

Workforce Development Program Timor-Leste Australia Awards Disability Inclusion Report June 2022

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations and Acronyms.....	4
1. BACKGROUND.....	5
2. OVERVIEW AND TERMS OF REFERENCE.....	6
3. APPROACH.....	6
4. FINDINGS.....	7
4.1 Overview of educational access for people with vision or hearing impairments.....	7
4.2 Overview of reading and writing tools for people who are blind or vision impaired ..	8
4.3 Overview of literacy skills for people who are deaf or hearing impaired.....	9
5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COORDINATION.....	9
6. RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE DISABILITY, SCHOLARSHIP ACCESS AND WORKFORCE INCLUSIVITY.....	10
6.1 Recommendations for AATL.....	10
6.1.1. Testing for IELTS levels to purposely select people with academic evidence of English skills.....	10
6.1.2. English language classes at LELI inclusive of people who are blind or vision impaired.....	10
6.1.3. Australia Awards promotion.....	11
6.1.4. Australia Awards Short Courses.....	11
6.1.5. Australia Awards Alumni.....	12
6.2. Additional recommendations.....	12
6.2.1. English for disability advocacy and employment.....	12
6.2.2. Sign Language consultation and interpreter training.....	13
6.2.3. Livelihood skill development for adults who are deaf.....	13
6.2.4. Adaptive Technology and training in assistive software and hardware.....	13
6.2.5. Braille Training.....	14
6.2.6. Inclusive Education (IE) Coordination.....	14
6.2.7 OPD capacity building.....	14
7. BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS.....	14
8. MEETINGS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS.....	16
9. CONCLUSION.....	16
APPENDIX 1 - List of individuals and organisations involved in consultations.....	17

APPENDIX 2 - Overview of NVDA	18
APPENDIX 3 - Testing for IELTS levels to purposely select people with academic evidence of English skills.....	18
APPENDIX 4 - English language classes at LELI inclusive of people who are blind or vision impaired.....	20
APPENDIX 5 – English for disability advocacy and employment.....	21
APPENDIX 6 - Sample schedule of teacher training on inclusive teaching strategies for LELI/UNTLE English teachers.....	23
APPENDIX 7 – Stakeholder interviews and findings	25

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABC	Accessible Books Consortium
AA	Australia Awards
AAI	Australia Awards in Indonesia
AAS	Australia Awards Scholarships
AATL	Australia Awards Timor-Leste
ADF	ASEAN Disability Forum
AHDMTL	Asosiasaun Halibur Defisiensi Matan Timor-Leste
ADTL	Asosiasaun Defisiensi Timor-Leste
APTC	Australia Pacific Training Coalition
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DPO	Disabled People's Organisation
ELTA	English Language Training Assistance
GEDSI	Gender Equity, Disability and Social Inclusion
IE	Inclusive Education
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
KDTL	Klibur Defisiensi Tilun Tilun Timor-Leste
LELI	Lorosa'e English Language Institute
LTA	Long-Term Awards
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
OPD	Organisations of Persons with Disabilities
PHD	Partnership for Human Development
PERTUNI	Persatuan Tunanetra Indonesia / United Blind Organisation
STA	Short-Term Awards
UNTL	University of Timor-Leste
WDPTL	Workforce Development Program Timor-Leste

1. BACKGROUND

This consultation and report were commissioned by Workforce Development Program Timor-Leste (WDPTL), which managed the Australia Awards scholarships program on behalf of the Australian government until 30 June 2022. From 1 July 2022 a new Australia Awards Timor-Leste program (AATL) will assume responsibility for in country management of Australia Awards scholarships and will lead implementation of the report recommendations.

The Workforce Development Program Timor-Leste (WDPTL) supports the objectives of the Australian Government's aid policy 'promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability', through three Components: Scholarship and Alumni Support (SAS), Training and Employment (T&E), and a flexible facility which can respond to DFAT and Timor-Leste's emerging workforce development needs. This includes support towards economic recovery in Timor-Leste through skills and tangible jobs and high-level Australian qualifications (scholarships) in targeted areas.

The WDPTL Scholarships and Alumni Support team manages Australia Awards scholarships for Timorese to study in Australia and provides professional development opportunities for scholarship alumni, ensuring they have ongoing links with other alumni and with Australian organisations, institutions, and people.

Each year in accordance with Gender Equity, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) principles the Australia Awards are promoted to underrepresented groups including women, people from rural areas and people with disabilities. This program recognises that people with disabilities face multiple hurdles in accessing education and work opportunities in Timor-Leste¹. As a result, since 2017, one scholarship per intake has been reserved for a person with a disability who meets the scholarship requirements.

In addition, to address current barriers in achieving the required academic and English entry requirements for post graduate studies in Australia the program has made the following adjustments;

1. A Diploma category is made available to applicants with a disability
2. Scholarship applicants who pass the eligibility and compliance check stage are provided with 30 hours extra English language preparation for PELT and IELTS testing.
3. Since 2020 a three-month academic English language short course has been held for people with disabilities so they can improve their English.

To date there are four alumni with physical disabilities who have graduated with diplomas and masters and one awardee with a hearing impairment who will mobilise to Australia in 2022. However, for the last two scholarship intakes (2021 and 2022) no awards were made to people with disabilities, and the English levels of applicants with disabilities still remains below IELTS requirements.

¹ Leaving no Youth Behind: Policy Brief 5 - Young People with a Disability, Belun/UNFPA 2018

The other significant barriers to disability inclusion in Australia Awards Scholarships (AAS), especially Long Term Awards (LTA), are limited applicants with required academic credentials and limited guidance in course selection and scholarship application writing. As an interim measure 2023 intake applicants with disabilities were offered application guidance via WDPTL's Graduate Intern. It is recommended that this guidance is formalised as part of the scholarship process under the new AATL program.

It is estimated that 5-10% of people in Timor Leste are reported to have a disability however this number is likely to be higher in accordance with global statistics². The World Report on Disability indicates that 15% of the world's population, 1 in 7 people have a disabilityⁱ and 22% of people living in poverty in developing countries have a disability.ⁱⁱ

2. OVERVIEW AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report provides an identification of the current access barriers and opportunities for improved participation by people with a disability throughout the Australia Awards cycle, including English language training.

More specifically, this report focuses on the barriers and participation opportunities for people who are deaf or hearing impaired and blind or vision impaired, being the two disability groups currently least represented and with the greatest access barriers to participation in Australia Awards opportunities. The report also details a series of recommendations for the program and interested stakeholders to practically address these barriers.

The two specific focus areas of this study and report as documented in the terms of reference are:

1. Identify, document, and analyse the barriers people with complete blindness or deafness face accessing the Australia Awards scholarships selection process.
2. Working with agreed stakeholders, identify the possible interventions that will increase access, based on current evidence and requirements.

