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The Dili Report

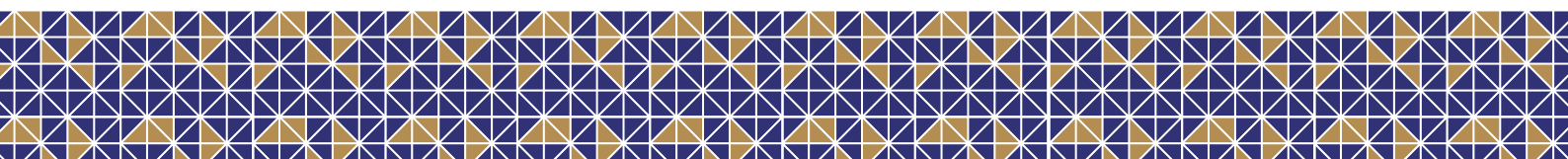
National Landscape, Current Challenges and
Opportunities for Growth

BY LIM LAI CHENG



[FOR INTERNAL CIRCULATION ONLY]

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About the Institute for Societal Leadership

The Institute for Societal Leadership (ISL) was established by Singapore Management University (SMU) in 2014. ISL aims to tangibly improve the lives of Southeast Asia's citizens by acting as a focal point for cross-sector collaboration between current leaders from government, business, civil society, academia and the media. The Institute also conducts research concerning social issues in Southeast Asia and designs its own suite of leadership training programmes, each of which seeks to foster the development of a new generation of Asian leaders dedicated to serving society.

About the Dili Report

The ISL research team conducted interviews in Dili between 15-16 May 2014. This report was first published on 29 December 2014.

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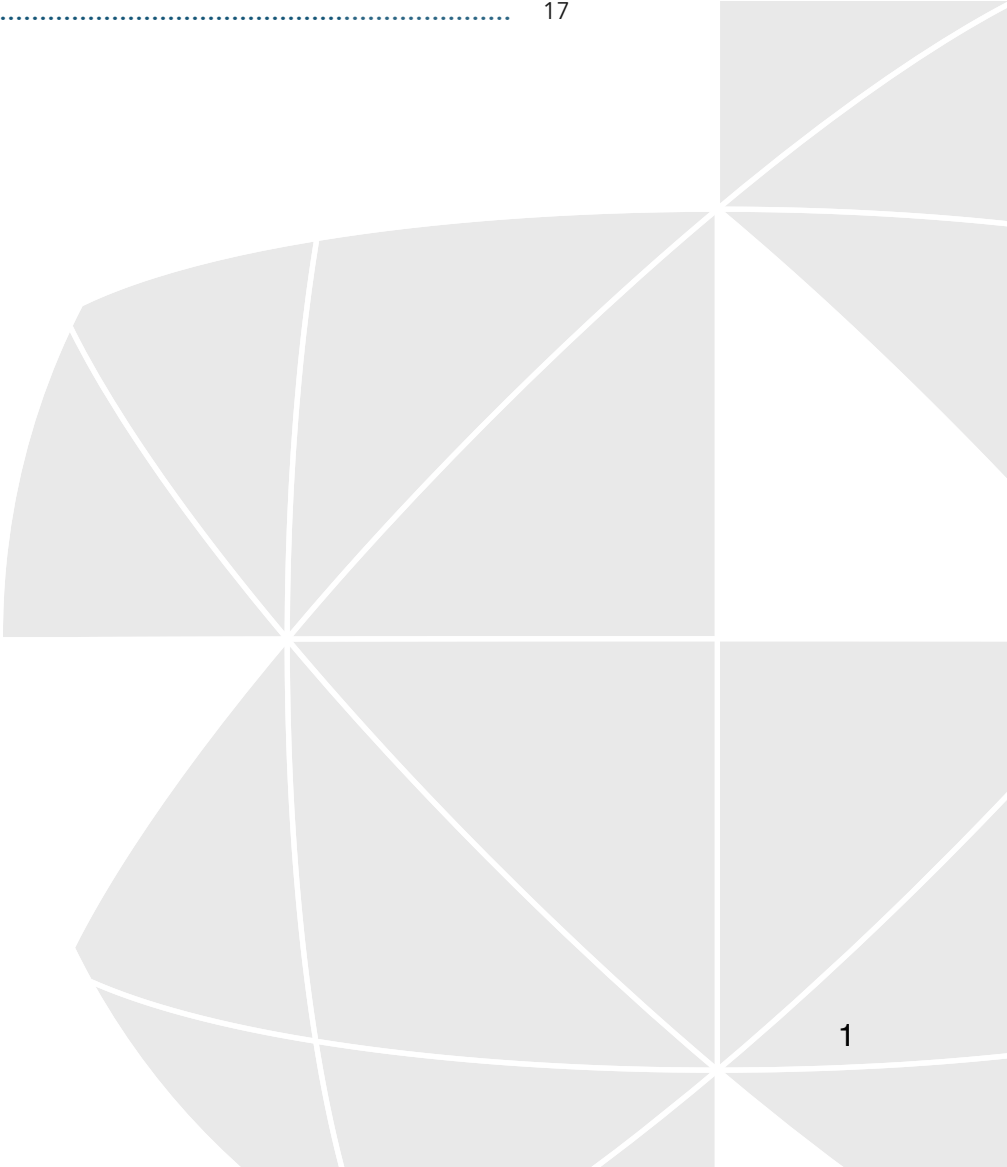
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I. Acronyms

