



Youth and Community Security in Timor-Leste

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Summary Executive

1. Generally people consider youth is the growing process of human from “Kids to adults”. It is hard to define specifically youths according to ages, therefore the government and some international agencies sometimes adopt other classes. According to population census of 2010 the pyramid population indicate higher is minority ages. This means youth will strongly increase in the future. Can be expected that youth’s population is higer this year and the 2015 result census indicated that youths with the age 15-24 are 245,121 or 21% from the whole populations. In the context of Timor-Leste “youth” sometimes judge that they are actor of conflict because their issue is really complicated and bring them to conflict or violence. This report identifies risk or potentials for youths to violence.
2. This report identifies the specific risks that threaten to bring youths to violent activity. Many surveys and reports clearly demonstrate the relationship between a weak macro-economy, increasing youth unemployment, and collective violence on the streets. Timor-Leste's citizens are widely convinced of this direct relationship.
3. Improvements to the education system are the most important pathway to success, because it provides a mechanism for youth to develop skills that lead to employment. However, this does not address the problem for those who have already graduated, who face weak demand for their services, and a shortage of job openings. More and more youth expect to be able to find work, and when these opportunities do not materialize, there is a sense of frustration, injustice, and dissatisfaction towards a political system that does not seem to be bringing change.
4. The centralization of work and educational opportunities in Dili has brought about rapid migration to the capital, resulting in significant problems related to unplanned urbanization. The rapid migratory patterns amplify frustrations by ramping up competition for an already scarce supply of employment opportunities. Competition for jobs with decent wages and occasional benefits are even stiffer. Combine these factors with highly limited physical mobility, and the links to increasing violent activity are clear.
5. Unemployment, poverty, and lack of education are also linked with alcohol abuse. Amongst young men, half use alcohol on a regular basis, whereas the majority of people would consume alcohol during ceremonial activities only. Alcohol abuse is coming to be recognized as an established trend for people aged 15-24, as the link between alcohol consumption and unemployment becomes more visible.
6. The link between youth violence and culture is inextricable. For youths, the attitude that they will take in their approach to violence will be largely formed by their community and their family members' values, which can be traced back for generations. Communities, schools, and households can all be significantly positive or negative forces in the development of how youth use



violence in their lives. For example, a society that accepts the use of violence as a way to resolve conflict can "normalize," such behaviors for children, increasing the likelihood that they will repeat such behaviors later, and teach them to the next generation.

7. Another challenge is the issue of impunity. Impunity occurs in when an individual or group does not receive punishment or some form of consequence for an illegal action. In Timor-Leste, impunity is an increasing problem, because of the existing informal relationships that influence official state behavior, but now also due to the influence of private patrons. As long as impunity continues, the situation will continue in which those with power, such as politicians and members of the security sector, will act with a different set of consequences than those for common people.
8. There have been some efforts from the government to prepare a board that will address the issue of youth violence in Timor-Leste. They seek to address the problem by providing mechanisms to communities to identify the source of conflicts, and to work creatively with them to resolve conflicts with local leaders. The implementation of community policing in Timor-Leste is based on the definition of the national strategic plan, including important elements such as village police officers (OPS), and through community involvement in local security activities, such as the Village Security Volunteer (SVS) program, and the Council of Community Policing (KPK).
9. However, measurable improvements from these initiatives will be minimal, because they do not address the deficiencies at the root of the problem. Unemployment, poor educational structures, immobility, and the resulting frustration make it difficult for youth to avoid violent conflicts. In order to truly resolve these challenges, and to bring about real development, the government must pursue a genuine understanding of the challenges facing Timorese youth, and to pursue a comprehensive solution.

Recommendations

1. That the Ministry of Education and State Secretary for Vocational Training and Employment Policy be enabled to treat education like other government "mega projects," with a high-quality curriculum oriented towards market needs.
2. That the State Secretary of Youth and Sport, and the State Secretary for Vocational Training and Employment Policy endeavor to discover and promote youths' potential through education, professional training, and mentoring for self-employment.
3. That the State Secretary of Youth and Sport, the Ministry of Education, the National Council of Youth, Security, and Civil Society encourage all youths, both male and female, to assume their responsibility as citizens and resist violent activity.



Parte I – Introduction

This report is in general context in security issue in community level also specific to issue of youths, where youth are frequently judged to be the creators of conflict because the problems that they face are complex. This report largely focuses on situation link to youths, it is not only focusing on risks that youths face but also focus on its cause and conflict.

In this context, in the past years there was too many reports published by national and international organization that link to youths are really complex. Identify some issues that bring youths to conflict whether economy, social and justice. From those problems sometimes bring youths to hard situation, because they feel that it is a good place for them to enjoy each. Even such places become risk for them but it is a solution for them, as described above that there is some cause that makes them to conflict. It is still fresh in our mind of martial arts groups where up to present there is no solution yet even the resolution been issued out to end martial arts groups (GAMs) activity in 2013 but the conflict of MAGs still happening in Dili and municipalities.

FM assesses that such issue is really important and urged every part need to pay attention for youth issue and it can be discussed by every part to provide ideas on how to get solution for youths' issue.

For further understand issue of youth, FM makes a revision for literature or reports on issue of youth in the context of Timor-Leste, including important mechanism that used by doing consultation and interview as well as conducting discussion with stakeholders for the issue. This report divided to six (6) parts of the general context and specific link to youth and security.

Finally, this report is focus on discussion of youth issue, particularly youth's situation that become risk and cause for conflict and the context of Timor-Leste. Therefore, this report will discuss specifically on youth and security. FM understands that security issue is large in society of Timor-Leste such as land dispute, domestic violence and other common issues. However, issue of youth is the main issue for FM to discuss and analyze and need every part to find for solution to secure youth and community.



Parte II – Context

2.1 Who is Youth in Timor-Leste?

2.1.1 Definition of Youth

Generally people consider youth is the growing process of human from “Kids to adults”. It is hard to define specifically youths according to ages, therefore the government and some international agencies sometimes adopt other classes. According to draft of the national youths policy of Timor-Leste of 2014 defines that young people are age from 15 to 24 including those who are married.¹

This definition aligns with the common definition used by the International agency such as UN in collecting statistic on youths. The national policy youths of Timor-Leste 2007 defines that youths are categorize 16-30 years old. Apart from this, the election law for community leaders 2009 defines youths that people who is age 17 - 30.² Furthermore, youngster parliament participate only the one who is the age between 12 – 17, even such ages considered kid’s according to the United Nations Convention for Children’s Rights that Timor-Leste had rectified in 2003.³ Therefore, “Young people” sometimes considered still kid (less from 17), and adult (18 years old up).

Timor-Leste’s national laws align as well with the situation or criminal actions that involve children or youths particularly their acknowledgment of penal code law adoption. Regulating on the penal code of Timor-Leste considered that people who are not age 16 and even 16 years old but incomplete 21 years old should not execute criminal punishment for them because it is consider immutability penal.⁴ Mainly, people use three terms of “Youths” to clarify youth’s definition as; “Joven”, “Foin sa’e” and “Klosan”. This report will use these three terms to explain youths concept in Timor-Leste.

There are two (2) definitions of youths that people generally considered such as age and culture. In this context defines youths who is age from 12 – 17, where this age commonly people called “Foin sa’e”, and this youths is naturally have finished their study from elementary school or continue to secondary school. The term “Klosan” is a definition that largely adopted for this concept, generally use it as culture or tradition to define youths which is not focus on ages but refers to unmarried people or even elderly. Therefore, Youths mainly refer to people who are married and do not and sometimes people use ages for specific definition.

The context of youths is depend on situation or condition of life of the people in Timor-Leste; economy, education, unemployment conditions and conflict phase become measure to define the large concept of youth in Timor-Leste, because all people live in different situation. In Timor-Leste people who are older but sometimes

¹ Draff Esbosu Politika Nasional Juventude, (2014)

² Lei Lideransa Komunitariu. Lei Nú 3/2009

³ Kódigu ba Labarik, (2011), asesu iha;

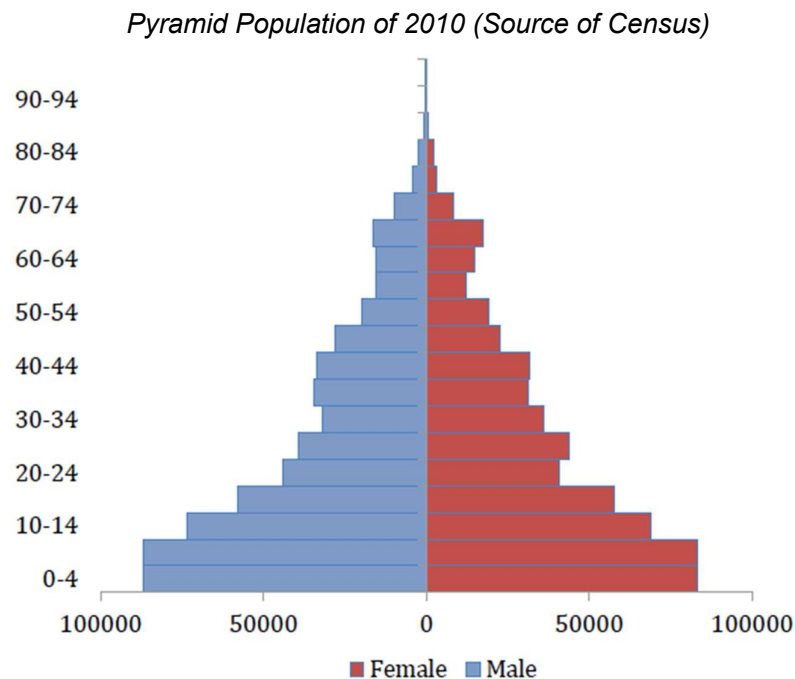
http://www.mj.gov.tl/files/TC_TT_Kodigu_Labarik_nian_Maiu_2011_versao_para_distribui%C3%A7ao.pdf

⁴ Kodigu Penal Timor-Leste, Dekretu Lei Nú 19/2009.

act like youngsters, and sometimes people who are teenager but having good responsibility just like married, therefore, youths is depend on people's life conditions. So this report we can consider youth is the one with productive ages from 12 to 22. This (12-22) is selected as a measure of those who are active studying that is just finished their study from primary to university levels.