3. APPROACH

Consultations were conducted with a broad selection of stakeholders, comprising a total of 20 organisations or individuals, during an in country visit in May 2022. This included Organisations for People with Disabilities (OPDs), donor programs, the Government of Timor-Leste, UN agencies, Australian Embassy, New Zealand Embassy and local programs and initiatives focused on disability inclusion in education and livelihood programs. See **Appendix 1** for the complete list of stakeholders interviewed.

Semi structured discussions took place during each meeting with an initial welcome and introduction of participants, sharing of barriers as identified by each stakeholder group, a request for examples of successful participation of people with a disability followed by a

² http://www.statistics.gov.tl/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Disability_Monograph.pdf

discussion focused on priorities and opportunities for improved disability inclusion within the Timor-Leste context.

4. FINDINGS

Consultations with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) also referred to as DPOs, local education and training providers, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), UN agencies, the Australian Embassy, the New Zealand Embassy and other donors have shared a range of barriers, many of which are common across all stakeholders. Stakeholders also expressed their willingness to foster the inclusion of people with a disability to improve participation and life outcomes for these citizens of Timor-Leste.

Access barriers for people with disability in Timor-Leste are wide ranging and include physical access barriers, teachers who have not been trained in relevant evidence-based inclusion strategies, attitudinal barriers, limited access to primary and secondary education and low levels of English language proficiency. This is especially the case for people who are blind or vision impaired and people who are deaf or hearing impaired. This is due to limited access to reading and writing tools such as computers with screen reading software and Braille; alongside the current limited expertise to train and use this technology. Further to this is the lack of a unified local sign language and the current low numbers of trained sign language interpreters, with only three currently available in Timor-Leste.

Of note in the consultations is the highly reported barrier that there are no specialist teachers for people who are blind, and no teachers trained to read and write in Braille, which restricts access to education and participation in English language courses. It should be noted that this assumes such skills are necessary for the inclusion of this cohort of learners and that other settings have teachers with these skills in mainstream education. This is not necessarily the case so it is important to reframe such assumed barriers and examine feasible inclusive approaches that will cater for students who are blind or vision impaired in mainstream education settings in Timor-Leste based on current resources and capacity.

4.1 Overview of educational access for people with vision or hearing impairments

Currently many people with hearing or vision related disabilities in Timor-Leste experience significant barriers accessing education. A recurrent education opportunity exists through MoEYS at year 9 and 12 level, however the year 12 level is currently under review.

There are low numbers of people, approximately eight to ten, who are deaf and approximately five, who are blind or have a vision impairment undertaking this option at year 9 level through MoEYS. The year 9 recurrent education program is delivered in Portuguese as the approved language of instruction, despite the fact that a range of sign languages are used by people who are deaf and Tetum Braille is used by some people who are blind, with both cohorts missing out on compulsory education in Portuguese.

In 2018 a total of 35 people and in 2019 five people who are blind undertook the year 12 recurrent education program through Indonesia. The OPD, ADTL has established a relationship with Indonesia for the delivery of the year 12 recurrent education program, in

response to no relevant program being currently on offer in Timor-Leste. This program includes tutoring support through ADTL. Students are required to travel to Indonesia for the final exam and to gain their high school equivalent completion certificate. This is delivered in Bahasa Indonesia, a language not currently taught in Timor Leste. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, no students have undertaken this program at year 12 level.

4.2 Overview of reading and writing tools for people who are blind or vision impaired

Braille is in limited use throughout Timor-Leste with few people able to teach Braille. There is currently no Braille printing with the only embosser not in use due to the absence of anyone trained to use this equipment.

Tetum Braille is restricted to uncontracted otherwise known as grade 1 Braille which is the alphabet, numbers and punctuation with no contractions. This makes Braille significantly longer to read and consuming approximately 3-5 pages for every standard print page of text. In Timor-Leste Braille is typically written with a slate and stylus involving pressing each dot individually and is an extremely slow method for writing. Further work is required to establish a Tetum contracted Braille code, produce Tetum Braille books and increase the access to Braille instruction in Timor-Leste.

Addressing the current limited Braille skills and resourcing is not recognised as a priority recommendation for WDPTL / AATL at this point in time. To address this barrier, a range of interventions are however suggested including engaging Braille specialists within the various volunteer programs, an Australia Awards short course, New Zealand Embassy small grant and a mentoring relationship with PERTUNI, the OPD in Indonesia focused on blindness and vision impairment.

Computers with NVDA screen reading software are in use in Timor-Leste. There are currently eight computers with NVDA at AHDMTL. AHDMTL has expressed an interest in having access to more computers with NVDA and opportunities to train more of their 93 members in the use of this technology as an accessible reading and writing tool.

See **Appendix 2** for an overview of NVDA screen reading software.

The development of computer skills with NVDA is recommended as a priority activity for WDPTL / AATL as a reading and writing tool that can be efficiently developed within a period of 3-6 months alongside the development of English language skills. The investment in further computers and training at AHDMTL would result in the efficient development of a reading and writing tool, effective for learning English language and essential for future education prospects including Australia Awards Scholarship opportunities. The provision of loan lap top computers loaded with the free NVDA screen reading software to UNTL and LELI would also assist in the development of English language skills in all four skill areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking; for people who are blind or vision impaired. These loan laptops could be funded by AATL and loaned to English language programs for the explicit purpose of the inclusion of this cohort in English language classes.

IELTS testing can also present as an administrative challenge when including people who are blind or vision impaired as the test needs to be booked 6 weeks in advance, which does not

align well with the demands of a tightly scheduled scholarship selection cycle. In response, **IELTS adjustments should be identified during preparation English language classes with further guidance from IALF Bali, to establish a process that enables adjustments to be identified and lodged within the Cambridge IELTS timelines.**

4.3 Overview of literacy skills for people who are deaf or hearing impaired

There is currently limited access to education for people who are deaf in Timor Leste. Children with hearing loss have far lower literacy levels than children without hearing loss, resulting in poor learning outcomes and reduced self-esteem.

Children with poor hearing do not acquire speech and language at the same rate or in the same way as children who can hear. Children learn to read and write by matching the sounds they have heard to letters and words but children with significant hearing loss are often unable to do this well and find it hard to learn to read and write. Literacy skills typically develop at a far lower rate with children who are deaf typically not achieving at the same level as children who can hear.

