



INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE
CHILDREN AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT UNIT

EMERGENCY EDUCATION IN EAST TIMOR

LESSONS LEARNED



NOVEMBER 1999- JUNE 2000

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I. OVERVIEW

Project Summary

In September 1999 the children and youth of East Timor saw their entire world torn apart. As retribution for a referendum in which citizens voted for independence from Indonesia, significant numbers of civilians were killed, homes were looted and burned, and 80-90% of the population was displaced to the mountains or other parts of the island. This occurred in a region where low-intensity conflict had persisted since the Indonesian occupation in 1975, instilling long-term psychosocial damage in the general population. During these events the exodus of Indonesian teachers, the removal of books and learning materials, and the destruction of buildings decimated the school system. Although primary schooling has been re-established and is reaching a large number of children, there are few educational opportunities available to adolescents or youth.

Established in November 1999 as the East Timorese were returning home, the International Rescue Committee-East Timor began as a small pilot project supported by a private foundation. The central question throughout the project was, “*How can IRC enhance repatriating communities’ capacities to take leadership in the education of their children and youth?*” Based in the Oecusse enclave, a district separated from the remainder of East Timor and surrounded by Indonesia, the project focused on establishing an emergency non-formal education program to meet the immediate needs of children and youth. It is estimated that **3,000 children and youth** were reached, both through direct structured activities and indirect means, such as material distribution.



The Oecusse Children’s Center during Parent’s Meeting

Although the project was initiated as an *emergency* intervention, the reality of repatriating East Timorese populations demanded that activities focus on *community revitalization and sustainability*. As expected, most people faced with returning to communities in a post-conflict setting are preoccupied with re-establishing community structures and networks. Understandably, when the East Timorese came back to their homes after an absence of a few months, education took a backseat to fulfilling the more immediate needs. In an effort to put it back on the agenda, the IRC education program focused on targeting existing group interests –based in schools and the

community- to encouraged a local response to the educational needs of children and adolescents. With a UN transitional government (UNTAET) in place, the future of East Timor was comparatively secure with emergency needs centered on developing local leadership capacity.

One of the project’s major achievements was the mobilization of the local community resources- both human and material- to increase available education opportunities. Through a participatory planning process, the education activities were community defined and developed. Local

institutions that existed prior to the conflict led each initiative undertaken. Some of these initiatives included: a children's center organized and staffed by the young women's group 'Grupo Feto FoinSae Enclave Timor', organized sports activities arranged by the youth group network *Juventude Lorico Lifau*, teacher trainings overseen by the Oecusse district education committee; and curriculum development for youth study groups designed by six Dili-based student organizations with networks throughout the country.



Youth Study Circle in Oecusse

While a number of achievements were realized by the project, it also encountered challenges that hindered project implementation. Most pronounced were

logistical complications due to the destruction of infrastructure, delays in the shipping of materials, and limited available transport to the isolated Oecusse enclave. In addition, although communities saw education as vital, the necessity to organize for food and shelter impeded a family's capacity to invest in other activities. The international community was limited in resources to address this issue as well. Nonetheless, an effective initiative was the World Food Program school feeding program, which provided schoolchildren with a noontime meal of rice and oil at school. As a result, school attendance increased since parents benefited economically from the free meal.

In spite of difficulties, IRC created an emergency education project that reached an estimated 6,000 children and youth and established lasting relationships with local groups. Support for one year of on-going work in Oecusse has been secured through UNICEF's Child Friendly Space program. In addition, projects currently in process include, the renovation of several buildings for the use of children's, youth, and women's activities. Collaboration with IRC's sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) program to work specifically with women's and girl's issues. In addition, outreach to schools and communities throughout the enclave will continue, allowing support for teacher training and community organizing around children and youth needs.

Support for other program directions such as the community-based youth study circles has been gained through AusAid's community assistance scheme. In response to assessments conducted in Oecusse, which identified the education needs of young people, groups in Dili with the aim of implementation throughout the country have developed the project. The program will extend for another two months, allowing for the printing of a resource book, the conducting of additional trainings in three more districts, and assisting local partners in creating education plans. Further support is being sought to continue resource development for this adolescent age group.

Results Framework

GOAL: To establish an emergency non-formal education program in the Oecusse district of Timor LoroSae to meet the immediate educational needs of children and youth.

BENEFICIARIES: 3,000 East Timorese children and youth

LOCATION: The Oecusse Enclave of East Timor, with coordination and support occurring in the capital of Dili

DURATION: November 15, 1999- May 15, 2000. Program extended through June 30, 2000.

BUDGET: US\$95,000

OBJECTIVE 1 To support the organization of community-based structured activities for children and youth that enhance formal school efforts

ACTIVITY 1.1 Facilitate the establishment of the Oecusse Children’s Center managed by the local young women’s group, which offers daily psychosocial activities for pre-school age children, i.e. recreation, music, art, health care.

INDICATOR 400 pre-primary children at daily or weekly structured classes. 12 youth workers, 6 teachers lead activities.

ACTIVITY 1.2 Organize non-formal education study circles for adolescents and young adults.

INDICATOR 100 youth leaders participate in bi-weekly non-formal education study circles.

ACTIVITY 1.3 Assist in establishing sports activities for children and youth throughout the Oecusse district through aiding leadership of the local youth group.

INDICATOR 2,500 primary children and youth participate in sports activities.

ACTIVITY 1.4 Explore youths’ education, skills training, and community activity needs with the aim of future programming.

INDICATOR Assessment compiled, proposal developed, and future funding secured.

OUTCOME

Structures for community-based children’s and youth activities organized through local groups, with plans for future programming support secured.

OBJECTIVE 2 To empower local populations by building teacher and youth capacities for work with children and communities

ACTIVITY 2.1 Through a local NGO partnership, train local project team to manage day-to-day program implementation.

INDICATOR 15 staff trained to run early childhood program. 10 youth leaders trained in sports management. 30 youth leaders trained in study circle facilitation. Accompanying training curriculum prepared.

ACTIVITY 2.2 Develop curriculum materials for non-formal education study circle program for youth covering topics such as conflict resolution, Timorese culture, and gender.

INDICATOR Study Circle Guidebook drafted with 18 lesson plans and resource materials prepared.

ACTIVITY 2.3 Plan and develop materials for teacher training workshop series in collaboration with Oecusse District Education Committee.

INDICATOR Curriculum prepared for ten-day teacher training course. Ready for teachers at open of school year.

ACTIVITY 2.4 Provide technical assistance to youth groups in applying for and securing funds to support their community service and leadership efforts.

INDICATOR 3 grant proposals prepared with local youth groups and funded through UNTAET and UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) QIPs.

OUTCOME

Increased capacity among local populations to plan and lead quality structured child and youth activities.

<p>OBJECTIVE 3 To evidence direct support for Timorese communities through providing education supplies and maintaining on-site staff presence in the Oecusse district</p>

ACTIVITY 3.1 Procure and distribute education supplies and other materials necessary for program implementation.

INDICATOR US\$8,500 worth of education and recreation materials purchased and distributed. Assistance was given in the distribution of approximately US\$3,000 of additional supplies provided by UNICEF.

ACTIVITY 3.2 Establish an Oecusse-based IRC office and identify and hire local support staff, i.e. driver, translator.

INDICATOR IRC Oecusse field office operational with part-time presence of education staff.

ACTIVITY 3.3 Provide transportation assistance to local groups in their efforts to support schools or develop programs for children and youth.

INDICATOR 25 meetings facilitated for local groups through use of IRC education vehicle.

OUTCOME

Material aid and physical presence offers community visible project outcomes and on-going support.

Timeline

November 15-31	December	January
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation • Site selection begins • Proposal development for Psychosocial Consortium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site selection complete • Local staff hired and oriented • First materials order placed • Psychosocial proposal continues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oecusse field office established • Community consulted re: project • Expatriate coordinator absent due to Dengue Fever
February	March	April
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal assessment of education and youth needs • Joint planning for interventions • Arrival of first project materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oecusse Children’s Center open • Sports activities by partner group • Teacher training developed • Collaboration on QIPs proposals with local groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships for study circle curriculum development • Support for UNTAET in distribution of education materials • Proposal development for Oecusse Child Friendly Space
May	June	July 1-15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft study circle resource guide • Training for study circle facilitators • Close first project phase in Oecusse • Proposal development for youth study circle project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document project lessons learned • Staff member attends IRC children’s unit workshop in Kenya 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orient incoming expatriate and local staff to program

Achievements

- Impacts of project reach approximately 400 pre-primary children, 2,500 primary children and youth, and 100 youth leaders
- Provision of sports and learning materials to school and community groups in 25 villages
- Training for teachers and youth volunteers to lead pre-primary education and recreational activities and resource materials development
- Support of the formal education system through developing materials and plans for a district-based teacher training program
- Development of a set of non-formal education curriculums addressing the psychosocial learning needs of youth, i.e. human rights, conflict resolution, reconciliation, gender issues, culture
- Promotion of responsible community decision-making through strategic planning workshops and funding development for youth groups
- Contributions to the establishment of a district-based field office
- Funding secured for project continuation in Oecusse (UNICEF) and for community-based youth study circles (AusAid)

II. BACKGROUND

The Pilot Project

In early 1999, the IRC began an effort, supported by a private foundation, to strengthen its emergency educational response capacity to crisis situations around the world. In the scope of IRC's mission to provide for the needs of refugees, internally displaced persons and repatriating populations, education had been identified as a priority intervention. Traditionally, education was not a major component of IRC's programs, nor had it been for most refugee assistance agencies. Although a child's right to an education is internationally recognized by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, not until October 1997 did the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) announce that "only a quarter of UNHCR-assisted minors, 6-17 years of age, attend school, and boys outnumber girls two to one (*Evaluation of UNHCR's Efforts on Behalf of Children and Adolescent*)." Including education to its emergency response capabilities, IRC intends to improve these statistics by providing children with greater opportunities.