2.1.2 Profile Youths in Timor-Leste

Based on 2010 census population, the pyramid of people indicated huge is "youth bulge". This means youths will continue increasing in the future, as show in figure 1. The below pyramid show children is growing up in high numbers compare with younger people, in order to expect youths in high numbers for this years. The initial result of 2015 census indicated that youths with the age 15-24 there are 245, 121 or 21% from the overall people.⁵



(Source Census of Timor-Leste 2010)

According to 2010⁶ census populations particularly youths of Timor-Leste who is categorize age 15 – 24 years old is 210,962 or 20%; age 16 – 30 is 227,791 or 26% of overall populations. According to youth's definition that age of 15 - 25 or 16 – 30 are really important to measure youths' percent considering as adults, and to show

⁵ Bazeia kalkulasaun - Hamutuk Idade Sira 11-25 iha Tinan 2015 (Joven iha Tinan 2015) nudaar porsentu populasaun 1,167,242 (resultadu inisiu 2015 census husi <http://www.statistics.gov.tl>).

⁶ Dada hotu husi Cesus foin halo iha 2015 sidauk disponivel, Ne'e duni relatoriu ne'e uza infomasaun husi 2010. Tanbe ne'e importante konsidera perfil joven apresenta iha ne'e nudaar indikativu aprosimadu situasuan agora daudaun ho kontestu nivel natalidade aas-liu iha durante tinan 20 liu-ba to agora.



the comparison act between youths as crime from the rest of adults' people. Census of 2010 identified as well that youth's population in Dili (41%) is higher than others municipalities with the rate maximum 26 - 37%. The reason is because after 15 years old lots of youths (16%) migrated internally in Timor-Leste (actually from municipalities to Dili).⁷

Comparison Youths and Ages					
Group of Population (Age)	Population (2010 Census)	Percentage of the Overall Populations	Percentage of Adult Populations (>16)	Project Populations (2015 Census) ⁸	Percentage of the Overall Populations (2015 Census)
Child (<16)	467,507	44%	-	-	-
Youths (15-24)	210,962	20%	35%	245,121	21%
Youths (16-30)	277,791	26%	46%	-	-
Adults (>16)	598,902	56%	100%	-	-
Total	1,066,409	100%	-	1,167,242	100%

2010 census shown that illiterate level of youths (15-24) is 79.1% that means illiterate people dominating for minority ages because of attending school since Indonesia's period is low and can be expected that youths of illiterate will continue increase from 2010 up to present.

Timor-Leste owns a patriarchy system of family, therefore, post of "Head family" usually mandates to man and signify as youth to be adult. From 2010 census show that age of 20 to 29; usually man assumes post as the head of family (It is a political reason of youth of Timor-Leste provide definition of age for youths to incorporate to group 25-30). This post of head family does not relate to marriage people from the age of 27, 75% women and 50% man have married.

According to *Labor Force Survey of 2013*, rate of unemployment is increasing especially youths of ages 15 – 24 with minority ages 21.9% but reduce people become larger which is 14% to people with the age 25 – 34 and 9% only to people with the age 35 – 44%.⁹ Unemployment youths (15 – 24) are bad from employment totally in Timor-Leste, and are really high to men 25.3% rather than women 16.7%.¹⁰ This survey indicated as well 28.7% youths (15 – 34) jobless, school and even trainings.

⁷ *Timor-Leste Population and Housing Census 2010 – Analytical Report on Youth Volume 16.*

⁸ Papel Governo Ba Dezenvolvementu Juventude iha Era Teknolojia (2016), Moniz, Metodio Caetano (Direktor Geral Joventude no Desporto), Apresentasaun Unital, Dili 23 Abril 2016.

⁹ Timor-Leste Labour Force Survey 2013, Ministry of Finance (<http://www.statistics.gov.tl/labour-force-survey-2013/>)

¹⁰ Timor-Leste Labour Force Survey 2013, Ministry of Finance (<http://www.statistics.gov.tl/labour-force-survey-2013/>)



From the total employment population, majority of them are “informal” workers or venerable or work in low salary; men is 31% and 15% women receive small salaries (<\$181 per month), this is affect to youths (15 – 24) is higher 81%.¹¹ Particularly in municipalities sometimes work irregular and only depend on time.

The recent survey by The Asia Foundation¹² indicated lots of man 80% in Dili and 87% in Manufahi, feel doubt and sad because they do not work and do not have sufficient money for their necessity.

Some reports on youths indicated that Timor-Leste’s populations of youths are huge compare with other neighbor countries in ASEAN. In a measure that 34% from youth with the age 15 – 24 of the adults’ populations of Timor-Leste is higher than other neighbor countries in ASEAN such as Indonesia (24%), Malaysia (28%) and Thailand (18%).¹³ Comparison of International researchers has shown that potentially risk to political violence increasing if a nation own high number of youth’s populations.¹⁴

2.2 What Relationship between Youth and Violence also Crime in Timor-Leste?

2.2.1 Youth Violence in Timor-Leste

a. About Violence

Violence is defined as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.”¹⁵ Other definitions also include psychological violence (such as neglect or behavior that results in a person experiencing psychological suffering) and verbal violence.¹⁶

Violence can include self-directed action such as suicide; inter-personal violence such as between family members or intimate-partners (domestic violence) or between community members; and, collective violence between members of groups (eg political groups or social groups like martial arts groups).¹⁷ In nations such as Timor-Leste with many complex and interconnected personal, generational, geographical, cultural, political and racial linkages and loyalties within the population, it is perhaps easiest to categorise violence by its location, either ‘internally’ (within or around the home) or as ‘externally’ (in the open or ‘on the streets’).¹⁸

¹¹ Timor-Leste Labour Force Survey 2013, Ministry of Finance (<http://www.statistics.gov.tl/labour-force-survey-2013/>)

¹² Understanding Violence against Women and Children in Timor-Leste: Findings from the Nabilan Baseline Study – Main Report 2016, The Asia Foundation: Dili.

¹³ Analiza Situasoun Joventude 2014, Sekretaria Estadu ba Joventude no Desportu ([http://www.unicef.org/timorleste/YSR_Report_Final_Tetum_and_English_\(2\)_21.11.14.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/timorleste/YSR_Report_Final_Tetum_and_English_(2)_21.11.14.pdf))

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ (World Health Organisation, 2002)

¹⁶ (Prevent Violence at Work, 2016)

¹⁷ (World Health Organisation, 2002)

¹⁸ (Muggah, Jutersonke, Murray, Rees, & Scambary, 2010)

The exact reason why people commit violence is multi-layered and not easy to determine.¹⁹ Some have described violence as a form of communication when non-violent communication fails, or as a ‘renegotiation’ of power relationships between individuals or groups, and in this way may be a tool of both the powerful and the powerless.^{20 21} Others, particularly when considering collective violence, have described violence as a kind of rational choice when people feel that the gains of undertaking violence are higher in comparison to the expected costs.²² Many programs that focus on preventing violence identify violence as a behavioral choice that people make, rather than something that is inevitable or inescapable.

Because it difficult to determine the direct reason for violence, researchers often use the concept of *risk-factors* and not *causes* when assessing the context of violence. Risk-factors indicate that a person or group is at a greater statistical risk (‘at risk’) of being either a perpetrator or a victim of violence, but do not claim that these factors are necessarily the direct cause of violence.^{23 24}

Risk factors linked to violence can be categorized as follows:

- Structural factors (societal level), such as: high economic and social inequality (poverty) and political marginalization; rapid migration and demographic change; and reduced community connectedness.^{25 26}
- Individual factors (personal level), such as when an individual: has been exposed harsh punishment, trauma, violence or bullying at home or at school when growing up; has limited education; and/or experiences mental illness or alcohol abuse.²⁷

Around the world, these risk factors are particularly prevalent within youth populations, and violence by young people is one of the most visible forms of violence in society.²⁸

a. Risk Factors for Youth Violence in Timor-Leste

The introduction to this report outlined a demographic profile of youth in Timor-Leste, which showed that there is a pronounced “youth bulge” in Timor-Leste, with around 21% percent of the total population currently between 15 and 24. This proportion will continue to increase as the majority of the population (recent estimates are around 70 per cent) are currently under 25.²⁹

Because of this large youth bulge, it is argued that ensuring Timor-Leste’s young people are educated, healthy, and productively employed are the biggest development challenges facing Timor-Leste over the next decade.³⁰ As early as 2007

¹⁹ (World Health Organisation, 2002)

²⁰ (Van Der Merwe, 2013)

²¹ (Myrntinen, 2009)

²² (Urdal, 2006)

²³ (Office of the Surgeon General, 2001)

²⁴ (The World Bank, 2007)

²⁵ (Muggah, Jutersonke, Murray, Rees, & Scambary, 2010)

²⁶ (Urdal, 2006)

²⁷ (World Health Organisation, 2002)

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ (UNDP, 2016)

³⁰ (The World Bank, 2016)



the World Bank released a report entitled “*Timor-Leste’s Youth In Crisis*”³¹ which outlined the potential risks from a failure to provide for East-Timorese youth, including the possibility of violence and lawlessness by those left disenfranchised by unsound development.

