

# A SURVEY OF GANGS AND YOUTH GROUPS IN DILI, TIMOR-LESTE



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The views and recommendations expressed in this report are solely those of the author, and are not necessarily those of AusAID or the Australian Government.

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**Photo on cover:** Slebor Group, Kampung Alor  
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The events in April 2006 that propelled Timor Leste into an ongoing political and social crisis came as a surprise to most observers. The disintegration of the security forces into multiple factions and the emergence of large, organized street gangs and a diverse range of potentially destabilising disaffected political groups was also largely unpredicted.

The sources of the violence are also varied and complex, including long standing ethnic tensions over the control of the markets and trading routes, property disputes arising from post 1999 resettlement, rival factions within the security forces, endemic gang rivalries, and a politically driven destabilization campaign by opposition parties.

The one common thread is the involvement of large numbers of young, marginalized males. The sources of their alienation are well known through a number of recent studies which revealed a sense of disenfranchisement due to a range of factors including unemployment, security concerns, and lack of access to education.

Not all youth have resorted to violence however. The key finding of this report was the existence of hundreds of different bairo (village) based youth groups, all attempting in different but positive ways to engage and unify their communities through collective, socially oriented activities.

These groups are essentially voluntary, community based civil society organizations, and represent important building blocks for future reconciliation and reconstruction programs, and as vital points of engagement with marginalized youth.

Their needs and objectives are generally modest, and could be met with a minimum of support. In the absence of active, viable representative youth structures these groups also present a vital opportunity for building a new, ground up youth representative body, to ensure youth perspectives are heard at a national policy level.

## **POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT**

The recent civil conflict in East Timor has been highly revealing not just of the social and political divisions within the Timorese security forces, but also of the existence of a large number of gangs, who perpetrated the bulk of the destruction following the disintegration of the police force. The enmity between the different branches of the security forces has been well documented, subject to enquiries and a series of national dialogue seminars. Little has been written however, about gang violence in East-Timor, yet it has been a constant feature of the East Timorese post-independence landscape.

Communal violence and gang warfare, in particular between rival martial arts groups considerably predates the current conflict. Under Portuguese colonial rule gangs or 'Moradores' as they were known were used as a tool of repression, as were gangs and militias throughout Indonesian rule. The post independence period has experienced sporadic but persistent clashes between gangs particularly in the western highlands, Baucau, Viqueque and Dili. A riot in March 2001 between martial arts groups destroyed most of the houses in Olobai and Boramatan villages in

Viqueque<sup>1</sup>. In another notorious incident, attributed to martial arts groups fifty houses were burned down in Ainaro, in August 2004. For much of the last six years gangs have also made parts of the eastern city of Baucau a virtual no go zone after dark, setting up barricades and extorting motorists.

The martial arts groups have long been a concern, with some 15-20 martial arts groups, and registered members estimated at around 20,000, almost all male.<sup>2</sup> The alignment of some martial arts groups with different political factions has escalated the current conflict. One group 'Korka is officially aligned with Fretilin, and PSHT is widely identified with the two main opposition parties the PSD and PD. The use of these gangs for political intimidation can be seen from recent serious clashes in Ermera, Gleno, and Suai. The leader of another group, Kung Fu Master, was also killed during clashes between police and army in Tibar, early in the conflict.

The infiltration of martial arts groups into the security forces has further inflamed the situation, in addition to creating a potential for conflicting loyalty. Some martial arts group members interviewed for this study said deference to 'wargas' or martial arts masters take precedence over other loyalties. Abilio Massoko for example, a former resistance leader, was a police commander and leader or 'warga' of PSHT. Massoko, also known as Abilio Audian, was arrested for distributing guns in the recent conflict. PSHT members received guns, although it's not established if they received them from Massoko. Police are also often accused of siding with one group against another during martial arts clashes. (See Figure 5)

Attempts have been made to address this problem. The National Forum for Communication between the Martial Arts Groups was established under the Office of the President to help resolve conflicts, with a Standard of Conduct agreed to on May 27, 2005. Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) is proposing to martial arts groups that they organise a national seminar to celebrate National Independence Day, on 28 November 2006.

Of most concern however is the apparent ethnic nature of the current conflict. Some have been quick to dismiss this rivalry as being politically driven, yet the fighting between western and eastern gangs in Dili also considerably predates the current conflict. In Dionisio Babo Soares' Doctoral Thesis 'Branching From the Trunk: East Timorese Perceptions of Nationalism in Transition' he describes continuous clashes between the two groups since independence, and even since World War Two, resulting in numerous casualties.<sup>3</sup>

According to Dionisio's study, this rivalry is derived from two chief causes. One is the dispute over who 'won' the war, with easterners claiming the major contribution to the resistance, and provoking westerners by labeling them as collaborators or militia.

The other cause dates back to commercial rivalry chiefly between traders from the western districts of Bobonaro and Ermera, and traders from the eastern districts of Baucau and Viqueque over market dominance, following an eastern influx into Dili after World War Two, and again after 1999 According to one source quoted by

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<sup>1</sup> Suara Timor Loro Sa'e (STL) 17/3/01

<sup>2</sup> 'Timor-Leste Youth Social Analysis Mapping and Youth Institutional Assessment', Lene Ostergaard, June 2005, Commissioned for the World Bank Timor Leste p.22

<sup>3</sup> 'Branching from the Trunk: East Timorese Perceptions of Nationalism in Transition' Dionisio Babo Soares, PhD. Thesis, ANU, Canberra, December 2003, pp.267-300

Dionisio, these tensions were previously only kept in check by a night curfew and Indonesian repression.<sup>4</sup>



Racist graffiti near Kampung Alor: "This village doesn't accept Easterners and traitors; Easterners are thieves. Long live the west"

While there are multiple strands in the current conflict, the nature of the violence appears to support these contentions to some degree. Much of the violence has been focused in the three market areas, with the destruction of two markets in Comoro, and Taibesse. Two big western gangs, Sintu Kulao from Becora and the Gaya Anak Sadar (GAS) group from Manleuana have engaged two big eastern gangs, Lito Rambo and Lafaek in Becora and Comoro respectively. There are other smaller ethnically based gangs too, but these appeared to be the two main initial flashpoints, although the conflict is now simmering almost all over Dili.

The shooting of demonstrators on April 28 and the murder of twelve police on May 25 this year near the Ministry of Justice in Dili have also polarised views on ethnicity. Many people now reductively cite these events to justify anti-eastern views, saying that easterners killed westerners, and therefore should be punished. A payback motive undoubtedly generates a great deal of the random violence taking place, especially against the refugee camps, in turn leading to retribution by eastern gangs.

Land disputes arising from post conflict resettlement also seem to be a major source of ongoing violence, especially disputes over ownership of the former Indonesian civil service accommodation around Taci Tolu, Perumnas and Surik Mas. There's strong evidence that some of the current spate of house burnings and intimidation campaigns against easterners revolves around individual property disputes, where eastern families have often illegally occupied dwellings left vacant after 1999, and efforts are now being made to violently evict them. There's anecdotal evidence that gangs are being paid to enforce these evictions. However in some areas now effectively cleansed of easterners such as Perumnas, gangs are now merely turning on each other, so this explanation is not comprehensive.

Many gangs appear to be led by former resistance figures, such as Lito Rambo, Kommandante Mau Kiak (recently arrested on August 18 this year) Sintu Kulao, and Ameu Van Damme. These figures are in turn said to be loyal to different factions

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<sup>4</sup> 'Branching from the Trunk: East Timorese Perceptions of Nationalism in Transition' Dionisio Babo Soares, PhD. Thesis, ANU, Canberra, December 2003, p.282

within the security forces and political parties, with loyalties and enmities dating back to resistance times. There's also evidence to support the contention that this is a turf war between these groups to some degree, for control of gambling, extortion and border smuggling rackets.

