistance Generation': The Reintegration of Freedom Fighters to Civilians in Timor-Leste

Jose Kai Lekke Sousa-Santos

The process of nation-building is a notoriously exclusive exercise despite the often used but ill-exercised catch-cry 'principle of participation'. The reality tends to be that the best intentions of the members of the international community often create an environment in which elements of the new society are sequestered to the margins. In the case of Timor Leste, these elements are mostly comprised of the last generation of freedom fighters to form the resistance movement and armed struggle against the Indonesian occupation. Referred to here as 'the last resistance generation', this paper advances the argument that the failure to reintegrate and transform elements of this young demographic—many of whom are disenfranchised, unemployed, and poorly educated—has been a critical but not unforeseen oversight of 10 years of nation-building.

The failure to reintegrate and transform the last resistance generation is a paramount issue which continues to be and, in the worst case scenario, has the potential to remain, one of the central dynamics of instability in the process of nation-building and security sector reform (SSR). The best case scenario is that this issue will remain a fundamental socio-economic challenge to the current and future leaders who will be responsible for the critical tasks of nation- and state-building in this complex state. This paper examines the lack of a holistic approach towards the reintegration and transformation of former informal and formal resistance groups, leading to the marginalisation and disenfranchisement of this significant demographic. It highlights past and current initiatives by both the Timor-Leste state and international agencies to reintegrate former recognised independence fighters into society, as well as unrecognised or uncategorised members of the resistance movement; and considers methods which might be employed to positively transform and engage this invaluable, albeit potentially destabilising, demographic.

A large number of the individuals and groups referred to here as 'the last resistance generation' gained international notoriety as a consequence of the 2006 crisis. An underlying theme of this paper is captured in the words of one such prominent figure, who asked 'are we forgotten heroes or bandidos?' He continued, 'if they continue to call us bandidos, we will show them bandidos'. The attitudes sometimes shown by international security forces, United Nations Police, and certain INGOs, means that the inadvertent demonisation of these former heroes of the struggle for independence continues to occur, so entrenching a culture of marginalisation.



Jose Kai Lekke Sousa-Santos

Ten Years On

Timor-Leste now faces the same central predicament that most nations emerging out of war or civil strife experience: how does the state integrate into the new nation-state those who fought or actively supported the struggle for independence and self-determination? Ten years of internationally managed or assisted initiatives have yet to resolve this fundamental issue, and key grievances of this demographic remain only partially addressed. Many of the youth who fought or were actively engaged in the struggle for independence in Timor-Leste—the last resistance generation—remain unacknowledged and are not included or able to fully participate in the economic, educational and state development accessible to many. This is due mainly to the trauma which these young men and women experienced during the Indonesian occupation from 1975 to 1999. Moreover, during the 10 years since the referendum, the opinions and solutions espoused by many well-meaning countries, humanitarian agencies, and international NGOs, on how to build the national security infrastructure⁹⁶, have failed to fully take into account the historical and socio-cultural complexities of post-independence Timor-Leste. Hundreds of thousands of dollars and countless man-hours have been spent addressing the issue of security sector reform as part of the broader nation-building exercise—issues deemed by international stakeholders to be paramount to the future stability of an emerging democracy in Timor-Leste. This paper does not advocate an across-the-board solution to all these problems but rather seeks to address what East Timorese NGOs advocating for disenfranchised youth and disaffected groups⁹⁷ have flagged as one of the key critical issues yet to be addressed and resolved.

The Marginalisation and Disenfranchisement of the 'Last Resistance Generation'

What is here being termed 'the last resistance generation' comprises a complex mix of countless remnants consisting of young former FALINTIL fighters, ritual arts groups and semi-religious sects, of secret societies and clandestine youth cells incorporated into the structures of martial arts organisations. All were critical components of the resistance and independence movement which now, 10 years on from the referendum, continue to struggle with issues regarding cultural and national identity, deep-seated trauma, the loss associated with no longer fulfilling a vital role in society, and a fundamental sense of not belonging in mainstream civil society. The ongoing marginalisation of the last resistance generation by, and from, the process of nation-building underway in Timor-Leste since 1999 reflects a failure to genuinely acknowledge and address the historical role that many young Timorese played in the fight for independence, and threatens to undermine contemporary state-building efforts. Issues of marginalisation and disenfranchisement are by no means exclusive to this particular category of people, however, the social inclusion of the last resistance generation—by which I mean their participation and not just their representation—is of critical concern in the context of both security sector reform and national development.

One of the critical and largely unaddressed consequences of the occupation is the widespread trauma experienced by those engaged both directly and indirectly in the struggle for independence. Severe and untreated post-traumatic stress disorder has led to the elements who have contributed to the struggle being left at a disadvantage, while the section of the youth demographic which was

96 The earliest and most influential of which was the King's College of London, 'Independent Study of Security Force Options and Security Sector Reform for East Timor,' The Centre for Defence Studies, King's College, London, September 2000. For a recent critique of security sector reform initiatives, see International Crisis Group, 'Timor-Leste: Security Sector Reform,' *Crisis Group Asia Report*, no. 143, 17 January 2008.

97 Such as the national NGO Uma Juventude

not involved in the struggle for independence was able to pursue and access a semi-normal life, for example, through educational, employment, and health care opportunities. Access to opportunities has better enabled this demographic to more easily integrate into an independent Timor-Leste and thereby overcome a certain level of trauma. Those who have little or no experience beyond the jungle, and minimal opportunity to develop their skills beyond that of guerrilla warfare, civil disturbances, and the instigation of instability during the occupation, now find themselves at a loss with regards to an identity, skill-sets, and a place and means through which to contribute to a now-independent Timor-Leste. The lack of opportunity and sense of not belonging, compounded by post-traumatic stress disorder, can manifest in deep-seated resentment and the continuing possibility that these groups will be a source of political and civil instability.