Hearing loss limits incidental learning. This is the learning we get from absorbing the communication we have with our family, friends, and school mates on a daily basis. As a result, such limitations in literacy skill development may result in Australia Awards long term awards being an inaccessible, hard to reach opportunity for people who are pre lingual deaf in Timor-Leste. **Alternative investments in livelihood opportunities for people who are deaf, with less demand on literacy skills, is likely to result in more efficient skill development with more immediate improved life outcomes and a greater sense of success.**

Lessons learned from other AA programs indicate that an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 5.5 or above is extremely difficult to reach for people who are pre-lingual deaf. This means that the promotion of Degree or above AAS opportunities may be unachievable or unrealistic given the English requirement requires an IELTS score of 5.5 (Bachelor level) or 6 (Masters level) to be eligible to commence studies in Australia. WDPTL has promoted scholarships to people who are deaf and has provided opportunities for enrolment in English language classes at LELI however due to barriers related to low English language skills, no opportunities to test IELTS levels for people who are deaf in Timor-Leste and an extremely limited supply of sign language interpreters, English language classes have not been a feasible option for people who are totally deaf in Timor-Leste.

5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

Consultations with various stakeholders indicate a high level of interest in disability inclusion with a consistent understanding of the current access barriers for people who are blind or deaf in Timor-Leste. These consultations also demonstrated the current lack of skills and resources required to support the inclusion of these disability groups with a need for targeted interventions to address this gap.

A more detailed focus is required on coordination of current interest and disability-inclusive activities in order to ensure all stakeholders are aware of initiatives and opportunities for disability inclusion and can maximise efficient use of resources to improve inclusivity projects. Coordination activities could include regular disability inclusion meetings across the various stakeholders and a more detailed mapping of all disability inclusive inputs and partnership opportunities.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE DISABILITY, SCHOLARSHIP ACCESS AND WORKFORCE INCLUSIVITY

The following recommendations first outline opportunities for AATL, the new implementing name for WDPTL, in response to the focus of this task and report. These recommendations are followed by a list of opportunities for other stakeholders involved in the consultations for this activity.

6.1 Recommendations for AATL

6.1.1. Testing for IELTS levels to purposely select people with academic evidence of English skills

- i. Test a sample of approximately 10 people who are blind or vision impaired interested in pursuing an Australia Award. To purposefully select people with academic evidence of English skills. Testing to include all four skill areas but to focus on results for listening and speaking skills as these tasks will be more accurate as there are fewer disability related barriers in these skill areas. This will help with a more accurate determination of current levels of potential applicants to inform the most feasible successful pathways for this cohort.
- ii. Test a sample of approximately 10 people who are deaf or hearing impaired interested in pursuing an Australia Award. To purposefully select people with academic evidence of English skills. Testing to focus on reading and writing skills as the skill areas with minimal adjustments required. The aim will be to determine current English language levels of potential applicants to help inform the most feasible successful pathways for this cohort. See **Appendix 3 for further information on this recommendation.**

6.1.2. English language classes at LELI inclusive of people who are blind or vision impaired

To include the following reasonable accommodations:

- i. Teacher training on inclusive teaching strategies for all LELI staff. (approx. 12-16 hours). Suggested co-delivery by Disability Inclusion Advisor (Jo Mosen) and local OPD member with lived experience of vision impairment.
- ii. Laptop computers with NVDA screen reading software and wired bone conduction headphones for all students who are blind or vision impaired. To be purchased by and remain the property of AATL and provided on loan for inclusive English language classes.

- iii. Accessible Word format and large print reading materials (up to font size 24 for participants who are blind or vision impaired). LELI to use administration staff and IALF Bali resources to develop and source alternative format reading materials.
- iv. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) developed for each participant who is blind or vision impaired with IEP to include all teaching and learning adjustments and all IELTS task reasonable adjustments. To be co-designed with support from Disability Inclusion Advisor (Jo Mosen), LELI and local OPD member with lived experience of vision impairment. To be developed prior to the commencement of English language training. (The development of a relevant IEP and training in its use to be incorporated into the teacher training for LELI). IEP to include disability information, access barriers, reading and writing tools and reasonable accommodations.
Note that this training will also aim to address some of the current challenges in investing resources to document IELTS reasonable accommodations 3 months prior to test delivery.
- i) Two equally skilled English language teachers for all inclusive classes with one teacher per session leading the class and the other floating to support students as required. LELI teachers to deliver training based on teachers selected for disability inclusive training with funding for these classes from AATL.

See **Appendix 3, 4 and 5** for more detailed outlines of disability inclusion in English language programs.

6.1.3. Australia Awards promotion

There are a number of opportunities to undertake targeted promotion of AA English language training, STA and LTA to individuals with disability and OPDs. The following are some specific opportunities that emerged throughout the consultations.

- i. Undertake targeted promotion of Australia Awards opportunities for people with a disability within the Advanced Diploma in Social Inclusion at UNTL as this course produces graduates with a disability each year who will be either eligible or close to eligible for an Australia Award.
- ii. Provide an annual course and career information session to potential applicants with a disability, providing information on course and career pathways and supporting interested applicants in the application process and in course and institution selection. This could be delivered as a partnership program with APTC.
- iii. Focus English language courses on inclusion of people with a disability who have the capacity to progress to an Australia Awards eligible IELTS level.

6.1.4. Australia Awards Short Courses

The following priority areas have been identified that would be relevant in future Australia Awards Short Course planning. Note that each of these topics could also form the foundation of an Australian Volunteer Initiative (AVI) volunteer position or a New Zealand

Embassy small grant application. Inclusive education teaching strategies to support students who are blind or vision impaired in Timor-Leste. This could become a focus activity for the Partnership for Human Development (PHD) to support their work with MoEYS.

- i. Alternative Formatting training. To support the production of Braille, large print, audio and electronic formats. Training to be provided to inclusive education specialists within MoEYS inclusive education resource centres. This will result in the establishment of a team of specialists in alternative format production of Braille, large print, audio and electronic formats for students who are blind or vision impaired. To also support this team of specialists in the use of these reading formats and to train students who are blind or vision impaired in the use of alternative reading and writing tools such as Braille and computers with NVDA screen reading software. The Accessible Books Consortium (ABC) delivers this training on a fee for service basis with occasional opportunities for fully funded training packages to developing countries. Go to <https://www.accessiblebooksconsortium.org/portal/en/index.html> for more information on ABC.
- ii. Inclusive education teaching strategies for students who are deaf or hearing impaired in Timor Leste.
- iii. Sign language training and professionalising a network of sign language interpreters in Timor-Leste.

6.1.5 Australia Awards Alumni

Establish an alumni disability network to support the emerging number of alumni with a disability along with those who have studied or have an interest in the disability sector. This network or community of practice could have regular virtual and face to face meetings to connect, collaborate and share their work in the disability inclusion sector in Timor-Leste. This could include supporting applicants with disabilities interested in applying for overseas scholarships.

6.2. Additional recommendations

6.2.1 English for disability advocacy and employment

AATL could form a partnership and develop a MoU with UNTL for the delivery of targeted English language classes for people who are blind or vision impaired. English language classes at UNTL could be delivered through the ELC and focus on basic English language skills for advocacy and employment purposes. To also act as a foundation program with the opportunity to progress onto LELI English language classes offered at a higher IELTS level.

