

NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL

EVALUATION REPORT



MOVING BEYOND THE TEMPORARY?

Evaluation of the NRC's School Rehabilitation and

Compact Teacher Training Program in Timor-Leste

By Ritesh Shah, University of Auckland

& Barry Leneman, Necessity Housing Inc.



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Statements made in this evaluation remain the sole responsibility and viewpoint of the authors.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CAD	Core Activity Database
CTT	Compact Teacher Training
GoTL	Government of Timor-Leste
IDP	Internally displaced person
IFU	Infrastructure Unit
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
MoE or "Ministry"	Ministry of Education
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NMFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NOK	Norwegian Kroner
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
USD	United States Dollar
YEP	Youth Education Pack

Executive Summary

In mid-2008, the Ministry of Education asked the NMFA (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and NRC (Norwegian Refugee Council) to assist in the temporary upgrade of schools in remote areas of Timor-Leste (East Timor). Between May 2009 and June 2010, NRC constructed or rehabilitated 30 remote schools in Manatuto and Ermera district. NRC also fitted basic water supply (where possible), built/remodelled toilets, delivered new tables and chairs, and installed basic sports equipment at each of these sites. Following this, NRC developed and delivered a Compact Teacher Training (CTT) program at all 30 schools between February and October 2010. It provided five weeks of on-the-job training and aimed to develop teacher competency in the domains of Teaching and Learning and Professionalism.

In August 2010, an independent evaluation of NRC's role as a provider of school rehabilitation and of compact teacher training in Timor-Leste was commissioned to: (1) assess the extent to which obligations towards the primary project beneficiaries (teachers, children and the school communities) had been fulfilled; (2) assess the compliance of both projects with objectives as set in the project documents and agreements; (3) assess the relevance, effectiveness and contribution to sustainable solutions for each project.

The evaluation found that NRC's actions recognised and were able to address the constraints and limitations that often leave remote and rural schools neglected in the country's development. Specifically, the school reconstruction component took into account the need to provide durable structures that were appropriate and feasible to the environments they are constructed in. In addition, the CTT recognised the value and importance of providing site-based support over an extended period of time to teachers who otherwise lack training opportunities.

In combination the projects:

1. Introduced constructive solutions to those impacted by conflict by combining rehabilitation of physical infrastructure aimed at improving access to education, with intensive on-site training that was geared towards improving educational quality and relevance;
2. Made strong attempts to ensure that project activities would be coordinated, transparent and complementary to other Ministry initiatives and donor activities in the education sector;
3. Were generally cost-effective and completed within prescribed timeframes; and
4. Worked closely with each schools' broader community to assess and address their school and water/sanitation needs, provide temporary employment opportunities to males, and facilitate renewed dialogue between teachers and parents.

The evaluation team determined that many of the stated objectives and activities were achieved in both projects. The school rehabilitation undertaken contributed to:

1. The creation of a friendly learning environment for students and teachers alike through the safer classrooms constructed, new furniture and play equipment provided, and water/sanitation (WASH) works completed;
2. Improved teacher motivation and student enjoyment of school, based on interviews and observations conducted; and
3. Improved hygiene and health of the students by fitting a water supply and adequate toilets on site

Based on classroom observations, and interviews with teachers, students, parents and CTT trainers across six sites visited, the evaluation team determined that the CTT had contributed to:

1. A safer and more child friendly school environment by introducing teachers to new methodologies for managing the classroom and engaging all students;
2. Classrooms where teachers were aware of and utilised a wider range of active learning methodologies with their students;
3. Increased teacher confidence in lesson planning utilising the primary curriculum document; and
4. A greater understanding, on the part of teachers, of the professional behaviours and dispositions they needed to exhibit in front of their students and wider community.

However, the evaluation team has a number of concerns about the durability of the intervention in the medium to long term. The report concludes that it remains unclear whether communities or the Ministry have the necessary commitment, knowledge and skills to maintain the improvements that have been made. Additionally, the evaluation team doubts, in the absence of ongoing monitoring and feedback for the teachers trained across the 30 sites, that behaviours, attitudes and skills gained from the CTT will be sustained. An underlying concern in this evaluation is that despite NRC's best efforts, national offices of the Ministry have largely failed to notice the value of NRC's technique and approach to school rehabilitation and teacher training; and that while some educational partners (INGOs and international agencies) in Timor-Leste have chosen to utilise the skills of the CTT trainers to progress their own projects, none have indicated an interest in continuing or reinforcing the CTT program after NRC's exit.

Given NRC's imminent exit from the country at the end of November, the evaluation team has a series of immediate concerns, or recommendations for NRC Timor-Leste. They are listed in Section 5.3.

The evaluation team also believes there are several lessons that are important for NRC globally, and for other education partners remaining in Timor-Leste to heed as they continue their work into the future. They are:

1. **Nothing is impossible:** NRC demonstrated the power of possibility in difficult circumstances. Given the challenges of working in Timor-Leste, the approach undertaken during school reconstruction and the CTT should be closely studied and applied/adapted to other contexts and programs, particularly its systems of logistics, communication and monitoring/support. Despite numerous obstacles and challenges, NRC was able to effectively overcome most of them, largely due to an excellent system of logistical support, planning, and communication/monitoring between field and national office staff.
2. **Site-based teacher training works:** Teachers and students benefit from a program that consists of a cycle of skills development, practice with new techniques and ideas, and monitoring/feedback from trainers. For professional development programs in Timor-Leste, extended on-site teacher training presents a viable and results oriented alternative to costly and often ineffective programs currently promoted in the country.
3. **Recognise the benefits of joint projects within the same organisation:** The school reconstruction and CTT projects have shown that a combined effort between two teams with quite different mandates can be successful when there is effective coordination, communication and collaboration

between them. They also demonstrated that in terms of engaging with communities affected by conflict in a durable fashion, teams working on shared objectives can achieve symbiotic results that promote the broader policies and goals of the sector in which they are operating.

4. **Plan for the long haul:** For future education and shelter projects, budgets and timeframes allocated should be sufficient to allow a staged exit, which includes a handover to other donors or national authorities. Ideally, this should be in place prior to project commencement, and be formalised in a MoU.
5. **Do not underestimate the power of perception:** There are strong indications that the perceptions and beliefs of end users and partners are quite important in long-term engagement and support of program activity. While it is expected that messages and ideas will get misconstrued in any context, it is critically important that these misconceptions are rectified. Only through ongoing monitoring, collaboration and communication with project beneficiaries and partner organisations will these issues be identified and jointly resolved.
6. **Work to build local capacity:** The process and resulting outcomes of both programs indicate that it takes a lot more time and effort to build the skills, competency and expertise of local beneficiaries and citizens than to utilise the expertise of those who may already exist; but that this investment often yields great dividends later on. Conversely, failure to build local capacity for the sake of expediency can lead to a lack of ownership, responsibility or capacity to sustain the program after donor intervention ends.
7. **Recognise the costs and opportunities of going it alone:** The success of these two projects is due to the excellent management and timely execution of intended activities by NRC. Based on the experiences of donors who have handed over management of activity to the Ministry, or used existing Ministry systems, it is quite likely that the degree of short-term success would have been more muted. However, NRC's challenge in getting higher level buy-in indicates that projects working independently of government systems for teacher training and project management may suffer in their long-term durability.
8. **Better consider the end from the start:** For education projects aimed at improving educational quality, rapid response solutions are rarely appropriate in the medium to long term. NRC may need to consider how for future programmes of teacher training, in contexts that are development-focussed, there may be a need to plan for the long-term and secure adequate funding and resources for such activity from the start.

Introduction

1.1. Purpose and scope of the evaluation

Since November 2006, NRC has been working in Timor-Leste to address humanitarian gaps. Most recently, the shelter¹ and education teams have been involved in an 18-month project rehabilitating the school facilities and providing compact teacher training (CTT) on-site. In October 2010, both projects will come to an end in anticipation of NRC's planned exit from the country by the end of November². In mid 2010, NRC expressed its intention for an evaluation of these projects to occur in August and September. This evaluation was seen as necessary to:

1. Provide an independent assessment of NRC's role as a provider of school rehabilitation and CTT, and determine the degree to which its obligations to target groups was met;
2. Ascertain how well both projects complied with objectives outlined in project documents and agreements; and
3. Gauge the relevance and effectiveness of both programs as well as their contribution to durable solutions for the communities that NRC undertook this project within.

In its proposal to NRC, the evaluation team suggested the myriad of evaluation questions posed in the ToR³ would be better approached by investigating overarching themes at the various stages of the project cycle (design, implementation, outcomes)⁴. This suggestion was accepted by the evaluation steering committee. Therefore, the ensuing approach taken by the evaluation team in both its analysis and reporting of findings explores matters of coordination, efficiency, relevance, participation, transparency, gender equity and coherence at all stages of the project.

1.2. Methodology and approach

Given that both the program and NRC as an organisation will not be continuing its work in Timor-Leste beyond the end of this year, the evaluation team approached this evaluation from a summative (end of project) stance rather than a formative one. The team focussed its efforts largely on ascertaining the outcomes both interventions have had in the communities NRC has worked in and assessed these outcomes against stated project objectives. Such outcomes, however, could not be contextualised without an appropriate understanding and assessment of project design and implementation (i.e. project inputs). The evaluation team has endeavoured at all stages of the project to undertake its work in a way that is open⁵, relevant to end users⁶, reliable and independent⁷, and participatory.⁸

¹ Shelter refers to the NRC technical team on the ground, not a shelter program. The NRC shelter team that worked on this project continued from its previous work on transitional shelter activities.

² Alfredo Zamudio, "Exit Strategy Norwegian Refugee Council Timor-Leste 2010," (Dili: NRC Timor-Leste, 2010).

³ See Appendix Three

⁴ The evaluation matrix included in the evaluation teams' initial proposal is attached in Appendix Four

⁵ Throughout this process, the evaluation team, in collaboration with representatives of NRC have openly shared questions/concerns, findings and methodological approaches and

All data collection occurred between mid-August and mid-September 2010. At the outset the evaluation team spent time on a desk review examining the content of documentation sent by NRC.⁹ Specific interview questions¹⁰ were then drafted based on this review.

This was followed by two weeks in Timor-Leste between late August and mid September. The majority of this time was spent visiting six of the 30 remote school sites¹¹. The schools were purposively selected based on the evaluation teams' preference of visiting sites that: (1) were at different stages of the project/post-project cycle; (2) presented a cross-section of sites in terms of relative remoteness; (3) represented a mixture of construction techniques and approaches utilised.

During school visits, the evaluation team employed a largely qualitative, case-study approach. Interviews or focus groups were held with several different groups of project beneficiaries. In total approximately 100 community leaders and parents of children at the school, 34 students¹², 15 teachers, four CTT trainers, and one school director were spoken to across the six sites. The school visits also included a thorough inspection and walk-through of the school buildings and grounds to assess construction techniques, WASH project(s) undertaken, and the quality and appropriateness of sports equipment and school furniture provided by NRC. Informal observations of teacher practice were also conducted at each site to gauge how individual teachers employed skills, attitudes, and dispositions taught during the CTT. At the two sites where teacher training was occurring at the time of the visit, the nature and content of this training was also observed. Attendance data was also collected as part of the teams' visit to each school site.

En route to some of the school visits, district Ministry officials were visited at their offices and interviewed.¹³ Interviews (both formal and informal) with NRC program

challenges. The team also aimed to be as open as possible with participants of this evaluation in terms of its purpose and its intent, as well as its limitations.

⁶ In an inception conversation, the evaluation team discussed with the evaluation steering committee the potential purposes of this report. It was made clear at that time that this document would be used for NRC's own internal learning, as well as a platform for discussion with donors and the MoE in Timor-Leste who might build on the pilot nature of this program. It is with these audiences in mind that the evaluation team approached its analysis and reporting of both programs

⁷ All of the evaluation questions were explored through the collection of data from multiple sources to make sure the information gathered is correct, relevant and independently verifiable.

⁸ The evaluation team believed that the voices of project beneficiaries, NRC management and staff in Timor-Leste, the Ministry of Education, and those with experience and knowledge of working in Timor-Leste, particularly within the education sector needed to be included.

⁹ This includes: project proposals, LFA's, building designs and survey reports, ongoing progress reports, communication between NRC-TL and the MFA (donor), and communication between NRC and the MoE.

¹⁰ See Appendix Five

¹¹ A map noting the locations of each of the schools NRC worked in as part both projects, is included in Appendix Six and Seven

¹² The evaluation team recognised early on the difficulty of engaging children in conversation. To "break the ice" participating students were asked to draw various pictures of their school (old and new), sanitation facilities, and classroom activity. Students then discussed their pictures in the form of a story and the evaluation team asked questions to the group around each picture drawn.

¹³ The superintendent and one school inspector were spoken to in both Ermera and Manatuto districts.

and senior management staff, national Ministry officials and representatives from INGOs, UNICEF and the World Bank were held in Dili as time permitted.¹⁴

1.3. Methodological limitations

The evaluation team was only able to visit six of the 30 sites in the two weeks it was in Timor-Leste. It cannot be automatically assumed that the outcomes observed at the six sites visited can be generalised across all 30, as each site has its specific constraints and challenges. Given the timing at which the evaluation took place (during or shortly after project completion), the ability to adequately assess whether the overall objectives of the projects will be sustained in the long-term is not possible.¹⁵ Finally, the teams' visit occurred after substantial completion of construction, thus outcomes assessed as part of the reconstruction component are based on a number of construction assumptions¹⁶.

2. The context behind the projects

2.1. NRC's mandate in Timor-Leste

In 2006, four years after Timor-Leste regained its independence, Timor-Leste plunged back into conflict. Rioting in Dili led to more than 6,000 homes being destroyed and 100,000 people fleeing into makeshift refugee camps around the country. NRC commenced its work in the country in November 2006, with the specific mandate of filling humanitarian gaps through a shelter and camp management program to some of the IDP population. As part of this activity, NRC constructed 595 transitional shelters, managed several IDP camps, and rehabilitated a health clinic in Dili that had been damaged in the 2006 crisis. In 2008, an education program was added to its existing shelter and camp management programs, as part of NRC's quest to promote durable solutions in post-conflict settings. The program began with the construction and management of five youth education centres with vocational training (YEP), in collaboration with its shelter team. The objective through YEP was to provide youth with pathways to employment, self-employment, or re-entry into the formal education system.

In 2009, the Ministry of Education and the NRC agreed to collaborate on a program to improve the infrastructure in 30 schools in rural areas of Timor-Leste with funding provided by Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA or "the donor"). It is this last project, in association with the Compact Teacher Training (CTT) Program that was subsequently run at the same schools, with which this evaluation concerns itself.¹⁷

¹⁴ A complete list of all individuals spoken to from all these groups is included in Appendix Three. However, the names of individuals have not been included to protect their right to confidentiality.

¹⁵ We consider this a critical limitation as international best practice, as well as NRC's own policies in education and shelter, suggest that solutions need to be durable and self-sustaining

¹⁶ Such as: structural design addressed soil stability and the inevitability of an earthquake; concrete, rock, sand and water were mixed properly; footings and steel placement, as well as appropriate soil clearance around steel followed plan and/or structural observation details; steel posts had required size and appropriate welding of rod at their base; slopes next to all structures are less than 1:1 or have adequate retaining walls; retaining walls when built have substantial grouting as well as appropriate backfill drainage; bottom of footings and liquid seepage (toilet water containment pits) are set into slopes less than 1:1 from daylight; black water remains underground and farther (horizontally) than 150 ft. (45.72 meters) from rivers and/or potable water sources.

¹⁷ Greater background about both programs is discussed in Section 2.3

In April 2009, the transitional shelter program was shut down due to a change in government policies. By September 2009, all tented camps were closed as a result of a cash recovery grant given to IDPs by the government. NRC handed over responsibility for remaining camp management activities to IOM in October 2009. In December 2009, NRC commenced plans to exit the country by November 2010, primarily because of a lack of need for ongoing shelter and camp management, and a lack of substantial funding for educational activities to continue.¹⁸ At the moment NRC is in its last month of operation in Timor-Leste.

2.2. Primary education sector in Timor-Leste

The violence that ensued after the country's vote for sovereignty from Indonesia in 1999 had catastrophic impacts on the primary education sector in place at the time. Research estimates that up to 90% of the schooling infrastructure was destroyed in the violence that engulfed the country as the Indonesians left. Additionally, 50% of the primary teachers, many of them Indonesians, departed the education system.¹⁹

The immediate response by the United Nations and other development partners was to quickly return students to school by (re)building school facilities and recruiting teachers to fill the void. Many buildings were reconstructed in haste, leading the World Bank²⁰ to conclude, "Although 80 percent of schools were restored and useable within 18 months of their destruction, many schools were not in good condition even by 2003." At the same time, the rush to fill schools with teachers led to many individuals being recruited into the profession without appropriate pedagogical or educational backgrounds.²¹ Today, Ministry of Education statistics indicate that the vast majority of teachers are either unqualified or underqualified for the duties they are expected to perform.²²

This has led to a situation where today, the percentage of students remaining in school and completing a full course of compulsory schooling remains quite low. It is suggested by the World Bank that this is due to a number of factors including the large distances between home and school, poor school infrastructure, a shortage of learning materials and equipment, high rates of teacher absenteeism and the poor quality of instruction.²³

To address these ongoing concerns, the Ministry of Education (MoE or "Ministry") has set ambitious goals to ensure that all Timorese children receive a free, accessible and quality education. In regards to infrastructure, the MoE, in adopting *Education Policy 2007-2012* and implementing the *Base Law for Education* in 2008, has prioritised the upgrade of all school facilities to a durable Australian standard over the next ten years. However, the Ministry's first priority is to rehabilitate and construct schools that will serve as the major campuses in each sub-district (known

¹⁸ Draft Exit Strategy, NRC Timor-Leste January 2010

¹⁹ UNICEF, "Situation Assessment and Analysis of Children and Women in Timor-Leste," (Dili: UNICEF, 2008).

²⁰ World Bank, "Timor-Leste Education since Independence from Reconstruction to Sustainable Improvement (Report No. 29784-Tp)," ed. East Asia and Pacific Region: Human Development Sector Unit (The World Bank, 2004). p. 32

²¹ S Nicolai, "Learning Independence: Education in Emergency and Transition in Timor-Leste since 1999," ed. International Institute for Educational Planning (Paris: UNESCO, 2004).

²² Ministry of Education, "National Draft Strategic Plan 2011-2030, 2nd Draft," (Dili: Ministry of Education, 2010).

