
Timor-Leste

**Total area:**

14,874 km²

Population:

1,167,242 (2015)

Literacy:

50%

Official languages:

Tetum, Portuguese

GDP (PPP) per capita:

\$5,479 (2017 est.)

Life expectancy:

62 years

Religions:

85% Catholic, 8% indigenous beliefs, 4% Protestant, 2% Muslim, 1% other religions

Prayer points

Mambai people of Timor Leste

There are about four groups of Mambai peoples in Timor Leste, which identify themselves as similar but not the same. These people need freedom from the bonds of animism, which they see not just as their religion but as their whole culture and preserve through many different rituals and ceremonies. Pray for protection for workers willing to serve in East Timor, where there is a lot of opposition. (WEC International - October 2021)

Domestic violence against women

Timor-Leste has one of the highest rates of violence against women and girls in the Asia-Pacific region. During their lifetime, nearly 60% of ever-been-partnered women will have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from their intimate partner. Among all women aged 15 to 49, 14% have been raped by someone other than an intimate partner in their lifetime, and 10% in the past 12 months. Please pray for those affected, particularly for women scared to leave their partners due to fear and stigmatisation. Pray also for organisations like The Asia Foundation and the Australian Embassy who are working to raise awareness of this plight on Timorese girls and women. (Mission Aviation Fellowship UK - April 2020)

Helpful Healthcare

Having given birth to twins the day before, things suddenly took a turn for the worse for 28-year-old Isabelle. She began convulsing and the nurses quickly realised that Isabelle had developed eclampsia. A life-saving blood transfusion was vital, but bags of blood are a rarity in the clinic in Baucau, Timor Leste, so Isabelle urgently needed to reach the hospital in Dili. Isabelle got the help she needed because she was evacuated to hospital by plane and was later happily reunited with her twins. But

many people die every year in countries like Timor-Leste because they are too far from a hospital when they become critically ill or injured. Pray for better healthcare and safer roads so that people can reach the help they need in time. (MAF International - July 2016)

Making a positive impact

East Timor became independent in 2002 following a bloody struggle against Indonesian occupation. Today, unemployment is very high, as is alcohol abuse and gang involvement. Many women and children carry a history of physical and sexual abuse. The Roman Catholicism followed by 99% of the population often incorporates animism and other folk religions. Protestants are generally accused of bringing in a foreign religion, can be the victims of violence and are not permitted to gather on campus. Pray for Christian students to remain strong and not to be ruled by fear of curses that may be invoked on them, even by their families. Pray too for lecturers and principals of schools to see the positive impact Christians make on the campus. Finally, pray for peace and reconciliation for a country torn apart by gangs and violence and for healing from abuse and trauma. (IFES - July 2014)

A nation with many needs

After the UN administered referendum in 1999, 70% of Timor-Leste economic infrastructure was destroyed by Indonesian troops and anti-independence militias, and 300,000 people fled. With international assistance, stability was restored and the country eventually gained its independence in May 2002. However, Timor-Leste remains a nation with many needs with unemployment still around 50%. Isolated communities in outer regions have very limited access to many of life's essentials and surface transport can be slow and dangerous with narrow, winding roads that often become impassable. Catholicism is dominant yet the Evangelical Church is relatively small (about 3%). Pray for the 1 million people who live in this small, new nation, as well as for the ministries of those seeking to help to secure their future. (Mission Aviation Fellowship UK - January 2011)

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