To include the following reasonable accommodations:

- i. Teacher training on inclusive teaching strategies for relevant UNTL staff. (approx. 12-16 hours).
- ii. Desktop or laptop computers with NVDA screen reading software and wired bone conduction headphones for all students who are blind or vision impaired.

- iii. Accessible Word format and large print reading materials (up to font size 24 for participants who are blind or vision impaired).
- iv. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) developed for each participant who is blind or vision impaired with IEP to include all teaching and learning adjustments. To be developed prior to the commencement of the course. (The development of a relevant IEP and training in its use to be incorporated into the teacher training for UNTL).
- v. Two equally skilled English language teachers for all-inclusive classes with one teacher per session leading the class and the other floating to support students as required.

See **Appendix 2** for further details and **Appendix 3** for a sample schedule of teacher training on inclusive teaching strategies for LELI / UNTL English teachers

6.2.2 Sign Language consultation and interpreter training

A total of five sign languages were identified during the consultations comprising of Tetum sign, American Sign Language (ASL), Filipino Sign, Bisindo (Indonesian) sign language and Portuguese sign language. Other sign languages such as Auslan (Australian) sign language may also be in use given other sign languages are influenced by neighbouring and / or donor countries. A consultation is recommended with sign language users to confirm the most dominant and preferred sign language. There are currently a total of three trained sign language interpreters in Timor Leste, all using American Sign Language. The training of more local sign language interpreters is recommended, using the agreed sign language identified from the consultations. The provision of more local sign language interpreters is a critical first step in enabling access to education for people who are deaf in Timor Leste. This will in turn increase the number of eligible Australia Awards applicants who are deaf through higher education qualifications and higher literacy levels.

6.2.3 Livelihood skill development for adults who are deaf

Consultations identified an interest by people who are deaf to acquire immediate and relevant skills to provide them with an independent livelihood. Participants in the consultations suggested cooking, baking, sewing, building and welding as some areas of interest and opportunity. This can be taught locally through TVET providers, with the support of APTC Timor Leste's focus on building the capacity of local training providers in disability inclusion. Training could be provided in local languages / sign languages used by participants to minimise access barriers or hard to reach entry requirements.

6.2.4 Adaptive Technology and training in assistive software and hardware

It is recommended that there is investment in NVDA screen reading software for people who are blind or vision impaired. Not only is this software already in use in Timor-Leste and comparatively low cost. Consultations identified an interest by people who are blind or vision impaired to acquire skills in the use of computers with NVDA screen reading software. There are currently eight computers with NVDA at AHDMTL. AHDMTL has expressed an

interest in having access to more computers with NVDA and opportunities to train more of their 93 members in the use of this technology as an accessible reading and writing tool. Investment in further computers and training at AHDMTL would result in the efficient development of a reading and writing tool, effective for learning English language and essential for future education prospects including Australia Awards Scholarship opportunities.

It is recommended that AHDMTL are supported to apply for a New Zealand Embassy small grant to cover the cost of training in the use of NDVA screen reading software for people who are blind or vision impaired. This support could be provided by interested Australia Awards alumni.

6.2.5 Braille Training

As outlined in section 4.2 above significant work is required to establish a contracted Tetum Braille code, produce Tetum Braille books and increase the access to Braille instruction in Timor-Leste.

It is not therefore recommended that the program invests in Braille instruction at this juncture.

6.2.6. Inclusive Education (IE) Coordination

Consultations with the various stakeholders indicated a high level of interest in disability inclusion with a consistent understanding of the current access barriers for people who are blind or deaf in Timor-Leste. A more detailed focus is required on coordination of current interest and disability-inclusive activities in order to ensure all stakeholders are aware of initiatives and opportunities for disability inclusion. Coordination activities could include regular disability inclusion meetings across the various stakeholders and a more detailed mapping of all disability inclusive inputs and partnership opportunities.

Coordination of IE inputs is of most relevance for MoEYS. One option is for all DFAT funded education partners in Timor-Leste to form a network with regular meetings including MoEYS and other government stakeholders. This network could focus on coordination of activities, ensuring all activities align with MoEYS priorities and the impact, evaluations and learnings are shared. DFAT coordinated CBM allocated input days could be distributed to establishing this network and coordinating the first meeting, including establishing Terms of Reference and documenting all partner activities in alignment with MoEYS goals.

It is recommended that this is discussed at the next Australian Embassy supported KALIBUR meeting.

6.2.7 OPD capacity building

Build OPD capacity for inclusive education training to teachers, recognising many people with disability have had limited access to schooling. Capacity building to focus on disability awareness raising, rights and inclusive teaching strategies.

7. BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Recommendation 6.1.1. requires LELI to allocate testing time and staff to test a sample of approximately 10 people who are blind or vision impaired and 10 people who are deaf or

hearing impaired to gauge their IELTS levels. This will help inform their likely progression onto English language classes or other study or livelihood pathways that do not require English language skills. This testing will also require free NVDA screen reading software for people who are blind and a sign language interpreter for people who are deaf. Exact costs to be determined based on local rates and LELI time and staff allocation.

Recommendation 6.1.2. is the highest cost intervention as this requires additional English language teaching staff, pre course training on inclusive education strategies, accessible format reading material and assistive devices. See appendix 3, 4 and 5 for further details.

Recommendation 6.1.3. involves minimal to no additional budget with promotional activities integrated in the standard AA promotion cycle.

Recommendation 6.1.4. requires AA STA opportunities to consider incorporating a disability focused course with budget implications to be addressed within the STA design.

Recommendation 6.1.5. requires minimal additional budget with a targeted focus on engaging alumni with a disability focus to establish a network and occasional alumni activities.

8. MEETINGS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

A total of 15 organisations and individuals were interviewed categorised into stakeholder groupings of:

- OPDs
- International Scholarship Donors
- Education and Training Providers in Timor-Leste
- Other Initiatives

Their inputs provided a wide range of perspectives that informed the report recommendations reflected in section 6.1 above. See **Appendix 7**, for a summary of each stakeholder meeting including their focus, identified barriers, good practice examples and opportunities and recommendations.

9. CONCLUSION

This report has provided an overview of the current access barriers and opportunities for inclusion of people with disability throughout the Australia Awards cycle, including English language training. The consultations affirmed that people who are deaf or hearing impaired or blind or vision impaired are the two disability groups currently least represented and with the greatest access barriers to participation in education in Timor-Leste, including in Australia Awards opportunities.

Recommendations for AATL focus on a series of practical and achievable interventions that can commence in the second half of 2022 or throughout 2023. These interventions are designed to support the program to be inclusive of people with disability, ensuring that inputs adhere to a 'do no harm' approach and are likely to result in successful education and livelihood outcomes for people with disability in Timor-Leste.