²³ World Bank, "Timor-Leste Education since Independence from Reconstruction to Sustainable Improvement (Report No. 29784-Tp)."

as *Eskolas Basicas*).²⁴ This will leave many outlying affiliate or *filial* schools untouched in the short to medium term, despite projections that school rolls will dramatically increase during this time.²⁵ In the short to medium term there is a risk that a substantial number of students, particularly those in remote areas of the country will continue to attend school in substandard, unsafe or overcrowded classrooms.

Additionally, a number of measures have been taken to improve the skills and professionalism of teachers currently working in Timorese classroom. The *Education Policy 2007-2012* makes it clear that, "all teachers shall, in the medium and long term, possess broad knowledge in their area of education, good pedagogy knowledge, and the skills and competences needed to guide and support the students, as well as an understanding of the social and cultural aspects of education through the development of several policy measures."²⁶ Since that time, the government has established separate directorates for initial and ongoing teacher training; drafted a *Teacher Competency Framework*²⁷ specifying the skills, attributes and qualities of a professional teacher²⁸; offered a series of intensive training courses to unqualified teachers; and legalised a Teacher Career Regime that will take effect in 2011. However, due to limited government capacity to institute and implement many of these policy changes, actual shifts in teacher practices and attitudes have been slow, and opportunities for training tailored to the needs of specific teachers non-existent.²⁹ At the moment, teachers in remote schools often have to travel great distances to subdistricts or Dili to participate in training, with deleterious effects on student learning in the interim.³⁰

2.3. NRC's response

In mid-2008, discussions commenced between the Ministry of Education, the NMFA, and NRC about how they could be of assistance to the MoE in their ambitious efforts to upgrade school facilities across the country.³¹ The Ministry's initial intention was

²⁴ See Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, "Legal Regime for Administering and Managing the Basic Education System," ed. Ministry of Education (2010). According to an interview with a senior MoE official within the Infrastructure Unit, construction priority is to be given to the *Eskola Basica*, a nucleus school for a series of communities that will serve Grades 1-8. This nucleus school is to be surrounded by a number of satellite schools, located outside the main centre to serve students in either Grades 1-4 or Grades 1-6.

²⁵ Projections in the recent Strategic Plan (see footnote 21) estimate that in the next 10 years, the total number of six year olds entering school will increase by 10,000 (p. 14)

²⁶ Ministry of Education, "National Education Policy 2007-2012: Building Our Nation through Quality Education," ed. Office of the Minister (Dili: 2007). (pg.20)

²⁷ _____, "Competency Framework for Teachers," ed. DNFCP (Dili: 2009).

²⁸ The four domains are: language, technical knowledge, teaching and learning, and professionalism

²⁹ See Ritesh Shah, "Timor-Leste Ten Years On: Reconstructing Curriculum for the Future?," in *13th UKFIET Development and Education Conference* (Oxford UK: 2009).for a further discussion of this.

³⁰ This is a fact verified in several interviews conducted with district and national level MoE staff over the course of the evaluation, and was also discussed by the teachers themselves. While some training takes place during school holidays, other trainings/meeting occur in either regional or national training centres, taking teachers away from their classroom for days at a time.

³¹ This initial conversation was prompted by the NMFA asking for the return of \$1.8 Million USD in unspent funds from the World Bank in mid 2008. According to the Charge D'Affairs of the Norwegian Mission in Dili at that time, this money had grown in value to approximately 18 Million NOK. The funds when received back several months later were allocated towards the combined school reconstruction and CTT projects, through two separate grants (TPFS0901 and TPFZ0901) administered by NMFA. The grants were approved in July 2009 after the

for NRC to assist in constructing schools to a permanent, Australian standard through funding support. NRC, however, expressed concern that given the scope of work the Ministry intended to undertake under its ambitious reconstruction programme, two generations of school children would continue to be educated in overcrowded or substandard conditions in the interim. NRC indicated its preference to provide transitional schools that would provide “improved educational infrastructure for the generation of students that would otherwise be required to be educated in inadequate facilities not conducive to the provision of a reasonable education.”³²

In July 2008, the NMFA, with NRC as the implementing partner, was formally invited by the MoE to provide assistance in upgrading schooling infrastructure.³³ In response to a Concept Note that had been presented by NRC and the NMFA prior, the Ministry stipulated in its invitation letter that:

1. NRC would rehabilitate schools to a five year standard at sites that:
(1) were in an “emergency” situation, (2) were not easily accessible by roads; or (3) would not receive attention from the IFU in the next five years;
2. NRC’s construction designs should allow for buildings and materials to be moved from one location to another; and
3. NRC would work closely with the IFU at all stages of the project.

NRC asked for 10,021,000 NOK from the NMFA for the anticipated twelve-month project that was to commence in May 2009. This funding would cover the costs associated with rehabilitating 30 remote schools in two districts (Manatuto and Ermera) of Timor-Leste, as well as the provision of appropriate sanitation facilities at each of these sites.

NRC also suggested to both the NMFA³⁴ and the Ministry of Education that a teacher-training component be added to its proposed school rehabilitation work.³⁵ The intention behind this aspect of the project was to build on improvements in the physical learning environment by providing five weeks of onsite Compact Teacher Training (CTT) to improve the daily teaching and learning experiences of teachers and students at all 30 locations rehabilitated. The belief, according to NRC’s country director was that, “the complementary impact of both improved facilities, as [well] as the improved capacity for teachers, provides a better environment in several ways for the students, as learners.”³⁶

As part of this project, NRC would train eight different teams of Timorese trainers, who would then develop a curriculum reflective of the domains of Teaching and Learning, and Professionalism within the government’s *Teacher Competency*

signed MoU from the MoE was received, but were applied retroactively from May 2009 onwards.

³² See Norwegian Refugee Council, "School Infrastructure Rehabilitation Tpf0901," (Timor-Leste: NMFA, 2009). Sect 2

³³ Ministry of Education Infrastructure Facilities Unit, "Draft Position Paper on the Concept Note Presented by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Norwegian Refugee Council," (Dili: 2008).

³⁴ Norwegian Refugee Council, "Compact Teacher Training Tpf0901," (Dili: NMFA, 2009).

³⁵ This was done in alignment with NRC’s Shelter Policy, which states that “NRC will facilitate education by assisting with the construction/rehabilitation of schools [and that]...any such intervention will be planned in cooperation with NRC Education Policy”. See *Core Activity Policy Document, Shelter*.Sec 4.6

³⁶ Email from country director, 20/9/10

Framework. Trainers would employ a competency-based approach, giving teachers opportunities to learn, practice and demonstrate their skills over a five-week period, ultimately leading to teachers earning a Certificate in Teaching and Learning that would be nationally recognised.³⁷ In the morning teachers would be observed in their classroom, practicing and utilising techniques they had learned the previous day. In the afternoon, over the course of four hours, trainers would provide feedback to these teachers, and deliver the next module of instruction. During the course of training, the trainers would also facilitate interactions between the school and community members by helping teachers plan and run two parent workshops in the area of “Supporting Your Child’s Learning at Home.” A total of 3,463,000 NOK was asked from the NMFA for the funding of this program. Initially the CTT program was expected to coincide with the start and end of the reconstruction component of the project, but this was later changed, to run from May 2009 to October 2010.³⁸

A relationship of cooperation and mutual accountability between the MoE and NRC was formalised in a MoU signed by both parties in July 2009.³⁹ The MoU⁴⁰ assigned responsibilities and tasks to both parties, and recognised the relatively short timeframe within which the projects would be conducted.⁴¹

3. Project design and implementation

3.1. Transparency, participation and coordination

NRC Shelter and Education policies define very clearly the need for its programs to work closely with national authorities, other donors, project beneficiaries, and other internal programs. The Shelter policy discusses the need to strengthen local competence, capacity and self-reliance; select beneficiaries in a transparent and participatory manner; and be coordinated with other NRC programs⁴². Similarly, the Education policy indicates the need for NRC programs to support the priorities and plans of national authorities, and specifically gain their acceptance of project curricula and materials; strengthen the existing school system through capacity and competence building, including the training of teachers, trainers and education

³⁷ At the time of the evaluation both NRC stated there was verbal acknowledgement of this recognition, but there was no formal process for how this certificate would be counted as “credit” within the new Teacher Career Regime.

³⁸ Reasons for this are discussed in Section 3 of the report

³⁹ It should be noted that there were substantial delays in getting the MoU agreed to and signed. According to those spoken to as part of this evaluation, the MoE made a decision to change aspects of the MoU as a result of consultation with its legal advisors. The MoU then had to be translated into Portuguese before it could be signed off on. As a result, recruitment for CTT trainers did not commence until the MoU was signed on July 24, 2009. However, preliminary work on the CTT began in late May, after approval to begin project planning activity was granted from the Director-General of the MoE.

⁴⁰ M Anne Brown, "Security, Development and the Nation-Building Agenda--East Timor," *Conflict, Security & Development* 9, no. 2 (2009).

⁴¹ Primary obligations assigned to NRC included: working with the MoE to identify a group of potential schools to be rehabilitated; preparing the projects in anticipation of works to be completed; submitting draft program for teacher training and community education for approval to MoE; coordinating with all relevant central and district offices within the MoE; need not to disturb the normal operation of the school for the purposes of teacher training. Primary obligations assigned to the MoE included: identifying the 30 educational institutions to be rehabilitated in line with the Letter of Intent after reviewing a study and proposal put forth for each prospective site by NRC; guaranteeing NRC access to the site throughout the project; defining and identifying terms of reference and assumption for the implementation of the CTT; and being considerate of the tight timeframe of both projects.

⁴² *Norwegian Refugee Council Shelter Policy*. Sect 5.1 and 4.2

officials; and to work closely with UN agencies and other international NGOs⁴³. As part of this evaluation, the subsequent section ascertains the degree to which these objectives and goals were met in each of the components of the program.

3.1.1. School rehabilitation

NRC worked closely with the Infrastructure Unit (IFU) within the MoE to identify the prospective sites that would be rehabilitated by NRC. The director of the IFU presented a list of potential sites to be rehabilitated beginning in April 2009 to NRC. NRC completed an initial assessment of these sites, and provided the IFU with an indication of the scope of works that was deemed necessary. This initial assessment allowed NRC to verify actual student enrolment numbers and the necessary scope and feasibility of required rehabilitation, as well as provide an opportunity for NRC to discuss its intentions with community leaders and school representatives. Based on these initial assessments, NRC put forth a case to the IFU that rehabilitating existing structures was more costly than constructing new structures at some locations⁴⁴.

Approval to commence work was then granted by the IFU director in a timely fashion for most sites.⁴⁵ The director felt satisfied that NRC had utilised communication and coordination channels set in place effectively, and went so far as to compare NRC to other donors who, "had their own agendas", "lacked an understanding of the Timorese culture", or "had no respect for government processes and controls."

Once sign-off was granted from IFU, coordination occurred most frequently between NRC and the district superintendent in subsequent stages of the process.⁴⁶ Both superintendents indicated that prior to the commencement of the reconstruction project, they had indeed met with NRC, but given the structure of the MoE, felt they could not contradict or intervene in decisions that had already been approved by national office. These superintendents understood their job was to facilitate the work that was already approved, rather than to offer any substantive input or feedback.⁴⁷ However, they felt that throughout project implementation, NRC worked in partnership, keeping them informed of progress and challenges faced. Additionally, they often represented the MoE at completion ceremonies at each site, "receiving" the schools back from NRC after the works were finished.

NRC's intention for the reconstruction component was for communities to be involved in the project from its inception.⁴⁸ This process began with visits to all sites beginning in May 2009, according to project documentation. Staff interviewed at NRC felt that their frequent site visits and assessments, prior to commencement, provided ample opportunity for informal conversations with each community regarding the needed improvements to their facilities. Nonetheless, in some of the communities visited by the evaluation team, community perception was that NRC had not adequately assessed their schools' needs.⁴⁹ NRC's response was that initial assessments were

⁴³ *Norwegian Refugee Council Education Policy*. Sect 5.3, 5.2 and 4.1.2

⁴⁴ Given the poor structural conditions of many Indonesian-era buildings and the extensive termite damage to wooden pilings that they observed, according to the Country Director

⁴⁵ NRC's records indicate that in most instances the period between initial discussion and final approval of particular sites was less than two months.

⁴⁶ However, the director of the IFU indicated that his office was involved in a final inspection of the site prior to the completion ceremony and handover back to the MoE.

⁴⁷ In a couple of instances, the superintendents or members of their staff accompanied NRC on visits into the field either prior to, or during the reconstruction process.

⁴⁸ Norwegian Refugee Council, "School Infrastructure Rehabilitation Tps0901," Sect 4.1.

⁴⁹ At one school, after the initial assessment was completed, NRC amended its original scope of work due to community pressure and the recognition of the need for additional rehabilitation work in addition to new construction. In this particular case, a senior NRC

based on: (1) current student enrolment numbers and the required facilities that such a student population would require; (2) considerations of costs of rehabilitation versus new construction, or a combination of the two; and (3) guidance from the IFU.

Once the projects commenced, NRC provided a number of temporary employment opportunities to the male population to promote cooperation and community ownership of the project. This was done despite a comment in one CAD report that, "the lack of experienced workers in remote areas [makes] progress more difficult."⁵⁰ In an attempt to ensure that the maximum number of males would benefit from short-term employment opportunities, rotating rosters of work teams were created by each community's *chefe de suco* in consultation with NRC. Males who participated in construction works were paid \$2 USD/day for their work.⁵¹ Women also participated in the construction process, although their role was to support the male labour force with food and water, and generally were not paid for their contribution.⁵²

For communities needing more complex or labour intensive water supply development, a separate agreement was reached requiring the community to provide volunteer labour in exchange for NRC supplying at least one water point for general community use.⁵³

NRC's project proposal⁵⁴ indicated that local youth would be integrated into rehabilitation works when possible, and provided with basic construction skills training.

However, at the schools the evaluation team visited it appeared that those who worked on the construction projects were predominantly older men, rather than youth. Additionally, discussions with these individuals indicate that the nature of the labour provided to NRC was mainly manual and did not provide them with any new construction skills.⁵⁵

3.1.2. Compact Teacher Training

NRC's Education Team was in early communication with relevant MoE officials regarding the CTT. Prior to submitting its proposal to the donor, the team met with several national directors.⁵⁶

One national director felt that early discussions between NRC and the MoE regarding the CTT were tainted by the fact that NRC had decided to maintain control of project

official acknowledged that the initial assessment had not accurately considered the needs of the student population at the school.

⁵⁰ NRC Shelter Team, "July 2009 School Reconstruction Progress Report," (Dili: NRC Timor-Leste, 2009).

⁵¹ While the evaluation team did not garner any comments about this wage from community members spoken to, one of the inspectors the team spoke to indicated that they had complained to him about this issue, arguing that they should receive at least \$5-\$7 USD a day for their labour. NRC's response is that its payment of \$2/day was made in line with what other agencies or programmes in Timor-Leste pay unskilled labour from the community.

⁵² According to NRC TL, in a few communities they worked in, women were paid for their efforts. However, payment of women was not confirmed at any of the six sites the evaluation team visited, and thus cannot be verified.

⁵³ The problems with this arrangement are discussed in Section 3.2.

⁵⁴ Norwegian Refugee Council, "School Infrastructure Rehabilitation Tpf0901." Sec 4.1

⁵⁵ This included sifting river sand, hauling rocks, mixing/pouring cement, and raising roof sheeting.

⁵⁶ This included the Director for Continuing Professional Development and the Director for Pre-Service Teacher Training

management, unlike donors such as UNICEF who provide technical and financial support for teacher training through the MoE.

The benefit of this arrangement, according to UNICEF and MoE officials spoken to, is that ownership of such program rests with the government, rather than the donor, leading to a sustainable model that can then continue after donor support ceases. However, UNICEF officials acknowledged the difficulty of this process, as projects become stymied within the Ministry by a lack of capacity, unrealistic expectations, an unwillingness to follow through on agreed processes, and/or shifting/differing priorities. Given NRC's tight timeframes and its exit out of the country shortly after project completion, the necessary time and effort that would need to be devoted to building this sustainable partnership was not feasible.

Once funding from the donor has been received, NRC began the process of recruiting and employing its trainers. NRC advertised widely for the positions and received 265 applications. Less than 37 met the minimum criteria and 19 of these individuals were interviewed.⁵⁷ One national director felt that this is one area in which NRC did not work closely with the MoE, because his office was not asked to be part of the recruitment and selection process. This then led to NRC employing trainers who are "not qualified in all four domains of the Teacher Competency Framework," according to him. This perception is contradicted by documentation⁵⁸ and interviews with NRC officials, where there is clear indication the MoE was invited to review the candidate selection criterion, suggest potential candidates, and participate in the interviews, but chose not to.⁵⁹

By October 2009, the majority of trainers had been employed and a program of training for the CTT trainers commenced. Trainers participated in a 20 day specialised Certificate IV training course, adapted from a similar one that NRC already had in place for its vocational trainers from YEP. NRC invited the MoE to select up to 10 inspectors from the two districts their project was based in to participate in the training.⁶⁰ Unfortunately, none of the inspectors were able to attend, as they were involved in a structured professional development program of their own.

After completion of their own training, CTT trainers began to develop the program they would deliver to teachers in schools. In November 2009, NRC presented the broad structure of their 25-day training program to the Director General and Inspector General of the Ministry. According to that month's CAD report, "this has been well received."⁶¹ Similar presentations were made to national directors responsible for

⁵⁷ Minimum qualification required was a Bachelor's Degree in Education and achievement of at least a Level 2 Portuguese Language Certificate according to the CTT project proposal (Sect 5.2).

⁵⁸ See for example NRC Education Team, "August 2009 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database," (Dili: NRC Timor-Leste, 2009).

⁵⁹ The misperception may be linked to lingering resentment that NRC decided not to use Ministry trainers, but rather employ their own. According to the NRC Education team, the Ministry did initially ask for NRC to utilise its trainers. NRC's response was that Ministry trainers would be welcome to apply for positions as NRC Trainers, employed by NRC. The Ministry was asked to suggest and encourage good trainers to apply for such positions. In the end, very few Ministry employed trainers chose to apply for the NRC CTT positions.

⁶⁰ The decision to invite inspectors from these two districts was made in recognition of the fact that after NRC left, it would be their responsibility to support and guide teachers in the child friendly methodologies introduced by the CTT, according to one senior NRC education official.

⁶¹ NRC Education Team, "November 2009 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database," (Dili: NRC Timor-Leste, 2009).

teacher training within the MoE. Once a draft of the program of training was finalised in early 2010, these directors were again consulted and approval for this program granted.

One of the national directors believed that there was no need to change the content of the program developed as NRC clearly indicated how each lesson and module was aligned with Ministry priorities and documentation regarding teacher training.

During this period of consultation, some concern was voiced by the MoE about the language of instruction to be utilised by trainers in working with teachers.