The sections below will consider in more detail why this “youth-bulge”, among other cultural and societal factors, has the potential to exacerbate youth violence.

1. Employment

Multiple sources have recognised a link between low economic growth, high levels of youth unemployment and collective and/or external street violence.³² Timor-Leste citizens themselves have a well-established belief that unemployment is the primary cause of street violence between youths - a common concern from East-Timorese community members that the stress of finding employment, idleness and a lack of responsibilities lead to groups of youth sitting in the street (“street-corner gangs”) with nothing to do but be drawn into problems and fighting.^{33 34 35}

Youth (15-24) unemployment was estimated in 2013 at 21.9%, and is significantly higher for young men (25.3%) compared to young women³⁶ (16.7%). The official figure for national unemployment Timor-Leste sits at 11%, but actual numbers are likely much higher than the official figures, and likely only to rise given the youth bulge.^{37 38}

The level of unemployment in Timor-Leste is also influenced by location. The ILO estimates that in urban areas youth in the age group 15-19 reported very high unemployment rates (40.2 %) compared to males in the same age category (22.8 %) in the rural areas.³⁹ This variation reflects high seasonal (but not consistent) employment available in regional areas for agricultural harvest. Many believe that the Government unemployment figures are misleading, because they do not reflect the harsh realities of vulnerable employment and informal employment (workers lacking contractual and formal protections), short-term contract work, and low paid work.⁴⁰ The ILO estimates that 90% of 15 to 24 year olds are in such informal employment arrangements and 81% are in low-pay jobs (monthly salary of less than US\$181).⁴¹

Survey data collated by The Asia Foundation as part of the *Understanding Violence against Women and Children in Timor-Leste* (The Nabilan Baseline Study) released in 2016 show a clear picture of the seasonality and quality of work. The Study found from that from a total of 839 responses, 55% of men in Dili and 54% of men in

³¹ (The World Bank, 2007)

³² (The World Bank, 2016)

³³ (Muggah, Jutersonke, Murray, Rees, & Scambury, 2010)

³⁴ (NGO Belun, 2014)

³⁵ (Scambury, 2009)

³⁶ Reflecting that many women do not enter the official labour force.

³⁷ (Quitao, 2016)

³⁸ (Ministry of Finance, 2013)

³⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁰ (Quitao, 2016)

⁴¹ (Ministry of Finance, 2013)



Manufahi had not worked or earned money in the previous 12 months, and of those 'employed', 43% in Dili and 62% in Manufahi worked only seasonally or once in a while. Importantly, the survey also found that around 4 out of 5 men in both Dili and Manufahi (80% and 87% respectively) had felt stressed or depressed about a lack of work or income, feelings that may contribute to violent behavior.⁴²

2. Education

Improvements to educational systems are a widely-accepted pathway for success, by giving them the means to obtain employment.⁴³ In recent years Timor-Leste has made strong progress in increasing school attendance, literacy and numeracy. However, a mismatch persists between the number of graduating youths compared to the number of jobs available, and between education outcomes and job requirements. This means that the rate of unemployment for youths with a secondary education is actually the highest in the country (41.6%, compared with 15.8% for youth with primary education and 25.2% for youth with tertiary education).⁴⁴ With its focus on technical mega-infrastructure projects with long timeframes and dubious benefits, the Government of Timor-Leste is not creating enough grassroots jobs that match the capabilities of the Timorese youth. The NGO Lao Hamutuk outlined this problem:

“If the Government doesn't change its policies and invest in our own people, the level of poverty will escalate. This year, nearly 30,000 young people will reach working age, but work opportunities are very limited, and this number will swell further when babies born after 2002 reach working age in three or four years, after Bayu-Undan (offshore mineral deposit) revenue ends.”⁴⁵

The perceived “false promise” of education raises youth expectations for better jobs and earning opportunities, and when these opportunities do not arise, a level of frustration, a sense of unfairness, and a dissatisfaction with the political and economic system may result. If the government does not acknowledge these frustrations and act accordingly, these feelings may be risk factors for collective violence as organised and educated youth seek an outlet for their frustration.

3. Migration

A corollary to the problems of employment and education has been the centralization of work and education options in the capital Dili, leading to rapid urbanization and migration to the capital. Dili has grown from a population of 17,000 in 1966 to 234,000 as per the 2010 Census.^{46 47} An analysis of youth based on the 2010 Census found that one in six youths had migrated within Timor, generally from a rural area to Dili in search of greater work and education opportunities.⁴⁸

⁴² (The Asia Foundation 2016)

⁴³ (NGO Belun, 2014)

⁴⁴ (Ministry of Finance, 2013)

⁴⁵ (Lao Hamutuk, 2016)

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁷ (National Statistics Directorate 2010)

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

This rapid migration of youth has contributed to greater anxiety and frustration, because it has exacerbated poverty. More people living in Dili means more competition for employment and education, essential services are spread thinner, and peoples' physical mobility is limited— all factors linked to rises in violence. Further, urban migration has increased the social isolation of youth by removing them from their traditional family, community support, and conflict-resolution frameworks. Migration has also brought village and regional level disputes into the capital, and promoted the rise of criminal gangs such as some Martial Arts Groups as an alternative to family or community support structures.^{49 50}

4. Alcohol

Factors such as low employment, education or poverty are often linked to alcohol abuse, and yet alcohol consumption is generally low in Timor-Leste with around half the male population lifelong alcohol abstainers and most others limiting their drinking to occasional celebrations or festive occasions.^{51 52 53} Moreover, the link between violence and alcohol consumption is not always clear. Some research has indicated that alcohol or drug use amongst young people enhances the likelihood of injuries or deaths from violent behavior,⁵⁴ but the Nabilan Baseline Study (2016) discounted men's alcohol abuse as not significantly associated with intimate partner violence experience or perpetration in Timor-Leste.⁵⁵

However, alcohol *has* been recognised as a significant problem specifically for East-Timorese youth (15-24), perhaps due to the link between alcohol and unemployment.⁵⁶ Research has also suggested alcohol can be a factor that escalates external and internal conflict into serious violence within East-Timorese communities. Indeed, conflict monitoring found alcohol involved in 26 percent of violent incidents in 2013.⁵⁷
⁵⁸

1. Societal / Intergenerational Factors

Culture can be defined as "the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time."⁵⁹ In the context of violence and youth, culture is of critical importance, as the behavior of young people is shaped by their community and families' values and can be passed between generations.

Society's attitudes towards using violence and force as punishment at home or in school, and to resolve problems and conflict in the community or in family and intimate relationships can impact on the prevalence of violence in these contexts now

⁴⁹ (Muggah, Jutersonke, Murray, Rees, & Scambary, 2010)

⁵⁰ (World Health Organisation, 2002)

⁵¹ (The Asia Foundation, 2016)

⁵² (World Health Organisation, 2002)

⁵³ (NGO Belun, 2014)

⁵⁴ (World Health Organisation, 2002)

⁵⁵ (The Asia Foundation, 2016)

⁵⁶ (NGO Belun, 2014)

⁵⁷ (Belun, 2010)

⁵⁸ (NGO Belun, 2014)

⁵⁹ (Cambridge Dictionary, 2016)



and in the future. For example, a society that accepts the use of violence as a way to resolve conflict can be seen to create an enabling environment that “normalizes” violence for children who subsequently learn and repeat such behavior in later life. International studies have shown that communities that fail to provide effective non-violent alternatives to resolve conflicts appear to have higher rates of youth violence.⁶⁰

Witnessing or experiencing violence in home, at school, and elsewhere in society can lead to trauma among East Timorese children. Along with promoting acceptance and normalization of violence, childhood trauma may affect the mental health of youth and adults. Recently, symptoms of trauma and poor mental health in men were shown to be linked to involvement in gangs or fights with weapons in Timor-Leste.⁶¹

Data in Timor-Leste indicates that from the youngest ages many East-Timorese children experience or are subject to acts of violence in their family or at school. A 2006 UNICEF study concluded that most East-Timorese children are physically punished, with 60 percent being beaten by a stick by their parents, and 39 percent being slapped in the face by teachers.⁶² Many parents educate their children by means of violence to frighten them, as “respect” is perceived to also mean “fear”.⁶³ The Nabilan Study (2016) also found that almost half of all women and over one-third of men reported that they had witnessed their mothers being physically beaten by their partners when they were children.⁶⁴ Children who are exposed to or experience violence (including abuse, physical punishment and domestic violence) are more likely to experience violence as victims or perpetrators when they become youths or adults. This is sometimes referred to as the ‘inter-generational continuance’ of violence.^{65 66}

Historically, generations of Timorese have been exposed to an inordinate amount of collective and political violence, from the initial resistance to brutal colonial Portuguese rule, to Japanese invasion and occupation during World War II, civil war, Indonesian invasion, occupation and local resistance, militia violence after the referendum, and the international peacekeeping intervention. This pattern of violence has continued after independence, with a violent security sector ‘Crisis’ (2006-2007), an assassination attempt on the Prime Minister (2008), a war on illegal and political groups both in Dili (2008-2013) and in Baucau (2015) where a military style operation was constituted. Historically, political competition in Timor-Leste has been that the resolution of political competition has always been through violent means.⁶⁷ Muggah et al. (2010) argue that the normalization of collective and interpersonal violence is linked not only to structural factors (unemployment and urbanization) but also to long held grievances and historical experiences — including the recent events of 2006–07, but also those as distant as the late 1950s.^{68 69}

It is further argued that this cycle of conflict in Timor-Leste led to the ‘militarization’ of

⁶⁰ (World Health Organisation, 2002)

⁶¹ (The Asia Foundation, 2016)

⁶² (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2014)

⁶³ (NGO Belun, 2014)

⁶⁴ (The Asia Foundation, 2016)

⁶⁵ (World Health Organisation, 2002)

⁶⁶ (The Asia Foundation, 2016)

⁶⁷ (Myrttinen, 2009)

⁶⁸ And you could argue also subsequently the “Mauk Maruk affair” of 2015.