The young women and men who played such a critical role during the final years of the struggle for independence now feel marginalised and discriminated against due to the lack of recognition for both their roles during the resistance struggle, and the subsequent loss of opportunities in education and socio-economic prosperity. A singularly common denominator—and occasionally unifying factor—amongst the majority of individuals and elements within these groups scattered throughout urban and rural Timor-Leste is the poverty of opportunity they have experienced and an overriding sense of not belonging. The largest demographic within Timor-Leste's population is our youth, and it is no coincidence that up to two-thirds of East Timorese youth are either directly involved with or affiliated to martial arts, ritual arts or disaffected groups. The 2006 crisis demonstrated the potential for volatility amongst this last resistance generation, and pointed to a potent combination of factors—unintegrated, sometimes traumatised ex-fighters, and a young and potentially militant population. This uncompromising security landscape needs to be understood and engaged with by stakeholders, not demonised or further marginalised. This often feared demographic could, and should, become Timor-Leste's greatest resource.

Early DDDR Initiatives

Despite early efforts in disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and rehabilitation (DDRR) programs, many young former FALINTIL remain at the margins of society. Over 1,000 former FALINTIL fighters went through the reintegration program, but thousands of others remained dissatisfied with their treatment and the manner in which the new army had been established.⁹⁸ In 2001 this dissatisfaction led to the creation of a number of veterans' organisations and, in December 2002, to riots.⁹⁹ Former FALINTIL fighters under the age of 35 who do not qualify to be considered as veterans under current government legislation are to a large extent uneducated, lacking in vocational skills, and suffering from extensive post-traumatic stress disorder. Those who were not integrated into the newly-formed defence or police forces, for instance—mainly due to high levels of post-traumatic stress disorder and/or the lack of educational skills, such as literacy and numeracy—are relegated to accepting menial positions in the very state that they have sacrificed so much to create.

One of the first formal attempts at reintegrating former Independence fighters was the FALINTIL Reinsertion Assistance Program (FRAP), developed in 2000 under the UNTAET administration, which attempted to assist in the social and economic reintegration into civilian society of the 1,308 guerrilla fighters not selected to join the new East Timor Defence Force. The program provided each ex-guerrilla with a package consisting of transport to their host communities, a transitional safety net of USD500 provided over a five-month period, a reintegration package or income-generating activity, training, as well as job and medical referrals. In focussing on the provision of initial support to the

98 For a critical evaluation of the Falintil Reinsertion Assistance Program, see John McCarthy, 'Falintil Reinsertion Assistance Program (FRAP), A Final Evaluation Report', USAID, Dili, June 2002.

99 'East Timor at flashpoint as disillusionment sets in,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 December 2002.

former combatants, however, the program did not offer a long-term solution, and did not engage or guarantee participation in the broader nation-building process.¹⁰⁰

Subsequent to this, the Alkatiri/Fretilin Government created a secretary of state for veteran's affairs and undertook the registering of veterans with the intention of granting pensions.¹⁰¹ The caveat, however, is that only 350 veterans with service of 15 years or more will receive monthly payments calculated at USD407 (\$100 more a month than the public service salary). Veterans who have served eight to 14 years only become eligible to receive a pension after the age of 55. Many young fighters experiencing difficulties in accessing employment, education and vocational training, feel this to be unjust and discriminatory.

The transition from combatant to civilian life is shaped by context, and any strategy which seeks to enact the transition, transformation and reintegration of former independence fighters in Timor-Leste must take into account the unique cultural, historical, and social fabric of the country. Particularly important to recognise is the role of traditional leadership and power structures within Timor-Leste, which include large numbers of former combatants and clandestine elements as central figures. The difficulties encountered in the identification and validation of members of the clandestine movement has meant that as yet, there have been no similar programmes or initiatives to address and support the needs of these former clandestine elements and groups. They, along with other unrecognised and marginalised elements of the Independence movement—including ritual art groups, cells and elements within martial arts groups—are at risk of morphing into disenfranchised and violent armed groups, organised criminal elements, or guns for hire.

A Source of Instability: Alternative Security Structures

The reintegration and transformation of young resistance veterans—including both FALINTIL and clandestine—into mainstream society is an essential component of nation-building and the mitigation of future conflict. It is little coincidence that a number of the martial arts and ritual arts groups involved in the 2006-07 violence have their origins in the clandestine and guerrilla



Discussion group formulating conference recommendations



Conference training at Dare, June 2009

100 McCarthy, 'Falintil Reinsertion Assistance. See also, Edward Rees, 'The UN's failure to integrate FALINTIL veterans may cause East Timor to fail,' *Online Opinion Australia*, 2 September 2003.

101 International Crisis Group, 'Timor-Leste: Security Sector Reform,' p.20.

movement. Strong affiliations to both of the respective national security institutions—the F-FDTL and PNTL—as well as to political parties and economic elites further necessitates the need for a comprehensive and holistic understanding of and approach towards the reintegration of past security and clandestine structures into the state apparatus. The moral authority and legitimacy which many of these groups established during the occupation mean that they pose a potential further challenge to the state, namely as an alternative source of authority to the state, and specifically to the security sector and administrative institutions at the local and national levels.

Where to from here?

The approach advocated in this paper is a far more holistic, comprehensive, and socially appropriate approach that challenges those involved in security sector reform—the Government, the United Nations, international security stakeholders and INGOs—to engage the last resistance generation not only in discussion but also in the security sector reform and nation-building processes themselves. Programs initiated by local East Timorese NGOs such as Uma Juventude, Ba Futuru, and many others, have selected as participants young leaders from groups such as 7-7, 5-5, 3-3, 12-12, Fitar bua Malus, PSHT, KORK, Colimau Duah Ribuh and Sagra da Familia, as well as Former FALINTIL fighters under the age of 35, giving them the opportunity to engage in intensive training in conflict mediation, peace-building, and nation-building techniques. After completion of these programs the majority of participants have shown their effectiveness as agents of conflict mediation and change both at the grass-roots and national levels.