ASEAN Association of South East Asian Nations

F-FDTL FALINTIL-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste

FALINTIL Forças Armadas da Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste

FDI Foreign Direct Investment

FRETILIN Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente

GDP Gross Domestic Product

SIO Social Impact Organisation

TAF The Asia Foundation

UN United Nations

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNTL Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e

II. Acknowledgements

This report and country insights lab experience would not have been possible without the help of then Non-Resident Ambassador to Timor-Leste, Mr Lee Chong Giam, and the support and help of Dr Noeleen Heyzer, Special Advisor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on Timor-Leste. I would like to thank colleagues at the Institute, Tim Weerasekera for taking notes and John Ellington for formatting and editing the report.

III. About the Country Insights Labs Series

The Institute for Societal Leadership conducted a series of eleven *Country Insights Labs (CILs)* in select Southeast Asian cities between June 2014 and June 2015. Each CIL aimed to uncover the critical social and environmental issues facing leaders from business, government and civil society in a given country and frame the underlying causes behind each issue within the country's context. The study identified emerging trends in Southeast Asia and has since directed further research toward interconnected social and environmental issues shared among countries in the region.

Additionally, ISL research staff investigated the day-to-day organisational challenges faced by *social impact organisations (SIOs)* in each Southeast Asian country. We broadly defined an SIO as any organisation with *the capacity to contribute to the betterment of communities*. These included, but were not limited to, philanthropic organisations, corporate foundations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), activist groups, social enterprises and impact investors. Interviews focussed on challenges associated with funding models, human resources, tax incentives, legal frameworks and government registration processes. In total, research staff interviewed 237 organisations and 293 individuals, including government officials, business leaders, philanthropists, NGO workers, social entrepreneurs, media professionals and academics. The interviews themselves consisted of questions relating to organisational history, operations, strategic outlook, cross-sector collaboration, leadership and country context.¹

The Institute did not intend the CIL series to be exhaustive or to produce statistically significant data. On the contrary, the series was a qualitative study that employed interviews and market insights as a means of understanding an increasingly complex landscape. As one of the world's most diverse regions, Southeast Asia is home to an array of cultures, languages, religions and economic levels of development. At the cornerstone of each country study is a belief that workable solutions and partnerships depend on an awareness of how each country's unique context relates to its social issues.

The ISL research team conducted interviews in Dili between 15-16 May 2014.

¹ For a list of sample questions, see section VI.

IV. Timor-Leste (East Timor)

A. Historical Background

Timor-Leste, Asia's newest nation, is located in Southeast Asia, on the southernmost edge of the Indonesian archipelago. The country was colonised by the Portuguese for over 450 years, occupied by the Indonesians for 24 years and administered by the United Nations for two and a half years. As a nation, Timor-Leste has had a very traumatic birth.

The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste was first declared on 28 November 1975 when Portugal gave up control of its colonial holdings. Nine days after the national flag was raised, Indonesia invaded and annexed the territory. Throughout the Indonesian occupation, Timorese resistance forces led an armed struggle against the Indonesian army for the restoration of national independence. This resulted in a protracted and bloody 24-year conflict during which an estimated 102,000 Timorese died, amidst a backdrop of arbitrary detention, torture, forced displacement and gender-based violence.

In August 1999, within the context of the Asian economic crisis, Indonesia proposed a referendum to offer the Timorese a choice between autonomy and independence. 78.5 percent of the population voted for independence from Indonesia. The announcement of the voting results was followed by a surge of violence and destruction on the part of anti-independence militias. In the end, thousands of Timorese were killed or injured, and more than 500,000 were displaced.²

In September 1999, the UN Security Council authorised an Australian-led International Force to restore peace and security under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter. A UN Transitional Administration was established to administer the territory, with the mandate to build a state from scratch.

Despite the presence of peacekeepers, ongoing violence against journalists, peacekeepers and

civilians continued throughout 2000. Humanitarian agencies involved themselves in relief efforts, protection and distribution of food to the displaced and monitored human rights violation.

