



Fundasaun Alola gives agriculture and safe nutrition trainings

Dili – To increase daily incomes and nutritional intake of women, Fundasaun Alola worked together with the Ministry of Agriculture and NGO “Belun” gave training on the use of organic fertilizers to women’s groups from Aileu, Maliana, Baucau and Dili (Atauro).

DSW Program Officer, Joanico Oliveira said that the objective of this training was to teach the women how to make organic fertilizers and improve the quality of vegetables by utilizing organic waste.

As Joanico explained, “the overall objective of the training was to improve food security in the case of food crisis in the districts, so the women can have the right knowledge to respond accordingly.”

Fundasaun Alola also distributes agricultural equipment such as crowbars, buckets, water reservoirs, water dippers, seeds and other items.

The project is supported by World Vision. It is divided into two phases, the first phase is carried out in Aileu and Maliana districts, and the second phase is in Dili (Atauro) and Baucau districts.

“In this training we teach how to create and use organic fertilizers, and then the women will monitor the first phase to observe the results. They will continue practicing making and utilizing fertilizers around Aileu and Maliana districts. Based on the food crisis experience our nation had in 2002, we must prevent it from happening again. We cannot allow suffering due to the lack of food, especially for our women and children,” said Joanico.



Women's group mixes organic fertilizers; preparing to plant vegetables.

Becoming a teacher with a scholarship from Alola



Flaviana (in the middle) with her friends observe a mathematics game in the shape of a snake. Teachers learn to introduce mathematics through games.

The scholarship program’s goal is to help students to finish their studies and successfully find jobs like in the case of Flaviana Filomena.

Flaviana was a student at a pre-secondary public school in Suai when she received a scholarship from Alola to fund her studies from 2004 to 2006. Now Faviana is a teacher in Covalima district.

Flaviana said that she was eligible for a scholarship because she was a good student in school. She is an orphan, so she needed the scholarship to finish her studies. After she finished, she became a teacher.

Flaviana also attended a training for infantile teachers from Covalima district. She was very grateful for the opportunity to attend the five day long training provided by Fundasaun Alola.

She said: “I don’t have any experience teaching because I only finished high school. But with the experience and teaching materials that my colleagues have shared with me, I can be a better teacher to my students.”

“During this training I was able to learn different methods of teaching children through games, singing, storytelling and creating journals. This can help me teach my students in Suai district.”

Dili – Through its education department Alola distributes scholarships to students in Timor-Leste, from infantile schools to university level.

Who is Fundasaun Alola? Alola was founded in 2002 dedicated to empowering women through improved health, education, leadership and employment opportunities. Established as a national NGO, Alola is governed by a board of management. Chair: Mrs. Kirsty Sword Gusmao. Management team: CEO, Anne Finch. Advocacy Program Manager, Alita Verdial, Economic Development Program Manager, Cecilia Fonseca, Education Program Manager, Inacia Tamele, Maternal and Child Health Manager, Veronica Correia, Operations Manager, Monica Guterres.

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Pilot training for 40 teachers



Teachers clap their hands and sing a song that the trainer taught them and trained them how to extend this activity to students in their schools.

Dili – To improve teaching capacity in pre-primary schools, the education team at Alola delivered a pilot training in 13 districts, attended by 40 teachers.

Ema de Saisa Freitas, training coordinator, said that the realization of the pilot training was made possible through a close collaboration between Fundasaun Alola and the Ministry of Education, supported by UNICEF.

She explained that before she started the training, the education team conducted an assessment of teachers in 13 districts. This assessment was approved by the school directors, and the districts’ superintendents were asked to select 2 teachers from their districts.

There were 16 participants from Dili given the proximity of the training location and recommendations received directly from the regional director in Dili.

The focus of the training was to show the teachers how they can better utilize good methodology for teaching students in pre-primary schools, use simple language to help students understand the material, and be approachable and communicative as teachers. The teachers were also shown ways they can learn about the needs of their students, regulate their behavior in a positive manner, and improve everyday teaching in general.

According to Ema, all teachers who participated in this training will be certified and will be able to train other teachers.

Afonso Maia, regional representative of the Ministry of Education, said that he enjoyed the training because many teachers participated and all of them showed consistent interest in learning new materials during all five days of the training.

He also said that he will bring up the issues that kindergarten teachers face today with the Ministry of Education.

Representative of Fundasaun Alola, Inacia Tamele said, “I want to thank all teachers for taking time to participate in this training.” She also asked them to “implement in their teaching of children whatever they learned and pass the information to other teachers.”

A teacher from pre-primary school of Santa Ursula Vila Nova in Baucau said that she really enjoyed the training because she had an opportunity to visit the Museum in Mercado Lama. She appreciated seeing the bones of dinosaurs, and the richness of Timor found by archeologists in Mundo Perdido.

Bank Mandiri offers books to Fundasaun Alola

Dili – Agus Martowardojo, Executive Director of Bank, Mandiri Indonesia, and his wife, Mrs. Martowardojo, visited Timor-Leste in March. They offered 33 books of various titles for the library in the Alola’s Women’s Resource Center to increase the number of books available to women for information access.

Bank Mandiri official, Longuinus Armando from the marketing division, delivered the books directly from Ms. Martowardojo, who was in Timor-Leste on a short visit and due to her busy schedule could not visit Alola herself.

The objective of this gift was to help library users to learn about earth sciences and our planet as a whole. The public can learn about what resource development has done so far and what can be done in the future.

“If we just remain quiet and don’t access new information, then we don’t know what is happening. So we must read more in order to learn about daily events, especially in the new era of globalization,” said Longuinus. She also added that “through reading books we obtain information about the world.” “If we don’t have an opportunity to access the Internet, we can still learn from books.”



