

BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE: ANA BELA CARDOSO'S JOURNEY IN TIMOR-LESTE



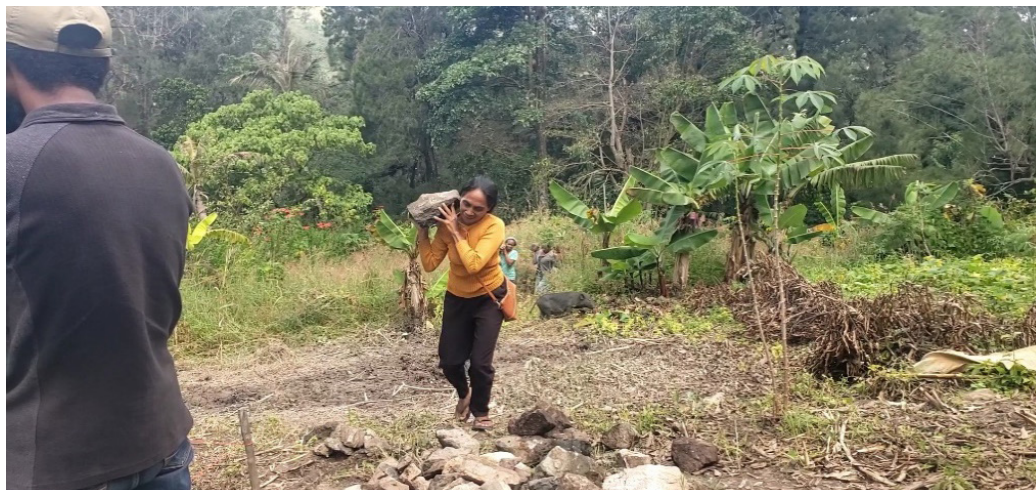
The SPRINT project aims to equip local community members with knowledge and skills in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA). One key participant in this initiative is Ana Bela Cardoso, a 40-year-old mother of seven children and the Secretary of the Suco Disaster Management Committee (SDMC) in Mulo Village in Ainaro Municipality, Timor-Leste. Through a DRR-CCA training held in February 2024, Ana Bela learned valuable strategies to better prepare for disasters while promoting gender equality and inclusiveness within her community.

Ana Bela's overall experience with the training was deeply positive. She shared that she gained new insights into disaster preparedness and climate adaptation. In particular, the gender equality and inclusion sessions were eye-opening for her. *"Ha'u simu ona tópiku oin-oin hosi treinamentu ida-ne'e hanesan preparasaun mitigasaun prevensaun no adaptasaun ba tipu dezastre oin-oin. RRD ne'e ho objetivu atu hamenus vulnerabilidade iha nivel individuál no comunidade. Aleinde ne'e ha'u mós aprende kona-ba igualdade jéneru no inkluziun ida-ne'e mak aprendizajen di'ak no foun ba ha'u."* ("I learned various topics from this training, such as preparedness, mitigation, prevention, and adaptation to different types of disasters. DRR aims to reduce vulnerabilities at both the individual and community levels. Additionally, I learned about gender equality and inclusion, which was new and very valuable to me.")

IMPACT ON GENDER AND INCLUSION AWARENESS

Ana Bela highlighted that the sessions on gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI) resonated most with her. She realized the importance of including women in decision-making processes at both the household and community levels. She also emphasized the need to extend opportunities to women and persons with disabilities, ensuring they have access to participate actively in community activities. *"Ha'u interese tebes ba sesaun GEDSI tanba agora ha'u hatene oinsá feto sira tenke partisipa iha foti desizaun iha uma-kain no comunidade. Salienta liu tan, katak importante tebes atu fahe oportunidade ba feto no ema ho defisiénsia sira seluk atu envolve an ativu iha atividade comunidade nian hodi asesu kontrolu no benefísiu."* ("I am very interested in the GEDSI session because now I understand how women should participate in decision-making both at home and in the community. It is also crucial to share opportunities with other women and persons with disabilities so they can actively engage in community activities and gain access and benefits.")

Ana Bela took the knowledge she gained and shared it with her family and neighbors. Her relatives appreciated the lessons and expressed their willingness to apply these practices within their households. Some have already started implementing mitigation measures, such as reinforcing their house roofs using local materials and planting trees to reduce the impact of strong winds. *"Ha'u hetan koñesimentu husi treinamentu ha'u fahe ona ba ha'u-nia família no comunidade. Ha'u-nia família sira ne'ebé ha'u simu ona, rekoñese katak lisaun sira-ne'e importante*



tebes no sira fiar katak sira kontente atu halo tuir sira-nia ba família rasik no mós iha comunidade.” (“The knowledge I gained from the training I shared with my family and community. My family members who I shared with recognized the importance of these lessons and are happy to apply them in their own households and the community.”)

REFLECTIONS AND LOOKING FORWARD

Despite these positive outcomes, Ana Bela faced challenges in applying what she learned, particularly due to the high illiteracy rates in her community. Additionally, the geographical distance between households and the community center made it difficult to organize sessions that reach everyone. Ana Bela believes that ongoing efforts are needed to address these issues. *“Dezafiu sira ne’ebé membru comunidade sira hasoru mak hanesan analfabetu no aprende foun ba sira presiza tempu atu komprende definisaun no aplikasaun hotu. Liu tan, dezafiu sira-ne’e mós hale’u fatin jeográfiku hanesan distánsia entre uma-kain ida-idak no sentru comunidade.” (“The challenges faced include the high illiteracy rate, as these concepts are new to most community members and require time to fully understand and apply. Additionally, the geographical distance between individual households and the community center presents another challenge.”)*

Ana Bela expressed gratitude towards MAHARU, the implementing local civil society organization (CSO), for bringing the DRR-CCA training to her village. She is committed to continuing her learning journey and sharing the knowledge with others in her community. *“Ha’u kontente tebes no apresia tebes ba MAHARU ne’ebé implementa projetu RRD-AMK iha ha’u-nia suku. Hamutuk ho kolega feto sira ami sempre buka oportunitade atu aprende hodi hadi’a ami-nia koñesimentu.” (“I am very happy and grateful to MAHARU for implementing the DRR-CCA project in my village. Together with my female colleagues, we are always looking for opportunities to learn and improve our knowledge.”)*

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