



United Nations and Youth in Timor-Leste

April– July 2017

Welcome to the First Issue of Our Newsletter!

We are the United Nations Inter-Agency Youth Results Group. Made up of all the UN agencies working in Timor-Leste, we coordinate the UN's interventions related to youth work, support the Government's efforts for young people and strive to respond to the needs of young men and women in Timor-Leste. This is our first newsletter. Its objective is to raise awareness of what the UN collectively does for youth and what results we achieve.

In this issue we will have a look at the youth activities of **UNDP**, **UNFPA**, **UNWomen**, and **UNICEF** ! These agencies have implemented activities on youth participation, education, and healthy lifestyle. Themes that are important to Timor-Leste's youth well being, and highlighted in the **National Youth Policy**. Stay Tuned ;)



I. Youth and Civic Participation

Joven Vota

The **UNDP** Electoral Project LEARN conducted activities targeting young and first-time voters as part of voter education for the 2017 Presidential and National Parliament Elections. Out of the total number of voters, 51% were young people aged 17-30. Different strategies were implemented to embrace young and first time voters in electoral processes.

Joven Vota (Youth Vote), an outreach activity, was held before the elections to increase awareness on electoral processes and encourage this age bracket to vote on Election-Day. Many young people living in Dili observed this infotainment activity which presented the voting process and the importance of voting in elections.



Social networking sites were simultaneously used to engage more young people as Dili alone had more than 90,000 young voters. These sites were supplemented by pictorial presentations with voter education contents. TV programmes, short videos, Public Service Announcements were produced and broadcasted through several TV channels and social media for wider reach especially for young people living in rural areas. Additionally, young journalists of community radios of four municipalities were trained to promote voter education for elections.

The project conducted these initiatives as part of the technical support to the Election Management Bodies (EMBs) of Timor-Leste for the 2017 national elections with the financial support from Government of Japan and Korea. There will be more activities focused for young people especially in the areas of voter registration and civic education targeting municipal elections.



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Resilient nations.



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UN Timor-Leste

Timor-Leste First PRIDE March, organized by Timor-Leste's Youth

On the 29th of June, the HATUTAN Youth Council, supported by UN Women organized the first ever PRIDE March in Timor-Leste. It attracted more than 500 people, where the youth were an overwhelming majority. The atmosphere was very festive and resembled that of a carnival, with participants waving colorful rainbow flags, cheering and beating the drums in the capital of Timor-Leste.

The day before the march, the Prime Minister sent out a video message, broadcasted on national Television, and shared widely throughout social media, calling on everyone to accept and respect the LGBTI community members and encourage their involvement in the development of the country. It is a landmark for the LGBTI rights advocacy as it is the first time that a senior level government official came out with a statement in support of LGBTI rights.

Natalino Guterres, who coordinates the HATUTAN Youth Council, said many like him grew up feeling "lonely" and do not know where to turn when they suffer discrimination.

The event was part of a 3-day celebration organized by HATUTAN Youth Council along with other partners, such as the US Embassy, CODIVA, The Asia Foundation, and UN Women as well as other UN agencies based in Timor-Leste.

After the march, various speakers delivered speeches, urging everyone to accept the LGBTI community and calling for respect of the dignity and human rights of the LGBTIQ community in Timor-Leste.



The sense of euphoria ... I saw happiness written on people's faces and some teared up. It reminds me of Independence Day in 2002..

- Natalino Guterres

#Pride2017



For more info please visit the [UNWomen website](http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/timor-leste): <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/timor-leste>



You can follow HATUTAN Youth on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/HatutanYouth>



HATUTAN

Youth Voices



Ricardo Valente at the Asia Pacific Regional Consultation on Youth, Peace, and Security

I am Ricardo Valente from Dili. I am a student, activist, and president of the Timor-Leste Youth for Peace (TLYP). I represented the TLYP at the Asia Pacific Regional Consultation on Youth, Peace, and Security in Thailand, Bangkok last 16th – 19th of May.

During the consultation I participated in many different activities. On the first and second day, I shared my experiences, obstacles I have encountered as a young Timorese, and also I have shed light on our organization, the TLYP. On the third day I had the opportunity to design and build recommendations on issues revolving around youth, peace and security.

On the 4th day of the consultation, a scholar from the *Clingendael Academy* in the Netherlands provided a capacity building training on negotiation and mediation. At the end of this consultation I was awarded a certificate!



What did I learn from the Consultation in Bangkok?

- How to build, maintain and promote peace through initiatives such as arts, sports, and education.
- Identifying problems and building strong recommendations.
- Effective ways of negotiating and mediation.

"After this consultation I am sure that I will continue to become a peace-builder and work for peace. Therefore I will continue work with my fellow friends in our organization to promote peace by doing Social Activities".

—Ricardo Valente

Lecture on the Demographic Dividend at the Universidade Nacional Timor-Leste (UNTL)



Students from the UNTL taking notes during the Demographic Dividend lecture

On 21 June 2017, the UN in Timor-Leste conducted a seminar event with students of the National University of Timor-Leste (UNTL). It was part of a series of seminars with the objective of sensitizing the students on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and how each agency in Timor-Leste contributes to the fulfillment of each SDG goals. The topic for this month was on Demographic Dividend and Youth. The topic was presented by Dr. Domingas Bernardo (Assistant Country Representative, UNFPA).



