



VISITTO TIMOR LESTE



In late August 2025, Liz Waters, Miles Coverdale, Yve, and Noel Bayley visited Timor-Leste to investigate the performance of past and present Water East Timor funded projects. We also experienced the remoteness of the villages, the rough roads connecting them, and the challenges our Bakhita team faced in transporting truckloads of materials to these distant locations, especially during the rainy season. We admired the rugged but beautiful landscapes. We met villagers, were serenaded by student choirs, and received Tais in thanks from village leaders and priests. Our meals and accommodation were mostly very good. This wonderful experience could not have occurred without the support and leadership of Eddie De Pina and Amino Salsina. Their driving skills were exceptional, and we admired the grunt of the elderly Toyota Land Cruiser Troupe, in which we travelled. A new venture for Bakhita providing custom-designed tours of Timor-Leste for up to 14 persons.



Hato-Builico 2024 Our first stop was Hato-Builico village, nestled at 2,400 metres above sea level on the shoulder of Timor-Leste's highest peak, Mountain Ramelau (2.9 metres). The project involved the installation of poly pipe from a spring head in a mountain valley, 2 kilometres above the village. The Bakhita water team designed the system to have an outlet on each of the four storage tanks. Poly pipe directly connected these tanks to the four areas requiring water supply: the school, administration, church community (including the priests' residence), boarding houses, and a kitchen for the school community. The four storage tanks were in good order, sitting on concrete and stone platforms and fenced. The design and workmanship of the water team was excellent, bringing water from the source and connecting to designated outlet points. However, the integrity of the design was compromised in some places, with poly pipe cut and redirected, and plumbing parts missing or relocated.

The second phase of the project to renovate the community toilets used by boarding house students was yet to be fully realised due to an electricity cut. This prevented the use of power tools. It was decided to renovate only four of the proposed six toilets and showers, as the condition of the other two would require more time and money. Additionally, some of the funds allocated for the renovations had to be used to restore the water supply from the source.

Visiting the community at Hato-Builico emphasised the need for hygiene education to be a part of our future projects. It also highlighted the importance of community understanding and strong leadership in ensuring the integrity of the water system design, care, and maintenance.



Letefoho Senior School 2015

A three-hour journey over mountainous terrain brought us to Letefoho, where Water East Timor was involved in bringing water from a nearby spring to the school. We installed storage tanks, pumps, and sanitation facilities, and provided a new roof for the school.

With the help of other groups, the entire school was refurbished. Since then, it has gone from strength to strength and is now one of the best-regarded schools in the country.

We were greeted by the student body singing, and a very moving ceremony recognised the Australian contribution. We inspected the toilets and other facilities, which were in good condition and clean. Father Helio elaborated on the need to repeatedly educate students on hygiene and reinforce care of the facilities. This was an ongoing part of the school curriculum, he said.



Asulau Village 2023

After a three-hour drive through magnificent scenery along terrible roads, we arrived in Asulau, a small and somewhat remote village. This project involved transporting water two kilometres from a local spring to holding tanks, which were then connected to tap stands in the village. The provision of clean water enabled the construction of four school toilets, adjacent to the school and market, and two community toilets further up the hill. These toilets were funded by Mr Jose Ramos Horta, President of Timor-Leste. The toilets were clean and had good water flow.

The holding tanks were in good order, but water levels were low, possibly due to water loss. The system was generally in a reasonable condition, although some impromptu modifications by the villagers to address specific needs had reduced its overall efficiency. We were impressed by the construction skills of the Bakhita team and were delighted to learn that schoolchildren in this village no longer had to walk four kilometres to collect water before attending school. Before returning to the Bakhita Centre, we attended another Tais ceremony, enjoyed coffee and refreshments with the local villagers, and made a stopover to enlist the parish priest in the ongoing maintenance efforts.



Bobonaro 2025

A long drive with breathtaking mountainous scenery over challenging roads led us to Bobonaro. Our visit coincided with World Youth Day, and the Pilgrim Cross was being transported to Bobonaro for the two days of planned celebrations. The school community was busy preparing for the evening festivities, but we were warmly welcomed by Sister Domingo, who manages the girls' boarding house adjacent to St Augustino Senior Secondary School. We had lunch at the girls' boarding school, where after two Tais presentations, the girls' choir sang for us. The recently completed purpose-built toilet and shower complex, did not disappoint. The quality of the build was excellent and demonstrated the skills of the Bakhita team. The construction included three male and four female toilets, as well as an additional VIP toilet with a flushing cistern. Each toilet was fitted with a lock and well-lit with recessed lighting. Two vanity basins were also constructed in the walkway adjacent to the toilets. Water East Timor received assistance from Warrnambool East Rotary and Wannon Water to fund this project. A plaque will be mounted to recognise all contributions.



Palaca 2019

We had an excellent stay at the Bakhita Centre in Palaca. The team provided delicious food and comfortable accommodation. This accommodation centre, along with the new tour business, will help financially support the ongoing activities of the Bakhita Centre.

One of the 45,000 litre tanks donated by Moyne Shire and constructed on-site in 2019, with the assistance of Andy Graham and Daryl Lewis, was still working well.

Our journey along the Coast road to Dili was a pleasant one, with one of the best roads of the trip. We stayed at Pro Ema, a not-for-profit venture that runs as a training centre in hospitality and beauty for girls and women escaping domestic violence. Their meals, and desserts in particular, did not disappoint.

We returned with a much better understanding of the challenges faced in planning, implementing, and maintaining our water projects. To discuss how future projects are selected, undertaken, and maintained, we have scheduled a planning day for 10 November. Please contact us if you would like to be involved or have suggestions.

NEWS & EVENTS



FESTA TIMOR

Sounds from Timor-Leste, presented by our very own south-west musicians

Lian Husi Timor

Saturday 8 November 5.30 – 7.30 pm

Uniting Church Hall, rear 115 Koroit Street,
Warrnambool

\$35 per ticket

includes finger-food and a complimentary drink

BOOK YOUR TICKETS ONLINE AT HUMANTIX

<https://events.humanitix.com/festa-timor>

OR

Enquiries text/call Liz on 0499887044

Celebrating and
supporting south-west
Victoria's special
connection with Timor-
Leste



Join us for this celebration of life,
singing and dancing
and

Launch of the Water East Timor
website

www.watereasttimor.org



Your attendance will help Water
East Timor provide clean, safe
water to rural villages
in Timor-Leste



Water
EAST TIMOR™

AGM

The Water East Timor Inc. AGM will be held on 11 November 2025 at 7:30 pm. Members, donors, and supporters are invited to join us at the City Bowls Club, Cramer Street, Warrnambool, or via Zoom.

Following our recent committee member's visit to Timor-Leste, we will present a review of our past and current projects, as well as discuss our future plans.

All committee positions are open for nominations, and we would be delighted to receive interest from members.

Further information will be circulated via email. Your response would be greatly appreciated so that we can organise light refreshments.

Membership is now due for the 25/26 year.

We would like to express our thanks to members who have renewed and a warm welcome to new members. All donations and most of our fundraising dollars directly support projects.

Our \$30 annual membership helps cover administration costs, particularly insurance.

To renew or join please visit our website www.watereasttimor.org, click on the membership link. You will receive an email with banking details or contact us at watereasttimor@gmail.com