To this end, Banyan Tree has supported the development of an "education technical unit." In order to increase the organization's expertise, several emergency education pilot projects were planned which would allow the agency to design, implement and evaluate interventions in a refugee, IDP, or repatriation situation. Following a program pattern including deployment of an education specialist, selection of experienced local leadership staff, and organization of a context-appropriate set of education and recreation activities, specific program objectives and activities rely on the needs of the identified constituent populations. The locations selected for these projects largely are dependent on global politics, armed conflicts, and refugee movements occurring throughout the year.

The first of these projects has been implemented in the Oecusse enclave of East Timor, with materials development and coordination aspects taking place in the capital city of Dili. The purpose of the program was to establish an emergency non-formal education program that met the immediate educational needs of children and youth. The project specifically explored means of mobilizing local resources within schools, youth organizations, and other community groups to increase available education and recreation opportunities. Through an emphasis on a participatory planning process, it was expected that the activities would evolve over time and as such would have the potential of sustaining beyond the IRC project period. As East Timor is dealing with a repatriation situation, it was also important to lay a strong foundation for longer-term, sustainable programs. The central question which shaped project direction was, "***how can IRC enhance repatriating communities' capacities to take leadership in the education of their children and youth?***"

East Timor's Context

Timor is a small island north of Australia that became a Portuguese colony in the 16th century. During the 1700's the Dutch took over the western half of the island while the Portuguese maintained their hold over both the east and a small enclave in the west where their explorers had originally landed.



While the Dutch regions became part of Indonesia in 1947, the Portuguese did not grant independence to their territory until 1975. Indonesia invaded that same year and subsequently annexed East Timor. One third of the population, an estimated 200,000, died in the following years, either by the Indonesian military or due to famine and starvation. Since then, systematic oppression by the Indonesian government has forced the people to live in a climate of fear and intolerance.

East Timorese independence movements - using both armed and non-violent means - have engaged in a struggle for self-determination during the intervening years. After the fall of Suharto, the long-time ruler of Indonesia, their efforts gained momentum. In 1999 the new president of Indonesia, B.J. Habibie, agreed to a UN administered popular-consultation granting a choice between greater autonomy and complete independence. The August 30th referendum, in which 78% voted for independence, was followed by an organized campaign of terror and violence conducted by East Timorese militia and supported by the Indonesian military. It produced tremendous upheaval, physical devastation and psychosocial distress to the population. People experienced widespread attacks, forced displacement, and loss of homes, businesses, and means of agricultural production.

Many East Timorese, having either experienced or witnessed massive atrocities, have had difficulty coping with the impacts of the conflict. Children and young people throughout the country continue to suffer long-term impacts as their schooling has been impeded by a lack of teachers, books, and even buildings. The lack of community activities has hindered the healing process, with lasting consequences for children's and young people's development and well-being.

Education in East Timor

The national education system was fairly strong under the Indonesians. In the 25 years after the Portuguese left, the number of East Timorese school-age children attending primary schools increased from 25% to 75%. It is estimated that every village had a primary school by 1985. At the time of the ballot, there were about 1,000 schools in East Timor, with a total of approximately 200,000 students (*Arenas, Alberto, "Education and Nationalism in East Timor", Social Justice, Vol. 25, No. 2, pg 131*). Although this afforded people more opportunities and set a strong precedent for education, the curriculum was designed partly to indoctrinate pupils to the cause of "one Indonesia" and was considered oppressive by many Timorese. The violence after the vote impacted the education system through the destruction of school buildings, the burning of textbooks and furniture, and the loss of teachers, many which were Indonesians returning home.

Primary education, serving children 6-12 years, opened again in late November, with classes conducted in teacher's homes, churches, recently erected shelters, and in the open air. An emergency strategy was devised by UN agencies in order to reopen schools and encourage attendance, and if nothing else to keep school age children away from the streets. Incentives included WFP's school feeding initiative, UNICEF's re-roofing program, and the payment of salaries for primary school teachers. These measures were highly successful, as statistics collected by UNTAET in June 2000 show 90% of students returned to school despite difficult conditions. The subjects initially taught were predominantly Tetum and Portuguese, with a few select locations teaching arithmetic, religion, or English. All lesson content was taught from memory, as there was no available curriculum. It is not expected that an East Timorese standard curriculum will be fully developed for another several years.

A national survey carried out by UNTAET in December 1999 found that out of 10,693 persons working as teachers prior to the consultation, only 5,537 were Timorese nationals. Prior to September 1999, only 365 Timorese teachers were qualified to teach above primary school level. As the conflict forced many Indonesian teachers home, there has been a shortage of certified teachers at the primary school level and a virtual absence of qualified secondary school teachers. The teaching community is comprised of those who had taught under the Indonesian system, a few who had taught under the Portuguese, and primary and secondary school graduates who are interested in teaching. UNICEF took on the responsibility of teacher salaries and materials distribution during the emergency phase. UNTAET took over administration of schools in March. Although schools have been running throughout this year, the “official” opening will be in October 2000.

The issue of language is an extremely controversial issue with far reaching impact on the future of East Timor and the present education system. Any work done in the formal sector needed to be extremely sensitive to the language issue. Tetum, the indigenous lingua franca of East Timor, is not considered developed enough to communicate complicated or technical concepts. The absence of curriculum materials led to questions regarding the use of Indonesian texts, importation of Portuguese materials, and/or the development of an East Timorese curriculum. While the older generation advocates Portuguese as the language of instruction, younger people educated under the Indonesians believe that either Bahasa Indonesia or English should be the medium. According to CNRT, the plan for schools is to teach in Bahasa Indonesia for a transitional period of three to five years. During this time Portuguese will be phased in as the language used in the classroom.

Youth in East Timor

While primary schools have begun through the support of UNICEF, young people over the age of twelve have had little to look forward to or occupy their time. Community activities for youth in the past had been quite extensive. These ranged from church groups to sports teams, musical choirs to agricultural cooperatives, and small credit unions to vocational apprenticeships. The Indonesian government had sponsored youth groups in many villages, however, young people seemed rather disdainful of the program and rather spoke of their involvement in the clandestine movement.



Youth at IRC Training for Study Circle Facilitators

Although young people had a role in the struggle for independence from the movement’s early days, their level of leadership increased in the several years leading up to the referendum. A great number of youth and student groups sprung up as a result of the fall of Suharto and the subsequent demonstrations. These groups built networks throughout East Timor and within Indonesia itself. They organized protests, raised international awareness, and were instrumental in the voter education campaign surrounding the vote. With the success of their cause, youth groups are now reorganizing and searching for purpose.

They continue to have strong networks, however they have few material resources and generally lack a strong plan for activities focused on community development.

III. METHODOLOGY

Emergency Education

“Usually education is perceived as a development initiative. Thus it is often excluded from the emergency preparedness response.” However, recent interventions are perceived more and more as coherent responses that serve two purposes. They are on the one hand responses to the humanitarian and psychosocial needs of refugee children and on the other hand, contributions to the future economic and human resource development of countries in crisis.”

- Pilar Aguilar, UNHCR, “Rapid Educational Response”, Geneva, 1998.

IRC is a pioneer in the field of children’s care and protection in humanitarian crises, with two decades of experience implementing innovative and effective programs for the psychosocial needs and protection of children affected by armed conflict. In recent years IRC’s programs have demonstrated the swift, restorative effect of emergency education and recreation for refugee children. Research has shown that trauma recovery and normalization will be a less prolonged process if structured activities are set in place immediately after a conflict.

The organization of emergency education— including normalizing activities such as sports and recreation— has repeatedly shown to help children overcome the trauma of mass violence and displacement. It provides caring adult supervision, predictability, safety, and an opportunity to restore trust. Appealing to families and their children to find resources within their communities to meet the care and protection needs of its most vulnerable members can engage the community in maintaining its strengths and inner resources in the midst of a crisis. Although the most

WHY EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES?

- Fosters a sense of normalcy, restores hope
- Serves an important protection role
- Provides critical care for vulnerable populations
- Contributes to psychological and social well-being
- Contributes to continued social and cognitive development
- Effective vehicle from relief to development
- Is a right

(“Restoring the Right: IRC Education Efforts”, Children Affected by Armed Conflict Conference, Kenya, June 2000)

severely traumatized children may need more intensive counseling, many children recover remarkably well if their basic survival needs are met and they have the social support and intellectual and physical stimulation that an education program can provide.

From the perspective of international law, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) stipulates the right of children to an education, and to benefit from immediate care and protection. Article 28 states, “state parties recognize the child’s right to education. The goal is free and compulsory primary education, secondary education available to all, and higher education on the basis of capacity.”

Emergency education programs can play a critical role in care for vulnerable populations such as girls or the disabled. Services should be designed to meet special needs of these groups. Access to education

may serve a protection role, both in terms of raising awareness regarding individual rights, and by setting checks and balances against guardians' care. In the longer term, lessons learned in school can promote peaceful mechanisms for dealing with conflict.

The Program Model

IRC broadly defines its emergency education initiatives allowing for a flexible response to the needs of the local context. Programs may fall within the categories of formal education, non-formal education, and capacity building by school administrations or local groups. With emergency education programs in 14 countries, several examples evidence the achievements of the program. In Albania in 1999, IRC's program for emergency non-formal education reached approximately 12,000 Kosovar children within two months, including 700 adolescents who served as youth workers or had other leadership roles. Since 1997, IRC has provided non-formal education and psychosocial support to 3,500 children in Liberia, where they have been exposed to particularly atrocious violence. In Pakistan, the female education program has been operating since 1991 and in 2000 supports 30 schools enrolling 17,500 students.

The range of program interventions undertaken by an emergency education program might include any of the following.