There are also multiple groups of ex-FALINTIL, who feel excluded because among other reasons, they did not get jobs in the new army and police force. One Aileu based former combatants group called Forças Falintil SF-75 is alleged to be currently involved in the violence around the Matadouro and Caicoli area. Another new group the National Front for Justice and Peace (FNJP), have held a number of demonstrations demanding the dissolution of Parliament, (echoing opposition demands), and threatened retribution if this did not happen. Their leader Augusto de Araújo, also known as Tara, is a former FALINTIL leader from Bobonaro. The group has also demanded the release of Major Reinado, and for the Portuguese riot police the National Republican Guard (GNR) to leave the country.<sup>5</sup>

Another smaller group, possibly linked to the FNJP is Youth for Justice and Peace (JPJ). The JPJ was involved in violent protests in support of Major Reinado outside the Joint Task Force (JTF) Caicoli detention centre in Dili, on July 27 earlier this year. This group has identical demands to the FNJP, and are said to be linked or to be the same group who have demanded that Australian and Malaysian troops stay in their barracks so they can confront the GNR.<sup>6</sup>

Other groups are affiliated with powerful individuals with political ambitions, or even opposition parties. The Sagrada Familia group for example is led by an ex-FALINTIL commander named Cornelio Gama (more commonly known as Eli Fohorai-Boot, L-Sete 'L7') who has opposed the government since 2001. The group has been accused of a number of violent attacks, including on a Baucau police station on November 27, 2002. The Council for the Defence of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (CPD-RDTL) also commands a large following of disaffected FALINTIL and rural poor, and has demonstrated an ability to manipulate this discontent and rapidly mobilise large groups of demonstrators. Widely perceived as an eastern group however, the CPD-RDTL had their Dili headquarters burned down at the beginning of the recent crisis.<sup>7</sup>

Another disaffected group Colimau 2000 are alleged to have links to former militia groups. Colimau 2000 is blamed for some of the violence on April 28, 2006 and is seen as a sort of rent-a mob. Led by Osorio Mau Leke and Dr. Bruno da Costa Magalhaes, they've gone through a series of name changes, currently re-inventing themselves as the Movement for National Unity (MUN), perhaps in an attempt to gain a wider base of support. This group was however believed to have been peaceful and disciplined during the recent violence in Caicoli, Dili over the arrest of Major Reinado, although camped close by in Matadouro.<sup>8</sup> (See Figures 9 and 10)

Chronic unemployment, which exceeds 50% nationwide but higher in Dili due to the drift of youth from rural areas, means recruiting is easy for such groups from the legions of unemployed youth who feel socially, economically and politically excluded. It was these disaffected, marginalised youth who comprised the bulk of the rioting mobs. The presence of small groups of such youth on street corners especially at

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<sup>5</sup> Radio Televisaun Timor Leste (RTTL) news 27/7/06 (in UNOTIL Media Summary)

<sup>6</sup> Timor Post, Dili, 28/7/06

<sup>7</sup> Timor-Leste Conflict Vulnerability Assessment, MSI Assessment Team, produced for USAID/East Timor and USAID Office of Conflict, May 2004, p.24

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid* p.42

night, playing music, drinking and asking for money from pedestrians and local shopkeepers is a ubiquitous feature of Dili urban and rural life.

Graffiti delineating the territory of such groups is equally ubiquitous, and can often seem threatening, Graffiti is generally considered as anti social behaviour in the West, so it is assumed that these groups must be gangs, and be violent or criminal in nature.



**Graffiti by Slebor Group in Kampung Alor**

The names of these groups can also seem threatening, and suggestive of violent intent such as 'Beaten Black and Blue', or 'Provoke Me and I'll Smash You' (OBOR), but this is usually far from the case. One OBOR member for example was a volunteer staff member of the local branch of Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC). Mostly the names are taken from Indonesian rock band groups or album covers, or Hollywood action films.

As this study found, it's impossible to generalise about these groups, which comprise a broad spectrum from small, informal groups of young males who mostly just play guitar and drink, highly cohesive, organised youth groups with coherent objectives and a range of sporting and civic activities, to large organised, ethnically based criminal gangs.

## **OVERVIEW**

**Group Typology:** Although many groups are hybrids, with connections to other groups from other categories, and individuals having membership of more than one group, there could be said to be seven main types of groups, with three sub-groups.

1. Large disaffected groups with some grievance from the past towards the ruling party. The main groups are Colimau 2000, CPD-RDTL, Sagrada Familia, and Orsnaco. The membership of these groups is largely drawn from rural unemployed youth from about thirteen upwards, poor farmers and ex-FALINTIL. Ethnicity varies with each group. Sagrada Familia for example is identified with the East, but its members are mixed, as with CPD-RDTL. Colimau 2000 is associated with the west, chiefly with Ermera and Bobonaro districts. All groups are predominantly if not exclusively male.

Some of these groups like Colimau 2000 and Sagrada Familia take the form of religious sects; Colimau 2000 members believe former resistance fighters will return from the dead to lead them to victory. All groups share in common the belief that they've somehow been disenfranchised, and reject the legitimacy of the current government. Some of these groups allegedly sustain themselves through petty crime and extortion, and even cross border smuggling. Some, like Colimau 2000, are also accused of links with former militias. There are also many smaller groups composed of former FALINTIL soldiers scattered throughout the country, like the Aileu based SF-75 (see Annex 01 for more detail on the above groups)

2. Martial arts groups: As described above, there are some 15-20 martial arts groups, with the number of registered members around 20,000. Several organisations have members in all 13 districts and are organised in a hierarchical model, with branches down to the village and hamlet level. Estimates to the number of non-registered members is much larger, above 90,000, which compared to the total number of youth, men and women, being about 230,000, indicates that probably some 70% of young Timorese men are active in martial arts groups.<sup>9</sup> These groups are all ethnically mixed, with some women members. Kung Fu Master for example claims 30% female membership, but with other groups this number is much lower, closer to 5%. While all groups claim to preach principles of self discipline and non-violence, much of the district based communal violence is committed by these groups or at least in their name. As described above, some martial arts groups have become politicized, with the two biggest groups aligned to opposing political factions, and to factions within the security forces.
3. Kakalok (magic or mystical) or 'Isin Kanek' (wound) groups such as Seven-Seven, Five-Five and Three-Three. These groups were generally formed as clandestine organisations under Indonesian occupation, but some groups like 12-12 claim to have been in existence in Portuguese times. Group members can be identified by a series of circatrices running longitudinally up their arm, or in clusters, the number corresponding to the group i.e. Seven or 5-5 etc. These groups are feared as they are believed to have magic powers or 'black magic'. The 'Magic Group' members' age ranged between 20-51, with older leadership and generally much younger membership. All groups are said to have some women members. According to most accounts these groups are largely inactive except for the group Seven-Seven, which has reinvented itself as a martial arts group, in addition to alleged involvement in gambling and extortion rackets. Seven-Seven is also believed to be closely linked to Sagrada Familia. Seven appears to have a large number of younger members with some exhibiting fresh scars, suggesting that this group still actively recruits members.
4. Large bairo based ethnically distinct gangs, whose main activity appears to be organized crime, although in some cases they were previously primarily involved in the resistance movement. For this reason the main groups are led by former resistance figures, such as Sintu Kulao and Lito Rambo in Becora, and Ameu Van Damme in Manleuana, although the resistance record of these figures is sometimes questioned. These groups have long standing rivalries,

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<sup>9</sup> Timor-Leste Youth Social Analysis Mapping and Youth Institutional Assessment, Lene Ostergaard, June 2005, Commissioned for the World Bank Timor Leste p.22



- especially Sintu Kulao and Lito Rambo, both from the Becora area. Other groups like Commando are eastern in origin, but cover most of the country as a sort of organized crime syndicate. These gangs are needless to say exclusively male, each one numbering in the hundreds. These groups, especially the western groups, appear to have perpetrated the bulk of the recent violence. The eastern groups are largely confined to the IDP camps, where they sometimes range from in hit and run attacks. It is doubtful however that these groups would identify as gangs.
5. Youth Groups: These fall into three categories
    - a) Large, bairo based youth groups like Burado in Ailok Laran, and Aituri Laran in Taibesse. These groups, also sometimes numbering in their hundreds, are ethnically mixed, and of mixed gender. Age group generally varies between 12-33. While their main activity is usually sports, they often conduct social services like street cleaning or helping the poor. It is unlikely these groups are involved in the violence, although some of their members might be on an individual basis. Some groups claim to be acting as community security, so they might also become involved in violence as a result. These groups generally list their main objective as bringing local youth together and unifying their community.
    - b) Apical, large bairo based youth groups, like Choque in Becora, Blok M in Audian with older leaders, often former resistance figures. Also sometimes numbering in their hundreds, ethnically mixed, and of mixed gender, these groups are generally more organized, like small scale NGOs, sometimes running informal language and computer training courses in addition to sports competitions and music. Some, like Choque or Joventude Colmera also engage in social services like cleaning the streets and markets. The age range of these groups varies between 15-40. Some groups of this type are questionable however, with no discernable activities or objectives. Some leaders of these groups may be using their status and authority as former resistance figures, or through providing alcohol and cigarettes, to manipulate local youth into crime or violence. It's highly possible that these leaders are also manipulated by leaders further up, utilizing old clandestine networks to mobilize these youth for political ends.
    - c) Small structure less bairo (village) based exclusively male groups, whose main activity is playing guitar and drinking. Some of these groups are also often dedicated artists like the Slebor group in Kampung Alor, or Green Vila in Vila Verde. These are by far the most numerous of the identifiable groups of mixed gender. They often act as informal security for shopkeepers, in return for cigarettes and alcohol or a small fee to pay for artistic materials. This fee is not always paid willingly though. Like the other groups, they also deny involvement in any violence, but some of their members might be on an individual basis. The average age of these groups is between 16-24. They generally list their main motivation in belonging to such groups as security, and solidarity with other youth in their local community.
  6. Small groups of young males, some recently formed, usually living in close proximity, gathering at night, often drunk, to look for trouble. It is these

groups, in addition to the larger ethnically based gangs who are blamed for much of the ongoing violence, intimidation and house burnings. They also live off extortion and stand over rackets, and are blamed for the recent spate of Chinese shops burned down in the Bairopite area in early September.

7. Church run groups, mostly younger around the 10-13 age group, of mixed gender. Many are run from Dili Cathedral, and their main activities are playing music, singing and dancing, and listening to stories.

