Steps to the Future – Timor Leste

Thanks to the ongoing support from the Deputy Vice Chancellor, the Steps to the Future team have been able to run a second successful cooperative workshop for education and training in Timor Leste. The organising team of Professor Peter Kell, Lorraine Sushames, Mandy Sandery and Therese Kersten were all a little anxious in preparing for this event. Initially the TL vice Minister for Basic Education - Dulce Soares had agreed to sending 60 participants for each of the two days and we were pleasantly surprised to see more than 200 participants arrive each day.

We were privileged to have the Australian Ambassador, Mr Peter Doyle, CDU Vice Chancellor & Deputy Vice Chancellor all present at the opening of the two day event where the following themes were discussed: Leadership, Assessment Methods, Vocational Education & Training and Bilingual Education.

Professor Michael Christie generated interest and discussion on multilingual education in the NT. Timor Leste is currently piloting programs in three districts delivering education to preschool children in mother tongue. Michael’s presentation has led to some strong links being made between CDU and UNESCO who is supporting the TL Ministry of Education. There is also the opportunity for CDU to be involved in overseas placements for Preservice teachers, Early Childhood education and teacher development as well as working with the Australian College of Educators in assisting the teachers of Timor Leste.

Once again, all those involved in this now ‘biennial event’ learned quickly how to think on our feet, be resourceful & innovative while remaining calm. I’d personally like to thank all those involved in helping to make this a meaningful and worthwhile event for teachers in Timor Leste. I look forward to the School of Educations next opportunity.