- 1) Identification and rapid training of teachers or community volunteers to lead non-formal education classes and recreational activities;
- 2) Development of provisional curricula addressing the psychosocial and learning needs of children and youth;
- 3) Provision of instructional and learning materials to students, teachers, and community-based groups;
- 4) Promotion of responsible community decision-making in accessing educational opportunities through youth groups, parent-teacher associations, and community education committees;
- 5) Re-establishment and support of the formal education system and student's access to it as quickly as possible.

Regardless of the actual intervention, a core set of beliefs guides program implementation. IRC believes that emergency education for children in crisis should be a *rapid* response, have a *psychosocial* emphasis, include *adolescents* in leadership roles, and encourage *community* ownership. Non-formal education is seen as an effective mechanism to deliver these aims because it can be implemented independently of a state's initiative. The program model used by IRC to guide project implementation is more a set of characteristics than a standard set of program components.

CHARACTERISTICS OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

- Flexible curriculum/ location
- Rapidly organized in emergencies
- Teacher training component
- Strong adolescent participation
- Adapted to learner's needs
- Linked to permanent schooling when possible

("Restoring the Right: IRC Education Efforts", Children Affected by Armed Conflict Conference, Kenya, June 2000)

Applying the model

In East Timor there was no operational government or active transitional administration in the first months following the referendum. It was initially believed that schools would be slow to open, leaving children without structured activities. IRC's plan was to enter in and manage a non-formal education program focused on activities such as sports, art, music, and recreation. The project would reach several thousand children with two to four hours a day of structured activities, and involve adolescents in directly leading groups of children. The curriculum would be designed on a weekly basis by teams of teachers and youth workers. IRC would take special responsibility for training those caring for children, paying staff a small monetary incentive, and procuring the education and recreation materials. As schools would begin to open their doors again, the program would either phase out or continue to provide supplementary activities linked to the schools.

The project was originally planned around this model and based on a set of assumptions drawn from prior experiences in emergency education and knowledge about the existing situation in East Timor. While some of these assumptions were useful in guiding program direction, others did not conform to the reality.

1) Communities will have difficulty quickly establishing educational activities.

Communities took surprising initiative in opening schools, with most starting instruction within 1-2 months of returning. Although some teachers were not qualified and none were initially paid, classes for primary school ages were taught in homes or under trees for several hours a day. Most of the courses at this early stage involved language study of Tetum, Portuguese, or English and were taught from memory, as there were no available resource books. Part of the reason for this rapid community-led response was the fact that the East Timorese were a repatriating rather than a refugee population. They were returning home to people and places that they knew and were able, at least partially, to fall back into pre-existing systems. Also, they quickly realized that the success of their children in an independent East Timor would partially rely on developing new language abilities, as Bahasa Indonesia, the language of instruction during Indonesian rule, would no longer be used.

2) Children will be one of the most vulnerable population groups, with few of their psychosocial needs being met.

While children did have obvious needs in coping with the violence they had witnessed and their changing communities, the prompt opening of schools meant that those aged 6- 12 years did have some support and structured activities to occupy their day. While children's psychosocial care could have been improved, this was not seen by local education officials as a priority need compared to reconstruction of schools, distribution of education materials, and organization of teacher's salaries (via UNICEF). As a result of discussions with teachers and community members, it became apparent that immediate needs among the adolescent and youth populations were especially great, as they had no available schooling, few employment opportunities, and little forum in which to discuss the events and violence witnessed in the past years.

3) IRC will have the capacity to rapidly deliver large amounts of educational materials for the project.

While rapid delivery of relief items is a major objective of IRC's emergency response programs, the logistical hurdles faced in East Timor's context greatly hindered its performance. First, the logistics cell was stationed in Darwin since access through Indonesia was near impossible. Darwin, a small outback city, did not have at hand all the equipment needed for the magnitude of the humanitarian response directed at East Timor. This necessitated large lead times for shipping both to Darwin and then to Dili. Transport to the Oecusse enclave then provided its own challenges, adding up to several weeks to delivery time. In addition, the capacity of logistics was small compared to other IRC programs. Little direct support for the unit was built into the budget. This meant that other programs within the IRC structure that were paying for procurement took precedence. The unfortunate result of these difficulties was delivery of program materials three months into the project period.

4) Projects can proceed with the support and participation of the local community.

While this assumption did prove true, achieving appropriate community involvement inherently meant a high degree of consultation. This is a timely process within already established communities such as those found in a repatriation situation. In East Timor's fairly hierarchical societal structure, the involvement of certain community leaders is key to project success. When these individuals are absent, as was the case with the district education officer for three weeks early in the project period, little progress in planning or implementation can be achieved. However, this absence provided an opportunity to liaise with other leaders and community groups, garnering support and taking the project in new directions.

5) Projects can be coordinated with UN, NGO, and church efforts to eliminate overlaps or conflicts.

The majority of the coordination between these parties occurred in the field. Early on there were coordination meetings organized by UNICEF for education and psychosocial programs. Unfortunately, few groups were attending and the momentum of these meetings waned within the first few months after the emergency. Later, coordination efforts were begun again by UNTAET. In general, there were so few organizations focusing on children and youth issues in East Timor that there was little danger of overlap.

Out of necessity rather than certainty, two additional assumptions were made. If they did not both prove to be true there would be major difficulties in project implementation. In the end, the first of these assumptions was realized while problems with the second hindered the project.

6) East Timor will remain stable.

In the absence of a minimally stable society, it is extremely difficult to deliver an emergency education program of any quality or quantity. To the credit of the East Timorese people and the international peacekeeping forces, the past six months have been witness to some of the more peaceful days of East Timor's turbulent history. Other than small pockets of social unrest- primarily within the youth population of Dili- the program has had a secure environment in which to operate.

7) Implementation could proceed through the project period and not be hampered by weather conditions or illness of staff.

This assumption, unfortunately, did not prove true. The project period fell over the rainy season. Within the district where activities were held, access to a number of major villages necessitated river crossings. After trying these crossings several times over a period of a few weeks and being unable to pass (once nearly losing a vehicle), it was decided to concentrate programming within the district capital. In addition, one and a half months into the project, the expatriate coordinator contracted Dengue Fever. She was sent to Darwin for recovery and was away from the field for nearly a month during this crucial establishment period.

After completing the assessment phase of the project, an additional operating assumption was added that was key to program direction and central in shaping the proposals designed for future funding.

8) *Capacity for project implementation can be built via partnerships with local organizations*

When first visiting the communities in which the project was planning to work, a number of local organizations came forward and shared program ideas. The strongest were several youth groups that had already spoken to their neighbors and subsequently joined IRC as it visited surrounding communities for assessment. At their request, IRC assisted the groups in thinking through their different ideas and planning for actual implementation. It was then decided that rather than IRC solely beginning its own projects, it would work through several of these local organizations in the programs where their aims coincided with our own in terms of efforts to assist children and youth. Both of the proposals prepared for project continuation contain this partnership with local partners as a central assumption.

Lessons Learned: Emergency education best operates under a set of guiding principles while allowing room for the design of context appropriate interventions.

Constraints

The program encountered a number of constraints solely by virtue of its location in an emergency setting. In terms of logistics, destroyed infrastructure and relatively isolated geography hampered materials delivery. Even without these challenges, the logistics cell was short in capacity and overloaded by other sectors in need of supplies. Transport of personnel to and from the project site was difficult due to the impossibility of land travel. Chaos reigned in the office and living environments, with several location shifts, shortage of supplies of all kinds, and the frequent lack of electrical power. Qualified personnel were difficult to identify, leaving the project understaffed for much of its duration. Finally, within a repatriation environment, local people were only able to make limited commitments as they were faced with many responsibilities in terms of day-to-day survival.

Project composition and strategies of implementation provided their own challenges. The budget available for the emergency education program was relatively small compared to the needs

evident in targeted communities. Little was budgeted for education and recreation materials, which was one of the greatest needs in the early months of the program. In addition, working through local groups to design programs resulted in a number of small initiatives to address needs. This was challenging at times as each part needed to fall within project objectives and maintain connection to each other. Moreover, relying on partner organizations for the majority of implementation limited IRC's ability to monitor and control the quality of the programs.

IV. PREPAREDNESS

Pre-departure orientation

Prior to arriving in East Timor, the education coordinator spent several days at IRC's New York headquarters for orientation and meetings with the education arm of the Children's Technical Unit. This time included the standard IRC orientation of meetings with human resources, the emergency response unit, and other technical units. In addition, an afternoon was spent with the Education Technical Advisor working through objectives of the pilot project and discussing relevant questions to be explored. A volunteer for the unit had compiled an extensive notebook of background articles and internet sites which provided an overview of East Timor's history, issues leading to the conflict, and analysis of the current situation. This proved an invaluable resource during the project's first months while the expatriate staff members were still orienting themselves to the context. Also, a laptop computer was collected in New York and transported to the field.

Lessons Learned: An in-person orientation at headquarters is essential in providing a global understanding of IRC's programs and the context for emergency education.

Organizational Readiness

IRC began working in Indonesia in early 1999, when it undertook a needs assessment of various displaced populations in Indonesia affected by the mounting political crisis in East Timor and across the archipelago. In June 1999, IRC employed an Emergency Coordinator followed by three staff members in Indonesia. In the aftermath of the violence inspired by the referendum, this team transferred their operation to East Timor itself. Early on, the need for children's programs was recognized and answered with a tracing project for separated and unaccompanied minors and the emergency education pilot project supported by Banyan Tree. Both were established in November of that same year.

IRC-East Timor had actually been in country for less than one month upon commencement of the emergency education project. Given this fact and the difficulties inherent in establishing an office amidst the literally smoldering ruins, it would have been unlikely that the organization could have been more prepared than it was. Core organizational services were in place as best as they could be given the circumstances. Specific preparations useful to project start-up included the procurement of a vehicle, computer, and start-up materials used in the assessment process.

