

Timor Leste Prisoner Support Proposal



[Becora jail in Dili](#)

Objectives

- Provide computer tablets in Prison Cells
- Help establish an NGO for Prisoner Support

Executive Summary

This proposal uses the success of the NSW Computers in Cells program as a way to focus attention on the benefits of education and related services to otherwise isolated individuals. In this case, it would be a potential “seed project” to highlight the benefits of internet access in Timor Leste. This project also aims to establish an NGO in Timor Leste to support prisoners and introduce computers in cells.

An introductory project would involve the delivery of tablets and a server to Becora prison in Dili, providing basic educational, legal and creative programs.

- Timor Leste is one of the few countries without a fibre-optic internet connection and relies on slow and expensive satellite services.

- Building the fibre optic cable will create jobs, improve communication, increase trade and business opportunities and provide access to long-distance education and tele-medicine.
 - A similar project connecting PNG & the Soloman islands is predicted to add \$US5bn (\$7.4bn AUD) to their economies & create up to 300,000 jobs by 2040
- Australia remains committed to constructing a fibre-optic cable from Darwin to Timor Leste: the Front End Design has been completed, and funding for the cable is part of the most recent (COVID) funding plan of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).
 - Education is a key aspect of Australia's aid in ET - perhaps we could convince relevant parties to package prisoner education (via tablets in cells) with this goal
 - Options for the cable were presented to Prime Minister Taur Matan Ruak on October 2020, approved by cabinet November 2020
- The new infrastructure announcements come amid concern from Australia and the United States about Beijing's increasing presence in the region, especially in Timor Leste
- Tablets in cells is fairly inexpensive: entire Sydney program for 600 tablets, logistics and training cost \$1.5 million
 - Timor Leste prison population is around 800
 - Many educational/creative apps do not require an internet connection
- Benefits:
 - Increases literacy (currently 68% nationally)
 - Potential to collaborate with University of Victoria for courses
 - Lower risk of violent extremism
 - Reduce recidivism, boost social integration, assisting ET economic development
 - Crime rates are increasing in Timor Leste
 - Increased gang membership resulting from feelings of social exclusion
 - In Australia's national interests
- Barriers:
 - Lack of internet infrastructure: no fibre optic cables
 - Insufficient training
 - Cost
 - Security risks around inmate communication
 - Language barrier due to multiple languages
 - No NGOs for prisoners' rights in ET
 - Difference in judicial systems of Indonesia and ET
- Further Barriers: Conditions in the Timor Leste prison system are poor
 - Guards regularly beat prisoners, abuse their power
 - Prisoners are not provided with bedding or clothing

- Police often incarcerate without legal authority to do so
- Overcrowding- system is almost at double capacity, leading to lack of privacy, difficulty in providing minimum standards of food, medical care and accommodation, as well as rehabilitation services; heightened rates of suicide and self-harm

Meeting of 3/2/21

In attendance

- John Dowd [President of the Community Justice Coalition and International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) Australia]
- Luciano Valentim Da Conceicao (Consul-General of Timor Leste)
- Brett Collins (Justice Action Coordinator)
- Jessica Herbert (Human Rights Team Leader of Justice Action)
- Sachin Khunte (Human Rights Team of Justice Action)

Points of action

- Contact lawyers and human rights organisations in Timor Leste to establish an NGO focused on prisoner support. There is the potential for Timor Leste to form an ICJ branch.
- Reach out to [contacts](#) within Australia who will support the establishment of the NGO and the future project of computer tablets in cells.
- Facilitate a meeting at Parliament House with Elizabeth Biok and Rodney Lewis.

Agreements

- To work together to establish an NGO in Timor Leste dedicated to support prisoners. This will involve collaboration between lawyers and human rights organisations in both Australia and Timor Leste as well as prisoners themselves. Justice Action can provide guidance in representing the voice of detainees and engaging prisoners in future projects.
- The successful NSW Computers in Cells program highlighted the benefits of tablets in prisons. Given the low education rates and large variety of languages spoken in Timor Leste, tablets will be an important education and communication tool. With the capacity to improve literacy and numeracy skills and diminish language barriers, tablets will help prisoners reintegrate successfully into wider society. Timor Leste would appreciate the support from NSW to implement a similar program.
- The project should focus on education, communication and the benefits for wider society rather than it being framed as a human rights issue.

