

Atauro Island Investment Prospectus 2010

Timor Leste



Indigo-Atauro Friendship Group
Special Committee of Indigo Shire

Summary of projects for which we are seeking support

- 1. Composting toilets US\$400 (Aus\$480) per toilet**
- 2. Student Scholarships US\$600 (Aus\$720) per year**
US\$1800 (Aus\$2160) for three years
- 3. Teacher Exchange program Total cost Aus\$ 5000**

Any contributions welcome

- 4. HIAM Health Mosquito net program Aus\$15 per mosquito net**

Aim to provide one to every one of 2000 households on Atauro

How to assist the Indigo Atauro Friendship group with these projects

If you are interested in discussing how you might contribute please contact the committee through

Ms Natalie Keveaney
Indigo Shire
Ph. 0357288000

Dr Wendy Connor
conthw@westnet.com.au

nkeaveney@indigoshire.vic.gov.au

Donations can be made to Indigo Shire

Account Name: Indigo Shire Council
BSB: 063 637
Account No. 1004 6006

Project specific Remittance Details

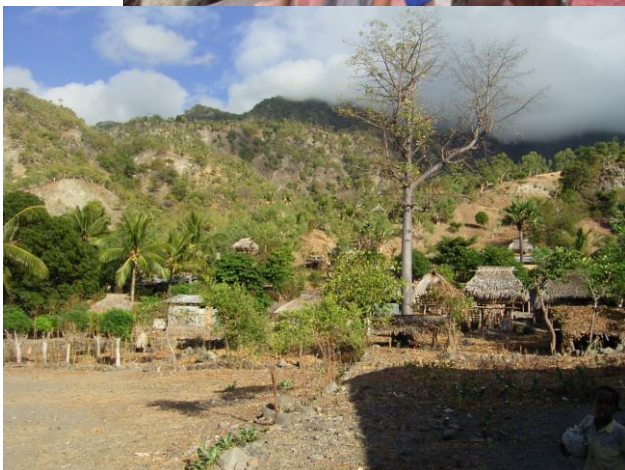
7208 1620 72080 COMPOSTING TOILET
7208 1620 72081 STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
7208 1602 72082 TEACHER EXCHANGE
7208 1602 72083 HIAM HEALTH

Introduction

This prospectus offers an outline of projects available for investment to support the people of Atauro Island, East Timor. These projects have been identified through consultation between members of the Indigo-Atauro Friendship Group in Indigo Shire, Victoria, and local community members from Atauro Island, East Timor.

The prospectus provides an outline of projects identified as key priorities to contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of local people on Atauro Island. The prospectus is a 'work in progress' as some projects will be funded, and new priorities and opportunities will be identified.

The support of individuals and organisations within Indigo Shire and surrounding areas is encouraged to support us in providing assistance to the people of Atauro Island.



Introduction to Indigo-Atauro Friendship Group

After East Timorese independence in 1999, the East Timorese Consulate sought to build links between East Timorese and Australian communities. Senor Abel Guterres (East Timorese Consul General to Australia) travelled widely across south-eastern Australia promoting interest in the new nation and assisting local communities to establish friendship links with East Timorese communities.

A local East Timorese Friendship Group was first proposed by members of the Indigo Shire Junior Council in 2004. The association with Atauro Island grew out of links established by residents of the Indigo Shire with Atauro Island to the north of Dili. Atauro Island is separated from the mainland by a deep water strait and is a relatively isolated and poor area in a very poor country. Early visits to the island confirmed the real development needs of the island and its people, and the genuine opportunities that a link between Atauro Island (sub-district of Dili) and Indigo Shire could bring to both communities.

The Friendship was formalised in 2008 when Councillor Frances Walsh from the Indigo Shire travelled to Atauro Island for the signing of the formal Memorandum of Understanding that links the two communities. Since then the Indigo Shire has established a committee responsible for advancing the friendship. The goals of this group are to identify and facilitate opportunities for the people of Indigo Shire to engage with and support the people of Atauro Island.

