

THE GLOBALISM INSTITUTE, RMIT UNIVERSITY, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Organizational Overview and Approach to Gender

The Globalism Institute is a research institute based at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. It was established in 2001, and has around 20 staff. Our research sites include Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, India, Malaysia and Sri Lanka, as well as various sites within Australia. The Globalism Institute places a strong emphasis on undertaking collaborative research projects with governments and civil society organizations in these sites. These projects draw on expertise in fields such as global politics, international relations, community studies, cross-cultural communication and international education. Our central research themes are globalization, nationalism and community sustainability. Further information about the Globalism Institute can be found at <http://globalism.rmit.edu.au>.

The Globalism Institute has been undertaking research in Timor-Leste since 2003, particularly focusing on investigating how forms of identity are redefined through the process of nation-formation. The key themes guiding our research and other activities in Timor-Leste are Gender, Nation Building, Justice and Security, and Community. For further information about the work of the Globalism Institute in Timor-Leste in both English and Tetun, please see www.timor-leste.org.

Our research is interested in understanding the extent of social change to gender identities and relations, the impact of organizational and community activities in the area of gender, and inquiring into where and how policies and programs have worked. Many challenges in the area of gender remain. Despite the various attempts at transforming patriarchal structures and changing the nature of gender relations, many women remain limited in terms of their access to education, suffer poor standards of reproductive health, and severe problems with regards to gender-based violence. Even where changes have been made through state-policy and legislation, many women continue to identify the need to achieve effective social, economic and political participation of women in reality.

Programs

The Globalism Institute collaborates in formal and informal ways with organizations in both Timor-Leste and Australia whose work relates significantly to gender. Key past and present collaborations include:

Research Project October 2006 - July 2007: Mapping the Pursuit of Gender Equality: Non-Government and Agency Activity in Timor-Leste

Completed in July 2007, this project delivers a comprehensive picture of how NGO and agency sectors in Timor-Leste approach gender-focused activity. The final public report (published in both English and Tetun) systemically brings together information about the various NGOs and agencies working in the area of gender, their projects and their

approaches. In addition, an analysis is made about major trajectories of gender work in Timor-Leste. It is hoped that this bilingual report (which includes a directory of organizational contacts) is an important resources for interested organizations and individuals within Timor-Leste and beyond.

In addition, the Globalism Institute researchers will provide the Office for the Promotion of Equality with an internal advisory report, which will provide an informative basis upon which to strategise about future government-civil society collaborations.

Organizational Collaboration: The Office for the Promotion of Equality, Prime Minister's Office, Timor-Leste.

Funding Support: Irish Aid and the Globalism Institute.

Working with RMIT English Worldwide

In 2005 the Globalism Institute helped to secure a short-term scholarship for Mario de Araujo, who works with Oxfam Australia and is based in Dili, to undertake a 5-week intensive language program at RMIT English Worldwide (REW). After the success of this exercise, the Globalism Institute and REW established a program partnership to facilitate similar opportunities for three East Timorese women in 2007. Given the extent of challenges still facing women in Timor-Leste, it is hoped that this opportunity has multiple benefits. Not only does it allow participants to increase their English skills, it also provides an opportunity for travel, cultural exchange and personal growth. Participants' financial and logistical needs are supported by organizations and individuals in Timor-Leste and Australia.

For more information about this program please contact Damian Grenfell at damian.grenfell@rmit.edu.au.

Study Program

We particularly encourage students with an interest in undertaking an Honours, Masters or PhD to contact the Globalism Institute if seeking supervision in the area of gender, social change and/or Timor-Leste, and for undergraduate RMIT students who have an interest in undertaking an internship as part of associated projects.

At present Globalism Institute researchers are supervising a number of students undertaking Timor-Leste-related theses, including an Honours student examining gender and peacebuilding in Timor-Leste, and a PhD student looking at the intersection between gender and the nation-building process in Timor-Leste.

International Forum 2005: *Challenges and Possibilities: International Organisations and Women in Timor-Leste*

Long-term reconstruction and development programs continue to operate in East Timor, many focusing on issues affecting women. In this context, 'Challenges and Possibilities' drew upon the experiences and ideas of participants, including East Timorese women and representatives of international organisations, in order to explore three key issues:

1. The practices and assumptions of international organisations working with East Timorese women;
2. How East Timorese women have responded; and
3. How the international presence has impacted on women in East Timor.

Organizational Collaboration: The Globalism Institute collaborated with a range of organisations and community members in Timor-Leste and Australia in organising the event and ensuring wide-ranging participation in this three-day international forum. Organizations included state bodies, international agencies, international and national NGOs and community groups in Timor-Leste, and NGOs, community groups, local government, university bodies and business in Australia. Please see the Participants, Committee and Support pages of the forum report for further details.

Workshop 2004: *Barriers to Women's Participation in East Timor's Reconstruction*

This seminar sought to highlight the various barriers that continue to obstruct a fuller participation for women in East Timorese society. Coming largely from an international perspective, the seminar addressed the framework for discourse about women in East Timor. The keynote address was by Jacqui Siapno who presented a paper on 'Creating New Spaces, Shattering Silences: Class, Race, Ethnic, Linguistic, and Paradigmatic Questions besides the Gender Barriers'. Other speakers included Etervina Groenen (North Richmond Community Health Centre), Sara Niner (the Alola Foundation), Janet Hunt (RMIT University), Jen Worthington (formerly United Nations) and Deb Salvagno (East Timor Women Australia). Facilitation was provided by Virginia Gough (Institute of Cultural Affairs Australia).

Organizational Collaboration: East Timor Women Australia (ETWA) and RMIT University's Community and Regional Partnerships, along with support from community members.

Publications and Resources (to date July 2007)

- Grenfell, Damian, Anna Trembath and Chris Scanlon, eds, *Challenges and Possibilities: International Organisations and Women in Timor-Leste / Desafiu no Oportunidade: Organizasaun Internasionál no Feto iha Timor-Leste*, Globalism Institute, RMIT University, October 2005 (bilingual conference report: web-based, hard-copy and two CD versions).

- Trembath, Anna and Damian Grenfell, *Mapping the Pursuit of Gender Equality: Non-Government and International Agency Activity in Timor-Leste*, Globalism Institute, RMIT University, Dili, July 2007, ISBN 978-0-646-47770-1. (English version)
- Trembath, Anna and Damian Grenfell, 'Oan Kiak: Women and Independence in Timor-Leste', *Arena Magazine*, issue 83, June–July 2006, pp. 10–12.
- Trembath, Anna, 'Gender and Security in Timor-Leste', Presentation to *Globalism Institute Seminar Series 2006*, RMIT University, Melbourne, 24 May 2006.
- Trembath, Anna, 'Gender Dynamics in Timor-Leste's Security Crisis', Presentation to the *Second Oceanic Conference on International Studies*, Melbourne University, Melbourne, 7 July 2006.
- Trembath, Anna and Damian Grenfell, *Mapa ba Lala'ok Buka Igualdade Jéneru: Atividade Ajénsia La Governamentál no Internasionál nian iha Timor-Leste*, Globalism Institute, RMIT University, Dili, July 2007, ISBN 978-0-646-47770-1. (Tetun version)
- Trembath, Anna, 'Review of *Independent Women: the Story of Women's Activism in East Timor*', *International Journal of Feminist Politics*, forthcoming 2008.
- www.timor-leste.org/gender

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If you would like to be included on the Globalism Institute's emailing list to receive regular updates on our activities, please send an email to the above address.

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