Australia's relationship with Timor Leste

- August 2019: Australian government says they will connect Timor Leste to the North West cable system to help the country transition from expensive satellite services to a fibre optic internet connection. **Source:** [Australia to support fibre optic cable lifeline to East Timor](#)
 - Scott Morrison announced Australia's support for the completion of a Front-End Engineering Design of an undersea internet cable linking Australia and Timor Leste.
 - While the government has not revealed the precise value of the project, a subsea fibre optic cable to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands' cost \$133 million for 4700km of cable. The Timor Leste cable is likely to extend less than 500kms
- The cable will link Timor Leste to the existing North-West Cable System, running from Darwin to Port Hedland. **Source:** [Morrison Promises to revamp East Timor Military Base Upgrade internet Speed](#)
 - Australia is Timor Leste's leading development assistance partner (\$105.2 million in total ODA in 2020-21)
 - 2020-21 bilateral allocation [budget estimate]- \$73.0 million
 - 2020-21 total Australian ODA (Official Development Assistance) [budget estimate]- \$105.2 million
 - Part of the development partnership progress in 2019/20 was the Front End Engineering Design for a fibre optic submarine cable
 - Budget focus is helping ensure ET's economic recovery e.g infrastructure, education etc (which includes the fibre optic submarine cable)
 - Tablets in cells could be something we seek to get John Dowd to talk to the Minister of corrective services to highlight as being very beneficial to the DFAT
- Nothing has been said further on DFAT in regards to the internet cable access (since August 2019). **Source:** [DFAT East Timor Development Assistance Partnership](#)
- Working closely with the Government of Timor Leste on what will be the first undersea cable into the country; the AIFFP (Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific) is investing AUD 1.5 million to complete a Front End Engineering Design (FEED) to scope various cable design options, route options and technical and engineering requirements. **Source:** [Front End Engineering Design \(FEED\)](#)
 - Principle contractor: Vocus Group (Australian company)
 - This appears to be the first substantial step taken in the project
- There is potential for Australia to help Timor Leste with its response to COVID-19. Although ET has responded well to it, neighbouring Indonesia has struggled to contain it and it remains unclear when Indonesia will be able to start their recovery. This offers a

significant problem for ET. Here, Australia could offer help with vaccinations and pass on knowledge on contact tracing. **Source:** Discussed in the Meeting 3/2/21.

- Minister for Foreign Affairs: Senator the Hon Penny Wong
 - Telephone: (02) 6277 7500
 - Fax: (08) 8212 8273
- DFAT general contact
 - Address: R.G. Casey Building; John McEwen Crescent Barton ACT 0221
 - Telephone: (02) 6261 1111
 - Fax: (02) 6261 1743
- August, 2022: The election of a new ALP federal government has seen a continuation of Australia's strong support for the Pacific region in general. **Source:** https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Hansard/Hansard_Display?bid=chamber/hansardr/25921/&sid=0110
- Potential Australian Federal Ministers involved in the oversight, advocating and funding of an underseas fibre-optic cable to Timor under the new ALP government would be:
 - The Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade: The Hon. Penny Wong
 - The Minister for Defence Industry + The Minister for International Development and the Pacific: The Hon. Pat Conroy
- The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, headed by The Hon. Penny Wong, is responsible for establishing overseas funding for foreign projects
- After an extensive search of Federal Parliament's Hansard of the 45th Federal Parliament to the current, 47th, ALP headed Federal Parliament, the Timor-Leste fibre-optic cable extension was never discussed

Government approval in Timor Leste

- October 2020- Timor Leste Prime Minister, Taur Matan Ruak, was given a presentation from the Vice Prime Minister and the Minister of Planning and Territory, José Reis, on the options for fiber optic connection from Darwin, in Australia, to Timor Leste. **Source:** [Prime Minister Taur Matan Ruak Hetan Aprezentasaun Kona ba Opsaun Sira dada Fibratika hosi Darwin mai East Timor.](#)
 - The submarine cable connection from Darwin to Timor Leste policy is a priority of this Government, in cooperation with the Government of Canberra, aiming at increasing the capacity of the internet network within the country, not least because the 8th Constitutional Government also has an electronic or digital Governance program, which, to be implemented, needs faster connections to the internet.

- November 2020- Timor Leste Submarine Fiber-Optics Cable approved. **Source:** [East Timor Submarine Fibre Optics Cable Approved](#)
 - The Council of Ministers has approved the implementation of the digital connection to Australia through an underwater fibre optic cable system.
 - The Plan was presented by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Planning and Ordination, José Maria dos Reis
 - The following Ministries in the Timorese Government will be involved in the project:
 - Ministry of Planning and Territory
 - Ministry of Transports and Communications
 - Ministry of Finance
 - Ministry of Public Works
- With regards to computers in prison cells, Mr. Luciano has stated that the ET government will appreciate the technology. **Source:** Discussed in the Meeting 3/2/21.
- July, 2021- The tender for the submarine fibre optic cable was presented by Timorese Deputy PM, José María dos Reis to the Timorese government and was approved. **Source:** <https://subtelforum.com/tender-approved-to-connect-submarine-cable-to-australia/>
- There were three options that were available:
 - To connect the existing North-West Cable that runs from Darwin to Port Hedland to Dili via sea (600kms)
 - To connect the existing North-West Cable that runs from Darwin to Port Hedland to Sui, on the south-bank of Timor, via sea and then to Dili via land
 - To connect the existing North-West Cable that runs from Darwin to Port Hedland to both Dili and Sui via sea **Source:** Ibid.
- The Timorese government in their press release of July, 2021 did not disclose which option was approved **Source:** Ibid.
- Whilst the press release identified an expected future completion date for the project at Sept, 2022-23, the AIFFP website still categorises the project as being ‘under scoping’, which raises questions as to whether the project has actually been started or not. **Source:** Ibid.
- May, 2022 - In a speech given at the CommsDay Summit in Sydney in May, 2022 at the Fullerton Hotel by Vocus Group CEO, Kevin Russell, outlined that the planned extension of the North-West submarine fibre-optic cable north to Timor Leste was still in the stage of “*negotiations*” and that said negotiations were “*continuing*”. **Source:** https://files.vocus.com.au/www/documents/Speeches/220503-Kevin-Russell-CommsDay-Sydney-Speech_FINAL.pdf