A transitional government was formed in 2001, and in August of that year, thousands of voters in East Timor turned out to vote for the 88 members of the constituent assembly and established the country's first parliament. In April 2002, independence leader Kay Rala "Xanana" Gusmao won the presidency by a landslide victory, becoming Timor-Leste's first president. The government drew up a national development strategy and plan, including the formation of a police force from an amalgamation of young recruits and Timorese who had previously served in the Indonesian police. A new defence force was also formed, half of which comprised those who had been in armed resistance. The United Nations Development Programme assumed principal responsibility for the judiciary and law-making.

From the standpoint of humanitarian aid and international support, a second phase of reconstruction and development followed and efforts were focused on poverty reduction, water and sanitation provision, vocational skills training, education, health and literacy promotion.

Security remained precarious, even while the UN started winding down its presence in 2005. Tensions between the police and neglected armed forces precipitated a new conflict that resulted in an outbreak of gang violence in 2006. Prime Minister Alkatiri's decision to sack more than 500 from the military prompted demonstrations and tensions took on an ethno-political character. Accusations were hurled at westerners (those living in the west part of the country) in Timor-Leste for not contributing to the fight for independence as much as the easterners had. 150,000 Timorese (15 percent of the population then) had to seek refuge in makeshift camps. Both the police and military, the two public institutions tasked with

² D. Y. Coleman, *East Timor: 2014 Country Review* (Houston, USA: Country Watch, 2014).

Timor-Leste By Numbers

Official Name:	Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (2002 - present)
Capital:	Dili
Area:	14,874 sq km
Population:	1.2 million (country); 180,000 (Dili)
Ethnic Groups:	Austronesian (Malayo-Polynesian), Papuan, a small Chinese minority
Religion:	Roman Catholic (96.9%), Protestant (2.2%), Muslim (0.3%), other (0.6%)
Language:	Tetum (official), Portuguese (official), Indonesian, English
Currency:	United States Dollar
GDP (PPP):	\$25.41 billion [2013 est.]
GDP Per Capita (PPP):	\$21,400 [2013 est.]
GDP Real Growth Rate:	8.1% [2013 est.]
Labour Force:	Agriculture (64%), Industry (10%), Services (26%)
Literacy:	58.3% (whole); 63.6% (male); 53% (female)
Life Expectancy:	67.39 years (whole); 65.87 years (male); 69.01 years (female) [2014 est., 3 rd]

Source: CIA World Factbook (www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/)

providing security, perpetrated rampant crime and lawlessness. This prompted the United Nations Security Council to set up a new peacekeeping force to restore stability.

In February 2008, a rebel group staged an unsuccessful attack against President Jose Ramos-Horta, a well respected leader of the Timorese resistance who was also recipient of the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize. The ringleader, Major Alfredo Reinado was killed in the attack and the majority of the rebels surrendered to the government in April 2008.

The 2006 civil unrest revealed deep-seated social, economic and governance challenges that lay beneath the surface of Timorese society since

independence – problems such as the high number of rural and urban unemployed, inadequate infrastructure, rapid population growth, weak public sector, limited service capacity, fragile state institutions and weak governance. The crisis also set Timor-Leste back by several decades.³

Post-2006, the government has taken measures to resettle the people, reconstruct the economy and stabilise the nation. The early adoption of prudent fiscal and monetary policies contributed to low inflation and accelerating economic growth. While the country's large petroleum wealth offers the potential for a prosperous future, Timor-Leste remains one of the least developed countries in the world, with about 50 percent of the population still living in poverty.

³ E. Lothe and G. Peake, 'Addressing symptoms but not causes: stabilisation and humanitarian action in Timor-Leste', *Disasters* 34.3 (2010): 427-443.

B. Current Challenges

❖ **A fragmented system of authority.** Post-2006, the path towards national development and restoration has not been a smooth one for the government. While good policies have been established, there remains an implementation gap due to Timor-Leste's checkered past, the presence of multi-state and non-state actors as well as the multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic nature of the population.

While the plan was to train the Timorese to run a self-sufficient government, during the UN Administration the success of skills transfer and capacity development was limited. The government remained dependent on foreign advice and assistance for many of the tasks of administration, particularly at senior levels. To many within the Timorese community, foreign intervention and help were often levied at the expense of local knowledge and practices. That non-state Timorese parties were not included led to the Timorese having difficulty in accepting some internationally-led interventions. There exists a rift between decision makers and the community due mainly to the clash between old and new value systems. The new system uses the structures adopted with international help while the old system relies on local and community leaders to determine the rule of law.