Alola's CEO, Anne Finch with Operations Manager Monica Graziela reviewing the books offered by

Alola staff participates in the Life Skills Training for Trainers

Dili – The advocacy team at Fundasaun Alola designed a Life Skills Training for Trainers specifically for the Alola staff members. The objective of this training is to improve capacity building skills, to teach how to train others, and to support programs in the future.

Inacia Tamele, coordinator at the Women's Resource Center, said that 17 staff members from the advocacy team, 9 from the education team, district support workers from 13 districts, 2 representatives from the Ministry of Health and 2 from the Catholic Relief Services participated in the training during 7 days.

"The objective of the Life Skills Training is to promote life skills of Alola staff as trainers," explains Inacia.

Alola originally had three trainers, but now there only two. Two trainers are not enough to conduct trainings in all districts, and Alola will identify a new trainer.

Another objective of this training was to improve open communication among all Alola staff, as well as in their respective communities and in their families. Alola staff members were also encouraged to talk about how to protect themselves as women and men, and how to improve their individual decision-making. Participants learned about peace mediation and reconciliation, and got to know each other in the process.

Life Skills training will be held three times at Alola's Women's Resource Center. This training will also be established in 7 districts (Aileu, Ainaro, Manufahi, Suai, Maliana, Oe-Cusse and Dili, as well as Atauro). Each session will reach out to 25 people, and according to the project goal, more women than men will be involved.



Inacia and Agapitu showing participants how to use the training manual for the Life Skills Training

Each participant in the Training of Trainers will then become a trainer in her/his district and will run trainings there. UNICEF will monitor each training and the activities associated with the Life Skills trainings. These activities are supported by UNICEF.

Learning how to preserve and arrange tais textiles



Helen has practice how to furl the Tais in a good way and arrange it to safe for along time.

Dili – To show how to arrange *tais* properly for safe storage and to protect it from dust, edema and decomposing, Joanna Barrkman and Sandra from

the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) gave a training to all Alola staff, TimorAID and Timor-Leste Museum.

Alola Esperansa manager, Helena Gomes said that all participants really enjoyed this training because they had an opportunity to learn how to arrange tais for proper preservation. Joanna and Sandra showed how to furl textiles with a special cloth made from *caladium* (also known as *elephant ear*). In the process of rolling tais, hand sheaths should be used to prevent tais from getting dirty.

According to Helen, when properly furred, old tais can be kept for 10-20 years. "Because we learned how to furl tais, we will not get dust, dirt and other substances. We can keep them for a long time."

During the training staff were taught how to handle tais pieces by avoiding direct hand contact with tais. Dust and oil can cause stains, which can lead to the decomposing of tais.

As a follow-up, similar trainings will be given to tais groups in 13 districts. "The groups will be trained on keeping tais safely and earning proper methods of handling them."

Counseling mothers in exclusive breastfeeding

Dili – Mother Support Group (MSG) members in Oe-Cussi district are now able to counsel new mothers in exclusive breastfeeding to their newborns in the first 6 months before giving complementary food.

Liliana Pires, Program Officer in the Maternal and Child Health Department at Alola and a specialist in exclusive breastfeeding, said that through these trainings MSG members get a better understanding of the benefits of breastfeeding. Trainings included Infant Young Child Feeding (IYCF) component.

Liliana shared a story of a father, Sabastiaun da Concesaun, who participated in the IYCF training in 2007. He supported his wife to breastfeed exclusively for the first 6 months and give good complementary feeding after their baby turned 6 months old. He founded it very helpful and benefiting to his wife and their child, currently 3 years old, because the baby was healthy and didn't get sick. They have another baby now, 4 months old. The family learned a good lesson, and decided for exclusive breastfeeding as the healthiest option and a more affordable one as well.

Sabastiaun's experience as a father reinforces the need for men to participate in the training in order to increase their roles in child rearing.

Another example of the importance of such trainings is the case of a woman with a 1-month old baby, who refused to be placed in a 'smoke' house after giving birth. A practice in Timor, women and their newborns are often taken into a



The baby held by his father was not breastfeed during his first sixth months and the baby carried by her mother has been breastfeed when the baby was born until now. The difference between two babies is significant.

special house with no windows, and forced to sleep near a burning fire to 'purify' her body after birth. This particular woman understood the dangers of such practice and made the decision not to go to such house.

Now Mother Support Group members who attended the training are actively counseling women in Oe-Cusse on the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months before giving babies other types of food.

MSG group in Ainaro enjoyed the benefits of the NBFA Program



Mothers with their children watching "Keep New Generation," an important film about exclusive breastfeeding and maternal health in general.

Dili – Mother Support Group in suco Soro of Ainaro district generated interest in the local community when they showed a film about exclusive breastfeeding for the newborn babies. With this

film they were able to inspire mothers in the suco to breastfeed exclusively.

Mother Support Groups promote exclusive breastfeeding of babies during their first 6 months in order to prevent newborns from getting sick and as a way to support natural family planning.

Breastfeeding Program Officer, Liliana Pires said that the pilot program in suco Soro has been successful. The group was really interested in extending information to the community and working together with a local health center.

The film "Keep New Generation" is one hour long and explains different aspects of maternal and child health.

After the film, there was an open session to ask questions about the topic. Many men asked questions about the benefits of breastfeeding and nutrition after 6 months.

MSG coordinator Alicia da Gloria said that she was very happy that Alola established a group in the suco, because group members can help the community to understand the importance of breastfeeding.

"Before a Mother Support Group was established in this area, we were not sure about exclusive breastfeeding because we did not understand it. Now Alola's group can give us a clear explanation for why breastfeeding is beneficial."