



Cody distributes school equipment through Alola

Cody Anderson, an Australian student from Airlie Beach in Queensland who won an essay prize, has collected a container load of pre-loved school equipment, clothes and soft toys. This equipment including, books, color pencils, paper, paints and clothes, was presented to Alola in a ceremony last week.

The equipment is for distribution in the schools. Cody, who was moved to raise funds for a particular remote and rural school in Timor, came across to Timor for a day with her mother, Tracey, to present the equipment which she had collected with her neighbours and community in Airlie Beach.

The visit, transportation and ceremony was the idea of the Prime Minister's department in Canberra, and all logistical support was given by the men and women of the Internacional Stabilisation Force.

Cody was unable to take the equipment directly to her chosen school because the visit unfortunately was timed during the Timor school holidays, but after Cody's visit to Alola, and meeting with the Chariperson Ms Sword Gusmao, Alola will conduct the distribution.



CEO, Anne Finch, and the education team receive goods from Cody delivered through the support of the Australian Forces

2nd International Conference: Women for Peace

Alola as a member of the women's network in Timor (Rede Feto), is hosting and organizing the second international women for peace conference. The Steering Committee for the conference is comprised of Alola, Asian Pacific Support Collective Timor-Leste, Fokupers, and the women's justice division of JSMP, Memoia Viva, UNIFEM, the UNMIT Gender Affairs unit, UNTL together with representation from the Secretary of State for Equality, and the Norwegian Embassy Timor Section.

The appointed co-ordination of the conference is Filomena Barros Dos Reis. Reporting on the organisation for the conference, Filomena said: "all activities for the conference are about involving women in discussing the pursuit of peace. The participations include oral history research being conducted by students of UNTL, a workshop and performance from local and overseas artists. The final component of the conference is a roadshow around all districts implementing the results of the International Conference through poetry, theatre, music and art. The theme of the conference is that as creative agents women can promote and celebrate peace. They can play and important role in the future in conflict resolution.

The conference will be part of the international network for peace building, with regional and international representation. The conference is supported by the Norwegian Embassy in Jakarta.



Mena Nudar Komisaun Organizadora ba komfrensia

Mother Support Groups work together with the referral hospital in Baucau

In June, Alola appointed two staff to work part time liaising with the hospital in Baucau. These two employees were drawn from amongst the Mother Support Group members of well established groups. Their job is to counsel women about how they use breastfeeding for their infants and young children. They talk to women about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, and the risk of formula milk. The hospital liaison staff give women advice about aspects of successful breastfeeding, and their involvement ensures that the nursing staff get the message as well.

The maternity packs that Alola provides to all women who give birth in an approved health facility are also handled and distributed by the new hospital liaison staff. The packs contain items that the mother and baby will need after birth—infant cloths, a towel, soap, etc..

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: Kirsty Sword Gusmao. Leadership Team: CEO: Anne Finch. Program Managers: MCH - Maria Immaculada Guterres; Advocacy - Alita Verdial; Education: Rosanne Simpkin; Economic Development: Cecilia Fonseca; Office Manager—Monica Guterres.

Exhibition of TAIS from the Alola Collection in Melbourne

In September, Alola participated in the opening of an exhibition of tais in St Kilda Town Hall in Melbourne. This event was combined with a forum to discuss the textile tradition of Timor, to talk about the process of weaving, and the future for the producers of these fine textiles.

Ofelia Neves Napoleão, the Production Manager of Alola's Taibessi workshop, where products are made from this cloth, attended the events. She spoke about weaving processes and about the weaving of her home district of Ainaro, and her childhood memories of the making of fine traditional cloth.

Other papers were given by Robyn Maxwell (Senior Curator of Asian Art at the National Gallery of Australia) and Joanna Barkmann (Curator, Southeast Asian Art and Material Culture, MAGNT) and Sara Niner, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Monash University. Dr Niner is the curator of the Alola Tais Collection, and she organized the events with the support from the Friends of Suai and Port Philip Council.

The forum audience learnt about regional distinctions between various tais traditions and the processes involved in the pictorial and ikat motifs and techniques.

The exhibition contained samples of tais from all the main traditions. The afternoon sessions of the forum consisted of discussions around the challenges confronting the weavers today, as the traditions become lost, and as women are unable to continue to weave as part of the traditional rhythm of village life.



Sara Niner (middle) is the coordinator of the exhibition



The exhibition of Timor Tais was displayed at St Kilda Town Hall

Alola launches it's school holiday program

Alola has been working in collaboration with Care International to run a school holiday program during the extended school vacation period. The program is designed to give the children an opportunity to be exposed to quality educational activities. The program was conducted in 4 districts, and Alola, together with CARE (funded by the European Commission), and in association with the Ministry for Education, will next year extend it to all districts.

The program was launched in Becora on the 5th September by the Minister for Education, Joao Cancio Freitas. In his speech, the Minister spoke of the role of parents as the first educators of children.