Recommendations for other partners and programs interested in disability inclusion, focus on enhancing improved communication, collaboration and utilisation of program objectives to attain their own goals towards greater inclusion of people with disability.

It is important to recognise that disability inclusive development is an ongoing process with some activities being short term with more immediate success while other activities are a long term investment with success outcomes taking time to be realised.

This report has reinforced that disability inclusion for people with vision or hearing related disabilities will take time and requires skilled expertise, specific resources and intensive local capacity building to ensure long term sustainable improvement in educational and livelihood inclusion.

APPENDIX 1 - List of individuals and organisations involved in consultations

AGAPE

AHDMTL- Asosiasaun Halibur Defisiensi Matan Timor-Leste

Ahisaun

ADTL- Asosiasaun Defisiensi Timor-Leste

APTC – Australia Pacific Training Coalition

Australian Embassy

Inclusive Education researcher / AA alumni from Masters at Flinders

KDTL-Klibur Defisiensi Tilun Tilun Timor-Leste

LELI (Private English Language School)

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (Timor-Leste)

New Zealand Embassy

Partnership for Human Development (DFAT implementing partner)

UNDP

UNICEF

UNTL (University of Timor-Leste) English Language Centre

UNTL (University of Timor-Leste) Lecturer

APPENDIX 6 - Overview of NVDA

Developed by registered charity NV Access, NVDA (NonVisual Desktop Access) is a free, portable screen reader designed for Microsoft Windows. It can output visual content as audio or braille, and is free. NVDA was developed by Michael Curran and James Teh, who are totally blind. Within several years of its introduction, NVDA became one of the most popular screen readers available. It's widely used in digital accessibility testing, as NVDA is an excellent tool for finding barriers that affect real-life internet users. In a 2021 screen reader user survey published by WebAIM (Web Accessibility In Mind), NVDA was the second-most popular screen reader for desktop-laptop use (JAWS, or Job Access With Speech, was the most popular).

The following are key features of NVDA:

NVDA is a free, open-source project. The software is regularly updated with new features, and since its introduction in 2006, it has remained 100% free.

NVDA is remarkably robust. The software provides reliable control of web browsers, login screens, and many popular Windows applications.

NVDA is portable. Users can install NVDA on a USB flash drive, then use the software on most Windows PCs. Other screen readers like JAWS don't provide this portability, which limits their utility for users who work on multiple machines.

NVDA is customizable. It can be extended easily with plugins from the NVDA Community Add-ons website. The add-ons can enhance functionality for specific applications, magnify portions of the screen, and much more.

NVDA has a global mission. NVDA supports more than 50 languages and has an international community of more than 70,000 users in more than 175 countries.

<https://www.boia.org/blog/nvda-screen-reader-an-overview-for-developers-and-content-creators#:~:text=NVDA%20Screen%20Reader%3A%20An%20Overview%20for%20Developer%20and%20Content%20Creators,-January%2028%2C%202022&text=Developed%20by%20registered%20charity%20NV,braille%20and%20it's%20completely%20free.>

APPENDIX 3 - Testing for IELTS levels to purposely select people with academic evidence of English skills

Input	Purpose	Participants	Budget considerations
Testing for IELTS levels	To determine current IELTS level and time required to reach AA eligibility or if other options	A sample of 10 people who are blind who have demonstrated English language	LELI staff Computers with NVDA (testing could be held at OPD to use their

	such as local TVET training would result in more immediate and successful qualifications and income generation.	skills and commitment to improving English language with a goal to apply for an Australia Award.	supply of 8 computers with NVDA screen reading software)
Testing for IELTS levels	To determine current IELTS level and time required to reach AA eligibility or if other options such as local TVET training would result in more immediate and successful qualifications and income generation.	A sample of 10 people who are deaf	Sign language interpreter LELI staff

APPENDIX 4 - English language classes at LELI inclusive of people who are blind or vision impaired

Input	Purpose	Participants	Budget considerations
Teacher training on vision impairment / blindness inclusion strategies.	Development of confidence, skills and strategies in vision impairment / blindness inclusion among teaching staff.	All LELI teachers.	International advisor skilled in vision impairment / blindness inclusion strategies x 4 ½ days plus preparation time and travel costs. Local OPD member as co-presenter x 4 ½ days.
Assistive technology	Accessible Reading and writing tools for participants who are blind or vision impaired.	Students who are blind or vision impaired.	No. of laptop computers (1 per participant) IT support to load free NVDA screen reading software. Bone conduction wired headphones (approx. AUD\$150 each)
Accessible format reading materials.	Equal access to all required text for students who are blind or vision impaired.	LELI staff member assigned to source / produce accessible format reading materials.	LELI staff time. Printing large print reading materials. Training in alternative format production (can be included in IE training)

IEP development	To document reasonable accommodations for each participant with a disability.	LELI staff	Training. Staff time.
Two English language teachers.	Additional teacher to ensure the inclusion of students with a disability.	2 LELI English language teachers.	Cost for additional teacher.

APPENDIX 5 – English for disability advocacy and employment

Input	Purpose	Participants	Budget considerations
Teacher training on vision impairment / blindness inclusion strategies.	Development of confidence, skills and strategies in vision impairment / blindness inclusion among teaching staff.	UNTL English teachers assigned to course delivery.	International advisor skilled in vision impairment / blindness inclusion strategies x 4 ½ days plus preparation time and travel costs. Local OPD member as co-presenter x 4 ½ days. (Participants can be incorporated into LELI training sessions)
Assistive technology	Accessible Reading and writing tools for participants who are	Students who are blind or vision impaired.	No. of desktop or laptop computers (1 per participant with aim to use existing

	blind or vision impaired.		technology / computer lab at UNTL) IT support to load free NVDA screen reading software. Bone conduction wired headphones (approx. AUD\$150 each)
Accessible format reading materials.	Equal access to all required text for students who are blind or vision impaired.	UNTL staff member assigned to source / produce accessible format reading materials.	UNTL staff time. Printing large print reading materials. Training in alternative format production (can be included in IE training)
IEP development	To document reasonable accommodations for each participant with a disability.	UNTL staff	Training. Staff time.
Two English language teachers.	Additional teacher to ensure the inclusion of students with a disability.	2 UNTL English language teachers.	Cost for additional teacher.

