

15 March 2008

Dear friends,

In the midst of the current crisis in East Timor, first Jill Finnane, wife of board member Michael, and later Trade Winds manager Ron Farran visited the country and had surprisingly (given the circumstances) fruitful trips.

Jill's purposes were to encourage the use of permaculture methods of improving the soil and consequent productivity and to explore ways in which Trade Winds could support and value-add (within East Timor) coffee exports. Her trip was led by Dr David Lloyd of Southern Cross University (SCU) – both he and the university have provided research and education support to the East Timor Coffee Academy (ETICA) at Gleno, a tertiary training institute set up by local leaders. In her visit to the Familia Hope Orphanage, she received this response from Isa Bradridge (who runs the orphanage) to Trade Winds' coffee plans for future employment of East Timorese through value-adding the product in East Timor:

*[At present] most of the money in between the grower and consumer is made in Australia. . . The more of these steps that can take place in East Timor then the more value East Timor gets for the growing of its coffee. . . I would rather see Trade Winds putting its money towards working towards helping East Timor market its own roasted and ground coffee than giving something to the orphanage.*

The purpose of Ron's visit was to establish connections with individuals and groups interested in improving the sustainability and value-adding in East Timor of quality coffee. His recommendations are that we focus our support on the Gleno area in the Ermera district, a short distance south of Dili, where the finest coffee in the country is grown; that we sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SCU which has done extensive research into and has strong links with the local coffee scene; and that we have an MOU with ETICA. Plans are afoot in Trade Winds to do plumbing work at Hope Orphanage and provide water pumps to deliver irrigation to the shade tree seedlings at Gleno in a country with unreliable rainfall.

All this requires money. Trade Winds is setting up a facility to enable friends to provide funding and to enable Trade Winds to apply for grants to implement the growing and manufacture of coffee. This help will assist a near neighbour provide employment in a country with a serious unemployment problem, one of the causes of unrest; it supports an excellent quality product; it is a locally owned industry; and the close links with Australian supporters ensure proper financial accountability in regard to donations.

We will keep you posted on this venture.

Yours sincerely

Ken Goodlet

Chair