The Ministry indicated their preference for Portuguese rather than Tetum to be used for the majority of professional development delivery. NRC in response reiterated its belief that if teachers were to successfully apply and implement what they learned, instruction needed to take place in Tetum. However, NRC stated that handouts and annexes given to teachers would be in Portuguese.⁶²

NRC also consulted with other development partners throughout the CTT's evolution. Documentation from NRC indicates that on more than one occasion, NRC met with or consulted with agencies such as CARE and UNICEF regarding the CTT program. NRC also consulted with development partners working in the education sector through the Emergency Cluster. NRC attempted early on to integrate its CTT with UNICEF's own program of teacher training. At that time, UNICEF was still negotiating the terms of its own program with the government and had not yet received approval from the MoE. Given NRC's short implementation period, they were unable to wait for UNICEF and thus early coordination with a partner who remains in Timor-Leste providing teacher training was not possible.⁶³

During the development of the CTT program, CAD documentation indicates that the NRC Education Team staff made frequent visits out to the schools. The purpose of such visits was to ascertain the conditions of the schools that trainers would be based in, observe teacher practices, identify and discuss specific educational needs of the teachers and principal, and informally gather children's perceptions about their schooling experiences. Teachers and directors indicated that they had met with both NRC National Education staff and the trainers themselves prior to the commencement of the program. They did not, however, feel it was their place or role at that time to suggest or recommend specific training needs, and were happy to receive whatever program of training NRC were to subsequently offer. At the outset of the CTT, teachers were given further opportunities to identify their expectations and areas of need, and these comments were then revisited in the last session to gauge the degree to which they had been met.

Once the CTT program commenced, ongoing contact and communication about the project was maintained with relevant MoE officials. NRC invited district and national level staff to visit their training sites and observe their processes. Both of the inspectors that the evaluation team spoke to indicated they had taken advantage of such opportunities and were impressed by the professionalism, organisation and structure of the training they observed. Inspectors also assisted NRC in schools where buy-in or engagement of teachers/directors was difficult.⁶⁴ NRC was less

⁶² Interview with NRC Education Official

⁶³ Personal communication, NRC Country Director and Educational Program Manager 19/9/10

⁶⁴ NRC reporting indicates that inspectors provided supportive messages about the CTT and encouraged school personnel to make a commitment to the program. See for example NRC

successful in getting national MoE staff to visit the sites. Project documentation⁶⁵ as well as interviews with some of these individuals indicates that on several occasions, NRC requested national directors to accompany them into the field, but for varying reasons these invitations were repeatedly declined.⁶⁶ The one national-level MoE official who did accompany NRC to visit the CTT, appreciated the opportunity to witness a training that the teachers “genuinely enjoyed”, and felt her colleagues, by not observing such a process, had neglected their duty to cooperate and coordinate with NRC. One NRC staff member interviewed felt that the lack of national office engagement was because the organisation was a “small fish in a big pond”, in other words, a relatively small donor working in *only* 30 schools.⁶⁷

This apparent lack of interest did not deter NRC. They continued to share ongoing messages and updates about the progress of the CTT with national MoE officials. This included in August 2010, hosting a “Lessons Learned” meeting at Ministry premises in Dili. Some national and district-level Ministry officials, and representatives from numerous INGOs and local NGOs attended this meeting. At this meeting NRC shared details about the CTT and the outcomes observed thus far. One national director in attendance appreciated the fact that NRC had made the effort to “bring the program to them” and provide a snapshot of the program for those who were unable to visit the CTT in the field.

3.1.3. Between and within the projects

From the outset, NRC made it clear that close coordination was necessary between the Shelter and Education teams who were responsible for the combined projects. This was deemed important to ensure that: (1) school construction activities and education projects would complement rather than detract from each other; (2) NRC’s protection and reconciliation messages are part of core activities for both projects; and (3) security and logistical routines would consistently be followed. The CTT program recognised that improvements to the physical environment, particularly the provision of additional classrooms, furniture and sanitation facilities would help to facilitate their objectives. To that end, “close cooperation was to occur between the two core activity managers”, as well as between other senior staff within the two teams.”⁶⁸

Meetings between the two teams occurred on a regular basis through the life cycle of both projects, according to the NRC Country Director. However, the school rehabilitation program commenced its work in May 2010, six months before the CTT was functional. When the Shelter Team was drafting designs for each of the schools, representatives from the Education Team were consulted. In some cases, the Education Team made suggestions to the Shelter Team about design features such as skylights, windows and the placement of blackboards.⁶⁹ The Education Team was also consulted while furniture for students was being designed, purchased and built,

Education Team, "March 2010 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database," (Dili: NRC Timor-Leste, 2010), ———, "May 2010 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database," (Dili: NRC Timor-Leste, 2010).

⁶⁵ See for example NRC Education Team, "May 2010 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database."

⁶⁶ Reasons given included the distances they needed to travel, conflicting meetings/appointments on the days they were invited to attend, or that “they were just too busy”.

⁶⁷ Given the multitude of donor projects in the education sector (rumoured to be upwards of 200) in Timor-Leste, and demands each of these project pose on the Ministry of Education and particularly National Directors, this lack of involvement is not unsurprising.

⁶⁸ See Norwegian Refugee Council, "Compact Teacher Training Tpft0901." Sec 7.4

⁶⁹ Interview and personal communication with Education Manager, NRC

to ensure that it would be constructed to student-friendly dimensions and contribute to a positive classroom environment.⁷⁰ Representatives from the Education Team also visited construction sites and provided feedback on-site, according to project documentation.

Within each of the teams, there were well-organised systems for communication and reporting. The Shelter Team for the reconstruction component consisted of: the Shelter Manager, one senior engineer, one office manager, three site managers, six leading hands (foremen), one storekeeper, two logistic assistants, two draftsmen, and five drivers.⁷¹ Project planning software was utilized throughout by the Shelter Manager to effectively deploy staff and materials. During the life of the project, field staff reported back to their project managers and supervisors on a weekly basis. Senior staff inspected construction sites on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. Senior management and NRC HQ were kept abreast of construction activities through regularly reporting mechanisms⁷². The foreman and site managers supervised daily works, and would receive on a daily basis "logistic support, technical assistance, and monitoring required for each project" from the Shelter Team management based in Dili.⁷³

The Education Team⁷⁴ which oversaw and ran the CTT component consisted of: an Education Program Manager, Deputy Education Program Manager, CTT Program Coordinator, and Data Collection Officer,⁷⁵ all of whom were based out of Dili; and seven teams, comprised of two trainers (one female, one male) and a logistician/driver, who were deployed to the school sites. When teams were sent to the field, constant monitoring occurred between the field and the Dili-based staff. The CTT Program Coordinator and Data Collection Officer aimed to visit each team at least once a week. According to one progress report⁷⁶, "the purpose of the visits [is] to ensure the quality of the training but also to discuss challenges the staff were experiencing and needing assistance with." Trainers in the first instance were encouraged to resolve issues within the team, and if this did not succeed, then to bring it to the attention of the monitoring staff from Dili. Trainers spoken to as part of the evaluation felt free to discuss issues with both the monitoring staff and Education Manager/Deputy Manager, and despite their relative isolation, felt well supported and safe during their time in the field.⁷⁷

Between each cycle teams reassembled in Dili for debriefing and review of the CTT modules. Based on this process, changes were made. For example, CAD reports indicate that after the first cycle, a lesson on multigrade teaching was included.⁷⁸ This was a direct result of the trainers observing teachers struggling to engage all learners in such settings. Time between each cycle of training was also used to

⁷⁰ Interview with Deputy Education Manager, NRC

⁷¹ Norwegian Refugee Council, "School Infrastructure Rehabilitation Tpf0901." Sec 5.3.2

⁷² This includes monthly CAD (Core Activity Database reports), quarterly BSC (Balance Score Cards); and progress and end of year reports.

⁷³ Norwegian Refugee Council, "School Infrastructure Rehabilitation Tpf0901." Sec. 5.2.4

⁷⁴ _____, "Compact Teacher Training Tpf0901." Sec 5.2

⁷⁵ This position was added later to the staffing profile as it became apparent that weekly monitoring was a strain on Dili based staff. The March 2010 Core Activity Database states, "one challenge that has been experienced is the time demands of visiting staff in the field...we have made a decision to introduce a new position of data collection officer...[who] will take over some of the visiting that is currently done by our Deputy."⁷⁶

⁷⁷ This is perhaps best reflected in the fact that few trainers fell sick, or quit during the course of the four cycles.

⁷⁸ NRC Education Team, "May 2010 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database."

improve the skills of the trainers. Some trainers found working with teachers who spanned a spectrum of experience levels and knowledge difficult, and needed assistance in mentoring and support. This then became a focus for the August break between training cycles, when the Education Manager and Deputy Manager planned a series of activities for them on learning how to work effectively with adult learners.⁷⁹

3.2. Adapting to the context of implementation

The need to adapt to the local context in recognition of specific constraints and opportunities is one that is well recognised in development work today. Codes of best practice, such as the *INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies*⁸⁰, clearly indicate that the local context must be properly understood and responded to, to ensure that actions taken “do no harm.” NRC’s own Shelter and Education policies reinforce this. Specifically, the Shelter policy discusses that in its approach, NRC will “provide solutions adapted to the specific context...consider and reflect cultural and social aspects, climactic and environmental risks...[and] integrate environmentally friendly materials and appropriate technology in solutions.”⁸¹ Similarly, the Education policy indicates that its programs should be “addressing the specific learning needs of the target group where local programs are lacking or inadequate, through developing supplementary education models and material.”⁸² The completion of the projects within indicative timeframes, with attention to costs, alongside the manner in which each project recognised and adapted its processes to local opportunities and constraints, is addressed in this section.

3.2.1. School rehabilitation

NRC’s initial timeframe was to complete the construction of 30 schools in 12 months (May 2009-May 2010).⁸³ Construction projects commenced in June 2009 with 22 of the 30 sites completed by December 2009. The MoE approved the final eight sites by early January, and reconstruction at these sites (exclusive of the WASH improvements) was completed by May 2010, within NRC’s indicated timeframe and also within cost.⁸⁴

The evaluation team considers this quite an achievement given the constraints faced over the course of this component of the project and believes this was due to excellent communication, coordination and logistical support between the field and NRC head offices in Dili (as discussed in Section 3.1.1). Constraints faced included—delivery delays⁸⁵; difficulty in sourcing a steady supply of local materials such as timber steel and cement⁸⁶; challenges in coordinating and communicating with necessary MoE officials⁸⁷; and an unexpectedly long rainy season making access to some of the sites impossible for much of the project period.⁸⁸ In many cases, NRC’s proven experience in country anticipated and responded to these

⁷⁹ _____, "June 2010 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database," (Dili: NRC Timor-Leste, 2010).

⁸⁰ INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies (2010), p. 20

⁸¹ Policy. Sect 4.1

⁸² *Norwegian Refugee Council Education Policy*. Sect 4.1.2

⁸³ Norwegian Refugee Council, "School Infrastructure Rehabilitation Tps0901.", Sec 1

⁸⁴ NRC Progress report including update on Exit Strategy May 2010, p 3

⁸⁵ Documentation and photos from NRC indicate that in several cases trucks were involved in incidences that put them out of commission or impeded progress for several days/weeks

⁸⁶ NRC Shelter Team, "August 2009 School Rehabilitation Progress Report," (Dili: NRC Timor-Leste, 2009).

⁸⁷ _____, "October 2009 School Rehabilitation Progress Report," (Dili: NRC Timor-Leste, 2009).

⁸⁸ _____, "December 2009 School Rehabilitation Progress Report," (Dili: NRC Timor-Leste, 2009).

challenges appropriately, and planned around them. For example, in anticipation of the advent of the rainy season, NRC delivered materials across rivers well before commencement of construction to avoid the logistical nightmare of such a task once rains began.

A number of innovative techniques and approaches were utilised by NRC throughout the process to expedite construction. Specifically, split palm siding was locally sourced and assembled on-site with community assistance. Local river sand was used for concrete mix, and rock from around the construction site was incorporated into retaining walls and drainage. The use of these materials both created jobs for the community and minimised the logistics behind procuring and receiving materials from afar. Structural steel framing⁸⁹ was a well-selected construction method that was relatively easy to assemble. It also provided a durable structure resistant to termite damage⁹⁰ and facilitated structural compliance with three important design conditions.⁹¹

Building plans also addressed the climactic and geological conditions of each location. Specifically, all new structures were built with overhanging roofs that adequately shed the rainwater at its greatest flow without penetrating the window openings. Rainwater was appropriately diverted with percolation rock beds⁹² and swales⁹³ added to prevent flooding and divert water that is not naturally absorbed by the soil. Retaining walls⁹⁴, were built at most sites where construction was within the 'cut'⁹⁵, to protect the structure from collapsing hillsides. Structurally engineered caissons⁹⁶ matched with structural steel framing posts were designed for differing soil and slope conditions.⁹⁷ Translucent roof sheeting alternated with corrugated steel panels was a simple way to bring much needed natural light into shaded sites. Structures were designed with a suitable number of window openings, allowing for the best possible flow of air, and addressing the generally accepted understanding that lightweight structures in tropical areas can only stay as cool as the ambient air. Design drawings and buildings observed also indicated a sensitivity to lateral motion often caused by earthquakes. However, discussions with NRC's senior engineer indicated that no specific standard or code was applied specifically for this eventuality.⁹⁸

⁸⁹ Steel is considered a 'green' construction material because it can be recycled

⁹⁰ Norwegian Refugee Council, "May Progress Report Including Update on Exit Strategy," (Dili: NRC, 2010), 3.

⁹¹ These include: allowing for interior walls that separate classrooms to be removed or shifted at a later time; providing the opportunity for roof framing to be relocated to permanent structures in the future; and allowing for the use of lightweight split palm siding be used for exterior walls.

⁹² A quantity of rocks that disperses water at a rate that natural soil will absorb without puddling

⁹³ A concrete trough in the ground that rapidly diverts water to another location

⁹⁴ Retaining walls hold back the natural hydrostatic water pressure of ground water that flows to the face of steep slopes.

⁹⁵ Land that is removed from a hillside to create flat soil for construction of the foundation

⁹⁶ Concrete footings that support loads and decrease deflection

⁹⁷ Interview with NRC senior engineer

⁹⁸ This comment was surprising given Timor-Leste's moderate to high risk factor for catastrophic earthquakes, according to the UNOCHA on damaging or catastrophic earthquakes. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Earthquake Risk in Asia Pacific: Modified Mercalli Scale," (Bangkok: Regional Office for Asia Pacific OCHA, 2007).

Considerations were also made about utilising materials that minimised depletion of natural resources, could be reused, and were sustainable. Use of split palm for infill wall construction indicated a willingness of NRC to utilise a material that was renewable and locally available. The steel framing used for many of the structures is recyclable. Its use, rather than timber was considered in light of environmental conditions such as local deforestation and vulnerability to termites. Sheet steel roofing, while not completely green because of its toxic coating and heat magnifying quality, is the best choice because it is locally accepted, readily available, lightweight, and easy to install.

The biggest ongoing challenge for the reconstruction program has been the improvement to water and sanitation facilities at each school. The original project proposal stated that NRC would build “appropriate methodologies for sanitation in areas where water is not easily accessible, such as latrines, etc.” For some sites, the intention was to build pit or composting toilets, as water could not easily be brought up to the school site. Later, at a request of the Minister of Education, NRC was asked if they could bring water to all school sites.⁹⁹ NRC’s response was to advocate for other actors with expertise in water and sanitation works in Timor-Leste to undertake this aspect of the project, given this was both outside the initial scope of the project and not budgeted for in the initial proposal. When this failed, NRC felt an obligation to do its best to bring water to most locations on a gravity-fed system that could be sustainable and would required low maintenance. Savings from material costs and contractor services were redirected towards the additional costs borne through such work.¹⁰⁰

The added complexity of such work, and the prolonged 2009-10 rainy season delayed water fitting at nine sites, and led to NRC asking for a non-cost extension to complete remaining works at the end of May 2010.¹⁰¹ This request was approved, and NRC was given until August 31 to complete remaining WASH improvements. At the end of September, eight sites were still not completed. At the time this report was written, ongoing issues remained with the WASH component including inaccessible water points, the need to improve water intake access or drill a new borehole, a lack of community ownership or engagement in providing volunteer labour, and delays in material deliveries.¹⁰² Given NRC’s exit from the country shortly, a contingency plan has been established where all remaining projects will be subcontracted to an Triangle GH, a water and sanitation NGO, who will work with NRC in the handover process.¹⁰³

A few deficiencies and oversights in construction were observed at the six sites the evaluation team visited. At one site, a substantial and costly retaining wall was required to support footings¹⁰⁴ constructed at the corner of a new building. Yet, even with this wall, the stability of the slope was (and is still) being eroded by the constant overflow of the community water-tank located uphill from the school and it is uncertain whether in the long-term the wall will continue to support these footings.

⁹⁹ Personal communication, Country Director 21/9/10

¹⁰⁰ NRC Shelter Team, "February 2010 School Rehabilitation Core Activity Database," (Dili: NRC Timor-Leste, 2010).

¹⁰¹ NRC May 2010 Progress Report P.3

¹⁰² Based on WASH Progress Report and interviews with NRC Staff

¹⁰³ Personal communication in email, Country Director NRC, 19/9/2010

¹⁰⁴ A foundation that is calculated with the assessment of the soil to support the weight of the structure combined with surrounding conditions i.e. slopes, drainage, bedding plains etc.

The quality and durability of the plywood doors installed at some of the school sites is also of concern.¹⁰⁵ At one site visited, the paint had already begun to chip and degrade the plywood. Paint had been left for these communities to reapply by NRC for this occasion, but none of the community members we spoke to could remember the advice NRC had given them, and could not recall where this paint was now kept.

Finally, in some instances gravity fed water has been brought to a storage tank to allow for continuous and stable pressure as well as provide insurance against Timor-Leste's prolonged dry season. While well intentioned, the team observed that in one location there were already issues with community maintenance of this system, as they lacked the ability to access the bottom of the tank for cleaning. Additionally, the community had no mechanism for stopping flow to the tank when it was filled to capacity, as it was at the time of the visit, and had attached a hose to a hole at the bottom of the tank for this overflow situation.¹⁰⁶

When NRC's Senior Engineer was asked about these defects/deficiencies¹⁰⁷ he stated that NRC was in the process of sending a Shelter Team representative to every site in order to complete and repair some of these issues. These observed issues, however, bring up important questions about maintenance, durability, and support once NRC exits the country.