**(See Annex 01 for a more detailed summary of these different groups.)**

### **OPTIONS**

Gangs or youth groups are a standard feature of post conflict societies, but many overseas studies have pointed to the hybrid nature of these groups. As in South Africa and Northern Ireland, many former resistance groups were at the same time criminal gangs, or later became gangs to fill a post conflict vacuum. Few gang members would identify as such however, and most would change their behaviour if given the opportunity. Groups like Choque have shown they can make the transition from resistance groupings to socially oriented youth group, but need support to continue making this transition.

Equally important is the need to support those recently formed, highly motivated youth groups, to sustain their optimism, and to enable them to continue their projects of uniting local youth and their communities. Some groups like Choque and Juventude Colmera felt they were losing the motivation and cohesiveness of their groups due to lack of funds for activities, so support should be given to such groups as an urgent priority.

As identified by the World Bank<sup>10</sup> and UNICEF<sup>11</sup> studies quoted earlier, employment is a key aspiration of most youth, and group members interviewed for this study were almost unanimous in their agreement that this was the key to ending youth violence. There was also almost unanimous agreement that the ILO/UNDP public works program was a worthwhile program with positive outcomes. The only real criticism encountered was that it was not ongoing, that youth would just return to their old ways once the work was over.

In the short term however, most youth listed as a priority the supply of sporting equipment to compete with other groups, and musical instruments and artistic material to pursue their interests and explore their potential. Most groups had close links with other neighboring groups, and clearly identified the potential of sporting competition with other groups as a means of conflict prevention and resolution. Below are a set of possible short term options to address these needs:

**Youth Centres:** A basic youth centre could be built in each bairo depending on availability of funds. Each centre could be supplied with a set of sporting and music

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<sup>10</sup> 'Timor-Leste Youth Social Analysis Mapping and Youth Institutional Assessment', Lene Ostergaard, June 2005, Commissioned for the World Bank Timor Leste

<sup>11</sup> 'Viewing Young People As Assets In The Development Process: Key Findings Of A National Survey In Timor Leste', Richard Curtain with Brent Taylor, 17 March 2005, commissioned by UNICEF Timor Leste.

equipment, including uniforms for inter group competition. Existing sporting facilities could be repaired, upgraded, or new ones built.

It is recommended that an evaluation study is conducted to identify the most cohesive youth groups, and this program be initially trialed with these groups in a number of key bairros. If successful, other groups would apply to be involved, ensuring active participation.

In the construction phase the local youth groups could be employed as voluntary labour or under the auspices of the ILO/UNDP public works program. Local youth groups would then have some sense of ownership of the centre, managing it themselves, appointing a committee or simply a coordinator from within their ranks. An MOU could be set out between the donor and the youth groups containing agreements on such things as appropriate use of facilities, care and maintenance, and anti-discrimination guidelines.

Those groups which have demonstrated both motivation and capacity to deliver small scale training and social services could also be given assistance and capacity building in such areas as management or administration.

Although a number of NGOs are already engaged in the same sort of activities as these groups such as language and computer training, few are aware of these NGOs existence or know how to access their courses, and these NGOs are generally under resourced, and therefore can only deliver training to a limited number of applicants. These locally based youth groups can therefore play a vital outreach role at the village level, either in coordination with these NGOs, or as independent entities supported and mentored by national youth organizations or NGOs.

**Employment:** Those groups who have already implemented or are planning to implement small scale community employment or small business programs such as the Burado Group's motorbike maintenance cooperative could be allocated seed money to establish these community initiatives. Such initiatives could prove more sustainable than the current temporary employment programs. As with youth centres, an MOU could be concluded entailing certain guidelines, and even community obligations such as street cleaning, although some groups like Burado already do this on a voluntary basis.

A new approach is needed however, in engaging with such informal organizations. Most of these youth groups do not have the capacity to become formal NGOs, and so should not be expected to formulate constitutions, elect office bearers, have management boards, formulate proposals and all the other requirements that frustrate small scale organizations like these. More flexible means of engagement are needed such as in kind grants, or working through local NGOs to work directly with youth groups, to help them implement and manage their projects.

**Medium Term:**

**A Youth Fund:** The UNICEF Report 'Proposal for a National Youth Policy' prepared for the Secretary of State for Youth and Sport suggests setting up a National Fund or national budget allocation for youth. According to this report, the fund would oversee the disbursement of funds on a competitive basis, to support youth initiatives at national and district level. The report proposes setting national criteria to evaluate

the proposals, and a district level committee of prominent citizens could rank proposals in terms of best fit against the criteria.<sup>12</sup>

Under this plan an independent council would govern how the National Youth Fund operates to ensure full transparency. This Council should be chaired by the Secretary of State for Youth and Sport and consist of representatives of youth organisations, organisations working with young people and other prominent members of the community.

Unfortunately these types of councils in East Timor have generally proved cumbersome, so it's recommended in the short term to allocate these funds through a local NGO. The organisation could receive financial support to fulfill this role from the government, or the Youth Fund itself.

The organization allocated this role could then work directly with bairo level youth group representatives to assess their needs or viability of their project applications, rather than through another layer of community leaders. Alternatively an international NGO could be funded to manage this scheme, mentoring a local NGO to employ Dili and district youth officers to work directly with these youth groups.

### **Long Term:**

**Representation:** In Dionysio Babo Soares' thesis he identifies widespread youth disillusionment with existing parties, especially those predating independence. They are perceived as parties of the older generation, who ignore contemporary youth needs and aspirations, and yet involve youth in their internal rivalries.<sup>13</sup>

According to the World Bank Youth Institutional Assessment youth representative organisations are currently generally weak, with little mutual cooperation between them, and still struggling to reinvent their purpose after independence. They are also national organizations, with some district level groups, but little or no representative bodies at the bairo or aldeia level.<sup>14</sup>

However the report did identify a number of youth organizations with a coherent vision and mission, with the capacity to formulate and deliver programs. Groups like Student Solidarity Council and Grupo Feto Foinsai Timor Leste (GFFTL) have previously demonstrated an ability to mobilise youth during the 1999 Referendum, and now function as small scale NGOs. Some of these groups, with training and support over time, could be utilised to mobilise youth political participation, to ensure the voice of youth is heard at a national level in both policy and youth representative forums.

As suggested by the leader of the 'California' youth group in Akidiriun, 'youth ambassadors' could be selected from every bairo to represent youth at a national level. These youth ambassadors could be elected by local youth groups, or selected

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<sup>12</sup> Proposals for a National Youth Policy for Timor Leste, Richard Curtain, Report prepared for the Secretary of State for Youth and Sport, Democratic Republic of Timor Leste, commissioned by UNICEF, p. 15

<sup>13</sup> Branching from the Trunk: East Timorese Perceptions of Nationalism in Transition Dionisio Babo Soares, ANU, Canberra, December 2003, pp. 242-245

<sup>14</sup> Timor-Leste Youth Social Analysis Mapping and Youth Institutional Assessment, Lene Ostergaard, June 2005, Commissioned for the World Bank Timor Leste p.39

from existing leadership. Youth representation at the aldeia or bairro level would do much to alleviate a sense of powerlessness and disenfranchisement.

If youth feel they have some participation in the decision making process, it could go a long way to countering the current disregard for elected democratic institutions, and reflexive recourse to violence as a means of dispute settlement, an attitude that has generated much of the recent violence.

**Reconciliation:** A number of group leaders claim their communities such as Akidirihun, and Aituri Laran in Taibesse, were free of any communal violence. It would be useful to study these areas, and to organize informal seminars by leaders from these communities in each bairro, so others can learn from their example.

It would also be useful to organize a youth forum of leaders from the different youth groups, or a congress of all these local youth groups, independent or together with the national bodies, to set up a dialogue between each bairro and district.

The congress could take the form of a festival, incorporating a range of cultural and sporting events. There is a thriving youth sub-culture in East Timor, with a wide range of shared constructive cultural activities including dance, music, poetry, and painting. These activities should be supported and encouraged, and given a national forum of expression. Such an event held soon and then regularly, could do much to counter the current culture of male violence and retribution

#### SUMMARY

The current situation is highly complex, and can only be resolved through a long process of dialogue and reconciliation, a dramatic improvement in the economy, and a more efficient provision of basic social services. Overcoming a culture of male violence, and overall disrespect for elected institutions and democratic processes is also highly complex, requiring long term solutions.

While it is important to examine what went wrong, and to look at future strategies for rehabilitation and conflict prevention, it is equally vital to support and strengthen the positive aspects of Timorese society, to salvage what worked.

This study has found that that far from being merely victims or potential perpetrators, there are highly distinct groups within Timorese youth actively seeking solutions to improve their lives and the lives of their communities. These groups are in many cases elementary, grassroots civil society organizations, which play a crucial role in their own communities in engaging youth in constructive behavior, as a circuit breaker for youth alienation.

The UN and other international aid agencies have long endeavored to encourage volunteerism and a sense of community in East Timor. What this study has found is that there are already a large number of mostly undetected, spontaneous small scale voluntary associations. If given the support now to fulfill their fairly modest objectives and aspirations, these groups could play a vital unifying role within their communities, and provide leadership and focus for local youth.