Academics and practitioners alike need to think outside the box and utilise programmes such as those conducted within the wider Pacific region. Programs developed in response to conflicts in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands, for instance, gave young combatants the opportunity to experience possibilities beyond the jungle. In one case, the New Zealand Government invited leaders from the two warring factions in the protracted civil war in Bougainville on a study-tour of New Zealand where they were able to meet with Maori representatives and discuss traditional methods of maintaining nationhood and identity within a modern democratic state. This experience prompted a change of attitudes on the part of the leaders of these warring factions, created bonds and understanding between the leaders based on mutual experience, and opening their eyes to the possibilities and benefits of dealing with long-standing conflicts and animosity through peaceful means within cultures similar to their own. For other Bougainvilleans, this demonstrated possibilities for peaceably addressing the long-standing conflict between the province's self-determination movement and the Papua New Guinean state.

It is critical for the future peace and stability of Timor-Leste that all stakeholders involved in security sector reform—from the Timorese Government to the United Nations and all in between—ensure that increased engagement with the last resistance generation is prioritised. It is the reintegration and transformation of this group which holds the key to long-term security and stability in Timor Leste.

Understanding Community in Timor-Leste

The following article is an excerpt from pages 15 to 23 of the RMIT University report *Understanding Community: Security and Sustainability in Four Aldeia in Timor-Leste: Luha Oli, Nanu, Sarelari and Golgota*, by Damian Grenfell, Mayra Walsh, Carmenesa Moniz Noronha, Anna Trembath and Kym Holthouse, Globalism Research Centre, RMIT University, 2009. This report was launched during the conference and has been disseminated throughout Timor-Leste. For copies please visit www.timor-leste.org

Understanding Community

A young girl carrying two plastic jerry cans of water, one in each hand, walks along a rough dirt road. She makes this trip each day to a common water source in her *aldeia*, waiting for others at the site to fill up before walking back. Sometimes she walks there with a young neighbour, sometimes by herself, and she often enjoys listening to the older women talking together as they each wait to fill up their containers. On the way back she rests for a moment, and then places one of the containers on her head, balances it with her hand, and continues on to her home. The water is used by the household for cooking, washing plates, and for sanitation. She also needs to help find wood and to make the fire in the kitchen, to boil the water and to cook. She is 12 years old and she does this at least twice a day every day of the year.

Gathering water in this way is a scene that is repeated over and over again in contemporary Timor-Leste, in the communities of Nanu, Sarelari, Luha Oli and Golgota, and across the 13 districts that comprise the nation. In local communities, people are regularly seen undertaking a range of daily activities, such as walking to their gardens, working long days so as to prepare for planting, cleaning houses and sweeping yards, tending to animals, studying, washing clothes, extending and repairing homes, building an *uma lulik* or preparing for *adat* ceremonies, and walking home from mass.

As frequently as these kinds of activities occur, of people living, engaging, and interacting around day-to-day practices, these activities represent a Timor-Leste that is too often left out of analysis and consideration. Each of these activities, ostensibly simple to comprehend by themselves, provide important ways into understanding communities more generally. When understood as part of a social whole, the routines and patterns of such activities, along with how they intersect and link across one another, help us to begin to understand what is important to people and what is not, what activities dominate, who participates and how, what causes people concern, how groups of people see themselves, and what people believe. Importantly for this report, these kinds of activities provide a way into understanding how people thread their communities together.

Just as they are very different from each other, we do not assume that the four communities in this report—the *aldeia* of Nanu, Sarelari, Luha Oli and Golgota—are the same as or necessarily representative of all the communities in Timor-Leste. Nanu, in the sub-district of Fatumean in Covalima, is a Tetun Terik speaking community that directly borders with West Timor. Sarelari, on the other hand, is virtually at the other end of the country in Lautem, and is comprised of Sa Ani speakers, a language that was not even listed in the national census. Both of these communities are highly isolated and have very low levels of access to services. Luha Oli is in Venilale in the central highlands and is far less isolated in that it is situated on the road between Baucau and Viqueque. The *aldeia* of Golgota is situated on the outskirts of Dili and is ethno-linguistically far more diverse than the other three communities, has a greater range of availability of services, communications and electricity, and many people see themselves as being financially better off than their rural counterparts.

Central Concepts: Community, Sustainability and Security

In this study, 'community' is understood as a group or network of persons who are connected objectively to each other by relatively durable social relations that extend beyond immediate genealogical ties, and who mutually define that relationship subjectively as important to their social identity and social practice. By immediate genealogical ties, we mean those that constitute a family in the closest terms, such as parents and children. This is an important point as in this report it becomes clear that more extended forms of genealogy are central to how some forms of community are constituted in Timor-Leste.

With such a definition communities can come in various kinds, forms and sizes and are important to people in different ways and with different emphases. From our research in the four communities in this report, we found that the ways in which people feel a sense of connection to community arise via a wide range of factors. These include: the physical proximity of the community's members both in terms to each other and to non-members; the relative importance of place; a sense of historical continuity, often carried through oral discourse that outlives any individual members; markers of belonging, such as familial or kinship ties, origins, language, symbols and customary items; administrative structures and territorial borders, and the predominant modes of communication, transportation and economic integration.

In our attempt to determine what community meant to some people in Timor-Leste we did encounter, however, a significant challenge. Even in piloting this project, we were surprised to find that at times people had difficulty with this term. We used the Portuguese-influenced Tetun word '*komunidade*' which, despite its common usage in Dili especially at an institutional level, we discovered did not always make clear sense to people. There was not, however, another Tetun word that we or any indigenous speakers consulted could identify that is equivalent to the concept of 'community'.

