

## **EAST TIMOR WOMEN AUSTRALIA (ETWA)**

### **Projects and Organizational Focus**

Weaving traditional cloth ('Tais') is an integral part of many women's lives and plays a key role in East Timorese culture and identity. Weaving builds relationships and creates space for artistic and communal expression. By using traditional skills to make new cloth, women safeguard their cultural heritage and decrease the burdens of poverty. ETWA is a membership based, grass-roots Australian NGO working to help East Timorese women weave sustainable communities for their families and future generations. As ETWA works from a community development perspective, we are mindful to ensure value is given to the needs and desires that women identify. Cultural integrity is important to East Timorese women, particularly as western culture begins to sway younger generations away from tradition. Through the richness of weaving, ETWA aims to help our partner organisations, the Taibesi Cooperative and Cooperativa Tais Timor, to maintain cultural integrity while also helping women to improve their life chances.

Founded in March 2004, ETWA now has more than 70 members who volunteer at our office or work in their local communities or through one of three ETWA Chapters. We offer our members a space to learn about East Timorese culture, for involvement in local and international community development, to form new relationships and to contribute to more equitable social structures through a greater understanding of the principles and practice of community development.

### **Collaborations**

- The Taibesi Cooperative
- Cooperativa Tais Timor

### **Contact Details**

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*Written by ETWA, 2006*