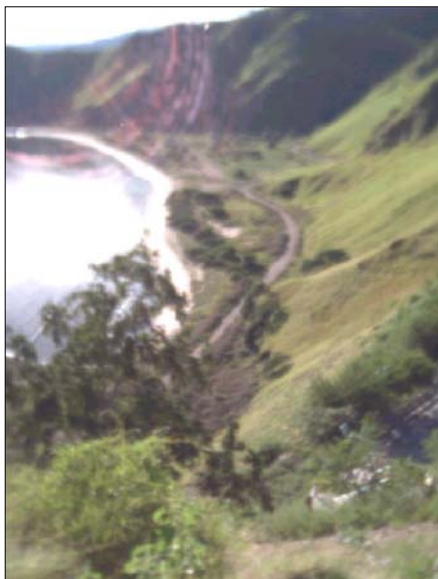
Prior to the arrival of the education coordinator, a children’s unit assessment team from IRC headquarters visited East Timor. While this group’s time in East Timor focused on more than the education project, it did consider the pilot’s initial implementation and looked at location possibilities. A potential project site was visited with contacts made both at that site and the central level. Although pieces of information were communicated verbally to the in-coming coordinator, neither a report nor contact lists were ever submitted. More complete information, regarding this assessment visit, preferably written, would have been useful during the early program days.

Lesson Learned: Procurement of capital goods and a small amount of program materials prior to staff will arrival greatly speed assessment and implementation.

Site Selection

The first step of project start-up centered on site selection and gathering of contextual information related to the education status of children and youth in East Timor. The process involved three field visits averaging two days each to diverse sites around the island. General information such as accessibility, community conditions and current children’s activities were examined. Upon arrival to each of the districts, contacts with key community leaders representing the church or CNRT were made, as well as a request for accompanied visits to surrounding villages. Upon completion of the discussions with village leaders, a conversation took place with the children. As it was not culturally appropriate during the short visit to take a group of children aside, the conversations were either held within the larger community group or informally via translators while walking through the village.

- SITE SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS**
- Impact of conflict in district
 - Condition of infrastructure
 - Location and accessibility
 - Operational schools
 - Community-initiated groups and activities
 - International NGO presence
 - Existing organizational field office
 - Number of potential beneficiaries



Bobonaro, a mountainous region along the border with West Timor was the first site visited. Many of the communities had already begun their own schools. Due to its terrain the area had sustained less infrastructure damage than other areas of East Timor. The next site assessed was Los Palos, on the eastern tip of the island. Another NGO, Concern International, was found to be already actively distributing education materials to the schools in that district. The final destination was Oecusse, an East Timorese enclave surrounded by Indonesian West Timor. Due to its geographic isolation, impediments to communication, and difficulties in accessing markets, Oecusse was selected as the project site. It was recognized that this location would have special logistical challenges, as it is an enclave

surrounded by a hostile Indonesia and to date is only accessible from Dili by helicopter or barge.

The methods used in collecting contextual information included discussions with key informants, direct field observation, group interviews and investigation of existing secondary materials. Interviews were held with individuals serving in key leadership roles both at the national and local levels. These discussions were essential in gathering information to guide education interventions. UNICEF, UNHCR, Save the Children, Christian Children's Fund, Concern, Oxfam, Jesuit Refugee Service, Peace Winds Japan, CNRT and key leaders in the church were all consulted.

Lesson Learned: The advantages of taking time to select the most appropriate and/or needy site for project implementation outweigh a limited time loss in start-up.

SITE PROFILE: THE OECUSSE ENCLAVE

Surrounded on all sides by Indonesia and secured by international forces a month later than the rest of the country, nowhere were the impacts of the conflict greater felt than in the Oecusse enclave. The district is isolated from the remainder of East Timor and is located on the northwest coast of the island of Timor. It is bordered on the north by the coast and in the east, west, and south by the Indonesian province of West Timor and possesses approximately 50 kilometers of coastline with a land border of roughly 95 kilometers.

The terrain is largely composed of a coastal plain of varying width with continuously increasing elevation toward interior mountains. The mountain ranges significantly restrict road movement within the district. Externally, access and logistics to this area from East Timor have always been difficult, but since the referendum they have become nearly impossible. There is currently no land bridge and sea transport is infrequent, leaving helicopter lifts as the only mode of movement in and out of the district. Passage over the border to and from West Timor has not been possible since independence.

It is estimated that at the time of the referendum, the population of the enclave was between 54,000 to 57,000. Nearly all the population took refuge in the mountains or in West Timor as a result of the violence in September. They slowly began to return in November and December with population figures six months later standing at approximately 47,000. There is consensus that the majority of remaining refugees are unlikely to return in the short-term due to their security concerns, poor economic and social conditions, and the lack of proper infrastructure.

The difficulties faced in Oecusse in terms of access, logistics and communications support impinge on the capacity of the local population to rebuild. The small international aid community is hindered as well in their efforts to effectively serve the district. Communication and transportation restrictions leave rural areas virtually isolated, with the widespread destruction of schools, facilities and classroom materials impossible to repair without outside assistance. The lack of electrical power, limited water supply, difficulties of telecommunications, and absence of government institutions have impeded the process of recovery. Economic life has been severely disrupted, with market activity initially at a standstill and now occurring only in a limited way.

As is the case throughout East Timor, in the Oecusse enclave the education infrastructure was devastated as a result of the recent conflict. A baseline survey conducted by the United Nations Transitional Authority in

East Timor (UNTAET) states that out of the 99 school buildings surveyed, only two were classified as “not much damaged”. 84 school buildings are classified as having sustained a degree of destruction of more than 30%. All furniture such as desks, chairs, blackboards, etc. were either burned or looted leaving the schools as empty shells. School supplies were stolen as well, leaving no textbooks or other teaching aids.

There were 6,879 children registered at 49 school locations as of January, approximately half of those are of school-going age in the district. The majority of these children are primary school age up to twelve or thirteen, although there are a few villages where youth up to twenty years old are attending. When questioned about attendance, the top reasons given for not going to school were the need to work in the fields or lack of school supplies. There are no reliable figures on literacy among the population, however community’s estimates of illiterates ranged from one fourth to one third.

(Source: UNTAET Humanitarian Assistance and Emergency Rehabilitation Pillar, “Joint Technical Assessment Report: Oecusse District”, March 2000)

Assessment

Upon entry to the Oecusse district, a weeklong assessment of education and youth needs took place. This became more formal than originally planned as the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) requested a formal assessment for an interested donor. IRC was the main agency involved in exploring the education and youth sectors. As there had been special concerns regarding unrest and limited opportunities of adolescents and young adults, the focus was placed on the needs of this group. Education, skills training, and community activities were the areas explored.

An assessment form was prepared with key questions developed based on the survey’s main areas. Sites were selected to represent a cross-sector of the enclave’s population. Several hours were spent at each of the chosen locations. The original intention to pose questions to small focus groups and key informants was the method used at several sites; however, some communities organized large youth meetings and at others teachers were the primary informants. The interview team for the first three site visits was comprised of an IRC education staff member and interpreter. For the remaining sites, members of several Oecusse youth groups accompanied the team, contributing some of their own questions and meeting separately with the community’s youth after the survey was complete.

As a result of the Oecusse-focused assessment, the priority needs identified included the following:

- 1) **Formal Schooling:** school reconstruction, school furniture, education materials, training for teachers and teacher volunteers, curriculum development
- 2) **Skills Training:** tools and raw materials to use in production, establishment of a market mechanism with trade routes beyond Oecusse, skills training for youth in agriculture, carpentry, animal husbandry, sewing, and training in micro-enterprise
- 3) **Community Activities:** music and sports equipment; resource materials and training to use in cooperative efforts; enclave-wide organizing of youth groups;

training in community planning, leadership, and human rights; assistance with reconciliation

This district assessment was useful in getting to know the communities, understanding their needs, and planning interventions. However, due to the limited resources available to IRC for the program and political constraints tied to activities within the formal education system, only needs identified under the community activities section were initially addressed.

Lesson Learned: Involving a local organization in conducting assessments will facilitate gathering appropriate information and benefit the group by improving information access.

Joint Designed Interventions

During the assessment phase of the project, a concurrent effort took place to build relationships with local groups having a stake in education and youth issues. As the budget for the pilot project was comparatively small, identification of resources from within the local communities was necessary. Several youth groups came forward with strong interests and capacities. While numerous encounters with teachers and headmasters occurred during these first weeks after entry, the head of the district education committee (DEC) was in meetings in Dili. Without this key representative of the education sector, it was difficult to initially plan for interventions within the formal school system.

As it was important to move forward with the project with those groups present, IRC began to work with Oecusse youth groups to plan program interventions. Additionally, this collaboration began due to the expertise of the education and youth officers. Hailing from Dili, the local officer had been a leader in the student movement during the independence struggle and easily made connections with youth in Oecusse, many of whom he had known before. During his initial visit to the enclave a planning workshop was organized with the local youth groups.

Accomplishments at this meeting included identification of a building to be used as a temporary youth center, formation of a liaison team to work with the international community, and discussions regarding potential initiatives of the youth. Serving as the facilitator for this meeting, IRC began to establish a strong rapport with the participating groups.



Partner Organizations Plan Programs

The following month the youth groups requested IRC to hold a formal strategic planning and leadership workshop for their members. Twenty-five young men and women attended. Similar workshops were held later that month for groups in Dili and Baucau, a town several hours east of Dili. The agenda allowed the group to think about leadership in its various forms, review community needs, and develop specific action

plans for their interests. Follow-up to the day included support work from IRC to prepare project plans and proposal outlines. Areas of project interest identified by these local groups included a children’s center, café, literacy campaign, language course, and a sports and cultural program.

