

Press Advisory

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Contact:

+670 729 5051
Vidal Campos Magno

Children in Prison are Dreaming of a Better Future

Dili, Timor-Leste – Ba Futuru and Pradet are doing rehabilitation activities through transformative arts education about conflict resolution and human rights with the under 18 years olds that have been imprisoned in Becora.

A group of nine young people in prison will finish three months of training in Ba Futuru's Transformative Arts and Human Rights Education Program, on Wednesday, the 30th of May. This occasion coincides with International / National Children's Day, which is on June 1st. International / National Children's Day, is a celebration around the world to raise public awareness of the importance of the welfare of children. To mark this occasion Dr. Jose Ramos Horta will hand out certificates and health supplies to the young people in prison to commemorate their hard work and to mark their new conviction to promote peace.

Vidal Campos Magno, one of Ba Futuru's dynamic staff, has been facilitating activities every Wednesday for 3 months with Evilio Antonio de Sousa and Luisa Marçal de Jesus from Pradet to engage these imprisoned young people in constructive activities to help them to process their difficult experiences and empower them with new skills and knowledge through which they can build a brighter future for themselves and their communities.

Campos from Ba Futuru, reports, "I have watched these youth change – in the beginning when I first came to the prison they acted traumatized, sad and sometimes nervous; now they are happier. One of the children told me 'You have made us happy through these activities; when I return home I will promote peace in my daily life and also share what we have learnt with my friends.'"

Campos also report, "I believe that the education offered through Ba Futuru's TAHRE program can help the children in prison to reduce their negative sentiments also to help them to cope with the realities they are facing in prison. Through this program their perspectives on their lives have changed, they have learned to better support each other and cooperate with one another, which will help them to find brighter future when they return home."

Ba Futuru, meaning 'for the future', is a not-for-profit NGO established in Timor-Leste in 2004. This year Ba Futuru's At-Risk Children's Project has received support from Concern, the Australian Embassy, Save the Children Sweden, Friends of Idlewild Stables, UNICEF, Silverton Foundation and Lonely Planet. Ba Futuru has worked with more than 10,000 conflict affected, vulnerable and at-risk children and youth to provide them education reach their fullest potential and regain a sense of confidence in the future.

For more information about Ba Futuru please visit www.bafuturu.org.

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BA FUTURU
Rua Vila Verde
Dili, TIMOR LESTE
+670 3322437
bafuturu@bafuturu.org
www.bafuturu.org