

Learning independence
Education in emergency and transition
in Timor-Leste since 1999



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Susan Nicolai



International Institute for Educational Planning

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Foreword to the series

UNESCO is increasingly requested to provide an educational response in emergency and reconstruction settings. The organization is in the process of developing expertise in this field in order to be able to provide prompt and relevant assistance. It will offer guidance, practical tools and specific training for education policy-makers, officials and planners.

The fifth of the eleven objectives adopted by the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000 explicitly focuses on the rights of children in emergencies. It stresses the importance of meeting "... the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability and conduct[ing] educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict". The *Dakar framework for action* (World Education Forum, 2000: 9) calls for national 'Education for All' plans to include provision for education in emergency situations. Governments, particularly education ministries, have an important role to play in an area that has often been dominated by the actions of NGOs and United Nations agencies.

Moreover, the field of educational planning in emergencies and reconstruction is still young. It has to be organized into a manageable discipline, through further documentation and analysis, before training programmes can be designed. Accumulated institutional memories and knowledge in governments, agencies and NGOs on education in emergencies, are in danger of being lost due both to the dispersion and disappearance of documents, and to high staff turnover in both national and international contexts. Most of the expertise is still in the heads of practitioners and needs to be collected, since memories fade fast. Diverse experiences of educational reconstruction must now be more thoroughly documented and analyzed before they disappear.

This task includes the publication in this series of seven country-specific analyses being conducted on the planning and management of education in emergencies and reconstruction. They concern the efforts currently being made to restore and transform education systems in

countries as diverse as Burundi, Kosovo, Palestine, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Timor-Leste. They have been initiated and sponsored by IIEP, in close collaboration with the Division for Educational Policies and Strategies in UNESCO Headquarters.

The objectives of the case studies are:

- to contribute to the process of developing knowledge in the discipline of education in emergencies;
- to provide focused input for future IIEP training programmes targeting government officials and others in education in emergencies;
- to identify and collect dispersed documentation on the management of education in the seven countries, and to capture some of the undocumented memories of practitioners;
- to analyze response in seven very different situations to educational provision in times of crisis;
- to increase dissemination of information and analysis on education in emergencies.

IIEP's larger programme on education in emergencies and reconstruction involves not only these case studies, but also a series of global, thematic, policy-related studies. In addition, IIEP is producing a handbook for ministry of education officials and the agencies assisting them, and developing training materials for a similar audience. Through this programme, IIEP will make a modest but significant contribution to the discipline of education in emergencies. Its hope is to enrich the quality of the planning processes applied in this crucial field.

Gudmund Hernes
Director, IIEP

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List of abbreviations

AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AVI	Australian Volunteers International
BP3	Badan Benyelurygara Pelaksanaan Pendidikan (Community Education Implementation Body)
BPRM	US Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration
CAP	Consolidated Appeals Process
CBO	Community-based organization
CCF	Christian Children's Fund
CDHTL	Comissão dos Direitos Humanos de Timor Lorosae (East Timor Human Rights Commission)
CESUR	Centro de Sistemas Urbanos e Regionais (Centre for Urban and Regional Systems)
CFET	Consolidated Fund for East Timor
CFS	Child Friendly Spaces
CFSI	Community and Family Services International
CIMU	Central Independent Monitoring Unit
CISPE	Civil Service and Public Employment Service
CNRT	Conselho Nacional da Resistência Timorese (National Council of Timorese Resistance)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CWS	Church World Service
CYDP	Child and Youth Development Program
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Organization
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESRP	Emergency School Readiness Project
ETSSC	East Timor Student Solidarity Council

ETTA	East Timor Transitional Administration
Falintil	Forças Armadas de Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste (Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor)
Fordem	Fórum Democracia Maubére (Timorese People's Democracy Forum)
FSQP	Fundamental School Quality Project
Fretilin	Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente (Revolutionary Front of Independent East Timor)
GAA	German Agro Action
GERTIL	Grupo de Estudos para a Reconstrução de Timor Lorosae (Group for Reconstruction Studies of East Timor)
GFFET	Grupo Feto Foin-Sa'e Enclave Timor (Young Women's Group of the Timor Enclave)
GFFTL	Grupo Feto Foin-Sa'e Timor Lorosa'e (Young Women's Group of East Timor)
GoI	Government of Indonesia
IDP	Internally displaced person
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
IMPETU	Ikatan Mahasiswa Pelajar Timor Timur Seluruh Indonesia (East Timor Student Group)
InterFET	International Forces in East Timor
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRCT	International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims
JAM	Joint Assessment Mission
JLL	Juventude Lorico Lifau (Youth of Lorico Lifau)
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
KSI	Kdadalak Sulimutuk Institute
MECYS	Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports

List of abbreviations

NCC	National Consultative Council
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NTT	Nusa Tenggara Timur (East Nusa Tenggara province)
NZODA	New Zealand Overseas Development Agency
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PKF	Peace-keeping force
PMU	Project Management Unit
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
QIPs	Quick Impact Projects
RDTL	República Democrática de Timor-Leste (Democratic Republic of East Timor)
Rp	<i>rupiah</i>
SATKORLAK	Office for People's Welfare and Poverty Alleviation
SSRP	School System Revitalization Programme
SUSENAS	Survei Sosial Ekonomi Nasional (National Social and Economic Survey)
TFET	Trust Fund for East Timor
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Army)
TTU	Timor Tengah Utara (district in West Timor)
TVTL	Televisão Timor-Leste
UDT	União Democrática Timorense (Timorese Democratic Union)
UN	United Nations
UNAMET	United Nations Assistance Mission in East Timor (1999)
UNATIL	Universidade Nacional de Timor-Leste (National University of East Timor)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMISSET	United Nations Mission in Support of East Timor (2002 to present)
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (1999-2002)
UNTIM	Universitas Timor Timur (East Timor University)
UNV	United Nations Volunteer
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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Executive summary

Following a quarter century of Indonesian occupation in East Timor, a popular consultation was held in September 1999 to determine the territory's constitutional future. As it became clear that voters had overwhelmingly rejected autonomy and instead wanted independence, pro-Indonesian militias launched a wave of political violence accompanied by bloodshed, looting and massive destruction of infrastructure. The crisis provoked large-scale human displacement across the border to West Timor and within East Timor itself. Peace-keeping forces restored order within several weeks, and over several months the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) was set up. Later, after almost three years of international administration, over 25 years of occupation, and nearly five centuries of Portuguese colonization, East Timor finally became an independent nation on 20 May 2002.

In *Learning independence: education in emergency and transition in Timor-Leste since 1999*, Susan Nicolai seeks to describe how schooling was affected by these events and the steps taken to re-establish education throughout the transition period. Susan Nicolai begins her study with a description of East Timor's difficult history, particularly noting the differing effects of Portuguese colonial rule and Indonesian occupation upon education and language policy. The Portuguese favoured educating an elite while the Indonesians gave preference to quantity over quality, using the education system as indoctrination in support of their rule. The violence surrounding the 1999 consultation had a massive impact on the education system, as on most sectors: the majority of schools were destroyed, all supplies and equipment looted or burned, and many of the teachers fled. The author goes on to detail educational response to displacement and post-consultation violence on both sides of the border.

In West Timor, both the Government of Indonesia and the international community provided relief to the refugee population in the form of food, shelter, medical services, water and sanitation. However, education and psychosocial care were not prioritized; consequently many refugee children lost a year or more of schooling and juvenile delinquency increased. Susan

Nicolai discusses the ‘tent schools’ set up in refugee camps – necessary due to the fact that the local Indonesian schools were overwhelmed and were of rather poor quality. Security problems disrupted these educational efforts and, as the international community withdrew, tent schools were forced to close and there was a sudden need for integration of refugee children into local schools. The heavy repatriation of refugees to East Timor, which occurred from mid-2000 onwards, somewhat eased these pressures; however, for those who have remained, access to quality education is a struggle that extends to the present day.

Susan Nicolai lays out three phases of educational response in East Timor, examining the role of the international community and its interaction with East Timorese leadership. The first was an emergency phase, characterized by localized response and lasting about a year until the official reopening of schools in October 2000. The second was a transitional phase, with priority placed on physical reconstruction, increasing primary school enrolments, recruitment of teachers and setting up a new education administration as the country approached independence. The third phase of system reconstruction began with independence in May 2002, and was marked by the formal establishment of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports (MECYS) and it was accompanied by a host of administrative, legal and financial issues.

During the emergency period, local communities took initiatives for the early resumption of schooling, drawing upon their own seriously depleted local resources, a testimony of the great importance that the East Timorese people placed on education. UNICEF took on a quasi-ministerial role in the early days, as UNTAET and the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT) both struggled to establish legitimacy. Educational provision for children and young people with special needs was a strong focus during this time. Education for children separated from their families and the psychosocial needs of the traumatized occupied the attention of several international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and UNICEF. The particular needs of adolescents and youth were addressed more slowly, with local associations taking important initiatives for integrating youth socially, economically and educationally.

In August 2000, leadership in education was assumed by the East Timor Transitional Administration (ETTA), jointly formed from UNTAET and CNRT. ETTA inherited the multi-donor Emergency School Readiness

Project (ESRP), with its aim of providing safe school buildings with basic furniture, textbooks and learning materials, as well as management support. Susan Nicolai explores how a declared focus on system reconstruction in reality emphasized physical infrastructure to the detriment of policy. Political disputes and general governance issues, related to decentralization and corruption, greatly slowed down any process of reform. The donors' role in post-conflict education reconstruction is also highlighted, with vested interests due to historical links or geopolitical considerations influencing support.

Throughout transition and into independence, language was a divisive issue, with the new East Timorese leadership opting for the use of Portuguese in instruction. The study explores the implications of that decision for teacher recruitment and training, and the quality of pupil attainment. The nascent East Timorese education system had to contend with additional problems related to poor quality – regarding teacher qualifications, low numbers of teachers (of whom few were women) and lack of curriculum. Susan Nicolai examines other challenges, including high attrition rates in primary school, low attendance in primary school despite good enrolment, limited access to secondary school, widespread adult illiteracy, limited classroom resources and struggles in provision of tertiary education.

Any success in educational response and reconstruction in both East and West Timor was dependent on many factors – and due to many actors. Measured against the complete lack of education that existed in September 1999, the author contends that progress three years on could be seen as extraordinary. However, measured against the kind of quality education that should exist, it is clear that there is yet a long road to travel. Susan Nicolai concludes by outlining the lessons that could be learned from the education efforts made as East Timor moved from emergency to independence.

Preface

Before entering into the study, some remarks on terminology are necessary. Over time, the eastern half of Timor island has been known by many different names. To its local inhabitants who speak the lingua franca of Tetum, it is known as Timor Lorosa'e. During its centuries as a colony, it was called Portuguese Timor. In its newly independent incarnation, with Portuguese as an official language, it is officially known as República Democrática de Timor-Leste (RDTL). However, as much of the substance of this book refers to the pre-independence period, for the most part, it is appropriate to use the term East Timor, which is the English-language term for the territory until independence. Similarly, the country's people are referred to as East Timorese. In instances where the more general term Timorese is used, this refers to the inhabitants of both East and West Timor. To lessen confusion, the local term of Maubere, a common local name which became a Portuguese pejorative, later transformed to imply solidarity within the populace, is not used.

Due to language differences, the question of the status of displaced populations in West Timor can become confusing. In the Bahasa Indonesian language, there is no distinction between the terms 'refugee' and 'internally displaced person' (IDP), with both meanings encompassed in the word *pengungsi*. This, and confusion over the territorial status of East Timor, has meant that the two terms have sometimes been used interchangeably. Technically, these populations were IDPs until the time Indonesia handed over East Timor to United Nations control on 28 October 1999. Because most of the time period discussed in this study falls after this date, displaced East Timorese in West Timor will be referred to as refugees.

It is important to note as well that the name of the education authority in East Timor has tended to change along with changes in governance. In its first incarnation within the United Nations Transitional Authority in East Timor (UNTAET) formed in October 1999, it was known as the Division of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports under the Department of Social Services. This changed in August 2000 with the creation of the East Timor Transitional Authority (ETTA) and the establishment of the Education Division based in the Department of Social Affairs. When the

second transitional government was installed in September 2001, education work commanded its own ministry and became the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports (MECYS). This designation was carried over after the installation of an independent governance structure in May 2002.

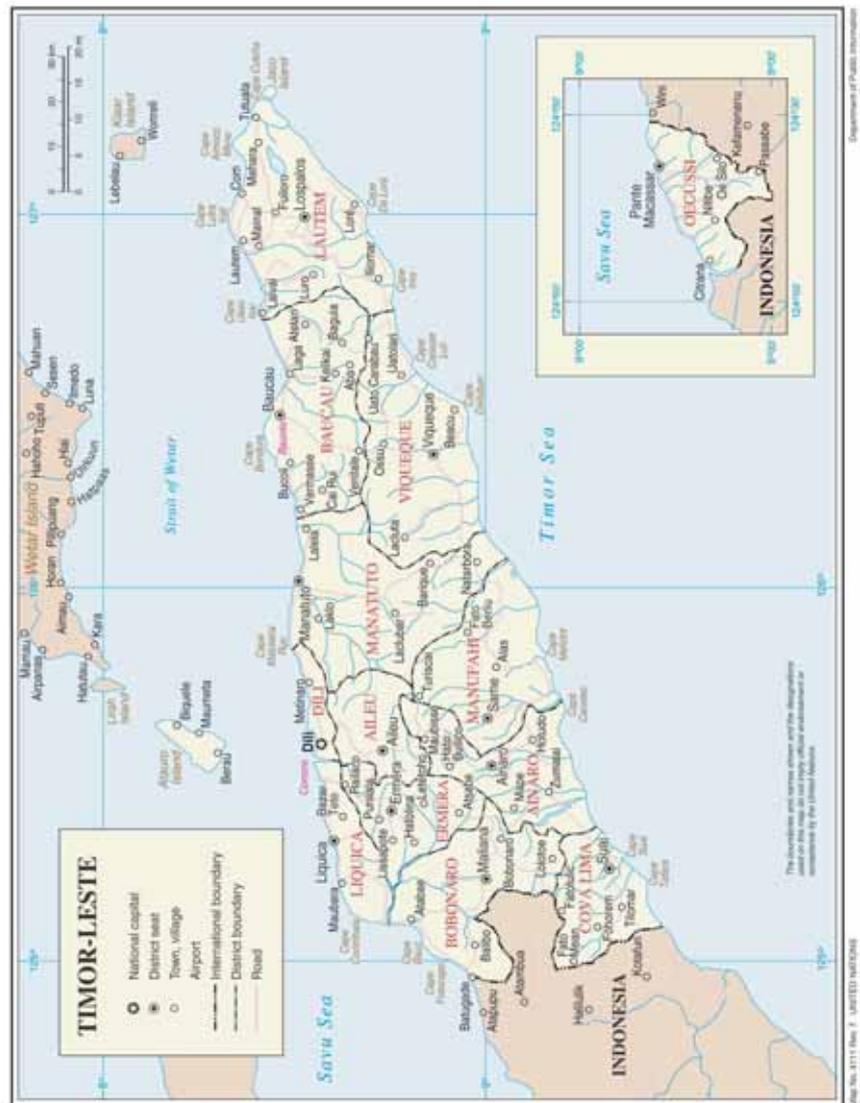
The currency used in East Timor from 1975 until the time of the 1999 popular consultation on autonomy was the Indonesian *rupiah*. As East Timor moved under international transitional authority, legal tender was unclear and the Australian dollar, the Indonesian *rupiah*, the Portuguese *escudo* and the United States dollar were all used to varying degrees. Eventually, the United States dollar was adopted as the official currency, and it remains so to date. Costs throughout the study are therefore expressed in United States dollars.

Map of Indonesia and Timor-Leste



Source: United Nations Secretariat.
<http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/timoreg.pdf>

Map of Timor-Leste



Source: OCHA.
[http://www.reliefweb.int/w/fullMaps_Sa.nsf/luFullMap/10AD863297BD650D85256CB00061706B/\\$File/timorleste.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.reliefweb.int/w/fullMaps_Sa.nsf/luFullMap/10AD863297BD650D85256CB00061706B/$File/timorleste.pdf?OpenElement)

Chapter 1

Introduction

From the depths of the ocean
a crocodile in search of a destiny
spied the pool of light, and there he surfaced
Then wearily, he stretched himself out
in time
and his lumpy hide was transformed
into a mountain range
where people were born
and where people died
Grandfather crocodile
the legend says
and who am I to disbelieve
that he is Timor!

Xanana Gusmão (1998)

Legend has it that the island of Timor is formed from the body of an old crocodile that the people call 'grandfather'. A young boy once saved the crocodile's life, and they travelled together through the sea. When the crocodile grew old, he said to the boy: "Together we have learned much, but now it is time for me to rest, and for others to live and learn." He lay down, and grew and grew, making an island for the boy and all his family to live on (Sylvan, 1988). The East Timorese, as a remembrance of who they are, often relate this creation myth. As one village leader explained: "Our people find their strength by listening to and learning from the land, as they would from a grandfather." Hearing this, one cannot help but think that such advice must now be more important than ever, as East Timorese are learning to live with independence.

This tiny territory on the eastern tip of the Indonesian archipelago had been controlled by foreign powers for nearly 500 years. The Portuguese first landed on the Timor coast in the early 1500s. Throughout several

centuries they consolidated power in the east, struggling for control against both the Dutch and tribal leaders. The Japanese occupied the island during the Second World War; after the war, the west joined the newly independent Indonesia and the east returned to Portuguese rule. Upheavals caused by the 1974 Carnation Revolution in Portugal had a dramatic effect on its colonies; freedoms increased and for the first time political parties were permitted. In East Timor, conflicts between the most significant of these – the Revolutionary Front of Independent East Timor (Fretilin) and the Timorese Democratic Union (UDT) – led to a coup, and the Portuguese rulers fled. Civil war broke out, and Indonesia invaded 10 days later, on 7 December 1975.

Indonesia occupied the territory with an iron fist for nearly a quarter of a century. Throughout this time, East Timorese resisted Indonesian rule, prosecuting guerrilla war and galvanizing international solidarity movements. It was not until the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s forced Indonesia to bow to international pressure that the East Timorese were granted a choice between autonomy within Indonesia or full independence. The campaign leading up to the popular consultation, however, was one of intimidation and violence. Pro-autonomy militias became active and the groups resisting occupation united under the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT). Administered by the United Nations Assistance Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), and after several delays, the ballot was finally held on 30 August 1999. Over three-quarters of voters rejected autonomy within Indonesia.

As the people confirmed their desire for independence, pro-autonomy militias supported by the Indonesian National Army (TNI) began their retribution – hundreds were killed and villages completely destroyed. The United Nations (2000: 3) common country assessment depicted the situation as “tragically unique”, claiming that:

“Not since the end of World War II has a country experienced such destruction of its infrastructure, complete collapse of government structures, displacement of most if its population and near-total disruption of all economic activities. The cost in material and human terms has been immense.”

The United Nations had more than their usual reasons to be concerned as, after Indonesia withdrew, they were given the mandate to govern the

territory. While UNAMET had been present in East Timor from May 1999, its mandate focused solely on administering the ballot. With the Indonesian armed forces both unwilling and unable to control the chaos following the consultation, tentative plans for a measured transition were essentially thrown out of the window. On 25 October 1999 the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1272, establishing the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) with broad responsibilities for security, relief and civil authority. This occasion marked “the first time the UN had sovereign control over a trust territory” (Gorjão, 2002: 314). They remained in power for nearly three years, until East Timor’s independence on 20 May 2002.

Across the border to the west, in parts of the island that remained under Indonesian rule, officials faced another crisis. In the anarchy surrounding the consultation, nearly 250,000 people – more than a quarter of the East Timorese population – fled into West Timor, many by force (Scott, 2001: 22). Scores of temporary camps were established in the border areas and large numbers were displaced to the provincial capital of Kupang on the island’s eastern tip. International agencies moved quickly to provide assistance to the refugees; however, from day one insecurity caused by the presence of pro-autonomy armed elements in the camps made response difficult (OCHA, 2000). While refugees began to return in the months after East Timor was secured, the process of repatriation was slow. In September 2000 the killing of three staff of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) led to a full withdrawal of the international community.

While the East Timorese had asked for independence at the ballot box, they certainly had not asked for it to begin so violently. Yet this was the reality, and with images of terror and destruction broadcast around the world, the international aid community descended on both East and West Timor. Assistance – emergency relief and post-conflict reconstruction – has since been available in nearly every facet of life. Education is one of those areas, and it so happens that 70 per cent of the population have prioritized it as the most important sector to be developed for the country’s future (Planning Commission, 2002). As the people of the crocodile finally have their chance to learn independence, it is clear that education has a big role to play.

Focus of the study

The violence surrounding the consultation had a massive impact on an already troubled education system. At what was meant to be the start of the 1999/2000 school year, up to 75 per cent of the population was displaced across the border or had fled to the mountains. In West Timor, the numbers of refugee children overwhelmed poorly resourced schools, and students could not easily enrol. In East Timor, as many as 95 per cent of education institutions appeared to be destroyed; schools had been completely looted, with rooftops and furniture stolen and teaching materials burned (World Bank, 1999). Most teachers had fled and had no intention of returning, as large numbers were from Indonesia. Children's documents were lost, and because offices and files were also destroyed, accurate information on the school system was nearly impossible to collect and confirm (United Nations, 2002: 61).

This case study offers an overview of educational response during East Timor's emergency and transition periods, from 1999 to early 2003. It explores not only the activities that have taken place in East Timor itself, but also includes educational interventions made in West Timor on behalf of refugee populations. An understanding of these various educational efforts is of interest in that they encompass, over a rather short period, a range of emergency phases and scenarios. These include emergency education response for refugees and returnees, as well as on-going support for education in two very different rehabilitation contexts.

The emphasis East Timorese have placed on education is perhaps not so surprising when one considers its role in shaping their past. As was common among colonizers, the Portuguese introduced a Western model of education, administered through the Catholic Church and available only to an elite few. Under Indonesian rule, from 1975 to 1999, education was used as a tool to conquer, with schooling available to the masses but used to spread the Indonesian language and promote Indonesian national unity. During occupation, a resistance movement with its own brand of popular education also left its mark. The displacement and violence of 1999 have dictated the present shape of education. In West Timor, focus has been on increasing capacity and facilitating integration into the local system. In East Timor, efforts have emphasized rebuilding a new education system and reconstruction of infrastructure.

This study attempts to both identify highlights in educational response in the midst of one particular crisis and to summarize key learning points that can potentially be applied in other situations. Towards these ends, the following aspects are explored: (a) Portuguese and Indonesian influences on education in the East Timor; (b) educational impact of the emergency and priority needs identified; (c) approaches to education for refugees displaced to West Timor; (d) efforts at initial educational response in East Timor; (e) governance in East Timor and its influence on educational reconstruction; (f) core initiatives contributing to restarting the education system and local schools; (g) key questions of policy for the East Timorese education system; and (h) educational transitions on independence – integration of refugees in West Timor and a new government in East Timor.

Research methodology

This study focuses particularly on East Timor's emergency and reconstruction periods between 1999 and 2002, touching on the prior and ensuing education contexts. While a broad definition of education is applied covering a range of teaching and learning activities, the focus of educational response was on formal schooling, with a few efforts in non-formal education and recreational activities. The study reviews education systems that largely serve children, with some mention of adult literacy as a major need. In the research process, a set of questions was applied, common to those used in similar case studies commissioned by the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), was applied. These questions were adapted to suit East Timor's context and served as an interview and research guide (see *Appendix 4*). Because the research was conducted relatively soon after crisis had taken place, it was not difficult to find individuals to interview and documentation to review; in fact, the greater difficulty was to sift through information and analyze it all.

The author served as principal researcher, spending three weeks in East Timor and approximately two weeks in Jakarta contacting those who had been involved in West Timor. Initial research scheduled for December 2002 was cut short due to riots in East Timor's capital of Dili and rescheduled for February 2003. In East Timor, several individuals from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport (MECYS), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the local Kdadalak

Sulimutuk Institute (KSI) were instrumental in arranging interviews and collecting documentation. Across the border, Save the Children UK was invaluable in facilitating research, most notably through the secondment of a staff member to conduct interviews, as the author was not permitted to travel to West Timor due to security restrictions.

Interviews were conducted with over 60 individuals who worked with education in East Timor during the emergency and transition periods. Over 40 interviews were held with those involved in education in West Timor. The majority of these were in-person individual interviews, with a small number conducted over the phone or structured as focus group discussions. Although emphasis was placed on identifying and speaking with education decision-makers, a full range of views was sought – from top-level government officials to students. Approximately two-thirds of the respondents were East Timorese or Indonesian, with the remainder being international. When possible, interviews were conducted in English; when necessary, a translator was used. In addition to drawing information from interviews, a comprehensive review of written sources was undertaken. While a number of books and articles describe the political context of the crisis, very little has been published to date about education. Identifying sources thus resulted in acquisition of a large body of grey literature in the form of education assessment visits, funding proposals and donor reports. As much as possible, details gathered from these sources were cross-checked.

While the five-week period of field research was relatively brief, the author also drew from previous experience on the island. From November 1999 to August 2000 she worked as Education Co-ordinator for the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Her work in East Timor included education assessments in several districts, managing an emergency education project in the Oecussi enclave and working with a network of Dili-based youth groups. Several years later, in February 2002, she visited West Timor for the International Save the Children Alliance, thus gaining a better understanding of educational issues on that side of the border. Both of these experiences proved invaluable in providing a contextual basis for the current research.

Box 1. Quick facts on Timor-Leste

Official name:	República Democrática de Timor-Leste (RDTL). Also known as Timor Lorosa'e (Tetum).
Location:	The eastern half of the island of Timor. The western half is part of Indonesia.
Capital:	Dili
Population:	800,000
Religion:	Roman Catholic, with a very small Muslim minority
Official languages:	Portuguese and Tetum
Working languages:	English and Indonesian, also numerous local languages
Currency:	US dollar
Main export:	Coffee, potential for oil
President:	José Alexandre 'Xanana' Gusmão (independent)
Prime Minister:	Mari Alkatiri (Fretilin)
Life expectancy:	57 years
Per capita GDP:	US\$478

Source: United Nations, 2003

Chapter 2

Before freedom

It only took a few weeks for the departing Indonesian occupiers and East Timorese militias to effectively loot the territory, destroying what could not be taken and forcing several hundred thousand people across the border. However, this crisis followed centuries of foreign rule, which at times had been brutal. Prosperity had never come easy in East Timor; on independence, the country was considered the poorest in Asia. It ranked very low in terms of child mortality and education, below average for economic poverty and environmental sustainability, and just average for gender equality (UNDP, 2002). As the United Nations expressed in their Common Country Assessment (2000: 20), “The various stages of East Timor’s history have created three tremendous challenges: the challenge of development, of rehabilitation and of nation building.” If one hopes to understand the complexity of these challenges, an understanding of East Timor’s history and struggle is important.

A brief history

East Timor today makes up the eastern half of the island of Timor. In addition to its mainland, the territory includes the Oecussi enclave on the northern coast of West Timor, the island of Ataúro just north of Dili and the very small Jaco island off its eastern tip. Mountains and coast dominate its landscape and its climate is generally hot and humid. Traditional East Timorese society was organized into kingdoms called *rai*, divided into smaller administrative areas called *sucos*, each containing villages called *knuas*. These kingdoms were ruled by leaders or kings called *liurai*, “considered as the protector, grandfather and lord of the entire people” (Pederson and Arneberg, 1999: 113). East Timorese community structures emphasize the ideas of unity, hierarchy and kinship. Traditional decision-making processes involved discussion and agreement by everyone, with those who held less power tending to accept results (Hohe, 2002b).

From the time the Portuguese first reached Timor in the early 1500s, they considered it part of their colonial empire; however the Dutch also laid claim and parts of the island were disputed. At first the Portuguese were primarily interested in its natural resources, and while they depleted sandalwood, other products such as coffee, rubber and copra emerged as exports (Pederson and Arneberg, 1999: vii). Most of the population continued to derive a living from subsistence agriculture, scattered in small communities throughout the mountains. For this reason the Portuguese did not impose direct rule, instead co-opting the traditional structures of *rais*, *sucos*, and *knua* to suit their purposes. In fact, it was only in the 1700s that the first Portuguese Governor was installed in Dili, effectively forging this coastal village into the capital (UNDP, 2002: 70). Missionaries introduced the Catholic Church, which formed another means of control, although Christianity and animist practices “tended to quietly co-exist” (United Nations, 2000: 21). In 1859, a treaty was signed with the Dutch granting Portugal the eastern half of Timor, along with a small enclave in the west where the Portuguese explorers had first landed.

Despite its relative isolation, conflict came to East Timor during the Second World War. The Japanese invaded, aware of Timor’s importance as a buffer zone. They stayed from 1942 until 1945, were responsible for the deaths of some 60,000 people and left many others near starvation (UNDP, 2002: 70). After the war, Portugal returned to its colony, and it was not until nearly 30 years later that it began to divest itself of overseas territories. As political space opened, educated East Timorese formed opposing parties – Fretilin, a leftist group supportive of independence, and the UDT, formed by an elite who were open to integration with Indonesia (Scott, 2001: 5). As Fretilin gained strength, the world became increasingly fearful of its leftist rhetoric, and Indonesia supported the UDT in launching a coup in August 1975. The Portuguese administration fled, and civil war broke out (Nicol, 2002). Fretilin unilaterally declared East Timor’s independence on 28 November 1975 in a move to pre-empt an option for integration, ruling for a brief ten days before Indonesia invaded on 7 December (UNDP, 2002: 71).

For the next 24 years, Indonesia occupied East Timor. At the time of invasion, some 200,000 people are believed to have died from war and famine. In the months following, up to 60,000 were killed and those first years saw the establishment of nearly 150 concentration camps. Napalm

was used both to destroy crops and livestock and to wipe out the population (United Nations, 2000: 22). Over the years, the brutality of the Indonesian occupation caused rebellion to grow. The resistance essentially had three prongs: the international diplomatic front, the internal clandestine movement and the Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor (Falintil) (Hohe, 2002a: 578). It was virtually impossible for foreigners to get permits to visit the province throughout the 1980s, but as access opened in the early 1990s, two events brought the question of East Timor to world attention. The first was the 1991 massacre at Santa Cruz cemetery, resulting in nearly 300 deaths and capturing the occupation's brutality on film for the first time. The second was the awarding of the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize to the archbishop of Dili, Carlos Ximenes Belo, and to exiled resistance leader, José Ramos Horta (Cristalis, 2002: 18).