It is worth pausing to reflect upon why the word '*komunidade*' may have on occasion lacked purchase. If the use of words is often based on needs, then one possible explanation is that as a word 'community' is used by those who require a more abstract category so as to navigate the regular movements made across and between different social groupings. In other words, a term such as community is required by those who have greater mobility to move across landscapes and a need to reflect on what different groupings of people might mean, such as in other societies where there are much more mobile workforces. However, for those with lower levels of mobility, there is perhaps much less of a need for an overarching category in that different forms of community are experienced in a deeply ingrained and natural way and known by particular sets of names, such as *knua*, *aldeia*, *suku* and so forth.¹⁰²

While this report seeks to give a strong sense of what life is like in four different *aldeia* across Timor-Leste, the information here is framed around two key themes, namely 'sustainability' and 'security'.

'Community sustainability' is a framework that has been used by the Globalism Research Centre (GRC) in undertaking projects in Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, India and beyond, as well as in Timor-Leste. By 'community sustainability' we mean the ways in which communities hold themselves together in a durable and coherent form over a period of time, even in the face of substantial challenges and under periods of intense change. Through this, we look at whether and how groups of people are able to maintain a long lasting connection that is resilient to pressures. In our use of

¹⁰² 'Civil society' is another possible example of this tendency, layering the linguistic diversity of Timor-Leste with an unevenness in the use of sets of particular terminologies, in this instance possibly based on the need for more abstract categories in a capital where people tend to have much greater mobility, and hence have a need for such discursive devices.

'sustainability', we emphasise subjective sensibilities and people's relationships with one another, rather than looking to indicators of material development. A community does not need to fix itself in form in order to be sustained; indeed, adaptation may be necessitated in order to respond to change or pressures. However, for a community to be sustained, the connection with one another and attachment to the group needs to be renewed and perpetuated in some way.

As a concept, 'community security' allows for a consideration of both direct threats, such as forms of social conflict, violence and the destruction of property, as well as the ability to achieve those things that might be understood to enable a good life, such as access to adequate shelter, food, health, education and cultural expression. Rather than formal security studies which has typically stressed the so-called 'high politics' of foreign policy, weapons and interstate warfare, we are undertaking analysis much closer to the tradition of 'human security', applying the focus of security to day-to-day life. In effect this is a security 'for' something, particularly a peaceful life where basic needs are met free of violence and threat.

The development of the human security field has certainly moved the emphasis of security discourse from protecting states to enabling societies. However, we see human security as being deficient in key respects, not least in terms of its tendency to focus on individuals as the basis of analysis. Security is socially determined, and it is better to focus analysis on groups of people to understand how it is achieved or otherwise.

In beginning to make an argument for 'community security', we feel this concept better allows a discussion of the ways in which key forms of security are determined in a social context and integrated into patterns of conflict resolution negotiated between people, and the ways in which a community is able (or otherwise) to sustain basic needs such as water, food, education, movement and culture's tal norms. In these terms a sense of security can extend as far as encompassing a community's ability to regulate and mediate processes of change that impact upon their lives, rather than having such change forced upon them.

Clearly, there are points of intersection between sustainability and security. Community sustainability can be considered as the myriad intersections between a range of social activities that underpin the durability of a community, including the generation of a sense of common identity. A lack of security may in effect put that community at risk, in the same way as a heightened security may support its ability to sustain itself. However, as this report shows, this is not necessarily the case as communities are able to sustain themselves in the face of substantial forms of threat.



Celebrating the end of the conference with a *tebe dai*



Exhibition of paintings at the conference

... There are at least three sets of arguments that frame the report more generally.

The first argument is that Nanu, Sarelari, Luha Oli and Golgota are all able to preserve significant levels of community sustainability in the face of low levels of community security. In the case of Nanu, Sarelari and Luha Oli, each of these communities clearly experience low levels of security in relation to food production, poverty, health, education and access to services, though each of the communities were not being directly threatened by violence at the time of our research. Golgota, on the other hand, has higher levels of literacy and experiences a greater sense of financial wellbeing as well as better access to health care, education and the cash economy. However, while Golgota itself seems to have remained fairly free of overt division, by being one community within a broader urban environment the community's ability to mitigate the risk of violence is substantially reduced, as shown during the crisis of 2006 and 2007.

The second argument that frames this report identifies the capacity of these communities to maintain a particular form of sustainability. In the case of Nanu, Sarelari and Luha Oli, despite experiencing massive social disruption as a consequence of war, each of these communities has proven durable due largely to the continuation of traditional and customary practices rather than the introduction of 'modern ways' via Portuguese colonialism, during the Indonesian occupation or since Timor-Leste's formal independence. There is by no means either an absence of or reluctance for the modern, but in dominance these communities are significantly integrated through customary or traditional sets of beliefs. The communities appear adaptive to change, not least through using existing social structures to mediate and confront a changing world, and demonstrate high levels of agency. However, all three communities also demonstrated quite clearly that maintaining their beliefs and cultures remains very important, even in the face of development demands.

In contrast to Nanu, Luha Oli and Sarelari, the customary is less important to how Golgota is sustained, though this is a question of degree rather than absolute differentiation. What we find is a durability born from an ability to manage both customary and modern beliefs in tandem. This is partly seen in the ways people are able to participate in forms of modern work or education in Dili while still maintaining customary relations with the communities of their birth far from Golgota. But at times the practice of customary beliefs also extend to Golgota itself, as these and more modern ways of understanding the world are drawn in tandem to help interpret social events, resolve conflicts and to secure both health and financial wellbeing within the aldeia. The durability of the community then at least in part comes from people being able to negotiate these different forms of social integration significantly on their own terms.

The third argument that frames this report is in particular an extension of the first argument. While these four communities display extraordinary levels of resilience in being able to sustain themselves, low levels of community security mean that extraordinary levels of energy and resources are required to survive immediate challenges and fulfil daily needs. This has implications for these communities' abilities to imagine and plan for their own sustainability into the longer-term future. The security conditions are such that they limit the empowerment of these communities in being able to progress toward more fulfilling lives marked by a greater sense of wellbeing. In battling with such low levels of security, these communities are frequently limited in their ability to move beyond the immediate and proactively manage and promote change in a longer-term framework.

