



Poverty reduction through Water, Sanitation

and Hygiene (WASH) Projects

December 2025 Newsletter

Bondia everyone (that's G'day in East Timor "Tetun"),

A heartfelt welcome to all our MiVAC members and their families to our MiVAC Christmas Newsletter.

I wanted to give you all an update on the projects we completed this year and those we are hoping to assist with in and around Balibo in East Timor (or Timor -Leste (T-L)). My Newsletter from June and my Chairman's Report in October contained some detail of what we have planned.

PROJECTS COMPLETED

Leohitu School – SkyHydrant System & Bathrooms



*The “dirty water tank” installed on the tank stand, with ladder and safety rails.
In the green shed is the pump and SkyHydrant filter system.*

Impact: Reliable safe water for students and staff. Safer access to toilets with new concrete path raised out of the mud. The main tank was labelled “Obrigadu Balibó House Trust” (or Thank you) – which shows community gratitude.

Completed works:

- 600 m poly pipe line from spring; new tank stand; SkyHydrant shelter and pump; absorption pit; electrical supply, new taps to water troughs and water connected.
- Existing gal tank taken off stand, cleaned out, and put back on stand.
- Rear toilets and troughs connected.
- Extra repairs: raised path, replaced lock, re-hung basins with new taps/flexible lines, taps at squat bowls.
- Main bathroom basin taps and taps and squatbowls connected and water running.
- School staff refresher training conducted on SkyHydrant operation & maintenance.
- Installed tap at sports ground.

NB: Main school bathroom handbasin drains remain broken, undermining hygiene and risking sustainability of the system. Waste water being collected in buckets. (May be problem locating suitable fittings in T-L.)

Balibó Community Learning Centre (CLC) – SkyHydrant Water System



The newly installed system, including shelter house, tucked out of the way in the corner. Again, in the green shed is the pump and SkyHydrant filter system. Water is pumped up o the “dirty water” tank, then gravity feeds back through the filter system into the “clean water” tank in the foreground.

Impact: Reliable clean water now available to dental clinic, volunteer house, and kitchen even during town outages. [Town water supply is sometimes available for only 1 day per week, so we used an existing 3,200L tank as a holding tank, from which water could be pumped up to the “dirty water” tank.] Provided running water to toilets and basins at the CLC.

Completed works:

- Shelter house, pump, SkyHydrant installed. System commissioned
- Existing galvanised tank used as pre-holding, pumped then to 3,200 L dirty tank.
- Dirty tank gravity-fed through SkyHydrant into 1,200 L clean tank, tied into existing distribution for clinic, kitchen, volunteer house.
- Dirty tank also connected to Profile tank (900 L) for general washing/watering and new 600 L toilet block tank.
- Toilets and handbasins in toilet block connected to the new tank.

Other Small Jobs Completed at CLC

- CLC: Re-attached external powerpoint, fixed volunteer house door catch, repaired basin drain with epoxy, replaced leaking shower valve/line, kitchen tap filter cleaned, so water flow ok now.
- Toilet block: Connected basins and toilets to new 600L tank.

ASSESSMENTS OF FUTURE POTENTIAL PROJECTS

Balibó Hospital – Maternity Ward

Completed: Site inspection and detailed report.

Concerns: Many deaths of newborn babies. Mothers and newborns exposed to serious health risks from mouldy, water-damaged ceilings. Unsafe birthing environment due to leaks, rusted battens, and unreliable water supply. Urgent need for remediation to ensure safe and hygienic services. Lack of necessary equipment. Midwife training very limited.

Recommended next:

- Roof: Refit ridge capping, seal holes and install new washers under screw heads, add sheet turn-ups.
- Water: Install SkyHydrant system with existing tanks and Gould pump (~US\$460), plus shelter house, new pipes & power supply
- Wall tiles: Remove loose tiles & install new wall tiles
- Secure approvals and funding: (Balibó Hospital Director has advised he can provide letter of approval. Request for approval assistance emailed to T-L Consul in Sydney.)

Fatuk Laran Spring

Completed: Inspection and design proposal.

Concerns: Spring water is currently unsafe due to animal contamination and runoff. Inlet frequently blocked by nappies and leaves, risking total supply interruption. Community health vulnerable to waterborne illness.

Recommended next: Repair/close fence gaps, add mesh to gate. Build mortar/stone diversion wall. Deepen drains to divert runoff. Fence upper spring area, add second diversion wall. Fit stainless steel mesh to pipe inlet. Materials cost: ~US\$1,600 (use villager labour).

Lotan Village Water Supply

Completed: Site inspection and report.

Concerns: Around 1,000 residents lack adequate water; main line broken, hill tank stagnant, small spring inadequate. Water insecurity likely forcing longer walks for women and children. Unusable infrastructure puts community health and wellbeing at risk.

Recommended next: Replace broken gal pipe, install flood-resistant line. Add SkyHydrant and clean tank downstream of hill tank. Plan dual supply (spring water for washing & toilets, SkyHydrant water for drinking). Extend system to west side (via Budin Bridge or suspended pipe, or own well?). Confirm population split east/west for distribution planning.

Batugade Cede Suco Water Supply

[A Cede Suco is like a village administration centre.]

Completed: Site inspection and (previous) report.

Concerns: Current well feeds Cede Suco plus Police Post. Well output volume unknown, but chefe said limited. Small, poor quality pumps; poor, unsafe power supply set up. Local school about 200m away has no clean water.

Recommended next: Sink bore in SW corner of compound - away from well. Plan dual supply (spring water for washing & toilets, SkyHydrant water for drinking). Extend system to adjacent school.

Balibo Cede Suco Water Supply

Completed: Previous site inspection and report.

Concerns: No supply at the Balibo Cede Suco. Local school about 200m away across road has no clean water.

Recommended next: Connect via breaching piece into water line outside Cede Suco. Plan dual supply (spring water for washing & toilets, SkyHydrant water for drinking). Extend system to adjacent school.

Minor Repairs at Palaka and Belola Schools

Completed: Previous site inspection and reports

Concerns: Current systems not fully utilised or not efficient. Some items broken.

Recommended next: Undertake the minor repairs as recommended.

WHAT'S NEXT?

MiVAC has been working closely with the Balibo House Trust (BHT) - which provisionally agreed to the above projects. BHT have their planning session in mid-January, from which we are hoping to get their full go-ahead, and an estimate of funding available. Once we have that information, we will be able to let you know our next steps.

Thank you to our Board members and members of our Executive Committee for your great work through the year. We have certainly achieved a lot!

On behalf of the MiVAC Board and our Executive Committee, I wish you and your families a safe and enjoyable Festive Season, and all the very best for 2026.

That's all from me for the moment. Please stay safe out there. Until next time ...

With kind regards,

Brian

Brian Boon, MCS
Chairman

December 2025

"You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that we truly give." Kahlil Gibran