Upon the return of the chair of the DEC several weeks after IRC’s entry into Oecusse, the project staff began meeting with the committee. Their major issues were school rehabilitation and teacher payments, neither of which IRC had the capacity or mandate to work on. The shortage of education materials was also raised; to which IRC indicated it could respond in a limited way. After further discussion, the issue of teacher training was brought up with agreement that IRC would begin to work with the DEC to design and carry out a district-led teacher-training program. In the end, the training was planned and curriculum prepared; however, the DEC pulled out, most likely due to internal politics between district and central level powers. The DEC indicated their interest in working on the project again in several months.

As the lack of educational opportunities for young people became more and more apparent, discussions also occurred with a number of youth groups in Dili. Throughout East Timor, disaffection among this population group had been slowly building. One model of education used in the past years was an informal community-based learning group. These groups afforded the opportunity to young people to speak honestly about the issues facing them and their country, a luxury not available within schools. One way to begin addressing the alienation of young people was to revive a type of study circle, making it applicable to today’s reality. Rather than begin this initiative only in Oecusse where capacity was limited, IRC chose to partner with Dili-based groups to develop Tetum-language curriculum materials on a topic of their choice - the intention being a compiled curriculum for distribution to youth throughout the country, including those in Oecusse.

Lesson Learned: Participation of local groups in project planning can introduce additional strategies to use in meeting program goal and objectives.

V. IMPLEMENTATION

Key Question: “How can IRC enhance repatriating communities’ capacities to take leadership in the education of their children and youth?”

Based on local partnerships, direct implementation of the project occurred within the framework of the three objectives. While neither the goal nor objectives changed during the project period, there were shifts in a number of activities based on assessments and interactions with local groups. Two additional objectives relating to coordination and documentation had been used during implementation for reporting purposes. Within this final report, these areas are covered in the administration section.

Partnerships

In an emergency, certain actors present themselves as a resource. Actual project implementation was predicated on partnerships with some of these resources- primarily youth groups. These partnerships increased the project’s appropriateness as members blurred the lines between planners and participants. Program capacity in terms of staffing and outreach also increased.

Where partners' aims coincided with IRC's aims, the project could provide limited assistance in the form of materials or transport and multiply the outcome. In addition, working through local groups committed to long-term presence within their communities contributed to the sustainability of interventions.

During the assessment phase, many youth from communities visited had already begun to organize activities of their own. One reason for their quick formation may have been the fact that East Timor was a repatriation situation, with people returning to already-established community systems. Activities that had begun ranged from language study to religious-focused activities, and horticultural cooperatives to music groups. The majority of youth groups had typically played a role in the fight for independence. They were now attempting to redefine themselves and meet new needs, as their original aim had been achieved through the referendum. Although they lacked much in terms of material resources, there were strong networks of those who had been involved in the struggle that could be counted as major assets.

Key local groups that were found in Oecusse included the following.

- **GFFET** (Grupo Feto FoinSae Enclave Timor/Young Women's Group of the Timor Enclave) This group had been part of the women's wing of East Timor Students Solidarity Council (ETSSC), a major student group initiating dialogue throughout the country regarding independence and the popular consultation. The group in Oecusse had once contributed to UNAMET's voters' education program and at times was targeted by the Indonesian military-backed militias. The GFFET of Oecusse reorganized again in January 2000. The active members at first were around twenty people with a large number of members joining during the project period.
- **JLL** (Joventude Lorico Lifau/Youth from Lorico Lifau) Formed as an umbrella group bringing together young men active with various youth groups prior to the referendum, JLL has worked in close partnership with GFFET since that time. JLL has networks of youth in communities throughout the enclave. Members had already organized one football tournament- the Nobel Cup- in December 1999, which involved teams from villages throughout the enclave.
- **DEC** (District Education Committee) The committee is comprised of community representatives interested in education, such as select headmasters, church officials, and CNRT leaders. This group would be the equivalent of an education administration and is regularly consulted by UNTAET and other groups working with education. They currently fall under the auspices of CNRT.

Dili groups that became partners in the youth study circle program included the following.

- **FORDEM** (FORUM DEMOCRACY MAUBERE) Toward the end of 1999, some of the Timorese students that studied in several universities in Indonesia established FORDEM. Their aim is to promote people's democracy movements and Timorese indigenous culture.
- **IMPETU** (Ikatan Mahasiswa Pelajar Timor Timur Seluruh Indonesia) The Indonesian military organized IMPETU in Indonesian universities around the end of 1980s with the aim of supporting Timor's integration with Indonesia. The students later changed the group to a pro-independence movement. IMPETU

now includes a civic education program, reconciliation, and micro-economic work.

- **ETTA** (East Timor Teachers Association) Students whose studies had been interrupted became active in running high schools mainly in Dili and Baucau. They formed the ETTA to organize teachers’ training, and have started designing simple curricula. ETTA is also interested in documenting Timorese traditional stories. ETTA involves more than 300 teachers.
- **GFFTL** (Grupo Feto FoinSae Timor LoroSae) The women’s section of the ETSSC, GFFTL was organized at the beginning of October 1998 as a result of criticism against low involvement of women in political dialogues between pro- and anti-integration supporters. Now, it is involved in running a literacy campaign program in Dili, which it hopes to spread throughout Timor LoroSae through its networks.
- **CDHTL** (Commissaun Direito Humano Timor LoroSae) The group was established after the referendum by a number of young people committed to post-conflict human rights work. It is quite involved in civic education covering human rights education and has networks in different districts in Timor LoroSae. CDHTL had more than a hundred volunteers towards the end of 1999.
- **Youth Presidium** Set up a few months before the referendum, Youth Presidium acts as coordinating body for youth groups under the CNRT (National Council for Timorese Resistance). The Presidium members include the local groups: Renetil, Impetu, Objelatil, Ojetil, Sagrada Familia, and Fitun.
- **IRC Gender Department and Networks** During the first months of 2000, the IRC Gender Department has organized visits and trainings to districts together with local women’s groups like OMT, GFFTL, ETWAVE. This initiative has enabled local women to discuss the issues that they face as women in their communities.

Lessons Learned: Local organizations, when treated as assets rather than solely as beneficiaries in need, have the potential to add much to a program.

Structured Activities

OBJECTIVE 1 To support the organization of community-based structured activities for children and youth that enhance formal school efforts

PLANNED ACTIVITIES	ACTUAL ACTIVITIES
<p>1.1 Create community-based learning centers throughout the enclave, which offer daily psychosocial activities for children and youth, i.e. recreation, music, art, study circles, community planning, or skills training.</p> <p>1.2 Assist teachers and youth workers in designing simple, non-formal education curriculums based on the local languages of Baiqueno or Tetum.</p> <p>1.3 Explore youths' education, skills training, and community activity needs and opportunities with an aim of future programming.</p>	<p>1.1 Facilitate the establishment of the Oecusse Children's Center managed by the local young women's group, which offers daily psychosocial activities for pre-school age children, i.e. recreation, music, art, health care.</p> <p>1.2 Organize non-formal education study circles for adolescents and young adults.</p> <p>1.3 Assist in establishing sports activities for children and youth throughout the Oecusse district through aiding leadership of the local youth group.</p> <p>1.4 Explore youths' education, skills training, and community activity needs with an aim of future programming.</p>

A number of the planned structured activities shifted based on experience once in the field. Creation of community-based learning centers was not a high priority as schools were already open with local populations wanting support focused there. In addition, travel throughout the enclave was logistically difficult as the project took place during the rainy season. The early childhood program at Oecusse Children's Center was a need identified by a local group, benefiting populations not being served in existing structures (i.e. schools). Implemented in partnership with GFFET, through IRC's support in training and provision of supplies, the center opened in March. Since then, it has welcomed between 175-200 3-6 year old children daily. Activities included immunizations, parent's orientation, excursions to the beach, and regular activities of music, art, sport, and literacy. An outreach site to the neighboring village of Padias was added in April, with approximately 200 pre-school children attending Sunday afternoon activities. Adolescents have taken on strong leadership roles at both of these sites, as youth workers assisting teachers to plan and lead activities.

Although there was a desperate need for curriculum or basic activity outlines to guide the program, teachers and youth workers seemed to have limited capacity for its development. It was enough for them- keeping in mind other responsibilities such as rebuilding their homes and lives- to manage daily activities and plan each school week. So rather than initially focusing on curriculum, the project chose to organize structured learning opportunities for young people. Begun as a small Oecusse-based initiative, non-formal study circles on topics such as the environment, gender, and conflict resolution took place with young people on average every other week. A total of 100 youth participated in one or more of these study circles. As this program was successful with Oecusse youth, it encouraged IRC to consider developing curriculum to better guide the lessons. This was later done with youth groups in Dili where there was greater capacity for quality materials.

Sports activities can provide excellent psychosocial benefit to both children and youth who have experienced conflict. The strong interest of the local youth group in organizing sports practices, teams, and tournaments led to IRC's support through advising on structure, assisting with transport, and distributing sports materials. In order to promote the volunteer nature of participation and encourage continuation of activities after IRC's departure, IRC chose to work directly through the local group of JLL. Through the distribution of supplies, it is estimated that

approximately 2,500 children and youth have enjoyed the benefits of soccer, basket, and volleyballs, as well as nets and jump ropes. In ten villages in the sub-district near Oecusse, JLL has coordinated a more organized sports plan of practices and tournaments that target the involvement of younger children and girls, as well as encouraging the more traditional participation of young men. IRC also assisted this group in developing a Quick Impact Project (QIP) proposal for sports field rehabilitation.

Finally, as planned, the IRC education team was able to explore the East Timorese youths' education, skills training, and community activity needs with the aim of future programming. An assessment process involving schools and young people, which is described under the preparation section earlier in this report, guided this activity. Future funding was secured for project continuation in Oecusse via the UNICEF Child Friendly Space initiative and the study circle project was extended by two months through AusAid's community assistance scheme.

Lesson Learned: Repatriated communities will often take the lead in structuring activities for their children and youth; however, they may lack the material resources to do so.

