

Indigo Atauro Friendship Committee Christmas Newsletter

2018 has seen the further development of areas that began in 2017 and the enhancement of the relationship between Indigo and Atauro.

Update on Projects:

Student Scholarships: The review of our student scholarship program saw the introduction of formal agreements with our students. Implementing these agreements in June 2017 achieved the Atauro community's objective of increased family commitment. It also provided wonderful opportunities for Indigo representatives to meet families and experience a new depth in relationships. At the same time improved organisation and communication with our student sponsors has improved these relationships.



Five of our current students meeting with Irene Cracknell in Dili during December 2018.

Left to right: Obed (nursing), Martinho (agriculture) Herminia (hospitality), Germano (geology) and Ricardo (engineering).



Lauriana (Science Education) and Germano (Geology) with Indigo reps Rob and Ro Porter in June 2018.



New student Herminia da Costa Soares (Hospitality) and her family in the village of Vila.



Martinho Soares' father signing the scholarship agreement in the village of Makili.

Composting Toilets: The demand for composting toilets on Atauro continues to grow. The on-going support for this “bricks and mortar” project in Indigo testifies to the value of this project.



Inspecting two new composting toilets built in the village of Fatu'u in the North of Atauro Island. The toilet on the left is to be used in the development of a new tourism area in the village. The toilet on the right was funded by money raised by the students of Wodonga Middle School. It is to be used by the Fatu'u primary school students.

Possible New Initiatives

School gardens and waste management on Atauro are areas important to building the capacity of the Atauro community. The support of both government and community groups in both Indigo and Atauro is strong for these initiatives. The Friends of Atauro are working with Timor Leste community groups Permatil and da Terra to encourage schools to develop vegetable gardens. O'Meara's hardware in Rutherglen and Yates seeds donated seeds for the school gardens.



Frances Walsh and staff examine donated seeds at Bequeli Primary School.



Rubbish bins have been installed at Beloi market and a rubbish disposal/recycling area established on the island.

Community Links

There have been important areas of confirmation and challenge in developing links between communities.

- **Successful fundraising activities** such as the Curry Night (Beechworth) and Atauro Challenge (Rutherglen) confirm the support of a sector of the community for the Indigo/Atauro relationship.
- **The new Youth Ambassador program** has chosen to support the development of school gardens on Atauro. This follows the strong connections the Junior Council developed with Atauro.



Curry night, June 2018.



The new water pump for Bequeli school garden - funded by the Youth ambassador program.



The 2018 Youth Ambassadors.

Incorporation of The Friends of Atauro

The move towards an incorporated structure for the Friends of Atauro as opposed to an S86 committee of Indigo Council presents challenges and opportunities. The challenge is to maintain the strong support of existing groups including the Indigo Council. At the same time developing a new structure that will be more flexible and one that has the ability to attract new supporters in demographic groups not represented at the moment. Greg Pinkerton from Indigo Shire has worked hard to develop a detailed Memorandum of Understanding between the new incorporated body (the final name is yet to be decided) and Indigo Shire. This memorandum plus the incorporated body's articles of association will detail how the new group will operate. 2019 should see the transition complete and the new organisation operating.

Finance

The Bank Balance at the end of November was \$19,120.32

The graduation of students, continued support of existing sponsors and careful monitoring of expenditure means that we are in a position to support two new students in 2019.

We thank all our sponsors both individual and group, on-going and one –off. Since the beginning of 2018 Alola Australia has tax deductibility status with the ATO. So if you make a donation to our student scholarship program it is fully deductible from your personal income tax. If you would like to take advantage of this benefit please contact a committee member, our treasurer Irene Cracknell or Jess Johnston at the shire office and we will organise the appropriate receipt.

Steady revenue means there is some room to support new initiatives in 2019.

Visitors to Timor Leste and Atauro

Committee members Frances Walsh and Rob and Ro Porter visited in June. Our Treasurer Irene Cracknell is visiting both Dili and Atauro Island in the first two weeks of December. We did not host any visitors from Timor Leste officially but we look forward to contact in 2019 through the shire's involvement in the Victorian Government's Timor Leste Initiative.

Thanks

The Friends of Atauro is a broad group. Thanks to all who have made a contribution. The shire continues to support the program and especially in helping with the transition to an alternative structure. A big thank you to Jess Johnston and Greg Pinkerton for their work. Thank you to committee members Irene Cracknell, Frances Walsh, Libby Hosking, Lesley Milne, Councillor Jenny O'Connor, Peter Croucher and Mark Verbaken who all find ways to add to the development of the relationship between Indigo and Atauro.

Rob Porter

(Chairperson of Indigo/Atauro Friendship committee)

Atauro Island Photo Page – June 2018



Top: Saturday Market in Beloi and Atauro Water Taxi & the Dragon Boat (transport from Dili)

Middle: Marcelo Soares (Indigo facilitator) Rob Porter (Indigo Rep), Graduated Scholarship students (nursing and public health). Makili clinic midwife – Senora Alburia

Bottom: Atauro's coastline, Barry and Lina's Place (Eco Lodge) is a great place to stay on Atauro.