

## EMPOWERING YOUTH LEADERSHIP: ELIZITA DA COSTA'S PATH TO BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE



Elizita da Costa, a 19-year-old staff member of the Lian Orululi organization and part of the NAFOFILA network, attended a Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), and Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) training in Ainaro in June 2024. As a young leader, this training marked her first exposure to such topics and served as a stepping stone for her development in organizational leadership and community empowerment.

Elizita reflected on the training as a valuable experience that broadened her understanding of disaster preparedness, leadership, and community engagement. The facilitators' skills and the interactive discussions among participants left a lasting impression on her. *"Treinamentu ne'e la'o di'ak ne'ebé folin-boot tebes ba ha'u, fasilitador sira iha kompriensaun di'ak no matenek kona-ba sira-nia matéria formasaun no fasilitasaun. Promove diskusaun interativu entre partisipante sira, formasaun ne'e sai ona hanesan plataforma ida-ne'ebé di'ak tebes hodi troka esperiênsia no hanoin kona-ba aspetu oin-oin iha prátika réal no dalan atu hadi'a."* ("The training went well and was very valuable to me. The facilitators had a strong understanding of the subject and were skilled in their facilitation. The interactive discussions among participants, the training became a great platform for exchanging experiences and ideas on different aspects of real practices and ways to improve.")

### PERSONAL GROWTH AND REFLECTIONS

The training instilled in Elizita a desire to learn more about organizational development, particularly leadership. She realized the importance of equipping herself with the necessary skills to contribute to both her community's and her organization's future development. *"Ha'u kontente tebes treinamentu ne'e aumenta valór ba ha'u, ha'u rekoñese katak ha'u sei aprende liu tan kona-ba dezvoltamentu organizasaun nian liuliu siénsia lideransa nian hodi prepara ha'u-nia an ba futuru ba dezvoltamentu comunidade no organizasaun nian."* ("I am very happy that this training added value to me. I realized that I need to learn more about organizational development, especially leadership, to prepare myself for the future of my community and the organization.")

Following the training, Elizita shared her newfound knowledge with her colleagues and is committed to putting it into practice in her community. She sees the relevance of the training to her organization's goals and believes that continued engagement with NAFOFILA will allow her to grow even further. *"Ha'u aprende ona koñesimentu foun kona-ba RRD-AMK GEDSI no lideransa ne'e foin primeira-vez ba ha'u. Maibé ha'u foin komesa aprende. Ha'u kontente atu envolve liután ho NAFOFILA no ho membru rede sira seluk atu aprende buat barak tan ne'ebé relasiona ho área ne'e. Ha'u fiar katak treinamentu ne'e relevante no benefisia ha'u-nia organizasaun."* ("I have learned new knowledge on DRR-CCA, GEDSI, and leadership, and this is my first time doing so. However, it is just the beginning of my learning. I am happy to continue

engaging with NAFOFILA and other network members to learn many more things related to this field. I believe that this training is relevant and benefits my organization.”)

One challenge Elizita identified was the limited participation of youth and community members in capacity-building activities. She plans to work closely with her network members to encourage more active participation, believing that such efforts will ultimately benefit the individuals involved. *“Ha’u sei servisu hamutuk ho membru rede sira ha’u sei haka’as an atu enkoraja sira atu partisipa ativamente iha atividade kapasitasaun iha futuru tanba sei hetan benefisiu ba sira-nia an rasik.”* (“I will work together with network members, and I am committed to encouraging them to actively participate in future capacity-building activities because it will ultimately benefit them.”)

## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK AND OBSERVATIONS

During the training sessions, community members shared their own experiences, which helped them appreciate the new knowledge being provided. Elizita observed that the community valued the training content, especially its contributions to strengthening preparedness and mitigation actions at both the household and community levels. *“Ha’u haree katak komunidadade iha sira-nia esperiênsia rasik antes ne’e, treinamentu ne’e aumenta valór ba komunidadade (KJDS) durante sesaun formasaun ne’e komunidadade fahe sira-nia hanoin katak konteúdu formasaun ne’e kontribui ona atu haforsa sira-nia kapasidade atu foti preparasaun mitigasaun no asaun adaptativu iha sira-nia komunidadade no iha nivel uma-kain.”* (“I observed that the community had their own experiences before this, but this training added value to the community (SDMC). During the training sessions, the community shared their views, recognizing



*that this training content contributed to strengthening their capacity to take preparedness, mitigation, and adaptive actions in their community and at the household level.”*)

Elizita’s journey has only just begun. She expressed a strong desire to continue learning and developing her skills through further capacity-building training, both for herself and her

organization. The training not only boosted her confidence but also gave her practical knowledge on facilitating community sessions related to DRR and CCA. *“Ha’u kontente tebes tanba ha’u bele aprende liu tan atu hasa’e ha’u-nia koñesimentu no mós atu hetan oportunidade tan formasaun kapasitasaun seluk.”* (“I am very happy because I can learn more to improve my knowledge and am hoping to have further opportunities for other capacity-building training.”)

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