Timor Leste information

Internet access issues

- Timor Leste is one of a few countries without a fibre-optic internet connection and relies on slow and expensive satellite services. **Source:** [Australia to improve East Timorese Internet and naval base](#).
- In January 2020, there were 515.1 thousand Internet users in Timor-Leste. Internet penetration stood at 39%. [Digital 2020 report: East Timor](#)
 - **76% of Internet users in Timor Leste use mobile phones.**
 - **2% of Internet users in Timor Leste use tablets.**
 - **Source:** [Share of Web Traffic by Device as a Percentage of Total Internet Users \(East Timor, Jan 2018\)](#)
- The UN telecom body lists Timor Leste as being among the world's 10 least-connected nations. **Source:** [East Timor country profile](#)
- As of 2020, the average download speed in Timor Leste is 0.36 Mbps, and the average upload speed is 0.62 Mbps. Timor Leste is ranked at number 178 out of 192 countries in terms of average Internet speed. **Source:** [Internet Speeds by Country - Fastest Internet In The World Map](#)
- The telecommunications sector has moved to a more privatised system since the country's independence. The law in Timor Leste provides for freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Moreover, the government of Timor Leste has liberalised the telecommunications sector to encourage competition and facilitate the expansion of access to higher quality Internet services all whilst minimising costs. **Source:** [Human Rights Report](#)
- According to Timor Leste's commercial business register, Internet providers which currently operate in the country are as follows (**Source:** [Internet Providers East Timor Leste Dili](#)):
 - CCS Internet
 - G-NET
 - Global Net
 - Telemor
 - Telkomcel
 - All of the above service providers are based in the capital, Dili.
- The country's three major mobile operators: Timor Telecom, Telkomcel and Telemor continue to roll out 4G LTE services. **Source:** [East Timor Telecoms Mobile and Broadband Statistics and Analyses](#)
- The World Bank forecast the improved internet access in Papua and the Solomons could contribute \$US5 billion (\$7.4b) to the Pacific economy, create close to 300,000 new jobs

by 2040 and improve business opportunities, long-distance education and access to tele-medicine. **Source:** [Australia to support fibre optic cable lifeline to East Timor](#)

- Building the fibre optic cable in general will contribute to the Timor Leste economy by creating jobs, improving communication and relations with the world, increasing trade opportunities, increasing business opportunities, increasing long-distance education and access to tele-medicine.

Similar projects elsewhere in Asia

- October 2020- Australia will partner with Japan and the US to finance a US\$30 million (AUS\$40.7 million) undersea fibre-optic cable for the South Pacific nation of Palau, the first project to be backed as part of a new infrastructure funding plan by the strategic partners. **Source:** [Australia partnering with Japan and the United States to finance Palau undersea cable](#).
 - “The Palau spur cable will be the first project under the Trilateral Partnership for Infrastructure Investment in the Indo-Pacific between Australia, Japan and the United States.
 - It demonstrates a shared commitment to delivering sustainable, transparent, high-quality infrastructure projects in the region.
 - The spur cable will connect Palau to a new cable which will span the Indo-Pacific region from Singapore to the west coast of the United States”
- The new infrastructure announcements come amid concern from Australia and the US about Beijing’s increasing presence in the region, especially in Timor Leste

Literacy statistics

- Nearly 37 percent of rural youth (ages 15-24) are illiterate, compared to just six percent in urban areas. Literacy rate is 68% as of 2018 (ranked 128 out of 159 countries) **Source:** [Timor-Leste - Literacy rate, adult total \(% of people ages 15 and above\)](#)
- In general, Mr. Luciano said that the usage of computers in ET is pretty standard but further added that only 30-50% of prisoners would be interested in engaging with tablets. **Source:** Discussed in the Meeting 3/2/21.
- 40 percent of basic education schools do not have drinking water: **Source:** [Quality Education](#)
 - Only 20 percent of preschool-aged children in Timor Leste are enrolled in school.
 - Nearly 37 percent of rural youth between ages 15 and 24 are illiterate, compared to just six percent in urban areas.
 - Approximately 70 percent of grade one students don’t meet basic learning outcomes.
 - 66 percent of basic education schools do not have functioning toilets.

