



Newsletter – July 2016

Things have been very busy with ATLAS projects. Read about the advances made. You are warmly invited to come to our fundraiser *Timor Time* on Sunday October 16, 2016. ***Very best wishes to you ~ from all of us at ATLAS***

Success!!! Woodwork project relocated

Why is something simple such a great thing? Finding land and building a shed in East Timor is not as simple as going to a real estate to buy land and then down to Bunnings to buy the materials. Vitál de Jesus, a young Timorese man whom ATLAS supports through education and training, has worked tirelessly over the last few months to achieve just that: the relocation of the Wood Work Project from the old location at Mary MacKillop International (MMI) site to our new shed.



Vitál and ATLAS members looked at many options: building a shed on another Religious Order's land, setting up workshop in a shed rented by another NGO, and purchasing our own land. Vitál then offered to build a shed on his own land. Looking at all the options a shed on Vital's land just made complete sense.

Work on construction of the shed commenced on Monday 17th May. Vital and his relatives cleared a space beside the house then constructed a rock retaining wall 1.2 m high. Over the following three weeks all steel columns, the roof, walls and concrete floor were constructed by hand. This was a massive amount of very heavy manual and labour intensive work. The hard work by Vitál and his relatives saved ATLAS thousands of dollars, with the only expenses being \$700USD for materials. The woodwork equipment was relocated from MMI on Sunday 5th June to complete the project.

Vitál has now registered a business in Timor-Leste, named 'Vital Woodwork'. ATLAS is now looking

at further training for Vitál and his wife Francisca to develop business skills to operate and grow the woodworking project into a successful business that can train and employ other Timorese people.

ATLAS is very thankful for the help and support of Mary MacKillop International to the woodwork project over many years. ATLAS now look to forming the Woodwork Project into an opportunity for other Timorese people to gain skills and useful employment.

Chris Scharf

[Read as an online post...](#)

Girls' education: a lifeline to development



Women and girls in developing countries are often denied opportunities for education.^[1] Yet, it is one of the most critical areas of development and the single most effective way to improve the lives of individuals and families as well as to contribute to social and economic development.^[2]

Timor-Leste is one of the world's youngest nations with one of the youngest populations; about 54% are under the age of 15.^[3] It is also one of the poorest countries with 49% living below the poverty line of \$1.90 per day.^[4] This means there is a lot of

pressure on schools, school children and education systems.

There are, at present, ten girls or young women from Maubara orphanage seeking our support to continue their secondary education. Early in life they found themselves without parents or families to look after them. They have all been residents at the orphanage for many years. They come from a traditional culture where men are the dominant members of society, where women work hard to care for their children, maintain the household, collect water and produce and prepare food for the family. Many women in rural areas have never attended school and, for those who have, it may have been for only a year or two. The Carmelite Sisters have given these girls every opportunity to attend school at each stage of their development i.e. pre-school, primary and pre-secondary. They are now asking for our help to undertake senior secondary studies.

ATLAS will support them. Planning is now underway and we are presently discussing with the Carmelite Sisters the details of the program. This includes the finances needed to cover costs. When this is completed, we will be pleased to give further information to those interested in supporting this worthwhile program.

Josephine Mitchell RSJ

^[1] <http://www.unicef.org.au>

^[2] IWDA International Women's Development Agency <https://www.iwda.org.au>

^[3] Timor population clock 2015 <http://www.livepopulation.com/country/east-timor.html>

^[4] World Bank 2015 <http://www.worldbank.org>

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Meeting Sister Inacia



Thanks to Ana Paula Guterres for this photo

Recently, members of the ATLAS Board had the pleasure of meeting in Canberra with Sister Inacia Malfalda Fatima from Timor-Leste. Sister Inacia is responsible, on behalf of the Carmelite Sisters, for the program of financial support which ATLAS provides for the care and education of the children at St Therese's Orphanage Maubara. During the past year, ATLAS also provided funding for the building of a new kitchen at the orphanage. ATLAS is a major donor for the orphanage and we assured Sister Inacia that we would continue providing financial support into the future.

We welcomed the opportunity to discuss a new proposal from the Sisters for assistance to finance the education of girls from the orphanage who have reached Secondary School. The outcome from this discussion was very positive and ATLAS has agreed to extend our support for the orphanage to include this special program. You will find further details in a short article in this newsletter entitled *The Education of Girls – a Lifeline to Development*.

On behalf of ATLAS, we thanked Sister Inacia sincerely for her accountability for the orphanage program and for the financial reports and the information she sends about the children and their activities.

Josephine Mitchell RSJ

[Read as an online post...](#)

Timor Time 2016

You could be a very lucky Melbourne Cup winner!

Come along for some fun with a purpose - the support of ATLAS projects in Timor-Leste

Timor Time 2016 will be on **Sunday 16 October**

12 noon for 12:30, \$55 per head

at Dooleys Catholic Club

24/28 John St, Lidcombe NSW

www.dooleys.com

For tickets ring Rayella ~ **0411 237 699**

rayellawicks51@gmail.com

[Read as an online post...](#)

Donation Form

C/- St Joseph's Church

231 Newbridge Road, Chipping Norton, NSW 2170

www.atlaseasttimor.com.au

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