World attention alone, however, was not enough to change the situation in the territory; that took the 1997 Asian economic crisis. By the mid-1990s, Indonesia had enjoyed nearly 30 years of uninterrupted growth, low inflation and a stable currency. This changed when the 'Asian Tiger' economies collapsed (Suryahadi and Pritchett, 2003). Major investments were lost and the exchange rate of the Indonesia Rupiah dropped from a pre-crisis high of Rp2,200 to US\$1 to Rp9,784 to US\$1 in 1998 (Wu, 2000: iii). The long-time leader of Indonesia, Suharto, was deposed leaving Indonesia's new president B.J. Habibie in dire need of economic aid. The United Nations had never accepted Indonesia's annexation of East Timor and a certain level of international pressure remained. In early 1999, Indonesia yielded to the idea of a popular consultation granting East Timor a choice between greater autonomy and complete independence (United Nations, 2000: 23). The United Nations Security Council, in Resolution 1246, established UNAMET to organize and conduct the vote.

Consultation and crisis

Violence and threats ominously surrounded ballot preparations; pro-Indonesian graffiti promised that "a free East Timor will eat stones" (Scott, 2001: 4). Despite these campaigns of intimidation, after being postponed twice the consultation took place on 30 August 1999. Cristalis (2002: 213) describes the mood the morning of the ballot: "In the pre-dawn light the queues in front of the polling station looked like a silent wake. People stood quietly in the half-light, edgily clutching their identification papers.

But as soon as the sun coloured the sky and nothing threatening had happened, their anxiety faded somewhat ...” Perhaps it should not have; while the day of the ballot was itself peaceful, violence broke out even before results were announced. Five days later, it was officially known that over 78 per cent of voters had rejected autonomy within Indonesia (United Nations Security Council, 1999a).

While the TNI (who had been in charge of security for the ballot) looked on, militias went on a systematic rampage burning and looting houses, beating and killing men and sexually assaulting women. While there were certainly some acts of targeted violence, “most atrocities were of an indiscriminate nature ... aimed at terrorizing entire villages or communities perceived as hostile to the pro-integration cause” (Modvig *et al.*, 2000: 3). This violence resulted in the death of some 1,500 people, nearly 250,000 refugees displaced to West Timor and the wholesale destruction of infrastructure (Gorjão, 2002: 315). The United Nations evacuated all but 80 staff (Scott, 2001: 17). The capital city of Dili and nearly all other towns were largely destroyed. It seems inconceivable that so much destruction could have resulted from anything but an outburst of violent, deeply irrational anger. But there is much evidence that this annihilation was planned; as one Indonesian soldier expressed before boarding his boat to Jakarta: “We built this place up. Now we’ve torn it all down again” (Kehi, 1999: 8). Widespread media coverage soon showed the territory in flames, stimulating huge public protests, especially in Australia (Hunt, 2002).

Local populations had expected violence, although perhaps not on the scale that occurred. In research conducted shortly after the consultation, Chesterman (2001) found that “across the country there were reports of entire towns packing their belongings and leaving in anticipation”. Many took refuge in the hills close to their towns and were only displaced briefly. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) estimated that people had enough food reserves available during this time (Hurford and Wahlstrom, 2001: 9). However, there were some quarter of a million in exile across the border and their return was not easy. West Timor was a natural place to flee as the Timorese had family relations and similar cultural backgrounds. Those who did not have relatives in the west took refuge in camps, often controlled by militias who sought to create a sense of fear among the people. The United Nations (2000: 9) described

“the presence of the refugees in West Timor [as] a destabilizing element for East Timor, and increasingly also for West Timor and Indonesia as a whole”.

These waves of violence and displacement led to the formation of a peace-keeping force (PKF) commissioned under Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter and authorized by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1264. The International Forces in East Timor (InterFET), an Australian-led multinational force, landed on 20 September to begin securing the territory. Plans for an orderly transfer of power from Indonesia had to be abandoned because of the violence, and UNTAET was established (King’s College London, 2003). During these first months in East Timor, the international community was struggling to respond to urgent needs in a territory in which, “along with physical destruction and population displacement, the institutional framework for governance [had] vanished” (World Bank, 2000: 5). Many of the usual suspects provided emergency aid at that time – United Nations agencies such as UNHCR, UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO), along with NGOs such as Care, Caritas, IRC and Oxfam.

UNTAET was set up to function as the formal government in the country. Its mandate was wide ranging, extending from security to emergency relief, and from direct governance to capacity building for independence (United Nations Security Council, 1999*b*). While UNTAET formally existed, it took quite a while for it to truly become operational. According to Chopra (2000: 33), six months after UNTAET was first established, many East Timorese “were still questioning when the transitional period would *begin*”. As one might expect in a country devastated by years of oppression and war, there were limited human resources available locally. As a result, UNTAET built up a large administration with thousands of international civil servants. This large influx created the fourth foreign administrative class in 60 years – after the Japanese, Portuguese and Indonesians. Unsurprisingly, it was not long before observers began suggesting that UNTAET “make itself redundant as soon as possible” (Morris, 2000).

A date for independence was set and political preparations began. During the transitional period, two historic elections took place. The first, held in August 2001, selected a Constituent Assembly with the responsibility of producing East Timor’s Constitution. The second, in April

2002, elected Xanana Gusmão as its first President. Finally, on 20 May 2002 UNTAET turned over power after a total of 31 months of rule and East Timor became the first new nation of the millennium. On the eve of East Timor's political independence, however, it is question whether reconstruction goals as set out in the United Nations Security Council's mandate had not been achieved, or whether a functional civil administration firmly in place (King's College London, 2003). The United Nations have since maintained a presence through the United Nations Mission in Support of East Timor (UNMISET). Since independence, however, governance has been fully in the hands of the East Timorese.

Box 2. Timeline from colony to independent state

Early 1500s	Portuguese colonial rule begins, lasts over 450 years
August 1975	Coup attempt, Portuguese withdraw
December 1975	Indonesia invades and shortly thereafter annexes East Timor
1976-1980s	Some 200,000 die in violence and famine, armed resistance grows
12 November 1991	Massacre at Santa Cruz cemetery brings world attention
November 1992	Xanana Gusmão, leader of resistance forces, is arrested
1996	Nobel Peace Prize goes to Bishop Belo and José Ramos Horta
May 1998	Indonesian President Suharto quits after massive protests
January 1999	Suharto's successor, B.J. Habibie, announces plan to hold East Timor consultation on self-determination under United Nations auspices
May 1999	UNAMET established to administer popular consultation
30 August 1999	Consultation occurs; over 78 per cent vote for independence
September 1999	Pro-Jakarta militias kill hundreds and force 250,000 people to West Timor, InterFET peace-keeping force arrives

October 1999	UNTAET takes over administration of East Timor
20 May 2002	East Timor becomes an independent state UNTAET phased out and replaced with UNMISSET
1 January 2003	Cessation clause declared and displaced in West Timor lost refugee status, facilitation for repatriation stopped

Educational legacies

Three distinct administrative periods have influenced the evolution of education in East Timor to date – Portuguese colonial rule (early 1500s to 1975), Indonesian occupation (1975-1999) and United Nations administration (October 1999 to May 2002). While the focus of this case study is on the period surrounding the latter, “it is important to take into account the previous social and economic structures, as this will continue to have an impact on the current situation” (United Nations, 2000: 19). As Millo and Barnett (2003: 2) further explain:

“Transitions from colonial rule to independence, after violent conflict, or from changes in systems of governance, result in new leadership regimes with new development plans and new conceptions of national identity. Because of its integral role in development, in generating new conceptions of the nation, and in institutionalizing change, changes in the practice and content of governance almost inevitably demand changes in educational systems.”

Each of East Timor’s administrations has introduced new ways of working – language, civil service, and structure – into the education system, and indeed into governance as a whole. The Portuguese, through the Catholic Church, introduced a colonial education system primarily serving the elite. Under the Indonesian occupation, the focus of education shifted from quality for a few to quantity and provision for the many (Oxfam GB, 2002: 15). The educational character of the transitional administration and an independent East Timor are the real questions at hand; they are explored later in this study.

Schooling in Portuguese times

Often, the Portuguese occupation of East Timor is described as a form of benign neglect. Instead of replacing local rulers, the Portuguese attempted to pacify and influence them. One of the main instruments of control used was religion, through the introduction of Catholicism. The Church essentially served as the major education provider under Portugal, founding and operating primary schools, seminaries and eventually a teacher-training institution (Wu, 2000: 3). Millo and Barnett (2003: 5) describe religious education in Portuguese Timor as “the main tool for building a submissive local elite”. This elite, made up of privileged Portuguese or *mestiços*, was confined primarily to the urban centres, and education was thus available to only a small minority of the population.

In 1937, over 400 years after the Portuguese came to East Timor, just 2,979 students were attending mission schools. The first public secondary school was opened in 1952, and throughout the 1960s there was an expansion in education. The number of students enrolled in elementary school rose fivefold and at the secondary level numbers doubled (Fox, n.d.: 3). Just after the Indonesian invasion in 1976, there were fewer than 14,000 pupils in 47 primary and two junior high schools serving a population of more than 600,000 (Arneberg, 1999). Although official Indonesian statistics state that there were no senior secondary schools, those interviewed who attended school at that time claim that several were operating. In any case, at the end of Portuguese rule, no more than 10 per cent of the population could be said to be literate (World Bank, 2001: 13).

Those who studied under the Portuguese generally claim that the quality of education was higher than that provided under the Indonesians. They say that teaching was superior, discipline was better and a sense of wider ‘literature’ and ‘culture’ was conveyed (Odling-Smee, 1999:14). While all this may have been true, it was done through encouraging Portuguese culture and Catholic values. Teaching did not include local culture or geography, and instead emphasized East Timor’s links to the Portuguese empire. Teaching styles were reportedly characterized by rote learning. Essentially, during this period, ties to Portugal represented a ‘window to the west’ for the elite (Wu, 2000: 3). Many have criticized Portugal for lack of investment in education, however Odling-Smee (1999: 14) notes that “it is wrong to compare number of schools in 1974

with the number of schools in 1984 or 1994". In the 1960s and 1970s, the number of schools was rapidly increasing; projecting ahead, there is no reason to think that expansion would not have continued.

While civil war and Portuguese retreat damaged much of the school system that had existed under the colonial administration, some influence has remained. Prolonged contact with the Portuguese language caused Tetum to incorporate elements of its syntax and vocabulary. Ties with Portugal have continued to be a source of moral and financial support over the years, and especially now in independence (Wu, 2000: 3). A number of those educated under the Portuguese system have now taken up leadership in the education sector. Others, having completed a minimum of four years of primary education and a few months of teacher training, today work as primary school teachers of Portuguese (UNDP, 2002: 47). NGO worker Oran Doyle (2001) believes that, overall, "the combination of Timorese memory (or folk memory) of high Portuguese standards", along with the "accessibility of schools in the Indonesian era has created a population who prize education highly and think of it as a right ... It has created demands that will be quite difficult to fulfil".

Education under Indonesian rule

It took more than two years after Indonesia invaded East Timor before the territory was fully under its control. During these first years of occupation, Fretilin continued to run schools and literacy programmes while hiding in the mountains and forests, despite Indonesian attacks. These efforts faltered, however, as "the noose tightened around the Timorese population" and they were moved into villages down near the coast as a means of control (Doyle, 2001). In another effort to exert control, the Indonesians abolished the former school system and the Portuguese language. Bahasa Indonesian was immediately instituted as the language of instruction, Indonesian teachers were brought in and primary education became obligatory. Only one remnant of the former system remained after the invasion: Sao José College, a Portuguese Catholic school in Dili. This school survived until the early 1990s, when it was seen as a threat to Indonesian authority given its suspected links to the clandestine movement (Odling-Smee, 1999: 9).

For the many criticisms that can be made of Indonesian educational policy in East Timor, one thing can be said in its favour: it introduced the

concept of Education for All. Under Indonesia, the number of schools increased exponentially and education became readily available, despite the fact that quality was very low and schools were used to ‘Indonesianize’ the population. Primary school enrolment between 1975 and 1999 increased dramatically, from a starting-point of some 10,000 to over 165,000 students (World Bank, 2002*b*: 55). Junior secondary education enrolments grew from 315 to more than 32,000 students, and senior secondary education grew from under 100 to between 15,000 and 19,000 students, depending on the source (United Nations, 2000; Lee, 2002). By 1980, the education sector had regained enrolment levels it had under Portuguese rule; and *c.*1985 nearly every village had a primary school (UNDP, 2002: 48). Population demographics meant that demand for education was high – in 1998 the population in East Timor was 875,689, of which 52 per cent were under 18 years old (World Bank, 1999: 7).

Table 2.1 Education at the end of the Portuguese and Indonesian periods

<i>Access to education</i>	<i>1975</i>	<i>1999</i>
Number of primary schools/number of children attending	47 primary schools 10,500 students	788 primary schools 167,181 students
Number of junior secondary schools/ number of children attending	2 junior secondary schools 315 students	114 junior secondary schools 32,197 students
Number of senior secondary schools/ number attending	None	54 senior secondary schools 18,973 students

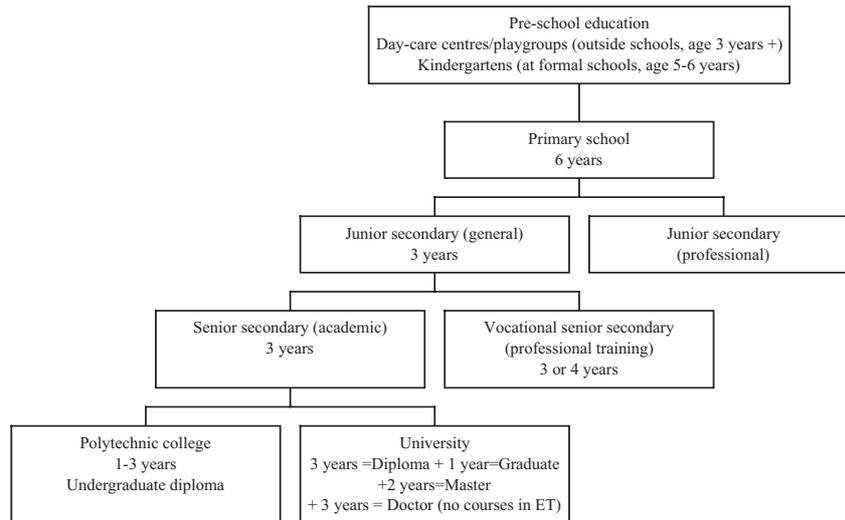
Source: United Nations, 2000.

This expansion of education in East Timor was part of a larger country-wide effort. Indonesia’s first Five Year Development Plan, drawn up in 1969, identified a well-educated population as a key element of economic development. After an oil windfall early in the 1970s, standardized schools were built throughout the archipelago (Tomaševski, 2002). The increased attention to education led to vast expansion of access; in 1971, only 25 per cent of Indonesians had a primary school education, while by 1994, the ratio had increased to nearer two-thirds (Ablett and

Slengesol, 2001: 8). While East Timor benefited from these efforts, it came out last in any country-wide ranking of educational indicators. The gross enrolment ratio (derived from the total number of students attending school) reached 90 per cent and was more or less equal for girls and boys. However, many students were older so that net enrolment, based on those enrolling at the right age for their grade, was closer to 70 per cent – compared to Indonesia's average of 97 per cent. Net enrolment at junior secondary in East Timor only reached 36 per cent, and in senior secondary 20 per cent (UNDP, 2002).

On the face of it, education in East Timor was available from the early years through to university. In the Indonesian education system children are required to enrol by age 7, and in 1994 schooling became mandatory up to age 15. Although Indonesia promoted the idea of nine years of compulsory schooling, the reality in East Timor was that a basic education generally only lasted six years (UNTAET, 2000). Separate junior and senior secondary schools existed, with both academic and vocational streams. Pre-school and university level education were also available. The largest education supplier in East Timor was the Indonesian Government, accounting for some 85 per cent of all pupils. Independent schools could also operate as long as they were government-registered, taught the approved curriculum, and entered students in state exams (Odling-Smee, 1999: 9). Not surprisingly, the Catholic Church was the main non-governmental supplier, particularly for kindergartens. It was not until 1992 that a university was established; however, even with the new university, there was not enough capacity and approximately half of East Timorese tertiary students continued their studies in Indonesia (Wu, 2000: 5).

Figure 2.1 The Indonesian educational ladder



Source: Arneberg, 1999: 87.

While Indonesian rule did bring a widespread expansion of education, the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP, 2002: 5) "Human development report" highlights "two main flaws": the use of education to 'Indonesianize' the people and the low quality of teaching standards. Unquestionably, the education sector was used to spread the Indonesian language and promote the concept of one nation. Important not only for integration of East Timor into the Indonesian state, education also served the purpose of control, since Indonesians generally did not speak Portuguese or local East Timorese languages. The attempt to control was at times obvious; in the early years of occupation, military personnel were teachers in remote areas (Provincial Government of East Timor, 1996: 109 in Arneberg, 1999: 85). Throughout the occupation, 90 per cent or more of all secondary school teachers were Indonesian. The curriculum was centralized for all 40 million students with one of the primary aims being national unity. After independence, subjects such as 'The history of the national struggle' and 'Morals of Pancasila' were said to be mandatory (Doyle, 2001).

Added to this, teaching quality was low, with a high level of absenteeism and overall lack of professionalism. High repetition rates were prevalent, and in 1997 one out of five students in grade 1 were repeating. As a result, there were four times as many pupils in grade 1 as compared to grade 6 (Arneberg, 1999). Many East Timorese teachers were not adequately trained to teach, and teachers' wages were such that many needed a second job. The profession was considered of low rank and a last resort (World Bank, 1999: 7). Teachers taught for exams and because they needed to ensure that students got the right answers, rote learning was used extensively. Classrooms had the bare minimum of equipment: benches, tables, a blackboard and usually no electricity (Odling-Smee, 1999). There were shortages of school textbooks and classrooms had almost no teaching aids such as resource books, charts or posters (United Nations, 2000: 60).

During the Indonesian period, donor and NGO involvement in education was limited and primarily directed toward the tertiary level. The New Zealand Overseas Development Agency (NZODA) and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) both provided scholarships for overseas study; AusAid also provided funds to upgrade the Dili polytechnic. Caritas, funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD), administered the Bishop Belo Fund to provide university scholarships locally. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded Georgetown University to work at the tertiary level strengthening teaching in English and animal husbandry. Caritas Sweden provided educational and professional training for Catholic schools and supported the Salesians' Don Bosco training centre near Dili. German-based Misereor supported Catholic schools and vocational programmes. For younger children, Christian Children's Fund (CCF) initiated 50 pre-schools catering to 1,850 children and provided scholarships for school age children in primary education. Timor Aid and its East Timorese affiliate Yayasan Timor Aid were implementing smaller scale non-formal education projects (Arneberg, 1999).

Lead up to transition

In anticipation of a likely vote for independence, in April 1999 CNRT gathered in Melbourne, Australia, to draft a development plan for the new country (CNRT, 1999). Although this plan was abandoned due to the scale of devastation, it continued to have some influence on educational

directions. As explained by current Education Minister Armindo Maia, who attended the meeting, many of those involved in its drafting have continued on in leadership roles in the sector, and this plan “helped to shape our thinking”.

**Box 3. Education in CNRT’s Strategic Development Plan
(pre-ballot)**

Vision

A new East Timor would aspire to have an education system that enhances the development of our national identity based on our selective cultural and universal human values, and the development of independent and critical thinking with the spirit of free and scientific inquiry.

Summary of strategic goals

1. *Appropriate education system.* The proposed education system is similar to the Portuguese system. Year 9 will be the minimum compulsory level.
2. *Appropriate curriculum.* Develop a curriculum with teaching of Tetum from kindergarten and reintroduction of Portuguese from grade 1. Both languages should be taught in parallel at least until year 9. Offer English and Bahasa Indonesian as electives. Include science until year 9 so that students are prepared if opting to continue vocational instead of tertiary studies. Ensure history and geography of East Timor as part of the national curriculum.
3. *Reintroduction of Portuguese literacy programme.* Commence Portuguese literacy campaign, starting with beginner’s level on television and radio. Request Portugal to provide specialized teachers and retrain existing East Timorese Portuguese teachers.
4. *Intensify the teaching of Tetum.* Standardize Tetum orthography. Develop Tetum teaching materials and other resources for primary and secondary levels as well as adult education. Develop a Tetum library system.
5. *Vocational studies within non-formal education.* Develop vocational studies for students who do not want to proceed with tertiary studies. Offer night classes to public servants, and workers in the private sector. Implement reintegration programmes dealing with torture and trauma.
6. *Students’ high achievement.* Establish support networks encouraging local community participation. Include human rights and civic

education. Include sports in education curriculum. Support schools to provide meals to students. Develop appropriate responses to traumatic situations including adequate training. Encourage the practice of school gardens.

7. *Fill vacuum left by Indonesian teachers.* Develop a database of available East Timorese skilled to teach. Form new teachers and ensure continual teachers' upgrade. Provide incentives to teachers especially to those in rural areas. Offer teaching positions on permanent arrangements, not casual.
8. *Adequate quality of primary school teachers.* Upgrade the level of teacher training. Allocate funding for further training programmes.
9. *Adequate teaching programme/methodology.* Provide teaching/learning materials to increase quality. Develop standard teaching programmes and methodology to all educational institutions. Implement health and safety programmes.
10. *Development of East Timorese history and culture.* Establish a region-wide Council of *Lia Nians* (village councils). Recruit and train personnel for research. Collect and compile data gender region-wise.

Source: CNRT, 1999

Even before fleeing their homes, East Timorese children had already missed some schooling due to the increased tension during the build-up towards the August 1999 popular consultation. Those interviewed reported that teachers from other parts of Indonesia began leaving in early 1999. Many students effectively did not attend the second half of the school between February to June 1999 (Belen, Fachrany, Bria, Aulia and Jiyono, 2000). The 1999/2000 school year, set to begin in July, never opened in East Timor. "For example, in [Oecussi], there was no schooling since July when children were sent home to assist in the popular consultation" (World Bank, 1999: 7). While discipline in schools during the Indonesian occupation was always a serious problem, it became worse in the months before the consultation. When East Timorese students did not pass examinations or got low marks, they tended to become angry with teachers. One district superintendent claimed that it was "not uncommon for students to hit a teacher, threaten a teacher with a knife, or throw rocks at the teacher's house" (Odling-Smee, 1999: 22).

East Timor's young people played a large role in pro-independence activities in the months leading up to the consultation, as they had throughout the years of resistance. The fact that many youth became critical

of the existing power structure was a consequence of the prescriptive and centralized education system, which ironically had the opposite aim of making East Timorese ‘good’ Indonesian citizens (Kehi, 1999: 10). Observer Scott (2001: 8) explains that “this generation did not take to the hills as their parents had done, but held public demonstrations, in the streets and on university campuses”. The Indonesians often reacted with violence to these tactics, and many young people were killed or ‘disappeared’. Some of the youth organizations that played key organizing roles during this period included the East Timor Student Solidarity Council (ETSSC) based in Dili, and East Timor Student Group (IMPETU) and Renetil organized by students attending Indonesian universities elsewhere.

Lessons learned

1. Even though colonial education systems, such as that run by the Portuguese, did not reach many children, over time they can take on an increasingly positive reputation when compared to later systems.
2. Positive attributes can be found even in education systems that oppress; Indonesia introduced the concept of education for all and increased literacy rates exponentially.
3. During a crisis period, scenarios can change so drastically that planning can seem to have been a waste; however, even when not used directly plans can be used to influence future priorities and directions.
4. Children and youth involved in resistance struggles may bring their own brand of violence into a school; they may also play a significant positive organizing role for communities.

Chapter 3

Refuge across the border

Nearly three quarters of the East Timorese population fled their homes amidst the chaos and violence that characterized the weeks following the popular consultation (Chopra, 2000: 27). While the vast majority vanished into the mountains and forests of East Timor itself, large numbers were forced to cross the border into West Timor. According to the Indonesian ministry for emergencies, at the height of the population influx in October 1999 an estimated 286,000 individuals – more than a quarter of the population – had crossed from East into West Timor (SATKORLAK, 2000). Over three-quarters of the refugees stayed in camps, while the remainder lived with relatives or in communities on their own (CIMU, 2000). Half congregated in Belu District around the main town of Atambua, about a quarter could be found in Kupang District and the remainder were accommodated in areas surrounding Kefamenanu in the district of Timor Tengah Utara (TTU) (OCHA, 2000: 7).

Although East Timor was effectively secured as early as October 1999, refugees were hesitant to return home for months to come. For the majority who lived in camps, living conditions were unquestionably poor. The situation was exacerbated by the presence of armed militia elements living amongst the population who, along with members of the Indonesian military, often used violence and intimidation to control population movements and aid deliveries. Lacking accurate information about events in East Timor, many refugees also believed there would be nothing to return to. Scott (2001: 22) explains that some “felt betrayed by UN withdrawal”, while others feared reprisals if they had been involved in the violence or voted for autonomy. Some who had been civil servants under Indonesia stayed in hope they would keep their jobs and be reassigned to a post in West Timor.

The presence of militia members in camps made them dangerous places to visit and “access was an ongoing problem” (IRC, 2000). From the first influx of refugees in 1999, Atambua was designated as United

Nations Security 'Phase 4', with all development programmes suspended but emergency and relief work continuing. Kupang, the capital of the province, was set at United Nations Security 'Phase 3', with continued programming and a raised state of alert. As time went by, the security situation became increasingly volatile. In July and August 2000, both a New Zealand and a Nepali peace-keeper based in East Timor were shot dead on patrols. Access to camps was cut off to the international community for nearly a week in August (Scott, 2001: 23). The security situation came to a head on 6 September 2000 when three UNHCR staff members were murdered by an angry mob in Atambua. All international staff were immediately evacuated, offices closed and local staff temporarily stood down. To this day, West Timor remains at United Nations Security 'Phase 5', with United Nations personnel prohibited from working there.

The West Timorese themselves were of course affected by the insecurity; along with issues of land use and aid entitlements, this led to mixed feelings about receiving the refugees. A briefing by the provincial government overtly reflects this ambivalence, stating: "they are on one hand relatives and fellow countrymen ... but on the other they constitute incredible burden and inconvenience" (UNHCR, 2000). Traditionally there had been much interaction between the East and West Timorese, with strong business relationships and a number of marriages. But the overwhelming influx of East Timorese led to disputes. As camp sites were chosen and shelter was sought, refugees took up large tracts of both public and private land. Aid benefits were also an issue, and even though refugees had lost most of their belongings, in local terms the amount of emergency aid supporting them seemed excessive.

Constant population movements also contributed to the chaos. The refugees' wide dispersal added complexity – in Belu district alone there were over 120 camp sites, two with more than 5,000 people and 30 with populations over 1,000 (UNICEF, 2000c). UNHCR (2000) reported that by December 1999, refugee numbers in the province had fallen from an initial quarter of a million people to some 185,000 individuals. A Government of Indonesia (GoI) census taken just three months later indicated a further drop to around 126,000 refugees. After that it is difficult to know, as UNHCR efforts to conduct a census in June 2000 were violently resisted by refugee camp leaders, and three months later the United Nations evacuated. In June 2001, GoI itself undertook a registration process. It

rather absurdly reported a total of 295,751 refugees, of which 95 per cent had decided to remain in West Timor (Save the Children, 2001). These staggeringly high figures contradicted most credible sources, which at the time estimated between 50,000 and 60,000 refugees remaining. In one way, the high numbers were not surprising, as refugee status meant access to assistance (Greenblot, 2001: 25).

Educating the displaced

When the refugee influx began, both GoI and the international community took action to assist. Relief efforts were generally focused on meeting basic needs, including provision of food, shelter and services for health, water and sanitation. Jiyono (2000), the UNICEF lead on education at the time, claimed that education, along with psychosocial support, was “given the least attention by government and NGOs, including United Nations agencies”. This neglect was partly due to initial predictions that the displaced would soon return home, compounded by the traditional absence of education in humanitarian work. The lack of attention to education resulted in a “majority of refugee children [losing] a whole academic year” and the “visible increase” of juvenile delinquency stemming from the idleness of camp life (OCHA 2000: 53).

GoI ostensibly offered three kinds of provision to extend education to the large numbers of refugee children. According to planning papers, in order of preference, first displaced children were invited to attend local schools if there were enough available facilities such as desks and chairs. Next, a second shift held in the afternoon was set up, when there were large numbers of refugee children. Finally, for those who still could not be accommodated, a tent school was provided within the camps (SATKORLAK, 2000). In reality, the third option seemed to be preferred, as both GoI and the international community were concerned that integrating children into the education system would “be perceived as potentially encouraging East Timorese to establish ‘roots’ in West Timor” (OCHA, 2000: 53).

The sheer magnitude of student numbers played a major role in dictating what was possible in educational response. At the end of 1999 after refugees began to return, OCHA (2000: 53) estimated that there were 37,500 remaining refugee children of school-going age. Efforts to integrate refugee children in classes with local children were painfully

slow; in mid-2000 government data showed no more than 7,528 refugee children enrolled in local primary schools, 2,727 in junior secondary and 1,380 in senior secondary (UNICEF, 2000b: 8). At that time, a year after the height of the crisis, an additional 15,000 to 20,000 primary students still needed to be integrated into the formal school system in host communities (OCHA, 2000: 53). Even so, UNICEF (2000b: 5) credited the local government with the following achievements during the first year of displacement: (a) provision of land for building of tents and barracks; (b) permission to use local school buildings for classes; (c) support for training of teachers; (d) support and co-ordination for integration of camp schools into the formal system; (e) supplying school uniforms for several groups of IDP and local school children; (f) supplying a full set of national curriculum text books to each camp school; and (g) providing teachers' salaries from the local government payroll, starting in July 2000.

While these contributions were clearly significant, in retrospect several district education staff described their response to the refugee influx as slow. One of the biggest constraints in GoI's response was budgetary limitations, as it initially had to cope with the massive influx of students and teachers within existing allocations (OCHA, 2000). Internal sources claimed that in addition to lack of budgets, there was little emergency experience and, as the crisis took place before GoI decentralization, the department functioned as "a centralized, bureaucratic structure, with little devolved decision-making power".

Educational players

With an office already set up in Kupang, UNICEF became operational more quickly than most other agencies. When refugees poured in, a UNICEF sub-office was soon set up in Atambua, the main town in Belu district. The agency conducted a brief assessment in camps in late September 1999 that showed overwhelming need for some sort of activities in which children could engage (UNICEF, 2000c: 1). UNICEF's programme covered three areas of work: health and nutrition, water supply and sanitation, and education and psychosocial counselling. The 'tent school' initiative that served as a centre-piece for its education work began first in Belu district, and later expanded with a small presence in TTU (UNICEF, 2000b). Donors included Australia, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands and the United States, with an estimated cost for the first year of emergency education operations at US\$1,495,000 (OCHA, 2000).

Throughout the intervention, UNICEF kept its own core staff small, with only two education officers placed at the district level (Belen *et al.*, 2000). To carry out field operations, a range of other actors were designated as implementing partners. These groups were provided support and funds for teacher training and incentives, provision of textbooks and student kits (including uniforms), snacks for the students, tents and building construction and other technical assistance (UNICEF, 2000b). In Belu district, the Atambua diocese of the Catholic Church was designated implementing partner. In TTU, the local NGO Yayasan Tapenmasu played that role. At a national level, UNICEF collaborated with the government's Jakarta-based Curriculum Development Centre, which seconded a staff member to adapt curriculum materials and conduct teacher workshops. In the area of psychosocial counselling, partners included Philippines-based Community and Family Services International (CFSI), the University of the Philippines and University of Indonesia.