## ANNEX 01

### DESCRIPTION OF GROUPS

Material for this section was gathered from interviewing members and leaders of these groups, members of the community, press reports and UN sources. The information presented is intended as an overall guide to the nature of these groups. It is neither definitive nor comprehensive, nor does it reflect the opinion of the author.

#### **Disaffected Groups:**

**CPD-RDTL (Council for the Defense of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste):** According to the USAID 2004 Conflict Vulnerability Assessment, this is the best organized and structured of the various disaffected groups, and has shown an ability to communicate its message effectively through the media. The CPD-RDTL was formed in 1999 to promote the view that Timor-Leste has been independent since the original proclamation of independence by FRETILIN in 1975, and accordingly, the country should adopt the substance and symbols of independence from that time (i.e., the Constitution, name of the Republic, flag, and national anthem). The group rejected the legitimacy of UNTAET, boycotted the Constituent Assembly elections, rejects the legitimacy of the T-L government, refuses to register as a political party and claims itself to be the real 'FRETILIN'.<sup>15</sup>

CPD-RDTL has emerged from a group of people who split off from the main Timorese resistance movement in the 1980's as a result of conflict related to the restructuring of the movement at that time. Since this time, CPD-RDTL's relations with FRETILIN (and formerly with CNRT) have been marked by conflict and violence.<sup>16</sup>

At present, CPD-RDTL sees itself as an extra parliamentary body whose objective is to raise political consciousness about the country's political history. This group opposes Portuguese as an official language and believes the current government is unrepresentative because it is drawn from FRETILIN leaders who lived in exile during the 24-years of Indonesian occupation.<sup>17</sup>

According to the USAID Report, this group is generally criticized as being short on ideology and high on nuisance value, but it has a significant following. The organization is believed to have around 6,600 supporters and has links to many of the dissident FALINTIL veterans' groups and youth organizations, including the group named Sagrada Familia (see below). Baucau and Dili are geographic strongholds, although it seems to have a presence in some other districts as well. The group is usually suspected as agitators whenever demonstrations turn violent, although this may not always be the case. The report concludes that further conflict between this group and FRETILIN is probable, and as long as FRETILIN is the government, this translates into conflict.<sup>18</sup>

**Colimau 2000:** This is a small sect with animist beliefs that is estimated to have a few hundred supporters and whose members claim to reject the authority of the government.

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<sup>15</sup> Timor-Leste Conflict Vulnerability Assessment, MSI Assessment Team, produced for USAID/East Timor and USAID Office of Conflict, May 2004 pp. 41-42

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. pp. 41-42

<sup>17</sup> Ibid pp. 41-42

<sup>18</sup> Ibid pp. 41-42

The group's followers believe fallen independence fighters will come alive again and return from the forests to lead them. The followers are poor, illiterate peasants from rural areas and some ex-guerrillas. According to an anthropologist Mathew Libbis doing field work in the Manufahi area, Colimau has strong local support in its power base around the Kemak suco of Leimea Kraik in Hatolia.<sup>19</sup>

Colimau 2000 returned from West Timor in 2000, and despite claims of animism, they apparently invited a priest to consecrate the ground on which a church was to be built. According to Mathew Libbis, Colimau is a Kemak expression meaning to hate each other, but according to the 2001 Suco Survey, it is also the name of a Bunak suco in Bobonaro.

Colimau was one of the clandestine groups that fought for East Timor's independence from Indonesia for decades. After it voted to break away from the CNRT in August 1999, Colimau 2000 members were not accommodated in government offices or the legislature. The group was also involved in a controversy in 2003 when the defense forces arrested their members in large numbers, without following due process. This has further fuelled group's sense of grievance.

Led by Osorio Mau Leke and Bruno da Costa Magalhaes, Colimau 2000 have gone through a series of name changes, currently re-inventing themselves as the Movement for National Unity (MUN), perhaps in an attempt to gain a wider base of support. The main demand of the MUN is that the national flag be changed as it should not be the flag of Fretilin, a political party.

Due to its proximity to the border, the group is believed to have some following in the refugee camps in Indonesia. There have also been allegations about the group having made contact with militia leaders in West Timor in order to plan a strategy to destabilize the country after the UN peacekeepers leave; at least one source of this accusation is the Indonesian military commander in West Timor. Accusations have been made that the group has been involved in petty crime and extortion.<sup>20</sup>

Colimau 2000 is widely feared and believed to be involved in a number of violent incidents in the current crisis, most recently on August 14 when they clashed with a martial arts group in Bobonaro, leaving one person seriously injured.<sup>21</sup> Other sources maintain that this group's fearsome reputation is undeserved, that they get blamed for incidents they were not involved in. As described earlier, this group was disciplined and peaceful during the violence of early September in Caicoli, Dili, following the arrest of Major Reinado.

**Sagrada Familia:** Based in Laga, a district in Baucau, and some districts in Lospalos Sagrada Familia is a quasi-religious sect, a mixture of Catholicism and animist beliefs. Members carry a red ribbon they believe protects them from harm. Its founder, an ex-FALINTIL commander named Cornelio Gama (more commonly known as Eli Fohorai-Boot, L-Sete 'L7') rejects the government's legitimacy and has said that a new civil war is possible. L7 claims he has more than 5,000 followers.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Timor-Leste Conflict Vulnerability Assessment, MSI Assessment Team, produced for USAID/East Timor and USAID Office of Conflict, May 2004 pp. 41-42

<sup>20</sup> Ibid p.41-42

<sup>21</sup> Diario Nacional, 14/08/06

<sup>22</sup> Timor-Leste Conflict Vulnerability Assessment, MSI Assessment Team, produced for USAID/East Timor and USAID Office of Conflict, May 2004 pp. 41-42

Founded around 1989, the group originally played a role in combating Indonesian propaganda against the resistance. The group's present political objectives are not clear, but its main grievance seems to be exclusion of former FALINTIL from the new security forces. The group has some kind of affiliation with CPD-RDTL. The group is also alleged to be involved in petty crime and extortion. The group finds its support among ex-combatants and unemployed youth. The group has been accused of a number of violent attacks, including on a Baucau police station on November 27, 2002, and a number of ethnically motivated brawls in Dili. One of their leaders is believed to live opposite the Dili main hospital, and this could explain some of the recent clashes there.<sup>23</sup>

**Orsnaco:** The group's name is drawn from a Mambai village in Manufahi. Believed to be led by Ruin Falur, Orsnaco is largely based in Turiscai District of Manufahi, where they built a large meeting hall and living quarters. Its former leader Fransisco Xavier Amaral, current president of the Asosiasaun Social Democratica Timorese (ASDT), is also Second Vice President of the National Parliament. According to Mathew Libbis, former clandestine leader 'Marcos' is the local ritual and political figurehead.

Relatively little information is available about this group but it is estimated to have a couple of thousand supporters and is believed to have affiliations with Colimau 2000. This group draws its support base from unemployed youth and ex-combatants.<sup>24</sup>

**Forcas Falintil (SF75):** According to anthropologist Mathew Libbus quoted above SF75 is based in Aillieu, but fragmented throughout the country, with no coherent organisational structure and no popular support. They apparently want to assert a parallel army and government, and continue their clandestine structure. Mathew Libbus recounted that in June, 2002 in Suai forty of the group stormed the police station, threatening to kill all UNPOL unless they freed one of its members, who had been arrested for intimidating people in the market with swords and machetes. This group is believed to be one of the groups involved in the violence around Caicoli and Matadouro area, and it apparently regularly fights with Sagrada Familia members.

### **Martial Arts**

**01. Kera Sakti (KS):** Originally an Indonesian organisation, KS was founded in Timor Leste in 1995. KS now has about 6700 members, about 38% of them women. Like other martial arts groups, KS claims to be solely a sporting organization, but according to media reports, KS has endemic rivalries with other groups, particularly PSHT and Korka, and its members are widely believed to be involved in the recent violence, although it's not clear if this is as individuals or as an organization. As with other martial arts organizations, it has a poor image in the community.

**02. Korka (Kmanek Oan Rai Klaran):** Korka is believed to be the biggest of the martial arts groups, with up to 10,000 members. Korka has been consistently accused of provoking and committing violence, most notably burning down fifty houses in Ainaro, in August last year. Korka officially affiliated itself with Fretilin in 2005. Korka seems to have a traditional rivalry with PSHT, especially heated in Same and Ainaro.

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<sup>23</sup> Branching from the Trunk: East Timorese Perceptions of Nationalism in Transition Dionisio Babo Soares, PhD. Thesis, ANU, Canberra, December 2003, p.295

<sup>24</sup> Timor-Leste Conflict Vulnerability Assessment, MSI Assessment Team, produced for USAID/East Timor and USAID Office of Conflict, May 2004 pp. 41-42



**03. Persaudaraan Setia Hati Terate (PSHT):** Also known Nehek Metan (Black Ants), PSHT are one of the biggest and most controversial groups, and are alleged to have been closely linked to the current violence. PSHT originated in Indonesia, with a number of international branches, but PSHT in Timor Leste say they are independent of the Indonesian branch, and their leader, Jaime Xavier Lopes, is Timorese. Although not formally affiliated like KORKA, they are widely perceived to be close to the two chief opposition parties the Partido Democratica (PD) and Social Democratic Party (PSD), although PSHT themselves deny any links to any political parties.