Training and Technical Assistance

OBJECTIVE 2 To empower local populations by building teacher and youth capacities for work with children and communities

PLANNED ACTIVITIES	ACTUAL ACTIVITIES
2.1 Hire and train local project officer team to manage day-to-day program implementation.	2.1 Through a local NGO partnership, train local project team to manage day-to-day program implementation.
2.2 Regularly offer workshops to build skills of teachers and youth workers. Topics might include: sports, art, traditional dance, nutrition, local language literacy, child protection, conflict resolution, and others to-be-determined.	2.2 Develop curriculum materials for non-formal education study circle program for youth covering topics such as conflict resolution, Timorese culture, and gender.
2.3 Provide organizational support to youth groups, enabling greater coordination in their community service and leadership efforts.	2.3 Plan and develop materials for teacher training workshop series in collaboration with Oecusse District Education Committee
	2.4 Provide technical assistance to youth groups in applying for and securing funds to support their community service and leadership efforts.

In implementing the emergency education project, IRC chose not to directly hire project staff, but rather to train and prepare local groups with similar aims. The rationale behind this choice included the project's small budget (not paying salaries allowed for more supplies purchased) and concerns over sustainability (better prospects with volunteer staff paid by local organizations).

Trainings given included a workshop in pre-primary education for 15 staff who would work in the Children's Center, a sports management and coordination training for 10 youth leaders, and a non-formal education study circle workshop for 30 youth facilitators. Accompanying curriculum for each was prepared.

Rather than directly offering a workshop series, as was the concept in the original activity plan, it was decided to build the capacity of others to offer appropriate training or education opportunities. The study circle program was the forum used to build this capacity. In partnership with six local groups, curriculum materials were developed in topics including reconciliation, indigenous culture, traditional story writing, literacy campaigns, gender, and conflict resolution. Designed as simple interactive and discussion-based activities, the eighteen lessons were prepared at a level to be easily understood and led by a facilitator without much background in the subject. These materials are in the process of being compiled and will be distributed through trainings to young people throughout July and August, 2000. As participants are already members of existing youth groups, they will be supported in organizing and facilitating study circles in their home communities.



Training for Children's Center Staff

A workshop series directed at building the skills of teachers was planned in collaboration with the Oecusse DEC. It was decided that ten experienced teachers would be identified to serve as teacher trainers. These individuals would spend the month of April working to develop basic activity plans in a variety of subject areas- language, math, science, history, physical education, etc. IRC would provide training related to curriculum development and technical assistance in preparation of a training, which would cover teaching methodology and activities. IRC's obligations to develop a training were fulfilled; however, the training itself has not yet been carried out. The DEC decided to pull out of its scheduled dates in April, but was interested in reviving the initiative again in August. Because IRC will be working on the Oecusse Child Friendly Space project at that time, it should have the capacity to assist.

As an outgrowth of assisting local youth groups with strategic planning, IRC provided technical assistance to youth groups in applying for funds to support their community service and leadership efforts. Increasing the resource base of local groups was key to building their capacity. During this period a number of small grant schemes were accessible to local groups. Proposals for UNTAET and UNHCR QIP's were prepared in partnership with these local groups. The first was a plan for sports field rehabilitation instigated by JLL. This US \$10,000 proposal was eventually supported through the transitional administration's Temporary Employment Project (TEP). A second QIP was worked on with GFFET. Seven young women planned to work at a cooperative café and applied for funding worth US\$3,900. A final proposal for a women's weaving cooperative was prepared with a community-based women's group, however the funds in the grant scheme were already allocated.

Lesson Learned: Capacity among local populations for care of children and youth may be high; however, assistance is needed to organize and communicate that knowledge.

Material Aid

OBJECTIVE 3 To evidence direct support for Timorese communities through providing education supplies and maintaining on-site staff presence in the Oecusse district

PLANNED ACTIVITIES	ACTUAL ACTIVITIES
3.1 Procure and distribute education supplies and other materials necessary for program implementation.	3.1 Procure and distribute education supplies and other materials necessary for program implementation.
3.2 Establish an Oecusse-based IRC office and identify and hire local support staff, i.e. driver, translator.	3.2 Establish an Oecusse-based IRC office and identify and hire local support staff, i.e. driver, translator.
	3.3 Provide transportation assistance to local groups in their efforts to support schools or develop programs for children and youth.

Education and recreation supplies were purchased and distributed directly to schools and youth groups. Approximately US \$8,500 worth of materials were purchased. These included items such as notebooks, pens and pencils, chalkboards and whiteboards, art supplies, sports equipment, and musical instruments. Some supplies were used in programs affiliated with IRC while others filled material gaps in the formal education sector. A memorandum of understanding was developed to clarify materials usage and then signed by school or local group representatives upon delivery of supplies. IRC also assisted in the distribution of UNICEF’s school-in-a-box and recreation kits to eighteen villages throughout Oecusse.

On-site presence in the district was more than just a program support activity. It was central to evidencing committed support to the communities with whom IRC worked. Along with the IRC shelter team, the education department was partially responsible for the set-up of an Oecusse field office and fully responsible for the hiring of support staff related to the program. Upon arrival there were no intact buildings available for living or working space. IRC, along with nearly all the other international groups present, worked and lived in a burned out hotel on the beachfront. The establishment of a functional and secure office was essential to placing staff in the enclave and running programs. This was especially challenging, as accessibility was so difficult. All construction materials and office equipment needed to be brought by helicopter or shipped in by private barge. Office and living space for education personnel were finally arranged in April, near the close of the project.

There was a vital need for transport among local populations as there were less than 100 estimated vehicles (including UN) in the whole of the Oecusse enclave (encompassing 50,000 people). In order to organize a meeting or deliver messages or supplies, local groups needed

assistance with transport. Over the project period, approximately twenty-five meetings were facilitated for local groups through the use of the IRC education vehicle. Transport, along with supply distribution and on-site presence was a visible way in which IRC could offer the community results and on-going support.

Lesson Learned: In resource poor communities, direct material aid can greatly impact organizational credibility and effectiveness.

VI. ADMINISTRATION

Staffing

During this project, IRC chose to keep staffing to a minimum, both to allocate a larger portion of the budget to materials and to increase project ownership among partner groups. The small number of leadership staff also reflected the difficulty in identifying qualified individuals. Due to the Indonesian occupation, the majority of the highly educated and skilled East Timorese had taken exile in Australia, Portugal and other European nations. Educated East Timorese, especially English-speakers, were in high demand and difficult to find and employ. For the project leadership positions, it was necessary to identify staff who could speak English, primarily for communicating with the expatriate project coordinator. Several times job announcements were circulated with no suitable candidates applying.

For the majority of the project period, it operated with a sole local staff person as Education and Youth Officer. IRC was extremely lucky to find this individual, as he had spent the prior two years as the leader of the East Timor Student Solidarity Council (ETSSC). His capacity for leadership was high, his connections among the youth community were many, and his English was excellent. While he did not have experience in the formal education system, his work with community-based education was extensive. In addition to this lead local staff, others were utilized as translators for short periods.

Personnel actually directly implementing programs were linked to partner organizations. Some were paid small stipends by their groups, while others worked as volunteers. Roles filled by these individuals included site coordinator, administrators, teachers, youth workers, and parent organizers. A benefit of staffing programs in this manner was that a greater number of individuals became involved. A disadvantage was that there was limited accountability to the project.

Lesson Learned: Staffing through local groups can increase community ownership of a project.

Procurement

After the looting that followed the referendum, availability of educational materials was one of the greatest needs for children and youth. Schools had no chalkboards, chairs, textbooks, etc.



Many no longer had a roof. Working with a relatively small budget for supplies, items procured included recreation and sporting materials, music equipment, art materials, classroom materials, children's books, and dictionaries. Targeted distribution of these items went to several local organizations for use in the projects that were implemented in partnership with IRC. Other distributions went to schools throughout the enclave who were in need of additional materials. The items ordered were purchased piece by piece, however there is some question as to whether a contract for kitted materials with a private

company may have shortened delivery time. While this may be true when purchasing in scale, the materials line for this project was small enough that it is doubtful that a kitted option would have been viable.

Prior to arrival, approximately US\$250 worth of basic arts and sports materials had already been procured. These were used as a part of the assessment process, being delivered to communities visited as an incentive for discussion. They were typically given to the school's headmaster or the village chief to distribute to organize activities as a part of their own efforts. Due to the focus on site selection and assessment, nothing more was requested until a month after the education coordinator's arrival. The rationale was that items to be purchased should be decided in consultation with the community. It was later realized that the items the community requested were not very different from what would have been procured without their input; but, nonetheless, the process of community involvement and participation in decision-making added to the overall program objectives. Factoring in the time-consuming procurement process, it would have been better to place an initial order for materials immediately upon arrival. Using perhaps one third of the materials budget for generic items such as notebooks and balls straight away would have sped the arrival of a first order of materials and still left a significant portion to be identified by the community.

The project took place at a site where there was no electricity available, apart from several generators in use by the UN or other international organizations. As materials development played a role in initial activity plans, it was important to explore alternatives in reproduction for these materials. An old-style mimeograph machine was looked into, however at US\$1500 with little access to spare parts, it was not considered cost effective. Reproduction was handled by taking materials to the capital for copying or borrowing the photocopier of other organizations.

Lesson Learned: In order to speed delivery of emergency services, an initial order of basic education and recreation materials should be placed immediately upon arrival of the project manager.

Logistics

As there was no accessibility to materials in East Timor itself, everything needed to be purchased and shipped over from Darwin, where the IRC logistics cell was located. The necessary procurement period unfortunately took several months including paperwork, purchasing, shipping, and then delivery. This time lag is partially unique to East Timor's geographical isolation as an island, and partially resulted from the checks and balances IRC puts in place on all of its procurement.