Rubbish bins! Now that is off my chest, better English translators—poor intonation! And invite more youth, what an inspiration this conference has been.

Participant

Very well organised—good job. Worked great with the translators.

Participant

3. Recommendations

These recommendations were developed by participants at the 'Nation-building across Urban and Rural Timor-Leste Conference' that was held in Dili from 8 to 10 July 2009. Recommendations focus on six areas: Nation-building, Gender, Justice, Peace and Security, Development and Governance. These recommendations were distributed following the conference to government, civil society, media, UNMIT, PNTL, F-F-FDTL and were published on the Internet.

Recommendations about Nation-building

1. Increase decentralisation in the context of the law so that community participation is included, particularly focusing on sectors such as decision-making, planning and implementation.
2. The law (decree law) will strengthen point number one.
3. Form a team to listen and facilitate the understanding of the necessities of the people to the government and from the government to the people.
4. Form a legal board that is based on the thoughts and necessities of the people at the grassroots.
5. Form a group to monitor the decentralisation process
6. Prepare local leaders, training for management planning

Recommendations about Gender

1. There is a need to build a safe house and a specialised women's prison in every district.
2. SEPI (the Secretariat for the promotion of equality) needs to build the capacity of focal points in the districts to develop their capacity about gender.
3. Ask the national parliament to quickly approve the domestic violence law.
4. Involve more men in gender training.
5. Involve women in decision making in the traditional law process.

Recommendations about Justice

1. We ask the National Parliament to quickly debate the CAVR report and create reparation laws for victims of human rights violations from 1975 to 1999.
2. We ask the government to give training to Timor-Leste judges and lawyers to increase their capacity to be able to be able to manage the courts and give judgement on all criminal cases, and ask the public ministry to give attention to cases that are registered in the courts.
3. We ask the organs of state and political leaders to not intervene in court decisions and that international judges and attorneys act as advisors.
4. We ask the government and state of Timor-Leste to consider and recognise the serious crimes that occurred in 1999, and to take the authors of these crimes to the international and national courts so that a judgement is made.
5. We ask the government and national parliament to socialise laws (formal and traditional) to the people of Timor-Leste.



Recommendations about Peace and Security

1. We ask the political leaders and the organs of state to take into account the interests of the community as opposed to the interests of the party.
2. Open security posts from the national level to the rural level. Rotate the work of PNTL and F-FDTL in all territories of Timor-Leste.
3. Create a prevention system that is sustainable against food shortages, natural disasters and social disasters.
4. We ask the organ of state to create good conditions for the PNTL and F-FDTL, to fix the salary system, increase facilities and reassess the PNTL law so that the PNTIL serve the community maintaining law and order in Timor-Leste.
5. We ask UNMIT, UNPOL, the community and international agencies to increase the capacity of PNTL and F-FDTL, and for locals and internationals to co-ordinate and work well in co-operation in the security area, while respecting the culture of Timor-Leste.

Recommendations about Development

1. Increase quality and strengthen the rural areas over urban areas.
2. Development plans must come from the grassroots (rural) and then go to the national level.
3. We recommend for the government to form mechanisms that are made up of local government, civil society and technicians, to monitor, evaluate and plan programs for rural areas.

Recommendations about Government

1. Develop decentralisation, human rights, and there must be a monitoring system that is sustainable for all development programs.
2. Run civil education that is sustainable about law and democracy.
3. Choose government members roles to follow their profession and education so that governance can run well (democracy, transparency and accountability are keys for transformation).
4. Develop a decree law that guarantees the role of civil society as being responsible for representing society and revise the decree law No.5/2005 (Non Profit Organisations).
5. There must be a reduction in bureaucracy in government work and an increase in the amount of public servants.

The discussion groups were facilitated by FONGTIL staff, including Dinorah S. X. Granadeiro, Antonio Abel Guterres, Guilherme Soares, Mario da Silva, Manuel Sequeira, Armindo dos Santos and Janu Soares, and Domingoes Ati from AHCAE Oecussi.

4. About the conference

Venue

The Nation-building Conference was held at the John Paul II Centre in Comoro, in the north of Dili. The Centre is owned and operated by the Salesians, and supports a range of community activities. It provides accommodation and support to young people travelling to Dili to further their education and seek employment, and also offered a safe haven to numerous people in during the crisis in Dili in 2006. The venue was a very pleasant location for the conference, and offered a range of different meeting spaces. Plenary sessions, some workshops and meals were held in a large outdoor pavilion, with other workshops located in a nearby conference hall. The garden setting and location outside of Dili promoted a peaceful atmosphere, which helped to set the mood for the conference itself.

Entertainment

Throughout the conference, entertainment added to the enjoyable environment and gave a different perspective of the nation-building process and Timorese culture. Timorese products were available for sale over the conference duration, and the conference was opened by performances by dancers from Le-Ziaval. Local musicians Galaxy closed the conference, and encouraged dancing by participants. The conference hosted an exhibition of work by local art groups, Sanggar Kultura, Sanggar Masin, Sanggar Matan, Sanggar Weturu, Gembel, Arte Moris, and was curated by Arte Moris. The works on exhibition included traditional and modern pieces in a variety of mediums, and showed the expertise and diversity of Timor-Leste's artists, while also giving a different perspective of conference themes.

Socialisation

The socialisation activities enabled the project team to introduce the conference, explain the rationale and objectives, and provide opportunities for people to ask questions directly of the conference organisers. These visits were critical to attracting participants from outside Dili, many of whom had not previously participated in a conference or workshop outside their own district.