Other NGOs and church organizations also took initiative in establishing tent schools or playgroups for children. Church World Service (CWS) attempted to strengthen psychosocial support through structured activities and recreation. Plan International worked in one of the most overwhelmed local schools outside of Kupang and established an afternoon shift reportedly with over 2,500 enrolled children. The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) worked in Tualpukan Camp, setting up a tent school that accommodated approximately 400 primary school age children. These groups, along with others such as the local NGO Womintra, also established non-formal activities for children. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) took a particular lead working with youth, setting up a project complementary to the tent schools that focused on provision of youth activities in the camps. Save the Children concentrated on supporting the integration of refugee children into the local school system.

Co-ordination of these various groups seems to have been a particular challenge. While those interviewed reported positive early steps toward collaboration in Jakarta, these working relationships do not seem to have trickled down to the field. This may partly have been due to confusion over co-ordination responsibilities. Although UNICEF served as lead agency for primary education strategy development, inter-agency co-ordination officially fell under the auspices of UNHCR's Community Development and Services working group (OCHA, 2000: 55). It seems

that this was the smallest of the United Nations working groups, with only seven individuals attending on average, and often no government representation. Local officials say that, during the initial emergency, they felt uninformed. The supervisor of basic education in one sub-district claimed that “there was no co-ordination between UNICEF and the Education Department at all for about the first six months. It was not until early 2000 that they began talking to us”. The unfortunate result of this lack of early co-ordination was that tent schools were not linked to the formal system; when the United Nations was forced to pull out quickly, this parallel system died an equally quick death.

Other United Nations agencies besides UNICEF did have plans to get involved in education; however, their involvement was slow to get moving. In October 1999 a Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) was launched for West Timor (OCHA, 2000). Originally covering nine months, CAP was revised and extended when refugees repatriated less quickly than expected. The first appeal was centred on repatriation, food, health, and water and sanitation – only UNICEF submitted a project on basic education. The revised West Timor CAP, prepared in June 2000, stated that while emergency education was recognized in the original appeal, “limited donor interest and lack of projects impeded education response” (OCHA, 2000: 53). Seeking to rectify this omission, the revision added education projects from UNESCO, UNHCR, as well as the International Organization for Migration (IOM). UNESCO planned to develop remedial teaching and a psychosocial after-school programme. UNHCR intended to expand educational facilities, as well as provide equipment and supplies. IOM meant to support the tertiary level, with scholarships for over 500 university students to finish their studies. Because of the evacuation, none ever moved beyond planning.

Model for response

While some government schools admitted refugee children, most found it difficult to cope with the overwhelming numbers. UNICEF, working with GoI at the central level, came up with an alternative. The agency drew on the experience of emergency education in other parts of the world, particularly Africa, to design the West Timor intervention (Belen *et al.*, 2000). In an interagency publication, *Rapid educational response in complex emergencies*, Aguilar and Retamal (1998) outline a three-phased approach that had been used in Somalia, Rwanda and elsewhere – first

establishment of recreational activities, next introduction of non-formal education and finally return to the school-based curriculum. In West Timor, UNICEF (2000c: 2) adapted this experience as follows:

1. Establishment of 'tent schools' with a focus on basic skills in literacy, mathematics and recreational activities.
2. Use of local school buildings for a second shift of classes, construction of more permanent structures close to local schools to expand their capacity, and teaching of the formal curriculum (although children were not eligible for exams).
3. Integration into formal educational curriculum, with students entitled to be promoted to higher grades and sit for final exams.

In an effort to immediately reach the high numbers of refugee children who could not access local schools, the UNICEF programme first focused on setting up schools within the refugee camps. The tent schools were meant to be a "short term, gap-filling measure", with the ultimate aim to "integrate refugee children who remain in West Timor into the regular school system" (UNICEF, 2000b: 3). Even with plans for eventual integration, setting up new tent schools in refugee camps was controversial. The primary concern was that the programme, in effect, created a parallel system with few links to the state system. Several government officials also expressed concern over the quality of education to be found in tent schools, lack of documentation, teacher shortages and difficulties in co-ordination with international organizations.

In the short term, if refugee children were to receive education at all, there was little option other than to set up new schools in the camps. In a 'how to' guide on tent schools, Belen *et al.* (2000), stated the biggest rationale for the model was the fact that schools located near camps did not have the capacity to accommodate such a large number of additional students. Other reasons for separate schools included the perception that children from East Timor would have lower achievement levels, due to school having been missed over the past year, and they would struggle in the local classrooms. Language was also a barrier, as most of the refugee children used Tetum to communicate, even though Bahasa Indonesian had officially been the language of instruction in East Timor. It was thought that special health education may be required, as refugee children would be living in crowded and unclean camp environments, possibly exposed to increased risk of cholera, diarrhoea and respiratory infections. Finally,

there was concern that the traumatic experiences faced by children – and teachers – from East Timor would require special treatment unavailable in local schools. Advantages and disadvantages of the model as determined by the team at the time are summed up in *Table 3.1*.

Table 3.1 Advantages and disadvantages of ‘tent’ v. local schools

	<i>Advantage</i>	<i>Disadvantage</i>
Tent school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can focus on dealing with specific issues such as trauma, contagious diseases, mines/explosives Children are not faced with problem of differing abilities from local students Children are not pushed to adjust to local habits School at refugee sites provides parents opportunity to participate No need for transport costs No language problem when refugee teachers are used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students cannot join in exams Report cards are not available At integration, children will need to adapt to the formal curriculum Takes time for remedial teaching whilst integrating into formal curriculum Some teachers may suddenly return to East Timor Only minimum objectives can be attained: children will not progress far in learning
Local school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children immediately integrated into formal curriculum Students can join in examinations Report cards are available Remedial teaching can be provided Local students can serve as tutors for refugee children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differences of ability may cause refugee children to be depressed and drop out Older refugee children are reluctant to share class with juniors whose age fits the class Teachers tend to disregard refugee children’s specific needs Local children may be infected by refugee children’s diseases Transport cost – school is sometimes a long distance Additional burden to local primary school teachers Limited accommodation capacity

Source: Adapted from Belen *et al.*, 2000.

Setting up tent schools

UNICEF actively began an education response in November 1999, supporting the Atambua diocese, as its local partner, to set up tent schools at ten refugee camp sites in Belu district. From March to June 2000, this

coverage was expanded to schools in 13 additional locations in Belu and three camps in TTU district. By April 2000, over 4,500 students were thought to be attending the schools. In addition to supporting the establishment of 'tent schools', UNICEF also worked with the Belu district education department to provide remedial and school readiness tutorials at 10 sites. This is thought to have reached an additional 3,500 refugee children who would then be admitted to local schools. Over 130 teachers were trained in active learning methods and multi-grade teaching. Teachers and other social sector workers were further trained in school-based psychosocial activities. The following principles and aims guided UNICEF's (2000b: 4) work in this area:

1. Focus on the most critical learning age groups for basic education (primary school) for camp based learning.
2. Provide additional materials and training for such services.
3. Utilize human resources available among the displaced populations for such services to encourage participation and self help.
4. Identify and build capacity of local groups to undertake psychosocial activities (by Tetum speakers) for children and their families.

Children enrolled in emergency schools had been educated to different levels, with some children having missed a couple months, others a year, and some having never attended school. As an emergency programme, children entering the 'tent schools' were not required to present any form of documentation. They were accommodated in grades according to the level parents claimed their children had achieved. As the tent schools were an emergency programme, they did not "guarantee the same certification as in regular schools" (Jiyono, 2000: 10). Students did not receive marks or report cards from their classes at the tent schools, nor was there the assumption that grade promotion would necessarily occur. Likewise, there was no entitlement given to sixth grade students to sit the requisite national examination to pass on to junior secondary school (Belen *et al.*, 2000). Lack of access to exams became a problem, as many parents did not understand and were upset once they realized this was the case.

Creating the space

Thirty-five camp schools (some sites with more than one school) were set up through the UNICEF programme. Locations were selected based on the following criteria (Jiyono, 2000: 3): (a) an adequate number

of primary school age children within the camp site; (b) local or nearby schools cannot accommodate the refugee children; and (c) children not expected to move quickly to resettlement areas in Indonesia or East Timor.

The camp schools were generally constructed with tarpaulin roofs, with a few made from zinc. Some schools had walls constructed of plywood or local materials, while others were open-walled. Each school was divided by partitions into three classrooms, with space for an estimated 30 students per room (Jiyono, 2000: 5). A blackboard, chalk and erasers were supplied for each camp school. There was little furniture provided and children sat on plastic mats while teachers were allocated a table and chair. At a few tent schools, parents organized a collection to provide children with small benches, as there had been complaints of difficulties studying and writing, sitting directly on the ground. UNICEF (2000c: 4) provided cupboards to store textbooks, chalk and other supplies for each camp school. A number of teachers opted to store the textbooks at school rather than sending them with children, where there would have been a greater risk of loss or damage (Jiyono, 2000).

Each child enrolled in the camp schools was provided with an education kit comprised of exercise books, pens and pencils, a ruler, rubber eraser and a plastic bag. Also included were two government issued textbooks – one on language and the other on mathematics. In approximately half the schools, these were provided by the Department of Education, while UNICEF supplied the other half (Jiyono, 2000: 7). At the schools in Belu district, the Atambua diocese provided student uniforms and bags for approximately 3,500 children. In the few sites where the camp school was located in the same compound as the local school, student kits were also provided for a limited number of local children (UNICEF 2000a: 3-4).

In the original project design, UNICEF planned to provide school 'snacks' three times a week as a motivator for school attendance. These consisted of energy-enriched biscuits and mung bean porridge. Although budgeted at all camp schools through June 2000, in practice supplemental feeding was only available irregularly. The food stuffs were distributed when the counsellor came to the camp, which tended to range between once a week to once a month (Jiyono, 2000: 6). There were three schools that were an exception to this rule, where World Vision implemented a school feeding programme; attendance was anecdotally said to be less of

a problem at these schools. Some camp schools were able to continue offering supplemental feeding beyond the June end date for the 'snacks' project under a social safety net programme supported by the World Bank (UNICEF 2000b: 4-5).

Arranging for teachers

Of the 185 teachers recruited for 'tent schools', 90 per cent had been teachers in East Timor, most having reported to the Department of Education on arrival in West Timor. The remainder were drawn from unemployed or newly graduated teachers in the local Tetum-speaking community (UNICEF, 2000b: 3). There were 168 teachers working in 32 camp schools in Belu district, with 17 assigned to 3 camp schools in TTU (UNICEF, 2000c: 2-3). In a few of the remoter areas it was difficult to identify enough qualified teachers for the tent schools, and some graduates were used. Primarily, however, those selected had trained as teachers. West Timor education officials interviewed explained that, as time went by, there were problems of teacher turnover as refugees began to return to East Timor.

UNICEF provided a teacher incentive of Rp300,000 per month (about US\$34). This was designed to cover transportation costs, but was seen by some more as a motivator for teachers to handle the difficulties of camp schools. This incentive lasted from November 1999 until June 2000, at which time the government took over payment of teacher salaries (UNICEF 2000a: 4). Teachers who had worked in East Timor maintained their status as civil servants, and they continued to receive their salaries whether teaching or not. Thus, the majority of teachers in camp schools received greater compensation than West Timorese teachers, which Jiyono (2000:10) and others interviewed claim created jealousy and caused tension with teachers in local schools.

To prepare teachers to work in the tent schools UNICEF provided a three-day teacher training covering the topics of active learning and multi-grade teaching. Teachers interviewed said the workshop addressed "teaching children of different ages, role plays and using tangible materials". These trainings were conducted by senior staff from the Curriculum Development Centre, UNICEF education staff and several primary school principals (Jiyono, 2000). The first training was conducted in Belu district in November/December 1999 and reached 131 teachers from the 23 camp

schools. A similar introductory training was offered in May 2000 for 26 teachers from the 3 camp schools in TTU (UNICEF, 2000c: 2). Teachers who completed the trainings received a certificate. While the intention was that these teachers would train other teachers, additional training does not appear to have occurred.

In an attempt to strengthen the quality of teaching at camp schools, a five-person monitoring team was selected from the existing cadre of teachers by the Atambua diocese in Belu. In TTU, the education department's school supervisors expanded their role to cover camp schools. UNICEF (2000c: 3) supported each of these groups with transportation costs for daily visits to observe classroom teaching and monitor lesson plans. At the time, it was observed that teachers continued teaching with conventional methods, even after receiving training. According to Jiyono (2000: 6): "Due to lack of planning and few teaching aids, teachers tend[ed] to write mathematics and language exercises on the board and children [were] asked to copy and answer the questions." Rather than changing teaching methods, teachers who taught at the time felt that the success of teacher training was in encouraging use of singing and play activities, which was thought to have increased student enjoyment in schools.

Curriculum and learning

The tent school programme opted to use the Indonesian curriculum, or a version thereof, for two major reasons. First, it was unknown how soon refugees would begin returning to East Timor, and second, there did not appear to be a viable alternative, as East Timor had never had its own curriculum (Belen *et al.*, 2000). UNICEF (2000b: 3) developed a simplified package of instruction "focusing on essential areas of learning such as reading, writing and arithmetic in the context of a multi-grade, active learning approach". Essentially, two key subjects were taught – Indonesian language and mathematics. These used the standard government textbooks, and each student was to be provided with one copy. The Curriculum Development Centre prepared specially designed teacher guides on those subjects, although they were not widely available. Camp schools also included sports, arts, or religion. Teachers recalled that morning activities always began with hygiene promotion "to get children clean and healthy before class started". No textbooks were available for these topics, and lessons were heavily dependent on the teachers' creativity.

Nearly all the camp schools used the same timetable as regular schools, which involved classes for 3-5 hours a day, six days a week. Even though local adjustment was allowed and encouraged, a UNICEF official commented that teachers did not appear comfortable venturing outside the structure of the formal primary school curriculum to focus on the requested language, mathematics and life skills. The student-teacher ratio in the camp schools varied widely, from between 15 to 60 pupils per teacher. Limitations in space, lack of teachers, and uneven distribution of students by age led to a multi-grade approach to teaching; grades 1 and 2, 3 and 4, and 5 and 6 were often grouped together. Although some introductory training in multi-grade teaching was given, most teachers lacked experience with this approach, and commonly taught the same lessons to children with different ages and abilities (Jiyono, 2000).

Attendance at local schools

Those involved with the tent school programme repeatedly emphasized that the creation of a parallel system was not the preferred option. As UNICEF education head Jiyono (2000: 10) put it: “All efforts should be made to facilitate children to attend regular schools. Camp schools are established as a last resort for children, when attending regular schools is impossible. It has to [be] made clear to everyone, including the government, that education in camp schools is implemented on a temporary basis.” Unfortunately, integration in local schools was not a realistic resort for many children, as the existing education system was already plagued by low quality, lack of supplies and limited motivation of teachers (OCHA, 2000). Also, as one NGO worker described the situation: “If you go off and set up separate schools, the government says great, this is taken care of.”

Enrolment was made more difficult in that children were required to produce birth certificates they did not have, pay fees they could not afford and wear a uniform when they only had one set of clothes. Some education officials did attempt to institute policies that relaxed enrolment requirements. However, these policies, were not effectively communicated to the majority of schools and compliance depended on the willingness of the school principal. Also, the decree that children could attend school ‘if’ facilities were available was interpreted several ways, with some schools denying access because they did not have proper furniture or space. Because

the population considered school fees and uniforms compulsory, many East Timorese children did not attempt to enrol because their families thought they could not afford to attend (Greenblot, 2001: 26).

When admitted, refugee children sometimes more than doubled the number of enrolled students. Classrooms that normally held 30 students were filled with more than 60 students. Chairs designed for two were being used by three students. In areas around the bigger refugee camps, local school facilities just did not have the capacity for such large numbers of additional children (UNICEF, 2000c: 6). According to Sandra Renew, a Save the Children education adviser: "Schools seemed to be able to cope with a doubling of their numbers more or less, but after that they were in a real crisis." Among the worst were Naibonat school which went from 159 to 922 enrolled, Merdeka which increased from 235 to 652 and Tulapukan from 207 to 685 students (Save the Children UK, 2001). In practice, the main mechanism used by local schools to deal with the large numbers was to institute a second shift to provide additional classes. In a few cases, a shortage of teachers meant that some local teachers had to work both the morning and afternoon shifts (CIMU, 2000). In general, however, the norm of one teacher, one class, one classroom seemed to be the aim. Oddly, this sometimes resulted in teachers teaching only a few hours a day, as was their usual schedule, amidst claims of shortages of teachers and classrooms.

There were a number of difficulties in children's attendance beyond just managing increased enrolments. Among year one and two students, there were reports of problems in understanding Bahasa Indonesian. There were stories of East Timorese feeling they were unjustly being given lower marks than their peers. In one school near Kupang, parents demanded the grades be revised upwards; when the school refused, the school was ransacked, windows broken and documents and books burned (CIMU, 2000). Save the Children UK (2002a) reported that there had been a number of other incidents between refugee and local communities, with some deaths resulting from fights between local and refugee adolescents. In general, however, the ties of kinship won out. One teacher from a local school explained that "we accepted East Timorese children, we treated them well, but it was important that we did not treat them as special".

Non-formal education

Even with the creation of tent schools and some attendance at local schools, there were large numbers of children who did not enrol, some with psychosocial issues related to the crisis and a whole group of adolescents who did not have access to education. Factors limiting attendance ranged from lack of school uniforms to language difficulties, from long travel distances to lack of parental awareness of the importance of education. The draw of going to the market to trade or gamble also kept some children away (Jiyono, 2000: 6). By mid-2000, many refugee children had lost a whole academic year of schooling. There were efforts beginning to be made to reach out to marginalized children – particularly those within camps. These included projects on psychosocial support and activities targeted at adolescents and youth.

Psychosocial support

The UNICEF emergency education programme included a psychosocial component focused specifically on school age children. Through UNICEF's partner CFSI, in collaboration with the University of Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies, an initial assessment of psychosocial needs among children was made in October 1999. A programme was subsequently developed which involved training teachers and local people to act as counsellors. According to project plans, these teachers and counsellors were being prepared for three main activities (UNICEF, 2000b: 7): (a) conducting recreation and play activities as an aspect of the school day; (b) identification of children who might need psychosocial counselling; and (c) counselling and support for children who suffered serious psychosocial problems.

Experts from the above institutions, along with others from the University of Indonesia, prepared a training package and a manual. In December 1999, a group of 33 teachers and 23 counsellors recruited from professions (such as church and social workers) received a three-day training on basic psychosocial support. A further 50 teachers received a five-day training two months later (UNICEF, 2000b: 7). Included was information on the importance of psychosocial support, discussion on the culture of East Timor and its psychosocial implications, as well as tips on identification of children with special needs. Additionally, topics such as communication with children, helping children in need of protection and

the process of mourning were included (Jiyono, 2000: 8). There was little effort to address teachers' psychosocial needs, and according to one NGO worker there at the time, "teachers' emotional trauma sometimes interfered with their ability to provide a safe emotional and physical space for teaching and relationships with children". Teachers in the camp schools received introductory training in psychosocial counselling, and were supported to better identify students who may have had mental problems due to the crisis. Between December 1999 and February 2000, 81 teachers from Belu district attended two workshops addressing these issues (UNICEF, 2000c: 2).

In practice, however, very few children were ever referred on by teachers for counselling. It is unclear whether this was due to the fact that only a few children suffered disturbance to a serious degree, or because teachers found it difficult to identify those who were distressed (UNICEF, 2000b: 7). Since not many children were ever referred – in fact only about five children in total – the counsellors made regular visits to schools to help teachers conduct alternative education activities and work with children who might need additional help and psychosocial support (Jiyono, 2000: 9). Counsellors were also meant to support the tent schools as community service centres within the camps. When opened, it was intended that they be used by the community for health services, reading activities or general discussion. Jiyono reported that, however, "in actual practice, the place [was] generally only used for the camp school".

Adolescents and youth

As enrolment efforts were mainly focused on children of primary school age, education options for youth in the refugee camps were almost non-existent. According to Belen *et al.* (2000), it was initially thought that secondary level students would be accommodated in local schools. It appears, however, that the many obstacles to their attendance left adolescents idle or even being drawn into harmful behaviours. Their politicization was at times obvious, as evidenced by the commonly worn 'Autonomi Ya!' t-shirts that were distributed free during the lead up to the consultation (IRC, 2000).

When IRC began putting together an education and psychosocial support programme in July 1999 its assessment showed a clear lack of activities for youth. The project was thus planned to focus on youth, aged

between 10 and 18. Recreation kits were provided to 23 camp schools, and later to additional locations. Starting in April 2000, groups of youth volunteers began to receive training from implementing partners to work as play facilitators (UNICEF, 2000b). In the two months of operations before evacuation, the project worked in nine camps in the Atambua area, assisting with youth recreation activities such as football, volleyball, music, weaving and agriculture. Wayne Bleier, project manager, reported that because of difficulties with camp access, an “abridged participatory model was developed that allow[ed] camp members to shoulder the responsibility”. Project implementation at each camp encompassed six main steps (IRC, 2000):

- Step 1: Staff entered a camp to talk to camp co-ordinator about the situation of youth in the camp. After discussing the camp’s concerns, IRC explained its ideas about providing structured youth activities and suggested that camp members are the best people to run the activities.
- Step 2: Original plans included training for group facilitation, but changed after limited success at the first one-day training. People did not talk freely and camp co-ordinators wanted more control.
- Step 3: Camp co-ordinators talked with children to ask them what kind of activities they would like. Co-ordinators were asked to create a schedule for activities, and provide a volunteer facilitator. No materials were given until these criteria were met.
- Step 4: In all but one camp, sport activities were chosen; as they were popular and relatively easy to organize, IRC began with these. Once running, a meeting of camp youth was called to ask for additional activities. Incorporating games, singing and story-telling, these meetings demonstrated simple activities for facilitators.
- Step 5: Weekly visits were made to camps, with time for facilitators to discuss problems, activities to be evaluated and statistics gathered.
- Step 6: On-going training was provided in weekly meetings that included talks and demonstration. For example, after a discussion about dance, elders came to perform a traditional dance the following week.

Towards integration

Long before the United Nations evacuation, it was recognized that educational assistance for refugees needed to be provided so that it also strengthened the already poor local schools. The revised West Timor CAP (OCHA, 2000: 54) stated that: “while temporary and camp based schools will continue as a short-term measure, the main effort will be facilitating absorption into the existing school system in camps, existing site settlements, and in new settlement communities.” Save the Children was the main NGO to take up the education work with a focus toward integration. In an assessment conducted in November 1999 it highlighted the importance of refugee children’s integration into local schools. Because the agency was new to Indonesia, only having established a country programme in May that year, it did not immediately become operational. It was not until July 2000 that a project based on the assessment began. The Save the Children programme operated from Atambua for three short months until evacuation in September.

It was thought that camp-based schools would fall under the supervision of the formal school system by the end of 2000 (UNICEF, 2000b: 4). According to UNICEF personnel, discussions with the government to facilitate this handover were just beginning prior to the United Nations evacuation. There were plans both to assist integration of refugee children into local schools and some talk of establishing ‘satellite schools’ in refugee settlements where no local school was available. In mid-2000, UNICEF (2000b: 4) was supporting the district education departments to conduct co-ordination meetings with teachers, headmasters and school supervisors to discuss integration of children from camp schools into the local system. A school mapping exercise was also started mid-2000 in Belu district, where the majority of refugees were staying. Meant to assist with the integration process, the exercise was designed to collect geographic information on all permanent and camp school sites, numbers of school-age children and school capacities including teaching personnel and equipment inventories (UNICEF, 2000b: 8). Like other efforts, it was left uncompleted because of the security-related evacuation.

The evacuation of the international community in September 2000 brought most of the above work to an abrupt end. Any existing UN-supported activities were either greatly disrupted or were shut down,

including UNICEF's work with the tent schools. While a funding relationship with the Atambua diocese continued until the end of the year, UNICEF officials questioned the extent to which schools were able to carry on. One teacher who worked at a tent school freely stated that "as soon as UNICEF stopped paying teachers' salaries, we stopped teaching". It was initially thought that the United Nations would be returning within a few months, but that was not to be and West Timor still remains at United Nations security 'Phase 5'. There are many questions regarding it staying at this designation, as security assessments have been conducted and several NGOs have deemed it safe enough to return.

Those who have returned, such as Renew (2001) claimed that within six months there was little indication tent schools had ever existed, as none were functioning and buildings were either empty, being used for accommodation or had been demolished for the building materials. Camp leaders said that the children who had attended them were now generally enrolled in the formal local school. As such, the evacuation brought an end to the parallel system, but unfortunately added few resources to cope with the even greater numbers of students who then enrolled locally. This scenario was left for GoI to cope with alone, except for the assistance of Save the Children, the only returned international agency working in education following the evacuation. Their joint efforts will be further discussed in *Chapter 5*.

Lessons learned

1. While refugee children's attendance at local schools may be preferred, when numbers are so large that existing schools would go into crisis, new schools are necessary.
2. To avoid creation of a parallel system, the education authority should have a clear role and involvement in emergency response and follow-up.
3. Without a basic level of security for staff, the international community cannot function, and the few actors including education as part of their relief efforts will decrease.
4. Teacher incentives for displaced populations should be carefully checked against local rates and other income sources must be clarified.
5. For short-term educational needs, a simplified version of the familiar curriculum can be taught, with an emphasis placed on ways to better engage children.

Chapter 4

From emergency to transition

In the month following the popular consultation, what should have been occasion for celebration became one of terror. The East Timorese saw their homes, livelihoods, and infrastructure destroyed by systematic violence inflicted by local militias and the TNI. It disrupted agriculture, animals were slaughtered, transportation and fuel all but disappeared, and acute shortages led prices to spiral up by 200 per cent in the space of two months (World Bank, 1999: 3). The education sector was as devastated as any other, with schools destroyed, and massive numbers of students and teachers displaced. Timor Aid, an NGO run by East Timorese from the Diaspora, described it thus (United Nations, 2000: 18):

“At the end of 1999, East Timor was a strange land. There was no government, no official language or currency, no system of law, no media, and no shops or schools. Not only was the country physically plundered and raped, but also no former structure existed which could be used as a base for rebuilding.”

Since then, East Timor has gone through a series of distinct phases in its process of recovery. For education, one might say that the ‘emergency response’ lasted nearly a year – until the official re-opening of schools in October 2000. The subsequent period through to independence could be seen as the ‘transitional’ phase for education. Leadership rested with ETTA, and during this time the education sector – albeit focused on physical reconstruction – was largely successful in restoring enrolment at least at the primary level. The final phase briefly addressed in this document is early independence, under which education administration was completely turned over to the East Timorese.

Box 4. A school in Lautem district

In a small settlement in the [eastern most] district of Lautem, the militia and TNI arrived on September 12. In a village comprised largely of wooden houses, the school stood out. A relatively new, modern concrete structure, it was equipped with tables, chairs and educational material. The militias looted what they could carry and then burnt the school to the ground. The school had catered for 135 pupils, explains Manuel Justina, the local teacher. Following the attack schooling ceased for nearly three months. When classes resumed, they took place in a clearing, or when the rains came, in a basic wooden shelter. Even when a few classrooms were rehabilitated, schooling was hampered by a lack of basic materials such as paper and pencils. This same scene was repeated endlessly across East Timor.

Source: Doyle, 2000.

Early assessment

The first step in organizing an emergency response involved a Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) to gather reliable information on the extent of damage to schools. How many new teachers would be needed? What had happened to school buildings and classrooms? How could curriculum be handled and what textbooks would be necessary? Communities themselves, however, did not wait for results of assessments, nor did they wait for others to take action: “Soon after the violence subsided in September, many teachers and students resumed teaching and learning in whatever buildings that remained standing. Volunteers who had never taught before offered their services” (Wu, 2000: 10). Organizations including UNICEF, CNRT, UNTAET and the Catholic Church and certain NGOs supported these initiatives to re-open formal schools. During this emergency phase, a few agencies also explored how non-formal education could be supported.

In the JAM, the international community together with East Timorese representatives “aimed to identify priority short-term reconstruction initiatives and provide estimates of external financing needs” (World Bank, 1999: 2). Co-ordinated by the World Bank, a team of major donors, United Nations agencies, multilateral institutions and East Timorese technical specialists participated in a ten-day mission in November 1999. Education

was one of eight sectors covered. In addition to field visits and meetings, the JAM education team relied heavily on information that had been gathered in the course of other assessments. Just prior to the popular consultation, Columbia University and Norway's Fafo Institute completed a study describing socio-economic conditions, meant to be used as a baseline following the consultation (Pederson and Arneberg, 1999). In addition to this study, UNICEF had led a rapid assessment of schools in October, working through international NGOs, WFP and a skeleton UNTAET staff to collect district level information.

The findings of each of these assessments contributed significantly to priorities laid out in the JAM report (see *Appendix 1* for JAM education goals and targets). JAM estimated that "Approximately 95 per cent of schools and other education institutions were destroyed in the post-ballot period. Buildings, furniture and teaching materials ... have been lost" (World Bank, 1999: 6). It went on to cite statistics from the Oecussi enclave as an example of the extent of damage: "All 3 kindergartens were destroyed, 28 of 43 primary schools were irreparable, and there was heavy damage to five of seven junior secondary and all four senior secondary schools." Destruction to education infrastructure throughout the country was so total that nearly everything needed repair or reconstruction. Details on individual schools were not gathered in JAM, but were left for UNTAET district staff to gather at a later date.

During this period of assessment, it was obvious that some of the most pressing needs would surround teachers. The majority of the 5,000 teachers from other parts of Indonesia had returned home even before the vote took place. JAM estimated that between 70 and 80 per cent of senior administrative staff and secondary teachers had departed (World Bank, 1999: 6). This gap created an acute problem especially at the secondary level – in junior secondary schools, 97 per cent of teachers had been from other parts of Indonesia, while at senior secondary level the figure was 92 per cent. Teacher losses at the primary school level were less devastating, as less than 25 per cent were from outside East Timor. However, among primary teachers remaining in East Timor, less than 10 per cent were thought to have minimum qualifications in education (Arneberg, 1999: 91).

During assessment, a number of additional educational issues of consequence were identified. There were indications that Portuguese would

be adopted as the official language and used in schools; Arneberg (1999: 83) warned that this would put a heavy burden on the education sector, as curricula would have to be redesigned and teachers trained in the language. There were also concerns that the education system would have to be smaller, more efficient and more responsive than the previous large and ineffective system, as the local tax base would not be able to continue to support the style of education system run by the Indonesians. In addition, East Timor's rate of illiteracy was estimated at over 50 per cent. Large numbers of older children had left school and were in desperate need of skills training and tertiary education had essentially been destroyed (World Bank, 1999).

