

Digital Stories of Stigma - Timor-Leste - Celestina

Series title slide text: Stories of Impact and Resilience from People with Disability

Explanatory slide 1 text: Sharing lived experiences gives planners and policy makers valuable insights into the needs of those impacted by their decisions.

Explanatory slide 2 text: We asked people with disability to tell a story about a time they experienced stigma and how they coped.

Video title text: Experiences of Stigma. Celestina's story – Timor-Leste

Start: We see a photograph of a young Timorese woman, she has a birthmark on her lower right jaw and her eyes are slightly rolling up. She has long dark hair a small smile.

She says: My name is Celestina Carion. I am 25years old and I live in Becora. I have a total vision impairment. I work as a researcher. I want to tell a story about the discrimination tl faced in my community when I was younger.

We see a photo of water flowing from a tap on a tank to a blue plastic bucket.

Celestina says: One day I went to fetch water from the public tank. Some youth s hanging out there said “hey, there’s a blind person. Le’ts hide her jerry cans”

We see a photo of people standing and walking through a shady courtyard. Then a photo of a young woman near her front door where another woman is seated on a chair.

Celestina says: when I heard those words, I felt like I was worthless. I felt very sad. After going home and telling my mother what happened she went and argued with those people who hid my jerry cans. But then they told my parents “Don’t trust your blind daughter, we did not hide her jerry cans”. In fact, they took my jerry cans and hid them where I couldn’t find them.

We see a picture of water running from a tank and person filling a container.

Celestina says: They also splashed me with water until I got wet. I couldn’t do anything because I can’t see. I felt very sad. All I did was cry.

We see a picture of a woman crying while another woman points at her, then we see a picture of four water containers.

Celestina continues: I felt sad because I couldn’t do anything to stop them. I was just a little girl then and knew nothing. All I thought about was ‘maybe I’m the only person who is blind and that is why they did this.’

We see a picture someone holding a braille punch and a sheet of paper with braille on it. Then a picture of the back of a young woman near the front door of a house. She is wearing a red silk shirt and has here hair up in a bun. This changes to a picture of a young man standing and talking to a seated woman.

Celestina says: But my uncle always said “it’s okay, if God made you like this you must accept it. Those people who discriminated against you will get what they deserve.” These words always encouraged me, and I am happy now despite my condition. After that incident and my uncle’s encouraging words I didn’t go back to the fetch water from the tank. I just stayed at home.

We see a picture of a woman standing near a wall with small ferns growing from it. She is wearing a white t-shirt and jeans.

Celestina says: The same problem did not happen again. Sometime later, I did return to fetch water. I went with my older sister. When they saw my sister, they ran away.

We see the original photo of the tank with water flowing to a blue container. Then a picture of two women walking to a door, one woman is holding a water container, the other is gripping her arm. Then we see a braille punch set and the shady courtyard again.

Celestina says: What I want is for people to understand my condition. At the time, even I did not understand how people with disability should be treated. I thought I was the only blind person in the family and that's why people didn't want to play with me and hid my jerry cans. As a disabled person, I want organisations that work in the disability area and the government to prioritize people with disability. They have to advocate strongly so that people who have the same condition as me aren't discriminated against, because rural communities haven't got the right information about how to treat people with disability.

Disclaimer slide text: This publication has been funded by the Australian Government through the department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The views expressed in this publication are the author's alone and are not necessarily the views of the Australian Government

Use of video text: Please respect the integrity of this content and refrain from editing or altering it in any way.

End slide text and logos:

Text: Find more stories of impact and resilience, beside this is a QR code that links to <https://mbspgh.unimelb.edu.au/centres-institutes/nossal-institute-for-global-health/research/research-groups/stories-of-impact-and-resilience>

Also in text: This video has been funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Produced by RHTO and the Nossal Institute, University of Melbourne, through the CBM-Nossal Partnership.

Logos:

Australian Aid – navy blue writing and a red kangaroo,

RHTO, A blue outline of an oval, inside is coloured half red and half white with a green outline of Timor-Leste, a group of four people together, one who is using a wheelchair and the words Ra'és Hadomi Timor Oan.

CBM, global disability inclusion red writing, and inclusion advisory group black writing with a yellow circle, red and yellow dots in a cross shape

The University of Melbourne, blue square with white writing and figure of Nike the goddess of victory with the latin words postera crescam laude