



# Helping to educate, heal and empower the people of Timor-Leste

A report for The Emerge Foundation



# Thank you for your support

A message from  
Professor Zlatko Skrbis,  
Interim Provost to Mr  
Ian and Mrs Marianne  
MacRitchie.

**Dear Ian and Marianne**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the board of the Emerge Foundation for your support.

You have shown immense generosity to the people of Timor-Leste. It is a privilege to partner with the Emerge Foundation, an organisation that has won the hearts of Australians by honouring our nation's commitment to our closest neighbour.

Philanthropic support is the foundation of many institutions. It represents improved financial sustainability for ACU, and more importantly, better access to education and opportunities for students. Throughout 2020, ACU celebrated our 30th anniversary. An impressive milestone we could not have achieved without our community of

donors. A gift is a wonderful thing, but to be a benefactor of your generosity for more than a decade, well, that kind of commitment is priceless.

On behalf of our staff, our students and the people of Timor-Leste, I say a simple but heartfelt thank you. I look forward to the privilege of working with you and seeing our programs in Timor-Leste grow from strength to strength.

**Professor Zlatko Skrbis**

Interim Provost  
Australian Catholic University

# Future in Youth

## Empowering youth through soccer

Project lead - Dr Paul Taylor, Assistant Deputy Head, Behavioural and Health Sciences

The Future in Youth program aims to increase knowledge of and access to physical activity and physical education by working with schools and local communities.

A key aim of this program is to build lasting capacity within school communities, including leadership, health and life skills. Your generosity has allowed us to provide a range of resources including translated activity manuals and relevant sports equipment packs to each school to run physical activity classes all year-

round. We expect that this will help increase positive attitudes toward and engagement with education by Timorese students.

### 2020 ACTIVITY

Normally ACU staff and students visit Timor Leste twice a year. Due to the ongoing effects of COVID-19, we were restricted to one visit in 2020, which took place in March. The main purpose of this visit was for ACU staff to meet with the Baucau district Head of Education and Director of Children

and Youth Centre (CYC) to plan future school visits and investigate further options for expansions.

Unfortunately, ACU students could not travel to Timor Leste in 2020 to conduct the soccer program due to the travel restrictions. The only school visit that took place in 2020 was our visit to Ostico school in Baucau district to introduce Mr Ian MacRitchie to the school principal and the students. Ostico participated in the Future in Youth program in 2019.



Future in Youth in action in 2019



*ACU staff and students in Timor-Leste*

### ACU STUDENT EXPERIENCE

It is unfortunate that our students were not able to travel to Timor-Leste in 2020. Your generosity not only empowers the youth of Timor Leste but it also helps to build capacity of our own students. ACU students use the experience to develop key professional skills in areas such as exercise prescription, teamwork, communication and leadership. Perhaps more importantly, the interaction with the vibrant, welcoming and caring Timorese people and culture always has a profound impact on them personally. ACU students gain a unique cultural emersion and develop enhanced empathy. Their understanding of a broad range of experiences and situations beyond their own and those of others helps our students to be better health practitioners in their future careers.

### WHAT NEXT?

ACU's Future in Youth program is well received by the people of Timor Leste. A major achievement of this program was enabling locals to continue the soccer program throughout the year. CYC has now become a major stakeholder and a partner of ACU as its staff are now well equipped and resourced to conduct the soccer program throughout the year. This allows any school to take part and ensures any keen child does not miss out. A key next step of this program is incorporating the Future in Youth program in Timor-Leste's physical education curriculum. Initial discussions with the Baucau district Head of Education has been very encouraging but further discussions are required before it is finalised. If Timor Leste becomes a 'COVID bubble' for international travel, we anticipate our staff and students will

travel there once again to conduct this program in 2021. If this is not possible, we expect to deliver our 2021 program virtually. The Faculty of Health Sciences is currently in the planning phase of the virtual program and they hope to be able to offer a range of seminars, professional development and courses using our staff and students.



