

# ANNUAL UPDATE

# TIMOR-LESTE

## AILEU



**Together with your sponsorship, children and families are making positive changes in Aileu. Learn more about the valuable ways we work with children and communities.**

Children in Aileu face many barriers to fully enjoying their rights. Over the last year, hundreds of parents learnt new positive parenting practices to help give their children safe and supportive home environments.

And more than 400 young people gained essential knowledge about their sexual and reproductive health. Youth are now able to make informed decisions about their lives and bodies.



**685**

People have access to clean drinking water



**6**

Field farmers schools created for youth to gain agriculture skills



**127**

Boys are now advocates for girls' rights and gender equality

**“AT THE YOUTH CENTRE, I ATTENDED TRAINING ON SEXUAL HEALTH WITH PLAN'S SUPPORT. NOW I AM A PEER EDUCATOR.”**

Anita, 23 years old





**NAME: JOSEFINA**

**AGE: 23**

**DREAMS TO BE: AN  
ENTREPRENEUR**

**“I LEARNT HOW TO RUN A SMALL BUSINESS TO EARN AN INCOME. IT’S IMPORTANT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO NOT ONLY LOOK FOR A JOB BUT ALSO TO CREATE YOUR OWN JOB.”**

## Meet Josefina

**Like the child you sponsor, Josefina is taking steps toward achieving her goals.**

Josefina is the oldest sibling in a large family. She’s always loved taking care of her brothers and sisters and is determined to succeed so she can support them as they go to school.

## Opportunities for Growth

Josefina’s family lives in a rural area. Her parents have been farmers for all her life, but they have struggled to make a good income from selling their produce. Josefina likes to grow vegetables as well and tries to contribute where she can.

Although Josefina completed secondary school, she was not able to afford university. But a couple of years ago, she joined the Village Savings and Loan Association, which was set up by Plan in her community.

Through the Savings and Loan Association, Josefina took part in training on horticulture and how to raise chickens. She also received seeds and farming tools for her vegetable garden.

## Harvesting Success

Since joining the Savings and Loans Association, Josefina has seized the opportunity to invest in her garden. She took out a small loan to purchase watering equipment and a wider range of seeds.

She’s now increased her production and has earned enough money to both pay off her loan and help her younger brothers and sisters with their education.

Josefina is also encouraging other young people to set up or join their own Village Savings and Loans Groups so they can start their own business and earn a good living.



*Josefina with her thriving garden*



# OUR PROJECTS IN AILEU ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



Young people can confidently take charge of their bodies with sexual health education

## MY BODY, MY FUTURE



**Around one in five girls in Timor-Leste marries before their 18th birthday.** Access to sexual health education is limited which leaves both girls and boys without the knowledge they need to take charge of their bodies.

At 13 schools, 145 girls and 127 boys joined Champions of Change groups. These groups empower young people to advocate for gender equality, becoming leaders in their community to change social norms. And 461 youth took part in comprehensive sexual education where they learnt how to form healthy relationships and how to prevent unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

Two new youth-friendly health centres are also ensuring young people can access safe and supportive sexual and reproductive health care. Girls and boys can now make informed decisions about their bodies and their futures.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT



**Pre-school education in Timor-Leste is not common,** particularly in rural and remote areas, such as Aileu. The early years of life are crucial to help build strong foundations for children as they grow.

To help girls and boys get the best possible start in life, monthly parenting sessions are held in ten communities. These sessions empower parents with knowledge on key child development milestones and positive parenting practices. Mothers and fathers also learn about children's rights and gender equality.

The monthly parenting sessions also expanded to include a mobile library, helping to bring age-appropriate books to children in Aileu so they can learn, play, and grow.

“Thanks to Plan for establishing play groups in our community. I am very happy to learn with my new friends on how to count numbers, singing, storytelling and building good relationships with friends.”

– Felisia, 5, from Aileu



# YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



The best is yet to come—and together we will continue to work for a brighter future for the children in Aileu.

- More than 80% of children in Timor-Leste have experienced violence or abuse in their home. We will continue to advocate for child protection and girls' rights, both in communities and at the national level.
- Young people are regularly excluded from playing an active role in their communities. We will support youth, particularly young women, to gain the leadership skills they need to stand up for change.
- We will also ensure young people have access technical or vocational training so they can get a good job or start their own business.

Thank you for your continued support.



“Thank you for supporting children and their families in Aileu. All the achievements have happened because of your support.”

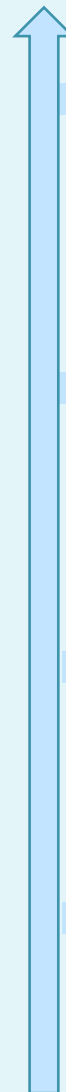
**Ramalho Barreto**  
Programme Area Manager

## THE PLAN EFFECT



Your sponsorship commitment is turned into effective long-term change—providing help for self-help. We involve children at the centre of all projects, bringing effective and sustainable solutions to families and communities. With Plan's Effect, your commitment helps empower communities to transform their lives and futures.

## THE LAST 12 MONTHS



**JUNE**

**10**

Communities set up mobile libraries with children's books



**JULY**

**1,030**

People joined Village Savings and Loans Associations



**AUGUST**

**18**

People trained as early childhood facilitators



**SEPTEMBER**

**24**

Villages learnt about adolescent sexual health and rights