Since then several projects have been identified and these are detailed below. The initial project was to support the establishment of a malnutrition relief program for children and pregnant and lactating women. This has been up and running since 2008 and has had a demonstrable impact on the health of the community.

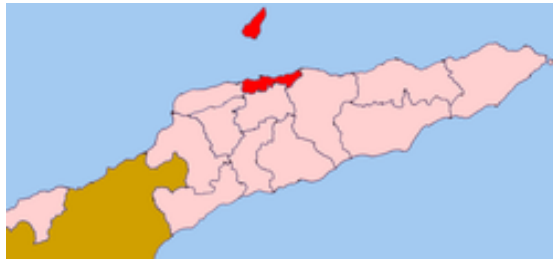


Councillor Frances Walsh signing Memorandum of Understanding with Atauro Subdistrict Administrator in 2008.

Outline of Atauro Island

(extracts from Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atauro_Island)

Atauro Island is a volcanic island situated 30km north of Dili, East Timor. Politically it comprises one of the subdistricts of the Dili District of East Timor. It is about 25 km long and 9 km wide, about 105 km² in area, and is inhabited by about 10,000 people.



East Timor map showing Dili District and Atauro Island



Atauro Island showing Sucos

A number of small hamlets are grouped into 5 districts (Suco): Bikeli and Beloi in the north, Makadade in the southwest, and Maquili and Vila in the southeast. The administrative village is Vila, and a bitumen road on the East coast connects Vila with the village of Pala in Bikeli Suco, and inland to Anartuto in the mountains in Makadade Suco. Other villages around the island are accessed by foot or by boat. The island can be reached from Dili by weekly ferry, or by smaller fisherman's boats. The island is ringed by a coral reef and provides excellent snorkelling and diving.

Mt. Manucoco is the highest point at 995m above sea level. Atauro is a small and rugged island, frequented by landslides and a shortage of fresh water, especially during the drier months. Fresh water springs are present approximately 2km north of Berau, with minor reservoirs around Makadade, and the eastern slopes of Mt. Manucoco. Wells along the coast provide water of poor quality to most coastal townships.

Atauro has two distinct seasons - wet and dry. The island has suffered from extensive clearing since Portuguese settlement in the early 16th century. Vegetation on rocky hillsides consists of open grassy Eucalyptus woodland with rainforest within valleys.

Atauro was colonized along with East Timor by Portugal in the 16th century. It was used as a prison island soon after the settlement of the Portuguese. Atauro is unusual in Catholic East Timor, as there are many Protestants amongst its inhabitants.

Roman Luan is a local Atauro NGO established following the withdrawal of the Indonesians in 1999. An Australian woman, Gabrielle Samson had been working on the island for an Indonesian University setting up kindergartens. She stayed on and helped establish and run Roman Luan. It has been involved in many community development projects including kindergartens, community schools, library, conservation projects and the establishment of a small community run eco-tourism project.

Some critical challenges faced on Atauro Island include:

Extended dry season and poor water supply to most populations on the island;
Poor soils and very rocky terrain;
Loss of native vegetation cover on hillslopes;
Limited training and capacity for community development (from public administration to infrastructure construction);
Limited capital availability;
Physical isolation from mainland;
Political isolation as a sub-district of Dili;
Annual food deficit lasting some months, requiring food supplies to be brought from mainland;

Some important strengths of Atauro Island include:

Presence of local NGO 'Roman Luan' which has 10 years' experience in local community development programs
Presence of community-based ecolodge accommodation at Tua Koin (run by Roman Luan), and at Barry's Place, run by Barry ...and his family.
Local individuals committed to working with Indigo-Atauro Group and other donors to assist with community development
A history of working with outside groups, including a working relationship between the Indigo and Atauro communities supported by a part time liaison officer.