*Visit to Ostico school in March 2020*

# Barefoot Nurses

## Creating the health care of tomorrow

Project Lead - Associate Professor Stephen Guinea, Associate Dean, Learning, Teaching and Professional Experience

Established in 2012, the Barefoot Nurses program aims to promote health literacy and basic primary health care for the people of Baucau district in Timor Leste. The program's focus is on infants and children due to the high rate of childhood mortality and chronic diseases in the region. Until 2019, this program was conducted at the Seven Eleven Farmacia clinic (formerly known as the San Antonia clinic) in Baucau. It employed an Australian-trained Timorese nurse to travel to Baucau for six months and provide professional development to health professionals in the Baucau district. The Barefoot Nurses program also conducts a Train-the-Trainer program where ACU staff and students from the Faculty of Health Sciences train locals in basic health, nursing and nutrition. Participants use their new skills to train others and provide first aid care for people in isolated regions outside of the Baucau city centre.

In 2019, the Seven Eleven Farmacia clinic was closed and re-established in January 2020 with a new name, Dolce Cuore Clinic. The clinic started to operate in January 2020 but was only officially opened by Mr Ian MacRitchie during his visit to Timor Leste in March 2020.

This clinic is led by Dr Ivonia Maria Guterres and is currently staffed by:

- two doctors – one full-time and one part-time
- three nurses – one general nurse, one nurse administrator and one midwife
- one part-time pharmacist.

All staff members are local Timorese, which helps to ensure the clinic is available most of the year for patients to visit.



*Opening ceremony of the Dolce Cuore Clinic*



*Staff of Dolce Cuore clinic and Ian MacRitchie (Dr Ivonia second from right)*

“It is great that the clinic can visit our village. We stay far away from the city and don't have any mode of transport to travel to Baucau. More importantly we are happy the clinic is free, including the medicine.”

**Clinic patient**

## ACTIVITY IN 2020

Your generosity has enabled Dr Ivonia to purchase a large amount of equipment, including beds, office furniture, scales, sterilisers and emergency equipment. In 2020, more than 6,000 patients visited the clinic. The majority of the patients were diagnosed and treated for upper respiratory tract infection, hypertension, back pain, arthritis, anaemia, bronchitis, dermatitis, diarrhoea, scabies and gastritis.

The clinic was closed in February 2020 because Dr Ivonia was on medical leave.

Your generosity has also allowed Dr Ivonia to conduct more than 70 outreach clinics in remote villages in the Baucau municipality such as Venilale, Vemase and Baucau Vila. Funds from Emerge were used to hire vehicles to travel to these villages and to purchase medicine. Because of your generous donation, patients visiting the Dolce Cuore Clinic and the outreach clinics are not required to pay for the medical services or medication.

## NUMBER OF PATIENTS VISITED EACH MONTH

MONTH	TOTAL
January	206
February	Closed
March	333
April	264
May	736
June	1,008
July	974
August	1,037
September	473
October	1,081
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,112</b>

*Data for November and December not available yet.*

“We attend remote villages in our outreach program because some of these people live very far and are simply unable to travel to our clinic in Baucau, and they really need the health services to overcome any illness”

**Dr Ivonia**

## NUMBER OF OUTREACH CLINICS CONDUCTED EACH MONTH AND PATIENTS VISITED

MONTH	NUMBER OF CLINICS	NUMBER OF PATIENTS
January	4	28
February	0	0
March	4	28
April	4	26
May	8	23
June	13	36
July	13	31
August	11	37
September	6	52
October	10	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>318</b>

*Data for November and December not available yet.*



*An outreach clinic conducted by Dr Ivonia at a remote village*

## ACU STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Generally, staff and students from ACU travel to Timor Leste in August/ September to conduct the Train the Trainer program. ACU students assist with the delivery of the program by educating the locals who participate in basic health literacy and by demonstrating how to use resources provided by ACU. Communication can be a challenge when ACU students visit Timor Leste, as locals who participate speak different dialects and have limited capacity to speak English.

