

Trek for Timor Projects 2017/18 Education Strategy

This year's Trek for Timor is aimed at expanding our *Education Strategy In Timor Leste*. This strategy has two key parts:

1. Social housing to support young people to pursue an education in Dili.
2. Scholarships for young people to enable them to stay at school and to go onto tertiary studies, either at University or College

Social Housing for students

The Social Housing project is a reasonably new project for KVRP aimed at providing housing for young people in the capital Dili, so that they can attend university or college. We currently have one student house established in Dili, in which 8 young people are living and studying.

In 20178/18 we hope to build a second student house for 8-10 students, offering them a place to stay while they are studying, access to IT support, living expenses and education related fees and expenses.

For many families from Remexio, affording to send their children to Dili to study (the only location of Universities and colleges in the country), is out of their reach. Travelling to Dili and back each day is not an option and so, unless a young person has family in Dili, with sufficient space to accommodate them, access to education beyond secondary school is unlikely. We know that education is critical to enabling young people in Timor Leste to have the life opportunities most of us take for granted.

Our housing project will provide a safe and supportive environment for young people to live and study, an opportunity to support each other and opportunities to become a mentor to support other young people in their hometowns to aspire for an education as well.

The social housing project will involve sourcing vacant land in Dili, working with our



Amy at the front of Student house in Dili

partner Padre David, working with local builders and young people to design and build the house and then with the Village chiefs and committees in Remexio to select

young people most in need. The criteria for selection will be based on economic disadvantage, academic performance (good study habits as well as a commitment and readiness to study and desire to contribute back to their community)) and the value his or her education will have to the community.

Scholarships for students

Education has always been a priority for KVRP when considering how best to contribute to the development of Timor. The solar lighting project (now completed) has enabled students to study at night, whereas previously the dimly-candle-lit interiors of their homes made this impossible.

With so many families living below the poverty line, chances of the children in such families completing secondary school (let alone proceeding to tertiary studies) have been slim. Financial support from outside the family can transform young lives.

KVRP's scholarship program aims to help as many Remexio students as possible to continue their education in order to reach their full potential and subsequently contribute to raising living standards in the whole community. Every year, KVRP works to raise money to support at least 15 young Timorese students with education scholarships. The value of these scholarships range from US\$120 to US\$1,000, but KVRP believes that a good education is beyond price.

Having reliable partners "on the ground" enables the program to be well targeted and monitored. KVRP works with ICFP (the teachers college in Baucau), Padre David (previously the priest in Remexio, which is a sub-district of Aileu district) and Friends of Aileu (a project supported by Moreland and Hume City Councils in Melbourne).

Scholarship recipients are chosen according to a number of criteria including economic disadvantage, academic performance (good study habits as well as intelligence) and the value his or her education will have to the community.

Money raised through Trek for Timor 2017 will ensure that KVRP is able to continue providing scholarships into the future.

Juliana Mendonça de Andrade received a KVRP scholarship for three years to enable her to attend ICFP (teachers college) in Baucau. She graduated with high marks at the end of 2016 and her professional skills will educate and inspire the young students in her primary classes from now into the future