APPENDIX 6 - Sample schedule of teacher training on inclusive teaching strategies for LELI / UNTL English teachers

Session	Focus	Time Allocation
Disability definition	Understanding disability, disability categories and Models of Disability.	1 hour
General inclusive education approaches	Understanding the philosophy of inclusion and some of the key teaching strategies for mainstream inclusion in accordance with the principles of Universal Design for Learning.	1 hour
Understanding blindness and vision impairment	Overview of blindness and the most common eye conditions.	1 hour
Blindness and vision impairment inclusion.	Overview of inclusive teaching strategies for students who are blind or vision impaired.	2 hours
Adaptive technology	Overview of the most common adaptive technology (reading and writing tools) used by people who are blind or vision impaired including lap top	2 hours

	computers with NVDA free screen reading software.	
Alternative formatting	An overview of sourcing and developing accessible reading materials.	2 hours.
IELTS adjustments	A review of inclusive strategies, adaptive technology and alternative formats as they relate to IELTS adjustments.	1 hour
IEP development	Writing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students who are blind or vision impaired.	2 hours
Inclusive teaching strategies overview	A review of the application of inclusive teaching strategies for students who are blind or vision impaired.	2 hours
Sighted guide training	Training on basic sighted guide skills.	1 hour

ⁱ Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2007). *2004 Demographic yearbook- fifty-sixth issue*. New York: United Nations. Cited in World Health Organization & World Bank. (2011). *World Report on Disability* (p. 28).

ⁱⁱ *World Health Survey*. (2002-2004). Geneva: World Health Organization. Retrieved from <http://who.int/healthinfo/survey/en>

APPENDIX 7 – Stakeholder interviews

ADTL

Focus: OPD representing the rights of people with disability in Timor Leste. 2015 census total of people with disabilities in Timor-Leste is 38,118 or approximately 3.2 % total populationⁱⁱ of Timor Leste with a disability. Approximately 14,667 who are blind / vision impairedⁱⁱ and 12,164 who are deaf / hearing impairedⁱⁱ.

Barriers

- Students who are blind or deaf are the least supported disability group at school.
- Lack of assistive devices to enable students who are blind, or vision impaired to access reading materials and participate in learning.
- Insufficient MoEYS budget to support students with disability.
- Low teacher awareness and limited teacher strategies in disability inclusion.
- No sign language interpreters in schools to support the inclusion of students who are deaf.

Good practice example

In 2016 and 2017 students with vision or physical disabilities have been sent to Kupang in East Nusatenggara for SMR (yr 12). They are provided with the learning pack for recurrent education for their final year of schooling so that they can have a school completion certificate. To support this, ADTL negotiated with MoEYS for additional tutoring to be provided which included 15 contact hours per week of support. After this bi lateral relationship with Kupang, there is recognition that this recurrent education option should continue to exist but be provided by MoEYS in Timor Leste for people with disability who have previously been denied access to formal education. Alongside this initiative, ongoing work is urgently required to support the inclusion of children with disability in mainstream schools. 5 people did packet C (yr 12) in 2020. None in 2021 or 2022. Currently the Timor Leste Ministry of Education, Recurrent Curriculum Department, are updating the Packet C content in Portuguese and Tetum for students with disability. ADTL is unsure when this will be finalised. This is however a more suitable option to pursue as it is Timorese content and assists MoEYS in monitoring and supporting all students with a disability undertaking this level of education.

Currently, following the completion of packet B students are referred to vocational training such as to Senai mainstream Vocational Training Centre which is inclusive of students with disability. At this centre students are learning livelihood skills such as sewing and motor

mechanics. OPDs are also teaching the skills of Braille, computers with NVDA and JAWS and sign language.

Priorities and opportunities

1. Inclusive teacher training.
2. Assistive devices and training in the use of these devices to support the inclusion of children with a disability in mainstream schools.
3. Access to computers and training in the use of computers with NVDA screen reading software for people who are blind or vision impaired.
4. Braille specialists to train reading and writing in Braille and produce Braille text.
5. Sign language interpreters.

AHDMTL

Focus: An OPD representing people who are blind, or vision impaired in Timor Leste. This OPD currently has 91 members. They have some adaptive technology including 8 computers with NVDA screen reading software and a Braille embosser. The Braille embosser is funded by UNICEF and the machine is from Indonesia however no members currently have relevant skills to use this machine.

Barriers

- Lack of knowledge of English language courses as information is not provided to OPD members.
- No experience in supporting students who are blind or vision impaired and low teacher confidence in disability inclusion within English language courses.
- No specialist skills in reading or producing Braille.

Recommendations and opportunities

1. Apply for a NZ Embassy small grant (up to USD\$20,000) for a supply of computers with NVDA and computer skills training.
2. Work with PHD on supporting inclusive education training.

AGAPE & KDTL -Deaf OPD

Focus: Advocating for the rights of people who are deaf and promoting a Deaf community. This includes improving the use of sign language. ASL is the dominant sign language used in Timor Leste however other sign languages are also used so it is important to ensure a unified sign language is available to all people who are deaf. .

There is a focus to support **the centre in Dili for year 9 for adults who are deaf and for people who are blind. In this centre there is cooking training and government supported training such as welding and air conditioner technician.**

Barriers

- No access to secondary education.
- Limited sign language interpreters (3) and none to support access to mainstream education.
- Barriers in literacy development with members noting that it is hard to learn Portuguese.
- No formal paid positions for sign language interpreters.

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- No inclusive education resources such as videos, diagrams and pictures.
 - Hard to learn to read and write as we have missed out on school until the age of 10 – 15 years.
 - No funding to train more interpreters.
 - Barrier of no secondary school qualifications.
 - Need interpreters for short courses.

Good practice examples

There are some positive relationships with overseas deafness organisations such as in the Philippines.

10 people are currently undertaking sign language training to then work as sign language interpreters.

“I want to visit deaf friends in other countries and get help from these friends to improve deaf inclusion here”

Recommendations and opportunities

1. Establish a relationship with APTC and local TVET providers for training in livelihood skills such as baking, cooking, sewing, welding and handicraft.
2. Apply for an NZ Embassy small grant (up to USD\$20,000) to train more sign language interpreters and professionalise the network including advocacy for paid interpreter positions.

Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC)

Focus: APTC are operating under a new model where their focus is to support local TVET institutions rather than deliver Australian courses. Within their new focus APTC include an aim to support local TVET providers in their GEDSI compliance.

Barriers

- Physical access barriers including attitudinal barriers in TVET settings.

APTC inclusion activities

- Partnership with ADTL with a rotation of 6-month employment positions in APTC of a person with a disability in a GEDSI role.
- Upcoming project on promoting and supporting disability inclusion in TVET providers in Timor Leste.
- Identifying TVET trainers or people who want to become TVET trainers who have a disability and offering them entry into the TVET trainer course.
- Working with interested TVET providers and supporting them to establish a Disability Support Officer role.
- Exploring the opportunity to provide a vocational course to people who are deaf with the potential for future inclusion in the labour mobility scheme. Participants would be provided with a sign language interpreter within this course.

