

# My Journey In Timor-Leste



What comes next in my Journey in Timor-Leste? After serving for more than 3 months in Dili God sent me farther in the district of Cova-lima and subdistrict of Suai. How did that happen? There was one Sunday that Nanay Connie talked to me, this is before I fly to Singapore for my short break and to meet up with my mentor in building up children ministry my children ministry Pastor, Ps Hong Teck, we normally call him Ps HT. I was just telling Nay Connie that I will fly back to Singapore the following week and after I come back I will focus on going to districts already, particularly in Alieu to see if there will be opportunity there for children ministry. To my surprise she just blurted out, *"if you really have a heart for children please pray for the place SUAI. Me and my husband has been praying for this place, but it is very far."* I don't know exactly how to react. I was caught off guard. I was already prepared to go to Alieu and I have been praying to God for 3 months to give me an exact place and direction and all of a sudden, He just dropped the bomb like that. I went home that Sunday and prayed about it. I googled it and it was so far, so I complained and complained and beg God to just send me to Alieu instead. Monday came and again God is so persistent because during lunch break I talked to one of my closest preschool teacher that I wont be coming back to the organization after I come back from Singapore and she was really sad about that so I asked her maybe she can help me go around Timor. She was really excited about that and then I asked her about Suai and she said she have never been there but she knows the place and just like God already planned it, the unusual thing happened; one of the cleaners in the preschool Mana Jinha went to the playground to just say hello before going home for lunch break and Mana Mota just said, *"Oww, Mana Jinha is from Suai!"* So, Mana(sister) Jinha sat down and talked to me about it. She gave me information like how long the travel to get there and what are my choices and even asked us to stay in their place and I knew from then God is already moving. Then I went for my own lunch and boom I looked outside of the mikrolet (mini bus) their public transportation in Timor Leste and the bus next to us has a signboard that says, "DILI-SUAI". By that time, it's already confirmed to me and I decided to go. I accounted to my mentor in my trip to Sg that I need to shift direction and go to Suai instead because the move of God is so strong. Sorry for the long detail, but I believe that these small details of how God moved me to my assignment is very important. I know many of us in the ministry can be so eager for actions and results. I was so persistent for those 3 months asking God repeatedly and wondering what will be next, where should I really be? I mean EXACTLY? To be honest I did not like those silent days with God. I hear Him daily in my devotions on what I should do or expect daily but not what I should expect or do in weeks and month to come or what should I really be doing. Remember I got John 4:34-42 as my mission passage and I still can't see that happening in those months and then my 4<sup>th</sup> month hits and it made me realize how important those 3 months of preparation and equipping was. June 1<sup>st</sup> of 2018 I with Mana Mota with Mana Jinha traveling before us we started our journey to Suai and it was not easy. I already heard about how dangerous the road and about the 12 hours travel time and then it rained the night before, making the road worst, but I chose not to look at those things and not to let FEAR interfere. I even googled the place again and saw the small description about Suai, stating the *"church massacre"* that happened during the conflict. Very encouraging isn't it? Well, Friday of June 1<sup>st</sup> came, the bus was scheduled to pick us up by 5 in the afternoon, but it did not come. We called and called and finally 30 minutes after