Further information:

<http://www.islandofadventure.tl/index.html>

General info on East Timor:

<http://www.friendsoftimor.com/>

Tua Koin Eco village



Program 1: Composting toilets:

Construction of composting toilets and provision of use and maintenance training.

The villages of Atauro Island are not serviced by any kind of sewerage system. Up until now, toilets as we may recognise them, have not existed. People go to the toilet in open fields and in some drop toilets. These existing practices are unhygienic and unhealthy, and contribute to the health problems of local people, high infant mortality and low life expectancy.

The composting toilets program adopts a local design, developed initially by Roman Luan for use in Tua Koin ecolodge, to enable the communities to use local skills and low cost materials to provide facilities that manage human waste in a controlled and hygienic manner. Indigo-Atauro Friendship group has already supported the construction of a number of composting toilets, and funds have also been received from another INGO.

As this program adopts a new approach that challenges traditional practices, pilot projects have been established in Maquili and Bikeli Sucos where Roman Luan and Indigo Atauro Friendship group have already been active, and where there is local enthusiasm and support from village leaders. Such support is imperative to assist in the identification of locations for composting toilets, and to ensure that the appropriate training is provided. People need to be trained in the proper use and ongoing maintenance of the toilets. An existing composting toilet constructed in Maquili (Aldea Masilihu) in 2009, is shown in the photo.

Project cost and management

The base price for construction of one composting toilet is US\$350. However the price is increased if it is being constructed in a more remote village because of the cost of transporting materials. We aim to include an allowance for education, information sessions, the development of training materials and the training of construction workers. Therefore we are aiming to raise US\$400 per composting toilet constructed.

The project is currently being managed through local NGO Roman Luan and project organisers in the two villages involved in the pilot process.



Composting toilet in Maquili funded by Indigo



Atita Soares de Sousa



Charles Vito Soares Xavier (Alex)

Program 2: Student Tertiary Scholarships

Project description: Providing scholarships to take high school graduates from Atauro Island to Dili for further education.

Project Need: Very few families on Atauro Island have the financial resources to send their children to the mainland for further education. Most are subsistence farmers and there is a limited cash economy. It is unlikely that young people staying on the island will be able to obtain paid employment. Education is vital to the development of Atauro Island and for East Timor as a nation. By providing an opportunity for some of the brighter, hard working students to pursue higher education we can have an impact on individuals, families and community.

Project description, cost and management:

The Indigo- Atauro Friendship Group has been fortunate to establish a relationship with the Mary McKillop catholic charity organisation based in Dili who are willing to administer the scholarship without any extra cost to our group. We have a liason officer on Atauro who will work with the senior high school teachers to identify potential candidates and to arrange interviews.

We have elected to award scholarships to one male and one female student each year. These students will be assisted to select their courses at reputable institutions, then financially supported to attend that institution. Funds will cover tuition fees, books and other stationary, sundry costs and living expenses. For most students the financial support to complete their education will continue for three to four years.

They will be required to show evidence that they are attending and passing their courses.

Costs:

Scholarship for one year	US\$600	(\$720/yr)
Scholarship for three years	US1800	(\$2160)

We will be happy to accept one off donations but would prefer an ongoing commitment to support a student for the duration of their studies.

The first students in our program were selected in 2009 and are both attending Dili Institute. (see photos above).

Program 3: Teacher training and exchange

Brings two teachers from Atauro Island to Australia for 6-8 weeks.

The need

On Atauro Island, there are primary schools in most villages. There is one junior secondary and one senior secondary school in the main village of Vila. Schools have extremely limited facilities, with large numbers of students sitting at wooden desks in open classrooms. Teaching facilities are limited to blackboards. The Senior High School is a newer construction but still with very limited facilities. The teachers have limited access to training opportunities and professional development.