They have been accused of fomenting problems even in Indonesian times, and one witness said members use the organization to settle family and communal disputes. Another eyewitness report described an attack by PSHT members in the recent crisis on Bebonuk/Comoro, and other attacks in Perumnas and Hudi Laran, resulting in widespread destruction of Easterners homes. They are said to have heavily infiltrated the security forces, and to have received weapons from the police and army.

One ex member said that when they joined PSHT they were given a brochure setting out their principles on non-violence and mutual cooperation, but that the trainer then explained to new recruits that their enemies were Korka, Kung Fu Master, Kera Sakti, Taekwondo, and that PSHT must be stronger than them. As with the other martial arts groups though, PSHT members claim their group is given a bad reputation by the actions of a minority abusing the club's name.

**04. Kung Fu Master (All Districts):** Founded in 1965, this group claims to be the oldest martial arts group in East Timor, with about 7,700 members. The group recruits regularly, and participates in international competitions. It is based in all districts, with its main membership in Seminario Balide, Metinaro, Hera, Bidau Tahu Laran, Manleuana, Bairo-Pite, Delta, Tasitolu, Kampung Baru. The group claim to be ethnically mixed, and are not involved in any violence, or have any rivalries with other groups, as between PSHT and Korka. This claim should however be balanced against reports that the leader of Kung Fu Master Manuel Lopez was killed in a battle in Tibar, in the initial fighting between police and FDTL. Kung Fu Master is also alleged to be linked to KORKA, and was involved in a serious clash with PSHT in Suai, at the beginning of July 2006.

### **'Kakalok' Groups**

**01. Seven:** Seven, also known as Seven Seven, are a former clandestine group formed in Indonesian times. Their tag is the most ubiquitous of all groups, and can be seen all around Dili, but most particularly in the Becora/Taibesse area. The group is believed to have magical powers, by injecting themselves with a medicine that makes them invincible and even invisible to enemies. Their symbol is a longitudinal scar that runs vertically up their right arm with seven nodes (see Figure 07). They also carry a piece of red and black cloth with protective powers. 'Rodak', the original leader of Seven, is claimed to be still alive in the jungle somewhere. The leader of the Sagrada Familia Group 'L7' is said to one of his followers. Seven are apparently linked to Sagrada Familia, which one ex member likened to a mother organization. Gang leader Lito Rambo is also said to be one of their founders.

Seven are alleged to control the cock fighting and gambling rackets around Taibesse and elsewhere in Dili. According to one allegation, some of their members were also former militia members, and are still in Indonesia. They are also believed to be heavily involved in the recent violence, especially around the Bairopite and Comoro

area, but as with other groups, whether this is a group or merely individuals is hard to prove.

**02. Five-Five:** Five-Five are another of the so called 'kakalok' groups, reputed to have magic powers through medicine they insert under their skin. They believe this magic makes them invincible, and also compels people follow their commands. They are also a former clandestine resistance organization, yet they are also alleged to have militia connections. This allegation may be unfair, perhaps derived from the fact that Aitarak Militia leader Eurico Guterres was reputed to be once a member, but he was involved in the resistance at that time, and allegedly even part of a plot to kill Suharto. Apparently he became pro-Jakarta only after his imprisonment by the Indonesians. When asked what this group does now, people have been evasive, but one replied that they 'pray' to their patron saint, Saint Antony, for peace, prosperity and stability. The group is sometimes referred to as 'Santo Antonio' instead of 'Five-Five'.

**03. Twelve-Twelve:** The group claims to have been established since Portuguese times, and to have been a pro-independence clandestine organization under Indonesian occupation, but now its main objectives were self defense and mutual support for disadvantaged youth. At the present, the members of 12-12 are ethnically mixed. Like the other 'isin-kanek' or 'Kakalok' groups, members have a series of scars on their arms, in groups of twelve, (see Figure 06) and are believed to be invincible because of a potion inserted through the skin. Numbers of this group are hard to gauge as like the other 'isin kanek' groups, they are organized in 'caixas' or cells.

### **Gangs**

**01. Lito Rambo:** Lito Rambo is the name of this group's leader, a former FALINTIL guerilla fighter from Baucau, reputed by some to have been one of Seven-Seven's founders. Originally based in Becora, where it frequently came into conflict with Sintu Kulao, this group's chief activity appears to have been extortion rackets around the Audian area. The group is now largely dispersed, with many members, including Lito Rambo, now quartered in the Metinaro and Hera IDP camps. Lito Rambo is also apparently the president of the youth wing of the Democratic Party, the PD.

**02. Commando:** This is another eastern group, named after its leader from Lospalos 'Commando' based in Colmera. Allegedly involved in extortion and professional assassination, they are also known by the title 'Pembunu Dara Dingin', Bahasa Indonesian for 'cold blooded killers'. This group has also been recently dispersed, with its leader allegedly killed earlier in a pitched battle between up to five hundred people in Bairopite in 2001, according to one source.

**03. Lafaek:** The team did not get to interview members of this group, who are now apparently scattered throughout the IDP camps. According to some eyewitnesses, this group is composed of Easterners from Lospalos and the Quelikai sub district of Baucau, and has its base in Barat Beto in Comoro. The witnesses agreed that there was an earlier attack by this group against westerners in Comoro in August last year.

**04. Refut (Typhoon, in Fataluku):** The group takes its name from member Otnell Refut, a former champion boxer. This group is based in the Colmera district. We were not able to talk to members as they are mostly Lospalos origin, and so they are now scattered throughout the IDP camps. According to one witness, they are more of a social group or fraternity than anything, although they are known to be involved in

some petty crime. Members met each other after moving to Dili from the districts in search of work, and now function as a sort of extended family.

**05. Sintu Kulao:** This group is widely believed to have been responsible for the bulk of the violence in the Becora, Bidau and Taibesse area. Their name is taken from their leader 'Cintu' and the district, Kulao where they are based, as with 'Joao Becora', the leader of Choque, or 'Abilio Audian', the reputed leader of Blok M. They are alleged to be linked to Major Reinado.

According to one eye witness, just before Christmas 2005 the Sintu Kulao attacked a rival gang from Camea Has Laran, and killed one of their members,. Police came and arrested some members, while the rest fled to Remessio. Mostly westerners, the group have consistently targeted easterners in the region, with an endemic rivalry with Eastern gang named after its leader Lito Rambo.

**06. Gaya Anak Sadar (GAS):** Closely linked to the petitioners group of sacked FDTL soldiers, this group, based in Manleuana above the Comoro River Bridge area, is reputed to be responsible for much of the violence and destruction in the Comoro, Ai-Mutin, Surik Mas and surrounding area. Manleuana is seen as a western ghetto, and GAS is predominantly a western gang, led by former resistance fighter Ameu 'Van Damme'. This group is alleged to act in concert with Sintu Kulao. Exclusively male, this group is said to number in the hundreds.

### **Youth Groups**

**01. Choque (Collision) Becora:** Choque is based in Becora, and is easily the best known and possibly the biggest of the youth groups. According to their leader Joao da Silva (alias Joao Becora) Choque was established in 1989 by Francisco Binaraga, Timor's first world body building representative. The group was established as a youth movement, with a focus on sport as a way of keeping young people occupied and engaged. Choque has a number of sports clubs, in existence since the Indonesian era, including volleyball, basketball and football clubs. The group runs a security business, but also helps keep the local area clean on a voluntary basis. Although its base is in Becora, the group claims to have branches in a number of other communities including Suai, and over one thousand members in Dili. (See Figure 25). Choque leader Joao Becora also heads another new group, United Youth For Transparency and Justice (UJTJ).

**02. Mankodo (in Bahasa, Black And Blue From A Beating)** Based in Becora, Mankodo was established in 1996 by youth who'd met each other through sporting competitions under Indonesian occupation. Its base is in Kuluhun Cima, and they now have over a hundred members. Mankodo claim to not have been involved in any of the violence, that they are just a youth group with a focus on sport, to keep youth focused on positive activities. Mankodo has no official connection to other groups but was interested in cooperating with other groups such as Choque.

**03. Dalan Klot (Narrow Path):** Also based in Becora, Dalan Klot was established under Indonesian occupation, and has around sixty two members. The groups main stated focus is community renewal, through such activities as cleaning the market, and renovating sporting facilities and playgrounds. The group is multi-ethnic, living together as a commune in Becora, and work together with Choque. Members said the group was not involved in any of the violence, although some of its members are involved in martial arts groups, and its motto was 'construction, not destruction'.

**04. Jopal (Juventude Palapaso):** Jopal was founded in 2003, with the objective of coordinating and supporting sporting, social and artistic activities in the local area, among local youth. They also provide a forum for discussing social questions, and function as a sort of community security for the area. The group claims to be multi ethnic. Jopal had plans to connect with other youth groups such as Lurumata, based near Comoro, when the situation becomes safer. (See Figure 17)

**07. Slebor (Rebellious):** Slebor, based in Kampung Alor, was founded in 1995. The group is primarily a social group, meeting together to play guitar, sing and paint. Their work is highly visible in the burnt out buildings opposite the Mosque. Some of them live together in a house behind the beach road in Marconi, which they use as a sort of mural gallery, and where they conduct most of their activities. Slebor claim to be a distinct artistic group like Arte Moris and Sanggar Masin) and their music group sometimes plays together with Lospalos group the Galaxy Boys.

