The Future of Rural Schools Development in Timor-Leste

By Peter Clements, Architect
Clements Aspani Architects
www.clementsaspani.com

The Materiality of Timorese Architecture

“Sitting on woven mats under a thatched roof in a hut with no walls, we were the target of a barrage of questions from men who know they may die tomorrow and cannot understand why the rest of the world does not care... Greg Shackleton in an unnamed village in Portuguese Timor”

Greg Shackleton, Balibo
Built form and Pedagogy – how does the physical environment affect learning?

Outdoor Language Class SOLS 24/7 AHHA

Obviously you can have an outdoor class without any buildings at all – what really matters is the capacity of the teachers. But buildings can make teaching a little more pleasant during adverse weather etc!

Rural-Urban divide evident in the quality of school facilities

Urban schools have more brightly lit, modern, classrooms with ceramic tile floors

The With One Seed school in rural Baguia has simple corrugated iron walls and rough floor.
The Top-5 school facilities

- Toilets and handwashing facilities
- Ceiling fans in classrooms
- Large sized classrooms for 45-50 students
- Drinking Water (filtered from tank or well)
- Library books and teaching resources

The Sacred Library

School libraries sometimes function as locked storerooms, perhaps similar to sacred ‘lulik’ houses. Textbooks are precious, scarce and often in other languages such as English which students do not understand.
Toilets & Handwash Facilities

Good toilets and handwash facilities are critical for girls to continue their schooling. Toilet blocks should be connected to the main school buildings by a covered way, and have a rainwater tank.

School Kitchens & Cook Stoves

To provide fuel for young minds each school could have a kitchen, being a separate out-house where fuel-efficient wood stoves can be used to cook rice and other dishes. Breakfast Clubs for children who miss breakfast.
Computer Laboratories
Will one day all schools have a computer lab to learn Microsoft Word and Excel?

Classroom Furniture & Pedagogy
Clusters of tables to encourage working in teams
External Shade for Play

Pre-fabricated shade structure at Canossa Pre-Eskola Kindergarten, Comoro Has Laran, Dili, by Goya Foundation, Rotary Club of Kew and Clements Aspani Architects

School Refurbishments Examples- Los Palos

Los Palos school refurbishment by Spend-It-Well and Kirsty Sword Gusmao, 2012
School Facilities as an Investment in the Future

Fretilin billboard Dili, June 2017