Goodwill Ambassador for Education Ms Kirsty Sword Gusmao with the Minister for Education, Snr Joao Cancio Freitas

He stressed that this is an important role as the future of the nation is in the hands of children, and they need education in order to lead the nation in the future, and to be good citizens. The program launch was also led by the Goodwill Ambassador for Education, Ms Kirsty Sword Gusmao. In her speech, Ms Gusmao stressed that it is not easy to be a

parent, the parents are the first educators of the children: they teach the children to talk, walk, listen and to be social before they go to school:

"As a mother of three children, i know that it is important for a parent to be active to participate in a child's education, in their intellectual and emotional formation."

Again, she stressed, "Parents in taking care of their children start educating them in the early months between 0—6 months, the children will learn from everything they see at home. They will be interested in everything they see around them. They are always happy to imitate whatever others are doingcontinua pagina 3

Region 1 office in Baucau re-opens

Fundasaun Alola has returned to work in our Region 1 office in Baucau.

Marina Braz Da Costa, the office manager of Alola Foundation said: "The regional office in Baucau will continue the programs in Region 1, running out of Baucau to service Baucau district, Viqueque, and Lautem Districts, and to include the work that is done in Manututu district. This Office is to facilitate the Alola activities in all areas—health, education, economic and community development."

The office was originally opened in 2006. Womens groups used the office for meetings, and for activities. After the civil unrest in Baucau in 2007 the office was damaged and abandoned for several months.

Work has resumed, and it is currently used as a base for running the women's health, breastfeeding, hospital liaison, and advocacy programs with the District Support worker based there facilitating women's groups in the area.

The Region 1 education co-ordinator is also stationed in the Baucau office, supporting schools in Baucau, Lautem and working in collaboration with staff in Viqueque. From this base, the education team visit the schools and pre-schools in the region with which Alola is associated.

The office is supported with a team of staff: security, and a cleaner working under an office manager to ensure that the office can function again as a hub for Alola activity in the east..



Alola Baucau office

Small grants distributed in the rural areas

For the second year in a row, Alola distributed small grants, with support from the Gulbenkian Foundation. This year we are focusing on assistance in rural areas.

Women in rural areas are more likely to be unaware of assistance and development initiatives available to them. The program is run by the Community Development co-ordinator, Ms Cecilia Fonseca. Cecilia says that: "last year the program was run by Alola in the six districts in which Alola had District Support Workers. The 2nd district congress in Same revealed that rural women have many issues and concerns about health and development."

The program involves collaboration with the health centres, together with the District support workers. The workers now operate in all 13 districts.



The grants were distributed to 39 groups. The distribution started in August, and each group received up to \$1000. Grants to NGOs are in the vicinity of \$1500 to \$2000. The Gulbenkian provided USD30,000 in 2008. All grants will be distributed, implemented and acquitted by December 2008.



Staff changes: Nica Correia (left) celebrates with Marina Braz da Costa, who is now on maternity leave with Dete Fonseca. Azzi Reis has left to take a new job with UNDP and takes her beautiful baby, Jo, with her. Tanya Wells Brown has moved to UNFPA and we welcome many new staff to our all our growing programs.

Alola becomes the judge in the festival fashion show in Com

Alola, working together with GTZ, supported this year's Festival of Tais traditional Fashion in Com, Lospalos. Alola was part of the judging panel assessing the competition between the different producers. During the two days of the festival, Alola attended the music festival and was part of the events to promote and highlight the traditional and modern use of tais.



Wearing Tais Tradisional

Traditional tais is made from cotton grown in Timor, and spun and dyed in the community with vegetable dyes. This product is slow to produce, and requires a high level of skill, so has a higher value to the community and to the market than modern tais made from commercially dyed yarn. Products can be made and many uses found for modern tais. The traditional tais are part of the customs and ceremonies of each region, with the patterns and techniques handed down from ancestors.

Alola purchases the tais of the Com producer groups represented at the festival. This supports the business of weavers of the area, and provides material to make items for sale in the Alola shop, as well as high quality items that are sold as individual pieces.

Alola is a customer of both traditional and modern tais, and through training, and partnership is able to influence the production and marketing practices of the groups to enable them to continue to produce both the important high quality pieces, and the innovative modern work.

Alola is aware that the tais tradition is currently preserved by the work of the older women. Alola is concerned to work with younger women to ensure that they have the chance to learn the skills of their grandmothers.



Wearing Modern Tais



From page 1: School Holiday Program "and they learn to communicate based on what they see and are attached to. The school holiday program is important because it acknowledges a child's right to play and learn. Through playing a child will learn how to resolve problems, collaborate with others, strengthen themselves, use their imagination and communicate their feelings. Research indicates strongly that active children who are always participating will find opportunities to practise what they have learnt, progress in writing and reading.

"It is my expectation that as the parent or as the teacher, we have to support and encourage our children to reach their true potential and be successful in what they do" Kirsty said.