

TIMOR-LESTE

This August marked the conclusion of WCI's two-year *Economic Empowerment and Conflict Prevention* program in Timor-Leste. In partnership with local NGO Ba Futuru, the program was a huge success!



WCI began working in Timor-Leste with Ba Futuru in 2015, through the *U.S. Department of State's Global Women, Peace and Security Initiative*. Our Economic Empowerment and Conflict Prevention program focused on building the capacity of local organizations to empower women through training in financial and business literacy, peace building, community mobilization, and conflict prevention. Each of the 91 participants left our trainings with an action plan on how to achieve their professional, personal, and family goals. Over the course of the 18-month program, each woman received regular dedicated support from staff, who tracked their progress and served as mentors. When asked to present action plans for their business, the participants were provided with support, feedback and advice, ensuring the sustainable success of their business ideas.



"All the information that I received during this training was really great. Even if I don't know how to read and write, with the patience and willingness from the facilitators I was able to understand the information and ready to implement it."

- Antonia, East Timorese saleswoman (53)

COMMUNITY THEATER

In addition to our trainings, WCI and Ba Futuru put on six community theater productions to convey difficult messages about women's equality and conflict mitigation. These productions reached over 2,250 men, women, and youth, including community leaders such as vice administrators, police commanders, and village chiefs. After witnessing one performance, a post administrator suggested that Ba Futuru should continue to implement and expand their community theater performances in rural areas of the country.



Before one performance, only

17%

of men surveyed stated that women should have the same chance as men to work outside the home.

After the performance,

62%

of men surveyed stated that women should be given that same opportunity as men.

As a result of the program, women:

- Ran for Chief of their villages
- Started a program for youth on conflict mitigation
- Grew their small businesses

And reported that they:

- Are more engaged in community gender issues
- Understand how to solve problems within their homes
- Have a better understanding of finances and business

WCI and Ba Futuru hope to continue working together to empower women in Timor-Leste in the future!