⁶⁹ (Muggah, Jutersonke, Murray, Rees, & Scambary, 2010)

general society, with citizens and groups arming themselves as ‘conflict entrepreneurs’ to both protect themselves and benefit from conflict.⁷⁰ This predominance of war and conflict in the life narrative of every East-Timorese family led to generations of East-Timorese growing up with role-models and “heroes” being based almost entirely around conflict and war.^{71 72}

The increasing availability and popularity of social media with the youth of Timor-Leste has potential to increase their exposure to violence. Although no comprehensive study of the use and effect of social media in this context has been undertaken, anecdotal evidence suggest that the online ‘sharing’ of graphic content, such as photos and videos showing violent assaults, and the results of violence in the form of wounded bodies and corpses, is common amongst East-Timor’s youths. At least one video posted on Youtube is believed to have incited violence between rival youth martial arts groups in Dili.⁷³

Gender is inherently linked to violence, and Timor-Leste is consistent with global trends, with males statistically significantly more likely the perpetrators of violence.⁷⁴ Incident monitoring indicates that around 90 percent of all violent incidents are initiated by men in Timor-Leste.⁷⁵ Hence, in terms of the source of violence, it is certainly more accurate to refer to the “youth problem” as “the male youth problem.”

It is of course difficult to empirically measure cultural values of masculinity, although the Nabilan Report (2016) found that the majority of women (80 percent) and men in (84 percent in Dili and 88 percent in Manufahi) agreed with the statement that “*to be a man, you need to be tough*” and around half (44 percent of women, 40 percent of men in Dili and 49 percent of men in Manufahi) agreed with the notion that “*if someone insults a man, you would expect him to defend his reputation with force if he has to.*”⁷⁶ Unfortunately, these intense ideals of masculinity can also be linked to the high rates of violence by men and youth in gangs and collectively, as well as interpersonally, in family settings and against women.^{77 78}

1. Inequality and “impunity”

The youth of Timor-Leste experience economic and social inequality. One aspect of this inequality that is relevant for aspects of security and violence is that of “impunity.” Impunity occurs when certain individuals or groups do not receive punishment or experience any consequences from their illegal, corrupt, or violent actions. Impunity thrives in nations such as Timor-Leste due to the predominance of personal patronages, loyalties, and informal power relationships, which can override or influence the formal State systems of governance. Powerful informal relationships in Timor-Leste are entwined within a web of familial, ethno-lingual, geographic, political, and business linkages. In addition, power may be commanded through seniority, allegiance during the independence struggle, and through ‘veteran’ status.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ (Myrntinen, 2009)

⁷² (The World Bank, 2007)

⁷³ (Fundasaun Mahein, 2015)

⁷⁴ (World Health Organisation, 2002)

⁷⁵ (Secretariat of State for Youth and Sports, 2014)

⁷⁶ (The Asia Foundation, 2016)

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

⁷⁸ (Muggah, Jutersonke, Murray, Rees, & Scambary, 2010)



More broadly, impunity in Timor-Leste can be characterized as one set of rules for those with power (the “ema bo’ot”) including those in political office or members of the security sector, and a different set of rules for all others (the “ema ki’ik”).

It is suggested that this ‘culture of impunity’ in Timor-Leste has encouraged the cyclical outbreaks of collective violence since independence, as powerful groups and individuals who have committed violent crimes have (with some notable exceptions) been gently placated or ‘bought’ by the Government, effectively removing the punishment or cost meant to discourage violence. Often, illegal violence committed by “ema bo’ot” is rewarded.^{79 80} It is also possible to view the emergence of militarized ‘illegal groups’, including gangs of youth such as the MAGs, as quasi-legitimate attempts by the disempowered to claim a similar impunity to that enjoyed by others.

More apparent still has been the effect of the culture of impunity on the nascent State security sector institutions – the F-FDTL and the PNTL. In the nation’s short history, the politicised, undisciplined, and poorly-structured security forces have amply demonstrated their capacity to create or aggravate social conflict.⁸¹ Despite central participation of all levels of the East-Timorese security sector in the violent chaos of 2006, the subsequent lack of consequences for those involved reinforced the community’s distrust of the security sector and a belief both inside and outside of the sector that its members are ‘above the law’. A feeling of impunity within the PNTL and F-FDTL may in part explain the high rates of violence and brutalization that still occur by members of these organisations - the Provedoria dos Direitos Humanos e Justiça (PDHJ) received 80 complaints⁸² against individuals in the police and military in 2015 alone, and concerns have previously been raised over the effectiveness and accountability of the PNTL’s internal *Professional Standards and Discipline Office* (PSDO) in recording and processing disciplinary cases against its members.^{83 84}

Instances of violence by members of the police or military against citizens (or between each other) have been filmed and disseminated throughout the population via social-media, leading to a societal perception that some degree of violence is the normal operational procedure for the PNTL.⁸⁵ Indeed, the *Survey of Community Police Perceptions 2015* carried out by The Asia Foundation seems to confirm this. The survey found that police-community relationships are generally good and citizens are increasingly referring serious crimes such as assault to the PNTL. But it also found that almost one in five community leaders or members of the general public do not trust that the PNTL will not physically abuse them.⁸⁶

Acts of violence by members of the security sector set a poor example for the community, contribute to the escalation of violence in Timor-Leste, and further normalise violence in East-Timorese culture. Violent rivalry between members of the PNTL and F-FDTL (that climaxed in 2006 but still occurs with some frequency to this day) indicates that these organisations still sometimes act more like street gangs

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ (International Crisis Group, 2011)

⁸¹ (International Crisis Group, 2008)

⁸² It is believed that the majority of which involve violence and brutality.

⁸³ (Oliveira 2016)

⁸⁴ (United States Department of State, 2014)

⁸⁵ (Fundasaun Mahein, 2015)

⁸⁶ (Rajalingam & Wassel, 2016)



than professional public servants.⁸⁷ In this way the police can be seen as just one more privileged group in the struggle for power in Timor-Leste, a group that is feared but not respected, and whose legitimacy can be violently challenged by East-Timorese youth.

Moreover, all forms of violence perpetrated by the security sector reduce trust in the police and thus reduce the effectiveness of community engagement and violence prevention programs, such as community policing, that are considered vital to engage with the youth population, and ultimately reduce youth violence.

2.2.2 The Extent of Youth Violence in Timor-Leste

It is important to distinguish between “youth violence” as a measure of the number of perpetrators and victims that are “youth aged” (ie. 15-24), and the more colloquial concept of “youth violence” that refers to the forms of violence commonly associated with youth compared to adults.

This distinction is important because although youth are involved in all forms of violence, including collective/political violence and endemic levels of domestic violence, the “problem of youth violence”, generally refers to specific forms of violence perpetrated mostly by youths (as compared to those forms that prevalent across society generally). In Timor-Leste, “youth violence” therefore usually refers to violent and antisocial behavior involving individuals or gangs of male youth that occurs in the streets (drunken assaults, rock throwing, fights between students etc.), that is less prevalent in the adult population.

Sex of Perpetrator for all violent Incidents (Jan - June 2016)		
Male and Female	110	16%
Male	524	76%
Female	58	8%
<i>(Total)</i>	<i>692</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 1: Source of Belun “Situation Reviews” Jan-June 2016

The PNTL has only very recently started to record and release the most basic of crime statistics. The lack of rigorous national crime data available makes it difficult to quantify or measure the extent and trends of youth violence in Timor-Leste.

In 2014 the Timorese Government released a report⁸⁸ analyzing trends in the youth population including an analysis of youth crime and violence. The report used information from the NGO Belun *Early Warning, Early Response (EWER)*⁸⁹ community incident monitoring system to determine that for the period between March 2012 and May 2013, 38 percent, or nearly four out of ten reported violent incidents could be attributed to youth (including students and martial arts groups). It

⁸⁷ (Fundasaun Mahein, 2016)

⁸⁸ (Secretariat of State for Youth and Sports, 2014)

⁸⁹ The EWER system a volunteer monitoring network to gather data and information about violent incidents and situational change in all 13 districts of Timor-Leste.



further calculated that that between June 2012 and May 2013 the rate of violent incidents attributed to youth (15-29) involved less than 0.2 percent of the total (male) youth population.

