



SECRETARIA DE ESTADO DA
ARTE E CULTURA

Direcção Nacional de
Bibliotecas

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF TIMOR-LESTE ANNUAL REPORT

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Name of Country/Region: Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

Name of Library: (Future) National Library of Timor-Leste

Name of Director: NA

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1. General Overview

The National Library of Timor-Leste (Biblioteca Nacional de Timor-Leste) is in the process of being established as one of the national priorities in the Cultural Sector.

Following an agreement between Government and an Oil Company exploring the Timor Sea, in 2007, a decision was made that a National Library would be developed as a major cultural investment. The National Library of Timor-Leste will be “sustainable, accessible to all, providing space for learning, leisure and recreation and supporting the creation of a knowledge based society, respecting the past, looking to the future and helping develop the nation’s cultural identity.”

Within the framework of this joint project, it has been decided that the Company would be responsible for all infrastructure development, including furniture and IT, whereas Government of Timor-Leste is responsible for land acquisition, policy development, acquisition and management of library collections and hiring and training of staff.

In the last six years, Government of Timor-Leste secured a location in the centre of Dili with 2.5 hectares where the National Library will be developed. At the same time, State Secretariat of Arts and Culture developed some key policy documents, provided training opportunities to the existing staff and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Library of Portugal, which will provide support in terms of building a library collection and training of staff.



Ministério do Turismo,
Secretaria de Estado da Arte e Cultura,
Avenida Portugal, Praia dos Coqueiros

2. Relationship with Government and Legislations

According to the National Library Organic Law, to be approved by Council of Ministers, the future National Library of Timor-Leste will be a body depending economically from the Secretariat of State of Arts and Culture.

Some other key documents have also been prepared, including a Collection Development Policy, and Educational and Cultural Policy, a Preliminary Human Resource Plan, and an Acquisition, Collection and Storage Plan. All these documents are working documents, yet to be officially approved. Additionally, a working document on Infrastructure Requirements has also been developed, which aims at supporting the decision-making process before the building stages begin.

3. Key Facts and Figures

A National Directorate of Libraries, under direct supervision of a Directorate-General of Arts and Culture, as part of the State Secretariat of Arts and Culture, currently supervises all developments within the National Library project. This National Directorate is composed of 10 library staff with basic library knowledge, acquired during training in country and overseas.

The main Library Collection currently has little over 2.000 specimens, most of which are in Portuguese. They have been inserted in free-of-charge, online database, which has been adapted and translated to one of the official languages (Tetum). The collection is stored in a working container, where some of the staff also works.

4. New Developments in Creating and Building Collections

NA

5. New Developments in Managing Collections

NA

6. New Developments in Providing Access to Collections

NA

7. Collaborations with Other National Institutions

Within a library capacity building training provided by a local agency ETDA, East Timor Development Agency some of the library staff had the opportunity to do internships in existing libraries in Timor-Leste. At the same time, the National Directorate of Libraries has been collaborating with the Ministry of Education, by providing training to School Library managers across the country.