Colleges in Timor Leste

- Dili Institute of Technology
 - Has ties to Victoria University
- National University of Timor Leste
 - Has ties to Victoria University
- Universidade Da Paz
- Universidade Dili
- Instituto Profissional de Canossa (IPDC)

Victoria University Links to Timor Leste

- Victoria University (VU) has a long standing commitment to ET. **Source:** [VU & Timor Leste](#)
 - Timor Leste is referenced in Victoria University's Strategic Plan (2016–2020), where they committed to continuing collaborative work in Timor Leste.
 - In 2011, VU consolidated its partnership with the National University of Timor Leste, Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e (UNTL) and the Dili Institute of Technology (DIT).
 - Could use this as an opportunity to facilitate a partnership between Victoria University and East timor prisons, perhaps providing access to courses through tablets? (Modelling on how University of Southern Queensland provides those services to Qld prisoners).
 - Perhaps contact Peter McMullin who is the honorary consul tlconsulate.melb@gmail.com.
- In 2019, Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e (UNTL) created a digital library (elibrary.edu.edu.tl). It gives students and lecturers access to the best and latest book-publishing around the world in order to support their learning. **Source:** [VOZ Timor - Voice with Timor](#).
 - UNTL is working to diversify and improve the numbers of book references in the digital library through relationships with many partner universities around the world, including Australia (Australia National University (ANU), VU, Charles Darwin University and others).
 - Advocate for prisoners to have access to this through tablets.

Languages

- **Source:** [East Timor Languages](#)
- Portuguese and Tetum are official languages of Timor Leste and have official recognition under the Constitution of Timor Leste, as do other indigenous languages, including:

Bekais, Bunak, Galoli, Habun, Idalaka, Kawaimina, Kemak, Lovaia, Makalero, Makasae, Mambai, Tokodede and Wetarese.

- English and Indonesian are working languages. Section 159 of the constitution provides that these languages serve as "working languages within civil service side by side with official languages as long as deemed necessary".
- Indonesian remains the main language of instruction in secondary schools and universities, along with native Tetum, the other national language.
- Literacy rates by languages:

Year	Tetum	Indonesian	Portuguese	English	Any of the four
2004	68.1	66.8	17.2	10.0	72.5
2010	77.8	55.6	39.3	22.3	79.1

- Issues:
 - Tetum has dialects.
 - Portuguese is not spoken by a lot of people (~5% of its citizens spoke it 2007). Source: [East Timor drowns in language soup](#).
 - It is spoken more by people from the political elite or older people educated in the colonial era.
 - Language could be an issue as ET does not have a national language, but it has two official languages: Portuguese and Tetun. Most of the official government processes are in Portuguese, but most of the lawyers do not speak the language. Additionally, 95% of ET lawyers have studied law in Indonesia, which has the Roman Law system, which is quite different from the Portuguese Law that ET has.

Crime rates

- Crime increased in Timor Leste in 2018, with a total of 5,151 criminal acts, 500 more than the previous year, with 43.2% occurring in the capital Dili, according to annual data from the Directorate General for Statistics. Source: [Crimes Continue to rise in East Timor](#)
 - Of the total criminal offenses, physical integrity offenses accounted for the largest share of crimes (2,212 or 43%) followed by threats (330), spousal abuse (321), and simple damages (292)
 - The authorities registered a total of 2,631 suspects. Largest share of suspects 958 being between 20 and 29 years.

- Authorities reported a total of 2,933 victims, the largest share (1,229) was aged 20-29
- 5151 criminal acts but only 695 incarcerated people...?
- Therefore, the largest portion of the recorded crimes are acts of violence (43%) by young people (36%) on young people (42%) in Dili. Can we assume then that this is gang related? And can we assume that young people comprise one-third of the 695 individuals in the prison system?

Youth and Martial Art Gangs

- High youth unemployment rate (12.63% in 2019), lack of education, and government corruption = poverty and boredom = join “Martial Arts Groups” (MAGs)
- Causes of violence have been identified as social jealousies due to unequal access to public goods and services, resources, and employment opportunities (Belun 2014b).
- The new Timor Leste government of Prime Minister Taur Matan Ruak appears determined to tackle one of the Catholic nation's perennial problems, youth unemployment, which has led to a disturbing street gang culture and significant worker migration to Europe, South Korea, Australia and elsewhere.
- The Timor Leste population continues to grow at about 2.2 per cent annually compared to 1.28 per cent in Indonesia. Its population pyramid shows a "youth bulge" in the 5-15 age group, which means that more than 300,000 people will join the working age population over the next 10 years.
- Street gangs have become a problem not just in Dili but also in other major towns like Ainaro and Same. In impoverished communities like Lospalos, 250 kilometers east of Dili, a gang's promise of camaraderie, protection and purpose is often too good to ignore.
- Street gangs often frame themselves as martial arts or sports organizations. Kera Sakti, founded in 1995, has about 6,700 members, about 38 percent of them women. Like other martial arts groups, it claims to be solely a sporting organization, but it has bitter rivalries with other groups, particularly PSHT and Korka, and its members are widely believed to be involved in recent violence. It has a poor image in the community.
- Korka (Kmanek Oan Rai Klaran) is believed to be the biggest of the martial arts groups with more than 20,000 members.
- In 2013, the government issued a resolution to halt martial arts club activities in Timor Leste following numerous incidents of violence and killings involving their members. But in the 2017 and 2018 elections, many political parties used martial arts groups to get votes. Ministers or deputy ministers from Khunto packed their offices with Korka members. The PLP did likewise with PSHT members.
- The reason why many Timorese opt for organized crime is obvious for the NGO Fundasaun Mahein: “Timorese citizens of all backgrounds are turning towards organized crime in the midst of an economy that leaves them little hope for opportunity” (2013b, 2).

