

# East Timor Kindergarten Project - Update

This year has again seen the project accelerate towards its final objective of sustainability whilst also introducing new initiatives.

## Children's Picture Story Books

Children's Picture Story Books stir imagination, increase vocabulary, introduce children to a wider world and develop critical thinking. They are critical to a child's development but are unavailable in Timor.

If you believe that it is EVERY child's right to have access to books then you will appreciate the importance of this initiative. The project had previously supplied these books by purchasing books from remaindering warehouses, translating and adding labels to the books with the translated text.

This year we acknowledged that there was no organisation in Timor tackling this issue, so for reasons of sustainability, we would have to do it ourselves. We had not done it previously as our needs are small – 200 of each title would satisfy our needs – giving one copy to each teacher we train. However, doing this commercially requires print runs of at least 2,000. So we decided we would embark on this and we would plan to sell that surplus to our needs.

A new business model emerged – we could use the profits of our sales to underwrite the project into the future. And in order to minimise risk we would seek sponsorship for each book so that if circumstances prevented us from selling the books we could afford to give them away or sell them at greatly reduced rates.

Hinkler Publishing here in Melbourne agreed to work with us. They are an exporter of books, and have a department where English language texts are translated into several languages for distribution in foreign countries. By not costing-in the time of the volunteers, we are able to provide these books very cheaply and will offer them in Timor at \$3 or \$4 (to the Ministry of Education and other NGO's), with some donated where a need is identified. Because of our pro-bono work this price is cheaper than the NGO's could produce them.

The target is 32 titles with an interim target of 20 titles. So far:

- 9 sponsorships of \$3,500 have been sourced
- 4 titles have been printed and are moving via DIK to Timor
- 4 titles are currently being printed
- 4 titles are currently being translated
- 8 further titles have been identified as suitable.

**The project is very appreciative of RCR's support in this initiative.** They have sponsored one title in the first set of books: "*Smelly Bear*" (Ursu Mau-Dois). This sponsorship was provided at a time when this was a new initiative and as such not easy to 'sell' – a great gesture of support by the club.

The sponsorships already donated are:

- 4 x private individuals (1 x Timorese)
- 1 x Hash House Harriers, Dili
- 1 x Rotary Club of Richmond
- 1 x group of project friends (includes school children in Singapore, individual Rotarians, and various social clubs)
- 1 x parishioners of St Jude's, Langwarrin
- 1x Missionaries of the Sacred Heart

## **ATPE Office**

East Timor Development Agency (ETDA) has generously supplied us with an office which has made a significant difference.

This has now been set up – thanks to RCR. **RCR has donated a printer, laminator, guillotine and many other pieces of office equipment and consumables.** RCR also purchased many plastic storage boxes which allows us to be well organised. This now means that most of the production work can take place in Timor.

## **Trainers**

Two teachers are now employed half-time each. This has moved the project to a new level.

Early in the year they studied for 3 months full time and their hard work was rewarded by a Certificate 3 and Certificate 4 in *Train the Trainer*.

Currently the Trainers spend a lot of their time doing 'homework' as they build their skills in the subjects that they teach. They also study English every day and an international volunteer in Timor is training them in the use of the computer.

Barbara speaks to them almost daily over Skype and assists them in their administrative tasks.

They are now comfortable with that medium and have commenced 'study classes' using Skype.

## **Teacher Training**

International trainers travelled to Dili and conducted training in October 2012, January and April of 2013. The Timorese Trainers supported us in the classroom and then in January and April they conducted training for a new group under our supervision.

They have now just completed their first set of 5 workshops with a new group of 13 teachers – independent of us. This is a great accomplishment. This is the first level of training (there are 4 levels) and we will continue to mentor them as they move to be independent in all levels.

They handled all aspects of this training including the administration and coordination.

The next group under their control is scheduled to commence in July.

They both travel to the schools of participants to support them in their teaching; this includes four trips of several days to District schools.

## **Consumables**

DIK supported the project by providing 70 cartons of consumables. Planning is now underway to build a store room in the grounds of one of the Trainer's homes. It will be ideal if resources can be available in Timor on an *as-needs* basis.

## **UN**

We were fortunate to be given a Toyota PRADO car by the UN as they exited the country. It will mean that the international volunteers will not need to hire a car when they visit. The Timorese trainers are currently practicing to gain their licences.