JAM laid out four urgent priorities for short-term reconstruction in the education sector, although these were not all acted on immediately. These were: (a) primary and secondary education; (b) training of teachers and administrative staff; (c) education and training for out of school youth; and (d) tertiary and technical education.

Enabling primary and secondary students to return to school was seen as the most immediate need. This was said to require the "rehabilitation and repair of classrooms, the supply of basic teaching and learning resources, and the mobilization of teachers to fulfil this task". It was noted that "schools will need to be consolidated, and double shifting and multi-grade teaching should be considered". Teacher shortages were also considered pressing, especially at the secondary and tertiary levels. In one of the overlooked recommendations, JAM called for "accelerated teacher training [to] be instituted to train volunteers, graduate students and others who will fulfil the immediate need for teachers". In light of extremely low youth and adult literacy levels, an immediate national literacy campaign in Tetum and the yet to be decided official language was recommended, yet never fully acted on. Partnerships with overseas universities were seen as a priority for tertiary education, including both supporting current students and training others to develop technical expertise (World Bank, 1999: 10).

Box 5. Information gaps in emergency assessment

Quantitative data on different languages spoken. Although a 1998 Social Survey had information about mother tongue, the sample was too small and the level of detail inadequate. There was no evidence on how many East Timorese children speak Tetum, nor data on teacher command of Portuguese. It was thought that it would be difficult to develop transition plans for language of instruction.

Reliable data on literacy and numeracy. Official Indonesian literacy statistics seemed severely inflated, and the low quality of education indicated a large difference in the number of semi-literate people and functionally literate ones. Hence, the need for adult literacy training could not be assessed properly.

A consistent, integrated information system. Statistics contained many misleading, overlapping or inconsistent figures. Classification of institutions was confused between public and private schooling, especially for vocational secondary and tertiary education. Building an integrated information system for the education sector would be necessary for policy planning.

Source: Arneberg, 1999.

Organizational players

UNICEF served as the de facto Ministry of Education in the early days of the East Timor crisis, as there was no national education authority. According to Pilar Aguilar, Emergency Education Officer at the time, it worked through UNTAET district offices to assist with the practical responsibilities of registering teachers and disbursing teacher incentives, paid by UNICEF. As no school supplies were available in local markets, UNICEF made arrangements to have 'School-In-A-Box' comprised of basic education supplies, and recreation and sports kits shipped in. Emergency repair of school roofs began under its leadership. Over time, an integrated services and psychosocial support programme called Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) was set up at eight sites. Planned areas of major work included rapid teacher training and development of Tetum literacy materials, although these were not carried out for political reasons discussed

later in this paper (UNICEF, 1999b). Since independence, UNICEF efforts have included teacher training, curriculum development and the 100 Schools Project, a cluster school improvement model focused on school management (UNICEF, 2002).

By the end of 1999, CNRT had set up a voluntary team of central education administrators and began to establish District Education Committees along with UNTAET and UNICEF (World Bank, 2000: 6). Drawn from the clandestine movement, some observers found CNRT education representatives to be typically better informed of local realities than internationals (Doyle, 2001). Discounting the group's unified nature, the international community was "nervous about engaging with the CNRT for fear of aligning themselves with a political organization" (Hunt, 2002). Thus CNRT at first operated in parallel rather than in partnership with UNTAET, at least at the central level. It had few resources, and had to struggle to secure a building, obtain transportation and basic operational equipment. Obstacles came from within as well; CNRT's education division was characterized by "inexperience and ... a top-down management culture that left people with little confidence to take decisions" (UNDP, 2002: 49). CNRT remained influential until it disbanded in June 2001 to facilitate party elections.

From the time it was formed in late October 1999, UNTAET was officially in a governing role. Many of those interviewed said, however, that it took time before it had the capacity to provide any sort of leadership in education – at least not until six months into the operation. At first, the mission included very few technical specialist staff, and it was not until several months into 2000 that personnel with educational expertise were in place (King's College London, 2003: 250). Prior to that, education management fell directly under the UNTAET District Administrators, adding to an already long list of their responsibilities (World Bank, 2000: 6). Each district office was eventually assigned a District Education Officer, usually a United Nations Volunteer (UNV) who hired local staff and managed education administration. Once under way, UNTAET education efforts focused on the first item in the series of urgent priorities identified by JAM: returning children to school. UNTAET sought to rebuild the system and develop the capacity of their East Timorese successors.

The Catholic Church was one of the first impetuses behind the efforts to re-open schools. Because the Church had moral authority, and because

it had been such a large-scale provider of education in East Timor, it organized quickly for its own schools and in certain locations encouraged the community to open others. According to one Church official, “The quality and resiliency of the Catholic education system is what has enabled it to continue having a voice.” Over the years, the quality of Catholic schools was apparent; Arneberg (1999) claimed that pupils in Catholic schools have had to repeat levels somewhat less frequently compared to those in government schools. The Church’s working relationships and trust, however, were not straightforward with international agencies. This lack of co-ordination meant that, while “the Catholic Church was a major institution in East Timor, few outsiders recognized the significance of its role and its reach” (Hunt, 2002).

A number of other players were involved in education response from the emergency period onward. The World Bank was one of the key players, in that it co-ordinated JAM and later administered the education sector grant from the Trust Fund for East Timor (TFET). WFP ran a large school feeding programme where students in each school were meant to receive daily snacks consisting of pre-mixed corn and soya flour and vegetable oil (WFP, 2001). Some of the international NGOs involved in education, primarily working with non-formal, included Christian Children’s Fund (CCF), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), Oxfam Great Britain (Oxfam GB), Save the Children US, and Timor Aid. Local NGOs, who have tended to focus on literacy education, include Grupu Feto Foinsa’e Timor Lorosa’e (GFFTL), Gomatil, KSI and Sahe Institute along with others who have formed an umbrella network called Dai Popular. During the emergency period, Australian InterFET troops also assisted with the roofing of schools and arranged for books and toys to be sent from their home towns.

The responsibility for co-ordination of these various actors shifted over time. Initially all humanitarian co-ordination was set up under OCHA. In line with its de facto role as Ministry of Education, UNICEF led the sectoral Working Group for Education. At first, the Working Group met twice a week, and these meetings were reduced over time. Early actors recall that participation was not terribly regular and difficulties in co-ordination were exacerbated by the lack of supplies, communications or transportation, which meant time was needed for organizational set-up. In February 2000, as UNTAET became more established, the co-ordination

role shifted to the UNTAET Division of Education. This was in line with the overall movement of humanitarian responsibility from OCHA over to UNTAET's pillar of humanitarian assistance (Hurford and Wahlstrom, 2001: 11).

Restarting education

Communities themselves led in actually restarting education. "Thousands of volunteers ... [started off] bringing children together, putting roofs on school buildings, cleaning up rubble in hundreds of schools ..., distributing books, paper, pencils and school meals, and serving as teachers" (World Bank, 2000: 2). A few schools opened their doors as early as October 1999; however, the majority did not begin teaching until November, December, or even later. A small back-to-school campaign run by UNICEF promoted 1 December as the date to begin classes country-wide. Of course, actually getting all the students back in the classroom took longer. By January, UNTAET (2000) estimated that its own efforts along with those of UNICEF, CNRT and the local Catholic Church managed to get about 100,000 students, or about 50 per cent of school age children, back to the classroom. The Secretary-General reported to the United Nations Security Council (2000: 5) that by the end of April "the vast majority of primary school children and teachers were back in school".

Supporting local communities

As hard as the international community worked, the opening of schools in these early days was, in reality, largely a local affair. Returning to their homes after an absence of only a few months, communities were relatively organized and quickly began to focus on getting their children back in the classroom. The decision to re-open school was often simple – if teachers returned to the community, or others had been identified who could teach, then classes were started. During this first period, it was apparent that schools were functioning on an ad hoc basis. Doyle (2001) describes schools as "often lacking everything but enthusiasm; these were the inspirational early days. Schools taught whatever they could with nearly all having Portuguese and Tetum classes". In a few locations, determined by teachers' skills, schools also offered arithmetic, religion, traditional dance, sports or even English. All content for lessons was taught from memory, as there was no available curriculum (Nicolai, 2000: 8).

As local communities organized themselves, they were encouraged to form District Education Committees to get education re-started (World Bank, 1999: 7). Comprised of from six to eight East Timorese, representatives were usually drawn from local leaderships in each sub-district. The education committees operated as volunteers and collected enrolment data, organized supply distribution and supported school feeding programmes by finding cooks and supplementary food (UNICEF, 1999b). District Education Committees had varying degrees of success, largely dependent on membership. While some appointees have continued in leadership roles, others had vested interests at the time – in one district, the owner of a local construction company was appointed. Former UNTAET district education officer Nicolas Garrigue claimed that “it proved more effective to work through sub-district level education committees, made up of the CNRT-appointed representative and each school’s head master ... mainly because of communication and travel constraints”.

This remarkable energy and enthusiasm for schooling translated into concrete results. Even though fewer schools were operating, often in open spaces or burned out buildings, UNICEF figures show that more primary students attended school in the period from December 1999 to July 2000 than before the crisis. Some 170,821 students attended 760 primary schools, compared to 167,181 attending 788 schools in 1999. However, in that same period, attendance at secondary schools was less than 60 per cent of pre-crisis figures, with 28,722 junior and senior secondary students attending classes, compared to 51,170 in 1999 (United Nations, 2000: 61). Yoshiteru Uramoto thought that “enthusiasm for a ‘Timorese’ education and a school feeding programme were probably some of the early factors encouraging parents to send their children to schools”.

Although teachers generally started working on a voluntary basis, by December 1999 UNICEF was offering teachers a monthly incentive of Rp150,000, or about US\$18.00, and 50 kilograms of rice. The number of primary teachers under this scheme soared to nearly 7,000, perhaps not surprising in a land with so few jobs. The stipend for secondary school teachers was Rp300,000, along with the same amount of rice. It proved more difficult to recruit teachers for the secondary level; while some of those recruited had taught during the Indonesian period, many others had no teaching experience at all (UNICEF, 1999b). From May 2000 onward, UNTAET took over the payment of secondary school teachers’ salaries, covering salaries for primary teachers beginning in August (Wu, 2000: 10).

During this first unofficial school year, most teachers taught without chalkboards, textbooks or learning aids, in classrooms that had been stripped bare. In December 1999, UNICEF began to distribute emergency school supplies, all of which had to be procured and shipped either from Australia or Indonesia. Over the next six months 1,178 'School-In-A-Box' kits were delivered, along with 398 recreation and sports kits. The 'School-In-A-Box', comprised of both teachers' and students' kits, was designed to have enough classroom supplies to last 80 students three months. At a total cost of US\$295, boxes were costed at US\$1.23 per child per month. The recreation and sport kit had sporting and musical items meant to be used both in the school and the community. One official recalled that UNHCR also provided kitchen kits to the schools, although these were typically family size, without large pots needed to prepare food for student numbers.

Requirements for receiving these boxes included the following: the primary school must be open with regular classes; a teacher must take responsibility for distribution and storage of supplies; and the district should take responsibility for delivery to schools (UNICEF, 2000*b*). Logistical difficulties, such as the actual delivery of these kits, proved to be a major obstacle in ensuring education supplies were immediately available country-wide. Logistics was generally complicated due to "destruction of infrastructure, necessity of shipping materials to an island, and limited available transport" (Nicolai, 2000: 3). Given that East Timor is in a monsoon belt, there were problems of access not just to remote areas but to certain district towns as well, as roads outside Dili are often unserviceable after heavy rainfall. Once items were delivered to the districts' main towns, the PKF or international NGOs took care of delivery, often contributing their own supplemental supplies. However, district education officer José Bendito Prieto explained that delivery of school supplies was not necessarily first on the list of priorities for these groups, and their assistance relied on timing and goodwill.

Emergency non-formal education

At least some of the desire to open schools early on was meant to address a social problem rather than an educational one. Large numbers of children, especially youth, were sitting idle and beginning to roam the streets, particularly in the more urban areas of Dili and Baucau (Taylor, 2000: 7). However, efforts to re-start schooling were largely focused on

the primary level with few secondary schools opened in that first year. The successes in re-establishing formal schooling thus did not make a large difference for adolescents. A few local East Timorese student groups and several international NGOs particularly tried to increase education and activity opportunities for youth. They reported that there were benefits to working with non-formal rather than formal education. As one former NGO worker explained, activities were “more a matter of co-ordination rather than permission” and could move ahead without bureaucracy.

One example of a non-formal education project was run by IRC and operated in the Oecussi district, from November 1999 to July 2000. As the East Timor emergency encompassed a long period of repatriation, it was thought important to strengthen the capacity of local communities as they returned home. As a pilot for the organization, the project’s purpose was both to meet immediate educational needs and to explore the lessons for operating in similar environments. The central question that shaped project direction was: ‘How can IRC enhance repatriating communities’ capacities to take leadership in the education of their children and youth?’ It specifically explored ways to mobilize schools, youth organizations, and other community groups to increase educational and recreational opportunities. Through an emphasis on participatory planning, the activities were community defined and developed in partnership with local organizations. Each initiative undertaken was led by a local group: a children’s centre was organized by the young women’s group Grupo Feto Foinsa’e Enclave Timor (GFFET), structured sports activities were arranged by the youth network Juventude Lorico Lifau (JLL) and the Oecussi District Education Committee took leadership in teacher training (Nicolai, 2000).

Following on the experience of this pilot, in mid-2000 an international NGO consortium made up of CCF, IRC and Save the Children (US) set up a year-long project dubbed the Child and Youth Development Programme (CYDP). Funded by the United States Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (BPRM), the project was designed to facilitate child and youth development through emergency community-based psychosocial programmes. Each consortium partner worked in different locations, with slightly different implementation approaches. CCF was operational in the vicinities of Bacau, Lautem, Los Palos, Manatutu and Vicqueque. Save the Children worked in the areas of Dili, Ermera and Liquica. Both agencies used a village outreach approach, with local

volunteers carrying out regular children and youth activities. IRC focused on the sites of Maliana, Suai and Bobometo, and approached similar aims through establishing youth centres. While as a whole the programme claimed to reach considerable numbers – between 75,000 to 80,000 beneficiaries – an evaluation conducted after project end raised questions about actual impact of the activities (Hutton, 2001).

Each of these non-formal efforts expected that through participatory planning, activities could be sustained beyond the project periods. The Oecussi project did continue in the form of a UNICEF CFS discussed later under psychosocial support. Project staff Antero Benedito da Silva explained how local partner NGOs were continually turning over staff as individuals left for paid opportunities, and each new leadership team would change the nature of its involvement. Also, these groups had not worked closely with international agencies before and, accordingly, mutual assumptions were not always clearly communicated. These kinds of difficulties were multiplied within the larger CYDP project. Staff members from each of the agencies expressed concerns that the internal collaborative arrangements of a consortium significantly slowed project implementation. Also, the CYDP project was designed for an emergency scenario, but by the time funding came through, East Timor's context had changed. Lola dos Reis of CCF emphasized that the one-year time frame was much too short to begin effectively working with communities and building trust.

Re-establishing a system

While some schools were certainly operating in the first year after the consultation, it was not until October 2000 that they were officially re-opened. During this first year, primary schooling boasted significant gains in enrolment, with numbers quickly moving beyond those reported in Indonesian times. Indeed, the World Bank declared “the massive increase in enrolment by the poor, girls and rural children” as the transitional administration's “most phenomenal accomplishment” (Wu, 2002: 2). In fact, the destruction of the Indonesian education system afforded a number of opportunities to make new decisions regarding educational policies and curriculum design better suited to East Timor. Examples of some of these early significant changes include introduction of “pro-poor policies such as the removal of school fees, examination fees, and the withdrawal of required uniforms. Certain districts have also adapted the school year to the harvesting cycle to reduce drop-out rates of children of farm families” (United Nations, 2000: 64).

The flip side to this success was that with fewer teachers, student/teacher ratios rose significantly. Also, secondary education did not fare as well as primary, and as the United Nations (2000: 63) common country assessment asserted, “attention ... has focused on primary education, and as a result secondary school education has been somewhat neglected”. With the departure of virtually all teachers, secondary education suffered both from a lack of experience and declines in net enrolment. Similarly, technical and vocational education had little early success, with few instructors remaining and little equipment left that was of use (Sanderson, 2001). For higher education, just opening the National University of East Timor (UNATIL) in October 2000 was an achievement; there had initially been no plans to open so soon, but pressure from some 6,000 students caused the authorities to reconsider (Bollag, 2001).

It was not only government schools that were flinging open their doors. Private education providers, especially the Catholic Church, also played a big part in re-establishing the system. In a few districts the Church was instrumental in encouraging communities to re-start classes in government-run schools in addition to re-opening its own. While some 170 schools are Church-operated (amounting to nearly one-fifth of all schools in the country), a number of these offer support in name – as used under the Indonesian system – more than in practice. There are 26 non-Church private schools operating in East Timor, and private institutions of higher education are now proliferating (UNDP, 2002: 50). Long-term government funding of private schools is still unclear. At the moment, government subsidies are provided in the form of salaries for a certain number of teachers at Church schools.

Educational levels

During the years of Indonesian rule, there were 64 kindergartens in East Timor, the vast majority operated by the Catholic Church. Some 5,000 pupils attended these pre-schools, approximately 10 per cent of those between age 5 and 6 (Arneberg, 1999). During the transitional period this rate of enrolment fell, according to UNICEF’s Greg Fernandez, partially due to the fact that early childhood was ignored in national priorities – and thus in budgets. In November 2001, the Joint Donor Education Sector Mission (2001b: 12) found that 4,500 children were attending a total of 41 kindergartens. However, other types of early childhood education have also developed. All eight of UNICEF’s (2001a)

CFS include a component of early childhood development and CCF has worked with a number of communities in providing their own early childhood care. Regardless of type, the government does not pay pre-school teacher salaries, which instead must come out of parent contributions and fees (Oxfam GB, 2002: 15). An Early Childhood Forum was brought together beginning in 2000; through UNICEF and MECYS, it counts a draft national policy on Early Childhood Education as one of its achievements (Pereira, 2001).

Table 4.1 Characteristics of schools in East Timor, 2001

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Of which</i>
Number of schools	922	
State operated		717
Church operated		173
Private operated		26
Others		6
Number of classrooms		
Before the violence in 1999		5,162
Useable as of early 2001		4,449
Share of school operating		
One shift		71 %
Two or more shifts		29 %
Share of schools		
Primary		82 %
Junior secondary		11 %
Senior secondary		3 %
Others		4 %
Number of teachers	5,789	
Female		1,633
Male		4,156
Number of students in early 2001	237,551	
Girls		114,627 (48 %)
Boys		122,924 (52 %)
Student/teacher ratio		
State schools		56
Church schools		40
Private schools		41
Others		46
Average		52

Source: CESUR, 2001 referenced in Wu, 2002.

For primary schools, net enrolment jumped from a rate of 65 per cent at the end of Indonesian occupation to 75 per cent in the first year of transition (TFET, 2002: 28). The United Nations (2000: 62) surmised that this increase was due to a combination of factors, including removal of school fees and required uniforms, the school feeding programme and enthusiasm towards the new education system. This enrolment increase also contributed to a narrowing of “gaps in school participation rates between the richest and poorest, boys and girls, and urban and rural areas” (Wu, 2002: 2). However, because a large number of over-age students enrolled for the first time, an enrolment ‘bulge’ was created in the lower grades, with more than double the estimated numbers attending first grade in 2000/2001. Also, primary level student/teacher ratios rose, with ratios in excess of 100:1 in remote areas (Pereira, 2001). To increase efficiency it was originally thought that schools could operate double shifts; however, “the high afternoon temperatures in tin-roofed classrooms, school distances, the children’s state of health, and local custom” along with the teacher’s need to spend part of the day working on farms and in small shops made this assumption unworkable (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2002).

Junior and senior secondary schools were re-established under the Indonesian model. In the year following the consultation, enrolments at this level actually declined, although one of the Joint Donor Education Sector Missions (2000: 7) hypothesized that this was partially due to the departure of the non-Timorese middle class. However, because many communities are dispersed throughout the mountains, “secondary schools are far away, public transport does not exist and the condition of roads and paths [makes attendance] extremely difficult” (CESUR, 2001: 14). With a ratio of 20 students per teacher, numbers are not a problem, but lack of experience and qualifications certainly is. In addition to these challenges, in its initial phase the activities funded through the donor trust fund were almost exclusively for primary education. This was to be rectified in the programme’s second phase, which included an objective “to restore junior secondary enrolment to the pre-1999 level” (World Bank, 2001).

Table 4.2 Gross and net enrolment ratios

	1998/1999	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002
<i>Gross enrolment ratio</i>				
Primary (7-12 years of age)	89 %	84 %	113 %	110 %
Junior secondary (13-15 years of age)	44 %	42 %	47 %	51 %
Senior secondary (16-18 years of age)	19 %	21 %	26 %	28 %
<i>Net enrolment ratio</i>				
Primary (7-12 years of age)	51 %	52 %	67 %	70 %
Junior secondary (13-15 years of age)	24 %	21 %	22 %	25 %
Senior secondary (16-18 years of age)	11 %	12 %	16 %	17 %

Source: East Timor Household Survey, 2001 in Wu, 2002: 27.

Even before the consultation, technical and vocational education under Indonesia bore little relation to the real needs of the workplace (UNDP, 2002: 6). Most of the buildings housing these institutes were burned or heavily damaged during the crisis. In an AusAID review of the sector, Sanderson (2001: 1) advocated for “establishing a new system without having any regard for prior investment”. Since then, 10 schools have been set up, and variously provide training in agriculture, construction, electronics and motor repair, manufacturing, tourism, oil and gas, and small business. Much effort has gone into setting up a Brazilian-supported training centre in the Becora neighbourhood of Dili, which opened in September 2002 with 150 trainees. Other institutes have been more ad hoc, and formed in response to labour shortages. While there tends to be a low student/teacher ratio in these institutes, the World Bank’s Kye Woo Lee (2002) suggests that this does not contribute “to a high quality of education, but results in inefficiency”. There are also difficulties in attracting students to vocational education as under Indonesian occupation a strong desire for ‘white collar’ work had developed (Taylor, 2000: 7).

There were several higher education institutions in East Timor before the consultation: the public university Universitas Timor Timur (UNTIM), one national polytechnic, a teacher’s college for primary school teachers, one state health academy, the Catholic Pastoral Institute and a private School of Economics (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2000: 28). Under the transitional authority the public university UNATIL opened.

On re-opening, its biggest problem was over-enrolment as all-comers were admitted. A test was given for second-year registration, which reduced admissions, and solved this issue for the university. It did not, however, solve the problem for the large numbers who wanted tertiary education. Additional private institutions of higher education have since been set up to cope with demand, or according to some cynics, “to make a fast buck”; the latest count lists 14, an excessive number for such a small population. Half the professors at these institutions have only a Bachelor’s degree (La’o Hamutuk, 2003). The Directorate for Higher Education (2002) is now putting forward a set of draft regulations to govern private institutions.

While East Timor’s National Development Plan emphasizes the importance of “combating East Timor’s high illiteracy levels, a relatively small amount of funding is being put into adult literacy programs... In 2002, according to the Ministry of Finance, of the total expenditure on education, 25 per cent was spent on tertiary education, compared with 3 per cent on non-formal and language training combined” (World Bank, 2002a: 21). East Timor has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world at 43 per cent. There are striking differences between urban and rural areas, at rates of 82 and 37 per cent, respectively (UNDP, 2002: 27). Adult literacy efforts have tended to be small-scale. Local NGOs such as GFFTL have led literacy courses in districts focused on the Tetum language, and recently prepared one of the first Tetum literacy books (Silva, 2002). Teaching Portuguese, the Brazilians implemented a literacy programme called *Alfabetização Solidária*, initially teaching 3,500 adults. Another Brazilian project called *Telessalas* used television to upgrade the skills of those who already had some proficiency in Portuguese (UNDP, 2002: 54). Even with these efforts, an Oxfam GB education report claimed that most older people feel “that learning would not be of much use to them now and that they should put their energy into improving education for their children” (Field, Keating and Merrill, 2002: 29).

Addressing special needs

In East Timor, as in everywhere around the world, there are children who need special support in order to succeed educationally. Girls, children with disabilities and children from minority religious groups all face barriers to access. Girls in East Timor make up an impressive 48 per cent of those enrolled (TFET, 2002: 28). In primary school, gender parity appears to have been achieved, but the good news does not extend to upper grades. In

secondary and tertiary education, female participation is low, and the gender gap wide (Planning Commission, 2002). Children with disabilities, however, do not fare even as well as girls; children with disabilities are often completely excluded from schools (Field *et al.*, 2002: 33). With negligible inclusive education practices, there is only one school for special needs children in Dili that has received considerable support since the consultation. Also, while ethnicity does not seem to play a large role in educational access, religion does. For those few Muslim families that remain, there is only one Islamic school in Dili, which most attend. Other population groups for whom the crisis has affected educational opportunities include separated children, those in need of psychosocial support, children from rural areas and adolescents.

Separated children

During the chaos of displacement to West Timor, significant numbers of children were separated from their families. Reports later emerged that children were being sent by their families to ‘orphanages’ in other parts of Indonesia. At least some of these arrangements were said to be made by organizations closely linked to Jakarta-based, pro-integration militia groups. Parents would sign consent forms claiming that children would receive better care and a good education. However, forms included worrying clauses such as ‘no contact with the child until completion of the educational years’ (Greenblot, 2001: 27). Upon returning to East Timor, parents contacted UNHCR which, along with IRC, took the lead on cross-border child separation. By early 2003 a total of 2,209 children out of numbers suspected to be double that amount had been reunified with their families. According to UNHCR’s protection officer, Sandra Langenbach: “Education is often a major issue when these children return home. Families often cannot afford school and there are no scholarships available. There are very few out-of-school or literacy projects available, certainly not in every district.”

Separation does not appear to be much of a problem in East Timor itself due to cultural traditions of raising other people’s children. It is rare to find a family which is not also raising at least one niece, nephew or distant cousin. This tradition extends to a number of orphanages, or child care centres, often run by religious orders. In a joint IRC-UNHCR assessment, researcher Ciara Knudsen (2001: 8) found that education has historically been a major reason for sending children to one of these

centres, often run by religious orders, as “many poor parents do not feel they have the capacity to provide support or guidance for their child’s formal education”. Most children in centres appeared to attend a local school and had access to other educational activities such as hygiene, agriculture, music and recreation. A draft policy for child-care centres has recently been put together by the government’s Division of Social Services. It mandates that children residing at the centres have access to formal education, either on-site or at a nearby school. Recreation and sports, as well as skills training such as sewing or carpentry are also required (Secretariat of Labour and Solidarity, 2002).

Box 6. Experiences of separated children upon reunification

In 1999, at age 11, José* fled with his mother and three siblings to West Timor, while his father hid in the mountains around Dili. In West Timor, an organization offered to take the boy to a boarding school in Java to continue his studies, and José’s mother decided to send him. It was not until 2002 that José’s mother was able to return to East Timor and rejoin her husband, and they soon wanted to bring back their son.

UNHCR was able to bring back José in early 2003, more than three years after the child had gone to Java. When José returned he had mixed feelings. He had some conflict with his father that he did not want to talk about, but was happy to be back with his siblings. However, a couple of weeks after his return, José came to UNHCR and said that he wanted to go back to Java. When José described his education there, he said that they had never received any information about East Timor and it was not what he expected. He had been to school for one week, but found it very difficult. The school was far away from his home, and he just could not concentrate. His mother had just delivered another baby, his father did not have a job, and it was difficult for his parents to send him to any better school nearby.

Another boy, Melchior, had stayed with José in the same boarding school in Java. On return to East Timor, Melchior reintegrated well. He attends a district high school and, though school fees are expensive, his family supports education. Melchior is happy to be back, as he says “nobody can replace my parents”. He explains that it would have been impossible to keep in contact in Java as it is too far away.

* Names have been changed.

Source: Protection Unit, UNHCR East Timor.

Psychosocial and peace education

During the violence surrounding the referendum, nearly all East Timorese witnessed terrifying events. A psychosocial needs assessment by IRCT claimed that over 95 per cent of the population had been exposed to at least one traumatic situation. Common trauma events included “combat situations, lack of shelter, ill health without access to medical care, forced separation from family members and being close to death... More than half the population experienced at least one form of torture” (Modvig *et al.*, 2000: 9). Children obviously were not spared violence on such a scale. One-fifth of parents said their children had either been injured or separated from them. As a result of the political violence, 12 per cent claimed that their children had died. There were also reports of children being raped by the militia in Suai, Same and Ermera districts.

The study found that East Timorese were more likely to seek assistance within their families, the church or the local community than from health professionals. But there was limited support to teachers and others in such positions. As one school principal explained, “no one ever offered to help our teachers cope with students’ trauma”. In mid-2001, IRCT began a small project that aimed to support children’s psychosocial recovery through the schools. In a pilot project based in Covalima district, in the Suai area just across the border from West Timor, nearly 140 teachers were trained on trauma recovery with children. Rather than taking a clinical focus, the project largely emphasized play, song and co-operative group work. Lessons were developed based on East Timorese culture, forming a guidebook called *Trauma recovery through play*. In its second year, the project added a set of peace education modules, and expanded throughout Covalima and into the Bobonaro district (IRCT, 2002).

Peace education has also been an area linked to these issues that CRS has been especially active in. A staff person described how the organization has worked with several schools through a broader programme focus on peace building in community-based organizations called Culture of Peace. One such education project was in Aileu, a main base of Fretilin during the resistance, which became a cantonment for ex-freedom fighters following 1999. The culture of weapons led to a number of violent incidents, and CRS partnered with the Maryknoll Sisters to work with a few in and out of school youth groups. Through a visioning workshop with the students, the group decided that they continued to encounter many problems

and would benefit from training in conflict resolution and communications skills. The principles and practices developed since have been adopted as a school peer mediation programme, and CRS was invited to give an orientation for the teachers. The teachers and administrators have also become involved with Culture of Peace workshops run for community partners.

Although not working directly through schools, UNICEF's CFS initiative is one of the few efforts that contributes to both education and psychosocial support for children. Based on UNICEF's programme of integrated care for children in crisis-affected countries, CFS in East Timor are non-residential community-based centres for children, youth and women's activities. The centres have programmes for pre-school children, after-school programmes for primary school-aged children, as well as vocational and life skills development for youth, women and parents. Activities began in early 2000 in the first two spaces – in the Comoro neighbourhood of Dili and in the Oecussi enclave. Since then, six more have been opened – in Baucau, Manatuto, Los Palos, Viqueque, Ainaro and Manufahi. UNICEF (2001a) works with partner organizations in those communities who operate the centres including early childhood activities; language, computer and sewing classes; sports, art and cultural activities; and peer education with a focus on HIV/AIDS prevention.

