

FRIENDS OF BAUCAU WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Projects and Organizational Focus

Friends of Baucau is based in Melbourne, Australia, supported by the Cities of Yarra and Darebin. Friends of Baucau supports partners and programs in Baucau, Timor-Leste, in particular the Buka Hatene Centre, which coordinates the Friends of Baucau Women's Development Program.

The FOB Women's Development Program works in 6 areas including:

1. Alphabet groups - literacy classes with rural women teaching the alphabet and signature. Basic hygiene, nutrition and group building is also covered.
2. Women's economic development / small business. Some of the above groups may progress to undertaking a small business enterprise together. This is currently happening with 6 groups in peanuts, mulberries, soap, salt and tais. This project is supported by the British Embassy. The philosophy is very much one of supporting the group of women in whatever way they choose to progress with, some choose to continue with literacy and others with small business.
3. Training the facilitators and teachers of the above groups undertake training provided by the Women's program.
4. Leadership training - in 2005 the Women's program undertook Leadership training for women in the Baucau district that nominated and or were elected to village and suco councils. The program hopes to undertake this work again in the lead up to the national elections.
5. Domestic violence prevention and support service. The Women's program is working in partnership with PRADET and Caritas delivering training to Domestic Violence counsellors and has just successfully developed partnerships to construct and run a women's refuge in Baucau.
6. Women's resource centre at Baucau Buka Hatene provides information for women in the east and undertakes policy and advocacy for women.

Collaborations

The Women's program collaborates with organisations as mentioned above. The Friends of Baucau supports the core costs of the program. Projects are in collaboration with a partner who provides project funding. Baucau Buka Hatene works in partnership with the Women's program where the office and Women's Resource Centre is located. Some of the Alphabet groups are now being coordinated and supported by the Department of Education. The Women's economic development project is supported by the British Embassy. The Leadership Training was supported by the Office for the Promotion of Equality and the New Zealand Embassy. The Domestic Violence program is supported by PRADET and Caritas and involves many key organisations in Baucau.

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Written by Friends of Baucau, 2006; updated with new contact details 2007.