3.2.2. Compact Teacher Training

Originally the CTT program was to run between May 2009 and May 2010¹⁰⁸. The timeframe was later extended until October 2010 for a number of reasons, according to interviews and project documentation¹⁰⁹. NRC intended to serve approximately 150 teachers, and 1500 students through its program in 30 schools¹¹⁰. Training at the 30 school sites was spread across four discrete five-week cycles commencing in February 2010 and ending in October 2010¹¹¹. Specific schools to be visited in each cycle were chosen based on: (1) the state of reconstruction works at the school, as the CTT would only occur after all major buildings works had been completed; (2) accessibility to the site, largely impacted by the prolonged rainy season¹¹². As

¹⁰⁵ A decision was made mid-construction to switch to solid wooden doors for classrooms and metal doors for bathrooms to avoid this issue in other schools. Plywood doors were installed in some of the first rehabilitated schools, as this was all that was available when the project began. Since then, solid wooden doors have been imported from Indonesia. NRC Shelter Team, "September 2009 School Rehabilitation Progress Report," (Dili: NRC Timor-Leste, 2009).

¹⁰⁶ NRC staff explained the "hole" had actually been the clean out for the tank and thanked us for our suggestion to add a shut-off valve at the intake so the community could stop the flow of water should future issues require it.

¹⁰⁷ Problems that arise from defective installations or missing elements that may require repair or additional construction

¹⁰⁸ See Norwegian Refugee Council, "Compact Teacher Training Tppt0901."

¹⁰⁹ Including delays in obtaining the signed MoU from the Ministry as well as a change in the school calendar, which resulted in schools in 2009 closing in September and reopening in January 2010. See NRC Education Team, "August 2009 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database."

¹¹⁰ Based on numbers quoted in project proposal

¹¹¹ Cycle One: February/March 2010; Cycle Two: May/June 2010; Cycle Three: June/July 2010; Cycle Four: September/October 2010

¹¹² This resulted in a varying number of schools receiving the training each cycle. Cycle One for example visited seven sites/cycle across the two districts, while Cycles Three and Four visited eight sites/cycle across the two districts. When only seven school sites were visited in a cycle, the extra team of trainers was deployed to schools where a larger number of teachers were being trained. See NRC Education Team, "March 2010 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database."

discussed prior, timing between the cycles was utilised for reflection and modification to the 25 lessons, and for ongoing professional development of the trainers. As of August 2010, 104 teachers and 4658 students had been beneficiaries in the 22 schools the CTT had visited.¹¹³ Additionally, by June 2010, 1,646 parents and community members had participated in the workshops run as part of the CTT¹¹⁴. While these numbers do not provide a sense of the quality, appropriateness or relevance of the CTT, they do serve as a testament to NRC's ability to implement a program in a context and structure that many said was not possible.

Planning prior to and during the course of the CTT ensured that logistical concerns were addressed before commencing each cycle. According to interviews with the trainers and teachers trained, the CTT team would visit the site in the week or two before training was to begin to assess the quantity of teachers who were to be trained, address concerns of the teachers, and ascertain their living arrangements either at the school or in a building nearby. Based on this, resources for the teachers were prepared, and supplies procured. The participating teachers noted that they were impressed with the trainers' level of preparedness.

The period between project commencement in May and initiation of on-site training in February 2010 was used to hire/recruit trainers, train them, and then develop the 25 modules that would comprise the CTT curriculum. A factor, critical to the program's success, was the fact that the training was locally adapted to a Timorese context. While NRC has a teacher training syllabus for its programs globally¹¹⁵, the recognition that the curriculum needed to be endogenously owned and developed was a defining feature of the program's approach. At the outset, senior management from the Education Team spent time in the field talking to teachers, observing classrooms, and speaking to children before finalising the components and learning objectives that would comprise the CTT (see Figure 1).¹¹⁶ Trainers also spent time observing teacher practices in classrooms around Dili to better understand some of the issues they would need to address. Trainers were given a scaffold of how each lesson¹¹⁷ was to be structured, and were broken up into teams to develop individual lesson plans that would introduce and reinforce the chosen learning objectives over a course of 25 days. The process of devising the lessons proceeded slowly, according to CAD reports and took place over a span of three months of writing, discussion and revision.¹¹⁸ Daily lesson plans were grouped into weekly plans and then an overall program of delivery prior to training commencing in February 2010.

¹¹³ ———, "Nrc Treinamentu Ba Professores (Ctt) Timor-Leste 2009-2010," in *Lessons Learnt Conference* (Dili, Timor-Leste: 2010).

¹¹⁴ ———, "June 2010 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database."

¹¹⁵ See <http://www.nrc.no/?aid=9348422>

¹¹⁶ Norwegian Refugee Council, "Concept Note, Compact Teacher Training in Timor-Leste" (Oslo: Norwegian Refugee Council, 2009).

¹¹⁷ According to one trainer, each lesson had to include in its design an introduction, exploration of idea/concept, discussion activity and an evaluation task.

¹¹⁸ By mid-December, the trainers had written and produced 60% of the curriculum and daily plan. The remainder was completed by the end of January. See Norwegian Refugee Council, "December 2009 Progress Report Including Exit Strategy," (Dili: Norwegian Refugee Council, 2009).

Field	Unit Title
Learning Environment	<i>Work effectively in an education environment</i> The aim of this unit is for participants to gain an understanding of International and National issues and standards in Education and to be able to work towards meeting these quality standards in the Timor-Leste context.
	<i>Foster and promote an inclusive learning culture</i> The aim of this unit is for participants to develop skills in providing learning experiences for a wide range of learners. Participants will have the opportunity to develop learning strategies, monitor and improve practices.
	<i>Ensure a healthy and safe learning environment</i> The aim of this unit is for participants to develop the skills to make their work and learning environment safe and healthy.
Learning Design	<i>Use National Curriculum Documents to meet student needs</i> The aim of this unit is to assist participants to become familiar with curriculum and design learning opportunities that reflect these.
	<i>Design and develop learning programs</i> At the end of this unit participants should be able to develop learning experiences for a group of learners that meets learner needs.
Delivery and Facilitation	<i>Plan and organise group-based delivery</i> The aim of this unit is for participants to develop the skills to teach a group of learners in a face-to-face learning environment. Participants will develop skills in preparing session plans and resources to meet the needs of particular learners and environments.
	<i>Facilitate individual learning</i> The aim of this unit is for the participant to develop the skills to provide one-on-one individual learning opportunities. At the end of the training participants should be able to identify individual learner needs, build and maintain learning relationships, evaluate the learning relationship.
	<i>Facilitate group-based learning</i> The aim of this unit is for participants to develop skills in teaching groups. Creating a positive learning environment for the group, delivering, monitoring and evaluating learning opportunities.

Figure 1: Broad objectives and overview of the CTT program in Timor-Leste

As one CAD report notes, "...this training has been designed by Timorese for Timorese teachers. As a result the team has a strong sense of ownership of the program and the project."¹¹⁹ This was apparent in speaking to the trainers who spoke with pride of what they had developed and indicated that whoever was going to follow in their footsteps should heed their model. Ministry officials and representatives from NGOs commented that NRC's model of program development contributed to strengthening national capacity, and provided a model for how Timorese themselves can participate in their country's development.

At the outset, NRC did face some resistance and concern from teachers regarding the demands and nature of the CTT. According to one superintendent interviewed, teachers were concerned about being observed in their classrooms on a daily basis, and about the amount of time the training required outside of their teaching duties.

¹¹⁹ NRC Education Team, "February 2010 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database," (Dili: Norwegian Refugee Council, 2010).

This was also recognised by NRC who acknowledged that, “teachers normally work a four hour day and return home, during this training they are being asked to work an additional four hours for 25 days with no compensation.” Teachers indicated that at first, they found it hard to teach all day and then participate in training, but felt that the CTT program was worth this sacrifice. Despite teachers not getting paid for taking part in the CTT, participation and completion rates for the training across the schools was extremely high. Data available after the first three cycles of training indicate that out of a potential 104 teachers that could have participated, 99 had done so and successfully completed the training (a completion rate of 95%).¹²⁰

When teachers were asked why they chose to sacrifice their time for five weeks, they spoke of the fact that compared to other trainings they had participated in, the CTT provided them with practical suggestions¹²¹, immediate feedback, and new methodologies and techniques¹²² they could apply. Teachers also appreciated the professionalism, punctuality and commitment that the trainers themselves modelled, and the trust and confidence they inspired in the group of teachers as a whole. They felt valued by NRC during the course of the training, as lunch and an afternoon snack were provided to them, and small gifts¹²³ for them to use in their classroom were presented for each week they achieved 100% attendance.

The CTT was the first of its kind in Timor-Leste, where a Timorese team goes into the field to present on site teacher training over an extended period of time.¹²⁴ According to a representative from CARE, staying in the school over this period indicated a commitment on the part of NRC to understanding the people they were working with, and provided continuity to a process of change that takes time. One district superintendent noted that the trainers understood the limitations and challenges of particular schools as a result of their prolonged involvement, and could adopt their approach as necessary. This design was developed in consideration of the fact that trust, collaboration, and relationships between the trainers and teachers were necessary prerequisites for changing teacher practice. According to one NRC staff member the CTT model acknowledged that, “if you want to change them, you can’t just tell them what do.” Teachers, Ministry officials and representative from other NGOs all recognised that this was NRC’s biggest point of difference to the standard models of training offered in Timor-Leste—the CTT modelled and reinforced a set of behaviours and attitudes that encouraged teachers to take risks and step outside their comfort zone. This was witnessed first-hand by the evaluation team, when trainers were witnessed in action modelling a number of child friendly methodologies such as role-play, group work, and games.

¹²⁰ ———, "Nrc Treinamentu Ba Professores (Ctt) Timor-Leste 2009-2010."

¹²¹ As an example, one teacher recounted how during training, when faced with a shortage of rulers, the trainer showed them how to make a ruler out of rope. Simple suggestions such as these were much appreciated by teachers who often lack resources that are discussed in the new curriculum and textbooks.

¹²² This included new games and activities to engage students in learning, as well as simple techniques to redirect students when they were off-task.

¹²³ NRC Education Team, "February 2010 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database."

¹²⁴ Commented on by NRC in February 2010 Core Activity Database. Also corroborated by numerous Ministry officials and NGOs when asked to comment on the uniqueness of the program

3.3. Cost-effectiveness

NRC indicates that accountability for money spent and cost-effectiveness of results produced is an important aspect of its work globally.¹²⁵ As part of the evaluation, project costs were assessed against inputs, processes and outcomes.

When assessing just the construction costs, NRC performed well, especially in light of the difficult conditions they were working under. According to NRC documentation, average direct and indirect costs¹²⁶ for the reconstructed or new structures are quoted as being \$175/m², with transportation costs (due to the remote nature of the sites) estimated at an additional \$22/m². As a comparison, the new 'durable schools' being built by IFU cost approximately \$700/m² to construct. Interviews with Ministry officials and representatives from INGOs affirmed NRC's own assertion that given the nature and location of their work, other organisations would have spent significantly more.

The budget allocation across categories of spending for the reconstruction program was also analysed (see Figure 1 below). Almost half of the budget was allocated to project materials, goods and services that include items such as rock, sand, cement, structural steel, delivery, and labour. Personnel cost consumed the next biggest proportion of the budget (32% or 2,979,776 NOK)¹²⁷.

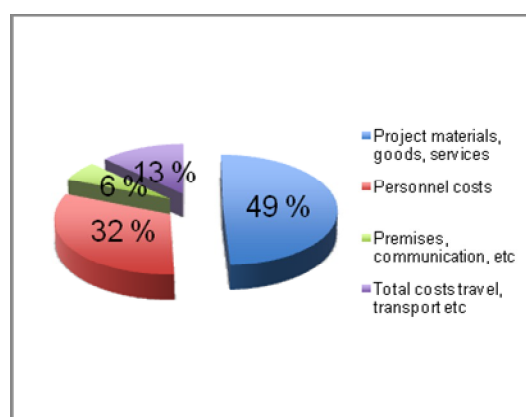


Figure 2: Distribution of monies spent for School Rehabilitation Project

The CTT program had a budget of 3,462,999 NOK. As of June 2010, NRC had executed approximately 1,858,431 NOK. A large part of the budget had not yet been spent for a number of factors, including: the fact that some budget items such as graduation ceremonies would not occur until October 2010; lower than expected logistics costs (namely auto repair and fuel expenses); monies from another grant being spent first at the outset of the CTT; and training costs coming in under budget. Based on the overall budget of the CTT program, and the expected number of

¹²⁵ See *Policy Paper for the Norwegian Refugee Council, Norwegian Refugee Council Education Policy*.

¹²⁶ NRC Shelter Team, "February 2010 School Rehabilitation Core Activity Database."

¹²⁷ One senior Ministry of Education official felt that this part of the budget may have been unfairly geared towards paying expat salaries. This amount of money paid the salaries of two international staff and 23 local staff. The average salary package of expat staff on the project amounted to 642,633.47 NOK, and the average salary package of local staff amounted to 73,674.32 NOK (a difference of more than nine-fold).

teachers to be served, the cost of training per teacher beneficiary amounts to \$3,616 USD¹²⁸.

From an outsider’s perspective, this may appear to be an expensive undertaking, but the costs of setting up this program must be factored into this calculation—trainers needed to be trained, vehicles and equipment purchased, and a program of training developed. Figure 3 indicates that the highest percentage of budget expenditure for CTT was allocated to personnel costs (38% or 1,244,953 NOK). This may be expected given that NRC had employed 14 trainers, six logisticians, and two project officers for up to 15 months. The CTT budget also paid for part of the salary of the Education Manager (expat salary) and the Deputy Education Manager for the entire project period of nearly 20 months. Logistics (travel and transport costs) was also allocated a substantial portion of the budget (22% or 714,957 NOK) due to the anticipated high cost of fuel and car maintenance that would result from the weekly monitoring trips from Dili to the field.¹²⁹ While project materials/goods/services constitutes a large portion of the overall budget, it should be noted that a significant portion of this was utilised to purchase six vehicles (\$99,990 USD), necessary to transport the training teams to and from the field.¹³⁰

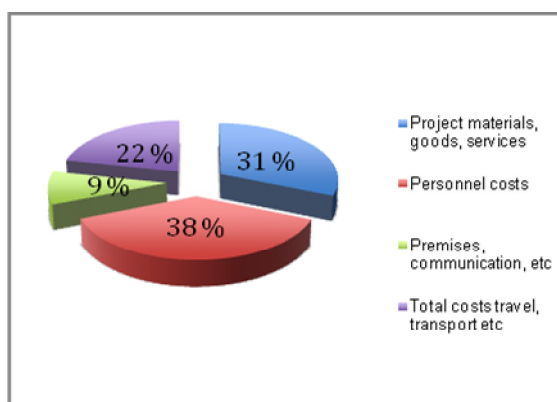


Figure 3: Distribution of monies spent for the CTT Component

In addition to specific budgets for the CTT and School Reconstruction components, a third grant, totalling 4,516,001 NOK was received by NRC from NMFA to cover administrative costs related the organisation’s ongoing operation in Timor-Leste for the period of January to November 2010. A large percentage of this grant (41% or 1,891,953 NOK) contributed to the salaries of expatriate employees (i.e. Country Director, Education Manager). The other significant portion of this budget (40% or 1,823,550 NOK) was allocated to cover office rental and communication costs associated with NRC’s Timor-Leste national office in Dili. Specific amounts within this budget attributable to either the CTT or School Reconstruction project could not be determined from the financial data provided, as this budget also covered administrative costs related to other NRC activities such as the YEP Programme.

¹²⁸ This number is obtained by dividing the total cost of the program in USD (based on a converted amount of \$542,450, provided by the Finance Manager) by the total number of teachers the CTT intended to serve, as the primary beneficiaries of this project.

¹²⁹ This allocation turned out to over-budgeted as only 15.79% of this amount had been utilised as of June 30, 2010

¹³⁰ To be sold at the end of the project as part of NRC’s exit strategy

4. Outcomes

This section of the report considers the results of both interventions, from the perspective of end users as well as measured against stated project objectives.

4.1. Comparing objectives to outcomes

To gauge overall impact of the project, the evaluation team referred back to the initial project proposal and logical frameworks developed for both the CTT and the school reconstruction programs. The team paid particular attention to the stated expected results/outputs, and matched this against observations, project documentation, and end-user perceptions.

4.1.1. School Rehabilitation

According to NRC's original intentions¹³¹ the overall objective of this component of the project was to "improve the learning environment by improving educational and sanitation facilities and enhancing opportunities for inclusion of sports activities in the school program."

5.3.1: *Rehabilitating dilapidated schools will provide a friendly environment to strengthen the education of Timorese children*

In the majority of the schools visited the rehabilitation provided by NRC has indeed created a friendly educational environment for children. It was discovered that:

- The new/remodelled classrooms had roofs that no longer leaked. In the past leaking roofing meant that classes often had to end early or be disrupted whenever rains came during the school day. With the new roofing, students and teachers no longer had to worry about water entering the classroom during school hours.
- New chairs and tables ensured that students were no longer sitting on the floor for extended periods of time. In many schools visited, a lack of furniture meant that students in the past used to sit on dirt floors for up to four hours a day and needed to write on their laps. This was uncomfortable for the students, and meant that they also grew restless and agitated, making teaching difficult for the teachers.
- Prior to the reconstruction, parents were concerned that their children were studying in an environment that was hazardous to their children's health and security—either because of the dirt floors and dust that the children spent time sitting on each day, or because structural beams or walls were severely degraded and in danger of collapsing. With the new/rehabilitated classrooms, parents felt more secure about sending their children to school believing they would now be safe and healthy.
- Interviews with teachers indicated that the new classrooms provided a much better environment for them to teach as they were much larger, better ventilated, and brighter than those used prior.
- Within the MoE, district officials consistently reiterated the "high quality of NRC's construction", that in many circumstances surpassed that which other INGOs and the Ministry itself have been able to provide up until now.

These factors combined led to increased motivation of teachers to teach and students to attend school and learn, according to community members, school directors and Ministry of Education officials interviewed. That stated, in some schools visited, the works NRC completed in and of itself would appear to not

¹³¹ Norwegian Refugee Council, "School Infrastructure Rehabilitation Tpf0901." Sect. 5.1

address the full scope of necessary changes needed to provide a friendly environment to ALL students at the school. Specifically:

- At two sites, NRC built new buildings, but left the old structures intact for the community to either repair or destroy themselves, based on initial agreements reached between NRC and the community. However, teachers and students continued to learn and teach in these older structures. While NRC's scope of work did not hold them responsible for the rehabilitation of "all" school structures in the places they intervened, children continued to study in classroom spaces with structural beams that could collapse, or roofs that could blow away any day. The evaluation team considers this an unacceptable outcome, as the aim should be that ALL students are learning in safe environments, not just some.
- Many classrooms visited were still overcrowded, and far exceeded the recommended maximum student to teacher ratio of 30:1.¹³² Some classrooms visited held in excess of 100 pupils, and other classrooms combined two classes and two teachers in one room, in an arrangement that made it difficult for either group to learn effectively.
- Furniture provided by NRC was not always sufficient to the needs of the school. In several classrooms visited, children were sitting four to a desk, when they are only meant for two, and students were doubled up on one chair. NRC contends that it based its furniture provision on the number of students attending each school session¹³³ at the time of reconstruction¹³⁴, and the quantity of furniture that already existed on site. Matters out of NRC's control, such as theft of furniture, may have also contributed to the situation observed at some schools.