Rural children

Patterns of rural/urban inequality are strongly evident in East Timor (World Bank, 2002b: 55). The precedents of urban and rural enrolment begun under Indonesian rule – entering school late and dropping out – have been difficult to overcome in a new East Timor. Children in rural areas find it difficult to attend secondary school due to fees and the long distances they need to walk to reach school. The need for boys to work with parents in the rice fields and early marriages among girls are also reasons for dropping out. The rationalization in the numbers of schools made it impossible for some children to walk every day; establishing proper boarding conditions would have been one way to avoid negatively impacting on school enrolment. However, the need for boarding houses was totally overlooked by ETTA and donors. While the church did run some basic boarding houses for secondary students, for donors, it was seen as low priority. WFP helped with some food, and UNHCR with blankets and cooking utensils, but there was no policy coming from Dili to actively

support schools trying to restore boarding facilities. One former UNTAET official claimed that: “None of the donors supported our proposals for rural boarding houses, at key schools in rural areas, nor for larger secondary schools – maybe the enrolment rates would have been higher had something been done about it.”

During 2001, Oxfam GB and UNICEF conducted research on the education needs of rural East Timor in order to “publicize the educational needs of people living outside the urban areas of East Timor, especially those in rural and remote communities” (Field *et al.*, 2002: 1). There seemed, however, to be no real sense among the rural communities surveyed as to how education could directly improve their lives. One of the exercises conducted as part of the research was called ‘The Road of Learning’; this involved a small group of men and a small group of women talking separately about different activities they would learn at different stages of their lives. Examples of the results from Maliana township are as follows:

Table 4.3 Villagers’ life-long ‘road to learning’

<i>Women’s learning</i>	<i>Men’s learning</i>
Learn personal hygiene	Help look after animals
Go to school	Work in the gardens/help in the fields
Learn to cook, carry firewood/water	Learn to ride a bicycle
Learn to make <i>tais</i> (traditional weaving)	Work by themselves in the fields
Get married and look after children	Build houses
Learn to use sewing machine	Sell in the markets
Teach daughters to make <i>tais</i>	Get married
Pass on traditional knowledge to children	Learn traditional laws
	Teach children

Source: Field *et al.*, 2002.

When asked what education issues they found important, some villagers discussed language difficulties in schools arising because many teachers do not speak Portuguese; others highlighted the need for adult literacy classes in Tetum; still others talked about the long distances their children have to travel to attend junior high. Issues around youth moving to more urban areas were also mentioned, with those surveyed emphasizing that villages are losing some of their best talent, and large numbers of young people in urban areas are unable to find work (Field *et al.*, 2002:

34). As Fox (n.d.: 5) explained, “the educational system rapidly draw[s] youth from the countryside and train[s] them for non-existent positions in urban areas”. While parents see that literacy is important in their changing world, those youth in rural areas who are successful in formal education often leave villages and do not return.

Adolescents and youth

Although primary school was quickly re-started, higher levels of education took much longer to begin. The increased rates of enrolment that reached younger children did not extend to adolescents. In fact, a lower percentage of those over the age of 14 were enrolled in school in 2001 than had been attending in 1998 (Wu, 2002: 2). This trend was made worse by the fact that these youth were considered too old to re-enter primary grades, and had no options in how to make up for schooling lost. Even when enrolled, older children seem to be more at risk of dropping out, rising at age 13 with a sharp increase from 15 onwards (UNICEF and Insan Hitawasana Sejahtera, 2003). Consequences of neglecting this area have included delinquency, unemployment and human resource development problems. One group of youth interviewed felt they “had been used to campaign for independence, but now got little back”.

Under Indonesian rule, youth activities had been readily available. There were Church groups, sports teams, musical choirs, agricultural co-operatives, small credit unions and even vocational apprenticeships. Some of these were sponsored by the government, others were organized by the Church. In the lead-up to the consultation, government groups had ended, and anyway, many youth had not participated, explaining how they had joined the clandestine movement instead. As a result of Suharto’s fall and subsequent demonstrations, many of these young people became bolder. They organized protests, built networks and were instrumental in the voter education campaign surrounding the consultation (Nicolai, 2000: 9). As the *National Human Development Report* explains, “East Timor’s independence is the culmination of a long struggle against colonialism by many groups in civil society – community organizations, religious groups, students and others” (UNDP, 2002). In the first year after the consultation, the absence of this struggle for independence was clear, as student and youth groups were suddenly forced to redefine their focus.

After the consultation, adolescents and youth had few options to occupy their time. While some were able to begin neighbourhood initiatives, many did not have the experience or resources to take their activities very far. IRC began to work with local NGOs on their involvement in non-formal education. Working with Dili-based student organizations, basic lesson plans were developed to be used by youth study groups. Designed as simple discussion-based activities, lessons were prepared at a level to be easily led by a local facilitator. Groups that took part in this project included (Nicolai, 2000: 21):

- *Forum Democracy Maubere (Fordem)*. At the end of 1999, some East Timorese students that studied in Indonesian universities established Fordem. Their aim was to promote people's democracy movements and they prepared lessons on indigenous culture.
- *IMPETU*. The Indonesian military organized IMPETU in Indonesian universities at the end of 1980s to support East Timor's integration. Students changed the group to pro-independence, and began to work on a civic education programme and micro-economic work. They wrote lessons on reconciliation.
- *East Timor Teacher(s) Association*. After the consultation, students whose studies were interrupted began to run high schools, mainly in Dili and Baucau. They formed the association to organize teachers' training and design simple high school curricula. They wrote lessons on traditional story writing.
- *Grupo Feto FoinSae Timor LoroSae (GFFTL)*. The women's section of the ETSSC, GFFTL was organized in 1998 as a result of low involvement of women in political dialogues. After the vote it began a literacy campaign and prepared lessons on this topic.
- *Commissaun Direito Humano Timor LoroSae (CDHTL)*. Established after the referendum by young people committed to post-conflict human rights work, CDHTL became involved in civic education and wrote lessons on conflict resolution.

As interesting as these kinds of activities may have been, they certainly did not pay the bills and some of these groups no longer exist. As one might expect in the poorest country in Asia, many young people are expected to work in order to make ends meet for their families. These financial needs do little to increase enrolment, as there is no great economic incentive to go to school (as well as place limits on civic involvement). East Timor's labour market is mostly informal, and there is no obvious link, other than

in the civil service, between education and a job (Wu, 2002: 35). The issues of education and jobs for youth will only continue to increase in importance, as those under 15 account for around 45 per cent of the total East Timorese population (Wu, 2002: 19).

These were the educational contexts facing the East Timorese from emergency on through transition. In the immediate aftermath of the crisis, education support came from a number of quarters. As one aid worker put it: “The chaos of the situation meant chaos for the sector.” Ironically, that same chaos probably gave some communities the space they needed to take initiative; but over time it is nearly impossible to maintain such effort without an overarching system. In East Timor, the success was that the skeleton of that system was quickly set up, gaining strength over a longer process of reconstruction.

Lessons learned

1. When no education authority exists, a large number of players jump in and help where they can; in such cases UNICEF often takes on a ‘ministerial’ role.
2. Communities can be their own best resources, as shown by the lead role that East Timorese communities took in re-starting schooling.
3. Teacher incentives, which UNICEF supported for about eight months in East Timor, can be instrumental in getting schools operational and keeping them so.
4. While emergency non-formal education efforts can offer support in the immediate aftermath of a crisis, the typical brevity of funding seems to eliminate any possibility of more sustainable change.
5. While emergency support touches on all educational levels, the emphasis is on primary education; this begs the question, given the numbers of youth, as to whether secondary and vocational education should receive increased support.

Chapter 5

Rebuilding East Timor

During the transitional period, education was inextricably tied to the nature – and the outcomes – of the leadership and legitimacy of the administration itself. On the one hand, as Chopra (2000: 28), an early UNTAET official, claimed: “conditions for success that are rarely available to peace missions.” The occupying power had withdrawn, a multinational force was in place to guarantee security, local populations openly welcomed the United Nations, political actors were unified under the CNRT, humanitarian efforts were in hand and well co-ordinated, and the World Bank was involved from the very early days. On the other hand, as Chopra and others have noted, success did not automatically follow from this list of positives. At least some of the operation’s difficulties were due to the “unprecedented breadth of its mandate,” especially as “governance was of lower priority than other aspects” (King’s College London, 2003: 217).

In the early days of its existence, the relationship between UNTAET and the East Timorese was a source of conflict. Part of the problem stemmed from the high visibility of the mission. For every 100 East Timorese the country boasted one foreign soldier, the official tender was the United States dollar, and streets were full of four-wheel drive vehicles bearing the standards of United Nations agencies, PKF and international NGOs (Morris, 2000). At the central level, relations between East Timorese and internationals also left something to be desired, as “for many international staff, the only Timorese that they ever interact with [were] those in administrative or service capacities” (Chesterman, 2001). In the districts this was less true, as staff spent long days in the field, often with East Timorese counterparts. Language was a hindrance everywhere: few Timorese spoke English or Portuguese, few humanitarian workers spoke Indonesian or Tetum; and interpreters were poorly qualified and scarce (Hunt, 2002).

These kinds of complications carried over into the relationship between UNTAET and East Timor’s CNRT leadership, leading to a series of

fundamental changes in governance throughout the transitional period. During the first eight months of operation, UNTAET and CNRT operated essentially as parallel structures, as the East Timorese judged options for participation within the transitional authority inadequate (Gorjão, 2002). Father Filomeno Jacob, head of education for CNRT during this period explained: “CNRT had no funds, UNTAET had no plans.” In an attempt to bridge the divide between competing leadership, UNTAET’s pillar of Governance and Public Administration transitioned into a new East Timor Transitional Administration (ETTA) in August 2000. The hand-picked joint UNTAET/East Timorese cabinet led efforts toward power-sharing; known as ‘Timorization’, a process which involved the overall integration of structures and staff (Scott, 2001: 27). A year later, after the Constituent Assembly was voted in to prepare for independence, the first elected government of East Timor was sworn in. Although it remained transitional in nature, this administration was seen as a precursor to the independent government that came into power eight months later.

Educational leadership

These governance changes affected the education sector as much as any other. Initially formed as the Division of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports within UNTAET’s Department of Social Services, the sector was led by a team of international staff. Although attempts were reportedly made to collaborate with the CNRT education team, results were mixed. In certain districts UNTAET education officers quickly hired temporary staff to manage administration. In others, CNRT officials continued in this role for months. In a paper reviewing education in East Timor, UNTAET district education officer Yiftach Millo contends that there was essentially “a dual system of authority, with CNRT’s legitimacy rooted in support at the local level, and UNTAET’s legitimacy rooted in international law”. (Millo and Barnett, 2003: 9). While this may be slightly overstating the case, the issue bears consideration. Many of those interviewed reported that confusion of leadership meant that it was often difficult to get decisions made in the early days – when needs were so desperate.

The creation of ETTA officially brought the two teams together nearly a year after the popular consultation, with the East Timorese Father Filomeno Jacob in charge of this new Education Division within the Department of Social Affairs. As a strong personality with equally strong ideas, Jacob struggled to establish an education system led by a group of

dedicated East Timorese with little experience, supported by a group of experienced internationals with limited cultural understanding. But integration, legitimacy and progress are not easily achieved. According to one observer, “there was only one official education division made up of both internationals and East Timorese, but in practice there continued to be two.” While authority was finally in indigenous hands, UNICEF’s João Pereira (2001) points out that “the complexity of change and its demands, particularly on newly appointed and often inexperienced East Timorese decision-makers and administrators, constrained ... programme planning and implementation”.

When the second transitional government was installed another year later, education commanded its own ministry. On 20 September 2001, Armindo Maia was sworn in as the first head of MECYS. Operating for a short eight months before independence, this era was characterized by the formation of what would quickly transition into a permanent education authority. By this time, many international staff had already left under the process of ‘Timorization’; those who had not only had a few months for capacity building on the appointment of permanent MECYS employees. The transition was complicated by confusion regarding UNTAET’s role in direct governance versus capacity building, “UNTAET staff members often worked diligently in an effort to carry out their technical functions at the expense of transferring skills to their counterparts” (King’s College London, 2003: 256). Several UNTAET district education officers concurred with a colleague’s statement that “fortunately there was enough flexibility in the field to focus on capacity building when it was not yet the flavour of the day in Dili”.

With little time and limited resources, educational leadership in East Timor had to make hard choices about sequencing interventions and resource allocation. The primary aim was to return children to the classroom as fast as possible. To achieve this, activities were primarily centred on restoration of educational infrastructure. Efforts to address policy and delivery problems facing the system, such as maintaining increasing enrolments, quality issues in language and curriculum, and establishing sustainable public financing took second place (World Bank, 2002*b*: 58). One review of the transitional authority asserts that education efforts were too heavily influenced by emergency logic. Areas such as “teacher training and administrative capacity-building were treated as being of lower priority” (King’s College London, 2003: 253). Also, limited effort was

put into decentralization at a time when this was actually crucial due to transport and communication difficulties. “Limited experience of UN practices and procedures, a demand for decision-making and action across all parts of the sector, and the need to establish completely new administrative structures have all contributed to the slower process of decision-making” (Pereira, 2001).

Donor efforts

During the transition, there was understandably a large – and what some would argue precarious – reliance on donor contributions. Of course, as Wu (2000: viii) put it, “these are one-time opportunities that are unlikely to repeat in the future”. Overall, the donor response to the East Timor crisis has been described as “remarkably generous, and unusually rapid”, especially given the tiny size and remote location of the territory (Hunt, 2002). In the first donor conference held in December 1999 in Tokyo, US\$522 million was pledged over three years, in addition to US\$149 million promised for emergency response. This reliance on donor funding may have had implications for local legitimacy. Millo and Barnett (2003: 9) argue that the international community’s extensive role in setting the education sector agenda meant that “accountability was therefore primarily to foreign stakeholders and the UN in New York”.

Within available funds, UNTAET and the donor community accorded a relatively high priority to the education sector. A World Bank paper on education outlined how, under the transitional administration, the sector was second only to infrastructure in public finance allocations. In 2000/2001, the amount available for education totalled US\$45.1 million. There were three main ways in which these monies were disbursed, respectively making up 30 per cent, 23 per cent and 47 percent of the total (Wu, 2000: 18). They were: (a) Consolidated Fund for East Timor (CFET) which covered wages and salaries, goods and services and capital expenditure of ETTA; (b) Trust Fund for East Timor (TFET) for rehabilitation and investment channelled through the School System Revitalization Programme (SSRP); and (c) bilateral contributions, which came in various forms including aid-in-kind, technical assistance and scholarships.

The bulk of an education system’s expense is spent on wages for teachers and other education personnel, regular replacement of textbooks and on-going maintenance of school buildings. In East Timor, these kinds

of recurrent costs are covered by CFET. Salaries accounted for approximately 75 per cent of the costs of this consolidated fund, with goods and services making up the other 25 per cent (Wu, 2000: 18). To recover from the crisis that East Timor had just undergone, there was of course a need to do more than cover recurrent costs. The multi-donor Trust Fund for East Timor (TFET) was created at the Tokyo donors' meeting and authorized by United Nations Security Council (1999b: 13) Resolution 1272 as a means to pool donors' money for post-conflict reconstruction needs. TFET (2000) grants included sectoral programmes in the areas of agriculture, education, health, infrastructure and water and sanitation. There was no sovereign borrower, with UNTAET instead acting on behalf of a future independent government. TFET funds were first available to education through Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), with monies designated by districts to rehabilitate a few schools. The bulk of TFET for education was spent through the SSRP, described below, which in essence formed a sector-wide approach.

In addition to contributing to multi-donor funds, a number of donors offered individual support to education. In most emergencies, Portugal is not considered a large donor; however, because of historical ties it played an influential role in the aftermath of the East Timor crisis. According to La'o Hamutuk (2001), the education sector has received the largest amount of Portuguese assistance at over half of the available monies. A former staff member of the Portuguese Mission explained that the programme had focused on strengthening Portuguese as the language of instruction. Among its larger initiatives, it provided language training for teachers, procured textbooks and supported scholarships for tertiary education. Brazil also channelled assistance based on its language ties; its funds have primarily been directed at non-formal education in the form of literacy campaigns and vocational education.

While Australia is geographically close, observers say it was cautious in support to education due to language issues and the possibility of being accused of undue influence. Instead, AusAID focused on offering consultants to advise on areas such as management for school reconstruction, technical and vocational education and student achievement and examinations. There have also been Australian-funded projects on general teacher training. The Japanese International Co-operation Agency (JICA) has also supported education, providing monies for school roofs and the refurbishment of a university engineering faculty. USAID

contributed to school roofing and rehabilitation and the European Community Humanitarian Organization (ECHO) installed latrines at rehabilitated schools (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2000). Some donors have supported the locally-led reconstruction of schools; for instance, Irish Aid funded a small grants programme channelled through newly formed Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) that led to the rehabilitation of eight schools. Unfortunately, several donors expressed in interviews that they had been somewhat deterred in their contributions to the education sector due to language policies instituted by the East Timorese.

Finally, Victoria Markwick-Smith, an UNTAET education advisor, explained how a significant number of international donors supported East Timorese university students to return to finish their studies in Indonesia or to undertake them elsewhere. Before the referendum, about 4,000 were at Indonesian universities and approximately 2,000 wanted to return to continue their studies after the referendum. The governments of Australia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Japan and Portugal, as well as the Ford Foundation, the World Health Organization (WHO), and Caritas Norway and its Bishop Belo Scholarship Program all supported this effort (La'o Hamutuk, 2002). The governments of Portugal, Australia, Ireland and Norway all funded a certain number of East Timorese students to undertake their studies at universities of the supporting country.

Table 5.1 Major donors involved in the education sector

<i>Area of concentration</i>	<i>Donor</i>
School rehabilitation	World Bank (TFET), AusAID, Irish Aid
Language training for teachers	Portugal
Teacher training	AusAID, UNICEF
Textbook printing and distribution	Portugal
Re-roofing of schools	UNICEF, USAID, JICA
Water and latrines	ECHO
Vocational training, literacy programme	Brazil, AusAID
Distance learning for youth and adults	World Bank, Brazil
Scholarships [for study overseas]	Portugal, AusAid, Indonesia, JICA

Source: Adapted from TFET, 2002: 27.

School System Revitalization Programme (SSRP)

Supported through the multi-donor TFET, SSRP was planned as a large-scale effort to restore the education system. Put together and

administered by the World Bank, along with representatives from UNTAET's Division of Education and CNRT, the SSRP was designed based on the findings of the JAM education assessment, UNTAET's (2000) work plan for education and CNRT's (1999) pre-consultation work on education (World Bank, 2003). During the negotiation period for the project, CNRT was consulted as the major stakeholder. They could not, however, be the legal recipients, and instead UNTAET's Division of Education served as signatory for the grant. According to one UNTAET official, at first "CNRT was not happy with the set up and at times would not participate" prior to the formation of ETTA. As governance structures evolved, each successive education authority has taken over programme management.

SSRP's overall purpose was "to improve the quality and relevance of education available to East Timorese children and youth" (World Bank, 2000: 3). It was planned in three phases:

Phase 1

The Emergency School Readiness Project (ESRP) was meant to "provide school age children and youth with opportunities for education at the basic operational level"; that is, having safe school buildings with basic furniture, textbooks and learning materials and management support. With an overall emphasis on primary education, the project focused on rebuilding school infrastructure – rehabilitating classrooms, providing furniture and constructing several prototype schools (World Bank, 2000: 9). Supported by a TFET grant of US\$13.9 million, ESRP became effective in August 2000 and closed June 2002, a year later than originally planned (TFET, 2002). ESRP and subsequent project also included efforts to provide teaching/learning materials, promote social communication and mobilization and to advance policy development.

Phase 2

The Fundamental School Quality Project (FSQP) was designed to follow-on the ESRP. Its aim was to "maintain the existing level of primary education enrolment and to restore junior secondary education to the pre-1999 level", as well as "continue to recover quality ... by rehabilitating physical facilities and by providing textbooks and instructional materials". Donors agreed to another US\$13.9 million to fund the construction of five integrated primary and junior secondary schools and upgrade nine others

to this same integrated model called *escola básica*. Repair of 65 primary schools to a “fundamental quality standard” was also planned (World Bank, 2001). Although the FSQP grant was agreed in October 2001, the project only began May 2002 due to delays in finalizing government land policies (TFET, 2002: 30).

Phase 3

The Enhanced School Quality Project was planned as block grants to be disbursed to school-community councils to spend as they saw fit to improve their school. Assistance for “a programme of professional support to teachers” was also planned (World Bank, 2002b: 3). Although this project was originally meant to follow the FSQP, staff now say that, given the funding climate, there will not be an opportunity to implement this final phase, and some of its goals will be integrated into the prior phase.

The ESRP was the most important education programme put into operation under the transitional administration. Overall, it was well received (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2002: 3). Its successes included 2,780 classrooms in 535 schools that were rehabilitated to a ‘basic operational level’ and five primary and junior secondary prototype schools that were built. Over 2 million textbooks were distributed, of which approximately 75 per cent were Indonesian textbooks, 15 per cent were Portuguese textbooks, and a final 10 per cent were non-language picture books. Altogether, 72,484 sets of school furniture catering to 129,968 students were delivered to schools, as well as 2,000 sets of teachers’ furniture. Audio-visual promotional clips and documentaries about the project were produced, along with various brochures explaining the project in all four languages (MECYS, 2002).

Notwithstanding these accomplishments, delays plagued the start-up of ESRP and criticism has continued to the end. Some observers comment that it was too heavily focused on infrastructure, too centralized and too reliant on CNRT information alone. One district education official claimed that the choice of schools for the first round, made entirely without consulting the district UNTAET office, was disastrous – some schools had even already been repaired and others were likely chosen due to connections. Procurement of school furniture was beset with problems, exacerbated by the fact that the World Bank’s implementation regulations were not altered in light of the emergency nature of the project. Many of

its original assumptions, such as those around double-shifting, community participation and distribution of materials, were not realized. Policy priorities such as national education law, curriculum reform and the functioning of the MECYS were in the end not dealt with (World Bank, 2003). When interviewed, project leader Francisco Osler concluded that “although addressed, education elements outside physical rehabilitation were relatively neglected by the project”.

A Project Management Unit (PMU) maintained continuity in managing ESRP under each variation of transitional authority, making the changes less disruptive than they might have been. At first, all staff of PMU were UNTAET Education Division staff. While this lessened communication difficulties, it also meant that hard choices needed to be made regarding which issues would receive attention, as all staff were overwhelmed with their workloads. In retrospect, members of the team itself have questioned the composition of the PMU. One of the early problems was the fact that there were at first no full-time procurement specialists hired who were familiar with World Bank procedures. Some interviewed suggested that a lack of professional educators in PMU may have skewed the focus towards infrastructure at expense of content and delivery. One staff expressed concern that progress reports for donors were required too frequently and that “more time [was] spent on reporting than on doing”.

Restoring infrastructure

In planning interventions for the education sector, the World Bank (2000: 7) stated that “the urgent reconstruction of school buildings must be the main objective of any emergency education project at this time – without safe, covered school buildings there can be no formal education”. The priority of infrastructure was reinforced a year later, when the World Bank (2001: 3) again claimed that: “The post-referendum destruction in 1999 has made reconstruction ... issue over the short term.” Although there were no comprehensive figures on school conditions until school mapping was conducted in 2001, that exercise identified 919 functioning schools in East Timor, with a total of 4,952 functioning classrooms – with nearly 50 per cent in bad shape or irrecoverable. Because some rehabilitation had already been completed, this figure was lower than original estimates, assuming up to 95 per cent destruction. Either way,

schools were clearly in poor condition; according to the mapping, only 26 per cent of schools had drinking water, 65 per cent had toilets (far fewer according to those on the ground) and 10 per cent had electric power (CESUR, 2001: 13).

The reconstruction of schools and related components fell under the activities framework of the multi-donor ESRP. Classroom rehabilitation was managed in close co-operation with UNICEF, which was responsible for re-roofing schools. Although a few international NGOs and PKFs also contributed in rehabilitation and re-roofing, there appear to be no central records on their activities. In addition to rehabilitation, ESRP constructed a small group of primary and secondary prototype schools. It also procured school furniture, approximately 40 per cent from within East Timor and 60 per cent from abroad. Under the auspices of ESRP, textbooks were acquired both from Indonesia and Portugal, as well as picture books from Finland. Finally, a comprehensive school mapping was also carried out.

School rehabilitation

A team of East Timorese engineers and school architects, hired in early 2000 to conduct a civil engineering survey, reported that nearly half the schools surveyed needed to be demolished and replaced (World Bank, 2000: 7). This was not possible given resource constraints, and a more realistic plan for rehabilitation was adopted. According to MECYS (2001), District Education Committees made the decision on which schools to rehabilitate, based on damage reports and enrolment estimates. UNTAET's district offices were, oddly, not consulted, according to one former district education staff member. In some districts, selections fell foul of favouritism, leaving out schools with greater need. This was somewhat rectified in a second selection process months later. A group of supervising engineers then set out to inspect the schools selected to assess whether they were repairable, and if so, to scope the repair works (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2001a).

School principals, in consultation with school councils where they existed, managed the rehabilitation. As deemed appropriate, this could be done through volunteer labour or sub-contracted. However, local volunteer labour was rare and hard to get – partly due to the fact that early on all rehabilitation projects were supported through the WFP food-for-work scheme. Overall, some US\$1.19 million was paid out to communities for

work on minor school construction. In addition to local volunteer labour, 52 different local businesses and community co-operatives were contracted to rehabilitate schools (MECYS, 2002). To inform the community of these activities, posters were translated into local languages and posted at school sites (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2000: 5). One UNTAET official, however, commented that “with the culture of written communication still very new to East Timor, it was doubtful that these were looked at”.

School re-roofing was managed by UNICEF, with a number of NGOs and PKF also contributing in this area. Initially decisions on which schools to prioritize were made by the District Education Committee, with UNICEF, stipulating the criteria that the “existing school structure had to be strong enough to support the roof”. Following the inception of the ESRP, decisions on which schools to target came through its office. In all, 349 primary schools and 36 secondary schools were re-roofed. Additionally, ceilings were installed on 448 classrooms and electricity installed at 13 schools (Estrochio-Martins, 2002). In an ESRP review in 2002, it was noted that strong winds had unfortunately already blown some of the new school roofs away (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2002).

The original ESRP Project Appraisal Document outlines that four prototype schools would also be built – two as ‘community schools’ and two as ‘resource schools’ (World Bank, 2000). Later, this concept was changed to construction of several primary schools and junior secondary schools. A foreign firm was contracted to develop the design for prototype schools; however, once the plans were shown to a group of local architects, a number of changes were suggested for cultural reasons. This process of re-design along with setbacks in the selection of sites delayed the beginning of actual construction (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2001a: 5). Even so, by the end of ESRP period, five prototype schools had been built – a primary school each in Baucau and Manatuto and three junior secondary schools located in Oecussi, Same and Maliana.

All construction work under ESRP was completed by April 2002. “Although the original ESRP target for school reconstruction was 700 schools, due to savings in construction costs, the final result was 535 schools with an increase in the number of classrooms from 2,100 to 2,780” (MECYS, 2002). According to the World Bank, project achievement surpassed the appraisal target by 32 per cent. Not everyone saw this as a

success, however; with teachers claiming that “if they had known how long it would take for the international community to repair their school; they would have done it themselves” and that “even though they could have made doors and chairs from bamboo, they did not want to jeopardize their chance at getting their allocation from the internationals” (UNICEF, 2001b: 8). The Joint Donor Education Sector Mission (2002: 1) claimed that after the ESRP rehabilitation was complete, about 48 per cent of children continued to attend school in overcrowded or unsafe structures. Their estimates showed that some 2,550 additional classrooms still needed rehabilitation (Planning Commission, 2002; Stringer, 2002).

Box 7. Example of an ESRP rehabilitated school

The SDN Biacou School in Bobonaro District consists of one 3-classroom unit that has been renovated and has 150 pupils. The roof, including roof sheets, purlins and trusses, were replaced by an [international NGO] and new doors, mesh to windows and interior and exterior painting were provided by ESRP. IOM are fixing ceilings to the three classrooms. Unfortunately, the roof trusses were very badly built (probably without any supervision) and should really be taken down and re-built. Apart from this, the classrooms are now in reasonable condition. There are toilets at one end of the building but they require renovation. There is, however, no water supply on site and there would be no point in renovation unless a well or other water supply is provided. Forty sets of furniture (for 80 pupils) were also supplied by ESRP and these are well made. Furniture is still required for the third classroom.

Source: Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2001b.

School furniture

The process of procuring school furniture started in September 2000, with distribution beginning in March 2001 (Division of Education, 2001b). Two furniture designs were selected, one by German Agro Action (GAA) and another by UNESCO. The first consisted of one desk with a bench seat for two students, the second had one desk and two chairs (Division of Education, 2001b). Student furniture came in three main sizes – for grades 1 to 3, grades 4 to 6 and for secondary school (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2002: 3). Teachers’ sets, made up of a desk, chair and lockable cabinet, were also manufactured. The original plan for

procurement of school furniture involved the purchase of 100,000 sets of plastic desks and chairs from abroad. Local stakeholders, however, resisted this scheme for two reasons: plastic was not thought to be of high enough quality, and there was a desire for the local carpentry industry to benefit from the project.

For these reasons, a new plan was made, with all furniture being made of wood and about 40 per cent of the sets produced domestically. Unfortunately, this led to higher costs and delays in production. According to the Office of the Inspector General (2001: 7), a set of student furniture produced in East Timor cost on average US\$30.79 – “a considerable figure ... which [was] not justified by the quality of the furniture”. On examination, that office also found a number of irregularities in tendering and bidding, and the process was re-opened. Eventually, an initial 54,484 sets of student and 2,000 sets of teacher furniture were delivered to schools. Where access was difficult, the American Marines assisted by airlifting furniture by helicopter. In the second half of 2002, another 18,000 sets were ordered and delivered, bringing the total to 72,484 (MECYS, 2002). This number, however, still fell short of reaching the planned 100,000 students, determined based on the assumption that schools would operate double shifts. As single shift schools continued to be the norm, school furniture “covers only about 85 per cent of the current enrolments at the senior secondary level, 116 per cent at the junior secondary level, and 42 per cent at the primary level” (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2002: 9).

Even on completion, controversy continued to surround the school furniture procurement process. The Joint Donor Education Sector Mission (2002: 10) claimed that “if the nature of the ‘emergency’ is interpreted not only in educational terms, but also in economic terms, the new plan struck a reasonable balance between the two interpretations”. However, it emphasized that “generation of local income and employment was not the main objective of the project”. Even so, the local NGO La’o Hamutuk (2001: 6), raised concerns that the “use of international competitive bidding procedures ... imposed requirements which essentially eliminate[d] small local companies from the process”. The Office of the Inspector General (2001: 5), after outlining clear policy conflicts between ‘local shopping’ and ‘open competition’, explains that “ESRP gave priority to local shopping in order to support the Timorese economy and labour market. However, to

conduct the local shopping, [it] had to breach regulation in one way or the other”. While not easy to rectify, as one former UNTAET staff suggests, “local contracting could have been combined with international supervision through NGOs”.