The Report concluded from this that the incidence of youth violence in the community was very low (in fact lower than for the population as a whole), contrary to the community's perceptions and fears that young people are a major source of violence.⁹⁰

However, Belun itself released data as part of their monthly EWER situation review for December 2015 that showed "major increases in youth-related incidents" with their data indicating a 40% security incidents attributed to youth in the last three months of 2015 (as compared to the first three months), and a general increase in violent incidents involving youth in the second half of the year.⁹¹

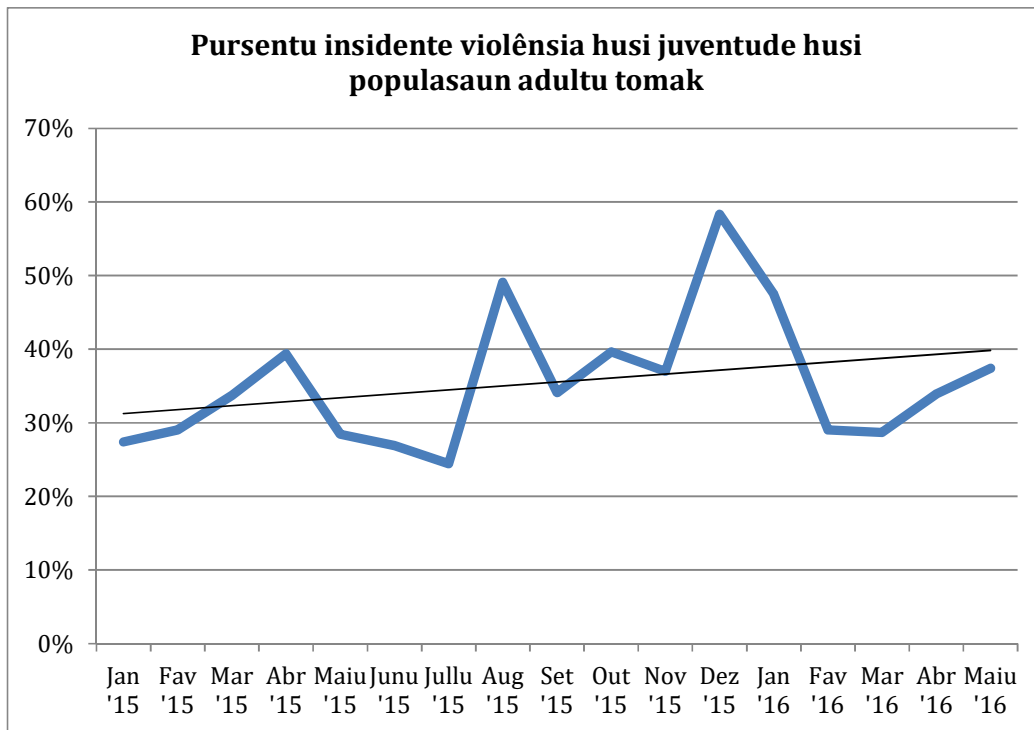
Projecting the EWER figures forward to 2016, it is apparent that there has been large fluctuations between the number of incidents between each month, with an overall percentage of 36% of incidents involving youth and a slight trending increase in the number of incidents attributed to youth as per the below graph. As youth make up between 20-46% of the adult population (depending on the definition of youth), and male youth around 10-23%, you can infer that male youth are overexposed as the perpetrators of violent incidents in society.

Pursentu insidenti sira violênsia husi juventude iha Timor-Leste				
Fulan	Insidente husi juventude/ estudante	GAM/	Total insidente sira	Insidente joven (%)
Jan '15	27		73	27%
Fav '15	25		62	29%
Mar '15	42		83	34%
Abr '15	58		122	39%
Mai '15	51		123	28%
Junu '15	45		119	27%
Jullu '15	27		90	24%
Aug '15	58		110	49%
Set '15	56		132	34%
Out '15	58		111	40%
Nov '15	51		127	37%
Dez '15	78		120	58%
Jan '16	74		139	47%
Fav '16	38		62	29%
Mar '16	37		101	29%
Abr '16	50		109	34%
Mai '16	54		123	37%
Total	829		1806	36%

Tabela 2: Fontes Belun "Revee Situaun" 2015 -2016

⁹⁰ (Secretariat of State for Youth and Sports, 2014)

⁹¹ Belun (2015) *Situation Review – December 2015*.



Grafiku 1: Fontes Belun “Revee Situasau” 2015 -2016

While analysis of Belun’s EWER data does not suggest a large change in the proportion of violent incidents by youth in the last three years, perhaps of more concern were the reported serious violent acts perpetrated by youths during this time, including those leading to death and serious injury and confrontations between PNTL and youth. Belun records the most typical acts of violence by youths as rock-throwing and fighting, but in late 2015 also documented a spate of violent attacks involving weapons including a fatal stabbing in November.⁹² Following on from this in 2016 Dili experienced a string of “Rama-Ambon”⁹³ attacks on citizens, with 19 recorded attacks to August 2016 resulting in 15 serious injuries and 2 deaths with these attacks were believed to be perpetrated by youth and linked to Martial Arts Groups.^{94 95}

A different measure of the extent of youth violence in Timor-Leste is in community perceptions. Perceptions or peoples’ feeling towards the security situation that they experience may be a better measure of the extent of youth due to difficulties in accurately measuring or classifying incidents, or the fact that many incidents in Timor-Leste are resolved informally, outside of the security and justice sectors, and therefore may not be recorded (thereby underestimating the problem). Moreover, unlike quantitative data, perceptions better indicate the impact of this violence in the community. For example, even a relatively small proportion of youth violence, such as the serious and well publicized youth and rama-ambon violence in 2015 and 2016, may have a disproportionately large impact on people’s feelings of their security

⁹² Belun (2015) *Situation Review – November 2015*.

⁹³ Slingshot Arrow – generally using steal bolt.

⁹⁴ (Belun, 2016)

⁹⁵ (Fundasaun Mahein, 2016)



in their community, and thus also their quality of life.

The Asia Foundation's *Survey of Community-Police Perceptions in Timor-Leste* is a longitudinal survey of security perceptions from the general public, community leaders and the PNTL. The 2015 survey found that 10% of PNTL, 13% of the General Public and 7% of Community Leaders believe that "youth problems" are the most serious security problem in their respective local communities today. This places youth problems in the top three security concerns in Timor-Leste (although significantly behind domestic violence and land disputes).^{96 97} Significantly, this level is higher in 2015 than in 2013 when only 4% of the general public identified youth problems as the most serious security problem.⁹⁸ The increase in perceptions of a youth problem comes despite Martial Arts Groups dropping significantly since 2008, suggesting that underlying structural factors such as unemployment, urbanization (migration) and poverty, and not institutions such as Martial Arts Groups, are the main contributors to youth violence.^{99 100} As discussed in the previous section, there are significant structural and social problems created by the extensive youth migration to Dili, and it is therefore not surprising that youth problems are perceived as a bigger problem (35%) in the capital than the national average.¹⁰¹

2.3 What is Security System in Timor-Leste?

Who involves and how is it? Regarding to Youth and Security Sector?

The PNTL strategic plan of 2014-2018 adopts a security pattern that involved all components and define that security issue is not focuses from security sector authorities but more focus on the citizen's role and involvement in security action.

PNTL believes that it is really effective to set up the community trust to PNTL in order to ensure that community is the PNTL partners and the community takes part in security action through a police pattern called visibility, involvement and professionalism (VIP). This pattern increases PNTL visibility in community and make them feel secure for security action and the community feel secure that they are really part of security safety because the police service really satisfy the people.¹⁰²

This pattern has developed security mechanism in the community level from the community policing council (KPK). KPK is the security resource that establishes in suco to safe them from citizens' participation that comes from local leaders and community in general. As established in all suco in Timor-Leste, member of KPK comes from suco council members, police officer suco (OPS), veterans and youths. The involvement of community is to focus on issue in the communities, identify causes of conflict and find for solution.¹⁰³

⁹⁶ (The Asia Foundation, 2016)

⁹⁷ It is assumed that "Youth Problems" generally refers to violence.

⁹⁸ Ibid

⁹⁹ (Belun, 2014)

¹⁰⁰(The Asia Foundation, 2016)

¹⁰¹ Ibid

¹⁰² Planu Estratéjiku PNTL 2014-2018.

¹⁰³ Fundasaun Mahein, 2013.



To understand issue or problem in the field there is always conducting a regular meeting of KPK, when identify problems, members from security resource discuss and provide idea on how to get solution for the problem. Usually the used mechanism is mediation and dialogue with communities for the problem happened and or problem in risk to happen

Also problem related to youths, manytimes youth involve in assaulting and fighting each other also general cases including some cases of martial arts groups, because some members of KPK are youth is easy to identify and find solution. However, it is not for all cases and they really appreciate for cases that consider as crimes in order to judge according to formal justice. Actually such cases used an important mechanism to find for solution and it is not refer to civil cases, they solve according to mediation and dialogue. The crime case will process according to justice way and law.

Those mechanisms will set up the relationship between communities in general and youth's relation with security sector in a security system which is established in the community. Through their involvement in this establishment of security system they become author for solution. It is actually take part from community and PNTL concerns that youths are owner of security act.

