

CASE STUDY
TIMOR-LESTE

STRENGTHENING VILLAGE LEADERSHIP: COMMITMENT TO RESILIENCE

Manuela Caldas, a 49-year-old Village Chief of Manu-taci Village and head of the Suco Disaster Management Committee (SDMC), participated in the Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation (DRR-CCA) training held in January 2024. The training, organized by NAFOFILA, aimed to raise community awareness and establish the SDMC structure to lead disaster management efforts at the village level.

Manuela expressed her gratitude for the training facilitated by NAFOFILA, acknowledging the value it brought to the village. The training not only promoted community awareness but also laid the foundation for the SDMC to take on leadership roles in disaster management.

REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP AND INCLUSION

As the Village Chief and head of the SDMC, Manuela was particularly motivated by the DRR-CCA training's focus on building her knowledge and understanding of disaster management. She emphasized the importance of sharing this knowledge, particularly with women and people with disabilities, to ensure they are included in community actions. *"Nu'udar autoridade suku no xefe KJDS ha'u kontente atu aprende liu tan kona-ba definisaun báziku RRD-AMK no kompriensaun atu hadi'a ha'u-nia koñesimentu hodi promove no fahe liután ba ha'u-nia membru comunidade liuliu ba feto no ema ho defisiénsia sira. Importante liu mak ita iha estrutura KJDS nian ne'ebé iha responsabilidade atu halo asaun ba atividade JRDBK nian."* ("As village authority and chief of the SDMC, I am happy to learn more about the basic definition of DRR-CCA and understanding to improve my knowledge to further promote and share it with my community members, especially women and people with disabilities. Most importantly, we now have the SDMC structure in place with clear responsibilities to take action on CBDRM activities.")

Manuela has taken an active role in sharing the knowledge she gained from the training with her community. She uses her position as Village Chief to discuss DRR-CCA topics during regular village council meetings. The changes she has observed include increased motivation among council members to cooperate with the project and implement preparedness and mitigation activities under SDMC leadership. *"Ha'u uza ha'u-nia autoridade nu'udar xefe-suku hodi fahe koñesimentu RRD-AMK informasaun iha sorumutu regulár Konsellu Suku nian ba membru Konsellu hotu-hotu. Mudansa hirak ne'ebé ha'u bele observa mak mudansa iha motivasaun atu adapta koñesimentu foun ne'ebé hetan husi formasaun liuliu motivasaun atu kolabora ho projetu ne'e hodi implementa atividade preparasaun mitigasaun no adaptasaun iha nivel comunidade ho lideransa KJDS nian."* ("I am using my authority as the village chief to share the DRR-CCA knowledge and information at the regular village council meetings with all council members. The changes I have observed include increased motivation to adapt the new knowledge gained from the training, especially the motivation to



cooperate with the project to implement preparedness, mitigation, and adaptation activities at the community level with SDMC leadership.”)

One of the challenges Manuela faced was ensuring that village council members fully understood the DRR-CCA concepts, as this material was new to many. To address this, she made awareness-raising sessions a regular part of council meetings to keep the community informed about disaster risks and preparedness actions. *“Dezafiu prinsipál sira ne’ebé ha’u hasoru mak presiza tempu atu asegura komprensuaun klaru kona-ba definisaun no konseitu husi membru konsellu suku sira tanba ami hatene katak materiál formasaun RRD-AMK ne’e foun ba membru balun.”* (“The main challenge I faced is that it takes time to ensure a clear understanding of the definitions and concepts by village council members, as we are aware that this DRR-CCA training material is new to some members.”) *“Atu hasa’e komprensuaun hosi membru konsellu no komunidadade sira sesaun hasa’e konsiénsia konsidera hanesan asuntu ajénda ida iha sorumutuk konsellu ida-idak no eventu komunidadade nian.”* (“To raise the understanding of the council and community members, awareness-raising sessions are considered one of the agenda items at every council meeting and community event.”)

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK AND FUTURE ACTION

The Village Council and SDMC appreciated NAFOFILA’s role in supporting their capacity-building activities. Manuela encouraged the community to take action by identifying safe places to build houses and reduce

risks from disasters like strong winds and landslides. *“Konsellu Suku no KJDS apresia tebes apoiu NAFOFILA nu’udar organizasaun intermediariu ida hodi fasilita atividade kapasitasaun ba KJDS no grupu komunidadade sira, ha’u fó avizu ba komunidadade sira atu hahú halo asaun atu evita risku potenciál sira hanesan anin-boot no risku ba rai-slide.”* (“The Village Council and SDMC highly appreciate NAFOFILA’s support as an intermediary organization to facilitate capacity-building activities for the SDMC and community groups. I alerted the community to start taking action to avoid potential risks like strong winds and landslides.”)



Manuela hopes for more intensive technical training for SDMC members and youths to further strengthen their capacities. She believes that with ongoing support and the provision of training manuals, they can continue promoting DRR-CCA in the community. *“Ami presiza treinamentu tékniku intensivu ba KJDS no konsellu suku inklui foin-sa’e sira atu haforsa ami-nia kapasidade hodi inklui mós fornese manuál formasaun nian hanesan referénsia ba futuru hodi promove RRD-AMK iha komunidadade.”* (“We require further intensive technical training for SDMC and village council members, including youths, to strengthen our capacity. This also includes providing training manuals as a reference for the future to promote DRR-CCA in the community.”)

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