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the driver picked up to tell us that they already left without us and the next schedule will be the next day at 2 in the morning. I calculated the time of arrival and at first, I was hesitant already but I chose to still go so we slept in the squatter area near the preschool where Mana Jinha lives and stayed there for a night. I saw their living condition and it broke my heart even more. Unfortunately, the bus also did not turn up. At first, they said just wait until 3 o'clock but nothing turned up until they don't answer our call anymore. We called the other operator and said there's a 5am bus and the now exhausted me without sleep just decided to go for it. 5 am came and nope, no sign of the bus. We called, and they said just wait for another 30 minutes so I told Mana Mota if 30 minutes after 5 in the morning comes and there's still no bus we will take our chances and go to the airport to check if there's a flight, if there's really none I will rent a car. Amazingly, I fell asleep after that. Seems like my inner self is at peace but not long after Mana Mota woke me up telling me that she saw one of our drivers outside of the preschool preparing to fetch our director because she got a flight to catch to Suai at 7:45 in the morning. Hearing that news was a bitter sweet for me. First, I was really thankful we got another way but on the other hand I was a little bit disappointed already at this time because I was told that there's only one flight to Suai and that should only be on Mondays. We got to the airport and more disappointment came, I thought we can just purchase a flight ticket but no, we were taking chances to get a seat. I told Mana Mota that was the first time I experienced to be a chance passenger. I always PLAN AHEAD! To add to the pile of sad news we were not given a seat. My optimistic side still kicked off saying, *"never mind, the actual activity is only happening on Sunday we can fly on Sunday morning."* Guess what? They fly daily except Sundays. Amazing! We went outside with Mana Mota looking at me and I blurted it out like a joke, "Mana Mota I thought there's only one flight in a week?" She apologized for the wrong information and she looked very stressed already. So, I closed my eyes, this time I was about to give up already. I talked to God for a moment asking Him why? I told God, *"Lord I don't understand! Your direction and the leading were very clear! I'm sure you want me to go to Suai why all of this is happening? Don't you want me to go? I read Your word this morning at one in the morning you still confirmed to me in Galatians 3:15 "Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it." I was really confident earlier on that the bus will come but it did not, and further troubles came. What do you really want me to do?* This is what's going on within me, but I don't want to show that to Mana Mota. Then I prayed, and I still can sense that peace about going ahead. I still have one last option but it will cost me more than I should, but I am determined to go! So, I told Mana Mota, "Okay! I am renting a car!" She asked me if I am sure and started calling our drivers from the preschool, but none answered. Then the chatterbox was already weakening me that time, but the airport security came and told us he found us a driver. He overheard our concerns earlier and we finally got on the road with me paying double of what was planned but believe me the experience of finally getting there in the promised land of God was nothing to be compared of the cost, it was worth it. We got there earlier with just 8 hours of very fast and dangerous travel. Mana Mota was car sick but what comes afterwards was priceless. I was left with 40 US dollars for our expenses there and got nothing for our return trip. But we got help from friends in Dili. Thank You Lord! If I chose to give up on those testing times wherein the devil tried his best to stop me I will

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not be able to see what awaits in the other side of those hardships and trials. I am thankful to share with you all this experience because maybe you like me is experiencing this or will experience this. The truth is that when the assignment is from the Lord the leading and the clues are always easy to find. God is not trying to play hide and seek but to begin, to start and to get to the assignment, that one is like going through an eye of a needle because the devil will try his best to discourage us, make us doubt of the call of God and eventually to stop us and kill the passion and the calling God has for us. I read from the book of Ps Steven Furtick crashing the chatterbox, "The enemy only fights those who pose a threat!" I finally got to Suai and we experience their culture there. We dance with the elders and just did our best to be part of the community. We gather children there and begun to work with a local church there and it was an amazing experience. Like always I used arts as well to reach out. We already started in the community where Mana Jinha lives and in Fatulor. These are the two places we already started gathering children. I was also amazed how God helped me also to start doing basic English lessons with them. We had English lesson in the church on our extra time when there's no ministry and we also did visitation and prayer to those brothers and sisters who are under persecution from their own family for attending church. I finally put the peg in the soil. The yellow peg I got from Pemba Africa. A church is about to sprout from that land peg! The prophesy is about to happen! I can't wait to come back again in the last quarter of the year. I went to Australia for a while as I attended Hillsong Conference "There is More!" Indeed, there is more! Excited for more! I am now with my family in the Philippines and having a short break and resting as well. I hope you will be blessed by my Journey in Timor-Leste. God bless everyone and until the next one! Thank you!



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My first trip in the community where Mana Jinha lives in Suai.

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I started working with the local church. This is in Fatulor!



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