Office space in both Dili and Oecusse was a major challenge as there were so few buildings still left intact. For the first project months in Dili, a single house was used as office space for around one hundred staff and living space for approximately twelve. In Oecusse, a partially destroyed hotel was used for both home and work. Neither of these IRC sites had dedicated office space until the last months of the project. In addition to difficulties with space, there were challenges with power cuts in Dili and the absence of electricity in Oecusse.

Transportation in East Timor presented unique challenges, particularly since the project site chosen was geographically isolated and necessitated booking UN flights to reach the destination.

There were many days when it was impossible to get in or out on the flights. Ground transport was somewhat easier. Upon arrival in country, a vehicle had already been purchased. This was essential to a rapid start-up as at that time there were no rental vehicles available and transport was necessary in order to conduct assessments. A good quality land cruiser with a snorkel for river crossings and room for about twelve passengers was chosen. Although this purchase used a major portion of the available budget, it proved to be a good investment in the long run as it was a capital investment that will be used during the project's continuation. However, dedicating one third of the budget to transportation did greatly limit the amount of direct aid in the form of education materials to be given to schools. If an emergency education programs were to begin in a place where rental or used vehicles are available this should be considered, as the strategy leaves more resources available for program implementation.



Wet Season River Crossing

Lessons Learned: Logistical challenges should be carefully considered in site selection, as the difficulties in delivery of goods and transport of personnel may be detrimental to program impact.

Budget

The budget total for the emergency education pilot project was US\$95,000. As an estimated 3,000 children and youth were reached, this works out to a cost per beneficiary of US\$32. Originally planned as a six-month project, the funds were extended to cover an additional month and a half, for a total of seven and a half months. Funds available from a private foundation were US\$85,000; however, upon arrival in the field and working through the budget with management, it was realized that another US\$10,000 would be necessary for implementation. This was added by a Leadership Council grant. The project coordinator, funded through support from IRC headquarters, stayed for an additional two weeks beyond this period to document lessons learned and facilitate a smooth handover.

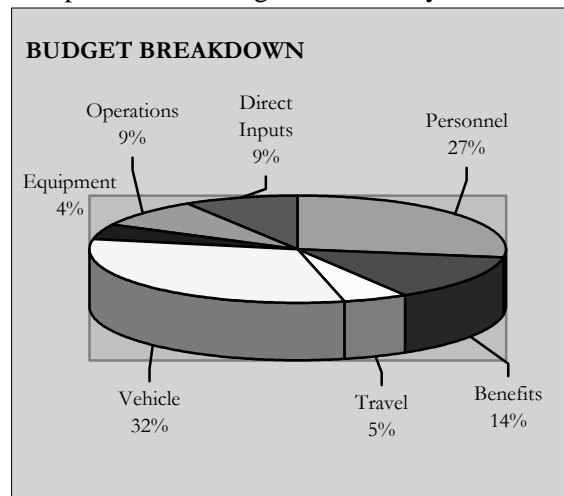
The majority of changes from the original budget reflected the special needs of the start-up nature of the program. IRC had little in place logistically and due to its limited unrestricted funds could not afford to cover additional costs directly related to the education project. A number of fixed costs were not covered in the original budget, necessitating realignment. Personnel lines needed to be changed to cover expenses such as a percentage of the country director and finance manager’s salaries, full salaries for a project driver and translator, expatriate housing, and local staff benefits. Incentives for teachers were removed, as UNICEF and UNTAET took on that responsibility. In the transport line items, both international travel and the cost of a vehicle were greater than projected; however, a motorcycle was not purchased. Office equipment and operations costs were also greater than expected, as it was necessary to factor in shipping, office reconstruction and furnishing, and bank fees. The amount of money used by the final project for training and materials was nearly double than planned.

In this emergency project, large percentages of the budget were spent in the personnel and vehicle lines. Each of these categories is especially important in a start-up project. An expatriate manager is necessary to establish program direction, as well as train national staff who may take on a stronger role as time goes by. To facilitate transport, obtaining a vehicle is initially a large

FIXED COSTS: SIX MONTH START-UP		
<i>PERSONNEL</i>		
Project Coordinator		20,000
Management & Admin		2,500
Location Differential & Housing		5,500
<i>TRANSPORT</i>		
Travel to-from Post		3,000
Vehicle Purchase		30,000
<i>EQUIPMENT & OPERATIONS</i>		
Computer & Printer		2,500
Radio Handsets		1,200
Office Rent/Reconstruction		1,500
Office Supplies		1,000
Communication		1,800
Shipping & Logistics		1,000
Program Related Costs		---
TOTAL	US\$	70,000
<p><i>*Figures are based on an estimated average budget, not exact amounts spent in this project. Budget should be developed based on country costs.</i></p>		

capital expense; however, as a project progresses this investment becomes more and more cost effective. The vehicle purchased for this initiative will be used in Oecusse’s yearlong Child Friendly Space project, a direct follow-up to this pilot project. While it would have been preferable to have a greater percentage of the budget go directly for training and materials, given the fact that a number of institutional costs were fixed this would have been extremely difficult. It is important to note that in a larger budget, nearly all funds would go to the community directly via allocation to items such as training and materials. Once IRC’s fixed costs are covered, it is able to dedicate funds toward direct community assistance. However, an advantage of a smaller budget (as experienced by this project) is that limited resources perhaps encourage greater involvement of the local community.

The fact that this emergency education grant was essentially made up of funds that could immediately be dedicated played a major role in facilitating a comparatively early entry in the education sector in East Timor. Although a few organizations came to do assessments, IRC was one of the first to arrive that had capacity to implement a program. While the budget was fairly small and its impact limited in scope, the organization's presence on the ground was key in securing funding for project continuation. A specific advantage of the funds was flexibility within the project plan and budget to allow for implementation according to community needs. Donors on the ground willing to fund education at the early stages after the conflict were few and far between. It is likely that within the process of proposal writing and securing a grant, another four to six months would have passed prior to the project start. The immediate availability of funds for program initiation changed that.



Lesson Learned: Unrestricted funds are invaluable in achieving rapid program start-up and securing additional grants to implement programs.

Coordination and Documentation

IRC worked extensively with local authorities and representatives of the UN transitional administration in project implementation. As it was an emergency program focusing on non-formal rather than formal education, involvement of these groups was more a matter of coordination than permission. There were periodic education and psychosocial coordination meetings sponsored by the UN, primarily attended by international NGO's. Attendance at these meetings allowed for shared information regarding types of interventions and areas of geographic operation. The majority of these meetings occurred in Dili. Because travel back and forth to Oecusse was so difficult, being in Dili for coordination purposes often meant spending between several days to a week there. As East Timor was considered an emergency, a number of international staff were on short-term contracts resulting in high turnover. This created repeated gaps and the necessity of repeating information to new arrivals. The comparative long-term presence of the project coordinator for the IRC education program gave the agency a degree of credibility in dealing with the Timorese population. Coordination with local authorities in the Oecusse district assisted in general community acceptance of the initiatives and gathering of data. The district education committee was especially useful to this end.

As this was a pilot project partially implemented for the purpose of examining an emergency response to education and youth issues, special pains were taken to carefully document the process. A number of forms for record keeping were developed, as were job descriptions, an assessment template, and training curriculums. Detailed monthly reports were completed with logical frameworks to quantify progress. A number of these items can be used as models in other

emergency education programs. The most useful will be found in the appendix attached to this report.

Lesson Learned: Concerted efforts to coordinate with other groups and document implementation from project start eases the difficulties of these tasks in the long-term.

VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

As always, monitoring and evaluation were important, yet difficult to implement systematically within this project's context. Because the program took place at a relatively early, fluid point after the crisis, planned and actual activities differed. Moreover, with much of the direct implementation being handled by local groups, qualitative monitoring was more complicated than quantitative.

As one aspect of monitoring, regular check-ins occurred with all local partners. On average taking place bi-weekly, meetings reviewed program activities, discussed problems encountered, and outlined next steps. If the group was involved in providing direct services to beneficiaries, such as at the Oecusse Children's Center or with the sports program, the agenda also covered numbers and profiles of those who had participated. For partners focusing on materials development for youth study circles, time was spent qualitatively looking at draft lessons and resources. Another contribution to monitoring the program's acceptance within the community was periodic meetings with key community leaders. Every six to eight weeks, representatives of CNRT and the church were contacted. Finally, internal monitoring was facilitated through a monthly reporting process. This included a logical framework organized by objectives, which required details on activities, indicators, and verification achieved each month.

Project evaluation was never undertaken through any formal measure. In the last month of the program, partners were asked to give additional feedback and recommendations during their monitoring meetings. Much of their advice was used in compiling the lessons learned in this report, as well as informing directions for portions of the project moving on to a second phase. Near project end, the IRC Education Technical Advisor's visit to the field played a large role in facilitating reflection and analysis among project staff and partners.

One of the major risks involved in the strong role given to local groups in project implementation was the loss of direct control over outcomes. As IRC limits its implementation role, it also lessens its ability to oversee quality and mandate changes. While not actually put into practice as a part of this project, local groups suggested several techniques to enable better management of program quality. These included organizing a community advisory board at program start, involvement of partners in establishing and measuring indicators, and following several focus groups of beneficiaries through the project's duration.

Lesson Learned: Systems of monitoring and evaluation, including decisions on project indicators, should be established with input from local beneficiaries or partner groups.

VIII. SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is a vital issue in all emergency programs but takes on special importance within a repatriation context. There is little justification for beneficiaries to invest time or effort in a program that will neither continue nor lay a foundation for future endeavors. Refugees coming back to destroyed homes are focused on rebuilding- both the physical structures and the systems which allowed the community to function. It is important as an international actor to recognize the role those pre-existing systems could play in achieving one's own aims. In the case of the emergency education program in East Timor, the corresponding systems were primarily youth organizations and community schools. Therefore, in an effort to enhance their sustained impact, project interventions were primarily directed via these groups.

