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Christmas message from TL3A Vice President

Dear colleagues,

Board members of the Timor-Leste Australia Alumni Association (TL3A), and all alumni members and families, Australia Awards Timor-Leste team, members of the Australian Embassy in Timor-Leste and fellow Timorese.

On behalf of the TL3A board, I would like to extend our greatest gratitude for supporting TL3A to become more visible in 2022 through activities initiated and convened by the association. The board members are very proud to see leadership and active participation of alumni members in various sectors including the recently established disability network led by Mana Casmira do Rosario Maia Mira, the recipient of our alumni of the year for 2022. We look forward to facilitating more creative ideas from alumni members to transform and advance the country we all love, Rai Timor.

We hope everyone has a fantastic holiday season and Merry Christmas! On behalf of the Timor-Leste Australia Alumni Association Board, we wish you all the joy of the season. May you spend the holidays with those you love and return rested and energised for a fantastic new year 2023.

The five board members, Efandy, Carmeneza, Luisa, Veneza and Ovania are proud to serve as your TL3A board members!



High level visit lunch with the then Ambassador of Australia for Women and Girls



Seven prominent female members from the TL3A were honoured to have lunch with the then Ambassador of Australia for Women and Girls, Christine Clarke CSC. It was a great opportunity for these female alumni to share their experiences on their achievements as a female leader in Timor-Leste. Ambassador Clarke acknowledged the alumni for their skills and their contributions to Timor-Leste's development since studying in Australia.

High level visit with Minister of Foreign Affairs

In September, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Senator Penny Wong met with women leaders including five female Australia Awards alumni to hear how women are driving economic change in Timor-Leste. Women's economic empowerment is an important contributor to economic growth and prosperity. Australia is proud that their support to the Government of Timor-Leste has active participation of women and girls as a core focus of the partnership.



Farewell outgoing & welcoming new board members to TL3A board

The TL3A board expressed our appreciation to our outgoing board member, mana Joraida Pereira for her valuable contribution to the TL3A over the past nine months. It is with a heartfelt goodbye that we formally announced mana Joraida's resignation from her position as a TL3A board member due to personal circumstances.

In October, we welcomed mana Ovania Mendonca onboard as TL3A's new board member.

Mana Ovania is one of the 356 Australia Awards Alumni and completed her Bachelor degree in Health Science from Charles Darwin University. Additionally, Mana Ovania was also one of the candidates nominated for the TL3A board members for the period of 2022 - 2024.

We would like to wish mana Joraida all the best in her journey and we look forward to working with mana Ovania in the TL3A board for the next two years mandate from 2022 to 2024.

TL3A Sectoral Group

In September, Sports Sectoral Group members from TL3A held regular futsal matches for its members. In August, the TL3A team organised a friendly futsal match with the Australian Embassy team where both teams had a great time and it was a good opportunity for networking. In September, we received 14 proposals from alumni. This consisted of 1 from agriculture sectoral group, 2 from development sectoral, 5 from Education sectoral, 2 from Health sectoral, 3 from Infrastructure and 1 from Sports sectoral group. The TL3A Board members have assessed all the proposals and five have been selected to align with Timor-Leste government plan and DFAT investment priorities. The selected proposals are 1) New Orientation System for High School students; 2) Supporting Higher Education Workshop and Library Infrastructure in Ermera Municipality; 3) Capacity Building and Promoting Gender Equality in Animal Health Profession; 4) Empowering and increasing women and girls' participation in engineering sectors and building pathways to career opportunities and 5) Futsal for Friendship, Capacity Development, AAS Information Outreach and Health improvement.



TL3A Alumni Disability Networking Group

TL3A recently established Alumni Disability Networking Group under the cross-cutting sectoral group. The purpose of this network is to increase disability awareness among alumni and provide support to people with disabilities to access various opportunities including Australia Award Scholarships. The twelve members of this network held its first meeting in November led by the selected coordinator lead, mana Casmira Maia where they discussed upcoming activities and events. On 3rd of December, members from the group participated in an expo during the International Day of People with Disability. For more information on how to connect with this group, please email Alumni Disability Networking Group coordinator, mana Casmira Maia on casmiradorosariomaia@gmail.com.



Alumni Small Grant Round 8



The Alumni Small Grant Fund aims to encourage alumni to undertake research, community development or leadership/professional development through either individual or organisations (disability, youth, or women or academic organisations). Seven applications were received from Australia Awards Scholarship alumni in November 2022 for small grant round 8. Of those two were for research, three were for community development, one for professional development and one for delivering workshop training. Two proposals have been selected: one called "Empowering Statistical Literacy Skill for Civil Society Organization", and the other a rural library in Laleia, Manatuto municipality.

Alumni Showcase: Casmira Maia

In October 2022, Australia Awards Alumna, mana Casmira do Rosario Maia presented her master's research on "Microenterprise as an employment opportunity for people with disability." Her research highlights how microenterprise can offer a viable, rewarding, and enjoyable employment opportunity for people with a disability, while contributing to Timor-Leste's economic development. Since July 2022, TL3A has facilitated two Alumni Showcases, which continue to provide meaningful and targeted engagement with alumni and prominent stakeholders. Forty nine participants attended the showcase from organisations people with disabilities, UNDP team, AAS alumni and DFAT representative.

Are you an Australia Awards Alumni interested in promoting your research? Please reach out to Alumni Secretariat Coordinator via email : octaviana.faria@thepalladiumgroup.com.