Profits from the petroleum industry are high, but only a few people are benefitting while many Timorese live in poverty due to corruption.

- **Sources:**
 - [Security Violence and Outlawed Martial Arts Groups in East Timor](#)
 - [Jobless East Timor Youths turn to Street Gangs](#)

Corruption

- Given the weak regulatory and institutional framework, Timor Leste is exposed to being targeted as a layering country in global money-laundering schemes, as well as losing public monies through corruption, embezzlement and tax evasion, especially in relation to the extraction of oil in the country. **Source:** [Anti-corruption Commission in East Timor](#)
- The biggest problems in Timor Leste are unemployment (62.6 percent), poverty (49 percent) and corruption (17.6 percent). However when asked specifically about the severity of corruption, 77 percent said that corruption is a serious problem in Timor Leste. **Source:** [The Alarming Nature of Corruption in Timor-Leste](#).

Prisons in Timor Leste

- Reports continue of excessive use of force by police when arresting suspects, and abuse and ill-treatment of detainees in police detention. Internal police disciplinary mechanisms remain weak at addressing such issues. - Human Rights Watch 2006. **Source:** [Prison Incarceration: OHCHR](#)
 - In Timor Leste all prison investigations are arranged by the **Ministry of Justice (MOJ)**, more specifically the Inspection Department, Auditoria Department and the Prison National Directorate. This ‘in-house’ arrangement is problematic in terms of transparency, fairness, and undermines prisoner human rights.
 - The shortage of magistrates also contributes to police often making decisions without legal authority about whether persons arrested should be released or detained after their government regulated 72 hours in custody (government procedure requires a hearing within 72 hours of arrests to review the lawfulness of an arrest or detention).
 - Within Timor Leste’s prison system, torture and other forms of ill-treatment perpetrated against incarcerated inmates remains an ongoing concern.
 - The prison system lacks accountability when torture and ill-treatment complaints are made. This may be attributable to a number of different administrative deficiencies or inadequacies; however the existing prisoner complaints protocols lacks transparency, due diligence and are open to wilful mismanagement.
 - Both the data and anecdotal evidence suggests that upon entering prison, prisoners are immediately beaten, tormented and/or isolated in a dark cell. In Becora, prisoners reportedly stay in this cell for two nights and three days, while in Gleno

it is reportedly a week - six nights and seven days. Prisoners are not provided with a mattress or a change of clothes, however they do receive three meals a day and sufficient water. Part of the treatment is regular beatings with hands and kicking of the upper body, including the chest and head of those in the isolated cell. Cases of prisoners who had to be treated in a hospital after these beatings have allegedly occurred.

Overcrowding in Timor Leste Prisons

- Issue of overcrowding in Becora and Gleno prisons. **Source:** [Overcrowding in Prisons a Failure of Government Policy Not Rising Crime in East Timor](#)
 - the creation of an additional prison in Suai, will assist in alleviating over-crowding in Becora and Gleno
 - overcrowding is a "consequence of criminal justice policy not of rising crime rates, and undermines the ability of prison systems to meet basic human needs, such as healthcare, food, and accommodation.
 - It also compromises the provision and effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes, educational and vocational training, and recreational activities
 - Overcrowding, as well as related problems such as lack of privacy, can also cause or exacerbate mental health problems, and increase rates of violence, self-harm and suicide
 - While acknowledging that the prison has limited equipment and human resources and that discussions were underway to transfer prisoners to Gleno and Suai gaols, Director Domingos expressed the view that building more prisons was not the answer because "it is more important that the community is aware they should not commit crimes."
- Statistics. **Source:** [East Timor Prison Stats](#)
 - 695 prisoners as of 2018.
 - Official capacity of prison system: 375 (September 2018)
 - Occupancy level (based on official capacity): 185.3%
 - (September 2018)
 - Therefore, almost at double capacity

Becora prison

- Photos of Becora Prison

[Indonesian prisoners inside their cells at Becora prison. The men had been transferred from a ...](#)
and [Interior of a cell inside Becora prison. This facility was previously used by the Indonesian ...](#)



[Tai Weaving](#) and [Making Bamboo Furniture](#)



- **Overcrowded Prisons.** **Source:** [Prison Incarceration](#).
 - In Becora, cells are at capacity in terms of the number of mattresses that are able to fit in each cell, with some prisoners having to share mattresses.
 - This issue is highlighted by the current statistics, as there are 555 prisoners being housed in a facility that was originally built for approximately 290 people.
 - On 28 May 2016, The Dili Weekly reported that Becora prison in Timor Leste is overcrowded.