Between 6 April and 8 May, the project team travelled to all districts in Timor-Leste. Representatives from FONGTIL, RMIT, AVI and conference partners held over 150 meetings with local organisations, networks and community representatives. In each meeting, the project team heard why the conference was important for Timor-Leste, and especially for people from the districts to have a voice at the conference. The majority of people with whom the project team met showed interest in participating in the conference, and had an opportunity to discuss this in person with project team members. These visits proved to be of significant value to the success of the conference. Additional to promoting participation and collecting registrations, the project team were able to identify potential presenters and encourage them to share their expertise and experiences.

People with interest in presenting at the conference were invited to submit a summary of their presentation in early May. Almost 40 abstracts were submitted, and a further 10 potential presenters were identified through other means. Abstracts were assessed and shortlisted by members of the project team, and FONGTIL and RMIT took overall responsibility to deciding on which presentations would be included.

Conference Workshops

In early June, RMIT and FONGTIL delivered three days of training for 12 presenters at Mana Lou's Retreat in Dare, in the hills above Dili. The training program gave presenters an introduction to the conference and presentations on each conference theme, in addition to the following topics:

- Preparation for the conference
- How to present in a conference
- Research
- Turning your presentation into a published paper including grammar and referencing

Each participant was encouraged to present to the group, and to receive constructive feedback. The program included sufficient time to focus on both presentations and power point documents. During the training, each presentation was extensively workshoped and all participants presented a shortened version of their papers. In addition, the training developed a sense of collegiality between the group and gave presenters a chance to meet one another prior to the event.

Representatives from the project team provided ongoing advice and support to presenters between the submission of abstracts and the conference itself. On the day prior to the conference, opportunity was given to the 11 participants who had received training in June to present their papers once again to RMIT staff.

Publication of conference papers

Following the presentation of conference papers, member of the project team provided support to the East Timorese and international presenters to ready their papers for publication. For the East Timorese presenters, this was a continuation of the training provided prior to the conference, where presenters were encouraged to prepare their papers in such a way that they could be included in the conference publication.

Not all presenters from the conference submitted their paper for this publication. All of those who did submit their article were accepted with papers coming in four languages, English, Portuguese, Tetun and Indonesian, and each going through a formal editing process. Papers submitted in Tetun were first edited for clarity and expression, and then again to standardise the Tetun expression so that the Tetun in the report is consistent. Papers written in English, Indonesian and Portuguese language were translated into Tetun, and also English where necessary, and the Tetun papers were translated to English. The final drafts of each paper and feedback from conference participants have been collated into this conference publication.

Lessons Learned

'Nation-Building across Urban and Rural Timor-Leste' was the first conference of its kind in Timor-Leste. The conference was significant because:

- it facilitated the bringing together presenters from a wide range of backgrounds and featured a high level of participation from the majority of the population who reside outside Dili.
- it was the first time many East Timorese presenters and participants had participated in a conference which combined academic analysis with community-based experience.
- it provided an opportunity for reflection, as well as to develop the skills of East Timorese to speak on their own behalf through an understanding of research and presentation techniques.

The lessons learned through this project concentrate on the objective of achieving a high level of representation from the districts outside Dili, and the practical challenges that this presented before, during and after the conference.

The socialisation visits proved to be critical, not just to promote the conference or to identify potential presenters, but to hear the hopes, expectations and concerns of East Timorese from outside Dili. That the project team visited local organisations in relatively remote locations was itself a representation of the conference's commitment to listening to the voices of the rural majority.

During the socialisation visits, the team heard expectations that the voices of people from the districts would not be overtaken by voices from Dili perceived as more authoritative. Some were also concerned that conference presenters or participants might use the conference as an opportunity to push specific political agendas. To mitigate against this, the project team created a program structure with space for discussion, developed a behavioural code of conduct for the conference and employed experienced moderators for all sessions.

The socialisation activities also raised the project team's awareness of the logistical challenges facing development initiatives outside Dili. Many people requested assistance in travelling to Dili for the conference, and the Conference Secretariat were able to offer to cover travel costs and pay a small per diem to participants. The full cost of these per diems was met with additional funding from Caritas, a conference partner.

During the development of the conference report, the remote location of some of the presenters challenged the ability of the Dili-based team to provide support for the development of articles for publication. Without dedicated resources to travel to visit presenters, the Dili-based team relied on telephone calls and occasional visits for other purposes to provide support to presenters.

The differences in the Tetun spoken between the districts also presented challenges to the development of the conference report. Translation to Tetun of a high standard is a slow process for a variety of reasons. To maintain consistency, it is important to contract one translator; otherwise great variations in the language used will emerge. Multiple forms of editing are also required, in this case English to Tetun and Tetun to English, as well as editing of each of the original Tetun articles for consistency as well as for clarity. This impacted on and illustrated the logistical challenges of the resource gap between rural communities and Dili, and Dili and Melbourne. These challenges of time and process added complexity, and therefore delays, to the normal submission and editing processes.

Lastly, while discussing nation-building was a priority for all participants, the team noted the significant opportunity afforded by the conference to participants to connect with one another. Where transport and communication infrastructure limits interaction between people from outside Dili, this kind of event enables nurturing of existing relationship as well as the development of new ones.



Olandina Mendonca Do Rego and Fransisca da Silva



Carmeneza dos Santos Monteiro and conference moderator Fernando da Costa

Recommendations

The strength of participation indicates that there is interest in this kind of conference, where participants from diverse backgrounds discuss and debate current issues. This is further supported by initial analysis of the participant evaluation, where the majority of responses call for opportunities to continue this discussion in this format. Many participants advocated that future conferences are located in districts outside Dili, to enable even more district participation.