The aforementioned issues are unintended consequences of the school rehabilitation program. Increased classroom space has allowed a number of schools to alter their schedule to accommodate all children of the community in one session, rather than two leading to shortages of furniture, children studying in unsafe structures, and large class sizes.¹³⁵

5.3.2: A temporary income source will be provided for village community members in many of the project sites

As discussed in Section 3.1.1, NRC created a temporary income source during school reconstruction at all 30 sites. The income however appeared to benefit adult males, and did not contribute to the project's intention of "improving gender equity"¹³⁶ or "engaging youth in the rehabilitation work with the inclusion of basic construction skills."¹³⁷ Women were not paid for their contributions to the reconstruction efforts, and most of the communities the evaluation team visited did not indicate that youth had been specifically engaged or recruited as part of this project.

¹³² This is the preferred government ratio of student to teacher, according to a World Bank official spoken to.

¹³³ In some schools with larger student numbers, double sessions were run where one group would attend in the morning, and another in the afternoon.

¹³⁴ The evaluation team noted that in many cases student numbers have increased as a result of the new/rehabilitated classrooms being constructed

¹³⁵ This could have been avoided with better communication and ongoing support between the Ministry (in particular school inspectors), NRC and the school regarding school management issues in light of the changes brought about. This is further discussed in the recommendations section of the report.

¹³⁶ Norwegian Refugee Council, "School Infrastructure Rehabilitation Tpf0901." Sec. 5.1.12

¹³⁷ Ibid. Sec. 4.1

5.3.3: Regeneration of the Water and Sanitation facilities at schools ameliorates the sanitation (and general hygiene and health) of children attending schools.

Teacher recollection of student health before and after the addition/remodelling of on-site water points and toilets indicated that hygiene had improved, but no specific mention was made to a reduction in incidences of hygiene related diseases such as diarrhoea. Teachers revealed that children no longer walked to the surrounding fields/bush to go to the bathroom. Where water was available on-site, children were noted to be washing hands more frequently, and at one school water buckets and soap were observed being utilised by each classroom prior to the serving of the school meal at the end of the day. Teachers also mentioned that children no longer had to wait in line at school to utilise toilets. Children also noted the new toilets as being cleaner, nicer, better maintained, and greater in number than those they had prior.

The exception to this attitude was in schools that still lacked water. More than one student commented to the evaluation team that they would “rather go into the bush than use a toilet without water”. Without providing an onsite mechanism for regular provision of water¹³⁸, general hygiene and the health of children will not be improved significantly. In more than one school it was witnessed that when schools did not have on-site water, water basins were unfilled, and in some cases toilets were locked due to a lack of water to keep them clean.

5.3.4: Attendance of girls to schools will increase due to better sanitation conditions

At all six schools visited by the evaluation team, attempts were made at collecting and analysing attendance data. However, the reliability, validity and quality of data were often questionable¹³⁹, and no attendance data were available from the schools prior to the commencement of the 2010 school year. Based on these issues, the team decided that sufficient longitudinal attendance data to assess this indicator was not available.

However, children spoken to, particularly girls appreciated having an adequate number of clean toilets and running water at the school. The evaluation team can only assume that this may have some impact on girls’ attendance in the long-term.

While NRC has improved community water sources in the sites where it has not been able to bring water to the school sites, interviews with children and teachers at school sites visited indicated that it becomes the responsibility of children to fetch water to fill the basins for the toilets. Research indicates that in Timorese society this duty is one assigned to girls rather than boys in rural communities.¹⁴⁰ By implication, this would indicate that girls are more likely to miss instructional time for such duties. In many

¹³⁸ At four of the six sites visited, water was not brought to the school site

¹³⁹ It proved very difficult to gather data from each classroom at the school, as in a number of schools teachers did not have their attendance books available on site. Additionally, attendance books that were collected often had incomplete or erroneous entries, and occasionally did not indicate the gender of each student.

¹⁴⁰ See Risopatron, Carlos. "Lessons Learned for Poverty Reduction from the United Nations Peace Building Operation in East Timor." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Risopatron>.

cases this lost time is not negligible, as community water sources are not always in close proximity to the school.¹⁴¹

5.3.5: Working with Parent Teacher Associations and community groups will strengthen community consultation and cooperation in decision-making

As discussed in Section 3.1.1, NRC engaged communities early on in reconstruction activities. Communities were consulted prior to construction began, men were employed in manual labour, and women assisted the construction teams by providing food and other provisions. NRC believed its consultation and cooperation throughout the process to be more than adequate, however interviews with community members would indicate that in some instances this was not perceived to be the case. This was most pronounced in communities where either they felt that NRC did not rehabilitate all structures on site, or where WASH projects remain incomplete.

NRC argues that the limits of its involvement were defined early on and made clear to the community. In the case of sites where rehabilitation works remain, NRC has in some instances, agreed to support community groups by providing additional building materials. NRC has also gone back to visit some of the communities where concerns remain to clarify initial expectations, which in some instances has included reminding the community of promises they made to NRC to demolish unsafe old structures. In regards to the WASH component, a number of delays have been caused by a lack of community cooperation in providing the necessary volunteer labour to complete such works, according to the Country Director. This has necessitated the Country Director personally visiting some of these sites to remind them of their promises and to reengage them in the activity that needs to be done.

In both instances, a challenge for NRC has been getting some community groups and parents to follow through on promises and commitments. This indicates a lack of real ownership or buy-in from community groups for such activity, the consequences of which are discussed further in Section 5.2.

Conversely, in two of the six sites visited there was an observable sense of social cohesion and community cooperation anchored around the school. The rehabilitation works had in these instances given the community renewed pride in their ability to work together to solve issues faced. For these communities there was a sense of collective responsibility, between the school, parents, and wider community of the need to maintain the works that had been initiated by NRC.¹⁴²

5.3.6: Children will have basic sport facilities in their community

All sites have been provided with basic sports facilities (one swing set with attached basketball hoop).¹⁴³ At the schools the evaluation team visited, it was evident that the

¹⁴¹ At one school site visited, the team walked down to the closest water point that was a 10-minute walk down a steep, slippery slope well out of sight of the school. At other sites, water points were located a similar distance away or closer. It should be noted however, that in Manatuto the average distance to walk to a community water site is 15 minutes and in Ermera, 11 minutes, according to OCHA Timor-Leste, "Timor-Leste District Atlas," ed. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (Dili: United Nations, 2008).

¹⁴² This was acknowledged in interviews with community members and school officials when it was asked how the new buildings and sanitation facilities would be maintained.

¹⁴³ Documentation from NRC suggests this is the case for the remaining sites as well

sports equipment provided by NRC was well utilised and enjoyed.¹⁴⁴ In schools with student populations of 68 this one piece of sport equipment with two swings and one basketball hoop appeared appropriate. However, in larger schools visited, this one piece of equipment was clearly inadequate for the student population, as few students could enjoy the benefit of the swings each day. NRC explained the decision to distribute equipment *equally* rather than equitably was made out of the concern that community jealousy¹⁴⁵ may result if different schools were to receive unequal amounts of support.

The basketball hoop was not being utilised because balls had not yet been provided to the schools as promised. NRC intends to distribute balls to all schools at the same time, after training at all sites has ended to again avoid issues of community jealousy.¹⁴⁶

4.1.2. Compact Teacher Training

The overall objective of the CTT was to, “expand the capacity of primary teachers and enhance learning experiences of primary aged children in two districts affected by conflict in Timor-Leste.”¹⁴⁷ Four expected results/outputs were indicated as verifiable indicators of this objective.¹⁴⁸

5.1.1: Primary school teachers have expanded their teaching capacity, especially in using child friendly methods

Interviews with teachers, trainers and children indicate that during and after the CTT, there have been shifts in teacher practices towards more child-friendly methods. This was reaffirmed when observing actual teacher practices in several of the classrooms that the evaluation team visited.

A number of teachers indicated that they had learned the importance of making the classroom a safe and encouraging space for their students through the CTT. They mentioned specific actions such as: speaking to children in a non-threatening manner; ensuring that students are not chastised for an incorrect answer; and making sure that boys and girls have equal opportunities to share ideas as some of specific lessons they had learned from the CTT. Teachers indicated that from the CTT, they had also learned new techniques of redirecting students when they were off-task, and short activities they could utilise to focus and engage students at the start of the lesson. These classroom management techniques provided them with an alternative to the traditional methods of either yelling at or hitting students to punish or redirect off-task behaviour. During the teams’ school visits, physical or verbal abuse of students was not observed at all, and teachers themselves recognised that such behaviour was not appropriate. The result is that students don’t fear coming to school anymore. One group of students whom the evaluation team spoke to noted that “the teachers are now more fun”, “don’t yell as much”, and “don’t hit anymore.” Most visibly, in all of the schools the evaluation team visited, children appeared to be happy and generally excited to come to school, which is not always the norm in Timor-Leste.

¹⁴⁴ Children in their drawings of the new school facilities frequently included the play equipment, and spoke enthusiastically about the swings in particular. The swing sets NRC provided were in constant use during our site visits.

¹⁴⁵ Norwegian Refugee Council, "School Infrastructure Rehabilitation Tpf0901." Sec.5.1.12

¹⁴⁶ Personal communication with Country Director and Education Director, 19/9/2010

¹⁴⁷ CTT Project Proposal, pg 3

¹⁴⁸ Ibid pg 4

Over the five weeks of training, trainers observed teachers expanding their repertoire beyond teacher-directed, recall learning. They noted that they incorporated a wider diversity of activities during instructional time rather than focussing on teacher-directed, recall learning for all four hours of teaching each day. Teachers reaffirmed this sentiment, and as one teacher put it, “the training has opened our minds to many new things.” Games, sports activities, storytelling, songs, and the use of local resources and objects as part of learning, were observed in practice in the classrooms the evaluation team visited, and in some cases months after the CTT program had ended. While teachers may now be aware of and utilise these techniques, many appeared to be struggling to effectively incorporate these methods into the lesson at hand. In many classrooms visited, activities were not applicable to the lesson, and used as a distraction or break from the normal routine of instruction.

At almost all the sites visited, teachers felt that the CTT had equipped them with a much stronger understanding of how to utilise the primary curriculum and specifically develop lesson plans around each subject area. One of the district superintendents discussed how given that many of the teachers participating in the CTT are “unqualified”, the importance of NRC imparting this skill to the teachers was vital to improving educational quality at remote schools. Teachers felt that the CTT had given them greater discipline, by providing a structure on how to develop each lesson¹⁴⁹, as prior “they had never been told what to do” (in regards to lesson planning). Lesson planning and preparedness, however, is an ongoing issue for many teachers, despite the support given by NRC. Most classrooms where NRC intervention had ended several months ago, appeared to have no evidence of a structured lesson, of the form that the CTT had encouraged. Instead, teachers appeared to revert to old habits of using the textbook as their lesson plan, and having students complete activities without sufficient joint practice and modelling.¹⁵⁰ At two schools, teachers admitted it was extremely difficult for them to plan and teach in the way they had been taught by the CTT on a daily basis because of the extra time it required.

Some teachers also appear to have incorporated multigrade teaching into their practices, following on assistance and support provided by the CTT program. At one school, teachers no longer believed that it was necessary to have each grade taught separately, given they did not have enough teachers to support this mechanism. Effective multigrade teaching, involving a common lesson followed by the differentiation of the student task was witnessed at this site. According to the NRC staff member who accompanied the evaluation team to this school, this was a radical departure from prior, when one teacher would split time between two different grades that were placed in two classrooms. In other schools, the necessity for multigrade teaching appeared to be apparent but was not being employed, leaving students without a teacher for up to an hour at a time. Again, the uptake of instructional methodologies taught during the CTT was far from being universally employed, indicating a need for sustained support and intervention if stated result 5.1.1 is to be achieved at all sites.

¹⁴⁹ The method NRC taught teachers followed the G.L.O.S.S. format: Grab attention; link to prior lessons/knowledge; state the objective; structure the activity; and provide stimulation (activity). All modules taught by the trainers employed this technique as a way of modelling.

¹⁵⁰ Trainers stressed a process of learning a new concept with students that involved: (1) doing an activity normally and without questions; (2) doing an activity slowly and asking questions; (3) having students complete the activity with the teacher and with teacher interjection; and (4) do it independently.

One misperception held by one school director, several of the teachers, and many Ministry of Education officials, was that the methodologies and approaches taught during the CTT could only be applied in subjects where Tetum was the language of instruction. This may be an “unintended consequence” of the majority of training being delivered in Tetum. It may also be the result of the challenges that teachers face in utilising Portuguese with their students.¹⁵¹ Whatever the case, this misperception does not seem to have been adequately addressed with teachers during the course of training, and by NRC in its conversations and articulations with the Ministry about its approach..

5.1.2: Primary aged children have the opportunity to experience a participatory learning environment conducive to learning

According to some of the trainers spoken to, another significant change observed over the course of the five weeks of training was in teachers moving from “passive to active learning methodologies.” When asked what this meant, they discussed in great detail their own perception that students were now part of the lesson, rather than observers to it, and in many circumstances involved in discussing ideas, sharing discoveries and finding answers to questions together. One of the district superintendents also noted the increased participation of students in the classrooms, stating that after the training “students and teachers talk to each other, rather than just the teachers talking at the students.” In the eyes of one community group spoken to, “teachers now play with students”, which they hadn’t seen occurring beforehand. All of this was verified when classrooms were observed. Across a number of schools, children were observed to be “participating” in the lessons, either by coming up to the board individually and writing their responses, engaging in group work, or participating in games.

Additionally, interviews with children indicate that after the CTT they are encouraged to discuss ideas and answer questions in groups. In one school, the students noted that working in groups has become a daily occurrence. According to students, their greater involvement in learning had changed their attitudes to school. Several students believed that they lacked the motivation to come to school in the past. Now they saw school as “more fun”, “more interesting”, or just “better”. This attitude was also commented on by some of the NRC trainers who felt that the biggest impacts that the CTT had on students “was not on their knowledge or exam results, but on their attitudes and motivations to come to school.” Trainers noted that students appeared to have a great deal of self-confidence, and an increased ability to express themselves. All of this fuelled a greater interest in coming to school, not just of the school-age population, but also amongst their younger siblings, according to the parents of some of these children.

That stated, group work or other “participatory activities” observed was not always effective in engaging all students. The team noted that in several classrooms the majority of students were off-task, disengaged, or not participating during such activity. In other classrooms, while students were organised into groups, the task at hand was still individual in nature, with students completing exercises without discussion or collaboration with their peers. This suggest that while teachers may now be aware of how to organise their classroom differently using groups, the substance of such activity may not always meet its full purpose or intent.

¹⁵¹ This was witnessed in several classrooms where in Portuguese classes they were teaching, the teachers themselves were struggling with the content and vocabulary of the lesson, and could not properly explain what they were teaching to their students.

5.1.3: The community and parents enjoy improved interactions with the teachers and thus influence their children's learning environment positively

As part of the CTT, NRC helped to facilitate two parent/community workshops in collaboration with the teaching staff at the school. The aim of these workshops was to discuss with families specific ways they could support their child's learning at home. Responses from teachers interviewed indicate that as a result of the parent workshops held during the CTT there is now greater cooperation and support from parents in terms of making sure their children attend school, come prepared to learn with school supplies and books, and are supported in their studies at home. Parents mentioned specific lessons they had learned from the training such as: making sure they send their children to school having eaten something, ensuring that their children have the required supplies and materials to learn (i.e. notebooks and pens), and dressing them appropriately in their school uniform. They also better understood specific ways they could help their children at home, such as providing a quiet space and time for them to complete homework and having older siblings assist with such tasks. Teachers in general appreciated the fact that the workshops provided them an opportunity to voice their frustrations and challenges with the broader community. Some groups of teachers commented that more than anything the workshops opened lines of communication between the school and the community, creating a space for future collaboration and support.

Measurable or verifiable benefits to the learning environment were harder to discern. Several groups of teachers noted how in the past parents used to pull their children out of school for responsibilities in either household or harvesting work. Now, they felt that parents understood that it was their children's right to go to school, and were encouraging them to attend rather than stay and help out at home. However when attendance data from these schools was analysed monthly across 2010, no significant reduction in medium-term absenteeism rates could be determined at any of the sites.¹⁵²

5.1.4: Female and male teachers act as role models for all students and gender sensitivity issues are included in the curricula.

The teachers across all six sites reflected in interviews that as part of the professionalism component of the CTT program, they had learned about the importance of being role models to their students. Specifically the training reiterated to them the importance of coming to school on time, dressing professionally, being prepared and organised in terms of lesson planning, and attending school every day, particularly if they wanted their students to do the same. Some of these changes were commented on by the students and community who discussed how after the CTT, the teachers appeared to be more motivated, reliable and organised than before.

However in two of the school sites visited, the professionalism of the teachers did not appear to be sustained one to six months after the program had ended. Teachers were either late to school, did not stick to their posted time schedule, or failed to

¹⁵² At one school where the workshops were held in March 2010 absenteeism had reduced to 2.2% in the month following the training, but spiked back up to the average of around 7.4% by August/September 2010, indicating that the workshops had no impact in terms of students attendance rates in the medium term. At other schools, similar patterns of reductions in absenteeism in the immediate month following the workshop were found, but in all cases absenteeism rates returned to normal levels soon after.

show up for the job altogether¹⁵³. All of these behaviours, while common in Timorese schools¹⁵⁴, are not aligned with NRC's objective of teachers acting as role models. This indicates the need for sustained monitoring and reinforcement of professional behaviours, which was not within the mandate of NRC, but should be within that of the Ministry of Education, and in particular the inspectors visiting the school on a regular basis.

5. The relevance and appropriateness of NRC's response

This section of the report considers the question of whether these outcomes are: (1) the right response for the time and place that Timor-Leste is in the reconstruction continuum according to international literature and standards of best practice; and (2) durable in the medium to long term in the absence of continued intervention by NRC or another donor. It concludes by offering a series of short-term recommendations for NRC to consider for their remaining time in Timor-Leste.