Primary School at
Berau Village, Atauro



People on Atauro Island are multilingual. There are three local dialects spoken on the island. The National Language is Tetum, a language based around dialects from the East Timorese mainland with many words from Portuguese. The official language of East Timor is the language of the first Colonial authority – Portugal. Government policy is for Portuguese to be taught in schools and universities, though most of the population speaks limited Portuguese. The language of the more recent colonial authority, Indonesian, is more widely spoken. Increasingly, English is being recognised in East Timor as the common language for many NGO operations, for international trade, and particularly relevant to Atauro Island, for tourism. Teachers of English on Atauro have limited knowledge of the language, and little idea of its ‘sound’, thus restricting the opportunities for local students to learn English properly. English speaking visitors provide an important opportunity for locals to listen to the language and to learn it beyond what local teachers can teach.

Project description, cost and management

This project aims to bring two teachers to Australia for two months. They will travel to Indigo Shire to spend time based at Rutherglen Secondary School and visiting other schools in the region. Aims – cultural exchange in schools in Indigo Shire to provide a better understanding of East Timor amongst local students, teachers and the wider

community; developing better skills in English language to raise their capacity to teach English; exchanging ideas on classroom teaching approaches and learning about modern teaching techniques and technologies (including developing IT skills). We hope to also provide each of the teachers with their own laptop computer.

The Aloia Foundation has provided a small grant from its Schools friendship program of \$2500. Accommodation in Indigo will be arranged as private billeting in the community. But funding will be required for other accommodation, travel costs, passports, visas, per diem (and purchase of computers).

Approximate costs:

Passport and Visa costs including medical examination requirements	\$500
Airfares Dili-Darwin return	
Airfares Darwin-Melbourne return	\$2500
Accommodation Darwin	\$200
Accommodation Melbourne ?	
Per diem for 50 days @ \$15 per day	\$1600
Miscellaneous	\$200
Total	\$5000

We are also seeking donation of two laptops computers for the visiting teachers to take home to East Timor to improve local IT skills.



Junior secondary school students on their way to school in Vila

Program 4.

HIAM Health malnutrition project--- Provision of mosquito nets

Over the past three years the people of Indigo have been raising money to support an East Timorese NGO called HIAM Health to provide a malnutrition relief service to Atauro Island.

UNICEF estimates that almost 50% of children under 5 years in Timor suffer from malnutrition. The rate may be even higher on Atauro where food is often scarce especially at the end of the dry season. Malnutrition predisposes to many health problems including malaria and other infectious diseases. It also impacts on children's ability to grow and to learn. The future of East Timor depends on these young people being able to take the country to a new level of development and governance.

HIAM Health is a non government organisation originally established by an order of nuns from Australia but now run by local people. The director of HIAM Health, Rosaria Martins de Cruz visited Indigo in 2008. The organisation is recognised by the government of East Timor as a provider of health services.

The program on Atauro has involved a team of health workers visiting the island and travelling by boat or car to all the villages. Initially they spent every second week on the island, now it is one week a month. All the children and pregnant and lactating women are weighed and measured at each visit. Food supplements provided by the WHO are given to all children under 2 years, any child under 5 years who is under weight, and to pregnant and lactating mothers. Local volunteers have been trained in each village to assist with the program.

The delivery of food is associated with a health education session delivered by the workers. Parents must attend and are educated about topics such as nutrition, hygiene, immunisation, disease prevention and even kitchen gardens.

In conjunction with HIAM health we are now embarking on a drive to obtain **mosquito nets** for each of the two thousand households on Atauro Island. Currently less than one in ten households have a mosquito net.

Malaria is a huge health problem on Atauro. It costs many hours of lost work in affected adults, and serious illness and even death in the young and very old. In most households the whole family sleeps together in the only bed, so one net can protect multiple members of the family.

For the cost of a cheap bottle of wine (\$15) you can have a big impact on the health of a whole family. If mum and dad don't get malaria they can go to the fields to work or the sea to fish. This means that the children can eat and so avoid malnutrition as well as malaria.