- Becora was constructed during the illegal Indonesian occupation. The report cited the Director for Becora prison, Joao Domingos, as stating that "Becora prison can only accommodate 250 prisoners, but currently it hosts 606 prisoners.
- Quoting the Director himself, the report states that Becora gaol has 23 cells for adults that can accommodate 101 inmates. Additional small cell blocks accommodate 80 inmates. There are 139 staff including guards, trainers and auxiliary.
- Various activities in Becora. **Source:** [SEPI and UNFPA deliver Anger Management Training for Becora Prisoners](#) and [Inside Becora Prison, Dili, East Timor](#)
 - Becora hosts various activities for helping prisoners and providing them with better opportunities after they've left prison.
 - An anger management class was hosted by the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA) and Security of State for the Promotion of Equality (SEPI). The program received positive feedback from inmates and was said to be useful.
 - Additionally, Becora also hosts a range of other activities like tailoring, making bamboo furniture and weaving tais which help prisoners to develop or use their skills and stay engaged throughout the day.
 - The introduction of tablets would further help inmates in Becora and add another activity to make their days in the Becora prison meaningful.

Violent Extremism in prisons

- Dili (Timor Leste), 16 July 2019. **Source:** [Prison officials, UNODC gather to strengthen prison assessment systems in Timor-Leste](#).
 - Workshop with senior officials from the Timor Leste Ministry of Justice (MOJ), prison directors, and guards from each of Timor Leste's three prisons.
 - Organized by UNODC's Regional Office for Southeast Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI).
 - Hosted to address the potential for violent extremism in Timorese prisons, which has become a priority as Daesh (ISIS) and other terrorist groups, who have now been largely defeated in Syria and Iraq, have had their affiliate groups expand into Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Accordingly, governments across Southeast Asia, including the Government of Timor Leste, are taking proactive steps to prevent and counter violent extremism before it becomes widespread.
 - "Prisons, when run effectively, can be an important place for rehabilitating violent extremist offenders, while also preventing the spread of extremist ideologies...Prison officers are perhaps the most important part in making this a reality. Well trained, passionate officers on the frontlines can help to reintegrate prisoners into society as law-abiding citizens and are essential to making prisons a

space for rehabilitation, instead of one focused solely on punishment.” - UNODC Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer Takeshi Matsumoto.

Law/Rules/Human Rights

- United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- United Nations Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment. **Source:** [Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment](#).
 - Principle 19: A detained or imprisoned person shall have the right to be visited by and to correspond with, in particular, members of his family and shall be given adequate opportunity to communicate with the outside world, subject to reasonable conditions and restrictions as specified by law or lawful regulations.

NGOs in Timor Leste

HAK Association

Site: [Asosiasaun HAK](#)

Email: info.asosiasaunhak@gmail.com

Number (Mobile): (+670) 7804 0405

- HAK Association (**H**ukum – Law, Hak **A**sasi – Basic Rights, and **K**eadilan – Justice) is an NGO based in Dili, Timor Leste. HAK’s vision is to realize the existence of a democratic, prosperous and socially just Timor Leste society based on human rights.
- HAK was mentioned by the Australian Parliament in their report on the human rights violations in Timor Leste, indicating that it is one of the major and internationally recognised NGOs in Timor Leste. In Indonesian, the word “Hak” means “right”.
- Its roots stem from an organisation established on 20th August 1996 which offered legal aid to political detainees during the Indonesian military occupation.
- It employed a staff of Timorese lawyers who collect information on human rights abuses, to assist detainees during police questioning and to represent those brought to trial ([Chapter 5 - Human rights in East Timor – Parliament of Australia](#)).
- On 23 March 1997 this office became the Law, Basic Rights, and Justice Foundation (HAK) and in November 2002 changed again to become HAK Association.
- They played an important role in logging and detailing the human rights abuses during and after the Indonesian withdrawal.

- Now, it focuses on human rights activities with a focus on conducting education, monitoring and advocacy activities.

Activities undertaken by HAK so far

- Legal Aid
- Human Rights Education and Law
- Monitoring of Human Rights situation in Timor Leste
- Study to suggest improve policy implementation
- Citizenship Education
- Monitored the 1999 Referendum (on special autonomy for Timor Leste in Indonesia or complete independence)
- Emergency Aid for Refugees

HAK Association works at three levels

national policy formation, enforcement of human rights, and people's empowerment. HAK Association work is based on basic values:

- humanity
- equality
- justice on behalf of the people
- democracy based on solidarity, participation, freedom, and responsibility

5 major program areas of HAK

- Formulation of program and policy recommendations that guarantee the fulfillment and protection of human rights.
- Empowerment of social groups and defense for victims of human rights violations.
- Protection of society's creativity, knowledge, assets, and interests.
- Strengthening the network for enforcement of human rights.
- Development of organizational management. Development of management means that activities can be implemented efficiently and effectively.

Sources:

- [The HAK Association | Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances \(AFAD\)](#)
Note: the site has additional information on HAK's management structures and important people. However, some of the information from this website may be old and outdated.
- [Chapter 5 - Human rights in East Timor – Parliament of Australia](#)

Judicial System Monitoring Program (JSMP)

NGO focusing on justice & legal affairs

Site: <http://jsmp.tl/>

E-mail address: info@jsmp.tl.

