YOUNG, EDUCATED AND AMBITIOUS - A LONGITUDINAL SURVEY OF TIMORESE APPLICANTS AND PARTICIPANTS IN THE PACIFIC LABOUR SCHEME

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Timor-Leste economic survey: The end of petroleum income

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What is the Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS)?

One of two flagship Pacific labour mobility programs, alongside the Seasonal Worker Program (SWP)

Participants from 9 Pacific countries and Timor-Leste

Over 2500 workers in Australia as of May 2021, including over 100 from Timor-Leste

Allows for low and semi-skilled work for up to 3 years in rural and regional Australia, including:

- Non-seasonal agriculture
- Livestock processing
- Healthcare and accommodation services

Administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
103 Survey Respondents:
- 27 successful PLS applicants (living in Australia)
- 76 unsuccessful PLS applicants (living in Timor-Leste)

Mixed Method Approach:
- Quantitative data collection included economic activity, demographic profile and education
- Qualitative data collection on reasons for application

Conducted over the phone and in person:
- Respondents were asked questions over the phone
- Responses were recorded in Tetun and translated into English
Demographic Profile of Respondents

- 87% of respondents are male
- The average age is 28
- Respondents have an average of 2 people relying on their income
Most surveyed applicants live in Dili but are from a rural area.

Geographic Distribution

Most Recent Place of Residence:
- Dili: 91%
- District: 9%

Home Village Location:
- Dili: 83%
- District: 17%
Educational Attainment Amongst Respondents

Highest Level of Education Completed

- Secondary School: 77%
- Vocational School: 21%
- University: 2%

Note: Applicants to the PLS are required to have a secondary education, at minimum.
Future Plans for Business and Education

Plans to Start a Business in the Future
- Small Shop: 26%
- Agriculture/Agribusiness: 28%
- Transportation: 2%
- Other: 1%
- No Plans: 43%

Do Respondents Intend to Continue Their Education
- No: 30%
- Yes, in Timor: 18%
- Yes, in Australia: 3%
- Yes, in Indonesia: 49%
Remittance Sending

Remitting money back home whilst overseas is an almost ubiquitous practice amongst Timorese SWP workers

Did PLS applicants with prior SWP experience remit money whilst in the SWP?

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<td>Remittance Sending</td>
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When applicants were asked why they applied:

- 68 mention family
- 17 mention a better life
- 8 mention education
Some of the reasons given:

“Because I want to change my life and development the next generation.”

“Because I am from poor family so I want to change my family life”

“Because I am as a chief of the family, I want to get a better life so that I can support my children to get education and other people as well.”
Interest in Permanent Migration Pathways

Given the Opportunity, Would Respondents Permanently Settle in Australia

- Responded: 78%
- No Response: 22%
- Yes: 20%
- No: 2%
Types of Adat Spending

Largest Area of Adat Spending

- Bride Wealth: 80%
- Traditional Ceremonies: 12%
- Sacred House Maintenance: 7%
- Other: 1%
### Amounts of Adat spending

Adat spending varies greatly amongst people, often due to variation in individual obligations.

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*Respondents’ Adat spending in the first six months of 2019 (in $US)*