

UNICEF Child Friendly Project



'Timor-Leste Basic Education and Gender Equality Thematic Report'

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Written by Tomomi Awamura

Edited by Miki Nagashima



Child Friendly Project was initiated sympathizing with the concept of Child Friendly Schools promoted by UNICEF.

In 2008, the project carried out fundraising campaign and sales of original goods. The profit of 2,499,850 JPY was donated to UNICEF's 'Basic Education and gender equality project' in Timor-Leste through the Japan Committee of UNICEF.

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In East Timor, only 47% of children enter school at the age of 1st grade. only 31% of boys and 24% of girls complete 9-years curriculum. This project targeted a 20% increase in enrollment in basic education and a 25% increase in children completing a full basic education cycle.

About Timor-Leste

Timor-Leste is a country located at the eastern end of Lesser Sunda in South-east Asia. It is the youngest nation in the world just attaining independence in 2002.

Even after becoming the sovereign state, the country continues to face political unrest deriving from conflict between people in the east and west, high unemployment rate and poverty.

Especially poverty is recognized as a major challenge. People are facing difficulty to meet basic needs with 668 USD

of GDP per capita, 49.9% of adult illiteracy rate and 38% of the population able to access improved source of water.



Background of the project

Timor-Leste's educational foundation has been seriously damaged by political instability and poverty. Especially low enrollment rate and low level of learning achievement are regarded as significant problem.

Only 47% of children at the age of 1st grade of elementary school and the repetition ratio is high such that it takes 11.2 years in average for children to complete 6-years curriculum. In addition, there is still large gender disparity in accessing basic education. Only 24% of girls are able to finish 9-years

curriculum despite of the ratio being 31% for boy students.

This gap is attributed to various factors including household poverty, parents' insufficient understanding on importance of education and low level of learning achievement due to absence of skilled teachers.



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Project Purpose & Duration

In response to the background stated above, UNICEF implemented 'Basic Education and Gender Equality' project. This project focused on increasing educational access and enrolment rate and reducing repetitions and drop-outs. Specifically, the expected outcomes of the project were a 20% increase in enrollment in basic education and a 25% increase in children completing a full basic education cycle.

The project was conducted from 1 Jan. to 31 Dec. 2009.

Project Activities

The activities of the project consists of two main components;

- 1) advocacy to the government and other stakeholders for developing better educational policies and
- 2) development of school curriculum that is a key requisite for free compulsory education for all.

PROJECT RESULTS

The project led to the significant results such as integrating the principles of Child Friendly Schools in the Ministry of Education five-year strategic policies, the teacher training policies and the competency framework for teachers. Also the development of 3rd Cycle Curricula is in progress. Part of project outcomes are described below.



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Promotion of Child Friendly Schools

- ⇒ MoE has drafted the Quality School Standards. This is expected to help diffuse and consolidate the CFS quality school model, but is also expected to reinforce monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the education system.
- ⇒ The teacher training policies as well as the national teacher competency framework have been adopted. The MoE has also developed a 5-year Education Strategic Plan.

Curricula Development and Equivalency Programs

- ⇒ The 3rd cycle curricula (Grades 7-9) commences its development. The curricula will emphasis on language development, sciences, and personal and social development with a focus on civic education, citizenship and human rights.
- ⇒ 820 students are enrolled in level 1 and 2 (Grades 1-4) of the primary equivalency program and are learning how to read, write and do math.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in School

- ⇒ 832 rural families have access to improved water supply facilities after completion of 7 gravity-fed piped water supply systems in Ermera and Liquica districts.
- ⇒ 316 teachers, parents, community leaders attended sanitation and hygiene education and promotion training.

Teacher Training

- ⇒ Various capacity building activities for teachers were carried out. 4,800 Grade 3-6 teachers nationwide are fully aware on the contents of the curricula and more confident with their ability to plan and deliver interactive lessons to their students; 10,000 teachers across the nation and 2,000 teachers in UNICEF priority districts were trained in math and general knowledge.

Database Development: Education Management Information System (EMIS)

- ⇒ The first ever Education Statistical Yearbook (2008-2009) is available in draft form. This achievement will allow the MoE to base their work on evidence and build key knowledge for improved action.

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

- ⇒ ECE focal point was nominated by the MoE and ECE working group.
- ⇒ 40 teachers are skilled for pre-primary teaching through the training.

Adolescent and Youth Participation

- ⇒ Educating communities on the value of young people's participation and promoting young people's participation.
- ⇒ Representatives of youth council were trained on organizational planning and management.

Communication initiatives

- ⇒ Close to 1,200 children and youth were able to increase their skills and express their opinions through their participation in radio and television productions. A total of 216 radio programs were produced on topics including immunization, breastfeeding, washing of hands and elections.

This project has yielded results above in partnership with the government, National Committees, NGOs and other UN agencies.

The cause of the project will be continuously pursued through finalizing the 3rd cycle curricula, advocating for establishing key policy frameworks and consolidation of M&E and CFS/EF baseline assessment with intensified involvement of children through the use of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods.