Alumni Showcase: Guteriano Neves



On 10 August, member of Timor-Leste Australia Alumni Association (TL3A), maun Guteriano Nicolau Soares Neves presented his research showcase on Timor-Leste: Economic Development Policy of a Rentier State. His presentation is driven from his long-term independent research on how having access to windfall of revenues shapes the state institutions, the state's role in overall economic development and framework of public policy equation that underpins the resource curse. His presentation provided economic context that underpins development challenges in Timor-Leste.

Maun Guteriano is an Australia Awards Alumni and completed his master's degree in public policy specialising in development policy from the Australian National University in 2017. He said, "I want Timorese to understand that petroleum dependency is not about money. It affects society's mindset, state institutions, changes the economic structure and incentives. A combination of these factors then shapes the framework and calculus of policy making in Timor-Leste."

This showcase was a networking opportunity to strengthen the linkages between members of TL3A with other alumni associations in Timor-Leste including New Zealand Alumni, US Alumni and other, relevant stakeholders, and their contribution to the development of Timor-Leste. A total of eighty two participants including AAS alumni, DFAT, stakeholders, local university students and representatives from organisations of people with disabilities attended this showcase and it was well-received with participants agreeing (48 %) and strongly agreeing (51 %) the research showcase was relevant to them.

Alumni Engagement Strategy Consultation



In October 2022, 21 alumni participated in the alumni engagement strategy consultation. The purpose of the consultation was to gain insights and feedback from alumni on the draft objectives for the alumni engagement strategy for the next four years. Some of the key themes for discussion included support to TL3A, increasing alumni engagement, networking, mentoring, reintegration and cross-cutting issues. The alumni engagement strategy covers the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2026.

The vision of the TL3A is to have a diverse alumni community that becomes a dynamic, open, innovative platform, to connect & foster alumni contribution for a better Timor-Leste.

UNDP Informational Session

TL3A in collaboration with UNDP Youth Employability and Entrepreneurship Skills (YEES Project) hosted an informational session in October to Alumni and TL3A members on how to access soft loan opportunities for Micro, Small, Medium (MSME) and large enterprises. The purpose of soft loan is to enable MSME and large enterprises to receive funding from commercial banks with an interest rate of 3% to improve and expand businesses in order to participate in Timor-Leste's economic diversification and economic growth as well as job creation. It was a fruitful session and discussion on the soft loan opportunities.





TL3A promote activities during New Zealand BBQ networking event

In August, several members of Timor-Leste Australia Alumni Association (TL3A) and the Australia Awards Scholarship (AAS) team participated in the Sunset Networking event hosted by the New Zealand Scholarship and alumni team. The team had the opportunity to promote TL3A activities and provide information about the Australia Awards Scholarship program. It was a great networking event between various scholarships and alumni associations in Timor-Leste.

Reintegration Workshop for newly returned alumni

In September, TL3A in collaboration with Australia Awards Timor-Leste (AATL) organised an reintegration workshop for six Australia Awards alumni who recently completed their studies and returned to Timor-Leste. The workshop aimed to help alumni reintegrate and use their knowledge and experience gained while studying in Australia in finding a job that matches their skills and qualifications.

The session was facilitated by the local recruitment agency Invest People. TL3A members also facilitated sessions by sharing their experience working in government institutions and development agencies and how to consider consultancy work as an alternative employment opportunity.



Farewell Event & Pre-Departure Briefing for 2023 intake awardees

Members of Timor-Leste Australia Alumni Association took part in delivering the Pre-Departure Briefing (PDB) in October to the awardees for the 2023 intake. TL3A board member, Luisa Gonzaga represented the TL3A board to deliver a speech at the farewell reception to congratulate the seven awardees for the 2023 intake. In December 2022, another PDB was hosted for three additional awardees for the 2023 intake. TL3A Board President, Caetano Efandy participated in the breakfast farewell and delivered the speech to congratulate the three awardees.



2022 Alumni of The Year & award winner

The 2022 Alumni of The Year event was a networking opportunity to connect Australia Awards alumni and celebrate the significant achievements of their contributions to the development in Timor-Leste. The award winner of the 4th Alumni of The Year Award was announced during the event and the winner may use the funds for the professional/community development. This year, 13 Australia Awards alumni consisting of 5 alumna and 8 alumnus were nominated for the 4th Alumni of The Year Award. The nominations was submitted by alumni for six categories including alumni who have demonstrated active engagement in community development, demonstrate leadership potential in their profession, contribution to the TL3A activities, contribution to women's empowerment and GEDSI, demonstrate contribution in research and contribution to sustainable economic development in Timor-Leste.



The winner of the 4th Alumni of The Year Award was awarded to Casmira Maia, second and third runner up were awarded to Joaquim Costa da Cruz and Guteriano Nicolau Soares Neves, respectively.



Mana Casmira Maia received a prize of \$3,000 USD for professional/community development.



Upcoming Activities in 2023

- Foundational disability awareness training by Palladium Maven Inclusion team: January
- Assembly Review Meeting: January/February
- Welcome Home Dinner for newly returned alumni: February
- Small Grants Community Development Activity on Rural Library in Manatuto : February -March

Social Media Performance:

TL3A FB fan page: 5.7K Follow our page and 5K likes

Australian Embassy FB fan page: 5 Alumni of the month posts on the embassy's page with 1000 average reactions

Australia Awards Timor - Leste | Program Office

Visit Australia Awards Timor - Leste Scholarship Program at
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