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STATISTICS

Total number of students and classes in SOLS 24/7 for the month of December.

December records the highest number of new full time students.

The following is the students' statistic and the number of full-time classes for the month of January.

	Class	New Students	Drop Outs	Total no. of students (current and new)	Total no. of females	Total no. males
Full Time	1	26	7	40	25	15

Our school's enrolment increased after 26 new students have joined our full-time program. Numbers have increased as it is coming into the second month since we have opened our part-time classes and more people are getting to know about our program. Furthermore, our students were encouraged to bring any friends who were interested to join the school. NGO forum also helped us to promote our program. Students have not only come from Dili but faraway districts such as Samae, Suai and Oikusi.



Singing the school anthem

We are very pleased with this development but we hope to get more students in the coming month. Apart from running our daily classes and doing our work, we are still promoting our full time classes by talking to other NGOs, talking to ministries and the community members around the school. We hope to continue making progress for the month of January.

7 students dropped out as they were not able to get use to the school's very packed program and discipline. Students have to be awake by 5.20am, much earlier than their normal waking up time at home which is, 7.30 am. Classes run throughout the day from 7am to 5pm. Definitely, the program here is very different from the lifestyle that many Timorese are used too but the packed schedule is so that students can get maximum learning in their two years at SOLS 24/7.

CURRENT SITUATION

No fights for the month of December.

Focusing on constructing the school and training students.

Even though Fatuhada is known be one of the most notorious areas for gang fights, we were very glad that there wasn't any fighting in the month of December. There were small groups of gangs that stood by the roads in front of the school but they did not cause any trouble. Due to this relatively peaceful situation, we were able to focus on constructing the school and training of the new students that had just come in November and December.

ENGLISH CLASS

Introduction to English.

Laying the foundation of English speaking and writing through Formula and Practice.

Formula and practice is a quick English learning system that has been developed by SOLS 24/7 & being used for the 7 years in Cambodia. It has enabled our students to converse in simple English within 2 – 3 months of their studies.

Students were taught how to use pronouns and articles, "a, an and the". Students also learned common nouns and regular verbs. Students were able to make simple questions and sentences such as:



Classes in the hall

Q: What is this?

A: This is an apple

Q: What is that?

A: That is a ball.

Q: What is that?

A: That is the beach.

Teachers had to use more dramatic ways to describe the meaning of many words as the students and the teachers did not have a common spoken language. One of our teachers commented that he felt like a clown waving his arms trying to communicate with students. But this was not a barrier as the students were eager to learn and gradually were able to communicate with the teachers.

LOGISTICS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

United to build our school.

Looking for solutions and putting our best to build the school.

The teachers and director, Teacher Raj worked together with all the students to renovate the school's premise in the afternoons from 1pm until 5pm. We cleaned up the place, renovated the house, build the tables and benches, and build a huge concrete water tank to store the water, made the classroom, gardened the school premise, put up the lights system and created a volley ball court. 100 zinc panels were bought to make the roof of the school and palm leaves and branches were bought for future use.

The students became more flexible and slowly removed their old habit of being lazy, acting slowly, complaining, giving up easily, over relaxing and so on. Even though work was very hard, we tried to look at everything as half full (positive) as we were not building only our muscles but the love and unity between the teachers and students. These activities had so much of positive overlapping benefits because we got what we needed to run a school and everybody benefited physically and mentally.



Excavating land

PART-TIME ENGLISH PROGRAM

Plans to extend our English Program.

Discussions held to offer part-time English classes for East Timorese.

SOLS 24/7 would like to extend her English Program by opening part-time classes in January. After the arrival of 2 very experienced teachers, we now have enough people to teach English classes and thus we will be able to provide more service to help Timorese come up in life.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Free visas, future partnerships and visits.

Volunteers get free visas, future partnerships discussed and cabinet ministers visit the school.

From the meetings and presentation with the Secretary to the Minister of Ministry of Labour and Community Re-insertion, we were given free visas for all our international volunteers. He was impressed and pleased with what SOLS 24/7 is doing to develop and reach out to Timorese youths.

Teacher Raj also met Mr. Helder, the manager of Youth Program DAI for USAID to discuss the possibilities of having an ITC Computer Lab for Timor Leste. Mr. Helder was expressed great interest in our idea but no decision has been made because he had to discuss the idea with his donors and team members.

6 officers from the Ministry of Labour and Community Re-insertion visited the school and had lunch with all teachers. They were impressed to see our activities and students. They wanted to spend more time talking to the students but only 2 of them could stay and the rest had to leave early.



6 officers visit SOLS 24/7

Future plans to open at Ulmera.

MOU signed for a 20-year lease on Sekolah Unggul (School for the Elite).



Signing of MOU

On the 16th of December 2006, SOLS 24/7 signed a Memorandum of Agreement & Lease for 20 years for Sekolah Unggul (School for the Elite). During the fight for independence in the late 90s, all the structure of the roofs, flooring, toilets and sanitary systems were destroyed, looted or left behind. There was no maintenance and thus the school is currently in a very bad state. Sekolah Unggul will be turned into SOLS 24/7 Teacher Training Center that can easily accommodate 500 – 1000 boarding students. The current Teacher Training Center in Dili will then be turned into an Academic Training Center.

EVENTS

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Students get 2 weeks holiday for Christmas and New Year.

We wished all our students a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year as they left for a 2-week holiday from the 23rd December to 7th of January. Like many other countries, Christmas in East Timor is celebrated by going to the church, attending parties and visiting the houses of relatives and neighbors. Our students shared with us that Christmas is a food feast as delicious food would be served in many the houses they visited. The students did not forget their teachers as they came back with cakes, fruits and even live chicken!

VOLUNTEER AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

More Men Make More Moves!

More developments made as Mr Ranny and Mr Saron join the SOLS 24/7 team in East Timor.



Saron, Mercy and Ranny

On 7th of December, Mr. Say Ranny & Mr. Rous Saron, from GDI Cambodia (SOLS 24/7 Cambodia) joined the team. Both of them have been an integral part of the team of SOLS 24/7 for over 6 years and have taken many responsibilities while they volunteered in Cambodia and have proven to be top amongst their peers. They have been very committed and are very valuable to the organization. Mr Ranny and Mr Saron are bringing with them a lot of knowledge and experience in teaching, starting-up new classes, agriculture and management and

with their presence we will be able to have more programs in and outside the school Mr. Say Ranny will be responsible for the training of modern agricultural techniques and Mr. Rous Saron will be part of the teaching team as well as being responsible for setting up a District Training Center early next year.