5.1. The right response at the right time?

Education is a high priority for communities affected by conflict and fragility, and as such the rapid restoration of schooling is symbolic of a return to "normalcy" and relative security.¹⁵⁵ Donors now label education as a child's right, rather than a privilege, and expect education to be part of a holistic humanitarian response to a conflict or crisis.¹⁵⁶ Likewise, education is increasingly tied to economic and social development, and seen as a critical component of increasing the capabilities of individuals within society.¹⁵⁷

For Timor-Leste, education's reconstructive and transformative qualities were defined early on in the process of nation-building. The country's first National Development Plan visioned a society that was "well educated, healthy, highly productive, democratic, self-reliant, espousing the values of nationalism, non-discrimination and equity within a global context." Within this plan, education was one of the sectors given highest priority to achieve such goals. The expectation is that citizens who are literate, knowledgeable and skilled will be able to actively participate in economic, social and political development with the aim of promoting social equality and national unity—in essence providing a durable solution to the country's past turmoils.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵³ Particularly concerning is one school where at the start of the day only 3 of the 10 teachers expected were present. The explanation given was that two teachers had gone to collect salaries and the others were late because they walk to school each day from a neighbouring town (approximately 2kms).

¹⁵⁴ See Ministry of Education, "National Draft Strategic Plan 2011-2030, 2nd Draft," 29. It states, "...Professionalism remains an issue with high amount of absenteeism and violence in schools."

¹⁵⁵ K Bush and D Saltarelli, "The Two Faces of Education in Ethnic Conflict," (Paris: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2000), J Paulson, "The 'Two Faces' Today?," *Research on Comparative and International Education* 3, no. 1 (2008), A Smith and T Vaux, "Education, Conflict and International Development," (London: DFID, 2003), World Bank, "Reshaping the Future: Education and Postconflict Reconstruction," (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2005)..

¹⁵⁶ L Davies and C Talbot, "Learning in Conflict and Postconflict Contexts," *Comparative Education Review* 52, no. 4 (2008), P Rose and M Greeley, "Education in Fragile States: Capturing Lessons and Identifying Good Practices," (Sussex: Centre for International Development and Institute for Development Studies, University of Sussex, 2006).

¹⁵⁷ Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Anchor Books, 1999).

¹⁵⁸ See Footnote 13, pg. 177

Caution must be given in assuming that the resumption of education in itself is sufficient to provide insurance against future conflict. Recent scholarship has put forth the argument that donors and the government must think beyond restoring access to education, to also considering questions of educational quality and education's relevance in society.¹⁵⁹ Disparities and inequities created by an educational system that preferences urban populations or elites within the population may leave a large part of a country's citizenry disenfranchised and increasingly alienated within the social fabric of society. Likewise, new schools without a relevant curriculum, skilled teachers, and engaging teaching methodologies may lead to high rates of non-participation in schools, diminishing the potential of education's restorative qualities.

For Timor-Leste, recent research indicates a number of concerns about inequities of access, quality, service delivery and teacher support, particularly for remote and rural areas of the country.¹⁶⁰ This is a phenomenon that was verified by interviews with national and regional MoE officials. They universally acknowledged that service delivery to remote schools is problematic due to a combination of the Ministry's limited capacity and poor or non-existent road infrastructure to many of these locations. The result is that many remote schools have problems recruiting and retaining skilled teachers, lack basic infrastructure and facilities¹⁶¹ that schools in regional or urban centres have access to, and find it challenging to receive teacher salaries and training.

NRC's response was unique in a number of ways. It recognised the unique constraints and limitations that leave remote and rural schools neglected in the country's development. Rare for most teacher training programs in Timor-Leste, the intent of the CTT was to bring the support to the teachers rather than ask them to travel elsewhere. The CTT also was unique in the fact that the trainers themselves designed the curriculum they implemented, giving the program real Timorese ownership. The intent of the combined programs were aligned with NRC Policies, in that it:

1. Introduced constructive, longer-lasting solutions to those impacted by conflict by combining rehabilitation of physical infrastructure aimed at improving access to education, with intensive on-site training that was geared towards improving educational quality and relevance¹⁶²;
2. Promoted education in Timor-Leste by: providing school rehabilitation, strengthening the capacity and competence of trainers and teachers, addressing the learning needs of teachers operating in remote areas of the country; and aligning NRC's priorities with those of the MoE¹⁶³; and

¹⁵⁹ B Bakarat, Z Karpinska, and J Paulson, "Desk Study: Education and Fragility (a Paper Prepared for the Inee Working Group on Education and Fragility)," (Oxford: Conflict and Education Research Group (CERG), 2008), K Tebbe, "Global Trends for Education to Support Stability and Resilience: Research, Programming and Finance," *Journal of Education for International Development* 4, no. 1 (2009).

¹⁶⁰ Belun, "Policy Brief: Access and Opportunity in Education," in *Early Warning and Early Response System*, ed. Center for International Conflict Resolution (Dili: Center for International Conflict Resolution, 2010).

¹⁶¹ This includes toilets, enclosed classrooms, school furniture, sports equipment, and textbooks according to the Ministry officials spoken to.

¹⁶² *Policy Paper for the Norwegian Refugee Council*, pg 6.

¹⁶³ *Norwegian Refugee Council Education Policy, Norwegian Refugee Council Shelter Policy*.

3. Worked closely with local authorities to ensure that NRC was supporting national plans and priorities and to gain their acceptance of NRCs curricula and materials for the CTT.

Its response was also aligned with best practice guidelines for humanitarian actors operating in emergency and post-conflict contexts in a number of ways¹⁶⁴.

Specifically the school reconstruction component took into account the need to pay attention to cultural sensitivity and provide durable structures that are appropriate to the environments they are constructed in. One UNICEF official felt that the reconstruction work NRC did in Timor-Leste was aligned with international best practice, and was superior to the standard of school reconstruction done by other actors. This sentiment was echoed by a representative from CARE who believed that NRC's actions did not sacrifice quality or acceptable standards because the school was in a developing country, and that the architecture employed, "paid attention to the local structures so the school wouldn't stand out."

For the CTT program, its attention to process, commitment to authentic capacity building (for the trainers), and desire to work in areas of real need are important aspects of international good practice. The CTT was distinguished from other teacher training programs, according to a representative from CARE by its continuity of care and support to teachers, the value and importance it placed on professional development, and the commitment it demonstrated to communities and schools. A representative from another NGO felt that NRC's attention to process throughout the CTT was critical, and indicated to her a commitment on the part of the program to doing things "right" rather than out of compliance or obligation to donors.

5.2. Translating outcomes into durable solutions

For the structures that NRC rehabilitated or constructed, the team believes that all aspects of construction¹⁶⁵ will meet the five-year standard of durability expected of them. "Temporary has a habit of turning into permanent" in Timor-Leste, according to one UNICEF official, and in cognisance of this, NRC opted to construct and rehabilitate schools to a much higher standard than was expected of them.¹⁶⁶ Given the Ministry of Education's ambitious school infrastructure project, it is quite likely the "temporary" structures built/rehabilitated by NRC will need to in use for the next 10-15 years¹⁶⁷. Semi-permanency brings on another lay of complexity, and there will be issues of maintenance and upkeep for these schools until the Ministry's ambitious program is complete.

In the medium-term, the most pressing issue for these schools will be the need for removal of solid waste from the storage tanks serving the new and remodelled toilets. Since there is no such removal service in Timor-Leste for remote areas, it is expected that a new waste collection system will be required within 3-5 years.

¹⁶⁴ See INEE, "Inee Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery," (New York: Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, 2010), Sphere, "Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response," (Geneva: Sphere Project, 2004).

¹⁶⁵ Structural integrity, construction quality, material durability, and overall capacity of products to perform to the standards established during the design phase

¹⁶⁶ The country director stated in conversation that all along, NRC's intention was to build schools to a ten, rather than five-year standard.

¹⁶⁷ There appears to be increasing recognition within the Ministry that they will not be able to achieve their stated goal of ensuring that all students are attending schools of a durable standard in the next ten years. According to the Country Exit Strategy, the MoE has now fast-tracked the construction of 240 interim schools to deal with the backlog (p. 9).

Additionally, plywood doors will need to be repainted yearly. Within five years, roofing will need to be maintained by applying metal paint and split palm siding will need to be replaced. Every one of these required maintenance projects require supplies and/or skilled labour that some communities may not be able to endogenously support. Indications are that the Ministry of Education does not consider it their responsibility to maintain these “interim” schools. One MoE senior official believed that because NRC’s structures are a temporary measure until students can be absorbed into new/expanded schools nearby, there is no need to provide additional inputs at these sites. Additionally, the MoU signed between the MoE and NRC does not mention whose responsibility it will be for ongoing maintenance or upkeep of these structures. This could be a serious problem in light of NRC’s understanding that, “The Ministry has no additional budget or capacity for the interim rehabilitation of any schools in the period between now and when each of the scheduled school rehabilitations would take place – in some cases possibly longer than 12 years from now.”¹⁶⁸

As has been traditionally the case in Timor-Leste, the responsibility will lay with the community and school for these works. While some of the communities the evaluation team visited have adopted the rehabilitated schools as their social responsibility to maintain and upkeep, this was not a consistent commitment. Some community leaders discussed how they firmly believed that ongoing maintenance of their school was the responsibility of either the Ministry of Education or other NGOs. While NRC or the MoE may be able to extract promises that communities will maintain the schools and sanitation facilities, without a clear accountability plan, adequate community-based skills and knowledge to conduct such work independently, and ongoing support from other external actors, the evaluation team does not believe that such commitments will be followed through on in many cases.

For the CTT program, concerns about sustainability of outcomes also exist. Six months after program intervention ended, it was clear in some schools that teachers had reverted back to unprofessional behaviour, and were struggling to consistently or adequately utilise the skills and tools the CTT equipped them with. Ideally, it would be the job of the Ministry of Education, through the Inspectorate and district offices to provide ongoing support and reinforce positive behaviours with these teachers and schools. However, one NRC official spoken to doubted that any of the inspectors were equipped with the knowledge and skills to do so.¹⁶⁹ Representatives from other INGOs also voiced concerns about who would support the teachers after NRC left. According to a representative from PLAN, “Timorese teachers need ongoing professional development and support, and while the training was a nice boost for them, they will probably lose their enthusiasm and interest in what they learned without continuous encouragement and feedback.” The evaluation team agrees with this concern, and questions NRC’s assertion, that “teachers who have been trained by NRC will in most cases continue their teaching even if we are not there with projects any more.”¹⁷⁰ While teachers may remain at their school, is that sufficient, or adequate to the needs of the children, if they fall back on old habits?

A UNICEF official questioned whether NRC had adequately developed an exit strategy in cooperation with the Ministry, so that ongoing support would be guaranteed for the teachers the CTT worked with. NRC did in fact advocate for a longer exit strategy, particularly for its Education programs, arguing that, “it would

¹⁶⁸ Project Proposal NMFA TPFS0901 Sec.2

¹⁶⁹ It should be noted that NRC did invite inspectors to participate in training, as discussed in Chapter 3.

¹⁷⁰ CTT Project Proposal, pg 12

have been preferred in order to increase impact and ensure the sustainability and complete takeover of the program by Timorese authorities.”¹⁷¹ The rapid timeframe of the CTT as designed and funded, did not allow for necessary relationships with the MoE to be built, fostered and nurtured as it had with the YEP in its phased transfer over to partner NGOs and the government. Despite this preference, and lobbying by NRC for additional funding from NMFA and other donors working in Timor-Leste, monies were not available to allow for this, and the program continued without a clear plan of long-term sustainability or transference of ongoing support.¹⁷²

More than one individual interviewed indicated that limited acceptance of the CTT approach by national MoE officials, would lead to a lack of follow-through on its methodology and approach once NRC left. To many this issue was the ultimate travesty of the program’s rapid end, as they believed there were many lessons that the Ministry could gain from NRC’s success of training teachers in remote areas of the country. Teachers, district Ministry officials and trainers all indicated that the CTT should continue in other schools, as it was something that all teachers could benefit from and deserved access to. Recognising that more time was needed to gain Ministry ownership for this to occur, NRC made attempts to see its program continue under the umbrella of another donor. Progress reports indicate that at least one INGO had expressed interest in taking over the CTT program and expanding it to more schools.¹⁷³ For unknown reasons, the donor made strategic decisions later to abandon this idea.¹⁷⁴

Finally, there is concern about what will happen with the trainers that NRC has built the capacity of as part of the CTT. It is abundantly evident from observations and interviews that national expertise produced as part of the CTT program may be the biggest legacy left behind by NRC. Trainers were lauded for their professionalism, competence, pedagogy, and enthusiasm almost universally in the schools visited. The trainers themselves believe that their knowledge and expertise should be further utilised. Many of the trainers are concerned about what will become of them once the CTT ends shortly. This is also a concern shared by NRC. In its country exit strategy, the importance of “set[ting] up a comprehensive and solid plan for national staff with incentives such as training options...and assistance for job applications, etc,” was recognised by NRC.¹⁷⁵ Ample evidence exists of how NRC has tried to advocate that its trainers be utilised for the skills and attributes they have acquired.¹⁷⁶ However, as of now, no formal accord has been reached between NRC and either the MoE or other INGOs to absorb this group of high competent individuals into other existing programs of training.

Considering NRC’s core mandate of providing viable, durable solutions, it may not serve the organisation’s interest or that of prospective beneficiaries, to initiate such activity so close to the end of its involvement in a country,¹⁷⁷ and/or in cases where

¹⁷¹ December 2009 Progress Report

¹⁷² According to the Education Manager, the CTT was always intended as a “pilot program” that aimed to prove success of a new model for teacher training in the country. It was then up to the Ministry and other donors to decide whether or not to embrace such a model, and not NRC’s responsibility to ensure ownership was transferred to them.

¹⁷³ See NRC Education Team, “March 2010 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database.”

¹⁷⁴ ———, “June 2010 Compact Teacher Training Core Activity Database.”

¹⁷⁵ Zamudio, “Exit Strategy Norwegian Refugee Council Timor-Leste 2010,” 12.

¹⁷⁶ NRC Education Team, “Nrc Treinamentu Ba Professores (Ctt) Timor-Leste 2009-2010.”

¹⁷⁷ The evaluation team acknowledges that a greater amount of time would have been afforded to NRC if the process in negotiating an MoU from the Ministry of Education had not been as protracted as it was. The evaluation team also recognises that NRC had reached a

funds are known to be finite and limited.¹⁷⁸ NRC's policy is that "when programmes are initiated, criteria must also be defined in relation to the specific situation and regions as to when to discontinue activities."¹⁷⁹ It would appear that the criteria for "completion" of the school reconstruction and CTT programmes was established based on limitations of funding, and NRC's intended phase-out from Timor-Leste, rather than the actual scope of need and "best practice" for this type of intervention. It is the belief of the evaluation team that the scope of need has not yet been met for the CTT and School Reconstruction programme in Timor-Leste. Interviews with Ministry of Education officials, representatives of other INGO's/multilaterals operating in Timor-Leste, and NRC's own documentation confirm this.¹⁸⁰

For the future, when establishing a programme with such strong identified need, it may be necessary to ensure that appropriate levels of funding and sufficient time are in place at the outset. Criteria for success should not be determined by funding, but by recognising what is required for solutions to be sustainable and durable. Rapid response solutions are rarely appropriate for education projects aimed at improving educational quality in the medium to long term. The evaluation team does not believe that NRC's claim that, "[our] input can be sustained by those who have participated in the programs, the beneficiaries," was credible or realistic. The activity NRC conducted, particularly in regards to the CTT was development-oriented, rather than part of a humanitarian response. If NRC is to engage in such activity in the future, then its approach must shift towards one that is more aligned with practices of sustainability, long-term involvement, and partnership and collaboration with existing actors. It is the evaluation teams' belief that to make a real and lasting impact, a commitment longer than 18 months is required.

5.3. Recommendations for NRC

1. **Visit all sites one more time:** NRC, alongside partners within the Ministry, should conduct another round of monitoring at each of the 30 sites it has worked in. This should be a combined visit that is coordinated between shelter and education teams. Ideally the visits should be "unannounced"¹⁸¹ to allow both teams to observe how the schools are utilising their facilities, and

point in its involvement in Timor-Leste where it could consider exiting. Specifically the *Policy Paper of the Norwegian Refugee Council*, states that a decision to discontinue activities in a country should be based on: (1) the target group no longer being in need of assistance or protection of the type that NRC can offer, or that their needs are now met by other actors; (2) NRC no longer has access to refugees/IDPs or is no longer in a position to implement professionally justifiable programmes; (3) the safety of relief workers can no longer be guaranteed; (4) The situation has reached an impasse and NRC can no longer contribute to constructive solutions; and (5) it is not possible to obtain sufficient financial, human and or other resources to continue. NRC in-country documentation clearly indicates that by the mid 2009, conditions had markedly improved, particularly with the IDP/refugee situation.

¹⁷⁸ This was made clear in an interview with the former Charge D'Affairs from NMFA for Timor-Leste.

¹⁷⁹ *Policy Paper for the Norwegian Refugee Council*. Pg 7

¹⁸⁰ For example MoE officials and representatives from a number of INGOs indicated that many remote schools remain unsupported, as access and logistics have proven too difficult for both the Ministry and other development partners. NRC also notes in its initial proposals to the donor that there "will be a continued need for interventions in East Timor within its mandate until at least 2012" (CTT TPFT0901, Sec 9.1) and that "the need will definitively be there" (School Infrastructure Rehabilitation TPFS0901, Sec 9) for both teacher training and additional school reconstruction for an extended period.

¹⁸¹ The evaluation team found the "unannounced" visits to be most revealing to them during their own visits. Due to a change of scheduling, two schools were visited on a day not originally planned. When the team visited these sites, it was apparent that many issues that might be masked if warning had been given were exposed for what they were.

how the teachers are incorporating skills, attitudes and behaviours from the CTT into their work. Defects and concerns should be noted and shared with district and national offices of the Ministry of Education and other INGOs/UNICEF who may be able to assist with these issues after NRC's departure. NRC should also use this visit as an opportunity to remind communities of the maintenance requirements that will be necessary for the reconstructed/new buildings and WASH components, and deliver the supplies required to complete such works.