Our recommendations are as follows:

- Further conferences based in the districts, for example Venilale and then Maliana, and then back to Dili, starting in 2011 and rolling through to 2012 and 2013 with a return to Dili. These events could be coordinated with local workshops run in all districts, along with a more developed process of socialisation so as to develop research and presentation skills across communities and widen the opportunities for participation.
- Given the importance of the socialisation visits to the success of this conference, future activities should include a much more extended period of socialisation than was allowed for in this instance, both ensuring wider and deeper socialisation, longer-term training programs, as well as an improved process of selection for papers so as to ensure as higher standard of presentation as possible.
- Conference events management would benefit from a dedicated events manager. This would allow for more advanced planning and provide professional events management.
- The further development of partnerships and collaboration between East Timorese CSOs and educational and research institutions in Timor-Leste and a range of international institutions.
- That the conference demonstrated the very clear disconnect in Timor-Leste between the centre and periphery, already acknowledged in a whole range of projects and studies, reconfirms the need for programs that help develop that 'inter-connection' between communities.



Alice Amelia OP Leite



Conference participants with the Vice Prime Minister

Conference program

Day One – Wednesday 8 July

8:00 am to 9:00 am

Conference Registration

9:00 am to 9:15 am

Welcome to the Conference: Moderator

9:15 am to 10:15 am

Dance Group Le-Ziaval

Damian Grenfell, RMIT University: Introduction

Vice Prime Minister Jose Luis Guterres, Government of Timor-Leste: Opening

Dance Group Le-Ziaval

10:15 am to 10:35 am

Morning Tea

10:35 am to 12:30 pm

Panel: Nation-building

Dinorah S. X. Granadeiro, Executive Director, FONGTIL

David Hicks, Stony Brooke University

Henrique Cesario da Costa, UNTL

Vice Prime Minister Jose Luis Guterres, Government of Timor-Leste: Response to Questions

12:30 pm to 1:45 pm

Lunch

1:45 pm to 3:25 pm

Panel One: Peace & Security

Presentation from Oecusse Community Representatives

Bu V.E Wilson, Australian National University

Julio Fransisco Freitas, CARE

Panel Two: Gender

Maria Zulmira Alves Soares, Caritas Australia

Fransisca da Silva, JSMP

Eugenia Neves da Costa, Moris Foun

3:25 pm to 3:45 pm

Afternoon Tea

3:45 pm to 4:45 pm

Panel: Justice

Chiquito da Costa Guterres, Post CAVR Secretariat

Lia Kent, Melbourne University

Conference program

Day Two – Thursday 9 July

Conference Space 1 Conference Space 2

8:00 am to 8:30 am

Registration

8:30 am to 10:40 am

Panel: Governance

Antonio A. Guterres, Deputy District Administrator Baucau

Dennis Shoesmith, Charles Darwin University

Francisco da Cunha, Caritas Australia

Panel: Development

Alice Amelia O.P.Leite

Joao Soares Reis-Pequinho, Forum Tau Matan

Justiano de Jesus

10:40 am to 11:00 am

Morning Tea

11:00 pm to 12:30 pm

Discussion Groups

12:30 pm to 1:30 pm

Lunch

1:30 pm to 3:10 pm

Panel One: Development

Domingos Rodrigues, CJSDF

Nuno Vasco Oliveira, Secretaria de Estado da Cultura

Leopoldina Joana Guterres

Panel Two: Gender

Gisela de Carvalho, FKSH

Olandina Mendonca Do Rego, CTRA

Teresinha M. N. Cardoso, CAUCUS Feto

3:10 pm to 3:30 pm

Afternoon Tea

3:30 pm to 4:40 pm

Panel: Peace and Security

Kelly Silva, University da Brasilia

Jose Sousa-Santos

Panel: Justice

Jose Luis de Oliveira, HAK

Jose Marques, Hanoin Foun Timor-Leste

Conference program

Day Three: Friday 10 July

Conference

8:30 am to 9:10 am

Feedback from Discussion Groups

9:10 am to 10:15 am

Second Discussion Group to formulate recommendations to Government and Civil Society

10:15 am to 10:45 am

Morning Tea

10:45 am to 11:15 am

Report back on discussion groups: Priority Recommendations

11:15 am to 12:00 pm

Launch of 'Understanding Community' Report

Charles Lathrop, Irish Aid

Carmeneza Moniz Noronha, RMIT University

Mayra Walsh, RMIT University

12:00 pm to 1:00 pm

Lunch

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Panel: Nation-building

Susana Barnes, Monash University

M. Anne Brown, University of Queensland

Carmeneza dos Santos Monteiro, Australian National University

2:30 pm to 3:00 pm

Closing: Dra Deputada Cipriana Da Costa Pereira

Music from Galaxy

Afternoon Tea

Participant survey

Nation-building across Urban and Rural Timor-Leste

Survey results from conference participants

The numbers on the sides of the graphs show the numbers of people who responded to each question. 'Tetun' refers to those who filled out the survey in Tetun and likewise for 'English'. The number of Tetun survey responses were much larger as there were many more participants from Timor-Leste at the conference.

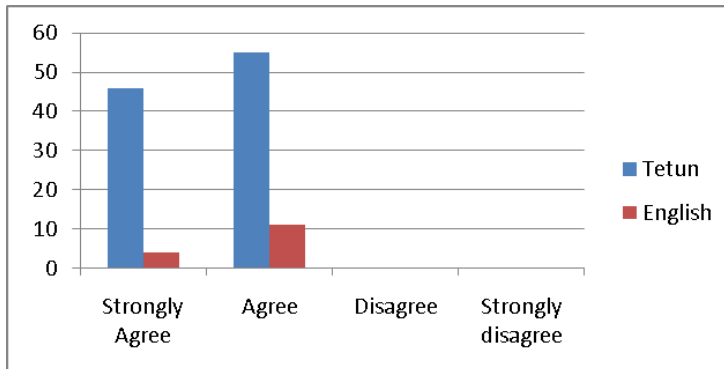


Figure 1:
Statement: The presentations were strongly relevant to me.

