



## Libby Bleakley goes to Timor

*Libby Bleakley is the daughter of a parishioner at St Declan's parish. As a Federal Police Officer, Libby worked with AFPO for 3 years in Timor. And as a result of her time in Timor, Libby has developed a crime prevention program similar to a PCYC (Police Citizens Youth Club).*



### Why...

In her own time, Libby went over to Timor-Leste on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 to purchase/lease land. The land is to build a gym for the use of the youth in the villages. This is part of her crime prevention program to assist and target the youth in the surrounding villages in Timor-Leste. Libby and Teresa Beck are funding this program themselves and will organise ongoing fundraising for the extra funds required; fundraising will go towards the leasing cost. Libby was able to lease land through an Australian building company, RMS; Libby worked with them when she was with the AFP – they built the Timorese Police Academy that the AFP funded as part of their mission. The land will have sewerage, electricity and security through the building company, which is an incredible bonus. They will be using demountable buildings, these can then be transported to other land if/when the lease expires or situation changes.

Part of their project is to help stop domestic violence, especially amongst the women and young girls. Some of the girls aged from 13 to 15 are having babies to their own fathers. One woman's arms were cut off by a man. Libby has a huge network of people in Timor – including Police (Timorese) and this will assist in the success of their program.

### DfG kits

While Libby was in Timor-Leste she delivered 47 DfG kits to the girls and women of Viqueque District. Libby also works with women who have been sexually assaulted; they also received some DfG kits. Libby says she can do with so many more kits. There are hundreds of girls and women who she could distribute the kits to. Libby returned from Timor on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2104

### Demonstrating and handing out of DfG kits

As Libby handed out a couple of the kits to show the girls, the girls were surprised and couldn't believe what they were. Some of the girls were giggling while Libby demonstrated how the kits are to be used. The kits were given to school aged girls, young women and some police women.

The girls were crying, excited and the smiles on their faces said it all. Women's periods are looked upon as, and called, "women's sickness". The women are unable to go out, go to school, church or shops.

One woman "aunty" in her 70s says she also needs the kit, it was explained to her about only for those who have their periods; "aunty" insisted she still has. "Aunty" told Libby that she has had many children... The conclusion was that this woman has incontinence. "Aunty" was given a kit and was absolutely delighted. She kissed Libby many times and couldn't stop smiling. "Aunty" held onto her bag like it was something so precious.

The impact of this project is phenomenal. It was the best gift that we (Libby and St Declan's parishioners) could have given.

## Responses to the kits by the local girls and women

**They loved the bright colours!**

**"The best thing..." "I can go to Church again..."  
"I can go to the shop..." "Thank you and bless you."**

*Paulineke Nolan, Pastoral Care Coordinator, St Declan's Parish*