Tel: (+670) 332 3883

- The Judicial System Monitoring Program (JSMP) was established on 28 April 2001. It is a leading Timorese-led NGO that monitors the country's Special Panel for Serious Crimes. (It also operates in Indonesia to monitor the trial process there).
- Its aims include providing continuous support for the rule of law and human rights; preserving judicial independence and ensuring that they operate in a manner consistent with international legal standards; protecting and informing vulnerable groups of their basic human rights; and promoting equality.
- In 2001, JSMP made an assessment of the judicial system and identified some issues associated with the limited judicial resources in the country. These problems included a lack of adequate research facilities, an absence of a court library, a lack of support staff for judges, and limited means of communication between the courts, prisons and other relevant institutions.
- On 19 July 2004, JSMP signed a joint statement that called on the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to establish a Commission for Experts to examine the trials of the Special Panel for Serious Crimes in Dili and the Ad Hoc Human Rights Court for Timor Leste in Jakarta. The statement emphasises the great amount of support from various NGOs and community representatives to hold accountability for these processes.
- In 2010, the organisation's Legal Research Unit notably held training programs for women and children. These programs assisted these groups to become more aware of their respective rights. For instance, high school children were taught their rights pursuant to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Penal Code of Timor Leste was also part of the program's curriculum.
- The organisation has been supported by international donors since 2001 and the Civil Society Fund of the Timor Leste Government since 2015.
- Contact person: Luis de Oliveira Sampaio (Executive Director): luis@jsmp.tl

Activities undertaken by JSMP so far

- Outreach Program
- Publications
- Training for Women; Women's Rights Training
- Children's Rights Training

JSMP's mission

JSMP's mission is to promote and protect democracy, law, justice and human rights. It aims to achieve this through the following initiatives:

- Monitoring legal institutions (e.g. courts) to ensure fairness of the judicial process and the integrity of the trial
- Providing legal education to the wider community
- Advocating for vulnerable sectors of society

JSMP's vision

JSMP aspires to foster a fair and just system that guarantees the protection of human rights for all.

Units/departments at JSMP

- Legal Research Unit
- Advocacy and Training Unit
- Parliamentary Watch Unit
- Management Unit

Sources:

- [JSMP Official Website](#)
- [Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development](#)
- [JSMP and its push for a Commission of Experts in East Timor](#)
- [Article: Monitoring the Justice System in Timor Leste](#)

Caritas Diocese Baucau

Church-Based Organisation

E-mail address: caritas_baucau@yahoo.com

Mobile: (+670) 7727 4244

- Created on 18 July 1999 by Bishop Mgr Basilio do Nascimento, Caritas Diocesana de Baucau (English: Caritas Diocese Baucau) provided social assistance for the Christians of the diocese.
- At the time, the Diocese of Baucau was the residence of refugees who lived in camps in the mountains. The organisation worked to fulfil its aim of providing the needs of these people.
- The organisation operates under the nationwide organisation Caritas Timor Leste. Caritas Timor Leste is not yet a full member of Caritas Asia, but participates in Caritas Asia Regional Meetings and Caritas CPLP (Portuguese-speaking group).

- Today, Baucau is East Timor's second largest city (after the capital Dili), with infrastructure that is struggling to keep up with a booming population.

Sources:

- [Caritas Timor Leste](#)

Caritas Diocese Dili

Church-Based Organisation

Site: <http://diocesededili.org/instituicoes-diocesanais/caritas-diocesana/>

E-mail address: sekcaritas@yahoo.com

Tel: (+670) 332 3442 or 331 3443

- In 2006, Caritas responded to the rise in violence within the urban communities in Dili. The Caritas Confederation appealed for funds to support a project to deliver food and emergency supplies to 35,000 people living in camps in the city. Therefore, Caritas Diocese Dili has a demonstrated history of providing humanitarian aid for those in Timor Leste and is an ideal candidate for a prospective partner organisation for our cause.
- In 1994, Radio Timor Kmanek, a Catholic radio station that aims to promote the heavily-Catholic cultural values of the Timorese nation, was created. The radio network has an impressive reach, being made available in almost the entire country and even some parts of neighbouring West Timor in Indonesia. The radio network served as a crucial source of information in the lead up to the 1999 referendum.

Activities undertaken by Caritas Diocese Dili so far

- Radio Timor Kmanek (Catholic radio station)
- Development Programmes (Economic development, Education and training, etc.)
- Partnership with HAFOTI, an organisation that provides opportunities for women to create local products for sale.
- Donation of items, e.g. clothes and food.