## **D9550 Conference**

ATPE had a stand at this conference held in Dili in April at which individuals and some clubs made donations to the Children's Story Book project. Barbara Woodberry also made important contacts.

## **Future Direction**

It is envisaged that the project will continue to slowly transfer responsibility to the Timorese Trainers. It is very important that solid foundations are laid at each stage of development.

ATPE continues to be low-key in order that it consolidates its training services before taking on an increased training load.

With the on-going support of RCR and in particular, the encouragement of RCR's International Chair, the project looks forward to another productive year in 2013/14.



*TRAIN the TRAINER Graduation - Certificate 3 & 4*



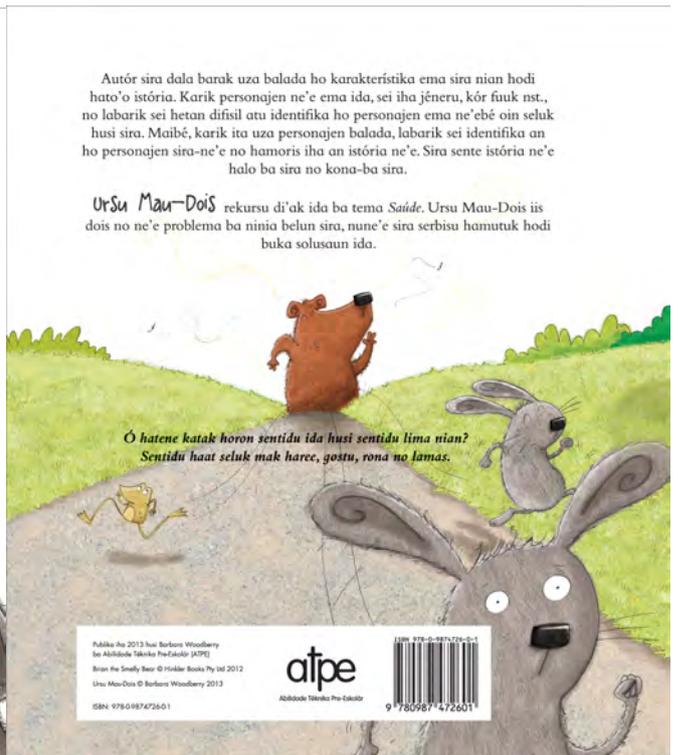
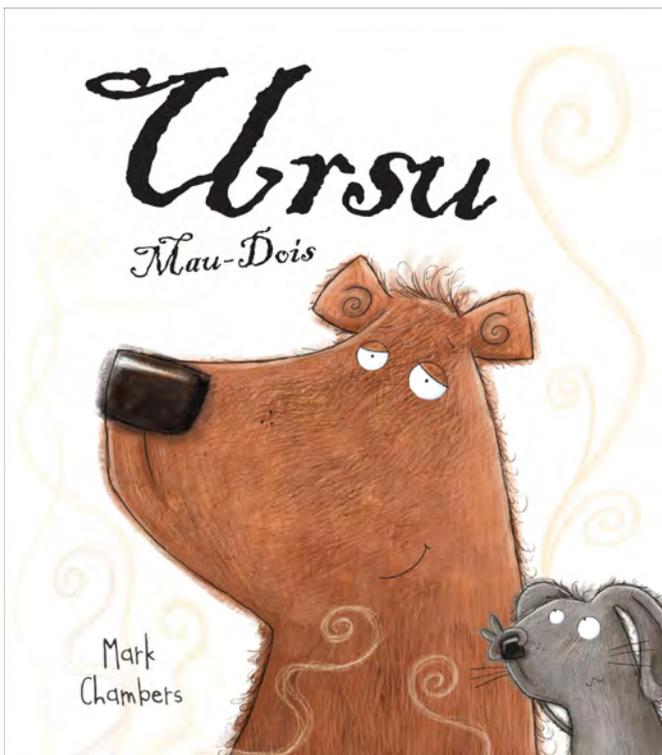
*Story Books sponsored by the Rotary Club of Richmond*



*Carlo using the Laminator - donated by Richmond*



*Ermelinda with the Laptop & Printer - donated by Richmond*



*Story Books in Tetum - sponsored by the Rotary Club of Richmond*