The group has a poor reputation, accused by many of public drunkenness, and petty extortion, extracting a 'tax' from local shopkeepers and residents. Slebor members have also been accused of intimidation and occupation of houses deserted by easterners: the house that they occupy now also apparently formerly belonged to easterners, now living in an IDP camp. Group members claim however they have been unfairly blamed for the actions of one or two members, and their friends or hangers on. The group claimed to be ethnically mixed, but we did not meet any easterners. (See Figure 11)

**08. Green Vila:** Green Vila can be found in a burned out house on the corner opposite Dili Cathedral, in Vila Verde. Founded in 1999, they have around thirty members. Apparently the group's main activity is music and painting. The walls were covered with murals, although the group Seven featured in many of them. The group has links with other art groups Arte Moris, Slebor and Sanggar Masin. Like many other such groups, they have a negative image for drunkenness but are believed to be otherwise benign. Again, the actions of a small minority may give the wider group a poor reputation. (See Figure 15)

**09. Nelfocoganagi:** We spoke to two members of this group, both twelve years old. This is a women's group, of all ages, who apparently meet together to, sing, dance, play basketball and tell stories. It's a Church organized group, and they have links to Gembel, another mainly music group with younger members, who meet in the Scouts meeting place in a park in Farol.

**10. Samfrus:** Samfrus, founded around 1996, are based in the Vila Verde area and have up to 300 members. They were formed as a pro independence movement, and as security against armed gangs and Indonesian security forces. The group's main activities are playing music, football, basketball, and organizing competitions with other groups. It has close links with a wide number of other groups in the area.

**11. Has Bongkok (The Inclining Mango Tree):** This group is based in the Perumnas area of Bairopite. The members we observed but were not able to interview seemed quite young, between 16-18. According to the groups leader, Has is a continuation of an earlier group Korenti, founded before the Santa Cruz Massacre, on November 12 1991. After Santa Cruz, the Indonesians began a crackdown on the clandestine movement, so the group changed their name to Has Bongkok. The group continued its activism until 1999, when most members fled to the hills. They did not know exactly how many members they had. Has Bongkok's

main stated activities now are playing guitar and organ, 'drinking a bit of tua', keeping the local area clean. They also have many group members in the football club Rusa Fuik, which plays in competitions all over the country. The group claims to teach a strong doctrine of non-violence, which they also teach this to children.

We tried to interview other younger group members but this proved difficult, with one older member becoming highly agitated. They have a mixed reputation, with some people saying that Has Bongkok members, even if not acting as a group, have burned down houses, and carried out looting, assaults and even murder. Other witnesses however claim the group is entirely benign.

**12. Aldeia Freche Group:** This group has been in existence since 2000. It is not really a youth group but a loose association of residents of the area, an aldeia within the Bairopite village.

**13. Luro Mata/OBOR (O Book O Rahun: If you provoke us you will be smashed):** Centred in the Luro Mata aldeia of Fatuhada, OBOR was formed in 2004 by a group of old friends, with the intention of bringing youth together to engage in constructive behaviour such as sport and music. The group has about twenty five members aged between eleven to early twenties. Currently their main activity is providing security for the area, naming themselves 'Seguranca Popular' (Security by the people, from the people, to the people). Otherwise their main activity is sitting around at night playing guitar and singing. According to their members Luro Mata is considered a safe aldeia, so safe that even other gangs have sheltered there including Lito Rambo and Refut. Members claim this group has never been involved in any violence.

**14. Juventude Aituri Laran (Taibesse):** The group was established in 2000. Since then their activities have focused on education and sports, including a football competition in thirteen aldeias. In 2004 the group established a football club named Marsikal, and has plans to manage a self employment organization, called Companhia Sulimutu in 2007. The group is mixed gender and ethnicity, with their leader from Lospalos. According to members, as their group has been running for a long time, the local youth have a harmonious relationship with each other, and with neighbouring aldeias.

**15. Juventude Colmera:** Juventude Colmera was established in Indonesian times, and restructured in 2000. Before the political crises, they engaged in activities such as placing rubbish bins around the Colmera area, and running non formal education courses. They have football, volleyball, and basketball teams. They also function as an informal security organization. The group is ethnically mixed, and has many female members

**16. El Diablo (Bairopite):** This group of about twenty male members is centred around a brightly painted house in Bairopite, opposite the heliport. The group was founded in 2004 as a way to bring together local youth to engage in sport, playing music and also painting. The group also has three computers, and runs computer, art and English courses for local children. The group maintains a loose association with Arte Moris, and also neighbouring youth groups Adoremus and Plur. (See Figure 13)

**17. Fender (Fatuhada):** Fender, named after the guitar, was founded in 2002 by five members. Based in Fatuhada, the main objective of the group is to develop local

musical talent, to teach young people to play guitar and sing. As well as training local youth, the group performs with the choir at the local church, especially at ordination ceremonies. They also have a football team. The group claims to be ethnically mixed, and has around fifty members, with a close association with a number of other groups including Potlot, Gembel, Agunia, Arte Moris, Alcatras, Center Clouse, 5 do Oriente, and Future Ban.

**18. United Gembel [(Crazy):** Gembel United meets in the Scout Center, in the park behind the lighthouse in Farol. The group was established in 2002, and has about 20 members, with its motto that when they are united they can help and support each other. The group's main activities are music, theatre, handcrafts and woodcarving. The group is ethnically mixed, and there were easterners present. The group is divided into two age groups, with the 10 to 15 year olds in 'Bocah Gembel', and the sixteen to twenty year olds in 'Gembel Senior', which together comprises 'Gembel United'. The group receives no financial assistance, but members say they receive 'moral support' from 'Sahe Institute for Liberation', also in Farol. (See Figure 26)

**19. California (Kuluhun):** The group was established in the 1980s, as a nationalist clandestine movement, and they claim they made the Kuluhun area a danger zone for TNI. The group now has over one hundred members, with many new members, so the average age ranges between 17-45. The group lists its main activities as sports, competing with other groups, and studying. The group says they are ethnically mixed, with close relations with Sintu Kulao, and Choque.

**20. Gang Potlot (Fatuhada):** This group, of around fifty members, also lists its activities as playing music and sport. One of its members plays with a famous local band 5 do Oriente. The group derives their name from an area in Jakarta called Gang Potlot, where the Indonesian rock group Slank used to live. They were founded as a sort of Slank fan group. They say they are ethnically mixed, and they have close links with other groups like Slebor, California, Blok M, Rebal, Choque, Kulau, and Plur.

**21. Jomar (Juventude Marconi):** Established in 2000, Jomar occupy a house in the area behind the current FHI/Health net office compound in Marconi. The group consists of a mixture of local youth, secondary school and university students, and martial arts group members. Daily activities are focused on sports such as football, volleyball, badminton. The group used to be involved in sports competition with teams from other youth groups. The group claims to be ethnically mixed, and the Galaxy Boys, a Lospalos group that had a base nearby, claim to have had previously good relations with Jomar. However two Jomar members expressed strong anti Eastern statements, and Jomar anti-eastern graffiti can be found on the burnt out remains of the old Galaxy Boys centre close to the Jomar centre.

**22. Burado (Buka Ransu Dalan Ba Unidade):** With a burned out house as its headquarters in the Ailok Laran Aldeia of Bairopite, this group was only inaugurated on August 20 this year. Burado has around fifty three members, of whom ten are women, and the age group ranges from fifteen to thirty. The women have volleyball and basket ball team, a traditional dancing group, and a singing group. They also help out bereaved families by gathering money from the community, and cooking and cleaning for the ceremony. The men play football, drink (which they listed themselves as an activity), and run a small scale mechanical cooperative where they fix cars and motorbikes for free. (See Figures 19-21)

**23. Fudido (Fucked):** Also recently formed, Fudido occupies a house in the Ailok Laran area of Bairropite. Group members wear black t-shirts bearing its name. The group has a poor reputation in the community, who list the group's main activities as drinking and stopping new cars entering the Bairro and asking for money. On meeting the group this was hard to believe, as the average age was around fifteen, with some girl members aged around twelve. It is possible their image problem can be attributed to their name, and the group has since dropped this name and erased it from their youth centre. (See Figure 24)

**24. PLUR (Peace, Love, Unity, Respect):** This group, formed in 2004, is located in the Frecat Aldeia of Bairropite. Led by a twenty nine year old law student, they have around eighty members, around thirty of these being women. Their group's average age ranges from twelve to thirty. They say their main activity is street cleaning and helping the disadvantaged. At the time of interview they were salvaging goods from a recently burned out general store on behalf of the Chinese owner-they said they weren't paid for this service. They listed their other activities as playing music, including playing at the local church, painting, and sport. (See Figure 22)