Unfortunately, due to the ongoing effects of COVID-19 and travel restrictions, ACU staff and students were unable to travel to Timor Leste to conduct the Train the Trainer program in 2020. The ongoing pandemic has also impacted the clinic as staff were unable to travel to Dili and Indonesia to purchase medication and supplies.

## WHAT NEXT?

Staff from the Dolce Cuore Clinic have never had any specialised training related to their roles. In 2021, we hope to:

- provide professional development opportunities for our clinic staff and past participants of the Train the Trainer program
- conduct training of other local doctors
- arrange for an Australian GP/ specialist to travel to the clinic once every quarter
- set up a telehealth platform.

From 2021, ACU's Barefoot Nurses program will be renamed the Maternal Childcare program. The program will be conducted by partnering with two clinics in Timor Leste, The Dolce Cuore clinic in Baucau (currently supported) and the Order of Malta clinic in Dili.



Anita and Dino, locals trained by the Train the Trainer program at one of the outreach clinics

# Instituto Catolico Para Formacao de Professores (ICFP) Catholic College

## Opening minds through education

Project Lead - Br Peter Corr, Australian Marist Solidarity & Ms Margie Beck, ICFP College, ACU Alumna



ICFP Catholic College

ICFP is known as the leading educational institution that trains primary school teachers for all 13 districts of Timor-Leste. At the time of independence in 2002, Timor Leste had very few trained primary teachers and no colleges to prepare more teachers. Traditionally from farming backgrounds, two-thirds of ICFP students are on scholarships supported by Emerge Foundation. A priority of the college has been 'Timorisation', which aims for a college staffed by Timorese and offering courses developed and taught by Timorese, all of whom have research capacity. Upon graduation many students return to their hometowns to teach the next generation of Timorese people.

### ACTIVITY IN 2020

In 2020, funds donated by the Emerge Foundation were used to award:

- eleven scholarships of US\$3,000 each for students enrolled in a Bachelor of Teaching (three-year course). The scholarship was paid in equal monthly payments over three years.
- twenty scholarships of US\$500 each for students enrolled in a Bachelor of Education (four-year course). This scholarship was awarded as a one-off scholarship for students in their fourth year.

For most of the students, the scholarship provides the only source of funding for their studies and is a source of great joy and relief. When we asked some of the students how they felt about their scholarship, there were big smiles and words like "Thank you so much", "My family could not pay for me otherwise", "I really appreciate getting the allowance each month", and "I have learned how to budget because my family lives too far away to send me food".



2020 ICFP Catholic College graduation ceremony



*Emerge scholarship recipients*

Students use the scholarship funds for a range of expenses. The Bachelor of Education scholars use the scholarship to cover part of their tuition fees in the fourth year.

The Bachelor of Teaching scholars use the scholarship funds towards:

- tuition fees
- rent and food
- printing and photocopying
- graduating costs
- travel costs as required
- emergency funds such as for a death in family or illness.

This year, 86 students completed and conferred their degree during the March 2020 graduation ceremony. Fifty-nine of these students graduated with a Bachelor of Teaching and 27 with a Bachelor of Education.

All students who completed their Bachelor of Education in 2020 are currently in paid employment as a teacher. Twenty-two of the Bachelor of Teaching students have opted to

complete their fourth year studies to receive a Bachelor of Education. There are at least 15 Bachelor of Teaching students in paid employment, mostly in NGOs or schools. Due to COVID-19 and the uncertainty of available jobs, the rest are working as unpaid volunteers in schools in their hometowns.