2. **Complete remaining WASH projects**: NRC has indicated that it will ensure that prior to shutting down the project, all stated WASH activities are completed or in process, either by themselves or a sub-contractor. This commitment should be honoured, as NRC has distinguished itself from the Ministry and other donors by fulfilling its promises on other aspects of the project.
3. **Continue to engage with the national office of the Ministry of Education**: It is critical that NRC invest a significant amount of its efforts in the remaining time it has to gaining greater ownership and engagement from national-level Ministry of Education officials, particularly over the CTT program.¹⁸² In light of some of the "misperceptions" held by national MoE officials about the project, NRC should work to address and rectify these attitudes through this effort. At the same time, NRC needs to continue to work closely with the IFU to detail the kinds of required upkeep and maintenance necessary at the 30 sites it rehabilitated.
4. **Ensure appropriate handover to district officials**: Ultimately, it will be the responsibility of the district superintendents, their staff, and the school inspectors to support the work of NRC once it has exited. NRC should work closely, particularly with school inspectors, on discussing how they can continue to support the trained teachers and wider communities.¹⁸³
5. **Continue to document and disseminate**: Given the unique attributes of the combined projects, it is critical that NRC provides as much documentation as possible to interested parties within Timor-Leste and externally about its approach, method/design and implementation process. This then needs to be disseminated widely and freely, but perhaps presented in a series of meetings where questions can be asked and concerns raised. One possible venue to do this in would be the *Annual Joint Review*, scheduled to take place in late October.
6. **Continue to advocate on behalf of the trainers**: NRC should continue to lobby with relevant donors and actors working in the area of teacher training, as well as the Ministry of Education, to incorporate CTT trainers into their efforts.¹⁸⁴ At the same time, NRC should consider avenues by which the CTT trainers can continue to collectively market/advocate for their expertise after November when NRC exits.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² One possible mechanism is by bringing the training to the Ministry, rather than asking them to visit a school site. NRC has been excellent at documenting its activities and progress through videos and photos. It would behove NRC to invest time and resources into developing a narrated short video detailing the CTT program in Tetum and Portuguese that could then be presented in a series of screenings and subsequent discussions.

¹⁸³ It may be necessary to offer to the inspectors a rapid version of the training the CTT trainers themselves went through (perhaps over the course of a week), if budget and time allow.

¹⁸⁴ This includes Portugal Cooperation, UNICEF, the Marist Brothers Teachers College in Baucau, UNTL, and the World Bank

¹⁸⁵ A need for a large group of trainers may arise next year when a Rapid Teacher Training program, supported by the Ministry of Education, takes shape.

Appendix One: Works Cited

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Appendix Two: Sampling Framework

Note: Names have not been provided in an effort to protect confidentiality

Ministry of Education:

- National Director of Continuing Professional Development
- National Director of Initial Teacher Preparation
- National Director of Infrastructure Unit
- Inspector General
- National Inspector
- District Superintendent, Manatuto
- District Superintendent, Ermera
- School Inspectors (x2)

CARE:

- Curriculum Specialist

World Bank:

- Education Manager

PLAN:

- Early Childhood Care and Development Advisor

UNICEF:

- Education Specialist
- Chief of Education

NRC Timor-Leste:

- Country Director
- Education Director
- Deputy Education Director
- Finance Manager
- Senior Engineer, Shelter
- Site Engineer, Shelter
- CTT Coordinator
- CTT Data Collection Officer
- CTT Trainers (x4)
- CTT Logisticians (x2)
- CTT Driver (x2)

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

- Former Charge D'Affairs, Timor-Leste

Teachers participating in CTT at six schools (15 in total)

Selected groups of students in six CTT schools (34 in total)

Director at one CTT school

Appendix Three: Terms of Reference

NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL



TERMS OF REFERENCE Evaluation

Project/Program:	School Infrastructure Rehabilitation / Compact Teacher Training (CTT).
Country:	Timor-Leste
Period:	2009 – 2010
Date final version ToR:	

A. Project background

1. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

Timor-Leste is a small country, with a population that in 2004 was estimated to be 924.000 people. Demographic growth is estimated to be 3.2 % annually. Back in 1999, the education in Timor-Leste was dramatically affected when the Indonesian powers departed and most of the education facilities were destroyed. UNICEF has estimated that 90% of the schools in the country were destroyed¹⁸⁶ during the violence of 1999.

A new crisis in 2006 nearly paralyzed an already fragile society trying to recover from a series of former crisis. During the violence of 2006, 37 people were killed, around 3,000 houses were destroyed and over 2,000 severely damaged, and an estimated 150,000 people were displaced. All camps were closed by end of 2009, a process which was facilitated by Timorese government's payment of cash grants for those who had their houses destroyed or damaged.

In November 2006 NRC initiated its activities in Timor-Leste. Since then, NRC has addressed humanitarian gaps through the construction of 595 transitional shelters, camp management in 5 transitional sites, construction and management of 5 youth centres with vocational training, rehabilitation of a clinic, construction of 30 schools in

¹⁸⁶ UNICEF: "Situation assessment and analysis of children and women in Timor-Leste", August 2008, page 48. Same source: Ministry of Education estimated in 2006 the amount of schools at work to be approx. 1.160 schools and 83 % (963 schools) are primary schools.

rural areas, and on-the-job training for teachers in all 30 schools. This evaluation involves the last two projects, related to school construction and teacher training.

2. PROJECT OUTCOME

Project: School Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Compact Teacher Training (CTT)

The goal of the project is:

- To improve learning facilities and thus improving education conditions in Timor-Leste
- To expand the capacity of primary school teachers and enhance the learning experiences of primary aged children in 2 districts affected by conflict in Timor-Leste.

The Purpose of the Project is:

- To improve the infrastructure of existing schools in Timor-Leste, including sanitation facilities and basic sports facilities with special attention to communities affected by violence,
- To contribute to capacity building of primary school teachers,
- To contribute to and enhance the learning experiences of primary aged children,
- To contribute to improved interactions between the school and community members, including parents, and
- To contribute to gender equality in the community

Target groups

- 30 communities in the rural areas of Manatuto and Ermera, with approximately 1500 primary aged students
- Approximately 30 school communities and their parent communities
- Approx. 150 teachers in these schools

Activities for School infrastructure rehabilitation

As a response to the education infrastructure needs in Timor-Leste, the Ministry of Education (MoE) has developed a new Education Policy which includes a proposed upgrade of all government schools to a durable standard over a ten year period.

There is a massive demand for school buildings in Timor-Leste of a suitable size and standard for delivery of a quality education. Existing class sizes are already large and a natural population growth rate of 3.2% indicates that there is a significantly higher number of children that are about to enter the school system than those that have completed their schooling and are about to leave. This will place more pressure on the existing inadequate infrastructure and it is likely that many children under 15 years of age (a segment which represents up to 45% of the population) will miss out on school improvements currently scheduled under a mid-to-long term programme proposed by the MoE. To reduce this negative outcome, the Ministry of Education asked the Norwegian embassy¹⁸⁷ and NRC to assist with the upgrade of 30 schools. The Norwegian embassy identified unspent funds previously allocated to World Bank, and after the reimbursement back to the Norwegian embassy, the funds had increased from the original 10 million NOK to 18 million NOK.

Responding to the MoE request and with these funds, since May 2009 until June 2010, NRC has constructed or rehabilitated 30 schools in rural areas, and in addition, fitting where appropriate basic water supplies, building toilets according to numbers indicated in Sphere standards, providing furniture (table and chairs) and a swing set to each of these 30 schools.

Activities for Compact Teacher Training (CTT)

Education in Timor-Leste was severely affected during the 1999 departure of the Indonesian forces, as most educational facilities were destroyed and more than 50% of the teaching force was Indonesian nationals who opted to leave. Over the past years the focus has been on the rehabilitation of the school infrastructure as well as on training of teachers - both qualified and unqualified – and on the development of a new curriculum and teaching learning materials in the two national languages, Tetum and Portuguese.

In close collaboration and approval by Ministry of Education, the NRC team has developed a curriculum and has implemented on-the-job training over a period of five weeks, in each of the 30 schools constructed or rehabilitated by NRC. The NRC team accompanies the teachers during the 5-week period at each school.

¹⁸⁷ A MoU on cooperation between Norway and Timor-Leste was signed on May 20th 2008.

The Compact Teacher Training with a Certificate in Teaching and Learning is a program designed to reflect the National Teacher Competency Domains of Teaching and Learning and Professionalism. The presentation of the Certificate uses a competency based learning approach, where teachers have the opportunity to participate in interactive learning experiences each afternoon and then are given the opportunity to demonstrate their new skills each morning in class. There are twelve competency based assessments in total which are completed in a supportive learning environment.

B. Purpose of the evaluation and intended use

- The main purpose of the evaluation is to provide an independent appraisal of NRC's role as a provider of school rehabilitation and of compact teacher training and to assess to which extent our obligations towards the target group has been fulfilled.
- To assess the compliance of both projects with the objectives as set in the project documents and agreements.
- To assess the relevance, the effectiveness and contribution to sustainable solutions of the school rehabilitation/construction and teacher training project.

C. Scope of work and methods

Scope

The methodology will include:

- Desk studies. As a general background, the evaluation team should study relevant material in NRC, such as relevant governing documents of NRC, country information, the NRC country strategy for Timor-Leste, action plans, project applications, agreements, reports and correspondence.
- Field visits to the districts of Ermera and Manatuto, and to select a random sample of schools built or rehabilitated by NRC. In addition to visit a minimum of four schools where training is taking place during the month of September.
- Interviews with stakeholders. Consultations in the field will be held with all relevant stakeholders, therein teachers (male/female), village leaders, PTAs

(where applicable), parents, students (boys and girls), Ministry of Education district and national staff, other education partners.

Evaluation principles:

The evaluation will be guided by the following ethical rules/considerations:

- Openness – of information given, to the highest possible degree to all parties.
- Publicity/public access – to the results when there are not special considerations against this.
- Broad participation – the interested parties should be involved when relevant / possible.
- Reliability and independence – the evaluation should be conducted so that findings and conclusions are correct and trustworthy.

D. Issues to be covered

The evaluation team will assess the performance of the shelter¹⁸⁸ and education teams in

Timor-Leste by applying the following criteria. (These criteria are defined in NRC's Evaluation

Policy and directly related to the project proposal). The questions under each criterion are meant to guide the evaluation team in focusing on key issues of interest for NRC:

Relevance/ appropriateness:

- *Did potential beneficiaries, including host communities, participate in any way in defining how both programs could respond to their needs?*
- *To what extent do the shelter and education programs provide the right response to the needs of boys and girls in areas affected by violence?*
- *Has NRC had the required capacity in terms of staffing, local knowledge and expertise in the country to conduct relevant and appropriate response?*

¹⁸⁸ Shelter here refers to the NRC technical team already on the ground, not a shelter program. The NRC shelter team with this project continued from the previous transitional shelter activities into this school rehabilitation and construction project.

- *What alternative design and/or approach to the education program could have been used?*
- *Are there mechanisms in place to monitor whether the shelter and education programs have adapted to changes in the context and needs?*
- *In which way, if any have primary school teachers expanded their teaching capacity?*
- *Have primary aged girls and boys had the opportunity to experience a participatory learning environment conducive to learning?*
- *Have the community and parents enjoyed improved interactions with the teachers and thus influenced their children's learning environment positively?*
- *In what way has the learning environment been enhanced?*
- *Has improved sanitation facilities encouraged attendance particularly by female students?*
- *Relevance of the projects towards MoE, NRC and MFA policies within this sector.*

Efficiency:

- *Are the school structures of a reasonable, adequate quality?*
- *To what extent has the shelter and the education programs utilized its resources and time efficiently?*
- *Were appropriate and adequate resources (material, human, financial) available, in the right place and at the right time?*
- *To what extent did planned and/or un-planned interaction of programs effect:*
 - *NRC s overall standing and position*
 - *The shelter program only*
 - *The education program only*
 - *Both programs*

Effectiveness:

The envisaged outcome for this project is to improve learning facilities and thus improving education conditions in Timor-Leste, and expand the capacity of primary school teachers and enhance the learning experiences of primary aged children in 2 districts affected by conflict.

- *Are objectives and activities sufficiently and clearly defined? Are they relevant to the context and to the envisaged outcome of the program?*
- *Have the programs defined criteria for selecting beneficiaries in accordance with its objectives?*
- *If these exist, have they been applied consistently?*
- *Is there an internal monitoring mechanism and objectively verifiable indicators in place to assess whether or not objectives are achieved? What standards and indicators are being used (i.e. Sphere standards, Ministry of Education Competency Standards)*
- *To what extent has the shelter team and education team achieved their objectives?*
- *To what extent did the beneficiaries actually benefit from the NRC shelter and education programs?*
- *How do the beneficiaries, boys and girls, female and male teachers, view the value, quality and quantity of the shelter and education programs?*

Complementarity

- *Is the program consistent with GOTL's priorities?*
- *Is it supported by local institutions and well integrated with local social and cultural conditions?*
- *Is the technology utilised appropriate to the economic, educational and cultural conditions in Timor-Leste?*
- *Does GoTL have the financial capacity to maintain the benefits from the program when the NRC intervention has ended?*
- *Is the program compatible with a sustainable use of natural resources?*

Coordination:

- *How has coordination with national authorities affected this project?*
- *Has target areas and beneficiaries been selected in Coordination with the Ministry of Education?*
- *How has coordination with local community/school groups been?*
- *How has the participation and decision-making process of local communities been for (a) selection of sites, land, solutions, construction (b) participation in Compact Teacher Training, cooperation with NRC trainers?*

Outcome:

- *Has the shelter and education programs identified quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure the outcome of their activities?*
- *Are monitoring and analysis mechanisms in place?*
- *What intended and unintended, positive and negative effects are produced by the shelter*
- *and education programs, both on boys and girls, men and women?*
- *Do the shelter and camp education programs produce the most appropriate outcome, given the situation and resources available?*
- *What can be done to avoid any negative impact or to enhance additional positive outcomes?*

Coherence:

To what extent were the policies of the actors involved (Government, NGOs, UN) complementary/contradictory in the shelter and education components of this project?

E. Evaluation team

The evaluation team will be composed of minimum two persons. The team leader will lead the work of the team and be responsible for completing the report. The team leader should have proven analytical skills and a background from the area of education and teacher training and experience of evaluations of humanitarian assistance.

One team member should be a skilled building/construction engineer with knowledge of local building capacity and local culture as well as a good knowledge of the conflict and culture in the region.

Difference in opinion between team members regarding conclusions/recommendations should be reflected in the report.

A Steering Committee will be established with the following members:

NRC shelter- and NRC education advisors, NRC Program coordinator Timor-Leste Evaluation coordinator, the Country Director, Education and Shelter PMs in Timor-Leste, the Head of Section Asia and Senior adviser Evaluations.

The main function of the Steering Committee will be to select the external evaluators, to provide written feedback to the draft report and establishing a dissemination and

utilization strategy. The main function of the Evaluation Manager will be preparing the Terms of Reference (ToR), in close collaboration with members of the Steering Committee, administration and overall coordination, including monitoring progress. The Norwegian Embassy in Indonesia, in the capacity of donor, will approve the TOR and be informed and consulted during the process of selection of the evaluation team.

F. Timeframe and budget considerations

The whole process of evaluation will have a time frame. The evaluation team is scheduled to start its work in late August 2010, desk study and early September conduct a 7- 10 days field visit to Timor-Leste. Approval of any significant changes to the evaluation timetable will be referred to the Steering Committee.

- There will be phone conference for briefing with Oslo and 1 phone conference for briefing with the NRC country team before the desk study.
- There will be 1 phone conference with Oslo before the travel, reviewing the inputs from the desk study and setting the agenda for the visit.
- There will be 3 meetings (briefing, mid term review and debriefing) between the evaluation team and the NRC country team.
- There will be 1 phone/conference for final comments when the last draft is send.

Total budget frame: USD 30.000, all inclusive

Reporting

A draft report should be submitted not later than October 1st 2010. The completion date for the Final Evaluation report will be 31.10.2010

The size of the report should be approximately 20 pages (excluding annexes), clearly written in English, using Arial 11 point.

The evaluation report should consist of:

- Executive summary and recommendations not more than 3 pages
- Main text, to include index, emergency context, NRC mandate, evaluation methodology, commentary and analysis addressing evaluation purpose and outputs to include a section dedicated to the issue of particular lessons-learning focus, conclusions (not more than 17 pages)

- Appendices, to include evaluation terms of reference, maps, sample framework and bibliography
- All material collected in the undertaking of the evaluation process should be lodged with the evaluation manager prior to the termination of the contract.

Follow up

For the follow up of the evaluation the Head of section Asia and the Country Director for Timor-Leste are the main persons responsible for the follow up of recommendations and to ensure that the realisations of these plans are monitored and documented.