Recommendations and opportunities

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1. Identify an interested TVET provider to establish a local sign language interpreter course in order to address the limited supply of sign language interpreters in Timor Leste. To consult with people who are deaf and related OPDs to clarify preferred and most dominant sign language used in Timor Leste and to co-design the course.
 2. Identify an interested TVET provider to establish a course in computer skills with NVDA screen reading software for people who are blind or vision impaired. To consult with people who are blind or vision impaired and related OPDs to clarify course content, trainers and to co-design the course.
 3. To ensure TVET Disability Support Officers have a suitable time allocation, training and related duties identified in their job description.

Australian Embassy

Focus: Australia is the largest development partner supporting disability activities in Timor Leste. This support includes core funding of disability programs, services and OPDs.

Australian aid promotes the Twin Track model to ensure both targeted disability-specific activities are funded alongside disability inclusion in all mainstream programs.

Barriers identified by Australian Embassy

- Rural barriers in traveling from home to school and around the school.
- Parent and teacher attitudinal barriers.
- Students with vision or hearing impairments experience the greatest access barriers. Embassy reported that MoEYS identifies these two disability groups as the hardest to cater for.

Recommendations and opportunities

Coordination of IE inputs with MoEYS. One option is for all DFAT funded education partners in Timor Leste to form a network with regular meetings including MoYS and other government stakeholders. This network could focus on coordination of activities, ensuring all activities align with MoEYS priorities and the impact, evaluations and learnings are shared. CBM allocated input days could be allocated to establishing this network and coordinating the first meeting, including establishing Terms of Reference and documenting all partner activities in alignment with MoEYS goals.

Build OPD capacity for inclusive education training to teachers, recognising many people with disability have had limited access to schooling. Capacity building to focus on disability awareness raising, rights and inclusive teaching strategies.

CBM input opportunities to focus on OPD capacity building on CRPD Article 24.

LELI

Focus: English language Classes. In regard to disability inclusion, to address the current low levels of English language proficiency among Timorese with disability, WDPTL has contracted the language school LELI to provide a 3-month academic English Language short course for people with disabilities. LELI has reported an interest in providing English language training to people with disability however recognise that further skills, resources

and assistance is required for people who are blind or vision impaired and people who are deaf or hearing impaired.

Barriers

- No specialist training in disability inclusion.
- No computers or assistive software.
- Low English levels amongst people with a disability.

Opportunities

Refer to recommendations section.

Ministry of Education Youth and Sport

Barriers

- No teachers trained to read Braille or use sign language.
- Inaccurate disability data collection.
- Limited teacher training on inclusion strategies.
- Teachers lack confidence to include children with a disability in their classrooms.
- Large classes of up to 60 students creates a further barrier in catering for children with a disability.
- Inaccessible schools.
- UNCRPD not yet ratified.

Current activities

- Train the Trainer package with 10 trainers undertaking training to then train other teachers on inclusion strategies.
- Advocacy training to explain about the IE Policy.
- IE Policy with a focus on no child left behind.

UNDP

Barriers

- People with disabilities tend to be undermined and undervalued.
- Infrastructure barriers.
- Public transport is inaccessible and limits children with disability travelling to and from school.
- No disaggregated disability data.
- Election access barriers.

UNDP inclusion activities

- Gender Inclusion is fully incorporated in all UNDP Timor Leste activities.
- Aim to also include disability as a cross cutting theme across all UNDP activities.
- Advocacy training in July 2022.

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- Transport access program planned for 2022. COVID resilience infrastructure for people with disability. Including 6 new offices in different municipalities plus renovation of 7 existing buildings.

Good practice examples

- **Spotlight:** A program focused on institutional strengthening, legislative reform, inclusive language, gender sensitive budgeting, safe space construction and access to justice. This is a UN flagship program run in partnership with other UN agencies. The Timor Leste project manager has a disability.
- **Inclusive election program:** Braille training is incorporated in the inclusive election program to enable people with disability to independently and confidentially vote. This program is funded by the Government of Japan. This program included a train the trainer model where 300 people were trained in Braille as a partnership with East Timor Blind Union. The Braille training was at a basic level with a request for more training. The election and Braille training was carried out during COVID restrictions.

Monrique dos Reis – Inclusive Education researcher / AA alumni Flinders University

Barriers

- Vision impairment is the most common disability group.
- People with vision impairment are the least likely to access primary school.
- Lack of qualified specialists to teach people with vision impairment
- Access to Braille is limited.
- Hearing impairment is the next most common disability group.
- Families of children with a disability have limited expectations about the future education and employment opportunities of their children.
- Parents do not have trust that the teachers can support and care for their child with a disability.

Good practice example

Australia Awards alumni with disability as leaders and role models in disability inclusion.

Recommendations and opportunities

- Establish a Disability Inclusive Development Australia Awards Alumni network / community of practice for alumni with a disability or who have studied a disability-related course. This network can have regular virtual and face to face opportunities to connect, collaborate and share their work in the disability inclusion sector in Timor Leste.
- Need follow up research / evaluation on the impact of PHD inclusive education training.
- INGO, OPD and disability advisor support coordinated with MoEYS

Human Development Capital Fund

Focus: Scholarships and training opportunities. Funding opportunities available to all people including people with disability in Timor Leste. Four types of scholarships available. Full and partial scholarships. Some scholarships available for targeted groups. All scholarships are based on merit. In country and OS scholarships. Also there are individual proposal opportunities. Last year 13,000 proposals are received and 4,000 approved and a \$500 for undergraduate and \$750 for Masters was funded in 2021. Partial scholarships are supported with either some of the tuition or accommodation fee covered if successful.

Recommendations and opportunities

1. scholarship made available last year targeted to a person with a disability under the vulnerable person category. No additional support is available to address disability related barriers so this opportunity would best suit applicants with minimal disability-related barriers. To further improve the uptake of this scholarship and an increased number of successful applicants with disabilities, it is recommended that a disability support package, similar to that offered within Australia Awards, is offered to address access barriers for people with disability.
2. Promote scholarships and courses to people without a disability interested in studying in the field of disability. Australia is the fourth most common country for this scholarship opportunity and offers a range of courses at undergraduate and post graduate level that build skills relevant to supporting people with disability in Timor Leste.

Plan International volunteer / **Cesar Augusto Carvalho**

Focus: Plan International project works in remote areas and conducts disability awareness raising in remote locations by employing a local man with a disability for community level awareness raising including working with families with a child with a disability.

Barriers

- Low awareness and low confidence by family that limits school access.
- Limited teacher awareness about inclusion.
- People with vision or hearing impairment experience the greatest barriers.
- Family, social and school access and attitudinal barriers.
- People who are deaf or hearing impaired in remote locations cannot access inclusive education and no opportunities to learn sign language as this is only offered in Dili.
- Parents concerned about letting children leave home to go to Dili to learn sign language. This is also due to limited confidence in extended family support. Families don't always trust extended families to look after children with disability.
- MoEYS inclusive education centres are not well resourced.
- Parents are concerned that teachers do not have inclusive strategies and resources. This is especially the case for children who are blind or deaf.