#### **IMPACT OF COVID**

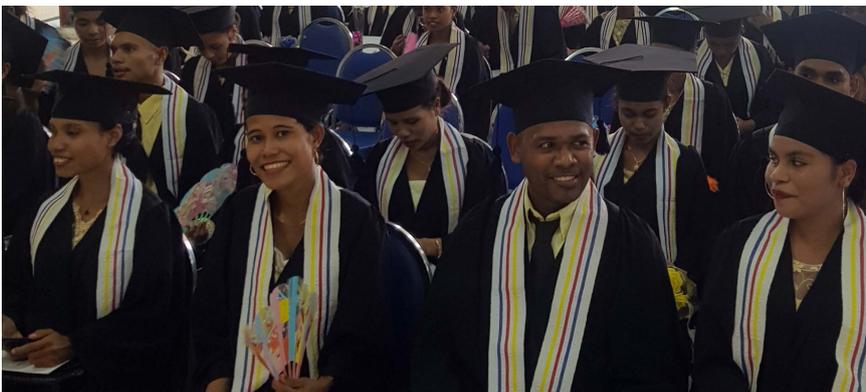
Due to COVID-19, a complete lockdown was imposed in Timor-Leste which resulted in classes being conducted online using platforms such as Facebook or WhatsApp. For hygiene improvements, the college employed a staff member to hand clean all areas of the college using bleach. Hand sanitisers are available at the entrance to the building and in every teaching space. In addition, masks are provided to all those who enter the college.

From an educational point of view, students were unable to complete their professional experience in 2020. Instead, students were divided into

groups and asked to prepare lessons to teach their peers. This activity was supervised by staff as if they were in a school.

Year 3 students usually complete a small project at the school. This year all projects were concentrated on beautifying the college grounds, making containers to hold sanitisers, information about use of sanitisers and general hygiene for each of the teaching areas.

The college is expecting the impacts of COVID-19 to continue to 2021 and will liaise with health authorities for guidelines and advice to make any necessary changes required to continue to conduct classes with minimal disruptions.



# Financials

We are very grateful for your generous donation of \$210,000 which we received in 2020. As per your request, your donation was allocated equally for the three projects.

## OVERALL FINANCIALS FOR 2020

PROJECT	DONATION	AMOUNT SPENT	BALANCE	NOTES
Future in Youth	\$70,000	\$6,307	\$63,693	Due to COVID-19, ACU was unable to conduct most of its Future in Youth activities in 2020.
Barefoot Nurses	\$70,000	\$54,195	\$18,941	Funds used for Dolce Cuore Clinic as at October 2020. Remaining funds will be used in November and December 2020
ICFP College	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$0	All funds were used to disseminate scholarships

Currently, there is a balance of \$573,192 remaining from the funds donated by Emerge. Reasons for this balance include:

- each year ACU reserves a portion of the funds to ensure the sustainability of programs if funding became limited
- interest accrued over the years
- the majority of the funds donated to Future in Youth in 2020 have not been used due to the current travel restrictions.

ACU prepared a business plan outlining the proposed use of the unexpended funds which has been approved by Emerge Foundation.

This balance will support current programs and growth in 2021 and mitigate the loss of activities and services if further donations in 2021 are limited.



# The next 30 years at ACU

## A message from the Director, Advancement and Alumni

I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank you for your support.

You are helping us to not only transform the lives of the people of Timor-Leste, but also build character, leadership and empathy in our students and staff.

As we celebrate what we have achieved over the past 30 years, we also look to the future and what we have yet to accomplish in the philanthropic space. We have developed a pathway for our students by empowering thinkers and doers who will create a better future. We are committed to advancing learning opportunities and outcomes for all young people by equipping them with the knowledge and skills for lifelong learning.

Our philanthropic vision is to create the health care of tomorrow, enable inclusion and opportunity, shape the future of teaching and galvanise the potential of young people and future leaders.

I am very proud of how far our young Advancement and Alumni team has come. I look forward to providing you with updates on how we are achieving our goals and striving to make a positive impact in the world.

**Ms Rachelle Bramley**

Director, Advancement & Alumni  
Australian Catholic University



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