

Friends of Suai news



December 2024

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter which includes updates on our friendship activities.

We would like to sincerely thank you for your support throughout the year. We remain committed to funding initiatives that benefit the people of Covalima, including the scholarship program and the Covalima Community Centre so that it can maintain its crucial services. We are seeking your support to do this.

Donating to Friends of Suai is a powerful way to contribute to Timor Leste's development, promote equality and help build a brighter future for its people.

We hope you will consider donating to our scholarship appeal and are grateful for any amount that you can contribute.

We wish you and your families a very happy Christmas and a safe and wonderful start to 2025.

Thank you and best wishes from Friends of Suai

Scholarship appeal

We have scholarship candidates ready to commence in 2025 and ongoing commitments to students underway with their studies.

All scholarships are funded by community donations and we need your help!

Scholarships provide opportunities for students to complete their education and prepare for future employment. Educating young people has a significant impact on the lives of individuals, their families and communities.

With your support we can ensure a better future for young people in Covalima district.

You can donate using the button below to link to our Give Now page, or directly to the Friends of Suai Donations account (details at the bottom of this newsletter).

[Donate to the Scholarship program](#)

Graduates start their teaching careers

As part of the Timor-Leste National Government teacher career regime, many of the Baucau Teachers College graduates are now being appointed as permanent teachers at public schools throughout the country.

To date, eight FoS scholarship graduates have been formally appointed as teachers. They have shared photographs with us and have sent their thanks and best wishes to all FoS supporters and donors.

The photo below is of graduates Elisa and Lucia at the official ceremony in Dili in November.



Vocational trade scholarships

This year Friends of Suai provided scholarships for students to complete trade qualifications in Dili. One young man graduated from Senai Becora in September after completing training to become a motorbike mechanic.

Another student, Deolindo (pictured below) is in the final stages of completing a Certificate in General Construction at Don Bosco Training Centre, specialising in electricity. He is hoping to complete his final placement in Suai.

We wish both of these students all the best as they embark on their careers.



Activities in Suai

16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence

Congratulations to the CCC Rural Women's Development team for organising a successful event in Labarai village on 25 November to commemorate 16 days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. The event included speakers and theatre group performances to share information about gender-based violence, human trafficking and inclusion. The CCC has developed an excellent reputation for hosting events and sharing information with communities throughout Covalima to promote gender equality, inclusion and understanding of human rights.



Rai Matak (formerly With One Seed) expansion

The With One Seed project, now known as Rai Matak (Green Land), is going from strength to strength. The national Rai Matak Foundation has now been launched in Dili, with the principle aim to continue to work with local communities throughout Timor-Leste to carry out carbon farming using the successful With One Seed model.

The Rai Matak staff at the CCC work with subsistence farmers in Tilomar sub-district to plant and maintain trees, with over 100,000 trees now distributed. There are plans for expansion into two new sub-districts in 2025. The CCC is starting the process of recruiting staff, building nurseries and engaging with communities.

The annual farmer payments will happen later this month, bringing much needed money into these rural communities. Pictured below are four Rai Matak staff with a farmer in Casabauc village (second from right).



[Donate on our Give Now page](#)

Upcoming event - Annual trivia night

Plans are underway for the annual trivia night on 20 March 2025. This is our biggest fundraising event of the year and we hope you can join us.

Please add this date to your calendar and [send us an email](#) if you'd like to host a table.



Past event in Port Phillip

Suai Church massacre commemoration

This year marked the 25th anniversary of the Suai Church massacre on 6 September 1999. Friends of Suai held a commemoration event to honour those who lost their lives and to show solidarity with our Timorese friends.

More than 40 people gathered in remembrance at St Kilda South Port Uniting Church. It was an opportunity to reflect on all that the Timorese people endured to gain independence and their ongoing struggle to rebuild their nation.

Stay connected

The friendship between the Port Phillip and Covalima communities is a relationship that goes beyond the usual concept of financial aid. It connects the community in the City of Port Phillip with the community of Suai/Covalima in order to enrich and enhance the lives of all involved. The participation of the community is key to the success of the friendship.

Get involved by volunteering your time, making a donation or attending our events. All are welcome.

Making donations

All funds raised will ensure the Covalima Community Centre in Suai can continue to implement community development programs. Donations can be made via the following methods:

Direct deposit (preferred method)

Commonwealth Bank account
Acct Name: Friends of Suai Donations
BSB: 063 243
Acct: 1034 3552

Online via the Friends of Suai Covalima

🔗 givenow.com.au/cause1266
(fees apply)

Bequests

You can make a bequest in your will to the Covalima Community Centre in Suai as it is an incorporated body (unlike Friends of Suai). This is a wonderful way to make a lasting impact to benefit future generations. You can obtain advice from your legal adviser about doing this, and for general information please email friendsofsuai@portphillip.vic.gov.au

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