2.4 What efforts have been made by the security sector and generally to address youth violence?

The introduction of community policing policies by the PNTL has provided a framework for addressing youth violence in Timor-Leste, through the provision of mechanisms at the community level to identify sources of conflict, and engage in creative problem-solving alongside local community leaders. The hybrid model of community policing that has emerged in Timor-Leste combines elements of local and international models, with local conflict resolution practices being combined with intelligence gathering based on the Indonesian Military Police model, New Zealand problem-solving models, and Japanese *koban* system of collocation within communities

The implementation of the community policing in Timor-Leste “based on definition of national pattern and strategic plan” with the three important pillars; First is the collocation of police officer village (OPS) in all suco level in this nation, these OPS responsibility is to resolve problem and cooperate with authorities such as elder people, and local leadersto resolve land dispute around zone, or crimes. They are complementing from community based on security volunteer village (SVS), which has been organized to support police and maintain security safety in remote areas and assist to reduce coast for police in rural area with limited member and resources. Final element is council community policing (KPK) that serves the two parts as a good coordination and to facilitate community's promise to resolve local security issue. KPK's in identifying and prioritizing safety and security issues affecting their communities, then engaging in problem-solving towards resolving identified issues, often in concert with the PNTL



One initiative that demonstrates how effective such an approach can be in addressing youth violence can be found in Liquica district. Faced with community instability caused by youth involvement with MAG's in 2013, the PNTL District Commander established an SVS network to augment the PNTL. This involved the creation of an informal security network, composed of veterans of the resistance and youths, which was able to monitor MAG activities when PNTL resources were stretched, allowing the PNTL to respond more effectively to intelligence provided by the SVS on MAG violence. Not only did this strengthen the SVS-PNTL relationship in regards to youth violence, but also built confidence in local-ownership of community security.

In Bobonaro district, another example of the CPC enabling the PNTL to address youth violence can be found. The participation of OPS in the Bobonaro CPC has led to greater levels of understanding and cooperation between communities and the PNTL to address issues of youth violence in Bobonaro, and seen OPS work alongside the traditional dispute mechanism of *tara bandu* to address these issues. Interviews with CPC members and *suku* chiefs indicated that the mechanisms provided by the CPC working in concert with *tara bandu* had led to a visible reduction in violent incidents involving youth and MAG's. This marks a shift in approach by the PNTL in its approach to dealing with issues of youth and violence, in comparison to the previous use of heavily armed Special Units to react forcefully to incidents of youth violence. It should be noted however, that the use of such units during 2006-2009 was in response to higher levels of youth violence, and was perhaps necessary to ensure stability. This does however, indicate that the PNTL is beginning to take the issue of mainstreaming community policing as institutional policy seriously.

Efforts outside of the security sector to address some of the contributing factors to youth violence can be found in youth programmes organised by the Secretariat of State for Youth and Sports (SSYS). Research has indicated that one of the key drivers for youth violence in Timor-Leste, is a lack of certain life skills among Timorese youth. Through the 13 Youth Centres in Timor-Leste affiliated with SSYS, and supported by UNICEF, programs have been initiated to provide youth with the life skills they need to need to avoid engaging in violence. These programmes are based on developing "key competencies which include skills in communication, negotiating, and practising self-control", which has contributed to lower levels of violence for those who've undertaken the training, notably MAG members who have managed to use these skills to reduce "inter-gang tensions and violence at the community level".

Whilst high levels of unemployment have already been mentioned as a risk factor for youth engagement in violence, it is important to consider some of the efforts being made to address this besides the life skills training being offered by SSYS. Whilst the General Director of Secretary of State for Vocational Training Policy and Employment (SEFPOPE) Jacinto Barros Gusmao has indicated that the government is attempting to find employment opportunities for youth outside of Timor-Leste, in Australia, South Korea, China, Malaysia, New Zealand and Japan. Gusmao has indicated this initiative is due the limited number of domestic job opportunities available, and the potential for this to spark instability in Timor-Leste, whilst also calling for greater private sector investment in the tourism, fisheries and agricultural sectors to provide greater employment opportunities and offset dissatisfaction over unemploymen.



However, Father Joao Soares, “Director of the Youth Commission for Dili Diocese has criticized the Timor-Leste government for not doing enough to curb unemployment”. Whilst Father Soares has organised training courses orientated towards developing youth skills in construction, welding, carpentry, plumbing, automotive and electrical trades, this fails to alleviate the lack of opportunities. The National Council for Youth, Timor-Leste (CJNTL), the umbrella organisation for youth groups and organisations nationwide, has also organised courses on economic empowerment training, towards providing youth with greater opportunities, and the opportunity to engage in positive behaviour rather than resorting to violence due to boredom and frustration. Finally, Science of Life Studies 24/7 Timor-Leste (SOLS) has 60 centres across Timor-Leste which also provide like skills and employment skills courses, run by Timorese toward addressing the challenges around unemployment.

Although the efforts of SYSS, SEFPOPE, The Dili Diocese, CJNTL and SOLS are laudable, and provide some of the vital life and employment skills that provide Timorese youth with options to engage in positive behaviour rather than violence, these efforts are still constrained by a lack of job opportunities in Timor-Leste. However, they have provided a significant number of Timorese youths with some of the skills necessary to manage conflict, and build resilience whilst seeking gainful employment, with SOLS alone having trained over 50 000 Timorese youths.



Parte III – Etichal Consideration

Before conducting this project FM agreed to an ethical framework with AVI/ Planet Wheeler. This framework included a rationale for research being conducted and an ethical and risk management plan. The rationale for research was to investigate the drivers of youth violence in Timor-Leste and how this is being addressed by the security sector and in general in order to create a body of knowledge on this topic. This research will form the basis for future preventative efforts, and improve understanding of the challenges and opportunities involved in addressing this issue. FM sought to manage ethical considerations by committing to the well-being, protection and safety of all participants, respecting the rights and wishes of those involved and communicating the results of research to relevant stakeholders and policy-makers

To minimise the risk of harm a research methodology was designed based on the appropriate selection of participants, based on consultations with community leaders and the provision of safe and quiet locations for training and research. Informed consent and assent was gained after providing clear information on the project's aims, methods and potential outcomes in a youth-accessible format. Permission from guardians was also sought where applicable. The training was orientated towards providing alternate options for youth when faced with situations that could lead to violence. Participating youth were given the chance to make informed decisions regarding their involvement in the research, cognisant of the fact that developing this understanding takes time. They were given the opportunity and encouraged to become actively involved in the research process. Researchers also provided the necessary level of assistance and information to ensure the successful participation of the participants



Part IV – Methodology

This study is about “secure youth and secure communities in Timor-Leste”. It is focused on youth violence, and the relationships between youth and the security sector. This research is divided into two parts in the methodology, and key informant interviews and Focus Group Discussion’s (FGD). The key informant interview’s identified those participants involved in addressing youth violence, from local leaders or members of suco council’s, youth or sport groups , teachers, religious leaders and also members of the PNTL and OPS. The FGD’s involved youths identified in the three municipalities where the research process was conducted, in Manufahi, Liquica and Covalima which was conducted from July to September 2016.

a. Key Informant Interview’s

The key informant interviews were conducted in the municipalities of Timor-Leste with nine (9) participants, three (3) in Manufahi on July 2016, participants being the suco chief, OPS and a youth leader. In Liquica the two (2) participants were the suco chief and chief of youth of Liquica. However, FM was unable to interview members of OPS and the youth council coordinator in Liquica because they were unavailable at the time. The research process in Liquica started in August 2016. In Cova Lima, the four (4) participants involved were teachers, the program manager of the youth center in Covalima and member of OPS on September 2016.

The FM research team interviewed these participants for several hours. These interviews were based on questionnaires prepared by FM. The purpose of these interviews was to help the research team develop a profile of the local community and understand how youth violence is affecting their communities.

b. Focus Group Discussion’s (FGD)

The FGD’s with youth participants were conducted in the three municipalities in July, August and September of 2016. FGD’s were facilitated from FM’s facilities and researchers. FM has its own rules to limit the number of participants, with a minimum of at least five (5) people and a maximum of ten (10). The first FGD was conducted in Letefoho, Manufahi district which involved ten (10) people, the second FGD was conducted in Liquica, at the administrative post of Maubara, Vaviquinha village with seven (7) participants, and the final FGD in Covalima, which was attended by seven (7) participants.

Firstly, FM researchers provided a consent form for the participants to read and raise questions regarding the FGD.. FM researchers explained the importance of the form and agreed that:

1. “*Focus Group Discussion*” (FGD) with purpose is to set up a perspective of youth for violence, and how the security sector (PNTL) and community try to resolve problems.



2. FGD is to heard ideas from youth on violence in communities their relation with the PNTL.
3. Participants in FGD are volunteers.
4. Participants of FGD can responde or not for questions during discussion process.
5. Participants raised information if it is eligible to FM or public.
6. Participants from 18 years old are free to attend in FGD.
7. FM will use ideas and information that compile through FGD in research report for public (includng online). FM will not atribute any words or quotes to a certain personal identity, but can be cited as a youth from district.

Facilitators also asked each of participants to explain their acknowledgement over their participation in FGD. After the participants read out the form, facilitators will ask participants to provide their ideas at the end of the FGD.

To explore ideas from participants, the FDG's were divided into four parts. Firstly, facilitators from FM introducing and explaining the FGD procedure. Then FM researchers facilitated the FGD's with questions open to participants in three sessions; About youths' life in community, their experience with violence and the relationship between youth and the security sector.



Parte V – Research Outcomes

5.1 The Live of Youth in Timor-Leste

5.1.1 Demography of Participants

In order to know about the lives youth in Timor-Leste, the FDG participants from the three districts declared their educational background, with some still studying and the majority of them finishing high school. The majority of them said that they are living with their parents, some are local leaders, and some are involving in civil society organizations and the majority of them are unemployed.

