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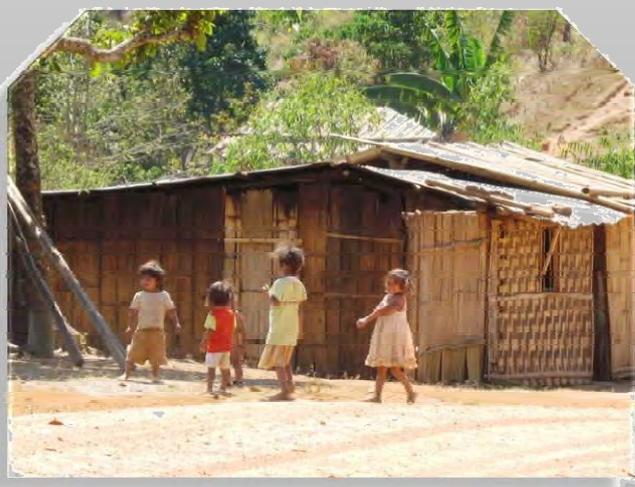
PROMOTING HEALTH, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

East Timor is one of the world's youngest nations but it is also one of the poorest. The hospital mission to East Timor began seven years ago in the sub-district of Laclubar. Currently collaboration has been extended to include the Catholic Church, the Ministry of Health and local schools in order to assist a people that has suffered and continues to suffer, and looks to the world hoping to find brotherly support.



With more than a million inhabitants, most of whom live in rural areas, this young country is experiencing a certain degree of political instability and some uncertainty about the future.

Recent data published by the United Nations shows that East Timor is the poorest country in Southeast Asia, with an annual *per capita* income of €275 and with a very high rate of youth unemployment. The UN Development Programme's 2006 Human Development Report (HDR) says that it will be possible to reduce poverty by using to income from oil and gas fields in the Timor Sea. The UN underlines that the money should be invested in agricultural development, professional training and health.



As regards public health, there are 10 doctors for every 100,000 people, according to HDR. The infant mortality rate was 61 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2005 and only 18 percent of the women giving birth received medical assistance.

The health situation is of special concern in the remote, internal regions of the country. As noted by Br Vítor Lameiras, one of the leaders of the Hospital Mission in East Timor, those are areas where "people die without knowing why".



In response to a request in 2002 by the Bishop of Baucau, Msgr. Basilio do Nascimento, who asked the Hospitaller Order to intervene in Timor-Leste's health sector, the "Fatebenefratelli" established the mission in Laclubar, a remote small town of 3,000 inhabitants located in the central mountains of the district of Manatuto. The choice was determined above all by the enormous health needs felt there and by the fact that it was one of the areas with the lowest development

indicators.

As in the rest of the country, 90 percent of this sub-district's population of 13,000 is Catholic, with the remaining 10 percent Moslem or animist. Apart from the "Fatebenefratelli", also present in Laclubar is a congregation of Brazilian nuns, the Congregation of the Most Holy Blood, who are active in education and in assisting young children.



The Brothers are helped by a group of Portuguese lay hospital workers (currently three), all technicians in various fields. Their joint activities include promotion and education in the health sector (in schools and with local communities), combating tuberculosis (they run a home for TB patients), psychiatric and mental health



support (community-based but recently strengthened by the inauguration of a new Fatebenefratelli facility to be used specifically for mental health) as well as training, including training in the field of human resources (through support and scholarships offered both at high school and university levels).





St. John of God Health Support Centre

On 30 July 2010 the Hospitaller Order inaugurated its new St. John of God Health Support Centre (*Centro de Apoio à Saúde S. João de Deus*) – (CAS-SJD) –, a facility whose construction was entirely financed by the Portuguese Province and also includes a specialist centre for psychiatry and mental health (featuring a residential unit for acute patients), a residence for the religious community and a training centre for Postulants and/or scholars.



The support of the Portuguese Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, which paid for the centre's equipment and furnishings, made it possible to start training activities immediately and to begin recruiting personnel in order to start treating patients in 2011. In [the month of August] 2010 a Memorandum of Understanding establishing operational conditions for the Centre was signed with the East Timor Ministry of Health.

The Centre can meet demand in the entire district of Manatuto (which has more than 35,000 inhabitants) and, as agreed with the Ministry of Health, will work in coordination with the six local health centres and the district hospital. In that connection the CAS-SJD technical team organized a training and awareness-raising course last November



for senior staff and nurses involved in the district's mental health programme and has begun a series of visits aimed at supporting and assessing the local Health Centres' mental health programme. That way patients referred for hospitalization will be able to benefit from uniform therapeutic models at the CAS-SJD, and will be hospitalized only in acute cases, while with other patients assistance and support will take place within their respective families and local communities.