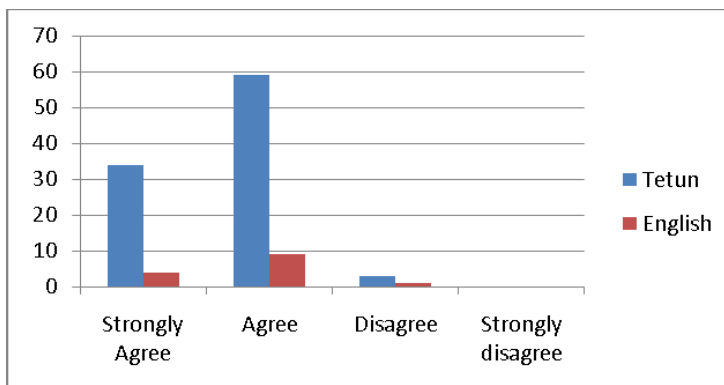


Figure 2:
Statement: I felt like I had a chance to be involved in debate, dialogue, and discussion.

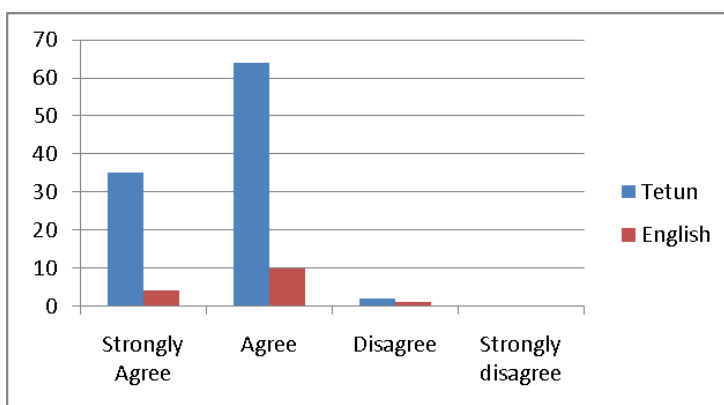


Figure 3:
Statement: I heard many different opinions.

Nation-building across Urban and Rural Timor-Leste

Survey results from conference participants

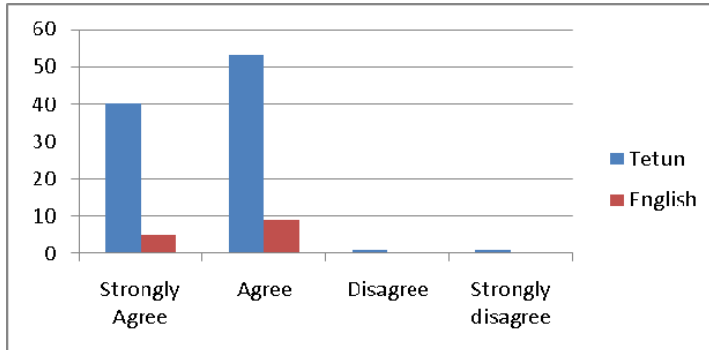


Figure 4:

Statement: I gained information I can use with my organisation, district and community.

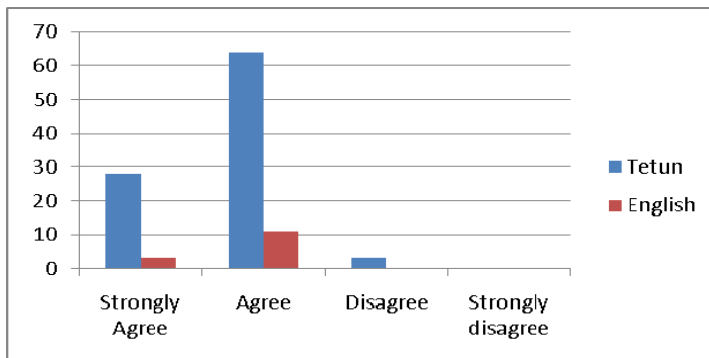


Figure 5:

Statement: I feel that the conference objectives were met.

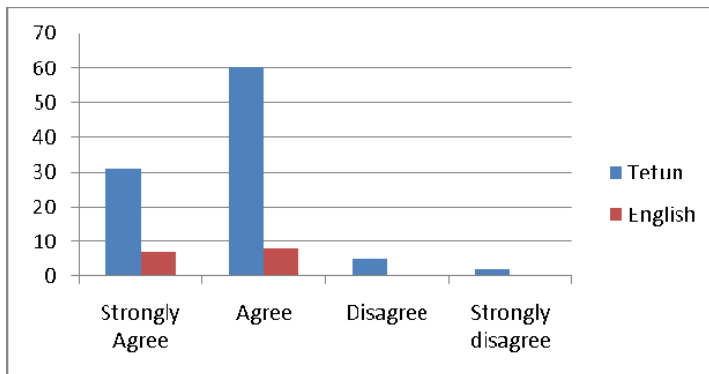


Figure 6:

Statement: The venue and food were satisfactory.

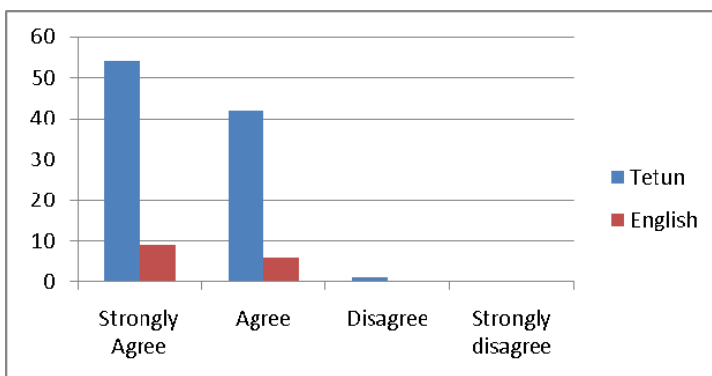


Figure 7:

Statement: I think this conference should be held again in the future.