For many who had given their lives to decades of resistance and fighting for independence, the struggle is not over. Veterans of the resistance want recognition and compensation for past efforts and sacrifices. They question the current constitutional order, and their rallying call is for "real independence"—a call which is often linked to demands for the withdrawal of the UN or former anti-independence politicians from government.⁴ With the veterans, there have also been expressions of disappointment with a post-conflict settlement that did not live up to their high expectations of independence, which was meant to usher in a new era of plenty and equality. The newly-formed national armed forces (F-FDTL) conceives itself as the mantle-bearer of the FALINTIL, or the military wing of the independence

party FRETILIN, and perpetuates the language of continuous struggle. Like many of the non-state groups, it draws upon the legacy of the struggle to claim for itself a special role in developing the future of the nation.

As a signal of impatience and resolve to continue the good fight, veteran organisations have at times taken things into their own hands and set up their own funds to provide pensions and other services for members who receive no or insufficient state support. While state crackdowns on the activities of non-state actors have been mostly framed in the language of re-asserting state sovereignty, political expediency often seems to play a greater role in determining which groups' state-like activities are seen as a threat and which ones are tacitly allowed to continue. The government has been observed to be partial and tolerant towards such activism in an attempt to 'buy peace'. The outcome of such a stance is a fragmented system of authority and a reinforcement of the fact that the centrality of the struggle narrative is not a debate about the past, but also one about access to economic benefits, social standing and political power in the present.

❖ **A weak social compact.** It has been observed that following the struggle for independence, a technocratic approach to building the structures of state overshadowed the need for unifying approaches to reconciliation and the creation of a sense of citizenship among the Timorese. For the majority of the population, the adoption of Portuguese as the official language, the language of a small and older elite in the country, in itself worked against the nurturing of a sense of citizenship as well as the opportunity to embrace locally held ideals and ideas of community and justice.

The principal driver of national unity was the resistance during Indonesian occupation. That sense of unity flagged after independence was restored. The influx of international aid workers and relief agencies post-1999 changed the dynamics for the Timorese. While international relief and development work was important to build a nation, the downside of it was that foreigners came mere-

⁴ H. Myrntinen, 'Resistance, symbolism and the language of stateness in Timor-Leste', *Oceania* 83.3 (2013): 208-220.

ly to fulfil a function or mission. There was little interaction with the community and their lack of interest and time for local history, culture and tradition showed. They also perpetuated the assumption that the system and institutions that function best are those created in the image of those dominant in Western countries. In this regard, Western aid workers appeared to Timorese to act as the new colonisers and invaders.⁵ This view is further reinforced as many Timorese lived in the remnants of their destroyed houses while shops and restaurants catered for international expatriates at prices which Timorese could not afford, creating a dual economy. The disparity is heightened when we take into consideration the sense of betrayal felt among many former student activists (now adults) who had joined the resistance and who had little opportunity for education after independence. These adults were forced to return to subsistence farming in order to survive, even though some had never farmed before. Such tensions within the fledgling nation necessarily led to a weak social compact. Ten years from independence, the Timorese people still feel their government has not delivered. Those who had sacrificed themselves in the war had been forgotten, there were no attempts to help individual families locate loved ones who disappeared during the war, fuel prices remain high and there seems to be no signs of their economic conditions improving in spite of the oil and gas reserves and revenue.

❖ **Contestation of languages and the risk to social capital.** The struggle for nationhood in Timor-Leste can be seen as essentially a struggle for the recognition of the country's unique and diverse ethno-cultural identity, which is a product of its particular colonial history.⁶ The nation of Timor-Leste consists of 15 distinct ethno-linguistic groups who speak at least 16 Austronesian and Papuan languages and their sub-varieties. The

idea that the country's citizens share one civic identity is currently more notional than real.⁷ When the declaration was made at independence that the Portuguese language and culture was part of the identity of the Timorese, it created a significant sense of alienation for the Indonesian-educated generation. During the Indonesian occupation, Portuguese was the language of the resistance. The decision to adopt Portuguese (rather than English or Bahasa Indonesia) reflected the preferences of a political leadership largely educated during the Portuguese period.⁸

The fact, however, remains that at independence, only 5 percent understood the Portuguese language and this was confined to the elites, which meant that the majority of Timorese were marginalised from official Timorese culture.⁹ Even though Tetum was popularised as a national language through its use in the Catholic Mass during the Indonesian occupation, it was not the language of choice due to a relatively unsophisticated lexicon.

From a sociological standpoint, a common language is critical to the relationship between government and civil society. Social change requires engagement especially within the widespread rural community of Timor-Leste. A common language ensures that people are included as active citizens, rather than excluded as lesser or non-citizens.

The Timorese leadership's adoption of the Portuguese language has not been comfortably received by either the younger generation educated in Indonesian (the language of the oppressors) or the majority of Tetum-speaking population who continue to live according to traditional values.

In realisation of this, while the school system has officially adopted a Portuguese curriculum at in-

⁵ A. Wigglesworth, 'The growth of civil society in Timor-Leste: Three moments of activism', *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 43.1 (2013), 51-74.