5.1.2 Youth's Participants in Community

“I am not really concerned with political activity, my wish is to create lots of activities for youths in order to promote peace between people”.¹⁰⁴

It is really important to know the participants activities within their community. There are various activities that they can engage in, in order to lead them away from violence. The participants said that they are involved in various activities established in their communities such as sport, church, and music groups as a means to organize youths to increase their talents. A participant in Manufahi said that he is interesting in sport, music and film because it is a means to associate with other youth for enjoyment.¹⁰⁵

To involve youths in such activity is a means to strengthen relationship between youths. Also they can self-organize to support development of the country. Participants from Manufahi during the FDG declared that their sport activity can create good harmony between youth and community. Other participants explained that their involvement in music groups and church activities can lead them away from violence. “I am involving in a choir not longer but it can educated me to away from violence”.¹⁰⁶

Because youth are always noted by the public as a potential for conflict, “youth anywhere always face problems, and this is caused by drinking wine.”¹⁰⁷ A participant in Covalima said “youth is a problem if we do not have an activity.”¹⁰⁸. A participant in Liquica said that sport and music activities are possible means to reduce violence between youths. Therefore, youths are continue pleading to get involved in various

¹⁰⁴ Partisipante Manufahi, FDG 28 Jullu 2016

¹⁰⁵ Partisipante Manufahi, FGD 28 Jullu 2016

¹⁰⁶ Partisipante Manufahi, FGD 29 Jullu 2016

¹⁰⁷ OPS suku Ogues-Covalima, Intervista Pesoal

¹⁰⁸ Chefe Suku Ogues - Maucatar – Covalima Intervista Pesoal.



activities such as sport, churches, politics and social but sometimes they do not have a chance to participate.¹⁰⁹

The involvement of youth in activities can increase their knowledge to participate in the development process. A participant in Manufahi said that they want to participate in politics because they want to learn something from the political parties. Even, sometimes in some political and social activities they did not get an invitation to participate.¹¹⁰

Youths are still concerned with unemployment as a cause of conflict for youth. Lots of youths feel provoked by this situation because there is no job creation. Participants in Liquica explained that a means to create jobs for youth is not to depend on the state but determine how youths can contribute to development. Recently youth are more conscious of how to develop their life in order to reduce conflict. However, they find the current political system difficult for them to express their opinions.

A participant is concerned about a project being implemented in their area, where it is only looking for family members for paid employment, yet expects other youth to volunteer for free.¹¹¹ “Sometimes people use youth for whatever reason, some people create group on behalf of youth to make proposals, but when the government provides aid they use it for their own private interest.”¹¹²

Regarding this, the government needs to encourage youth to develop this nation, involve youth in socio and post administration, yet they only take advantage of youth efforts. When those youths use music facilities they need to pay, so this has become an economic barrier for youth because they do not have money. We all want to see the disappearance of the corrupt system, because such a system will make youth dissatisfied and will only use youths for their private interest. Those problems happened because lack of control from local leaders, therefore, people are using youth for their private interest as well.¹¹³

5.2 Youths’s Experience with Violence

5.2.1 About Violence

Violence is taking place because of a lack of education, job creation and lack of non-formal education to provide working skills. Many times youths considered that violence is something normal for them because of the factor of ‘alku’. There are three places that the discussion is realizing which is continuing to focus on violence that is

¹⁰⁹ Partisipante joven Liquica, FGD 24 Agosto 2016

¹¹⁰ Partisipante joven Manufahi, FGD 28 July 2016

¹¹¹ Partisipante joven Liquica, FGD 24 Agosto 2016.

¹¹² Partisipante Joven Liquica, FGD 24 Agosto 2016

¹¹³ Partisipante joven Liquica, FGD 24 Agosto 2016.



provoked by 'drunks' in public places such as the street, sport venues and sometimes at parties or feasts.

On the other side, youths become victims for some construction projects. A participant in Manufahi said that "a problem for us is some companies violated our rights in our work places."¹¹⁴ Such rights need to be monitored and protected. OPS of Letefoho village, Manufahi in his interview said that recently there was a problem between youth and a company.¹¹⁵ A participant in Liquica said that their rights continue to be violated by companies and people use youth efforts to get for their own benefit.

"My observation to provoke conflict is dissatisfaction from youths, as been stated that a group of music band use youths' efforts to get for benefit".¹¹⁶

Participants in Liquica said that they are really concern with violence that happened in their work places. "Conflict taking place because of soccer, quarrel among others for something where finally occur conflict. it happens because of gruzzle but it is not a big issue and they immediately resolve".¹¹⁷ Because they want to resolve such problem soon. A possible mechanism that sometimes they use to resolve problem is culture and through the community policing network. A participant in Liquica district said "Solution sometimes resolve through culture mechanism or community policing establishment, somehow the resolution is based on formal justice in criminal cases such as murder and further processing to court."¹¹⁸

Those participants declared that conflict between youths recently compared to the past years related to martial art groups that become a big issue in 2013. Youths' efforts and police service are doing better in reducing conflict in the community. Rapid attendance of police can support reducing violence with support by youth.

The rivalry of members of martial art groups became a big issue and is taking place everywhere. "Youths are always provoking among other, in an accident youths from Belkasa assaulted youth from Fatululik – Manufahi, they fought each other and the result a young man should go to ICU, and the case is processed at court in 2012."¹¹⁹ Participants from Liquica said that "conflict between martial arts groups is increasing from 2007"¹²⁰. 'Conflict that is taking place here is martial arts groups such as PSHT, Kungfu and KORK in 2007;'. OPS in Covalima said that problem between youths is normally happening anywhere, but the important thing is the police act against it.¹²¹

¹¹⁴ Partisipante Joven Manufahi, FGD 28 Jullu 2016

¹¹⁵ OPS suku Letefoho –Manufahi, Intervista Pesoal.

¹¹⁶ Partisipante Joven Liquiça, FGD 24 Agostu 2016

¹¹⁷ Partisipante Joven Liquiça, FGD 24 Agostu 2016

¹¹⁸ Partisipante Joven Liquiça, FGD 24 Agostu 2016

¹¹⁹ Partisipante Joven Covalima, FGD 28 Setembru 2016

¹²⁰ Xefe Juventude Bairro, Liquiça, Setembru 2016. Intervista Pesoal.

¹²¹ OPS Suku Ogues-Covalima. Intervista Pesoal.



5.2.2 Participant's opinion for violence or communication violence

Youth's experience in resolving problems and getting strong support from local leaders through the community policing establishment initiative is a lesson that shown with the pattern established by community leaders – OPS, members of veterans groups, and martial art leaders including youths.

“We are here there is no problem since 2010 before KPK; we with our initiative from local leaders and suco councils, member of veterans and youths of martial arts we put a rule for youths not to sit in the street at night”.¹²²

Community leaders, OPS, and youth groups who were interviewed say they can resolve youths' problem because their coordination is going well in suco's and hamlets. Suco chief of Ogues of Covalima explained “Youth assume important role and need their contribution actively for the nation development.”¹²³ Youth is the future generation as stated by a participant in Liquica “Youths' role is really strong to resolve problem between youth and community”.¹²⁴ Interview with a teacher in Covalima said that youth should become a solution because time will change mentalities and will transform and we need strong civic education.¹²⁵

Youth have knowledge and involvement in conflict resolution in communities. Participants in Liquica declared that they always involved in mediation to resolve conflict, and they want peace. When applying such mechanisms, sometimes they can stop any violence, keep calm and inform to local authorities and police. But sometimes they are concerned for police using excessive force by hitting people involved in conflict. Regarding this, those who are involved in violence sometimes collaborate with police and escape. This also creates new problem when they go to stop people who are involved in fighting.¹²⁶

Resolving problems through traditional mechanism's is seen as effective. Problems that have taken place in communities, have seen trusted people come to resolve their problem such as lia-na'in, chief hamlet and suco. Large issues often result in police being contacted quickly; for example a suburb problem can lead to chief of suburb to resolve, if there is no solution they can process at the chief of hamlet or suco level. Other participants declared that it is depend on the severity of the as to whether it will be resolved according to the law with police involvement.¹²⁷

Participants in Covalima declared that when they face any problem, they try to stop the conflict and bring a local leader to resolve'. A young women said that if it

¹²² Xefe Suku Ogues, 29 Setembro 2016, Entrevista Pessoal.

¹²³ Xefe Suku Ogues, 29 Setembro 2016, Entrevista Pessoal.

¹²⁴ Xefe Suku Vaviquinha, 25 Agosto 2016, Entrevista Pessoal.

¹²⁵ Partisipante Mestri ida iha Covalima 29 Setembro 2016, Entrevista Pessoal

¹²⁶ Partisipante Liquiça, FGD, 24 Agosto 2016

¹²⁷ Partisipante Liquiça, FGD, 24 Agosto 2016



happens she intervenes and ask the conflicting parties to not continue the conflict, and another participant said that if such problem happen he has to stop it and ask them to resolve their problem in peace.¹²⁸

This informal manner is really successful in resolving problems in the community. A participant in Liquica said that they sometimes use traditional systems to resolve problems rather than the justice process. However, traditional solutions sometimes focus only in some part and blame each other for a better “dignity”. However, those who have power keep silent and did not inform to ‘lian na’in’. Poor people should be down and should follow for their decision making.¹²⁹

5.3 Youths Experience to Resolve violence (PNTL and Security Sector)

“OPS, they resolve problems always involve youths with local leaders, therefore we are happy with OPS’s service even sometimes their attendance is quite late”.¹³⁰ “Police should cooperate with communities and act fairly and not intervene as family”¹³¹

5.3.1 Knowledge for PNTL and Community Policing

Majority of participants had some knowledge of the PNTL. Some of them said that police service is ‘to maintain law and order’ in order to keep ‘security for communities’. They also said that police responsibility is to maintain security for public transportation particularly people who don’t use motorbikes and cars, this refers to the police presence in their areas.¹³²

A participant in Manufahi informed that he did not understand well the community policing service.. However, they did knows they are the ‘police working closely to community and their understanding is that the one is community policing’. Participants in Covalima explained that OPS’s service is to keep security for community in their villages.