Appendix Four: Evaluation Framework

Aspect of evaluation	Research question	Research approach	Specific focus areas:
Design	<p>How well has this project fit within NRC's mandate in Timor-Leste and globally?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of NRC's governing documents and its country strategy for Timor-Leste, as well as international standards of practice (i.e. SPHERE and INEE Standards for Education in Emergencies) in emergency relief/reconstruction. 2. Assessment of relevant project documentation (project applications, action plans) against this documentation 	<p>Did these programmes provide the right response to the needs of boys and girls affected by conflict?</p> <p>Relevance of the projects towards NRC and MFC policies within this sector</p> <p>Are the objectives and activities sufficiently clear and well defined? Are they relevant and connected to the envisaged outcome of the programme?</p> <p>Have the programmes defined criteria for selecting beneficiaries in accordance with its objectives and have they been applied consistently?</p>
	<p>To what degree did potential beneficiaries and the GoTL participate in the planning and design of the two components (structure and training) of the project?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interviews with teachers, school directors, community members and teacher trainers at case study sites selected 2. Interviews with relevant MoE district, regional and national staff connected to these school sites 	<p>Relevance of the projects towards MoE policies within the sector</p> <p>Is the program consistent with GoTL priorities?</p>
	<p>Did the design of the project pay specific attention to specific constraints and opportunities embedded within each of its targeted communities?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessment of relevant project documentation (project applications, action plans, agreements, correspondence) 2. Interviews with relevant MoE district, regional and national staff and other educational partners 3. Review of MoE EMIS and other demographic data of targeted communities 4. Interviews with selected members of NRC Shelter and Education Teams, Timor-Leste 	<p>Did NRC have the required capacity in terms of staffing, local knowledge and expertise in the country to conduct this project?</p> <p>Is the technology utilised appropriate to the economic, educational and cultural conditions of Timor-Leste?</p> <p>Does</p> <p>Were mechanisms put in place to monitor whether the programmes adapted to context and needs?</p>

<p>Process</p>	<p>In regards to process, how well have both aspects of the project (school rehabilitation and teacher training), aligned themselves with objectives set in project planning documentation and formal agreements?</p> <p>In areas where process has deviated from original plans, what have been the mitigating factors?</p> <p>Have decisions throughout project implementation been made in a transparent, context-driven, participatory and cost-effective manner?</p>	<p>1. Assessment of reporting and correspondence once projects commenced against project planning documentation and formal agreements with the MoE</p> <p>1. Review of available reporting and correspondence from initiation of each project 2. Interviews with selected members of NRC Shelter and Education Teams</p> <p>1. Interviews with teachers, school directors, community members and teacher trainers at case study sites selected 2. Interviews with relevant MoE district, regional and national staff connected to these schools 3. Review of available reporting and correspondence from initiation of each project</p>	<p>Were appropriate and adequate resources (material, human, financial) available in the right place and at the right time?</p> <p>Did NRC have the required capacity in terms of staffing, local knowledge and expertise in the country to conduct this project?</p> <p>To what extent has the shelter and the education programmes utilised its resources and time effectively?</p> <p>Is there an internal monitoring mechanism and objectively verifiable indicators to assess whether or not objectives are achieved? What standards are used?</p>
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Outcome	<p>To what degree have these projects been relevant and effective to end-users (i.e. students, teachers, community members) and other interested parties?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interviews with teachers, school directors, community members at case study sites selected 2. Focus group panel of small sample of students in case study sites selected 3. Interviews with relevant MoE district, regional and national staff connected to these schools 	<p>Have the community and parents enjoyed the improved interactions with the teachers and thus influenced their children's learning environment positively?</p> <p>In what way have primary school teachers improved their teaching capacity?</p> <p>Have primary aged boys and girl had the opportunity to experience a participatory learning environment conducive to learning</p> <p>How has the learning environment at the school been improved/enhanced?</p> <p>Are the school structures of a reasonable, adequate quality?</p>
<p>What impact have the two components of the project had on <i>measurable</i> indicators; as well as on community, teacher, and student <i>perceptions</i> of schooling access, quality and relevance? Are these outcomes expected or are they surprising to those involved in the design and process stages of the project?</p>	<p>What factors have mitigated the broad objectives of this project, as articulated on pg. 2 of the ToR?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analysis of school-level data on indicators such as student attendance, attrition and enrolment rates, and class sizes over the past three years at case study sites selected 2. Interviews with teachers, school directors, community members at case study sites selected 3. Focus group panel of a sample of students in case study sites selected 4. Interviews with relevant MoE district, regional and national staff connected to these schools 5. Interviews with selected members of NRC Shelter and Education teams 	<p>In what way have primary school teachers improved their teaching capacity?</p> <p>Have primary aged boys and girl had the opportunity to experience a participatory learning environment conducive to learning?</p> <p>Has improved sanitation facilities encouraged attendance, particularly by female students?</p> <p>How do the beneficiaries (students and teachers) view the value, quality and quantity of the shelter and education programmes?</p>
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interviews with teachers, school directors, community members at case study sites selected 2. Review of available reporting and correspondence from each of the two projects, including any mid-term or process evaluations conducted 3. Review of MoE and other donor documentation about the evolving educational context and policies in Timor-Leste since the inception of each component of the project 	<p>To what extent did planned and/or unplanned interaction of the programmes affect NRCs standing and position as well as its overall objectives?</p>

Appendix Five: Interview Questions

Ministry of Education

1. Can you briefly summarise the main priority areas of the Ministry of Education in terms of basic education at the moment?
2. What kinds of upgrades to school facilities need to take place as part of these priorities?
3. What kinds of training for teachers need to take place as part of these priorities?
4. What are the particular challenges that very remote primary schools face that other schools in the country may not?
5. How has the Ministry of Education tried to support remote schools?
6. What kinds of challenges has your particular directorate/office faced in supporting schools, students and teachers in remote communities?
7. Over the years, how have you collaborated with other NGOs and multilaterals (WB, UNICEF) on either improving school infrastructure facilities or providing teacher training?
8. What have you found to work successfully in such collaborations?
9. What has been challenging about such collaborations?
10. In terms of building and improving school facilities and/or providing teacher training, what would you say have been some of the biggest challenges the Ministry of Education has faced?
11. What do you know about the work NRC has been doing in regards to school rehabilitation and teacher training?
12. In what ways has your directorate/office been involved in the programme?
13. When were you initially approached or made aware of NRC's intention to improve school facilities and provide teacher training in remote parts of the country?
14. Were you consulted when they were planning the activities they wanted to conduct in these schools? How? What specific feedback or advice did you provide to them at that stage?
15. Once the school rehabilitation/teacher training programmes began, how has your office stayed involved and informed about the activities of NRC in the 30 schools they have/are worked(ing) in?
16. Overall did you feel that NRC involved you in the decisions they were making throughout, and listened to the advice you provided?
17. **(IFU)** In terms of techniques, systems and approaches used in the school reconstruction project, how would you assess NRC's work in terms of appropriateness and effectiveness?
18. **(FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ROLES)** In regards to the teacher training component, specifically the approach and method they used, how would assess their work in terms of relevance and effectiveness?
19. Given the project's overall budget of approximately \$3 million USD, do you think the money was well spent?
20. Overall, what do you think makes the NRC approach within these two projects unique to the work of other donors and the government? Do you think this is a model that others could follow?
21. What would you say are the combined projects' biggest strengths and weaknesses?
22. How do you think the positive changes that NRC made to school infrastructure and teacher practices will continue over time?
23. As evaluators, do you think there are specific factors, constraints or considerations we should be aware of or consider when making our assessment of the NRC program?
24. In your opinion, is there anything NRC could have done differently considering the constraints it faced throughout the project?

INGO/International Agency Representatives

1. How long has your agency been involved in Timor-Leste?
2. Broadly speaking what you describe as your agency's mandate and role in Timor-Leste?
3. Over time, how has your agency shifted its actions and programs as the country has moved out of the humanitarian crisis?
4. Specifically, in what ways has your agency been involved in the education sector?
5. Any specific involvement in school reconstruction/rehabilitation? Describe the nature of such projects.
6. Any specific involvement in teacher training? Describe the nature of such projects.
7. In what ways have you collaborated with other NGOs, multilaterals and the Ministry on these projects?
8. What have you found to work successfully in such collaborations?
9. What has been challenging about such collaborations?
10. What would say are some of the specific challenges of working in Timor-Leste? How have you overcome these challenges in your own projects?
11. How have you gone about measuring the effectiveness of your interventions? How do you know, for example that the learning experiences of students has improved as a result of the work you have done with certitude?
12. What do you know about the work NRC has been doing in regards to school rehabilitation and teacher training?
13. In terms of "best practices" of education work in humanitarian and reconstruction responses to crisis, how would you gauge the practices and approach of NRC in its programme?
14. Specifically in terms of construction techniques and systems and approaches used in the school reconstruction project, how would you assess NRC's work in terms of appropriateness and effectiveness? What about in terms of the sustainable use of resources?
15. And in regards to the teacher training component, specifically the approach and method they used, how would assess their work in terms of relevance and effectiveness?
16. Given the project's overall budget of approximately \$3 million USD, do you think the money was well spent?
17. Overall, what do you think makes the NRC approach within these two projects unique to the work of other donors and the government? Do you think this is a model that others could follow?
18. What would you say are the combined projects' biggest strengths and weaknesses?
19. How well do both of these projects fit with current priorities of the GoTL and specifically the Ministry of Education?
20. Do you think the changes NRC made to school infrastructure and teacher practices are sustainable? Why/why not?
21. As evaluators, do you think there are specific factors, constraints or considerations we should be aware of or consider when making our assessment of the NRC program?
22. In your opinion, is there anything NRC could have done differently considering the constraints it faced throughout the project?

NRC in-country staff (only relevant questions asked to interviewed staff members)

1. When conceptualising this project, what kinds of considerations did you make?
2. How were potential regions/schools/communities chosen?
3. What constitutes a five year construction standard for the school structures you have built or rehabilitated?
4. Why did you decide on a five-week in school-based programme of support versus other models of training?
5. How did considerations of sustainable use of resources fit into your planning? What about issues of long-term sustainability?
6. How did you include the end-users of this project from the inception? What kind of input did they offer and how was this incorporated into the proposal and LFA?
7. How did you include the Ministry of Education from the inception? What kinds of input did they offer and how was this incorporated into the proposal and LFA?
8. In what ways did you work with other INGOs/multilaterals in conceptualising this project from the outset?
9. How did you incorporate international best practices as well NRC's governing documentation into your planning?
10. What gaps in staffing, knowledge, and expertise did you realise you had when planning this project? How did you resolve these gaps?
11. How was what you finally proposed part of a durable solution to the development needs of Timor-Leste?
12. In what ways did you decide that amongst all the possibilities this approach could provide the "right response" to boys and girls in areas affected by violence?
13. How did you link the project outcomes, objectives and specific activities to be completed?
14. What forms of evidence have you collected in relation to these outcomes? What does this evidence tell you?
15. How do you know you are successful with some of the stated outcomes in your LFA, without ongoing monitoring and data collection after the project has ended?
16. In terms of monitoring, how have you made sure that at each site, the project is operating according to plan and meeting overall objectives?
17. What kinds of challenges had you had during the monitoring process?
18. What have you done when monitoring activities have indicated problems with the process of implementation?
19. Once the projects began how did you maintain buy-in and support from the end users? How successful were these efforts? What did you do in instances where there continued to be dissatisfaction or concerns around the work NRC was doing?
20. How did you maintain buy-in and support from the Ministry of Education once the projects began?
21. Did you continue to work and partner with other INGOs and multilaterals throughout? How so?
22. Did you feel you had sufficient staffing, expertise and knowledge throughout?
23. What were some unexpected challenges you faced along the way?
24. How would you assess the overall impact that NRC has had in the 30 communities it has worked in on this project?
25. Specific to the school rehabilitation component, what specific pieces of evidence do you have at the moment that in terms of whether you have achieved the results/outputs indicated in the LFA (i.e. reduction of diarrhoea in community as a result of improved sanitation)?
26. Specific to the compact teacher-training programme, do you think teachers have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to continue the practices they were taught during the five-week training? If not, what additional support do you think they need?
27. Do you believe teachers will be well supported by both their head teachers and the regional inspectors in the new teaching methodologies and approaches they have learned? How do you know?
28. What kinds of improved interactions between the school and community have you noticed as a result of both the training and the workshops you ran for parents?
29. How can you measure some of the OVI's listed in your LFA without monitoring teacher practices after your intervention has ended? Is there an opportunity for such monitoring to occur?

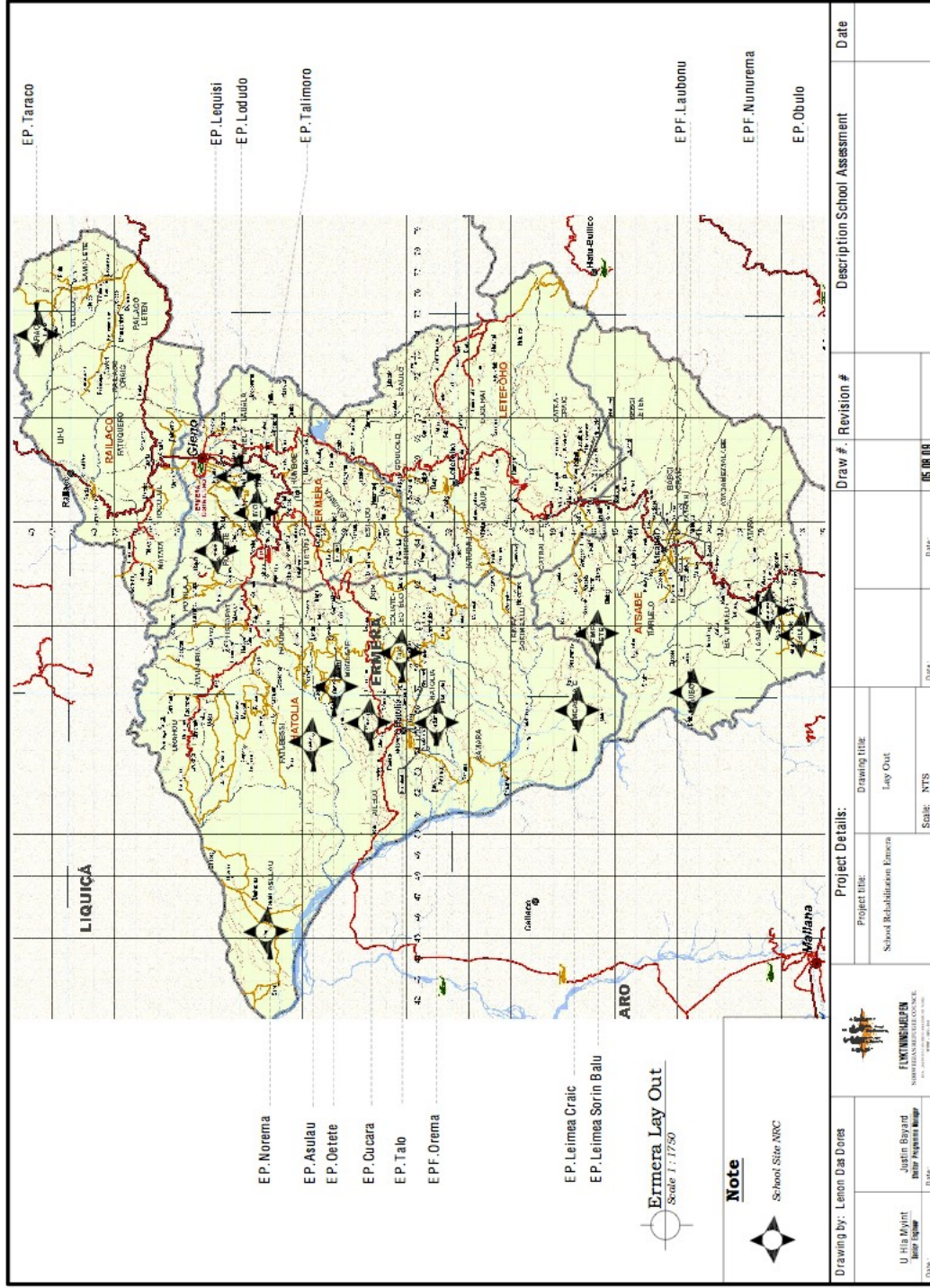
Group interview of CTT trained teachers

1. Before the school reconstruction project began at your school, what information were you given about it? Who shared this information with you? How was this shared?
2. Did you have an opportunity to make suggestions or recommendations about what needed to be done and how it should be done at your school? If you did, do you feel these ideas were listened to/incorporated into what actually happened?
3. Before the school reconstruction project began at your school, what information were you given about it? Who shared this information with you? How was this shared?
4. Did you have an opportunity to make suggestions or recommendations about what kinds of training you needed and how the training should be conducted? If you did, do you feel these ideas were listened to/incorporated into what actually happened?
5. What kinds of challenges or problems did you face at your school while the reconstruction and training programmes were going on? Were these problems resolved? How? Could these problems have been avoided in some way? How?
6. In terms of the trainers who you have/are working with at your school site, how would you describe the level and amount of support they gave to each of you? How would you describe their level of knowledge and experience with the material they were trying to teach you?
7. During the course of NRC's trainings did you feel you had enough:
 - a. Resources and materials provided to you?
 - b. Time with the trainers?
 - c. Information and support from the education team of NRC based at the office in Dili?
 - d. Support and assistance from the Ministry of Education?
 - e. Support and assistance from your school director?
 - f. Support and assistance from the community?
 - g. If not, why not, and how do think this impacted the programme?
8. In terms of the building improvements that NRC made to your school
 - a. How have these improvements made a difference to your work and the learning of students?
 - b. Specific to the improved water system and toilet facilities at your school, has this had any specific benefit?
 - c. Are they sufficient to the needs of the school and community?
 - d. Have there been any problems with the new/rehabilitated facilities built? Have these problems been resolved and how?
 - e. How are these facilities being maintained?
9. In terms of the training you received from NRC:
 - a. What did you learn from these trainings?
 - b. Do you believe this training was important? Why/why not?
 - c. What kinds of changes has this training made to your teaching practices?
 - d. What kinds of changes have this training made to the way you approach students in your classroom?
 - e. How has the training altered the way you use the curriculum or textbooks you have access to?
 - f. **ONLY FOR SCHOOLS WHERE TRAINING COMPLETED:** Has it been easy or hard to continue teaching in the way that the trainers taught you now that the training has ended? Why/why not?
10. In terms of the workshops that NRC ran for the parents of your students and the larger community, what impact or benefits did this have for the school?
11. Imagine that this programme was to continue next year for other schools. What would you change about the way the school reconstruction or teacher training would be carried out to make the programme more effective, keeping in mind that constraints (i.e. time, resources, location of school, etc.) would be similar?

Group interview guide for community

1. **Picture #1 (A picture of the school from before the NRC interventions began):** This was your school in 2008. Describe to us what the problems with the school were in terms of:
 - a. The classrooms, toilets, and other equipment
 - b. The behaviours and attitudes of the teachers
2. **Picture #2 (A picture of the school with NRC coming to their school): Then NRC came to your community:**
 - a. What did you like about NRC coming into your community?
 - b. What did you dislike about NRC coming into your community?
 - c. Did people from NRC ask any questions or share any information with you? What did they ask or say?
 - d. While the school was being built, how did you help NRC in the work they were doing? What was your role?
3. **Picture #3 (A picture of the new school): This is a picture of your school now.**
 - a. What kinds of changes do you think the project made to the way the teachers work with your children?
 - b. Has it had any impact in terms of the attitudes your children have about school? How so?
 - c. How have these improvements made a difference to your school and to the learning of students?
 - d. Specific to the improved water system and toilet facilities at your school, has this had any specific benefit?
 - e. Are the new facilities sufficient to the needs of the school and community?
 - f. Have there been any problems with the new/rehabilitated facilities built? Have these problems been resolved and how?
 - g. How have you as a community maintained and supported the upkeep of these facilities?
 - h. Do you believe you can continue to maintain these facilities with the knowledge and skills NRC provided you with WITHOUT additional outside assistance?
 - i. In terms of the workshops that NRC ran for you and the rest of the community while their programme was going on:
 1. What did you enjoy about these workshops?
 2. What did you learn from them?
 3. How useful were they in terms of understanding how you could help the school?

Appendix Six: Location of Schools, Ermera District



- EP. Norema
- EP. Asulau
- EP. Oetete
- EP. Cucara
- EP. Talu
- EPF. Orema

- EP. Leimea Cratic
- EP. Leimea Sorin Balu

Ermera Lay Out
Scale 1:1750

Note

School Site NRC

Drawing by: Lenon Da Dones		Project title: School Rehabilitation Project		Draw # / Revision #		Description School Assessment		Date	
Ulig Myint Project Engineer		Drawing title: Lay Out		Date: 05.08.09					
Date:		Scale: NTS		Date:					



