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Timor-Leste's Ministry of Education Celebrates International Literacy Day

The National Directorate for Recurrent Education (NDRE), in coordination with UNESCO Jakarta and its Antenna Office in Dili, celebrated 'International Literacy Day' on September 8, 2011 at the NDRE Auditorium. The program was attended by around 70 participants composed mostly of MoE staff and officials, NDRE staff including District Coordinators, development partners, NGOs and civil societies.

Director of the NDRE, Filomeno dos Reis Belo, opened the program and expressed his appreciation for the well-attended celebration of 'International Literacy Day' with its 2011 theme of 'Literacy for Peace', which was celebrated all over the world. Dr. Nestor Reyes Balmores, Senior Technical Consultant of the CapEFA Project of UNESCO in Timor-Leste also gave a short remark on behalf of UNESCO Dili. He pointed out the importance of the event and stressed that everyone has the responsibility to work for improving literacy and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, in

particular the eradication of adult illiteracy in Timor-Leste. Mr. Remegio "Redj" Alquitrán, also a CapEFA Consultant, read out the global message of the



UNESCO Director General, Ms Irina Bokova, in both Tetum and English.

The message of the Director General of UNESCO was that "International Literacy Day this year places a special focus on the essential relationship between literacy and peace." It was further mentioned that "literacy is a prerequisite for peace because it carries multiple benefits, cutting across the human, cultural, social, political and economic spheres." The message ends by urging "governments, international organizations, civil society and the private sector to make literacy a policy priority, so that every

individual can develop their potential, and actively participate in shaping more sustainable, just and peaceful societies".

On behalf of the Director General for Basic Education, Mr. Domingos Maia, Director Filomeno dos Reis Belo went on to brief the participants on the history of the literacy movement in Timor Leste, as well as the literacy advocacies of NDRE in the overall develop-

ment of Timor-Leste. Three presentations followed the Director's speech: (1) The Cuban support to NDRE under the "Sim Ou Posso" program by Mr. Salvador Lopez Cuesta of the Cuban Cooperation in TL Program; (2) NDRE's national literacy programs by the Chief of the Literacy and Distance Education Unit of NDRE, Ms. Fernanda Gonzaga Rebelo; and, (3) experiences in implementing literacy activities by the FUNDAMOR NGO in the district of Los Palos.

The celebration was closed by a prayer and the whole event was covered by local media.

Locally relevant ‘Hands-On’ Science and Mathematics Teacher Training

The locally relevant “hands-on science and mathematics teacher training” was implemented by SESIM (Centre Study of Science and Mathematics) under the umbrella of Timor Leste National Commission for UNESCO in cooperation with the Ministry of Education through the National Institute of Teacher training (INFORDEP) with funding support from the Korean National Commission for UNESCO.



Teacher participants actively involved in experiments.

The objectives of this training are three-fold. Firstly, to train trainers with pedagogy and content activities that will be presented to teachers. Secondly, for the trainers to then carry out two-weeks of training with teachers from across Timor. Thirdly, the schools are then visited in order to follow up on the training they received.

The trainers were trained over five days by a consultant from the USA. They learnt about several topics relevant to Timor’s Science and Mathematics curriculum, through simple hands-on activities, using every day and locally relevant materials. The trainers also learnt pedagogy and teaching techniques to be used to assist Science and Mathematics teachers.

After this intensive training, the teacher-trainers passed on their knowledge on to Science and Mathematics teachers over two weeks from September 6 – 23, 2011 at INFORDEPE, Balide, as well as a school in Taibesi.

On the first day, the training was opened by the President of INFORDEP, accompanied by the three vice presidents, the head of UNESCO antenna office of Dili, and delegates from KNCU. The training included learning about pedagogy, useful approaches, and practical examples, all linked to current curriculum and local environment and culture. During the training, some important people visited the training center, such as the Vice Minister of Education Mr. Paulo Asis, Father Palomo and the Korean Ambassador.

As with the opening, the training was closed by the president of INFORDEP and was also attended by the current chairperson of Timor Leste National Commission for UNESCO, Ms. Kirsty Sword Gusmao, who presented a certificate to the best participant.

After these two weeks the trainers go on to visit schools to assist the teachers on the job when they return to teach in the class room.

The Biology trainer: Ms. Alexandrinha Passos, lead a class whilst being observed by Mr. Gabriel (consultant).



