

## Press Conference: Encourage Women's Participation in Elections



To encourage women's participation in election presidential and parliamentary, the Alola Foundation's Advocacy Program and REDE Feto Timor-Leste organized a media conference and launched 2000 postcards with objective to encourage women's participation in both elections. It was held on 30 March 2007. The key message and postcard have been translated in to four languages; Tetum, Baikenu, Makasa'e and Fataluku and also transmitted in Radio Timor-Leste and community radios in Lospalos, Oecusse and Dili. The production of the postcard was funded by Jill Forsyth and friends in Australia.

Maria Dias (The President of Rede Feto), Kirsty Sword Gusmao (Board member) and Ubalda Alves (Executive Director of Rede Feto TL)

## English Course at RMIT English Worldwide



Firstly, the Alola Foundation grateful thank you to RMIT English Worldwide and the Globalism Institute that had supported the visit of 3 East Timorese women to undertake a short intensive English training course. The three women, Joana Belo da Costa, Martinha Afonso Pires and Teresa Verdial (Alita Verdial), the Advocacy Program Manager of the Alola Foundation. The RMIT English Worldwide awarded a full scholarship for five weeks, started on the 1<sup>st</sup> February – 9<sup>th</sup> of March 2007.

As a highly valued member of the Alola Management Team, this opportunity for Alita, has further strengthened Alola's ability to provide responsive programs that fit with the overall theme of Alola's programs, that of: Strong Women – Strong Nation.

We also want to thank Dr Damien Grenfell and Anna Trembath who were instrumental in organising Alita's involvement in the program. Also, our grateful thank you to Jill Forsyth and family for sponsor Alita's travel, accommodation and living allowance, while studying at RMIT.

## Centre for Women and Community



Alola's Women's Resource Centre (WRC) aims to provide a place for East Timorese women to meet and to access resources and information relating to issues such as gender based violence and maternal and child health. It provides a forum for local NGOs and women's groups from across the country. To achieve the objective, WRC had cooperated with UNIFEM to do the field test on UNIFEM education materials for Component Two of the Program for Enhancing Rural Women's Leadership and Participation in Nation Building in Timor-Leste

(PERWEL) that prepared by a Local NGO called Forum Tau Matan . It participated by 24 local women who come to access WRC services.

### Child Care Centre/ Sentru Tau Matan ba Labarik

This month, the Advocacy Program has welcomed the new project called Child Care Centre/ Sentru Tau Matan ba Labarik. This project is to provide support on staff children development for 12 children. It has started kindy age group and has planned to extend to toddler age group at the end of this month. The children are very interested to come and the parents are very grateful for the support. Three staff were recruited and new staff will be added to extend the activities. Great thanks to Rosanne , who voluntarily provides support for the development of the staff and resources of Child Care centre.

### Widows Support Program



*Fokupers in Group Counseling*

Sharing-Day is the monthly meeting between widows. Different guest speakers are invited to present and share information based on the widows' needs. The sharing-day also provides psychosocial support activities to strengthen and encourage women to learn about methods to cope with trauma and face daily life problems. Initially, the Widows Sharing-Day which started in September 2006, was funded through Aloia's Crisis Fund from the Milk Foundation in Singapore. And for the period of April to September 2007, the USAID/ DAI agreed to support this program. As usual, the counseling activity for the widows is conducted as part of the sharing-day program. Similarly, this activity has been developed based on their recent information which is being collected by Widows Support Project Officer. In May, the workshop was facilitated by PRADET Timor Loro Sae on "Stress, Trauma and Coping Skills".

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*Exercise with PRADET Staff*

### NEW FACES AT THE ADVOCACY PROGRAM



#### Standing left- right:

No 2. Rosalina dos Santos : CCC Project Officer, no.5 Maria Lourdes: Widows Sewing Trainer, no.6 Meredith Budge: WRC Advisor, no. 7 Cecilia Fonseca WRC Coordinator, no. 10: CCC Coordinator

**Sitting left – right:** no.1 Jacinta: WRC Volunteer, no.2 Domingas Mesquita: Widows Support Project Officer