## ANNEX 02

**LIST OF GROUPS**

NO	NAME OF ORG.	TYPE OF ORG.	LOCATION
1	11 - 11	Martial Arts	DILI
2	12 - 12	Clandestine	ALL DISTRICTS
3	20/20	Martial Arts	DILI
4	21 - 21	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
5	3 - 3	Martial Arts	DILI
6	55 - 55	Martial Arts/Clandestine	ALL DISTRICTS
7	77 - 77	Martial Arts/Clandestine	ALL DISTRICTS
8	SF-75	Ex-Combatants	DILI/KAIKOLI
9	ADOREMUS	Youth Group	HALIHUN
10	AGUNIA BAN	Youth group	TAIBISSE
11	ALCATRAS	Youth group	BEMORI
13	ANAKS BELA VISTA	Youth group	LAHANE
14	BABURA	Youth group	QUINTAL BOOT
15	BAMBOLA	Youth Group	AKADIRUHUN
16	BKT (BAKI TUTUN)	Youth group	LAHANE
17	BLACK CRAZY	Youth Group	LECIDERE
18	BLOK M	Youth Group	DILI/AUDIAN
19	BOCALIAR	Youth Group	BECORA
20	BUA MALUS	Clandestine	LETEFOHO
21	BUDI SUCI (TAICHI)	Martial Arts	DILI
22	BURADO	Youth Group	PERUMNAS
23	CALIFORNIA	Youth Group	KULUHUN
24	CAMPO BINTANG	Youth Group	BIDAU-Mota Klaran
25	CHOQUE	Youth Group	BECORA
26	CINDRELA	Youth Group	AILOK LARAN
27	CLACK FUIK	Youth Group	BECORA
28	COLIMAU 2000	Clandestine	DILI, DISTRICTS
29	DALAN KLOT	Youth Group	BECORA
30	EL DIABLO	Youth Group	AITURI LARAN
31	ESKUTEIRU	Catholic Youth group	ALL DISTRICTS
32	FAMBERS	Youth group	FAROL
33	FENDER	Youth Group	FATUHADA
34	FITUN	National Youth Group	ALL DISTRICTS
35	GAM PER ON	Youth Group	PERUMNAS
36	GANGTITIS - GANGTILIS	Youth Group	PERUMNAS
37	GANG RAI	Youth Group	AILOK LARAN
38	GAYA ANAK SADAR (GAS)	Gang	MANLEUANA
39	GEMBEL	Youth group	FAROL
40	GREEN VILA	Youth group	VILA VERDE
41	GRUPO FUDIDO	Youth Group	PERUMNAS
42	HAS BONGKOK	Youth group	BAIROPITE
43	HORTODOK	Youth Group	BAIROPITE
44	JAMAICA	Youth group	VILA VERDE
45	JOGO LIVRE	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
45	JOVLA	Youth Group	LAHANE BARAT
46	IBLIS YANG KUDUS	Youth group	AUDIAN
47	KEMPO	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
48	KERA SAKTI	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
49	KKI	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
50	KKT	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
51	KORKA	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
52	KUNGFU MASTER	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
53	KUNGFU MAUFELU	Martial Arts	BECORA



Survey of Gangs and Youth Groups in Dili

<b>NO</b>	<b>NAME OF ORG.</b>	<b>TYPE OF ORG.</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
54	KUPU-KUPU BATIK	Youth group	COMORO
55	LAFAEK	Gang	BETO BARAT
56	LITO RAMBO	Gang	BECORA
57	LURU MATA	Youth Group	LURU MATA
58	MAMURA	Youth Group	CACAOLIDO
59	MANKODO	Youth Group	BECORA
60	MATANDO GUEIROS	Youth group	TAIBISSE
61	MERCADO COMORO GROUP	Gang	COMORO
62	MERPATI PUTIH	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
63	NAKUKUN	Youth group	SANTA CRUZ
64	NELFOCOGANAGI	All Girl's Youth Group	VILA VERDE
65	N 4 SWEET	All Girl's Youth group	VILA VERDE
66	NUKU VENS	Youth group	COLMERA
67	OBJELATIL	National Youth Group	ALL DISTRICTS
68	OBOR	Youth Group	LURO MATA
69	OJECTIL	National Youth Group	ALL DISTRICTS
70	ORSNACO	Clandestine	TURSICAI/SAME
71	ORTORIO RUA	Youth group	BILIMAU
72	PADJAJARAN	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
73	PERISAI DIRI	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
74	PLUR	Youth Group	BAIROPITE
75	POTLOT	Youth group	FATUHADA
76	PREDATOR	Youth Group	KAMPUNG ALOR
77	PSHT	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
78	REBAL	Youth Group	BALIDE
79	RAJAWALI	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
80	RAN FAKAR	Youth Group	AILOK LARAN
81	REFUT	Youth Group	COLMERA
82	RENETIL	National Youth Group	ALL DISTRICTS
83	REPAL/JOPAL	Youth Group	PALAPASO
84	RESIDENT EVIL	Youth group	AUDIAN
85	REVIVAL	Youth Group	BEBORA
86	SAGRADA FAMILIA	Clandestine	ALL DISTRICTS
87	SAMFRUS	Youth group	MATADOURO
88	SANTO TARSIZIO	Catholic Youth group	VILA VERDE
89	SATRIA NUSANTARA	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
90	SERULING SAKTI	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICT
91	SF75	Youth Group	DILI/KAIKOLI
92	SINAR PUTIH	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
93	SINTERCLASS	Youth group	BEMORI
94	SINTO KULAU	Clandestine	BECORA
95	SLEBOR	Youth Group	KAMPUNG ALOR
96	SOLA DEUS	Youth Group	BEBORA
97	SPIRITE LIFE	Youth group	BECARI
99	TAEKWONDO	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
100	TAPAK SUCI	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
102	TASA-POMA	Youth group	BAIRO-PITE
103	THS - THM	Martial Arts	ALL DISTRICTS
104	TUBERS	Youth group	VILA VERDE
105	UNITED GEMBEL	Youth group	FAROL
106	VERTUDE	Youth Group	BECORA
107	ZEUS	Youth group	LURUMATA

## **ANNEX 03:**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The survey period for this project lasted a month, between July 17, 2006 to August 11, 2006. The survey team was comprised of three staff: an international coordinator, and two local research assistants. As extensive youth surveys have already been conducted, the main focus of this project was to document as many different types of group as possible within the timeframe of the survey period, and the nature of their membership.

Three types of interview approach were taken; recorded interviews using portable digital minidisk recorders, focus group style discussions where responses to set questions were noted down, and survey style questionnaires. The focus group style interview was preferred as people were more forthcoming than when speaking to a microphone. This was regretful as it was hoped that the recordings would be utilised in a subsequent youth radio program broadcast on community radio.

Respondents were asked a series of personal questions for the purposes of demographic data, and then a series of questions about why they joined the group and their perspectives on the current violence, and how they thought youth could be best assisted.

The questions evolved with the progress of the project, as more different categories of groups were identified, and so some questions became inappropriate. The degree of concealment also meant that it was futile in asking questions about involvement in and motivation for violence. Such questions could also be seen as provocative, or make people suspicious.

Witnesses were also interviewed to cross reference the claims of group members, but this had to be done with great sensitivity to avoid giving people the sense they were being investigated. Commentary was also sought from different people from a range of backgrounds including the UN, international and local NGO's.

Groups were approached in a variety of ways; through personal networks; word of mouth; directly approaching groups seen on street corners, and asking locals in areas featuring group graffiti. When trust was established, some groups were willing to serve as a conduit to other groups. Appointments were mostly made verbally, as few had mobile phones, and so the process of meeting these groups was often quite laborious. Access to the potentially dangerous groups was only negotiated through third parties, and interviews with these groups were not attained during the period of the survey, although contact was established.

The survey interviewed twenty six groups, talking to both members and leaders. There were around forty formal interviews, but around the same number of informal interviews with youths on the street, NGO staff, UN staff, and the general public.

The study identified over a hundred groups, (see Annex 02) but there's likely to be over three times this number, without counting martial arts groups (of whom the Asia Foundation have already compiled a national database), so this list is not comprehensive.

## ANNEX 04

### SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

**Age and Marital Status:** Most group members conformed to the typical demographic of Timorese youth as described in the World Bank and UNICEF surveys i.e. single, male, unemployed and aged between 18 to 24. However if the data was disaggregated according to the type of group, there was considerable variety.

The 'Magic Group' members age ranged between 20-51; the apical groups ranged between 18-40. The leaders of both these groups and the apical groups were usually tertiary educated, married, with rank and file members aged between 18-24, single, male, and unemployed.

The small all male bairo based groups generally were aged between 18-30, unemployed with low education. With the more functional, civic minded groups of mixed gender, the age group was similar, and all were single, but there was a much higher level of education. In the Burado group for example, all the women surveyed were either university students or working: one as a reporter for a daily newspaper.

With martial arts groups interviewed there was considerable variation, and on anecdotal evidence, high ranking leaders are often highly educated and employed in senior positions in government and international NGO's, including UN Agencies. While the bulk of their membership would certainly be comprised of young unemployed males, martial arts membership appears to transcend age, gender and class boundaries.

Marital status of all respondents was predictable, matching the typical Timorese demographic patterns: nearly all of those over the age of twenty four were married, and those under this age were single.

