



## Alola Employs Breastfeeding Specialist To Work At Dili Hospital

Fundasaun Alola has employed a full time midwife and breastfeeding specialist to work at Dili Hospital to teach mothers how to breastfeed their newborn babies and the importance of skin to skin contact with their newborn baby. Albertina de Rosa has been employed by Alola after the staff at Dili Hospital explained that midwives often did not have time to teach mothers about the importance of skin to skin contact and breastfeeding.

Albertina ensures that when the baby is born the midwife checks that the baby is well and then puts the baby on the mother's chest.

It is important that the baby has skin to skin contact with the mother within the first hour of being born. The baby is wrapped in a clean cloth and given their new beanie to protect them from the cold.



Alola Chairwoman, Kirsty Sword Gusmão accompanied the doctor and midwives attending mothers in the maternity ward in the Dili Hospital and gave beanies to the newborn babies.



Fundasaun Alola has also added a new item to the maternity packs that have been given out at the Dili Hospital for the last three years. Alola has added beanies to the maternity packs that have been knitted by women in Canberra.

Fundasaun Alola Chairwoman, Ms. Sword Gusmão accompanied doctor and midwife Odete Viegas as she attended mothers in the maternity ward in the Dili Hospital and gave beanies to the newborn babies.

Kirsty said that the Timorese mothers were very keen to have the beanies so that they can ensure that their newborn is warm while it is being breastfed. The distribution of maternity packs is part of the commitment of the Fundasaun Alola to promote the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of the baby's life. Alola has been distributing maternity packs for the last three years to women who give birth in the Dili Hospital, the Baucau Hospital and women involved in the safe motherhood program in Liquiça. The maternity packs are made

by Alola's sewing group of Taibesi and now include the beanies. The director of the Dili Hospital Clinic, Dr. Trelinda Barros said that she is keen for maternity packs to be available in all district health centres.

## Alola Esperansa Shop Continues To

Alola Esperansa shop manager, Helen Gomes said that the Alola shop has new products with a range of matching handbags, purse, jewellery bags, make up bags and mobile phone bags and next week will start making a new bag design.

All products including bags, wallets, mobile phone bags and hair ties are available in the Alola Esperansa shop at Alola and the Alola shop at the Nicolao Lobato Dili International Airport in Comoro. Alola will continue to stock their existing range of products as well as expanding their range of products. They will also continue to buy tais and other products from women in the districts to sell them in the Alola Esperansa shop.



New products now available in the Alola

**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 - Macu Guterres; Advocacy - Alita Verdial; Education: Marina braz da Costa; Economic Development: Bernadete Fonseca; Chief Operations Manager — Monica Guterres.

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## Launch of Mem Fox Book in Tetum

Mem Fox's book "Whoever You Are" was translated into Tetum and the Tetum book was launched at Alola.

In Dili participating in the launch were Mem Fox herself, Kirsty Sword Gusmão, Alola Chairwoman and Goodwill Ambassador for Education; Peter Heyward Australian Ambassador to Timor-Leste; Apolinario Magno representing the Education Minister; Mark Sherrwill, Country Manager of Conoco Phillips; infant school children from Bemori; primary school students from Rumbia; students from 4<sup>th</sup> of December Secondary school, were all in attendance. The book translator Elisabeth Gomes and all Alola Staff.

Apolinario Magno said, "Education in Timor-Leste faces many problems because of a lack of books."

At the launch Ms. Kirsty Sword Gusmão said she felt sad when she saw the lack of books available at school. "I have three small children. They like reading books; therefore we have a lot of books at home. When I saw how few books were available in Timor-Leste, I felt sad and weep because I want all children in Timor-Leste to have the same experience as my children, to learn about the world by reading the books."

Ten thousand copies of "Sé De'it Mak Ó" were printed for distribution to the infants and primary schools in Timor-Leste. Alola believes that when these books are given to teachers to use in schools, we need to demonstrate to teachers how to read the books to children in an engaging



Apolinario Magno representing the Education Minister gives Mem Fox the Tetum version of her book "Whoever You Are" at the book launch.

way so that the children can enjoy them.

The Australian Literacy Educator's Association who were also represented at the launch gave T-shirts to the young children with 'Please read to me' (*Favor ida le'e mai hau*) written on them in Tetum. The Australian Ambassador to Timor-Leste said that he really enjoyed being involved with the launch of this book and he thanked Mem Fox for this book which now can be distributed and read to children throughout Timor-Leste.

## Brazilian and Angolan Artists Participate in International Women for Peace Conference

Three international artists, two from Brazil and one from Angola have come to Timor-Leste to participate in an artists' retreat for the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Women for Peace Conference that will take place in Dili on March 5-6 2009.

The international artists will work with Timorese women artists to prepare music, theatre, sculpture and paintings about the role of women in peace building that the works will be displayed at the conference and travel to the districts after the conference as part of a road show that the Timorese artists will undertake.

Filomena dos Reis, conference coordinator said that before the artists create their music, theatre and painting, they will visit the districts to see and hear directly the women's stories and problems in rural areas.

Filomena said, "women live in different cultures around the world, but always face the same violence." The theme of the conference is "Women as creative agents for peace".

The international artists will stay in Timor-Leste for one month and work alongside Timorese artists like Aida Soares, Gina Correia, Nivea Dos Reis and others.