⁶ M. Leach, 'Timor-Leste in 2013: Charting its own Course', *Southeast Asian Affairs* (2014): 337-352.

⁷ R.O. Muggah, O. Jütersonke, R. Murray, E. Rees and J. Scambary, *Urban violence in an urban village: A case study of Dili, Timor-Leste* (Geneva: Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2010).

⁸ J. Macalister, 'Language policies, language planning and linguistic landscapes in Timor-Leste', *Language Problems & Language Planning* 36.1 (2012): 25-45.

⁹ H. Hill and J. M. Saldanha, 'The Key Issues'. In *East Timor: Development Challenges for the World's Newest Nation*, eds. H. Hill and J. M. Saldanha (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2001).

dependence, changes are underway to 'indigenise' parts of the compulsory school curriculum and make textbooks more relevant to Timor-Leste's social context. A mother tongue literacy agenda is being developed to improve early literacy outcomes by teaching the younger grades in local Timorese home languages. Efforts have also been made to make textbooks available in Tetum at the primary level.

The contestation of languages will remain an issue as Timor-Leste attempts to build social as well as economic capital, and the government's resourcefulness in handling the issue of language and national identity will continue to be tested in the coming years.

❖ **A shaky economic foundation.** During the colonial era, education was available only to the children of the elites. The Portuguese did not develop the land nor the people of the small outpost of their empire. Instead, they massively exploited its natural resources, such as sandalwood and teak. The Indonesians continued this exploitation, and a sizeable portion of Timor-Leste's forest cover was depleted during Indonesian occupation. The Indonesians also destroyed formal institutions and traditional structures of authority in East Timor, for instance, with the burning of the sacred homes (*uma luliks*) of the villagers. They exploited the petroleum resources in the Timor Sea (in conjunction with Australia), and corruption was rife during those times, with violence being used as the primary means of conflict resolution.

Timor-Leste has been fortunate to have had discovered new petroleum reserves since 2005. The country is proud to be debt-free, and the government relies on petroleum revenue to fund its annual budget. Income from petroleum comprises 95 percent of government revenue. Other revenues are derived from taxes and fees from services such as customs and passports as well as donor contributions made directly to the national budget.

Timor-Leste's economic foundation remains shaky as income from petroleum can vary from year to year. Making projections is difficult due to changes in oil prices and production plans as well as the fluctuating value of the US dollar. The more

pertinent point is that while petroleum reserves amount to close to US\$20 billion, the non-oil GDP per capita is only US\$367 overall, and US\$150 in rural areas. The government knows it needs to place greater emphasis on developing its non-oil economy. The Timorese economy is currently not diversified and the Timorese are heavily reliant on imports of goods and services such as cement, fuel, steel and other consumer products.

Human resource development is key to Timor-Leste's economic sustainability. Even within the petroleum industry, there is a dearth of Timorese with the knowledge, skills and experience to manage the current scale of operations. There is still a strong reliance on services provided by the Norwegian government for advice and assistance. Outside of the petroleum industry, more is required to raise the skills level of the people. As of this writing, the unemployment rate is 8.9 percent, and the youth unemployment rate is 23 percent. 41 percent of the population live in poverty and have no access to quality education and healthcare. Adding to these statistics, more than 50 percent of the population were under the age of 15. Population growth in Timor-Leste is now one of the highest in the region. This does not bode well, as a high growth rate will mean dramatic increases in spending on social services such as health and education year on year and a greater burden on petroleum revenue and reserves.

Primary healthcare remains an area of challenge. A 2013 Timor-Leste Food and Nutrition Survey indicated 'very high' rates of chronic and acute malnutrition among children. The prevalence of stunting was 50.2 percent, and 37.7 percent of children aged 0-59 months were underweight. 11 percent of children experienced wasting and 1.9 percent experienced severe wasting due to acute malnutrition. The United Nations has instituted a zero-hunger project, which includes free lunches in school. International NGOs, such as World Vision, have also been very active in ensuring that parental education goes hand in hand with the provision of milk powder and other nutrients for children.

Timor-Leste is subjected to severe drought and floods. This affects three quarters of the popula-

tion, which overwhelmingly relies on subsistence farming to survive. UNDP found that 64 percent of the population suffer from food insecurity. The extent to which Timor-Leste's Petroleum Fund can be used to develop the necessary infrastructure that may promote the country's socio-economic development will depend on whether or not economic growth is sufficiently inclusive.¹⁰ This will have to entail an emphasis on agriculture, which is the main source of income for 80 percent of the population, the strengthening of social protection mechanisms, the enhancement of productivity capabilities, employment generation, particularly for women and the young, and the promotion of financial inclusiveness. It would also be important to make the shift from subsistence farming to market-oriented farming, as increasing agricultural sector productivity can further alleviate poverty.