In a setting as resource poor as East Timor, it is not enough to begin programs and leave sustainability only up to local partners. As these groups themselves currently have little access to funding, no current financial foundation, and questionable capacity to manage large-scale programs, continued support from international groups is welcome. Therefore, it was important during this project period to invest time in identifying and securing donors for project continuation. Three major projects were funded with proposals, primarily prepared by the education coordinator with input from local beneficiaries and the expatriate staff. It is doubtful whether any of these projects would have been attained without the existence of the emergency education program, as the proposal process was facilitated by the presence of a staff person on the ground dedicated to developing IRC's response to children and youth issues. It is thus important to consider the additional impacts achieved by these projects when judging the efficacy of the pilot project.

1. THE OECUSSE LEARNING CENTER: A CHILD FRIENDLY SPACE			
Project Goal: To build a strong base of community leadership in the Oecusse enclave which has the skills and resources to address issues affecting children, youth, and women.			
Funder:	UNICEF	Duration:	One year
Beneficiaries:	10,150 Oecusse citizens	Budget:	US\$189,212
2. COMMUNITY-BASED YOUTH STUDY CIRCLES			
Project Goal: To increase community-based education opportunities for East Timorese youth.			
Funder:	AusAid	Duration:	Two months
Beneficiaries:	1500 youth	Budget:	Aus\$20,000
3. EMERGENCY PSYCHOSOCIAL AND REINTEGRATION SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN EAST TIMORESE COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE AND DISPLACEMENT			
Project Goal: To support East Timorese community efforts to promote reintegration and healthy development of children and youth.			
Funder:	US BPRM	Duration:	One year
Beneficiaries:	94,000 children & youth	Budget:	US\$2,400.000

The responsibilities of raising funds and implementing programs require considerable balance. If a project manager concentrates solely on future funding, the immediate program suffers. However, if additional donors are not sought and the program cannot be extended through original funders, potential long-term benefits of the initiative may never be realized. In the case of the pilot project, the rapid start-up of the program was delayed due to the urgency of writing a psychosocial proposal for the US Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration. However, if this time had not been allocated, securing that project with its US\$2.4 million to benefit children and youth may not have occurred.

Other project directions were considered and perhaps should be pursued. Youth continue to be a population facing many challenges in terms of education, employment, and involvement in community. The community-based study circle project begins to address, in a limited way, this group's needs in relation to education and involvement in community. Although the project is relatively small and short-term, there is much potential to build off of the foundation established in terms of partnerships with local groups and materials development. A proposal is being developed for a six-month program that continues the study circle initiative, as well as supporting other alternative education methods for youth.

In addition, UNICEF is interested in replicating the Oecusse-based Child Friendly Space project led by IRC on the eastern portion of the island, in the districts of Lautem, Baucau, and Viqueque. There is also a major need for school rehabilitation throughout East Timor. The World Bank and UNICEF are taking responsibility for this area and plan to have 500 schools re-roofed by October 2000. Given the current level of progress, this is unlikely. It may be the case that the World Bank will eventually invite the involvement of international NGO's already active in shelter programs in communities.

A final project direction to consider would be capacity building for district education administrations. East Timor, under the UNTAET, will be establishing a national education administration in the next several months. Under Indonesian rule, very few East Timorese had positions within the administration. Those who are now informally filling the roles are CNRT appointees, some with little applicable experience. IRC has been active in an education administration capacity-building program in Guinea and could initiate a similar project in East Timor.

While the above initiatives may be greatly needed, the fact of the matter is that because it is the non-governmental sector, programs can only be determined by donor interest. If funders are not prepared to dedicate their resources to an initiative, it will not move forward. The good thing is that an existing presence and experience in the field can go far in influencing a donor to invest.

Lesson Learned: Clarity and balance are important in defining an education manager's role in fund raising.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

The key question explored by the project, *“how can IRC enhance repatriating communities’ capacities to take leadership in the education of their children and youth?”* guided its movement toward the goal of “establishing an emergency non-formal education program in the Oecusse district of Timor LoroSae that meets immediate educational needs of children and youth.” The program tested techniques of working through partner organizations, promoting youth leadership and involving the community in designing interventions. Recognizing that work in East Timor was with a repatriating population, the project was careful to look at its interventions with an eye toward contributing to long-term development. While not undertaking activities exactly as planned, the flexibility to adjust the program according to context was essential in meeting the project goal. Its success is partially recognized by securing grants from other funders to implement a second project phase. What was done was worthwhile; what IRC now has the potential to do can continue to make a difference for the children and youth of East Timor.

When asked to share their personal reactions to the project’s success, East Timorese responded...

“The project shared information with us and helped us get access to funds and other resources.”
Youth Group Leader

“I had fun and the games helped me get my mind off of all my family’s problems.”
Child participating in sports activities

“IRC’s project helps people think critically about the situation and consider what they could do.”
Young person at Study Circle session

“Not “reactionary”, but looking for an appropriate response.”
Member of District Education Committee

Lessons Learned

What has this program helped us learn about IRC’s approach to education in emergencies?

METHODOLOGY

- Emergency education best operates under a set of guiding principles allowing room for the design of context appropriate interventions.

PREPAREDNESS

- An in-person orientation at headquarters is essential in providing a global understanding of IRC’s programs and the context for emergency education.
- Procurement of capital goods and a small amount of program materials prior to staff arrival will greatly speed assessment and implementation.
- The advantages of taking time to select the most appropriate and/or needy site for project implementation outweigh a limited time loss in start-up.

- Involving a local organization in conducting assessments will facilitate gathering appropriate information and benefit the group by improving information access.
- Participation of local groups in project planning can introduce additional strategies to use in meeting program goal and objectives.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Local organizations, when treated as assets rather than solely as beneficiaries in need, have the potential to add much to a program.
- Repatriated communities will often take the lead in structuring activities for their children and youth; however, they may lack the material resources to do so.
- Capacity among local populations for care of children and youth may be high; however, assistance is needed to organize and communicate that knowledge.
- In resource poor communities, direct material aid can greatly impact organizational credibility and effectiveness.

ADMINISTRATION

- Staffing through local groups can increase community ownership of a project.
- In order to speed delivery of emergency services, an initial order of basic education and recreation materials should be placed immediately upon arrival of the project manager.
- Logistical challenges should be carefully considered in site selection, as the difficulties in delivery of goods and transport of personnel may be detrimental to program impact.
- Unrestricted funds are invaluable in achieving rapid program start-up and securing additional grants to implement the program.
- Concerted efforts to coordinate with other groups and document implementation from project start eases the difficulties of these tasks in the long-term.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Systems of monitoring and evaluation, including decisions on project indicators, should be established with input from local beneficiaries or partner groups.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Clarity and balance are important in defining an education manager's role in fund raising.

KEY QUESTIONS FOR EMERGENCY EDUCATION MANAGERS

- 1) Is the setting a refugee or repatriation situation? How does this affect community capacity?
- 2) On which populations of young people do existing efforts focus on? Is there an age group not receiving needed assistance?
- 3) How might other organizational commitments impact ability to achieve education goals? Is there clarity on procurement timelines?
- 4) Who are the key community leaders or groups with whom it is necessary to consult and gain approval?
- 5) Which coordination activities are important to attend- both to avoid overlap and to promote the project and identify potential future donors?
- 6) What security threats may impact program implementation? Are there things that can be done to minimize those threats?
- 7) Are there risks the project faces in terms of weather or illness? What contingency plans do you have in place?
- 8) Which local groups share similar aims in their efforts to assist children and youth? How might they become involved and contribute to program sustainability?

Recommendations

- 1) *Establish an emergency education fund enabling rapid deployment of personnel and program start-up.*

Creation of a fund dedicated to start-up of emergency education interventions could make a significant difference in IRC's ability to rapidly respond to the needs of children and youth in crisis situations. Because resources were initially available to the East Timor program, the education project was up and running within several months after the crisis. Alternatively, although thousands of refugees remained in camps in West Timor, proposals for funding needed to be written and approved by donors. The program began approximately six months later than that in East Timor. This time lag resulted in the loss of significant educational opportunities for young people. An emergency education fund could change that.

- 2) *Build logistics capacity and larger materials distribution into the project budget.*

Because the pilot project budget was limited, no line items were dedicated to the logistics cell of the organization. Procurement is a fundamental operation within an emergency

setting. Funds need to be dedicated to support this function. In addition, in a situation where there is a complete lack of supplies, provision of needed items becomes a priority for communities. The urgency of these educational materials should be considered when designing a budget, with greater emphasis placed on ensuring necessary supplies to effectively implement a program.

3) Maintain program flexibility in order to design and implement interventions appropriate to context.

While IRC did have a program model in mind upon entry to East Timor, it proved to be inappropriate to the repatriation context existing in the country. This model was based on certain principles, which then guided the redesign of activities. At program start-up, this flexibility is essential. Emergency education efforts must take into account the great number of cultural, political, and socio-economic factors that impact a conflict situation. Although programs can learn from each other and replicate particular pieces of other projects, they should never look exactly the same.

4) Support language learning for international staff.

Applicable to any program, language skills become especially important in the education sector where much time is spent in interaction with local people. In this project, the education coordinator's effort to learn Tetum made a significant difference in IRC's relationships with the community and with national staff. A simple guidebook or cheat sheet of the local language would be an invaluable aid in improving relations with beneficiaries. In addition, language classes should be available to expatriates sponsored by IRC within the first few months of arrival to a country.

5) Provide expatriate project managers with a better orientation to potential funders.

A major responsibility of a start-up program is considering sustainability. Securing funding so that intervention extends beyond the short-term will make a difference in the impact of nearly any emergency education initiative. While identification of potential funders is often difficult from the field, almost as important as knowing who might fund a project is to know what they will fund. Managers need a strong understanding of donor profiles in order to consider the design of programs. IRC should consider developing an orientation package for staff specifically covering potential funding scenarios and appropriate donors.