**Reasons for Joining a Group** This varied between groups. All members of martial arts groups said they joined for sporting, fitness and self-defense reasons, having mostly joined under Indonesian occupation.

Members of 'Kakalok' groups said they joined for security, self-defense (some 'Kakalok' groups like 'Seven' are hybrids of martial arts groups) and to fight for independence.

Youth group members listed security as a reason, but also a range of other motivations including:

- As a means of meeting other youth in their area.
- As a means of unifying local youth to bring peace to the bairo
- To give local youth something to do, to distract them from antisocial and 'immoral' behaviour
- For youth from the districts, a sense of family
- To help the community through social programs e.g. street cleaning, helping the poor
- Engender unity and good spirit in time of conflict
- To harness the potential of local youth

**Ethnicity:** All groups claimed to be of mixed ethnicity, and claimed ethnicity was not an issue, but only three groups had easterners as members, and in two cases they were leaders. Choque group leader Joao Becora was from Baucau District, and was respected due to his reputation as an invincible resistance leader. Another leader, from the Aituri Laran Group was from Lospalos; he claimed he felt safe in this area due to the unifying influence of his group's activities. Other groups said they previously had easterners as members, but they'd all fled. Only one group encountered expressed anti easterner prejudice, and this was from group individuals not their leadership.

**Gender:** Nearly all groups claimed to be of mixed gender, but of the groups interviewed, women were only present in four cases. No doubt such activities as drinking and smoking would discourage most women from being involved in these groups, and associating unsupervised with young males. Even supervised youth groups like Arte Moris have found it hard to attract women for this reason.

**Involvement in violence:** While it was not the objective of this project to investigate the recent violence, it was thought worthwhile to examine each groups self perception and compare it with the community's perception. Only two types of groups admitted that they had been involved in any violence. Martial arts groups admitted some individual members might have been involved and wrongly used the club name. Joao Becora of Choque admitted that some group members had been involved in violence but that they had been disciplined and received counseling about their behaviour. Otherwise groups vehemently denied that they had anything to do with the current violence. All declared that their stated purpose was to create peace and unity, although the names of some groups as earlier discussed sometimes undermined this claim.

These claims of non-involvement in the violence seemed genuine, as of all groups interviewed, only three had a bad reputation in the neighbourhood, and possibly only one of these groups could be said to be involved as a group. Without a more thorough investigation, it could be only be concluded that all of some groups, and some of all groups were guilty of involvement in the current violence.

The majority of people interviewed said that it was people from outside their bairo who were guilty of violence. A few said locals were involved, but they were mixed, not from one particular group. It was interesting that nobody blamed the violence on one particular ethnic group. It was almost unanimous however, that those responsible for generating and manipulating the violence were 'higher up', implying political elites.

**Group Objectives:** Objectives were similar to the reasons that members gave for becoming involved, i.e. security, fitness; as a means of meeting other youth in their area; unifying local youth to bring peace to the bairo; to give local youth something to do to distract them from antisocial behaviour. A number of groups also listed their objectives as a mechanism for community mediation and as a source of leadership for local youth.

**Activities:** Activities for the martial arts groups were chiefly listed as training. One of the magic group's members listed their activities as praying. The youth groups listed their main activities as the following:

- Playing sport, mainly football but also volleyball and basketball, sometimes against other youth groups

- Singing and playing music, and teaching other local youth to play music
- Dancing
- Painting
- Talking about politics and community issues
- Looking after their local environment e.g. cleaning the streets and markets
- Providing security
- Collecting money from the community for poor, bereaved families unable to meet the cost of a funeral, and helping cook and clean for the ceremony
- Informal education courses including computer, Portuguese and English courses
- Community motorbike repair cooperatives
- Studying together
- Hanging out together
- Drinking

**Conflict Resolution:** In addition to sporting competitions with other groups, most youth cited a number of solutions:

- A national dialogue with youth, martial arts groups and the government.
- Meeting of every Uma Lulik (Sacred House) in Timor, Church leaders, and the government.

Unemployment was also clearly viewed as a source of the violence, and among the solutions offered was creating work opportunities by:

- Support for starting small businesses
- A guest worker scheme to give youth work experience in other countries
- Send youth back to their own districts to help their own communities to develop-too many young unemployed in the city, and not enough youth in the districts to assist in development
- Increased foreign investment
- A youth ambassador scheme, like a youth parliament with representatives from each Bairro

**Needs:** The needs that youth expressed in this study are broadly mirrored by the UNICEF and World Bank reports, i.e. access to education, both formal and informal, scholarships, employment opportunities, overseas traineeships. This longer term, broader outlook was particularly prevalent in the older leaders and members.

To the bulk of the younger group members interviewed however, the most immediate concern was inactivity. Most groups expressed a wish to play sport, especially to compete with other groups, to give them something constructive to do. They cited lack of access to sporting equipment due to expense, disrepair of sporting fields, and lack of a space to meet and gather. They also cited a need for musical instruments and a place to practice, and also painting materials to practice their art.

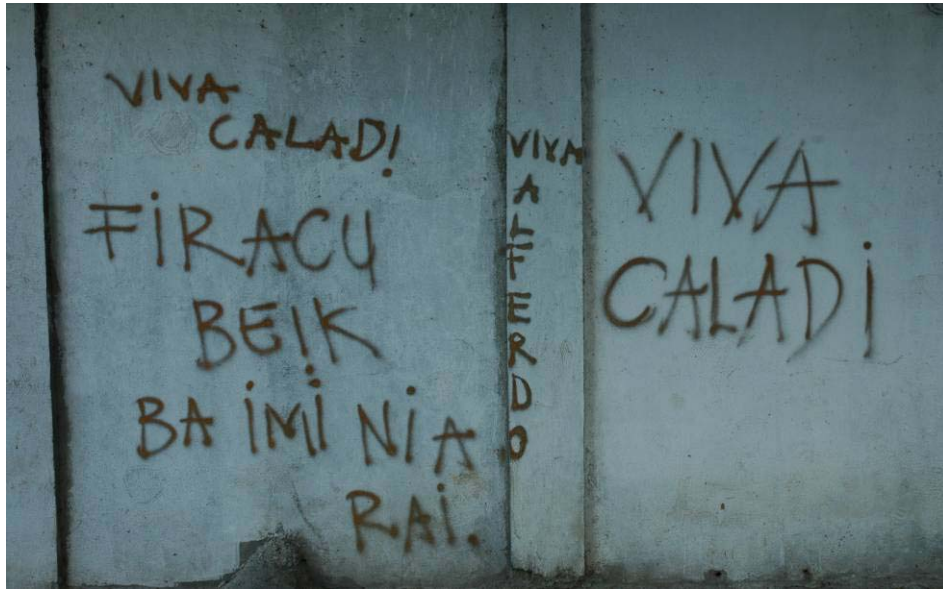
**ANNEX 05**

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ANNEX 06

PHOTOGRAPHS



**Figure 1**  
Racist graffiti near Kampung Alor: "Long Live Westerners; Stupid Easterners go back to your land"



**Figure 2**  
Racist graffiti in Bairropite. Note the interchangeability of 'Irak', to denote Alkatiri's Arab heritage, with 'Firaku'.



**Figure 3**  
Wreckage of Eastern owned fuel transport business, Kampung Alor



**Figure 4**  
Remains of once densely crowded Taibesse market





**Figure 5**  
Weapons handed in by PSHT as part of amnesty. Note the PSHT insignia on the rifle second from foreground  
Photo courtesy of Candido Alves, TILPA



**Figure 6**  
12-12 member



**Figure 7**  
'Seven-Seven' Member



**Figure 8**  
Seven Graffiti, Vila Verde



**Figure 9**  
Colimau 2000, Matadouro 27/7/06



**Figure 10:**  
Colimau 2000, Matadouro 27/7/06



**Figure 11:**  
Slebor Group, Kampung Alor



**Figure 12**  
Slebor graffiti, Kampung Alor near Dili Mosque



**Figure 13:**  
El Diablo Group, Bairopite



**Figure 14:**  
El Diablo House, Bairopite, next to Heliport



**Figure 15:**  
Green Vila, Vila Verde



**Figure 16:**  
Green Vila graffiti, Vila Verde, opposite the Cathedral



**Figure 17:**  
Jopal (Joventude Palapaso)



**Figure 18:**  
Jopal Graffiti, Farol area (Name has changed from Remajo, in Indonesian, to Joventude, Tetum)



**Figure 19:**  
Burado Group, Ailok Laran, Bairopite



**Figure 20:**  
Burado women's group that supports poor people by gathering community donations and cooking for their funeral ceremonies, Ailok Laran, Bairopite





**Figure 21:**  
Burado Youth Centre, Ailok Laran, Bairopite



**Figure 22:**  
PLUR: 'Peace, Love, Unity and Respect', Bairopite



**Figure 23:**  
PLUR graffiti, Bairopite



**Figure 24:**  
'Fudido' Group, Bairopite



**Figure 25:**  
Joao Becora and Choque Group, Becora



**Figure 26:**  
Saint Tarsisio Church Youth Group, Dili Cathedral, Vila Verde



**Figure 26:**  
'United Gembel' Group, Farol



**Figure 27**  
'Macarena' Group, Bebora