The OPS presence in villages is to ensure security for the community, however, there is a difficulty in their work as OPS, when sometimes there is no rotation. A young participant in Liquica said that the OPS service is really good because they are always together to attend people when facing any problem but when replaced by new OPS they are not as active because of the long distance from their work place or village.¹³³ Lately, new OPS are inactive in the village, and stay only in station,

¹²⁸ Partisipante Covalima, FGD 29 Setembro 2016

¹²⁹ Partisipante Joven Liquica, FGD 24 Agosto 2016

¹³⁰ Partisipante Covalima, FGD 29 Setembro 2016.

¹³¹ Coordenador Uma dame, Manufahi, 28 Julho 2016. Entrevista Pesoa.

¹³² Partipante Manufahi, FGD 28 Julho 2016

¹³³ Entrevista Xefe Suku Vaviquinha-Maubara-Liquica, 24 Agosto 2016)



where it makes it harder for people to not know about the OPS's service. However, they stressed that OPS is really working better for the community.¹³⁴

Youths who've been involved as members of KPK have valuable input with which to assist OPS.. A young man said that he is always involved in mediation for problems in the community because he feels as a young man that he works for suco.¹³⁵ OPS is always cooperating with communities and involve youths to hold various discussion for issue of security inside suco and identify as well solve problems faced by the community and needing a solution.¹³⁶

5.3.2 Relationship between Youth and Police

During the FDG's all participants described that the relationship between youth and police are good. They declared that they really respected the PNTL's service to the community because they have confidence that police can resolve problem in their suco's. Participants informed that youths and police have good relationship and OPS are always visiting communities from house to house, also communicating all the time with suco chief and hamlet chief to determine the security situation in suco and aldeia. OPS also provide information to community and students.

OPS presence in suco is secure, as when any problem happens they will attend quickly and make communities feel safe. This makes people really respect the OPS service in the community. Therefore, youths consider police as good colleagues or family. There are some difficulties that sometimes make OPS work too late because they stay long distance with their work place.¹³⁷

Suco chief of Vaviquinha explained that OPS has no presence in his suco, but they work better and collaborate with local leaders and community to resolve problems in the community, "OPS work very good with communities, the fact that the new one is less active in suco, sometimes we invite him but he does not come."¹³⁸ OPS presence in suco has show progress for violence between youths is minimal in their presence. A participant said that there is significant progress if there is OPS presence there. Violence is starting reduce because of OPS presence.¹³⁹

Other observation show that youths sometimes are afraid to inform to police because they can hate each other and use oportunites to hit them. "We feel afraid to talk about PNTL service because even we said something but our big brother can hit us." However, they feel secure and believe in police capacity. Therefore, police are better to familiarize themselves with communities and feel a part of community.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁴ Entrevista Xefe Suku Vaviquinha-Maubara-Liquica, 24 Agosto 2016)

¹³⁵ Partisipante Joven Liquiça, FGD 24 Agosto 2016

¹³⁶ Partisipante Joven Covalima, FGD 28 Setembro 2016

¹³⁷ Partisipantes Liquiça, FGD 24 Agosto 2016

¹³⁸ Xefe Suku Vaviquinha, Entrevista Pesoa.

¹³⁹ Partisipantes Liquiça, FGD 24 Agosto 2016.

¹⁴⁰ Partisipantes Liquiça, FGD 24 Agosto 2016.



A participant in Manufahi explained that police are there to maintain security in communities, supporting the resolution of problems and issues that need their presence. When there is a problem they always contacting police or OPS, Task Force to respond to such problems.¹⁴¹ A participant from Liquica explained that police sometimes focus more on their family or colleagues, sometimes police arrest people at random. “I saw that when there is an incident the police do not come yet, but after that the police than come soon, do not arrest the suspect but hit the victim”.¹⁴²

5.3.3 Mechanism to Resolve Violence

OPS members are strengthening their relations with youths, because they use police mechanisms to resolve conflicts. The police presence in their area make them secure. “Usually when problems are taking place we always calling for local leaders, KPK and PNTL to resolve.”¹⁴³

Those participants explained that they do really believe traditional dispute mechanisms are support by police. As stated by a participant problems should be resolved at the local level.¹⁴⁴ “We always resolve problem based on our village structure, suco chief, hamlet or police”.

Those participants further informed that police involved youth in their plan to prevent conflict through mediation for civil cases. OPS visited from house to house and schools to encourage youths not to engage in violence. The OPS presence in community is really important to prevent any potential conflict. The PNTL is always visible in the community and involve the community in security through the KPK.¹⁴⁵

While the presence of police in the field is supporting conflict resolution, police should not be brutal against youths. Previously it happened when the police hit youths who where involved in violence.¹⁴⁶ A participant in Covalima explained that in the past years, PNTL used force against youths. Sometimes police just beat, but it is not happening repeatedly.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴¹ Partisipantes Manufahi, FGD 28 Jullu 2016.

¹⁴² Partisipantes Liquiça, FGD 24 Agostu 2016.

¹⁴³ Partisipante Manufahi, FGD 28 Jullu 2016

¹⁴⁴ Partisipantes Liquiça, FGD 24 Agostu 2016.

¹⁴⁵ Partisipantes Covalima, FGD 29 Setembru 2016.

¹⁴⁶ Partisipantes Liquiça, FGD 24 Agostu 2016.

¹⁴⁷ Partisipantes Covalima, FGD 29 Setembru 2016.



Parte VI – Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

In the context of security of Timor-Leste, “youth” is frequently judged to be the creators of conflict because the problems that they face are complex. This report identifies the specific risks that threaten to bring youths to violent activity. Many surveys and reports clearly demonstrate the relationship between a weak macro-economy, increasing youth unemployment, and collective violence on the streets. Timor-Leste's citizens are widely convinced of this direct relationship.

Improvements to the education system are the most important pathway to success, because it provides a mechanism for youth to develop skills that lead to employment. However, this does not address the problem for those who have already graduated, who face weak demand for their services, and a shortage of job openings. More and more youth expect to be able to find work, and when these opportunities do not materialize, there is a sense of frustration, injustice, and dissatisfaction towards a political system that does not seem to be bringing change.

The centralization of work and educational opportunities in Dili has brought about rapid migration to the capital, resulting in significant problems related to unplanned urbanization. The rapid migratory patterns amplify frustrations by ramping up competition for an already scarce supply of employment opportunities. Competition for jobs with decent wages and occasional benefits are even stiffer. Combine these factors with highly limited physical mobility, and the links to increasing violent activity are clear.

Unemployment, poverty, and lack of education are also linked with alcohol abuse. Amongst young men, half use alcohol on a regular basis, whereas the majority of people would consume alcohol during ceremonial activities only. Alcohol abuse is coming to be recognized as an established trend for people aged 15-24, as the link between alcohol consumption and unemployment becomes more visible.

The link between youth violence and culture is inextricable. For youths, the attitude that they will take in their approach to violence will be largely formed by their community and their family members' values, which can be traced back for generations. Communities, schools, and households can all be significantly positive or negative forces in the development of how youth use violence in their lives. For example, a society that accepts the use of violence as a way to resolve conflict can will "normalize," such behaviors for children, increasing the likelihood that they will repeat such behaviors later, and teach them to the next generation.

Another challenge is the issue of impunity. Impunity occurs in when an individual or group does not receive punishment or some form of consequence for an illegal action. In Timor-Leste, impunity is an increasing problem, because of the existing informal relationships that influence official state behavior, but now also due to the influence of private patrons. As long as impunity continues, the situation will continue in which those with power, such as politicians and members of the security sector, will act with a different set of consequences than those for common people.

There have been some efforts from the government to prepare a board that will address the issue of youth violence in Timor-Leste. They seek to address the



problem by providing mechanisms to communities to identify the source of conflicts, and to work creatively with them to resolve conflicts with local leaders. The implementation of community policing in Timor-Leste is based on the definition of the national strategic plan, including important elements such as village police officers (OPS), and through community involvement in local security activities, such as the Village Security Volunteer (SVS) program, and the Council of Community Policing (KPK).

However, measurable improvements from these initiatives will be minimal, because they do not address the deficiencies at the root of the problem. Unemployment, poor educational structures, immobility, and the resulting frustration make it difficult for youth to avoid violent conflicts. In order to truly resolve these challenges, and to bring about real development, the government must pursue a genuine understanding of the challenges facing Timorese youth, and to pursue a comprehensive solution.

6.2 Recommendations

1. That the Ministry of Education and State Secretary for Vocational Training and Employment Policy be enabled to treat education like other government “mega projects,” with a high-quality curriculum oriented towards market needs.
2. That the State Secretary of Youth and Sport, and the State Secretary for Vocational Training and Employment Policy endeavor to discover and promote youths’ potential through education, professional training, and mentoring for self-employment.
3. That the State Secretary of Youth and Sport, the Ministry of Education, the National Council of Youth, Security, and Civil Society encourage all youths, both male and female, to assume their responsibility as citizens and resist violent activity.



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