❖ **The importance of being ASEAN.** International interventions in Timor-Leste's development pre- and post-2006 have been largely multidimensional and multilateral, involving the reinforcement of soldiers, police officers, humanitarian aid, development agencies and technical assistance from different countries. The adoption of Portuguese, although controversial locally, had been strategic in giving the Timorese government access to European Union funds through Portugal.

The current Timorese leaders, as a result of growing political experience and increasing wealth from oil and gas over the past few years, are resolute in working towards securing their country's position in the regional and global order. Throughout the Indonesian occupation, the nationalist political leadership promoted close ties with the Melanesian states that strongly supported Timor-Leste's struggle for independence.¹¹ Timor-Leste would like to be a member of the Pacific Islands Forum. However, as ASEAN rules do not permit double membership, the government has expressed their preference for ASEAN membership and are working on bilateral relations with individual ASEAN countries in a bid to be fully accepted into the ASEAN economic

community. According to former President Ramos-Horta, joining ASEAN is a means for Timor-Leste to attain not so much an economic umbrella but security. It is also an expression of Timor-Leste's willingness to cooperate with Indonesia in a regional organisation that promotes the norms of non-intervention.

Timor-Leste filed an application for ASEAN membership in 2011. Requirements include a demonstration of progress in socio-cultural, political and economic fields. Benchmarks would include the ability to allocate enough budget to participate in at least 1,000 world meetings and host at least 100 international events annually. The application also depends on the nation's progress in developing infrastructure.

Roberto Sarmento de Oliveira Soares, Secretary of State for ASEAN Affairs has acknowledged that the economy is the main challenge for Timor-Leste because it cannot compete in a free market, as ASEAN members do. But he believes that by accelerating development in areas such as fishing, marine tourism and farming, the country will be able to hit its targets. According to Foreign Minister Jose Luis Guterres, there is plenty of potential for expansion to other member states, since 80 percent of Timor-Leste's current trade is with Indonesia and Singapore. There is also great potential presented by its under-managed oil and gas reserves as well as other natural resources, such as gold. Optimising any of these would call for the participation of ASEAN members.

III. Insights from the Dili Lab

❖ **Language remains a critical impediment to Timor-Leste's development.**

In the earlier section, we drew attention to how the choice of Portuguese as the national language had caused a rift between civil society and policy makers as well as between government and the people. Tetum has high cultural value, and Portuguese, as the official language, advantages

¹⁰ S.H.B. Harmadi and R.A. Gomes, 'Developing Timor-Leste's Non-Oil Economy Challenges and Prospects', *Journal of Southeast Asian Economies* 30.3 (2013), 309-321.

¹¹ B.S. Sahin, 'Timor-Leste's foreign policy: Securing state identity in the post-independence period', *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 2 (2014): 3-25.

those with links to the country's colonial past. The government of Timor-Leste is fully aware of the conundrum that language issues have caused. However, there are currently no plans for reforming the language policy. The political leadership feels the need to retain the current policy to maintain unity among the people. Upsetting the current equilibrium by introducing a different official language would likely induce societal discontent that could potentially fracture an already tenuous peace.

From the perspective of countries that are willing to render help to the fledgling nation of Timor-Leste, the use of Tetum and Portuguese as languages of choice has led to much difficulty in effectively aiding the Timorese by way of technology or knowledge transfer. In our various meetings on Timor-Leste, language constraints emerged as an issue time and again. Added to the fact that systems and processes are in need of streamlining, the confounding factor of language has also made it difficult for Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) to take root. The language issue is also a barrier in terms of the provision of training in public administration and public policy that countries such as Australia and Singapore could provide (especially with reference to the new economic zone in Oecusse that the government is keen to develop).

Timor-Leste's Education Ministry is in the midst of a review, and reforms are underway for a more child-centred pedagogy. The Ministry has already introduced English into the curriculum at the primary and secondary levels. There are plans to enlist trainers from abroad who could act as teacher-mentors across all provinces to train teachers in pedagogy. The Ministry will be hard pressed to find more than two hundred volunteers needed, as local teachers will have to be taught in Portuguese or Tetum. Apart from volunteers from Brazil and Portugal who are able to speak Portuguese, it would be difficult to attract help that would have been more readily available in English-speaking countries, such as Australia, the United States, New Zealand and Singapore.