Sources:

- [Civil Society Organizations Brief: East Timor](#)
- [Caritas works to heal divide in E. Timor](#)
- [Caritas NZ: Timor-Leste Module](#)
- [UCAN Interview: Bishop Basilio on Struggle and Sacrifice Needed to Attain Peace and Stability](#)

Tablets in prisons in Timor Leste

Benefits of tablets

- Monitoring the roll out of tablets in NSW is important, as hopefully it will prove successful in encouraging prisoners' personal autonomy and reducing reoffending rates.
Source: [Prison officials, UNODC gather to strengthen prison assessment systems in Timor-Leste](#)
 - Could play a role in Australia's assistance of ET's economic recovery
 - Especially given: high unemployment and crime rate, low literacy level
 - Whilst there are only 695 people in prisons in ET (2018), this number has increased in recent years
 - Education can play an important role in preventing recidivism
 - Can be an aid in providing educational opportunities for prisoners, especially targeting young people → potentially connecting them with online learning courses
 - Can aid in rehabilitation, social reintegration and prevent violent extremism.

Uses of tablets without internet

- Puzzles, books, number related, mindfulness + meditation apps etc could be downloaded that do not require the internet. Some games do not need internet access.
- Lots of apps designed for children that teach literacy and numeracy skills (could be especially beneficial given high illiteracy rates etc).

Local server

- This would follow the model that NSW has implemented. **Source:** [Tablet computers have kept prisoners in touch with family during COVID-19](#)
- Instead of investing in setting up the internet and subsequent programs in setting up security measurements for restricting activities, it could be feasible to set up local servers in prisons for internet activities.
 - It would be cheaper and more convenient as it would save money in IT support and constant updating of monitoring mechanisms.
 - It would also provide immediate access to the internet.
 - It is also safer and monitored.
- Need to figure out the budget involved in setting up local servers in prisons.
- This would allow for limited, pre-approved information to prisoners like online learning, creative apps and news.

Cost of Implementing tablets in cells

- For an estimate, 600 tablets were handed out to prisoners in Sydney as part of a \$1.5 million program. **Source:** [Prisoners to get tablet computers in cells in bid to cut reoffending rates](#)
- Assume each tablet costs \$100 to purchase from JPay
- 700 prisoners as of 2018 = \$70k
- Other costs
 - Transport
 - IT: programming tablets to limit the access
 - Training
 - Paid apps
- If 4700km of fibre optic cable cost \$133 million, and the Timor Leste Cable will extend 500km, the cost of the installation will be approx \$14 million.

Rolling out

- Initially the tablets can be rolled out to the 100 best prisoners in one of the bigger prisons i.e., Becora Prison.
- After a feedback period and reception to the rollout, it can be extended to other prisoners.

Potential barriers to introducing tablets to prisoners in Timor Leste

- Lack of wifi/internet infrastructure a key problem
- Disinterest of prison authorities
- Prison guards may have insufficient training to facilitate the rollout of tablets
- Overcrowding and poor prison conditions
- Costs involved
- Security risks it poses, eg. allow inmates to communicate with extremists and gang members
- While ET does have NGOs for human rights, it does not have any NGOs specifically for prisoners' rights. Hence, Justice Action will help establish an NGO in ET dedicated to prisoners' rights. It could be useful to contact an established NGO like "Hak" as it would give credibility and importance to the initiative. Additionally, we would need qualified lawyers from ET who could offer legal support to set up an NGO. However, Mr. Luciano has said that the lawyer community in ET is small (approximately 80 public defenders and prosecutors total).
- Language could be an issue as ET does not have a national language. Most of the official government processes are in Portuguese, but most of the lawyers do not speak the language. Additionally, 95% of ET lawyers have studied law in Indonesia, which has the Roman Law system, which is quite different from the Portuguese Law that ET has.

- Brett presented an important point about the framing of the cause as calling it a Human Rights issue might make people less interested in it. Therefore, we should refer to it as a way to offer new Opportunities to prisoners. Additionally, it is critical to contact and get feedback from prisoners in ET, which has to be done through local lawyers. Prisoner engagement is crucial and Justice Action can provide guidance on representing the voice of detainees.

Translating

- Google translate
 - Can work really well most of the time but can have issues.
 - Issues
 - The more abstract words and concepts are harder to translate
 - Google translate does not capture contextually based words as it is hard for it to convey the different meanings and contexts of this individual word.
 - Hard to know if the google translation is accurate
 - Their translations will also commonly contain grammatical mistakes and wording that is awkward and unnatural.
 - Won't understand/translate idioms and phrases.
 - Does not have translation for Tetum, the language most Timorese speak.
- Other apps for translating Portuguese: [Say That Again? 8 Portuguese Translator Apps to Ensure Nothing Is Lost In Translation](#)

Contacts

Mr Luciano VALENTIM DA CONCEICAO
 Consul-General of Timor Leste

Mrs Zelia TRINDADE
Consulate-General for New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory

Peter McMullin

Timor Leste's Melbourne consulate located at Victoria University's City Campus

Ministry responsible	Ministry of Justice
Prison administration	Direcção Nacional dos Serviços Prisionais e de Reinserção Social - Timor Leste Prisons Service (TLPS)
Contact address	Avenida Rua de Caicoli, Dili-Timor Leste
Telephone	+(670) 3310153
Website	http://www.mj.gov.tl/ (link is external)
Email	dnsprs@mj.gov.tl
Head of prison administration (and title)	Helder Cosme Marçal Belo Director of Prisons