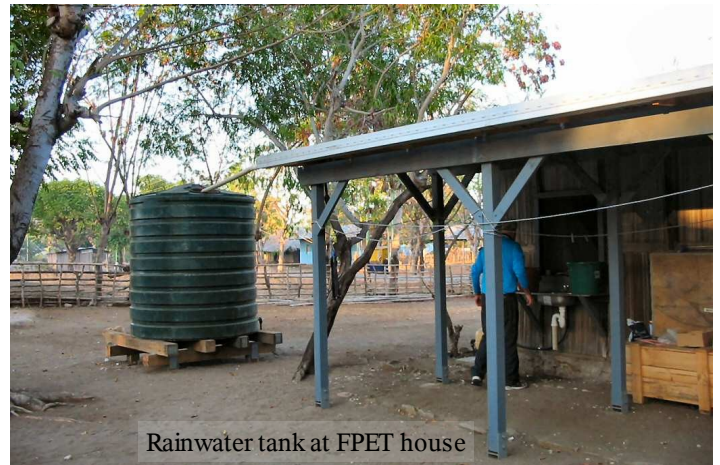


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View our website: www.fpet.org.au
Or Email: info@fpet.org.au
Or Write: FPET PO Box 191 The Gap 4061

Tanks for Rainwater



Rainwater tank at FPET house

President's Report

- Things are not yet back to normal in East Timor but there is an air of optimism that the country is moving in the right direction.
- A significant event in Atabae captures this spirit. On 31 July, the first meeting of a new **Community Representative Committee** took place. FPET is committed to a genuine partnership with Atabae. We have been asking our PALMS volunteers to work with Fr Marsellus to set up a representative group to coordinate with FPET on community projects. It finally happened when Margaret and David returned to Atabae after the recent trouble.
- This Committee should be able to truly speak on behalf of the community. It has representation from government, village council, church, schools, health services, Connect East Timor, women and youth. It plans to gather data and set priorities. It will help manage projects and organise community input so that the community takes ownership of partnership projects.
- We are still committed to helping Atabae Parish with church projects and will deal directly with Fr Marsellus and the Parish Council on specific parish projects.
- FPET is trying to empower ordinary Timorese to have some influence on their destiny. For the past 400 years, colonial and occupying powers have simply told the Timorese what to do and how to do it. It seems the Timorese like the idea of managing their future. Margaret reports that members agreed to *"commit to regular meetings and welcome other significant community members to join....The Committee were very positive and the consensus was – please go ahead as soon as possible."*

Jim Johnson (3300 6332)



Youth enjoy soccer despite the hard and stony ground

◇ Dry season water supplies for drinking and household use in the Atabae sub-district have often been very limited and poor quality since destruction of water supply systems in 1999. FPET has previously had options for improvement investigated. One idea now being advanced is to install rainwater tanks on some of the larger buildings.

◇ We are hopeful of installing three 4000 litre tanks at the Atabae Catholic school and boarding dormitory complex before the next wet season. David Hall has been gathering quotes for supply, installation and other information on alternative types of tanks.

◇ This should give some local experience in the use of rainwater tanks which are not widely used in East Timor and could help considerably with improved drinking water quality. Depending on local experience and attitudes, more tanks may be installed in future years.

Nick Delaney

Youth Initiative

With the troubles in East Timor highlighting the youth of the nation, the young people of Atabae have renewed their efforts. David and Margaret recently had a meeting with the Atabae Community Youth Association President, Arto da Cruz, and Secretary, Jose Asaca.

They reported: "This is a group of 26 young people who have taken the initiative to not only form to help themselves but also to start projects to help their community. They have a meeting weekly and each puts in 20 cents to help attain their goal."

The Association is seeking help with sporting and music equipment, such as uniforms, pianos and guitars, as well as small business incentive funding.

According to David and Margaret, there are encouraging signs: "Jose the Secretary comes over as a very intelligent, and committed young man. Their commitment and enthusiasm are most commendable." The young people of Atabae have always had much to deal with and we hope to support them in their present challenges.

Joel Hodge

Margaret and David's Return

Our Palms Volunteers, Margaret and David Hall, who were evacuated at the time of the recent troubles, have since returned to East Timor on 21 July 06.

Everyone has heard of the shootings, burnings and looting in Dili during recent months. The problems have not yet been totally overcome, but Margaret and David report "people are feeling safer and are getting on with life." They also report that people were very happy to see Australian troops and that they feel they can trust the Australians.

Margaret and David received a very warm welcome back in the Atabae community. The trouble was concentrated in the capital, Dili. Atabae had not had any recent disturbance problems, apart from a population increase of people taking refuge from Dili. This resulted in a noticeable decrease in livestock – chickens, goats, pigs, cattle and most thankfully a major reduction in the number of roosters. They say that the most obvious difference from before they left in late May, is the many happy smiling faces now.

Brendan Carroll

Widow and orphan support



Widows and orphans at Aidabaslala village

◇ The community in Atabae sub-district has great difficulty in supporting the large proportion of widows and orphans living there. FPET has provided some money to assist over the years we have been assisting the community.

◇ Fr Marsellus reports that he has recently distributed FPET funds to over 200 widows and orphans but the total number is thought to be around 300.

◇ He will continue to distribute the remaining money over the next few weeks. He also assures us that all recipients are very grateful to FPET for the financial assistance.

◇ Fr Marsellus has previously provided information on the numbers and location of widows and orphans. We expect to get an update of this information and other population statistics in the next few months from a comprehensive health survey being organised by Margaret Hall with the Atabae clinic staff.

Nick Delaney

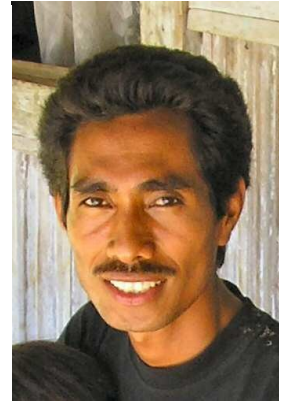


Jim Johnson at November 2005 Atabae Parish Council Meeting

Jorge is coming to Brisbane

• Jorge Leite has been friend and interpreter for FPET members in Atabae. He polished his English skills by translating for Australian INTERFET troops patrolling around Atabae. He also picked up the Australian sense of humour.

• When Connect East Timor (CET) installed the Atabae village radio system, the technicians turned to Jorge to help get community cooperation and explain how to operate the network. CET then employed him to carry out routine checking and maintenance of the radios and reporting on their use. FPET joined with CET to buy him a motorbike so that he could regularly visit the 8 villages with radios.



• Jorge will be in Brisbane in October for a short CET course on radio maintenance and network management. FPET is looking forward to offering him some Brisbane hospitality and I hope he will be able to meet many FPET supporters.

Jim Johnson

Thank you to our supporters

Supporters in St John the Baptist Enoggera parish held "Christmas in July". Thank you for your generous donation from this event which will go towards supporting the Atabae community.

Father Marsellus reports that the Aidebeleten school is in full operation with over 70 students and 3 teachers. Without your support this school would not exist - and many of the students would not receive any education. An inspiring example of what can be achieved through friendship and partnership.

John Brady (Treasurer)



Children welcoming back David and Margaret

So, **WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW? - You choose:**

1. Join the Friends and Partners with East Timor, or
2. One-off donation, either to PALMS Overseas Fund (Atabae) for community development (tax deductible) or (non-tax deductible) for Atabae parish works.
3. Monthly direct debit, as above.

Let us know and we will contact you:

Name: _____

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To: Friends and Partners, PO Box 191 The Gap 4061