❖ *Foreign-backed social programmes must leave room to address post-traumatic stress disorder and the horrors of past conflicts.*

There are several challenges to building a sustainable economy and stable nation in Timor-Leste. More pragmatic diplomats take a long-term view of the potential of the new nation. The evolution to a stable economy cannot be rushed and simply willed into being. There is a keen awareness that Timor-Leste has only recently emerged from decades of conflict and is desperately in need of systems, processes and the basic infrastructure for state building. Much needs to be done to lay the groundwork because the population remains polarised—there are both veterans of the resistance who maintain that independence is not quite complete, as well as victims of strife and violence suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

Repeated bouts of violence in Timor-Leste's recent past and a persistent sense of injustice have had a lasting mental health impact on the Timorese people and recovery may require more than therapeutic interventions. The mental health of the Timorese may pose as important an impediment to economic progress as the economic foundations discussed earlier. Widespread mental health problems are the result of exposure to conflict, human rights violations and atrocities. The general population still lacks access to livelihoods and justice. Researchers have argued that frustration and disappointment with a failure to achieve social justice in the form of economic opportunities, social stability and good governance are typical of many post-conflict societies. The restoration of a sense of justice will be a slow and piecemeal process, best advanced by a multi-sectoral, grassroots and participatory approach.

Mental health services in Timor-Leste, along with other infrastructure and social services, are currently weak. There were no specific mental health services in the country prior to 1999. In a 2008 assessment that employed the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency

Settings, researchers noted that the country needed 300 mental health workers to provide appropriate care, but had only 15 at that time.

The Timorese leadership may be resolute and committed to clean and honest dealings and a strong education system. However, an awareness of the psychological state of the Timorese and, more importantly, the post-traumatic stress disorder prevalent among families will be crucial to ensure that healing and restoration can take place.

Being especially communal and spiritual in orientation, the Timorese expect some form of closure to the horrors of war they had witnessed. Yet according to the 2013 Timor-Leste Law & Justice Survey published by The Asia Foundation (TAF), there has been very little progress in the pursuit of justice against defendants for past atrocities. Instead, TAF researchers argue that events such as the 2009 release and repatriation of Indonesian citizen Maternus Bere, indicted for crimes such as the killing of more than 30 unarmed civilians and three priests in Timor-Leste on 6 September 1999, only fuel the fires of frustration. While the Timorese justice system has become more formalised in recent years, including a 'mobile courts' initiative, confidence in the government to resolve disputes, legal matters and past crimes has been low.

NGOs working in Timor-Leste are often impatient with the lack of drive and initiative on the part of the people they are trying to help. An understanding of the complexity of dealing with a post-conflict nation will engender patience in helping the Timorese to help themselves. According to one senior diplomat, 'when approaching Timor-Leste, it is important to have empathy for them. They have been through hell, yet they are not bitter. They genuinely want to move on.'

❖ ***More foreign aid is not necessarily better.***

The UNDP is still trying very hard to play a helpful role in the social development of the country. Non-invasive help such as the establishment of

youth and English language centres may very well give the people the boost they need to take ownership of their own lives. Direct intervention and coercion are unlikely to be productive.

While appreciative of international assistance thus far, Timorese officials are optimistic, confident and eager to take charge of their own destiny. They feel they have come of age.

To quote current Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao, who has openly expressed his opinion that the UN has overstayed its welcome in the country in a speech made to the diplomatic community in Dili on 17 May 2011, 'We know what we want, and the state of Timor-Leste knows what its people want.' His statement clearly demonstrated the growing discomfort among the Timorese government with the continued presence of the UN and other international capacity development agencies since 1999 as well as its confidence in its own ability to take full control of the country's governmental and institutional affairs.¹²

It appears best then, to leave Timor-Leste to develop its own institutional muscle slowly but surely. It is also critical for the government to own its own citizenry, build a strong social compact and develop a national identity among its very fractured populace.

❖ ***Timor-Leste's greatest asset is its youth.***

In a brief exchange with Prime Minister Gusmao while he was in transit in Singapore, he indicated that he had high hopes pinned on the youth of Timor-Leste. The PM was confident that the foundation laid for the education of the young are sound and that the National University of Timor-Leste is also growing from strength to strength through various partnerships with Asian and Western nations. Currently, faculty from the medical school at National University of Singapore offer support and help to students at the National University of East Timor (UNTL). Countries such as Australia have also been generous in awarding scholarships for bright Timorese students to study abroad. What Gusmao was keen to see was the

¹² Sahin, B. S. 'Timor-Leste's foreign policy: Securing state identity in the post-independence period', 3-25.

setting up of more English Language centres in collaboration with universities in Timor-Leste as well as leadership development programmes to expose Timorese youth to global and national issues and strengthen their competencies.