A group photo with the Professor from ROK and the other two delegations.

Strengthening Journalists' capacities on human rights reporting in Timor-Leste

The Timor-Leste Media Development Center and UNESCO, in collaboration with the UNMIT, organized a training for journalists on human rights reporting, held in Dili on 22-26 August, 2011. The workshop provided young journalists with material and training on national and international human rights standards, UN conventions, and the Timor-Leste Government's commitments in the area of human rights. The workshop also devoted special attention to specific human rights topics such as gender-based violence, children's rights, and freedom of expression.

The training was attended by 56 trainees both from Dili and the Districts. Most of the participants were reporters from the large community radio network in the country, but also journalists from the print and the online media as well as a group of journalism students from the National University of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Allan Thompson, a career journalist, journalism professor and media trainer did a wonderful job of designing and delivering the training including sessions on basic concepts of news-gathering, principles of interviewing, storytelling and writing and the application of these concepts to human rights reporting.

The training included a fieldwork day. The trainees who were divided into thematic groups, according to their interests, spread out across Dili to work on a news story. With the information gathered, they produced radio documentaries and pieces of print journalism that they presented afterwards to the rest of the group.

As a follow-up to the training, UNESCO and TLMDC are producing a handbook for journalists in Timor-Leste on human rights reporting.

Capacity building on human is of high interest to UNESCO. The Organization aims to promote human rights education, encourage and disseminate human rights research, and lead actions in the fight against all forms of discrimination.



Capacity Development Workshop on Literacy Concepts Organized in Dili, Timor-Leste for NDRE Staff



Within the framework of the CapEFA Project and in response to the need for an increased knowledge and understanding of the National Directorate of Recurrent Education's (NDRE) leaders and staff on literacy programs, a Capacity Development Workshop on Literacy Concepts was organized on 3-5 August 2011 in Dili, Timor-Leste and attended by around 90 participants composed of sub-district coordinators, district coordinators, key national staff including technical staff and trainers of the National Directorate for Recurrent Education.

The workshop was aimed at enhancing the participants' understanding about investing in literacy and adult learning by exposing them on emergent literacy concepts and identifying key literacy elements that define the literacy environment in Timor Leste.

Dr. Abdul Hakeem of APPEAL in UNESCO Bangkok Office was

assisted by Ms. Kaoru Suzuki-Houghton in presenting: 'Knowing the Benefits to Make the Case for Greater Investment in Literacy'; 'Addressing Critical Issues in Literacy - Using Generic Literacy Principles and Benchmarks As a Starting Point for Policy Dialogue'; and 'Regional Support for Enhancing Capacity for Materials Development'. Dr. Norma de Leon Salcedo, Head of the Secretariat, Literacy Coordinating Council of the Department of Education in the Philippines also talked about 'Good Practices in Literacy and Adult Learning and Roles of Community Learning Centers: The Philippine Experience.'

After the two lectures, the participants attended role playing and small group sessions to address three workshop goals – (1) strategies on how literacy can be used as a continuing process for the empowerment of people; (2) factors

and/or elements in a literate environment; and, (3) fleshing out a series of continuing strategies to create and maintain an effective and efficient literate environment. The participants developed a draft action plan in order to strengthen literacy programs in Timor Leste. The elements of the plan are: a massive community mobilisation for community literacy; further strengthening of the existing literacy programs of the National Directorate; and, the inclusion of emergent concepts in existing teaching and learning materials for Timor Leste's national literacy programs.

A brief evaluation of the workshop was carried out as the last session of the activity, followed by a group photo session to document the activity.



In-Country Workshop on Strengthening School-to-Work Transition Programs Conducted in Timor Leste



About 20 participants composed of MoE officials, including Director Alfredo Araujo of Basic Education and School Grants and Director Alfonso Soares of Policy and Planning, attended the 2-day In-Country workshop on the ‘Strengthening of School-to-Work Transition Programs for Students with Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairments’ held on 23-24 August 2011 at the Excelsior Resort in Dili, Timor-Leste.

The workshop was organized by the Inclusive Education Unit of the Ministry of Education led by Mr. Jose Monteiro with support from UNESCO Jakarta and its

Antenna Office in Dili. The aims of the workshop were to simplify the draft Standards, Guidelines and Quality Indicators for Strengthening School-to-Post-School Transition Programmes for Students with Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairments for adoption within the context of Timor-Leste.

