

Digital Stories of Stigma - Timor-Leste - Nelson

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. Nelson's story – Timor-Leste

Start: a photo of a young Timorese man in a bright green and yellow shirt sitting in a classroom facing the camera

He says: My name is Nelson. I am 20 years old. I have a physical disability and use crutches.

We see a picture of crutches against a wall and then a picture of Nelson facing the camera with a whiteboard behind him, then a picture of a man at a bookshelf and a picture of a young man turning away from a person who is pointing at him.

He says: I am a student and I live in Fatuhada. I will never forget the time I experienced discriminations from one of my teachers when I was in junior high school.

We see a class of students working followed by an individual reading a notebook.

Nelson says: one day, the teacher told students from two different classes to come together in one class to have a joint lesson. I was sitting silently, copying what the teacher had written on the board when someone made a noise. The teacher turned around angrily. He pointed directly at me and said, "Timor-Leste doesn't need people like you, even if you don't come to school".

We see two pictures of a classroom with students and two of students in a school yard.

Nelson continues: We were all confused, so I said, "who are you referring to?" The teacher said "I was referring to you, even if you don't come to school Timor-Leste doesn't need you". I thought it must be because I was the only person with a disability and there were no leaders in the country with a disability.

We see Nelson giving the thumbs up sign, seated in a wheelchair. He has one leg.

Nelson continues: Afterwards the school staff started treating me differently from my friends. At the time I was the only student with a disability at the school.

We see more scenes of school life.

Nelson continues: Those words hurt me a lot. As a person with disability, I wanted to continue my studies, but after I heard those words "Timor-Leste doesn't need you" I felt very sad.

We see two pictures of Nelson using crutches followed by a bookshelf.

Nelson continues: After analysing what happened, it was clear to me he did it because I am a disabled person. None of my friends are disabled, only me. He said that because he thought that I can't do anything, like physical work that might be hard for a person with disability.

We see a picture of Nelson talking and gesticulating.

He says: That moment made me feel physically sick, but despite those harsh words I had the will to continue. My older brothers and cousins who had already graduated encouraged me to finish my studies.

We flash to a picture of one man dressed formally standing with Nelson and two other men, then a classroom and then a large public meeting.

Nelson continues: My recommendation for the Ministry of Education is to provide training to teachers so that they can understand the situations of people with disability, and discrimination at schools can be avoided. Organisations that work with people with disability in Timor-Leste need to do advocacy at the local level so people can learn to respect the needs of 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

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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'es 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