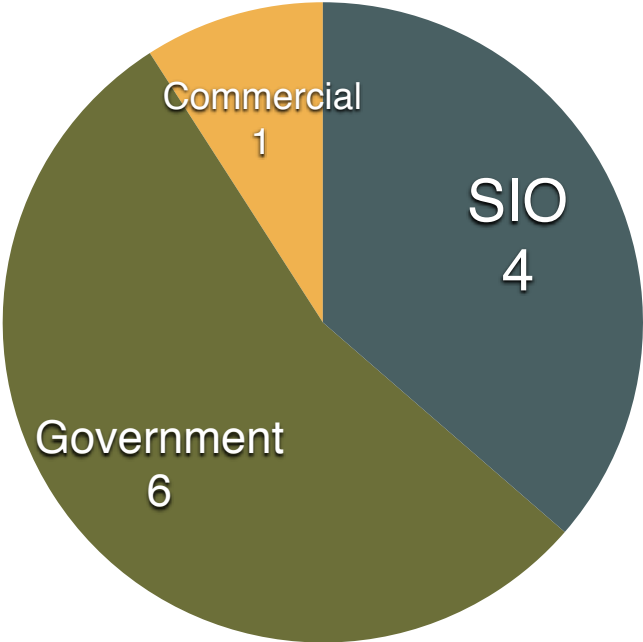
According to Index Mundi, the median age for the Timorese population is 18.5 years. 42.4 percent of the population is below the age of fourteen.¹³ The new generation of youth in Timor-Leste has grown up in an era without the threat and conflict of war. They are eager to learn, are driven, and have imbibed the values of their elders to contribute to the development of their country. If the requisite amount of resources is committed to their basic education, and economic development continues to keep pace with government intentions, there is much potential for them to be able to contribute positively to the Timorese workforce.

¹³ 'Index Mundi 2014', accessed 13 Jan 2015, http://www.indexmundi.com/timor-leste/demographics_profile.html.

V. List of Organisations Interviewed

- Cocoon Centre. Dili, 16 May 2014.
- Credit Suisse. Singapore, 20 May 2014.
- Department of ASEAN Affairs. Dili, 15 May 2014.
- Fundasun Mahein. Dili, 16 May 2014.
- Heartfriends Manatuto. Dili, 16 May 2014.
- Ministry of Basic Education, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. Dili, 15 May 2014.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. Singapore, 11 March 2014.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Singapore. Singapore, 14 May 2014.
- United Nations, Office of the Secretary-General. Bangkok, 2014.
- United Nations Development Programme. Dili, 15 May 2014.
- World Vision, Timor-Leste. Dili, 15 May 2014.

ORGANISATIONS BY SECTOR



Total Organisations Interviewed: 11

VI. Questions for Interviewees

Organisational History

- 1) How and why was your organisation established? Is there a founding story?
- 2) For international organisations - Why did your organisation decide to enter Timor-Leste?

Operations

- 3) On what projects are you currently working? What would success look like one year from now? Five years from now?
- 4) How successful were your past programmes? What is your organisation doing differently from when it first began operations in Timor-Leste?
- 5) Do you foresee any upcoming difficulties?
- 6) What does your organisation need to make your programmes more effective?

Strategies

- 7) What are your organisation's goals for the next 3-5 years? How do you plan to meet those goals?
- 8) What factors might jeopardise the success of your overall strategy?

Collaboration

- 9) Were there any difficulties or pitfalls in past collaborations? Have any difficulties surfaced in your current collaborations?
- 10) Have you collaborated with organisations outside your sector? How could such relationships be improved or facilitated?
- 11) Is there any individual or organisation with whom you would like to collaborate but have been unable to do so?

Human Resources

- 12) Do you generally source staff locally or from overseas? Have you had any difficulties finding skilled local staff?
- 13) Which professional skills, if any, do local staff currently lack? What do local staff need to succeed in today's workplace?
- 14) How would you evaluate local educational institutions in preparing future employees? Are there private or foreign institutions attempting to fill any gaps?

Leadership

- 15) What does effective leadership—in business, government or civil society— look like to you?
- 16) What skills and resources do Timorese leaders need to better serve their society?

- 17) The Institute broadly defines *societal leadership* as “the practice of creating sustainable value and impact for the betterment of society within one’s sphere of influence.” Are there any remarkable individuals in Timor-Leste whom you would consider a *societal leader*?

Sustainability & CSR

- 18) Does your organisation have any sustainability guidelines? How did you determine your current guidelines?
- 19) Does your organisation engage in any Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives? Have you been able to measure the impact of your organisation’s CSR programmes?

Funding (for social-sector organisations)

- 20) Roughly speaking, how is your organisation currently funded?
- 21) How financially self-sustaining is your organisation at the moment? Do you have any plans to lower dependence on outside funding in the future?

Context

- 22) How does working in Timor-Leste differ from working in other Southeast Asian countries? What does Timor-Leste have in common with the rest of the region?
- 23) How do minorities (ethnic, religious, or otherwise) fit into the landscape? Do minorities actively collaborate with the status quo?
- 24) Outside of your own organisation’s scope, what are the key problem areas facing Timor-Leste?
- 25) How is Timor-Leste different from five years ago? How do you imagine it will change in the next five years?

VII. References

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