Director Alfredo Araujo of the National Directorate for Basic Education and School Grants opened the workshop. Two key processes were undertaken during the workshop: (1) explanation of the working definitions, underlying assumptions, and guidance on using the Standards and; and (2) presentation of the different domains of the Guidelines. Discussions then

proceeded on the contextualization of these standards and guidelines in Timor-Leste.

Dr. David Mitchell, UNESCO Consultant and author of the Guidelines was the main facilitator of the workshop. The participants went through the different domains of the Guidelines and reflected on the existing situation of the country as far as the standards and guidelines are concerned. The participants provided relevant and contextualized information on the country in relation to the guidelines and drafted action plan to meet those guidelines and to improve the application of the standards on the transition program. A document was prepared as the final output of the workshop and will serve as a base for the next steps towards the full application of the guidelines in Timor-Leste.

Quarterly Meeting Of Timor Leste National Commission For UNESCO

The Timor Leste National Commission for UNESCO was officially launched by HE President Mr. Jose Ramos Horta on April 23, 2009. The Commission is chaired by Ms. Kirsty Sword Gusmão, who is also the Goodwill Ambassador for Education and the President of Alola Foundation. The Timor Leste National Commission for UNESCO consists of executive members and the secretariat. The executive members meet every three months or as required to advise the National Commission on

issues and priorities. The meeting is usually organized by the secretariat of National Commission. For 2011, we held the third National commission meeting on September 14. The meeting was attended by 23 executive members, 2 guests from Korean National Commission from UNESCO and a group of people who attended an UNESCO study visit overseas, so that they could report back on their study visit.

There were several agenda items discussed during the meeting such as: follow-up on the participation pro-



gram project, and reports from the Chairperson and the current Secretary General regarding the last three month’s activities and other priorities.



In-Country Debriefing on the Study Visits to 5 Countries on Equivalency Education and Role of CLCs Organized in Timor-Leste



The In-country Debriefing on the Study Visits to Five Countries on Equivalency Education and the Role of the Community Learning Centres (CLCs) was con-

ducted on 1-2 August 2011 at the Excelsior Resort in Dili, Timor-Leste.

Thirty one NDRE officials and representatives from the 3 CLCs attended the In-Country Debriefing. The debriefing was aimed at identifying the best way to implement equivalency education as well the role of the Community Learning Centres, based on the experience of the

Philippines, Nepal, Thailand, Indonesia and Bangladesh. The ultimate intention was to develop relevant lessons learnt into an action plan for adoption in Timor Leste.

Following the presentation of the Study Teams, a proposed action plan was developed. The proposed action plan would serve as the participants' proposal for possible adoption by NDRE in order to improve the implementation of equivalency Education in Timor Leste and strengthen the involvement of the CLCs.

Ms. Kaoru Houghton, APPEAL Project Officer at UNESCO Bangkok, critique the strategies that were identified in incorporating the lessons learnt in NDRE's Recurrent Education Programs. The In-country Debriefing was facilitated by the CapEFA Project Technical Consultants, Dr. Nestor Balmores and Mr. Remegio Alquitran, who were assisted by the NDRE Team and supported by Ms. Kaoru Suzuki-Houghton of UNESCO Bangkok Office.



Visitation from Korean National Commission for UNESCO to Timor Leste National Commission for UNESCO



The three delegations from Korean National Commission for UNESCO.

During the visit the delegates attended the opening ceremony of “Hands-on Science”, assisted in teaching some of the topics within the training, and visited several secondary schools such as ‘ES São Pedro Comoro’, ‘ES Externato São José’ and ‘ES 5 de Maio’. They also attended the quarterly Nat-com meeting on September 14, 2011.

Related to the hands-on science and mathematics teacher training, three delegates from the Korean National Commission for UNESCO visited the National Commission for UNESCO Timor Leste during five days from September 10 -15, 2011.



Mr. Woojin CHO was sharing information

During the meeting the delegates were able to share information with TL Nat-com, including KNCU legal status.

The objective of the visit was to provide information regarding the mission and vision of National Commission for UNESCO and to also build the relationship between TL Natcom and KNCU.

Representative of the participants, Mr. Abel das Neves, presents a “TAIS” to the professor from KNCU.



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**Celebrating Cultural Diversity in Timor-Leste
Selebrasaun Diversidade Kultura Iha Timor Leste**

