Employing Young People in Community Cultural Development

Many Hands International

- Australian not-for-profit
- Places CULTURE at the centre of development
- Works as a counterpart to the State Secretariat for Culture, Timor Leste

Culture and Sustainable Development

- John Hawkes: ‘society’s values are the basis upon which all else is built. These values and the ways they are expressed are a society’s culture.’ (2001:1)

Community Cultural Development in Timor Leste

- ‘The various existing cultures should not be seen as elements opposed to development but instead as part of it… Because culture and traditions are dynamic processes, which change through time, a better understanding and incorporation of such elements in the process of modernizing the country will help developing a cultural identity for East Timor.’ (Secretario De Estado Da Cultura 2013: 4)

Youth & employment in Timor Leste

Approximately:
- 1 in three people in Timor are ‘youth’
- between 15,000 and 20,000 young Timorese entre the labour market each year
- 40% of young people are unemployed in the rural areas

Fataluku Cultural Research Project

The Fataluku Cultural Research Project aims to preserve cultural heritage by:
(1) Recording endangered forms of traditional cultural expression.
(2) Building local capacity to preserve cultural heritage.
(3) Providing Fataluku people an opportunity to view and learn more about their cultural heritage.
Benefits to young people

- **Rico said:** ‘I have the opportunity to learn about cultural practices and knowledge that I have heard of but never seen for myself. This is very good for me.’ (personal communication, April 2013)

- **Maria said:** ‘I have worked with other international NGOs. Working with MHI is different because even though I am from Lospalos and am Fataluku I do not know all the cultures from our region. When I became part of the research team I began to learn about my own culture …’ (personal communication, April 2013)

Benefits to the community

- improved intergenerational relationships
- raised profile of young people

Benefits to the organisation

- motivated team
- supportive local communities
- quality work
- time and cost effectiveness
- accountability

Challenges/Issues of employing young people in CCD

- short funding period
- high level of support, training and mentorship required

Conclusion

- Community cultural development can provide meaningful employment opportunities for young people in rural areas
- Multiple benefits are experienced by young people, community and the organisation
More information

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