Instructional materials

To select student learning materials and textbooks, a committee of around 70 teachers met in early 2000 under the guidance of UNTAET’s Division of Education. Because it had been agreed that Bahasa Indonesian materials would be used as a transitional measure, samples of various Indonesian textbooks were shipped in to be considered. This committee recommended a set that required only minimal changes to their original versions and marked text to be cut. One teacher involved commented that textbooks were chosen “out of familiarity rather than any discussion on real education aims for the future”, but as former UNTAET education advisor Trina Supit explained, “given the urgent context this is hardly surprising”. Portuguese textbooks and picture books produced in Finland were also added to this procurement. The Joint Donor Education Sector Mission (2001a) provided a description of the books:

- *Indonesian textbooks.* Purchased from Indonesian publishers, photos of East Timorese children were put on the covers of these books, a preface by CNRT leader and future president Xanana Gusmão was added, and controversial texts around history and national identity were removed.
- *Portuguese textbooks.* Portuguese books were purchased for grades 1 and 2 in the subjects of language, mathematics, and social and physical studies. For grades 3 to 6 and all secondary school grades, language books were purchased.
- *Picture books.* For grade 1, picture books were purchased to help build communication skills. Sourced from Finland, these were wordless books used to encourage discussion in the mother tongue or facilitate second language teaching.

Through the World Bank financed ESRP, a total of 2,073,400 textbooks were ordered and given out free of charge; of these, 1,584,600 were Indonesian textbooks, another 272,800 were Portuguese, and 216,000 were picture books for first graders (MECYS, 2002). In addition, the Portuguese Government donated 120,000 textbooks in

mathematics and social studies for grade 1 and 2 students (Lee, 2002). Once received, textbooks were distributed to districts and then to schools. While the first stage of this operation went as planned, the second did not. It was initially thought that community volunteers could take textbooks out to schools, but as one UNTAET district official explained, “this was unrealistic given the lack of available transportation”. Requests made to the PKF and international NGOs to assist in distribution to the more remote areas could not be relied upon as they were followed through at the convenience of the assisting group. The UNTAET education officer went on to say “we had to almost strike and stop distributions before Dili allocated a handling budget”. Because deliveries from publishers started arriving only in October 2000, the same month that the schools were re-opened, distribution targets were met in only 5 per cent of the cases. It took seven months to fully distribute the first set of deliveries amounting to nearly 1.2 million textbooks (TFET, 2001).

Box 8. Audio-visual productions promoting education

ESRP’s Social Mobilization and Communication Unit started late in the project’s cycle, and struggled with the fact that most of the population did not have access to the television and newspapers that were its targeted media outlets. In addition to functioning as the publicity office for the MECYS, the unit produced a series of twelve audio-visual promotional clips and six educational videos in Tetum. Broadcast via the local television station, TVTL, these pieces have been aired on a weekly 30-minute education programme. Some examples of the work include:

- *Higiene ho saude ... hemo be tasak (Hygiene and health ... drink clean water)*
Provides information and education to school children on issues of personal and environmental hygiene. Produced in co-operation with ECHO and Action Contre la Faim (ACF) (01:25 minutes).
- *Waihira ho usa violencia o nunca bele los (Using violence you can never be right)*
Campaign on anti-violence and anti-bullying in schools (02:30 minutes)
- *Telecurso – Língua Portuguesa (Portuguese language courses)*
Regarding the introduction of Portuguese in education, a teacher promotes Portuguese language courses being offered in Dili using TV and video (01:27 minutes)

- *Educação ... Murak mean ba aban bain rua (Education ... golden wealth for the future)*
Features interviews with East Timorese on the value of education for the individual, community and nation. Interviews include: Brigadier General Taur Matan Ruak of the Defence Force of East Timor (FDTL); Benjamin Corte-Real, dean of UNTL; and police woman Sofia de Oliveira Fernandes (in two parts, 43:00 minutes)
- *Organiza an ... participa iha imi nia oan nia educação (Organize yourselves ... participate in your children's education)*
Examples and advice on how to develop a parents' association and involve the community in local schools and the education system (12:00 minutes)

Source: MECYS, 2002.

In UNICEF research conducted by Kara Greenblot (2001: 17), it was found that only 5 per cent of students had a complete set of textbooks, 42 per cent had some textbooks and the remaining 53 per cent had no textbooks at all. Although practices vary from school to school, it appears that out of classroom hours, textbooks are generally kept in a classroom cabinet. There was no initial plan around replenishing texts, although those purchased in late 2000 were expected to last only two years (Lee, 2002). In 2002, members of the Joint Donor Education Sector Mission (2002: 3) found that “textbook quality was adequate”; however, teachers expressed a desire for “books that reflected the environment of Timor-Leste”. Also, there was “frustration expressed” at the difficulties of getting books from the district to school levels, and “more books on more subjects were requested”. Since then, the Portuguese sponsored the adaptation of language books, which now have pictures showing Timorese life.

Education supplies were provided by UNICEF, along with the ETDA Division of Education. UNICEF (2000a) supplied schools with 200,000 sets of notebooks, pens and pencils, as well as over 200 blackboards. The Division of Education, through the ESRP, was meant to be responsible for the remaining needs. According to the Joint Donor Education Sector Mission (2001a: 9), student supplies included: “exercise books, pencils, erasers, ball point pens, a ruler, paper, and watercolour paints (shared among 10 children)”. Teachers’ supplies consisted of “plan books, pens,

pencil sharpeners, scissors, geometric shapes, chalk, chalkboard dusters, a chalkboard, and number charts". Even though amounts were adequate, there were too many of certain items and not enough of others. As one teacher put it, "really, did we need to have three maths textbooks for any single grade?" It seems that the problem was more ad hoc ordering and distribution. The same donor mission mentioned above found that "schools are chronically short of essential supplies and basic instructional materials and evidence of sports equipment is elusive" (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2001b: 2).

School mapping

During 2001, a nation-wide school mapping project was completed over six months. Carried out by Lisbon Technical University's Centro de Sistemas Urbanos e Regionais (CESUR, 2001: 13) in association with the Group for Reconstruction Studies of East Timor (GERTIL), the project examined the physical condition, facilities, catchment area and projected enrolment for each school. In effect, school mapping was a kind of education 'census', as all schools in East Timor were visited to collect detailed information about infrastructure, students and teachers (Redden, 2001: 16). In addition to collecting data, a global positioning system was used to locate all schools on a map of East Timor. The results of the school mapping are being used to rationalize school distribution around the country, including identification of schools to upgrade under FSQP. The most significant of these was that primary and junior secondary school should be combined into one building called an *escola básica* (or basic school). Because these levels of education are compulsory in East Timor, it was hoped that this change would reduce the incidence of students dropping out after completing primary school.

Escolas básicas are envisaged to function as a kind of nuclear school, with students based at outlying primary schools attending a minimum of once a week (CESUR, 2001: 16). The exercise suggested the conversion of 60 primary and 21 junior secondary schools into *escolas básicas*. Choosing which schools to become *escolas básicas* and which schools to close is an immensely contentious process. During the Indonesian period there was a deceptive rise in village populations due to forced movements and the *transmigrasi* policy. A number of families have returned to their ancestral lands since the popular consultation and schools in these 'false' villages are no longer necessary. Other schools

were built on land that the Indonesians claimed, but in reality is subject to title disputes. There are questions as to how population movements and legal challenges to land claims might affect school sites. As the school mapping was completed while populations were still resettling, some are concerned that this data was used in determining schools sites for upgrading under FSQP (TFET, 2002: 28).

Inside the classroom

Re-establishing the school system has meant struggling not only with hardware that creates space and provides tools for learning; it has necessitated tackling what happens inside the classroom as well. Who will teach children? What language will be used? How is a new curriculum developed? While these issues and others had to be addressed by the transitional administration, at least to a certain extent, there was often hesitation in making policy-related decisions. Doyle (2001) suggested that “East Timor seems like a case of lots of project and activity underway, but little policy development underpinning them”. One root of this reluctance to delve into policy can be found in the nature of the transitional authority itself. In writing more generally on transition in East Timor, Gorjão (2002: 330) describes what he sees as a paradox: “On the one hand, [international transitional administrations] have enormous influence concerning the political decisions to be taken during the transition to democracy ... On the other hand, their lack of a democratic mandate ... constrains significantly their political power.” On the issues of teaching, language and curriculum, one can see that leadership made necessary decisions, but – with the exception of language – avoided initiatives that would set a policy precedent.

The teaching force

For East Timor, as elsewhere, “teachers are the single most important factor to determine the quality of education” (World Bank, 2002b: 61). Despite that reality, there is little evidence that teachers were given support throughout the transition period, especially in terms of training and career development. Selection of permanent teaching positions involved significant effort, and although marred with irregularities at the time, the long-term results proved to be relatively successful. As plans to officially re-open the schools in October 2000 were made, it became apparent that the 7,000 primary school teachers under the UNICEF incentive scheme were

more than could be maintained in the civil service. Yet it would be difficult to select the most qualified or experienced as most had lost their academic papers and credentials. Also, relatively low levels of education were attained under both the Portuguese and the Indonesians, the number of qualified teachers available was limited, particularly secondary school teachers. As such, there was a need to 're-recruit' teachers at both levels.

Selection

It was decided that a test would be the fairest way to determine skill levels and knowledge for primary school teachers. The budget would allow for 3,000 primary teachers, and only 5,400 of the 7,000 teaching as volunteers were eligible or wanted to sit the examination; this still left 2,400 to be eliminated as fairly and impartially as possible. While the UNTAET Division of Education maintained official responsibility for selection, staff involved in managing the process reported that many of the decisions were devolved to the CNRT. However, it was not until September 2000, after the recruitment was more or less complete and ETTA had been formed, that responsibility for recruitment was formalized with the Public Service Commission. This absence of clear responsibility created significant problems later, when a lack of regulation led to confusion between districts.

Based on verbal agreements, preparation for the recruitment test began in March that year. A team of 12 East Timorese educationalists, supported through Australian Volunteers International (AVI), prepared the test. It was written in Bahasa Indonesian – the most common language used in schools. Comprised of two parts, the first was designed to test knowledge of mathematics, social science and natural science, and the second to test skills in educational, developmental and child psychology. Part two was eventually dropped as a selection determinant as it was decided that most candidates would have limited knowledge in pedagogy. Examinations were administered in all 13 district offices and 64 sub-district offices in May 2000, with PKF providing security. They were then marked by computer in Australia (Office of the Inspector General, 2000). As a whole, test scores were relatively poor; on a scale of 100 points, the mean throughout the country varied between 31 and 50 points (Lee, 2002).

Appointments for primary and secondary school teachers were announced on 18 August 2000. A number of corruption allegations soon arose, and unfortunately certain CNRT officials were singled out. In some

places teachers with lower marks got jobs over those with higher marks, while in others teachers selected had not even sat the examination. The new Inspector General, Mariano Lopes da Cruz, was called in to conduct his first inquiry. Upon investigation, the Inspector General concluded that deviations by districts were generally due to misunderstanding the selection process or a response to community pressures, although in several districts there was apparent collusion. Problems cited with the process included that “instructions for recruitment of primary teachers ... were written in English and were directed to the UNTAET education officer, not to the CNRT Education Committee”. Also, “many teachers’ names [were] incorrectly spelt leading to misidentification, wrongful appointments, multiple assignments and wrongful payments” (Office of the Inspector General, 2000: 1-2). These issues were addressed through a series of corrective recommendations, which included dismissing and re-instating some teachers.

As for selection of secondary teachers, a test was not needed and recruitment was based on subject area qualifications. Candidates were asked to fill in a questionnaire and were interviewed at a district level by a panel made up of staff from both UNTAET and CNRT. Overall, the process for secondary teachers was less controversial, although there were some problems such as teacher allocation in incorrect proportion to student numbers and payroll errors. These were later corrected through an appeals process (Office of the Inspector General, 2000). The bigger problem was one of attrition, as many teachers were in fact university students who dropped out as soon as UNATIL opened. Later that year, the Portuguese Mission also facilitated a test to identify teachers for the Portuguese language. Only 5 per cent (158 out of 3,000 individuals) achieved a pass mark, thus leaving no issues of selection other than the very serious concern that a school system meant to be teaching in Portuguese was gravely short of teachers who could speak the language.

Table 5.2 Recruitment process for primary and secondary school teachers

	<i>Primary school teachers</i>	<i>Secondary school teachers</i>
Eligibility	Restricted to school workers	Open competition
Selection pool	Sub-district level	District level
Minimum qualifications	Secondary education	Six semesters at university
Selection criteria	Examination results	Qualifications and subject area

Source: Office of the Inspector General, 2000.

Training

Because of the low levels of teacher qualifications and experience, upgrading teachers' skills was identified as a major educational priority in this period (UNDP, 2002: 5). Even so, there seem to have been limited attempts at teacher training. UNICEF (2002: 4) claimed that by the time "the East Timorese Education sector [was] entering its fourth school year ... as yet there has still been no substantial attempt to effectively train teachers". According to Marcial Salvatierra, a former head of UNTAET's Division of Education, this was primarily due to uncertainties in curriculum and governance. Yet teachers were facing three major skill challenges: gaining proficiency in Portuguese as a language of instruction, teaching in the absence of a finalized curriculum, and incorporating improved pedagogy such as multi-grade teaching or active learning methods.

In early 2000, UNICEF and some Australian groups attempted to offer a modest programme of in-service training (Pereira, 2001). According to one attendee, CNRT education officials at the time stopped these efforts, possibly due to uncertainties of language and curriculum. Similar withdrawals from teacher training plans occurred in certain districts, "most likely due to internal politics between district and central level powers" (Nicolai, 2000: 19). This meant that no in-service training was available for teachers during most of the emergency and transition periods. For the 2000/2001 school year, only 106 of the 2,091 secondary school teachers had formal training (UNDP, 2002: 52). Because of limits in language proficiency, early teacher training had to be conducted in Bahasa Indonesian to be effective, often with translation to Tetum or another local language

(Pereira, 2001). These complications placed constraints on the ease of communication, and sometimes contributed to misunderstanding of concepts. Today, responsibility for in-service training rests with the MECYS's Institute of Continuing Education; who, with only three professional staff, must find it difficult to cope with demand. In 2002, the institute was focused on three initiatives: upgrading credentials of 750 primary school teachers, improving school management skills of 850 principals, and providing in-service training for 1,000 primary and secondary school teachers (Lee, 2002).

Pre-service teacher training courses for primary school teachers are not available at the public university. The one site that has just opened its doors to train primary school teachers is the Catholic Teachers College, although two private institutes, "are in the planning stages to offer diploma courses" (Directorate of Higher Education, 2002). Supported both financially and technically by the Marist Brothers of Australia, Brother Mark Paul, head of the Baucau-based college, explained that in October 2003 it will be enrolling 50 students from across East Timor's 13 districts to train as the first intake of new primary teachers in the education system. It also offers a Research and Resource Centre, opened in 2003, providing teachers access to resources not currently available in most schools such as photocopiers, computers and a library. At the secondary level, teacher training is provided through the UNATIL Faculty of Education. Prior to 1999, four fields were covered: Indonesian and English language, biology and mathematics. Since re-opening, Portuguese language, physics and chemistry have been added. Enrolment, however, is uneven; K.W. Lee (2002) explains that in 2002, 250 students were enrolled in the English department versus only two studying physics education.

Remuneration

A lack of career opportunities and absence of incentives to learn exacerbate poor teaching conditions. While overall teacher compensation was increased to four or more times the pre-referendum level, this was along with substantial increases in living expenses (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2000: 4). Teachers' salaries are determined by the civil service pay scale developed in the transitional period. Paid at a flat rate without differentials, there are only three levels which teachers can access; primary teachers receive a Level 3 monthly salary of US\$123, secondary school teachers are placed at Level 4 receiving US\$155 and university

faculty are at Level 5 with a salary of US\$201. Principals are paid as teachers and do not receive allowances for their additional duties (Lee, 2002). A few supervisors and administrators in the system hold positions up to Level 7 (Wu, 2000: 19).

Neither years of service nor educational attainment are factors in determining pay; nor is there opportunity for progressive rises in salary. This pay scale issue has had an impact on teachers' motivation and harmony inside schools. Qualified teachers could not stomach that those who had been teachers for one or two years during Portuguese rule, or young students with no teaching experience but had managed to pass the test, were paid the same as them. This was a particular problem among headmasters, and as they held the school reconstruction budgets, was a potential incentive for corruption according to several UNTAET staff. Moreover, there is no system of incentives to support teacher improvement – such as learning Portuguese – and any professional development is left to the teacher's initiative. The absence of subsidized teachers' housing in rural areas has been reported as a significant factor in teacher absenteeism and reduced classroom hours (Pereira, 2001).

Three years after East Timor broke away from Indonesian occupation, the majority of classrooms continue to be taught by inexperienced and under-prepared teachers, who, according to some, are increasingly unenthusiastic as well. Stringer (2002: 10) cites one school meeting where parents claimed that "sometimes teachers don't attend, don't teach". A group of students at another school reported to Doyle (2001) that "teachers arrive late at school and leave the students to copy from the textbooks while the teachers sit under the tree and chat together". UNTAET district education officer Garrigue explains that they "tried to cope with this problem through a system of unannounced inspection visits, to little avail. In fact, the only thing which seemed to work was to cut off teachers' pay if they had been reportedly absent for more than three days". Of course, some headmasters did not dare report recalcitrant teachers, especially as some were quick to resort to violence. While most teachers no doubt are well meaning, their skill level and conditions of employment make it difficult for some to follow through on those intentions.

Box 9. The story of one teacher

Maria Alzira Soares, a teacher in Dilor Primary School in Viqueque, studied until the fourth class under the Portuguese system. She worked as an assistant teacher between 1973 and 1975, but after the Indonesian invasion got a job in the civil service, where she worked until 1999. Maria has never attended any training to become a teacher, but because of her several years' experience, she began to work as a volunteer in a school in November 1999. She took the teachers' selection test in May 2000, but did not pass and stopped teaching shortly thereafter. In March 2001, her name and the name of two other teachers were added to the teaching list. She has been at Dilor primary school ever since, and is responsible for teaching Portuguese language classes and mathematics up to the second grade. While fluent in Bahasa Indonesian, Tetum Terik (her native language) and Tetum Dili, Maria says that she used to speak Portuguese many years ago, but does not feel comfortable speaking anymore because she has forgotten many words. She points out that "for many years it was dangerous to speak Portuguese, because if the Indonesians heard you ... you would almost certainly be tortured or killed".

Source: UNICEF, 2001b: 35.

Language of instruction

In East Timor, with its multitude of tongues and dialects, there is no easy answer to what language should be used or taught. While its new Constitution designates Portuguese and Tetum as official languages, with Indonesian and English as working languages, the East Timorese speak around 30 languages or dialects (Constituent Assembly, 2002). The national lingua franca is the Dili variant of Tetum, more specifically called Tetum Praça, a trading language that has incorporated words from Portuguese. Although 82 per cent of the population speak Tetum, it is primarily an oral language lacking technical vocabulary (United Nations, 2000: 21). Portuguese was thus also designated as official; unfortunately, there are few East Timorese comfortable speaking it. The 5 per cent who do speak Portuguese typically hail from generations 35 years or older. Throughout the occupation, Portuguese became identified as the language of the independence movement (Arneberg, 1999). The Indonesian language under Portuguese rule was virtually unknown, though today 43 per cent consider themselves fluent. Even so, the fact that Indonesian was the language of the occupier makes its use controversial. English, the last language given

special status, is spoken by only 2 per cent of East Timorese (UNDP, 2002: 3).

The most pervasive – and the most polarizing – policy debate regarding the education system revolved around the language of instruction. Use of Portuguese is generally pushed by a political elite, who reference its linguistic and cultural significance for East Timor. Academics like Benjamin Corte-Real argue for Portuguese as a link to other Lusophone nations, and a means to expand technical vocabulary. Corte-Real points out that “in some ways, Portuguese is the best unifier available, as native speakers of Timorese languages such as Mambai and Fataluku can be resistant to accepting Tetum”. However valid these reasons, the majority of teachers and students interviewed did not agree with the use of Portuguese for schooling. Young people in particular would like to see Indonesian – or Malay as it is now often called – continue to be used in schools. They have been educated in the language, see it as vital for trade relations, and believe Portuguese excludes them from political processes. While there are those who would want Tetum, it is generally conceded that a standardized orthography needs developing, which may take a decade or more (Kessler, 2002).

As an interim measure, Bahasa Indonesian is being used as the language of instruction, as since 1976 this has been the only language officially used in schools. However, a decision has been taken that Portuguese will eventually be the language of instruction, and as such is being progressively introduced in the classroom. Each year, an additional grade is taught in Portuguese; in 1999, the language was introduced for grade 1 and by 2002, grades 1 to 4 are being taught in Portuguese. In 2008, Portuguese will be introduced throughout secondary school and there are plans to teach all university subjects in Portuguese by 2010 (UNDP, 2002: 51). According to the Planning Commission (2002: 45): “One of the most difficult tasks for schools in the years ahead will be to extend both the use of Portuguese language and the standardization of Tetum for use in schools.”

There is a great shortfall of primary teachers who can teach in Portuguese. Lee (2002: 12) describes failures in recruitment: “In August 2001, [MECYS] announced a recruitment of 700 primary school teachers who can teach children in Portuguese, especially in grades 1 to 3. About 3,000 persons applied for the test, but only 300 teachers were selected

because of the unsatisfactory level of many applicants' proficiency in Portuguese." To provide language training, the administration entered into a bilateral agreement with Portugal. Some 170 teachers from Portugal, facilitated by the Instituto Camões and the Federation of Portuguese Universities, have been in the country since 2000 offering lessons to about 3,000 primary school teachers, 500 secondary school teachers and directly in the classroom to an estimated 30,000 students. Teacher training is scheduled four hours once a week, as Portuguese teachers rotate their class locations throughout the sub-districts. However, a number of teachers have reportedly dropped out as it is not compulsory, and there is no testing to measure proficiency levels (Lee, 2002).

Box 10. Tetum literacy programme

Since 1993, the Mary MacKillop Institute of East Timorese Studies has worked in close co-operation with Bishop Belo and Catholic Education Authorities to develop teaching-learning materials in Tetum. Aiming to revitalize and strengthen Tetum as a language medium and increase access to Tetum-language education materials, the literacy programme 'Mai Hatene Tetun' supports learning in the Tetum language for primary and secondary school children. The programme has been implemented in 60 Catholic schools. Although there have been a few state schools which informally use the materials, because of unresolved questions of Tetum orthography, there has not been any official sanction or adoption of these materials.

This project produces children's books for a graded reading programme, together with teachers' manuals suggesting the best practices and strategies for teaching. To date, East Timorese writers and Australian linguists have worked with the Mary MacKillop Institute to produce Tetum books for primary grades 1, 2 and 3. This has included 27 small books for children at each level with accompanying big books for teachers, as well as teachers' manuals. The books are illustrated in full colour. Three storybooks and several charts have been produced for kindergarten level and other resources are being developed. Ten thousand copies of the children's books have been printed and teachers' books have also been distributed.

Source: Mary MacKillop Institute, 2003.

Although official policy decisions have already been made around language, much debate continues. Not all internationalists agree with the emphasis on Portuguese, primarily due to the fact that issues of mother tongue learning and student attainment have not been addressed. Even so, most have steered clear of the debate; as the World Bank's Ron Isaacson expressed, "at the end of the day, languages is officially a country concern". In one of the more creative attempts to broach these issues, in 2001 the World Bank facilitated a videoconference between education officials in East Timor and in Mozambique, which also uses Portuguese as the language of instruction. During the meeting, Mozambique outlined lessons learned in "introducing Portuguese at the primary level, after initial literacy in the mother tongue". Related issues were discussed, including materials production, curriculum development, teacher training and adult literacy. As a result, "East Timor said they are now considering the use of Tetum in instruction to improve education efficiency" (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2001*b*: 2). However, in the two years since then, there have been no public moves to this end.

Curriculum development

UNICEF (2002: 4) was of the opinion that "language issues or more specifically, which language should be adopted in schools, have tended to dominate policy debates when in fact, there are many other pressing issues that should be addressed". Some say that one of these other issues was curriculum. While much has been achieved in restarting the education sector and rehabilitating schools, "the desired education efficiency and quality may not be achieved unless fundamental curriculum guidance can be provided ... and teachers provided with adequate support" (TFET, 2002: 32). Others interviewed say that it was appropriate to wait, and to begin a curriculum development process once independence arrived. During the earliest stages of the crisis, JAM stated that "There should not be a large investment in curriculum resources during the first year, but teachers should be encouraged to use what can be found or purchased cheaply within the region. Curriculum development is a task for the medium term and will require funds to be shared with new textbooks and teaching aids" (World Bank, 1999: 9).

These early recommendations to avoid developing curriculum meant that there was little movement on this issue throughout the transitional period. This gap is not only due to the findings of JAM, but also due to the

fact that there were few East Timorese with experience in curriculum development, as the former Indonesian curriculum did not allow for the inclusion of 'local content' (Odling-Smee, 1999). Given the fact that reform of the curriculum involved "definitions of Timorese identity, nation building, cultural values and religious morality", postponing it seems somewhat justified (Millo and Barnett, 2003: 10). However, throughout the transitional period, the urgency to have some resolution in this area continued to build. Having a school curriculum in place would provide a sounder basis for textbook selection, teacher in-service training, achievement testing and financial planning in the basic education sector, rather than without it. Added to this lack of curriculum, the combination of textbook shortages and the general reliance on rote learning has meant that much of a student's day is spent copying information from the blackboard (UNDP, 2002: 53).

Because there was little movement on curriculum development, more efforts seem to have been put in on teachers' guides, which would at least provide ideas on teaching particular subjects. UNICEF supported the development of teaching manuals in mathematics for upper primary school teachers, as well as a health education syllabus for grades 1 through 6 (Pereira, 2001). A teachers' guide in physics was prepared for secondary school, focused on providing examples of physics experiments that could be conducted using local materials (Gabrielson, 2002). Since independence, staff from the curriculum division at MECYS have been working on curriculum and guides for a number of subjects; of particular note are materials on East Timorese history. There are plans that a full curriculum will soon be developed with the support of a team of consultants from both Brazil and Portugal.

Box 11. Development of a Tetum language physics education manual

American physics teacher Curt Gabrielson spent two years in East Timor helping to develop the new nation's physics curriculum. This represents an immense challenge in a country where not a single physics teacher in the middle and high schools holds a four-year degree in the subject, some have never studied physics at all and the university's one physics professor died in the 1999 violence. At the behest of the UNATIL Education Faculty, Gabrielson worked with local teachers to create a manual of hands-

on lessons. A small group of teachers met regularly to edit the lessons. First they would do the activity together, and then work on the draft, making decisions on which Tetum words to use for various concepts. The manual was then trialled by a large group of teachers from all over East Timor in partnership with the MECYS.

The *Manuál Lisaun Pratika Fizika* contains a glossary of technical terms listed in Tetum, Portuguese, Bahasa Indonesia and English. Seventy-two experiments and over 500 photos appear in its 350 pages. It is the first technical book published in Tetum, and a step towards developing the language of Tetum for use in technical subjects. Some examples of the types of experiments developed include:

Banana leaf spines have a smooth track down the centre, custom made for marbles to roll down. Propping one up on a chair, marbles can be released from different heights and their velocity measured as they race across the floor. Then kinetic and potential energy can be compared to see how much was lost to friction.

A one-wheeled, rubber-band powered car can be made with cardboard, palm-frond spines and an aluminium can. If the force given by the wound-up rubber band and the distance the car rolls are measured, a simple bit of calculus can be used to determine the amount of energy used.

With kebab sticks, a model of the human arm and hand can be made to demonstrate muscles, tendons, ligaments and the different types of joints.

Source: Gabrielson, 2002

Community participation

During the struggle for independence, local communities – in the form of the Catholic Church, community organizations and student groups – played an important role. In essence, they were the veiled face of the resistance. As a former commander of the resistance's guerrilla force, Taur Matan Ruak, once put it: "If we were to recognise all those who supported our struggle, we would have to extend this recognition to most of the population, as all have, at some point in time and in their own way, participated in the liberation of our nation" (Meden, 2002). While the

Indonesian Government left the Church alone because of its religious function, community organizations and student groups were effectively repressed during most of the occupation. As they were seen as potentially subversive, lists of these groups were maintained and their leaders periodically intimidated (United Nations, 2000: 109). During the period following the consultation, both civil society and communities themselves tentatively began to become active in their own affairs.

Civil society and education

Scott (2001: 42) suggested that “the networks of churches, groups and organizations which did so much to keep the issue of East Timor alive internationally and promote change [domestically] could play an important role” in shaping East Timor’s independence. There were certainly large numbers of national NGOs established in the months following the ballot. While a few had a pre-referendum track-record, many of these national NGOs consisted of a couple of people who got together for a small project for which they needed funding, with little hope of developing sustainable programmes (Meden, 2002). As of September 2001, 197 groups – both East Timorese and international – were registered with the NGO Forum, a body serving a co-ordination function. In early 2003, over 250 national NGOs were registered (UNDP, 2003). A large number of these are concentrated in Dili – an advantage in terms of advocacy with the government, but a disadvantage in terms of reaching the most needy who primarily live in remote areas.

The NGO Forum has been used by civil society as one way to engage in policy formation. Early on, some NGOs participated in JAM and the NGO Forum has sent delegates to all Donors’ Meetings. In addition, representatives from NGOs, women’s groups and the business community sat on the National Consultative Council (NCC) – an appointed consultative body which preceded the Constituent Assembly (Meden, 2002). In 2000 the NGO Forum, together with the support of Oxfam GB, launched an education working group comprised of 21 civil society organizations. This group met periodically to discuss issues it saw as pertinent. In June 2001 it presented a briefing paper to the Canberra donors meeting which criticized UNTAET’s lack of a coherent national vision for education. It claimed that, without such a framework, it was difficult for civil society to effectively engage in transforming the education sector (Millo and Barnett, 2003: 13).

In mid-2001, observers recall a period when international NGOs were clearly sidelined by ETTA leadership, and looked upon with mistrust. This is perhaps not surprising when one considers the lasting influence of GoI, which was reluctant to allow civil society to organize. Much of the breakdown was due to the cautious attitude of East Timorese leadership – first within CNRT and later in ETTA. Throughout the transitional period, leadership resisted any foreign initiated activities aimed at educational transformation initiated from outside groups – whether foreign or local (Millo and Barnett, 2003: 10). Doyle (2001) explains that education officials did have some justification for these feelings: “Due to a lack of consultation ... some very dubious projects were developed. One NGO set up a school where there had never been one before and hired and trained teachers and were now expecting the education department to pay them. Shockingly another NGO tried to deal with the education crisis by bringing in Indonesian teachers and almost got lynched.”