At the launch of the artists retreat in Dare Fundasaun Alola CEO, Anne Finch said she was very happy that the



International artists Virginia de Medeiros, Marcia Castro, Filomena dos Reis and Marcella Costa arrive in Dili to participate in the 2nd International Women for Peace Conference in Timor-Leste.

international artists can work with Timorese artists to produce music and other art for the conference. She said that this conference will be different to the 1<sup>st</sup> International Women for Peace Conference that took place in Jakarta, Indonesia because of the artistic element to the conference.

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## School Girls' Conference

The Fundasaun Alola Education team in cooperation with Care International is holding conferences for school girls in Timor-Leste. Girls from these conferences will attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Women for Peace Conference.

The purpose of the Girls' Conference is to introduce the girls to women's rights.

Marina Braz Da Costa, the Education Program Manager said, "five girls conference will be held in Timor-Leste. The first conference will be in Dili, then Ainaro, Viqueque (Ossu) and Baucau.

The final conference will be in Dili again and will include students from private schools. The first Girls' Conference was held for the students of Secondary School No 4 Balide, Dili because the school was really keen to send their student to participate in the conference and learn about women's rights.

One of the girls' conference coordinators Joanna Vila-Nova said, "this conference will be an opportunity for the girls to give their opinions on their needs and the daily problems that they are facing. This program is focused on children's rights especially for the girls to improve their life in our society."

She said that the conferences involving the two organizations (Alola and Care International) will organize games to help the students know more about women's rights so they can participate in the development of the nation. We will also distributed the 2009 diary to them,



*Girls write on their friends backs about what they love each other at the Girls Conference.*

produced by Fokupers organization, so that they can read and see more about women's rights.

We have 50 girls that really enjoyed this conference run by the Alola Education team and Care International.

Lucia de Jesus as a student from secondary school no. 4 Balide said I am really interested in this conference because this is a way for me to know about women's right and to improve my skill to support the other women.

## Alola Facilitate Agriculture Ministry Training on Rearing Chickens



*District Support Workers listen to an explanation from the Agriculture Ministry trainer about how to prepare a henhouse for chickens and how to look after chickens when they are sick.*

Alola District Support Workers are working with the Agriculture Ministry in 13 districts to help them train women in how to rear chickens. District Support Worker Coordinator, Joanico Oliveira said, "the District Support Workers are facilitating the Agriculture Ministry running training for women in 13 districts on how to rear chickens. This is an important activity because it will improve women's capacity for economic development. It is a new activity for women in the districts to help them sustain their families".

He said that before this activity started, the District Support Workers received basic training from the Agriculture Ministry trainer about how to rear chickens, how to prepare a henhouse for chickens to lay eggs in and how to look after chickens when they are sick.

He said, "We have gone to all districts to tell women about this new activity. We hope that the Agriculture Ministry will assist these women with this activity so that women in rural areas can have more opportunities for economic development.

## Alola Presents at The 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Traditional Textile Symposium In Manila

As a well known organization in Timor-Leste and overseas, Alola often gets invitations to participate in activities overseas.

Alola CEO Anne Finch and Cecilia da Fonseca, Acting Economic Development Manager, attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Traditional Textile Symposium in Manila in The Philippines. Cecilia said, "we presented the history of Tais, explained how Tais is made, the materials used and the marketing of Tais."

Many of the participants were interested in the natural production methods used when making Tais such as the way that fresh morinda and indigo are cooked up and used to dye the cotton used in Tais.

Cecilia described the regional differences between the Tais. For example, the black Tais from Bobonaro compared to the red. Black and white Tais from Oecusse or the more colourful Tais from Lautem



*Alola CEO Anne Finch and Cecilia da Fonseca with all the participants at the 2nd ASEAN Traditional Textiles Symposium in Manila, The Philippines.*



*Women in Kalibo in The Philippines work together to scrape pineapple leaves to produce fibre for making cloth.*

District. These variations tell many different stories about the cultural and historical differences across Timor-Leste.

Cecilia said that the participants came from Asian nations where the textile traditions are similar to Timor-Leste in that the local populations still create cloth and sell it as a unique local product. Participants came from Vietnam, Iran, Indonesia, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Australia, Canada, The Philippines and Timor-Leste. The Symposium took place on 1-6 February 2009. All participants also visited the area of Kalibo in the Philippine to see the way that the local population use pineapple leaves to produce cloth. The cloth that they produce using pineapple leaves is called "pina". They scrape the pineapple leaves with a fragment of a plate, the fibre that is produced is dried in the sun and used as yarn to produce cloth.

Cecilia said, "the local population in Kalibo really enjoy their jobs. They work together to scrape the pineapple leaves with which they produce various things to sell and support their lives."

*(Continued from page 1) Brazilian and Angola Artists ...*

Marcela Costa, artist and sculptor from Angola, said that she came to Timor-Leste to improve the relationship between artists of Timor-Leste and Angola, She said "I felt very happy when I arrived in Timor-Leste and I believe that we will work well together with artists from Timor-Leste to produce music, theater, and other art forms as part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Women for Peace Conference to be held in March 2009.

Marcia Castro, a singer from Brazil said she was struck by the beauty of Timor-Leste when she arrived in Timor-Leste and saw the mountains around the city of Dili. I did not know about Timor-Leste before but when I have received the invitation, I learnt about Timor and felt great joy about the success of the Timorese struggle for independence.

Nivea Elisabeth dos Reis, an artist from Timor-Leste said she was really looking forward to working with the international artists who have many experiences from around the world. She subsequently said, "the music we have produced, when we got back from the districts is in Tetum so that all Timorese can understand our songs".