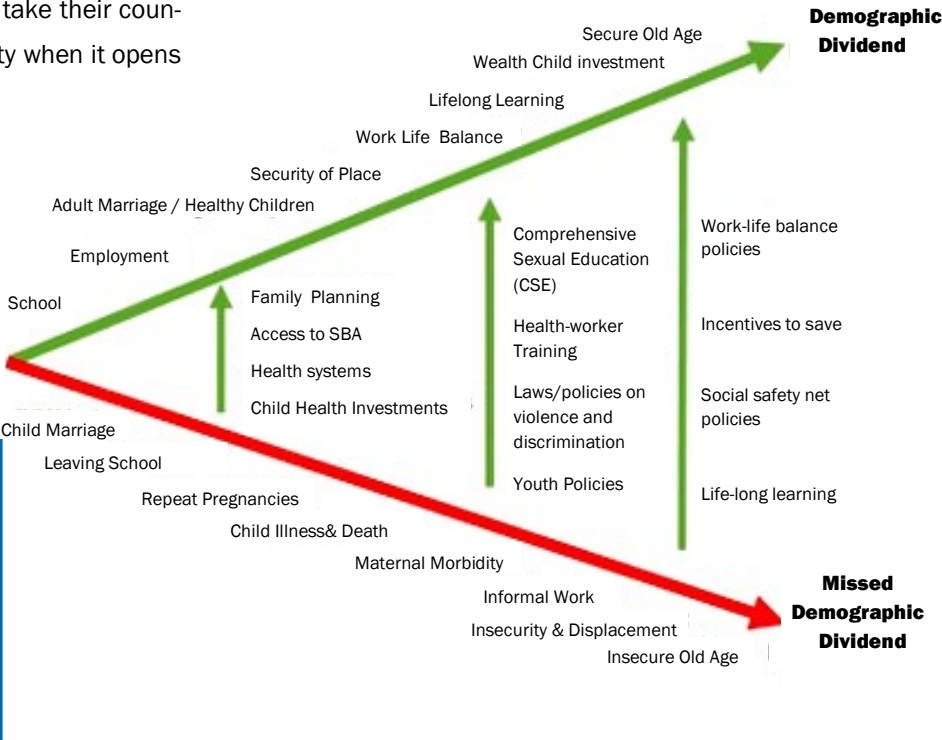
What is a Demographic Dividend?

The demographic dividend is the economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population's age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population (15 to 64) is larger than the non-working-age share of the population (14 and younger, and 65 and older).

The lecture highlighted the need to invest in **education**, **health**, and **job creation** in order for the young people of Timor-Leste to take their country forward and seize the economic window of opportunity when it opens in 2030.



Adolescent Girl



For more info please visit the UNFPA website:

<http://www.unfpa.org/demographic-dividend>



Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) Training of Trainers for Alumni of Youth Parliament



Alumni of Youth Parliament Members and UNICEF

On the 5th to the 9th of June 2017, the Secretary of State for youth and Sports (SSYS) conducted a Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) Training of Trainers (TOT) for Alumni of Youth Parliament and UNICEF Innovation Hub Members in collaboration with UNICEF.

The objective of the training was to improve the skills of the Alumni of Youth Parliament and Innovation Hub Members on basic life skills that are needed by young people, such as; self-awareness, communication skills, decision making, problem solving, and coping with emotions. Additionally, the training of trainers serves as preparation sessions for the participants to become facilitators and continue conducting training for their peers on LSBE. The training was attended by 30 participants.

For more info please visit the UNICEF website:

<https://www.unicef.org/timorleste/>



III. Youth and Healthy Lifestyle

Teenage Pregnancy and Early Marriage Research

The Teenage Pregnancy and Early Marriage Research was conducted by UNFPA, PLAN International, and the Secretary of Youth and Sports (SSYS). It was launched on International Girls Day, 10th of May.

With 19% of girls married before 18 and 24% already with a child by the time they turn 20, the Secretariat of State for Youth and Sports, UNFPA, and Plan International decided to investigate the decision-making pathways and experiences that lead to teenage pregnancy and early marriage in Timor-Leste. Choosing the Municipalities of Covalima, Aileu and Dili, the objective of the research was to investigate the root causes of pregnancies in adolescence and early marriages, as well as to collect information on possible ways to prevent them.

The research reveals that access to sexual education is very limited for young people in Timor-Leste, and contraception largely out of unmarried young people's reach, which leads to young women not knowing how or not being able to prevent pregnancy. But most importantly, with or without sexual education or contraception, the report shows that young women in fact have very little agency in the decision to engage in sexual relationships. It was found that most cases, the boys initiated the sexual relationship, and the girls always felt they had to comply. This unequal power relationship between girls and boys was identified as the main cause for teenage pregnancies in those three municipalities of Timor-Leste.

"To prevent teen pregnancies, we must stop blaming girls and start addressing the circumstances that make marriage and motherhood the only options for them"

-John M. Pile, UNFPA Representative.



IV. Youth and Employment and Employability

Oecusse Business Incubator: Youth lead Agribusiness in Oecusse

Separated but one with Timor-Leste, the Oecusse exclave, known as the special economic zone of social market economy, is now getting the attention it deserves since establishing its first UNDP-sponsored Youth space. The region alone accounts for 52% of inhabitants aged below twenty-five years old, and 80% of the population working as subsistence farmers.

The Youth center therefore aims to develop Agri-business across the region by empowering, connecting and employing young men and women through entrepreneurial support, incubation, prototyping, skills development and professional mentorship.



Youth in Oecusse engaging in the Agribusiness

In July 2017, UNDP in partnership with the regional Secretary for Agricultural in Oecusse, has been facilitating fixed workshops with local extensionist, focusing on building capacity and connecting young producers to profitable markets. The workshop further allowed for discussions on how young farmers can increase their production, market access, knowledge, and capital inputs.

Improving the productive capacities of young farmers through innovative solutions means that next generation of Oecusse can enjoy a future of sustainability and stability.



For more info please visit the [UNDP website](http://www.tl.undp.org/content/timor_les/en/home/operations/projects/):
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