One international NGO that strongly wanted to get involved in education was Oxfam GB. In early 1999, it had put together what was meant to be a flexible programme focusing on education and civil society. According to former staff, a key part of this was to be centred on in-service teacher training – workshops on child-centred and activity-centred teaching, and approaches to teaching conflict-affected children. A workshop for teacher trainers, begun in early 2000 and jointly organized with UNICEF and the Faculty of Education was halted mid-delivery. According to one attendee, the reason given by CNRT education leaders who interrupted was that international agencies should focus on the rehabilitation of school infrastructure. As it did not prove feasible to work in the formal education sector, Oxfam GB shifted its efforts to the non-formal and literacy circles. It partnered with two national women’s organizations to establish a joint literacy project using ‘Reflect Methodology’.

Indeed, NGO openings for involvement in education were minimal until ECHO finally put in place the school sanitation programme. Several of those interviewed thought while most NGOs did not seem to see education as an emergency issue at first, when they showed interest in the sector they were rebuffed by the centre. One UNTAET official stated that he “believed that a better and faster job would have been done on the ESRP school rehabilitation if it had been sub-contracted to NGOs” – in his district, World Vision had prepared an extensive proposal to do that but was turned down immediately. There were those that became involved regardless, such

as the efforts of CCF, IRC, IRCT and Save the Children discussed elsewhere. Another active international agency, the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS, 2000) was also involved in education with about a dozen Catholic Schools in the Luro, Maliana and Dili areas. Training on teaching methodology was provided, school stationery and desks and chairs supplied. Timor Aid, run by East Timorese from the Diaspora, was involved in the non-formal aspects of education and created a centre in December 1999 that provided English and Portuguese language and computer skill courses. More recently, it has taken on the issue of literacy education (Timor Aid, 2002).

At the time of this study, Oxfam GB along with a number of local NGOs was actively involved in planning a National Conference on Education, meant to bring together civil society groups with other actors to discuss key educational priorities for East Timor's development. Planning for the conference has been a collaborative process taking place over six months and is seen as "a first step in an on-going dialogue to ensure civil society participation in decision-making about education in East Timor" (Oxfam GB, 2002: 2). Working groups have been formed around the areas of teacher training; vocational training; popular education; pre-school; and education and globalization.

Involvement of community

Over the years, the high level of centralization in the Indonesian education system inculcated a culture of dependency. With little scope for local initiative, this attitude seeped into the culture; both parents and teachers alike generally "perceive 'the government' to be the source of all decision-making related to schools" (Stringer, 2002: 9). Civic education has, so far, been concentrated on elections, the constitution and local democracy. UNDP (2002: 6) says that "to some extent civic education will have to start with teachers, relying on them to communicate ideas not just in the schools but also to the community at large". Although communities in East Timor have a tradition of co-operative action, Lee (2002: 8) claims that the school system has not taken advantage of this environment. MECYS "has no community promoters and the school principals have not fully fostered the relationships with the parents and communities". There is an apparent ethos of 'waiting for orders', which is likely to be one of the greatest challenges to community involvement in the future. "Under the Indonesian system, power was centralized in Jakarta;

now power and decision-making is centralized in Dili. Poor people lack clear processes to influence change” (United Nations, 2000: 9).

This said, there have been some attempts to counter this reality both at local and national levels. The formation of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) is one such initiative. Under the Indonesian system, there was already a system of school committees, ostensibly involving parents, teachers and community members. *Badan Penyelenggara Pelaksanaan Pendidikan* (BP3s) were introduced in 1992 were largely focused on collecting school fees and distributing report cards (Oxfam GB, 2002; UNICEF, 2002). To date, BP3s have been re-established almost exclusively due to local initiative, as there was no budget available for support. Some continue to follow the legacy of financial contributions – often US\$1 per month or semester – used for school supplies, assistant teachers or scholarships for the poorest students. Field *et al.* (2002: 29) claimed that in rural villages, PTAs “only discussed school fees and tests rather than issues relating to quality, curricula, or ways that parents can assist their children to learn”. Membership on the committees often consists only of men. At a national level, draft by-laws for parents’ councils have been prepared, and a study completed on possible PTA options (Stringer, 2002).

ESRP also played a role in encouraging community involvement in schools. Under the project, communities were asked to participate in mobilizing labour for school rehabilitation and reconstruction. In March 2001, the Joint Donor Education Sector Mission confirmed that school communities were involved in the ESRP project and that local carpentry groups are contracted by the project (2001a: 1). However, according to Lee (2002), the responsibility for organizing this participation fell on school principals, some of whom were new to their role and others who had difficulty calling on the resources of the community. There is some debate as to how successful this involvement actually was. Millo and Barnett (2003: 11) assert that while the ESRP had the intention of forming school councils to manage the classroom rehabilitation process, “in most localities, these were never formally established and communities were left out of the decision-making process”.

Box 12. The PTA at Farrol Primary School

During the 2001 registration period, the Farrol principal called a meeting of parents in response to the urgency of the situation, as people were still traumatized and the school was in need of repairs. The principal informed parents that they could provide both moral and material support, and parents responded by providing glass for windows, cement for floors, and assisted with repairs to bathrooms, toilets and furniture. Parents also arranged support from community sources, including elite community members and NGOs.

Teachers attended the next parent meeting and it was suggested that the school start a PTA. Some parents were not in favour of an association because they thought it would act like a BP3, placing pressure on parents to pay school fees. Finally, parents decided to form a PTA and elected presiding officers. This group meets with the principal on a weekly basis to discuss issues and problems. The larger PTA meets every three months, and all teachers attend so they can answer parent inquiries directly.

Management tries to be transparent to increase parents' trust in the school, and the principal provides a financial report to each PTA meeting. A recent report, for instance, identified expenditures for photocopying, telephone, security, and religion and science teachers. The PTA has also established a policy to use the balance of school funds to pay for children of poor parents. In addition, meetings are used to announce upcoming events in which parents can become involved, for example by assisting students to prepare traditional Timorese songs and dances.

Source: Stringer, 2002: 13.

Given the degree of destruction and the overwhelming nature of the task at hand, most who were there seem to say that education interventions have been a “qualified success”. Millo and Barnett (2003: 8), however, assert that “while attempts at educational reconstruction were partially successful, the opportunity for transformation was missed”. While this is no doubt true, one must question to what extent transformation is possible in such environments. The ESRP’s implementation completion report claimed that the “transitional government authority made it impossible ... to reach a consensus on policy formulation issues”, leaving open issues such as the “structure of the MECYS, a national education law, teacher training,

curriculum reform and production and distribution of teaching-learning materials” (World Bank, 2003: 3). When so much had changed in so little time for the East Timorese, is it really a surprise that there were difficulties in making decisions that would later be difficult to change?

Lessons learned

1. Relations between local and international leadership are more successful when structured in a way so power is shared – with the balance falling toward the local.
2. Donors generally have clear interests in the education sector, often based on historical ties or geography; however when the sector becomes overly politicized (language, curriculum, etc.) those with fewer cultural links may avoid it.
3. For school rehabilitation and furniture, local contracts could be combined with stricter international supervision, perhaps through NGOs.
4. If materials are expected to arrive at schools in a timely fashion, delivery cannot rely only on the goodwill of peace-keepers or international NGOs.
5. In an emergency, teacher training cannot be left until the education system is fully functioning and curriculum known; it is especially an urgent need in places with an inexperienced teaching force.
6. While political considerations may guide designation of languages as ‘official’, the question of language competencies and mother tongue should play a role in determining the ‘language of instruction’.
7. Community participation needs greater attention in an emergency context, little can be assumed regarding community contributions to reconstruction.

Chapter 6

Towards durable solutions

World attention, once centred on East Timor has, over time, shifted to crises in other parts of the globe. Yet the Timorese – from both the East and the West – have had to learn to live with the results of the ballot held one fateful day in August 1999. Some who had fled the violence have chosen to remain in West Timor. Today, Indonesian officials continue to work in providing education for refugee children remaining since the internationals' evacuation in September 2000. Efforts have mainly focused on supporting integration into local schools, and Save the Children has played a major role in this work. Since December 2002, when refugee status was finally revoked, the door for assisted return to East Timor has been shut. Those remaining – between 30,000 and 35,000 – are left with the option of settling in West Timor or moving to other parts of Indonesia.

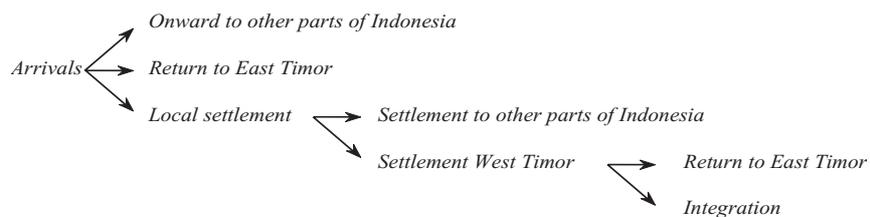
The majority, however, have returned to East Timor and felt their first taste of independence. On 20 May 2002, nearly three years after the popular consultation, the East Timorese took over the rule of their own land. The country – and its educational future – finally lay fully in the hands of the East Timorese, successes and mistakes would at last be their own. The new government will probably make some of both as it struggles to put shape to a new education administration, deal with capacity and efficiency and manage finance for the sector. With a heavy emphasis placed on the importance of education for development, it has already made particular effort in educational planning, with a National Development Plan in place and Annual Action Plans produced by the MECYS.

Remaining in West Timor

The bulk of repatriation back to East Timor occurred prior to mid-2000, after which time population movements slowed markedly. It was clear that repatriation of those who preferred to return to East Timor would take time, and it always seemed that a significant number would plan to stay. At one point the United Nations was estimating that up to 100,000

East Timorese would opt for resettlement in Indonesia (UNICEF, 2000b: 3). Early on, SATKORLAK (2000) attempted to analyze the different groups of refugees and the paths they might take. They categorized the refugees into the following groups: (a) families clear about their preference to return who would leave shortly; (b) others who would stay until ensured the situation in East Timor was safe; (c) some who were undecided, saying they would follow the decision of their community leader (many times this was also a 'militia' leader); (d) certain families, often those with relatives and some limited access to land, would stay until the cultivation season was over; and (e) others would definitely stay in West Timor, often because of their support for autonomy over independence and connection to militias.

Figure 6.1 Framework for refugee return and settlement



Limited international presence has meant that there is a lack of accurate and substantive data on the overall situation and movement of refugees. The figures that do exist show that the number of those who eventually remained was less than expected, although still significant in terms of resource drain on the district and provincial governments. According to IOM, around 40,000 returned between September 2001 and June 2002. At that time an estimated 55,000 were still remaining in West Timor (Save the Children UK, 2002a). Between July and December 2002, approximately 20,000 to 25,000 refugees returned to East Timor with the total remaining in early 2003 estimated at around 30,000 to 35,000. These individuals have been affected by the UNHCR cessation status, meaning that as of December 2002 they were no longer considered refugees.

After the United Nations evacuation, repatriation from the West Timor side was managed by GoI, through the logistical support of the TNI and funded by IOM (Save the Children UK, 2002a). After evacuation, remaining refugee communities were effectively left to fend for themselves, with the GoI providing limited food aid and other assistance. Anecdotally,

due to economic problems, even those who had been receiving assistance found it difficult to send their children to school. In interviews, children reported that “some of our friends who went with us to the tent schools ... don’t attend a local school because their parents don’t have money to pay”. CIMU (2000) claimed that “a high proportion of students do not have access to formal education. The proportion of refugee students who have not been accommodated in existing schools in West Timor is over 50 per cent”. While this reduced as refugee numbers reduced, even for those who were enrolled absenteeism was thought to range from between 10 and 30 per cent.

Supporting integration

Although the United Nations is still not allowed to operate in West Timor, these restrictions do not apply to international NGOs. Save the Children is one of a handful of agencies – and the only to work in education – who returned to operate in West Timor after the deaths in Atambua. In January 2001 a security assessment was conducted and it was decided that the programme could recommence, becoming operational again in February. Project efforts focused on integration of refugee children into the formal education sector through teacher workshops and support of active learning in the classroom. In addition, support was given in establishing outreach schools in remote areas with large refugee populations, administratively linked to a local school. Emphasis was placed on working closely with government in implementation (Save the Children UK, 2001).

Initially, due to security constraints, work was “restricted to the Kupang district, close to the Kupang city area” (Save the Children UK, 2001). Organized as a pilot project, it operated in 10 schools in or around refugee camps near Kupang. Subsequently, it extended work to 10 schools in TTU district and a further 19 schools in Belu district. The plan was that the Department of Education would eventually take on responsibility for maintaining and expanding on the pilot programme. Due to security issues, a risk management strategy was designed which shaped the project design. Aspects of the strategy included: increased liaison with GoI at all levels; relocation of an expatriate education adviser to Jakarta, with extended field visits; locating the pilot project in Kupang rather than Belu districts; programme activities not conducted in camps, but in schools in close proximity to high refugee populations; higher logistical support in the

form of vehicles and satellite phones; and openness to renegotiate time-frames if deemed necessary (Save the Children UK, 2001).

In preparation for roll-out beyond Kupang, Save the Children conducted an education assessment in and around TTU and Belu districts in August 2001. According to education advisor Renew (2001), a large number of refugee children, “described consistently by local community leaders in the assessment as many” were found not to be attending primary schools. While some schools were running classes with local and refugee children mixed, the second shift was still operating in a number of others. At that time, the government had provided little support for local schools to accommodate the increased numbers. When teachers were asked how difficult local conditions might affect refugee children’s integration, they repeatedly raised issues around lack of classrooms and furniture, limited textbooks and stationery, no school uniforms and not enough toilets and water. Distances to and from school were “perceived as ‘far’ and presented a psychological, if not a physical, barrier to accessing the local schools, especially for small children in years one to three” (Renew, 2001).

The Save the Children programme is centred around ‘Framework for learning’, a set of learning concepts the organization has identified as important for children living in crisis situations. ‘Framework for learning’ lays out learning themes grouped together as skills for survival, individual and social development and academic learning. Renew (2002) explains that in West Timor the tool has been used as “a series of concepts for teachers to keep in mind when working with children, a tool for advocacy with senior government education officials and a basis to develop resource materials to use in the classroom”. The concepts are used in a series of workshops that help teachers explore ways to a shift from teacher-centred, content-based curriculum to a competency-based, child-centred approach. To this end, the workshops introduce curriculum resource materials, including a classroom activity box, co-operative games box and classroom management photo set, each designed to promote group work and interaction (Save the Children UK, 2002a). A series of school support visits are scheduled to work with teachers on implementing concepts they have learned (Save the Children UK, 2001).

Reform and decentralization

This work meshes nicely with GoI's process of educational reform, emphasizing activity-based learning and child-centred approaches. A new national, competency-based curriculum is being pilot-tested for roll out in the 2003/2004 school year. The shifts in the education system are on top of a larger shift in GoI as a whole. Throughout Indonesia's history, governance has been characterized by centralized systems and bureaucracy. In 2000, the GoI began instituting a process of decentralization across all sectors of government. Prior to this, there were many constraints on localized action, ranging from rigid management of the national education budget to the limited freedom given school principals to make decisions (National Planning Development Board, 1999).

A specific example of this new flexibility can be found in a new outreach programme, supported by Save the Children UK (2002*b*). The project targets out-of-school children at the ages for grades 1 to 3. It operates in Belu and TTU districts and provides education in camps where more than 50 children are out of school, and the majority of children not attending school in the community are refugees. Classes are under administrative and supervisory responsibility of local schools. Training, school support and construction of building and sanitation facilities is also a part of the project (Save the Children UK, 2002*a*). In 2002 nearly 2,000 children, the majority of whom were refugees, had gained access to education through this outreach scheme (Save the Children UK, 2002*b*). Two schools started by the outreach programme have changed their status to regular schools, and are now administratively integrated with the formal system.

Those in West Timor report that refugees who have chosen to remain live in increasingly difficult conditions – shelters are in disrepair, there are serious shortages of food and a nearly complete lack of any sort of social service. Even so, children in general seem to be getting on well. For those who have stayed, good friendships have been built with their peers at school; those interviewed say that children will rarely talk anymore about who is a refugee from East Timor and who is local. Over time, each group adapted to the situation and began to find ways to cope. While a number of former refugee children remain out of school, it is no longer because they are from the other side of the border. Poverty seems to be the main factor, and a high number of West Timorese children have dropped out for similar reasons to those which keep refugee children away.

Independence for East Timor

A Joint Donor Education Sector Mission (2000) claimed that: “Few education systems face the mismatch between challenges and resources that East Timor’s authorities must manage.” Continuation of the initial successes of the transitional administration will require innovation and a long-term vision. The mismatch between challenges and available resources does not make these kind of advances easy, but in a country where the population is so young, with nearly a quarter of the overall population attending school (and one-third being of school-going age), they are absolutely essential. The school mapping process laid out major limitations in moving toward a more regular functioning of the education system, “by decreasing order of importance, accessibility, the ruin[ed] situation of many schools and the unavailability of teachers for primary education” (CESUR, 2001: 14).

Findings from a comprehensive household survey expand further on a picture of the education challenges facing East Timor. While the government has done an excellent job in boosting school enrolments, especially amongst the poorest in the community, estimates place non-attendance between 10 and 20 per cent. Many children do not start school until they are 8 or 9, and are as old as 14 by the time they finish primary school. The age discrepancies in classes makes teaching more difficult as children in a classroom are at different stages of social development. Drop-out rates are high among adolescents. There is a substantial shortage of trained teachers, and teaching quality is low. Finally, literacy remains a significant issue with three out of every five adults not ever having attended school, and almost two-thirds of the female population are illiterate (Ministry of Planning and Finance, 2003).

Box 13. Challenges facing the East Timor education system

1. Poor quality, in terms of teacher capability, teacher qualifications, and curricula.
2. Low access – only 110 out of 498 *sucos* (village administrative units) say that all children aged 6 to 10 attend primary school.
3. High attrition rates in primary school, and low attendance; about 20 per cent of children enrolled in primary school do not attend classes.

4. High rates of adult illiteracy – a national average of between 50 and 60 per cent (46 per cent male and 60 per cent female) as compared to 12 per cent in Indonesia. About 46 per cent of the population has never been to school.
5. High student/teacher ratios – as high as 62:1 for primary and 40:1 for secondary.
6. Gender imbalance among teachers (about 30 per cent of primary teachers are women).
7. Poor classroom facilities.
8. Very large numbers of children of school-going age; combined numbers constitute about one-third of the country's population.
9. Grossly inadequate tertiary provision, and insufficient emphasis on quality.

Source: United Nations, 2002.

Administration

It was not only schools that needed to be re-established following the physical destruction and population displacement of 1999, the entire institutional framework for governance needed to be rebuilt. The combination of extreme poverty, long-term conflict and inappropriate development by the former occupiers left East Timorese with few of the human skills and capacities necessary to take charge. As Armino Maia, Minister of Education described: “Look at our leader – from jailed jungle fighter to president. Myself, I’m only a university lecturer, now I’m running the entire school system.” Under Indonesian rule, East Timorese in the civil service were confined to the lower rungs of the hierarchical ladder, while the top positions were held by Indonesians who left around the time of the popular consultation (Meden, 2002). Unfortunately their only available role models have been “a lackadaisical Portuguese administration, a corrupt and bloated Indonesian bureaucracy, followed by a process-obsessed and expensive United Nations technocracy. ‘We’ve certainly seen how not to do it,’ joked one young East Timorese official in the new government” (Da Silva, 2002).

Under the transitional authority, the education division was developed in a rather lean fashion. Only essential posts were filled at a central level, and district education offices were allocated 10 or fewer staff members

– each covering at least 450 teachers and a minimum of 50 schools (Lee, 2002). To obtain a position in the new East Timor administration, candidates were required to submit their curriculum vitae to the Civil Service and Public Employment Service (CISPE). “A combination of international staff and Timorese would [then] select the person with the best qualifications for a job”, on the basis of an interview conducted by an independent panel (Hohe, 2002a: 581). School principals were selected through an election among the teachers.

Lee (2002: 4) characterized the relationship between the central and the district levels of the education structure as “remote and paternalistic”. The destruction of communication and transport infrastructures have contributed to this distancing, in that it very difficult to maintain regular communication. Even so, several UNTAET staff who had been based in districts expressed frustration that little attention was given to developing functional field-based structures. After independence, only several motorbikes, one vehicle and one computer are available to each district office in performing their supervision function. In addition to being poorly equipped, the district is largely dependent on MECYS in terms of budget. For example, there is no mechanism that facilitates schools directly receiving funds (Pereira, 2002). All goods, services and logistical support come from the centre as it has been assumed to have the advantage of higher efficiency (Lee, 2002). The National Development Plan proposes that capacity be built for decentralization, through the creation of five regional offices for several ministries, backed up by regional co-ordinating bodies with representatives from government, community groups, NGOs and civil society organizations (Planning Commission, 2002).

■ Education law and regulations

East Timor’s Constitution, which did not come into force until independence, represents the only framework in which education policy has been formalized into law (Constituent Assembly, 2002). Its references to education, however, only touch on the most basic of principles. The Constitution (Section 59) states that “a public system of universal and compulsory basic education” should be supported “that is free of charge in accordance with its possibilities and in conformity with the law. Access to the highest levels of education is ensured to every citizen, in accordance to their abilities”. Education for youth, including vocational training, should be promoted “as may be practicable” (Section 19). The priority areas to

be developed have been identified as follows (Ministry of Planning and Finance, 2002*b*: 6): (a) National Education Law which will provide state policy on education as outlined in the Constitution, specifying the institutional framework of partnership between the State and the private sector, religious organizations, NGOs, local communities and parents; (b) a law and/or regulation on the establishment and operation of private schools; (c) an enabling Law or Charter for the National University of Timor-Leste; and (d) guidelines on the national curriculum, particularly at the primary and secondary education levels.

The lack of legal framework that could legitimize change during the transition meant that, by and large, precedents set for education under Indonesian rule continued to operate, as no changes could be legally mandated. Also, there is still a lack of clarity on the relationship between government and Catholic schools. The Parliament is finally set to debate a proposed education law, now, more than a year after independence. Additional regulations have been drafted, but are awaiting the review of a technical adviser with a legal background and knowledge in Portuguese.

Capacity and efficiency

The Indonesian system created a number of ‘streams’ for schooling, resulting in “significant inefficiencies and an oversupply of school buildings” (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2001*b*: 2). It is well recognized that this heritage must be overcome if there is any hope of providing basic education for all East Timorese children. Given resource constraints, the system will have to make difficult choices and trade-offs. One crucial question is how fast to expand each level of education. The World Bank (2002*b*: 66) states that “a commitment to ensuring that all children complete at least primary school should be the top education priority – and is achievable in the first years of independence”. However, junior secondary education is another story, and its expansion “will depend on [the supply of trained teachers] and the availability of additional resources”. Such issues will have to be dealt with, as in the next five years some 10,000 school-age children will need to enrol (Lee, 2002).

This question of expansion is closely related to inefficiency caused by a gross enrolment ratio that is much higher than net enrolment. This misalignment of age to grade is worst among the poorest children and among rural children. As students commonly enter school late, and drop

out after only a few years attendance, the few skills that they do have enough time to learn are likely to be at a low level. “From the fiscal perspective, this entails high levels of spending without educating as many children as it should. The cost per graduate is the key measure of efficiency of resource use” (Wu, 2002: 31). For six years of primary education, the cost currently would be about US\$300 per student. However, because many children repeat grades or drop out, the actual cost per graduate is almost twice this amount. If age by grade distribution would even out, there would be enough places in primary schools to accommodate those now out of school. However, to achieve this, junior secondary education would have to be expanded and eventually, senior secondary (Wu, 2002: 32). The Joint Donor Education Sector Mission (2001*b*) suggests that moving to a system of multi-grade classrooms would be another way of reducing inefficiencies.

Table 6.1 Number enrolled and relevant age population

<i>Level</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Junior secondary</i>	<i>Senior secondary</i>
Enrolment in 2000	183,268	26,542	15,443
Relevant age population	155,487	65,595	43,945

Source: ETTA Education Division statistics, in Wu, 2002: 33.

Enrolment, however, is only one aspect to consider. When asked whether students are learning, teachers themselves raised issues of limited class time and poor attendance as major constraints. They say that children generally do not return for afternoon lessons; school is often cancelled due to Church events, and there is a lack of classroom space (UNICEF, 2001*b*: 5). UNICEF research found that “many students are what teachers refer to as ‘not active’, i.e. they came at the beginning of the school year to register, attended some classes and have rarely attended since then” (Greenblot, 2001: 18). Attendance is low because of the need for children to work, cost of supplies, sickness and distances to and from school. Student/teacher ratios may also contribute. There is a wide range in these ratios with the low end at 17:1 for one Dili school versus the high end of 243:1 for a school in Manufahi (UNDP, 2002: 50). Because of rationalization and the closing of some schools, children must walk longer distances to school than before; average time to a primary school is 25 minutes and to a secondary school it is twice that long (Greenblot, 2001: 17).

Future efforts to collect data will probably move towards using an Education Management Information System (EMIS). According to Redden (2001: 15), schools themselves have a “positive attitude to the collection of data” due to a reporting tradition ingrained under Indonesian rule. During the transitional period, there were two periods when data collection was undertaken: 2000/2001 and 2001/2002. While significant problems emerged associated with lack of forms, telephone, electricity and transportation, most schools generally understood the range of data that should be reported to the district level. In fact, the lack of resources meant, according to one teacher, that the school “often has to draw up their own forms ... but that is OK”. As efforts move forward to develop an EMIS, major constraints will be duplications in the data collection process and limited computer skills among staff.

Box 14. Options for improved educational efficiency

1. *Improved use of the teaching force.* Through in-service training, relieving teacher shortage through involving headmasters in teaching besides administering, assigning the best teachers to the early grades, and attention to incentives in the salary structure.
2. *Introduction of educational technology.* Use of radio with associated printed materials and teacher guides to carry the main burden of instruction for some subjects and some groups. This might include in-service training using radio, radio lectures to alleviate secondary school teacher shortages, and radio in mathematics and second language instruction at the primary level.
3. *Shift to multi-grade schools in rural areas.* More intensive use of teachers in a multi-grade setting allows small schools to be efficient with attendant reductions in travel time and costs for students.
4. *Involve the community in management of schools.* Through participation in a school board, including the hiring and dismissal of principals and teachers who do not serve the educational needs of their children. Block grants can be given to these schools for school improvement and teacher training.
5. *Funding by capitation grants based on enrolment.* Instead of allocating public funds through payment of teachers’ salaries, grants could be used to give schools incentives to expand enrolment. Schools could decide whether to hire an additional teacher, award merit pay and benefits to teachers, provide compensatory education or purchase instructional support technology.

Source: Wu, 2000: ix.

Student achievement

As is the case with much of the education system, testing also follows the Indonesian legacy. Traditionally, a national school-leaving examination was administered to students in primary grade 6 in the subjects of natural science, social science and mathematics. Students completing junior secondary and senior secondary education were tested in all subjects. In reality, the classroom was focused almost exclusively on preparation for these exams, with little effort toward diagnosing learning strengths or weaknesses of individual students. While this same system of exams was re-introduced in July 2001, a commission was formed to introduce reform in the process. In 2002, a modified mechanism for evaluating student achievement was introduced, consisting of a weighted average between end-of-term school tests and the national examination (Lee, 2002).

In 2001, with the support of AusAID, the ETTA Division of Education conducted a survey of student achievement in mathematics and science. Small samples of students in primary grades 3 and 5 were taken from all 13 districts. The survey revealed low levels of performance as compared internationally in mathematics and science subjects. In 2002, the study was repeated in five districts, with essentially the same results. The second study also revealed that “factors associated with language of instruction were having an impact on level of student achievement, especially in grade 3” (Morgan, 2003). However, these surveys were relatively small, and according to the project consultant, there is a need to establish a base-line through a larger, randomly drawn sample.

In one such effort to establish the level of student performance, a Primary School Achievement Survey was conducted from late 2002 till May 2003. The survey, supported by the FSQP, is a collaborative project of MECYS, UNATIL and the World Bank. The survey seeks to provide objective information on the factors that influence student participation in school and their achievement. The survey interviewed samples of children in grades 3 and 4, covering about 90 schools across the country. In addition, a specially prepared mathematics test was administered to measure achievement – mathematics being used to lessen the impact of language proficiency. This information on student achievement will then be used as a base to further develop education policy (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2002: 6).

Financing framework

As East Timor moves from its heavy reliance on aid to a time of fewer resources, the question of how to meet formidable education needs will increasingly be a constraint. School-age children constitute a large share of the population, the tax base is small, and teachers' salaries are high compared to average income. While reconstruction needs are considered one-time investments and can be covered by aid, sustainability of the education system requires that operating costs be financed by the local economy. Under Indonesian rule, the government subsidized high levels of education spending. While locally generated revenues comprised only 15 per cent of government expenditure in East Timor, education costs made up an estimated 25 per cent of the overall budget. Thus, even if all of the local income went towards education, it would not be sufficient to cover the pre-independence level of spending (Arneberg, 1999).

The transitional administration, with the support of donors and others, had accorded high priority to the public finance of education (see *Appendix 2* for details on public expenditure on education). Government parameters now require that education and health comprise more than 35 per cent of the overall recurrent budget. Of those funds spent on education, over 45 per cent must go towards primary education. For the 2003 financial year, education has received 26 per cent of the core CFET budget, the largest percentage of any sectoral area (Ministry of Planning and Finance, 2002a: 7). The operating costs of the education system have the greatest implications on sustainability. In 2001/2002 education accounted for 5 per cent of GDP, a higher level of public funding than under Indonesian rule, and higher than the average of low-income countries – which is about 3 per cent (Wu, 2000: 18). The bulk of these funds in East Timor goes toward teaching salaries. “Teachers account for more than 50 per cent of public sector employees and their wages claim 75 per cent of public recurrent expenditure on education” (World Bank, 2002b: 61). Education expenditures outside CFET are supplemented by TFET, funding the SSRP discussed in the previous chapter, and by bilaterals/multilaterals, which have put most of their money towards higher education (Joint Donor Education Sector Mission, 2000).

Table 6.2 Composition of East Timor education budget

	<i>2000/2001 budget</i>		<i>2001/2002 budget</i>	
	<i>US\$ million</i>	<i>% of total</i>	<i>US\$ million</i>	<i>% of total</i>
CFET	13.4	30	17.8	36
TFET	10.5	23	8.8	18
Bilateral/multilateral	21.2	46	23.7	47
Total*	45.1	100	50.1	100

* Approximate

Source: Central Fiscal Authority (CFA) and Division of Education, in World Bank, 2001: 11.

In East Timor, there is a strong correlation between poverty and low levels of education. Whereas 96 per cent of school-age children from well-off households in East Timor attended school, only 70 per cent of poor households did, irrespective of gender (United Nations, 2000: 59). As early as age 10, “around 10 per cent of children ... are employed, mostly in agriculture, though half of these also go to school” (UNDP, 2002: 50). Poverty’s manifestations within East Timor also contribute to an impoverished education sector. During visits to schools, parents regularly referred to the barriers poverty erects against the education of their children. “Many people are poor and we need money to be able to help the people send our children to school” and “many parents have no jobs, and can’t afford schooling for their children” are just some such comments (Stringer, 2002: 8).