Good practice example

In Dili people who are deaf are communicating with each other using sign language. Through this they are able to study at recurrent education and university level. For example, the Advanced Diploma in Social Inclusion at UNTL through Timor Leste Disability Association support. Also, people who are blind or vision impaired have been able to enrol in the bachelor's in political science at UNTL. These examples of university inclusion should also be on offer to students in remote locations. Most government university opportunities are in the capital.

Recommendations and opportunities

1. Build on campus accessible student accommodation at UNTL Dili campus. Raise awareness about disability, rights and inclusion.
2. Provide this to all community members including parents, teachers and government leaders.
3. Provide resources such as adaptive technology, sign language training, teacher training, teacher aides, etc to enable inclusion.

Hilly Bowman- Botir Matak production

Focus: Self-employed (entrepreneurship). Hilly has a background of art therapist. She has a focus on initiatives supporting trade / livelihood skill development for people with a disability.

Barriers

- Inaccessible transport
- Limited access to formal education
- Low motivation.

Good practice example

In one skill development program, sewing training was provided to women with a disability within their Dili boarding house (AHISAUN). This program was reported as successful because participants were in attendance at each training session and following the training have continued to use their skills to produce handicrafts for sale and are generating profits for their use.

Recommendations and opportunities

1. Deliver training in a setting accessible for people with a disability including ensuring accessible transport to and from the venue.
2. Apply for the NZ small grants scheme to support training delivery and the provision of equipment, such as sewing machines, for people with a disability to own and use for income generation following the training

Maryanne Nolan-Former CARITAS Australia volunteer in AHISAUN

Focus: Former volunteer with Caritas, decided to stay in Timor Leste when all volunteers were supported to return to Australia at the start of the pandemic. She has established a registered training company in Timor Leste and works as a consultant.

Maryanne Nolan focused on supporting the Ahisaun Foundation. She still provides some in kind voluntary assistance to this foundation run by the Catholic church. For example, when asked if the foundation has a child protection policy, she stated that she has just written one for them. The Ahisaun Foundation includes a boarding house in Dili for people with a disability. It houses approximately 29 young women and 5 men with a disability aged between 11-35. The youngest is a 11 year old boy with a physical disability who lives in the section that also accommodates 5 men who are wheelchair users.

The Ahisaun Foundation finds children / young adults in remote villages. Links people with mainstream or recurrent schooling opportunities. At KDTL centre provides sign language support for recurrent schooling. Two students living at Ahseun are deaf. Members have the choice to volunteer / work for the centre or join the transfiguration group. There are currently seven young women in the transfiguration group where they are receiving training to become a nun.

Barriers

- Most students with disability will at best access school until year 3 and then exit due to access barriers.
- Year 12 education is equal to year 7 – 8 in Australia so transitioning to further learning is difficult.
- Physical barriers such as no ramps.
- No safe road crossings with traffic lights
- There are many people with disability in remote village communities who want accommodation in Dili to study. Accommodation is a significant gap.

Opportunities

1. Support centre to align with Caritas and in ACFID code compliance.
2. Improve promotion of and access to further education and training opportunities for residents with disability.

New Zealand Embassy

Focus: in relation to disability inclusion, embassy fund supports a range of initiatives including for people with a disability. The New Zealand Embassy has supported OPDs in celebrating IDPWD. Also support with some capacity building. Supported social enterprise for people with a disability who do bottle recycling. Supported the building of their production house. Support rehabilitation centre for people with disability through assistive mobility equipment, Braille training, LELI English language including encouraging people with disability to be included. 250 in LELI in 2022 in English language classes funded by NZ embassy.

Three scholarship programs

1. PhD, Masters and Degree
2. Short courses for individual applicants to study in NZ for up to diploma level – 1 month to 1 year in duration.
3. English for government employees

Barriers

- Challenges for some applicants with disability in completing the scholarship application forms.
- No / low numbers of applicants with disability who meet the eligibility criteria especially in regard to academic qualifications and English language requirements.
- No additional support currently provided to people with disability within the New Zealand scholarship program.

Opportunities

1. Small grant scheme for people with a vision impairment. Up to USD \$20,000. Use a localisation approach so application does not need to be in English. NZD \$250,000 per year budget for small grants scheme.
2. Promote short courses to people with a disability (½ short courses are open. ½ of short courses are fixed by ASEAN). Short course can be an internship. 10-15 places per year for open category of short courses. Can include 2 months intensive English language training for short course.

Recommendations

Improve scholarship program to be disability inclusive through a disability support package. To further improve the uptake of this scholarship and an increased number of successful applicants with disabilities, it is recommended that a disability support package, similar to that offered within Australia Awards, is offered to address access barriers for people with disability.

Partnership for Human Development

Focus: DFAT funded education program. Working with RACS on the development of a vision screening tool plus UNICEF and PHD working on disability data collection. CBM Australia advisor from Germany supporting Timor Leste on early childhood identification of disability. Pathway plan from school to English language training classes. In service teacher training during school holidays. Has already been delivered in 5-6 municipalities over the past 2 years. One off training. There is a gap in teacher follow up after completion of the training. There is a partnership with OPDs with OPD members raising awareness about disability and lived experiences of people with disabilities in education. Deaf OPD and Vision Impairment OPD has been provide with government funding for awareness raising for pre service teacher training. Inclusive Education Manual – MoEYS manual. PHD facilitating review of this manual.

Barriers

- Access barriers to formal learning for all students with disability but especially for students who are blind or deaf.

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- Access is better in the capital due to better access to support services and resources. E.g donor programs more likely to be offered in Dili.
 - More time to learn English to address poor education background, excluded from mainstream school. Needing to learn how to learn, adaptive technology, sign language and English.
 - Limited data on students with disability.
 - Greater barriers for girls with and without disability.
 - Greater barriers for remote people with and without disability.
 - Need additional time for promotional phase for English language classes.
 - School teachers have low level of knowledge on disability and lack disability inclusion strategies.

UNICEF

Barriers

- Hearing, vision, psychosocial barriers.
- More barriers in rural areas for all disability groups.
- Less awareness about rights to an education in rural areas.
- Stigmatised language used to describe disability in rural areas.
- Barriers in Dili are focused on physical access barriers and communication access barriers.
- Family stigma.

Priorities and opportunities

- Physical access barriers need to be addressed.
- Recurrent education to be prioritised and improved in Timor Leste to assist people with a disability gain their school qualification if they have previously been denied access to compulsory education.
- Advocacy to address stigma and rights, especially in rural locations.
- Access to inclusive and adaptive technology and support services such as sign language interpreters, hearing aides, computers with screen reading software, Braille, etc.
- Need to formalise a unified sign language for Timor Leste.