School charges and fees were officially abolished under ETTA, largely due to donor financing of school rehabilitation, teachers’ salaries and textbooks. This is likely to be one of the reasons for enrolment increases (Division of Education, 2001a). For the poorest group, this effectively reduced monthly per capita spending on primary education from the US\$0.82 spent under the Indonesians, to only US\$0.33 (Wu, 2002: 9). Although there are officially no enrolment fees, there are still costs to sending children to school – supplies, clothing and transport are all necessary. Some schools continue unofficially to charge fees. Since education confers a number of benefits – financial and otherwise – to an individual, the question of who pays raises important questions of equity, as well as efficiency. Private returns to tertiary education are likely to be very high in the short term, and the World Bank (2002b: 15) claims that reintroduction of fees for families who can afford them is warranted. All

private schools charge tuition and fees: the Catholic schools have set US\$3 at primary level, US\$8 at junior secondary, and US\$10 for senior secondary for monthly fees. University tuition and fees were set at US\$19 per year in 2000, and raised to US\$35 per year in 2001 (Lee, 2002).

Educational planning

“Planning for education in East Timor is difficult – complicated by a severe shortage of resources and of trained people, and the complexities of a multilingual society” (UNDP, 2002: 55). The new East Timor administration was expected to put together a coherent set of plans that covered all parts of the education sector nearly as soon as they took their posts. Given the constraints one might expect in this scenario, planning has moved along admirably, with a five-year National Development Plan completed and a set of action plans worked on annually. Within these plans, education is seen as an essential aspect of East Timor’s development. The Countrywide Consultation, conducted to determine national priorities, found that “70 per cent of the population prioritized education as the most important sector to be developed for the country’s future” (Planning Commission, 2002: 143).

The first of these, the National Development Plan, was developed in the months prior to independence (Planning Commission, 2002). This document articulates a 20-year vision and evolves strategies and programmes of action. Both the National Parliament and the donors’ conference have officially adopted the plan for the five-year period from 2002 to 2007 (World Bank, 2002a: 2). Cidalio Leite of MECYS outlined how three major initiatives fed into the planning process: a poverty assessment, the countrywide consultation and eight working groups led by the appropriate minister and made up of senior government officials. Over the next two to three years, the Planning Commission’s (2002: 155) articulated aim is to “consolidate the efforts and achievements of reconstruction”. This includes rationalization of educational provision, development of human resources throughout the sector and strengthening the ministry’s institutional capacity. In the longer term – over five to 10 years – efforts will be made to modernize curricula, prioritize teacher training and continue to strengthen management efficiency. Gender issues are highlighted in the plan and adult literacy programmes are also proposed (see *Appendix 3* for information on education in the National Development Plan).

Upon independence, the Council of Ministers, via the Ministry of Planning and Finance, requested that all ministries submit Annual Action Plans for their programmes and projects. Attempting to link budgets with the goals and objectives of the National Development Plan, the exercise also aims to ensure that ministries are aware of commitments, human resource allocations and performance targets as approved by Parliament (World Bank, 2002a: 2). These are expanded into the following areas and are covered in MECYS's Annual Action Plan:

1. Senior secondary education
2. East Timor National University
3. University teaching
4. Early childhood education
5. Culture
6. Institute of continuing education
7. Management
8. Non-formal education
9. Primary education
10. Technical and vocational school
11. Junior secondary education
12. Managerial support for the secretariat
13. Physical education
14. Youth and welfare
15. Planning and policy

Criticism of the planning process includes problems of continuity and questions over power to implement. In the area of education, the National Development Plan focuses on three areas – improving quality, improving service delivery, and expanding access; with the latter seen as particularly crucial to achieving aims in poverty reduction and regional development. However, within the Annual Action Plans these three priorities become conventional programmes in primary, junior secondary and senior secondary education, thus losing some of the poverty reduction focus (World Bank, 2002a: 20). Also, despite the fact that MECYS was very involved, the design of the National Development Plan, the World Bank (World Bank, 2002a: 14) found that during drafting it was evident “that some divisions have not yet been empowered to spend program funds, nor understand how to receive funds for program activities”.

Lessons learned

1. Supporting local schools to integrate refugee children in areas of large displacement can accelerate the integration process for the whole community.
2. Training for teachers on the importance of teaching a wide range of subjects important to crisis-affected children, as in the 'Framework for learning', seems to help teachers shift to more competency-based, child centred approaches.
3. While enrolment rates may rise during post-conflict, at least in primary schooling, this is not necessarily matched by attendance.
4. Balancing power between central and district education authorities by decentralizing resources would allow for greater creativity and more appropriate uses of funds.
5. Competitive recruitment leaves less doubt as to the legitimacy of administration than appointment; selection early in a transition could allow for a longer capacity-building period.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

In Tetum, East Timor's most commonly spoken language, the land is known as Timor Lorosa'e – literally meaning place of the rising sun. As the territory gained independence on 20 May 2002, it certainly must have seemed like a new dawn to its people. With remarkable perseverance, this out-of-the-way, poverty-stricken province with less than a million people voted their way to independence from a country that did not particularly want to let them go and was over 200 times their size. The East Timorese propensity for patience had triumphed: as journalist Da Silva (2002) puts it, "faith in a righteous outcome is common among Timorese; they believe that in the end, justice prevails". Even so, as the East Timorese have so clearly seen, justice can bring its own hardships.

The education sector felt these hardships as much as any. With nearly a quarter of a million displaced to West Timor, an already poor education system was overwhelmed to breaking-point. In East Timor, with nearly all school buildings destroyed and most teachers gone, the education system was virtually non-existent. Although much of this study has focused on the education response involving international actors, it is clear that recovery has been the people's own, as were the long years of resistance. In both West and East Timor, certain themes stand out as defining the character of education response.

On the West Timor side, the scale of displacement essentially dictated what was possible in the short term. Issues of insecurity put a rapid end to these efforts and the necessity of integration into an already poor system shaped education work for the children who remained. Large numbers of refugee students led to the decision to establish what was essentially a parallel system, however temporary. As one Indonesian Government official expressed when interviewed, "What could we do? With refugees pouring in, could we really have asked under-resourced local schools to add hundreds of students each?" Instead, UNICEF, along with its partners, set up 'tent schools' in refugee camps. While there were plans that these schools

would become part of the formal system, insecurity and withdrawal of the United Nations led to their abrupt closure. As a result, GoI was left to provide education for refugee children and integration, however difficult, has been the only option.

On the East Timor side of the border, destruction of the education system was close to total. With most schools damaged or destroyed, a lack of trained teachers and loss of virtually all administrative staff, system reconstruction was the main priority. A multi-donor initiative managed by the World Bank led a response that emphasized school rehabilitation. During the early days, UNTAET was consumed by questions of legitimacy as it interacted with the CNRT, which continued for a period as a political entity representing the East Timorese people. By mid-2000 a merged authority was formed in the guise of the ETTA. As questions of legitimacy began to fade, problems of reform became more urgent. Which language should be used for instruction? What curriculum should be used? How should teachers be trained? These are just a few of the educational questions facing East Timor as it enters into independence.

East Timor was a first for the United Nations in governing a transitional territory, with a key responsibility of preparing a new administration. However, as explained by King's College London (2003: 256): "The design of the UNTAET mission did not allow for the easy transfer of the emergency relief that United Nations peace operations are used to providing to the slower, more calibrated task of establishing a new government, a process which inherently relies on a strong, integrated and continuing commitment to capacity building." At times, this failing was the United Nations own – in its education work problems with strategy, staffing and procurement all caused difficulties. Neither was communication always smooth; as one former staff member put it, "the United Nations served as postman, but they often lost the mail". At other times, limited results were more due to circumstance. In educational policy development, for example, there was caution among East Timorese towards too early a commitment, along with fear that international expertise would be contrary to official policy – both of which limited consultation.

Expectations for progress have been high among the East Timorese. Independence activists with lofty dreams have had to make the quick transition from clandestine resistance to transparent development. The country is building an education system from the ground up, weighted

down by authoritarian mind-sets inherited from colonialism and occupation, contrasted against the defiance of the resistance movement. Neither ethos facilitates systematic development of an education system. Even so, much has been achieved. This is borne out in East Timor in the way enrolments have increased since the yoke of occupation has been lifted, and in West Timor in that refugee children have largely been integrated into local schools. It is borne out in the numbers of classrooms that have been rehabilitated and the many teachers who have been recruited. It is borne out in the pride of schoolchildren who talk of the future of an independent East Timor.

Unfortunately, it is often what has not been achieved that determines children's education experience, as well as their decision to attend school or not. As Father Filomeno, former CNRT and ETTA head of education, expressed, "We accomplished a lot, but where we are now is nothing to be proud of. The Indonesians left us with less than nothing and now we are almost back to the starting point." In considering lessons learned, Gorjão (2002: 327) reminds us that the East Timor experience was in fact so unique that the lessons learned may be quite limited. Even so, some of the basic learning that may be drawn from educational response in both East and West Timor include:

Before freedom

1. Even though colonial education systems, such as that run by the Portuguese, did not reach many children, over time they can take on an increasingly positive reputation when compared to later systems.
2. Positive attributes can be found even in education systems that oppress; Indonesia introduced the concept of education for all and increased literacy rates exponentially.
3. During a crisis period, scenarios can change so drastically that planning can seem to have been a waste; however, even when not used directly plans can be used to influence future priorities and directions.
4. Children and youth involved in resistance struggles may bring their own brand of violence into a school; they may also play a significant positive organizing role for communities.

Refuge across the border

1. While refugee children's attendance at local schools may be preferred, when numbers are so large that existing schools would go into crisis, new schools are necessary.
2. To avoid creation of a parallel system, the education authority should have a clear role and involvement in emergency response and follow-up.
3. Without a basic level of security for staff, the international community cannot function, and the few actors including education as part of their relief efforts will decrease.
4. Teacher incentives for displaced populations should be carefully checked against local rates and other income sources must be clarified.
5. For short-term educational needs, a simplified version of the familiar curriculum can be taught, with an emphasis placed on ways to better engage children.

From emergency to transition

1. When no education authority exists, a large number of players jump in and help where they can; in such cases UNICEF often takes on a 'ministerial' role.
2. Communities can be their own best resources, as shown by the lead role that East Timorese communities took in re-starting schooling.
3. Teacher incentives, which UNICEF supported for about eight months in East Timor, can be instrumental in getting schools operational and keeping them so.
4. While emergency non-formal education efforts can offer support in the immediate aftermath of a crisis, the typical brevity of funding seems to eliminate any possibility of more sustainable change.
5. While emergency support touches on all educational levels, the emphasis is on primary education; this begs the question, given the numbers of youth, as to whether secondary and vocational education should receive increased support.

Rebuilding East Timor

1. Relations between local and international leadership are more successful when structured in a way so power is shared – with the balance falling toward the local.

2. Donors generally have clear interests in the education sector, often based on historical ties or geography; however when the sector becomes overly politicized (language, curriculum, etc.) those with fewer cultural links may avoid it.
3. For school rehabilitation and furniture, local contracts could be combined with stricter international supervision, perhaps through NGOs.
4. If materials are expected to arrive at schools in a timely fashion, delivery cannot rely only on the goodwill of peace-keepers or international NGOs.
5. In an emergency, teacher training cannot be left until the education system is fully functioning and curriculum known; it is especially an urgent need in places with an inexperienced teaching force.
6. While political considerations may guide designation of languages as ‘official’, the question of language competencies and mother tongue should play a role in determining the ‘language of instruction’.
7. Community participation needs greater attention in an emergency context, little can be assumed regarding community contributions to reconstruction.

Toward durable solutions

1. Supporting local schools to integrate refugee children in areas of large displacement can accelerate the integration process for the whole community.
2. Training for teachers on the importance of teaching a wide range of subjects important to crisis-affected children, as in the ‘Framework for learning’, seems to help teachers shift to more competency-based, child centred approaches.
3. While enrolment rates may rise during post-conflict, at least in primary schooling, this is not necessarily matched by attendance.
4. Balancing power between central and district education authorities by decentralizing resources would allow for greater creativity and more appropriate uses of funds.
5. Competitive recruitment leaves less doubt as to the legitimacy of administration than appointment; selection early in a transition could allow for a longer capacity building period.

With a new country comes new hope. The changes in governance that have come along with East Timor's independence have inevitably demanded changes in the education system. "Educational transformation goes hand in hand with political transformation... As long as there was no legitimate, democratically elected government of East Timor there was no opportunity to legitimately proceed with educational transformation" (Millo and Barnett, 2003: 14). Happily, this is no longer the case, and the real test for educational transformation is yet to come. After all, the international community still has many lessons to learn, and the East Timorese people are just starting to learn their independence.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Joint Assessment Mission: education goals and targets

In November 1999, the Joint Assessment Mission identified the following tasks as important in making a smooth transition from emergency work to the development of the education system, at least in the short-term (World Bank, 1999: 39-41).

Primary and secondary education

Resources for students/teachers

1. Provide basic teaching materials: pens, paper, chalk, textbooks, according to actual needs of school populations and in a timely manner.
2. Provide basic furniture: desks, chairs, tables, chalkboards and efficient storage (lockable metal boxes) and security.
3. Repair minor damage to school buildings (windows, doors, etc.) so that classes can commence, and institute double shifting and multigrade teaching where necessary.
4. Provide subsidies for poor children in order to ensure school access, especially for girls.

Assessments and evaluations

5. Undertake an assessment of where people live and where schools are needed in every district. Criteria for schools consolidation should include schools for children in remote areas and where children in the first three grades of school live.
6. Review existing curricula for quality and find and print appropriate curriculum materials and available textbooks for the short term and for primary and secondary schools. Malaysia and the Philippines may be sources for such materials.

7. Assess printing capabilities in Dili, and if they are insufficient, outsource printing in the region.
8. Review UNICEF assessments to plan for rehabilitation of school buildings. This will necessitate double shifting and multigrade teaching in schools, and for teachers to teach two cohorts of students.
9. Develop a national inventory of educational administrators and managers, and assess training needs for education administration.

Teacher training

Resources

1. Provide teaching resources for primary and secondary teachers (pens, paper, maps, charts and textbooks).
2. Train teacher trainers to train volunteers and new teachers on the national register in an accelerated teacher training course, with systems of evaluation, supervision and in-service support.
3. Give credit for teacher trainees in their final year of training, to complete degrees and diplomas through practical teaching service. Supervision and assessment of this teaching should be the responsibility of those assessing teaching skills.
4. Provide incentives for teachers to teach in the interim period, leading to payment of salaries by January 2000.

Assessments and evaluations

5. Assess the nature of teaching skills and languages in which teachers are literate in all districts.
6. Set up a national volunteer register for teachers at primary and secondary levels: university teachers and students awaiting the re-opening of university, graduate students, civil servants who could be asked to give 2-3 hours per week for education.

Education and training for out of school youth and adults

1. Establish a network of adult vocational courses in Dili and regional centres, targeting youth who are unemployed and need skills training in vocational skills (as assessed by current reconstruction needs), language skills (Tetum, Portuguese, English and other languages), and Timorese arts and culture. Require contractors to apprentice and

train vocational students as a proviso for the award of contracts, especially through UNTAET.

2. Provide certificates of accreditation stating skills learned and course duration.
3. Initiate a national literacy campaign in Tetum and the official language.

Re-starting tertiary and technical education

1. Register students in all institutions: UNTIM, polytechnic, nursing, teacher education, and students returning from Indonesia.
2. Negotiate with the Government of Indonesia for the students enrolled in Indonesian universities who are about to complete their studies to return to their universities.
3. Negotiate with UNTAET for the return of education institutions, to establish study centres in Dili for each of the four schools within UNTIM: education, economics, social and political science, agriculture, and for Dili Polytechnic and the Nursing Academy. Offer self access distance education modules for academic study in each of the four schools of the university, the polytechnic and the Nursing Academy, so that students can continue their studies on a part-time basis.
4. Organize in each these study centres, self-access language courses in Portuguese, English, Bahasa and other languages, especially for students aspiring to apply for overseas scholarships to complete their studies.
5. Open self access centres in each of four regional centres: Baucau, Los Palos, Maliana and Same providing courses in response to need.
6. Repair minor damage to university and college buildings (windows, doors, etc.) so that classes can commence.
7. Provide basic furniture: desks, chairs, tables, and efficient storage and security.
8. Make an assessment of materials needed for academic libraries in all disciplines.
9. Find one or several partner universities who could develop the University of East Timor, initially as a university link campus to upgrade both academic and administrative skills of East Timorese staff, and provide needed support in the immediate future.

Appendix 2
Public expenditure on education
in East Timor

Under Indonesia and transition to independence

	Indonesia		Transitional administration to independence							
	1998/1999 estimate		2000/2001		2001/2002		2002/2003		2003/2004	
	US\$M	%	US\$M	%	US\$M	%	US\$M	%	US\$M	%
<i>Total spending on education</i>			45.1	100.0	42.1	100.0	35.6	100.0	26.7	100.0
Consolidated fund (CFET)			13.4	29.7	13.5	32.1	14.0	39.2	13.5	50.7
Trust fund (TFET)			10.5	23.3	15.0	35.6	8.4	23.6	-	-
Bilateral contribution			21.2	47.0	13.6	32.3	13.2	37.1	13.1	49.3
<i>Inter-sectoral allocation</i>										
Social affairs (of which % to education)			20.7	64.6	21.4	63.2	21.9	63.6	20.7	65.3
Total CFET (of which % to education)			60.8	22.0	57.0	23.7	58.6	23.8	52.0	26.0
Total revenue as % of CFET			26.1	42.9	26.0	45.6	25.0	42.7	25.0	48.1
<i>Intra-sectoral allocation</i>										
Primary (only salaries)	3.0	27	5.1	38						
Secondary (only salaries)	2.1	19	3.0	22						
Tertiary (only salaries)	9	8	0.3	2						
Other recurrent and capital	5.0	23	5.0	37						
<i>GDP (of which % to education)</i>	375.0	3.0	263.0	5.1	303.0	4.5	350.0	4.0	350.0	3.9
<i>GDP per capita</i> ¹	\$426		\$351		\$404		\$467		\$467	
Per primary student spending as % of GDP per capita	\$22	5.0	\$27	8.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Per secondary student spending as % of GDP per capita	\$105				-	-	-	-	-	-
Per university student spending as % of GDP per capita	25.0	\$76	22.0							
	\$234	55.0	\$77	22.0						

Appendix 2 (continued)

	Indonesia		Transitional administration to independence							
	1998/1999 Estimate		2000/2001		2001/2002		2002/2003		2003/2004	
	US\$M	%	US\$M	%	US\$M	%	US\$M	%	US\$M	%
<i>Composition of education expenditure:</i>										
Basic education, youth, culture	12.07	100.0	12.80	100.0	13.22	100.0	12.75	100.0	12.75	100.0
Wages and salaries	9.00	74.6	9.23	72.2	9.65	72.2	10.14	72.2	10.14	72.2
Goods and services	3.02	25.0	2.56	20.0	2.56	20.0	2.61	20.0	2.61	20.0
Capital	0.05	0.4	1.00	7.8	1.00	7.8	0.77	7.8	0.77	7.8
Tertiary:	1.32	100	0.73	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77
Wages and salaries	0.49	36.7	0.35	48.5	0.37	49.6	0.39	50.4	0.39	50.4
Goods and services	0.69	51.9	0.38	51.5	0.38	50.4	0.38	49.6	0.38	49.6
Capital	0.15	11.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
No. of civil servants in education	10,800		6,125	54.8	5,818	51.0	5,816	48.9	5,816	46.9
Total no. of civil servants			11,182	100.0	11,399	100.0	11,899	100.0	12,399	100.0

Source: Wu, 2000: 17. Central Fiscal Authority of UNTAET; IMF staff estimates; World Bank staff estimates.

1. GDP per capita is not in US\$ million. It was derived from dividing the GDP by the population. Since an estimated 10-12 per cent of the population of non-Timorese origin left the country after the referendum, the GDP of 2000 was divided by 750,000. The school year (September to June) did not coincide with the Indonesia fiscal year (April to March), nor to the UNTAET fiscal year (July to June). The figure on public spending on education as a percentage of GDP does not adjust the months to align the school year with either of the fiscal years.

Appendix 3

Education in the National Development Plan

The National Development Plan lays out both a short term and a longer-term strategy for education. Over the next two to three years, the Planning Commission's (2002: 155) articulated aim is to "consolidate the efforts and achievements of reconstruction". This includes rationalization of educational provision, development of human resources throughout the sector and strengthening the ministry's institutional capacity. In the longer-term – over five to ten years – efforts will be made to modernize curricula, prioritize teacher training and continue to strengthen management efficiency. Gender issues are highlighted in the plan and adult literacy programmes are also proposed.

Vision

By 2020, the East Timorese People will be well educated, healthy, highly productive, democratic, self-reliant, espousing the values of nationalism, non-discrimination and equity within a global context.

Key challenges

1. A rapid expansion in primary school enrolment, particularly for children from poor households.
2. A reduction in the high drop-out rate at primary level.
3. An improvement in teaching quality through the provision of appropriate training.
4. The design and introduction of literacy manuals, and the implementation of campaigns to address the low literacy level within the population.
5. A specification of the respective roles to be played by the government, church, NGOs and local communities in the management of education.

6. The development of strategies for the furtherance of the Portuguese language at all education levels, and amongst the adult population.

Objectives

1. Increase the population's awareness and understanding of basic educational needs, and particularly reduce the number of illiterate adults, encourage community and NGO participation, and strengthen community ownership.
2. Increase access to education and develop means for ensuring the retention of children within the school system, at all levels; improve the drop out rate.
3. Rationalize educational provision in relation to the varying needs of different areas.
4. Improve educational provision, particularly through the provision of professional training, notably for girls and women, adults, and groups with special needs.
5. Increase the efficiency of school organization and management.
6. Encourage sports education in schools.
7. Develop a curriculum appropriate to East Timor's contemporary needs, encouraging the development of cultural identity, and stressing the importance of the values of democracy, self-sufficiency, nationalism and non-discrimination.
8. Develop programmes for unemployed youth, and for school drop-outs, providing qualifications enabling them to re-enter the labour market.
9. Develop extra curricular occupational programmes.
10. Develop forms of culture and art, emphasizing the national identity of East Timor.
11. Re-introduce and develop Portuguese and Tetum as the official languages of East Timor

Policies

Based on these objectives the following basic policies will be formulated:

1. Promote mandatory education for all children of school age.
2. Develop primary education for all as the main goal and priority in allocation of government resources.

3. Create incentive partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, parents associations and the community, to support education at all levels, in pre-school, secondary school, vocational training and non formal education, as well as in university education.
4. Establish a minimum qualification for teachers, such as a university degree. Develop additional relevant specializations for secondary school, vocational training, as well as for university teachers and assistants.
5. Mainstream gender in all educational programmes and monitor the impact of these programmes on women's education, through the development and use of gender-sensitive indicators.
6. Work with relevant sectors/organizations to advocate an improved status for women, promoting equal rights for men and women in access to education.
7. Have as a key policy objective to increase women's access to information on educational provision.

Appendix 4

Questions for interviews and investigation

To maximize compatibility between the case studies undertaken by UNESCO/IIEP, research questions are based on similar questions used in other case studies of education in emergency and reconstruction. They have been adapted for use in East Timor.

1. Background

1.1 Educational legacies

- What were/are the characteristics of structured learning within Timorese communities? How did it differ from the formal education instituted by the Portuguese and then the Indonesians? In what ways does traditional learning influence expectations of education today?
- What was the system of education under the Portuguese? How extensive was its reach – who had access? In what ways does that time influence expectations of education today?
- What was the system of education under the Indonesia? How extensive was its reach – who had access? In what ways does that time influence expectations of education today?

1.2 Freedom and catastrophe

- How did education provision and access change in the months leading up to the referendum? Did the move toward a vote affect availability of teachers (particularly Indonesian)? Did it affect what was taught in schools?
- What was the impact of the campaign of violence and destruction on the education system? How did the devastation affect school buildings, physical assets, and human resources?

2. East Timor in transition

2.1 *Critical response in the first months*

- How were needs and resources assessed during and after the emergency?
- When did schools, or other structured education, re-open following the crisis? How much of this was local initiative, and how much was reliant on a central effort?
- How were teachers identified, selected, recruited, trained, certified, motivated, compensated?
- How was basic infrastructure established, including equipment and supplies for the functioning of administration? How were textbooks, educational materials and teaching aids secured and distributed at a school level? To what extent and how were schools furnished with desks and chairs?
- How were the psychosocial needs of children initially addressed? How has this continued?

2.2 *Education policy and action*

- How has the massive task of school reconstruction been tackled? How were issues of secure learning spaces factored in (consideration of protection, safety, adequacy, drinking water, toilets)?
- How were criteria for recruitment of officials and employees decided (job descriptions, qualifications, numbers, civil service system and salary scale)? How were records of teachers and other employees established and updated? Were they computerized?
- What policies have been made regarding language of instruction? How are these being implemented – both in theory and in practice? In what ways does education provide for instruction in mother tongue or in other additional languages?
- How has the curriculum been negotiated? How were the key content areas in the curriculum (language, culture, history, geography and religion) handled during the transition?
- How is achievement of pupils and teachers assessed (educational supervision at different levels, tests and national exams, international tests)?

2.3 UNTAET as government

- How was the education division of UNTAET staffed? What were deemed essential roles?
- What tensions arose between UNTAET and the parallel structures of education leadership within CNRT and ETTA? How were these managed or resolved?
- What educational planning processes took place under UNTAET? How were these managed?
- How were management tasks decentralized? Which decisions were up to the district or school? How was a communication system built between the centre and districts and schools?
- What were the mechanisms for community consultation and participation in decision-making about education, at all levels?
- What initiatives were undertaken to strengthen the capacity of education administration?

2.4 Influencing the system

- How did UNTAET interact with NGOs, CBOs, multilaterals, bilaterals? How were partnerships built and maintained with those organizations?
- Which donors have been involved in education in East Timor? What approaches did different donors subscribe to and why? How have donor stances influenced education policy and priorities?
- What role have other United Nations agencies played in education, particularly UNICEF as lead agency? What roles have local and international NGOs, or civil society groups, played?
- What non-formal education initiatives have been tried, and led by whom? How have they enhanced education opportunities available? How have they connected with the formal education system?

3. An independent nation

3.1 Building a new education system

- How was the structure and organization of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports (MECYS) decided? How were the district units decided and education offices formed?

- How was the legal authority of the MECYS and other sources of authority clarified and codified? How were rules and regulations decided upon, at all levels?
- How did government choose a budgeting, financial management and procurement system?
- What preparations were made for handover from UNTAET to the Ministry? How was this handled in practice?
- What relationship is there between the school system and national universities and other higher education institutions?

3.2 Education planning and management

- How were long-term and medium-term education plans developed, including formulation of implementation programmes and projects?
- What information and data, including statistics, are collected? Who is responsible for data collection? Was an EMIS created? How is information used in planning?
- What mechanisms have been put in place for teacher recruitment and selection, training and certification, and compensation?
- How does government deal with issues of accreditation of pupils' studies and teachers' credentials? How is performance of teachers and students acknowledged publicly, ceremonially and symbolically?

3.3 Access and inclusion

- What is considered 'basic education' in East Timor? To what level is education legally mandated? How does government ensure the right of, advocate for and enforce school enrolment?
- Who has access to education? Who does not? How has this changed in the last three years? This covers issues such as gender, ethnicity, political affiliation, religious affiliation, rural/urban populations, and special needs, e.g. handicapped, former child soldiers.
- How are needs for transportation to school, school meals, etc. handled?
- Have there been any provisions made for self-study, distance and non-formal education?

3.4 Relevance

- Does the education provided meet the felt needs of children, young people, and adults?

- How are the cultural specificities of different population groups reflected in educational planning?
- How are educational needs related to income generation and employment, HIV/AIDS, gender, landmines, health and safety addressed?
- In what ways (if at all) does the curriculum address reconciliation/repatriation, promote mutual respect, highlight national and civic education, or include conflict resolution and peace education?
- How is on-going curriculum development to be handled?

3.5 Funding and external relations

- What have been the principal funding sources for operating costs, capital costs and capacity building?
- How does government interact with NGOs, CBOs, multilaterals, and bilaterals? How are partnerships built and maintained with those organizations? Who communicates the Ministry's priorities for funding, while dealing with donor's priorities, safeguarding against fragmentation?
- How are contributions from the community encouraged? Are user-fees a part of this in any way?
- How does the Ministry communicate and exchange experiences with other Ministries and with international bodies?

4. Across the border in West Timor

4.1 Critical response in the first months

- How were needs and resources assessed during and after the emergency?
- Who were the players in education in this first phase? What strategies did they initially employ in providing for the educational needs of IDP's/refugees?
- What role did the Indonesian government play in education response? What was considered the government's and what was considered the international community's separate responsibilities?
- How were safe spaces for learning created or identified? What issues surrounded this?
- How were teachers identified, selected, recruited, trained, certified, motivated, compensated?

- How was the curriculum been negotiated? How were the key content areas in the curriculum (language, culture, history, geography and religion) handled?
- How were textbooks, educational materials and teaching aids secured and distributed?
- How were the psychosocial needs of children initially addressed? How has this continued?

4.2 Sustained tension and conflict

- How did on-going security concerns throughout 1999-2000 constrain education response?
- What effect did the pullout of United Nations personnel and operations have on the education of refugees? How have the questions of learning spaces, teachers, and curriculum changed since then?
- In what ways has tension between refugee and host populations shown itself? How has this impacted education provision? How has education contributed to the relationship between the populations?

4.3 Searching for a durable solution

- What information and data, including statistics, are collected? Who has access to education? Who does not? How has this changed in the last three years?
- Which actors are currently involved in education for refugees? What are their approaches?
- How does government interact with NGOs, CBOs, multilaterals, and bilaterals? How are partnerships built and maintained with those organizations?
- How are educational needs related to income generation and employment, HIV/AIDS, gender, landmines, health and safety addressed?
- In what ways (if at all) does the curriculum address reconciliation/repatriation, promote mutual respect, highlight national and civic education, or include conflict resolution and peace education?
- How has uncertainty – individual, government, and international – over the future of refugees affected investment (time, money, staffing) in education?

- What durable solutions are foreseen as likely for the remaining refugees? How are the refugees accounted for in the government's educational planning processes?

5. Lessons learned

Concerning the above topics, these basic questions should help identify lessons learned:

- What were the core activities that made a difference to educational opportunities for children during and after the East Timor emergency? Who was responsible for the activity?
- What education issues have been most controversial during transition and independence? Why was that the case? Which ones have been resolved and how? Which ones are still outstanding?
- How effective was the relationship between the international and East Timorese communities? What were the key roles of each party? What could have been done to improve the partnership?
- Overall, in retrospect, how could things have been done better? What advice should be given if the world faces a similar situation in the future?

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