

Case Study of Feriksare

“Women can “

Feriksare is a suburb of Kakeulaetek sub-village of Taitudak village, Administrative Post of Alas, Manufahi Municipality with a total of 144 households and a population of 760.

Mrs. Cipriana Maria Emilia, 30, is widowed and lives with her six-year-old son. After her husband passed away, Mrs. Cipriana manages to live her life with her son by doing small business. Being a woman with only one son, Cipriana is a strong and active woman who is always responsible for manage her living situation herself. Mrs. Cipriana has started a small business of selling domesticated animals, re-selling used clothes and other items.

Besides her on going activities as a business woman, she is also a chief of the group for household toilet construction in their village. Mrs. Cipriana and her group initiated the action after getting information from WaterAid’s local implementing partners Fundasaun Luta ba Futuru (F-LBF) and Feto Asaun ba Sustentabilidade(FAS) on WASH and GEDSI programs and continue to motivate others to do the same.

Mrs. Cipriana further explained that she was staying with her elder sister’s family for a couple of years and she felt uncomfortable when they had to use a joint toilet. So, after getting some income, she then decided to build her own simple house and a toilet and now she stays in the house with her only son.

“When I observed my fellow women in our suburb here before F-LBF shared their information on WASH Program, most of them were going to defecate in the bush, and being a woman I felt like losing my dignity. I personally was also using a joint toilet with my sister’s family and felt really not comfortable at all. I then decided to build my own house and a toilet and felt comfortable when using it alone. Now, I have had my own toilet, I feel it is really complete for me in my life” Said Cipriana.

In addition to family hygiene, Mrs. Cipriana feels that the information they received from F-LBF and FAS on gender issues was really helpful and taught many good points and opened their minds to understanding what gender is about and how important it is to share workloads within the family. Before this, many people still have a taboo perception that cooking, washing clothes, washing dishes and collecting water are considered women’s job, and to build a toilet is a man’s job. However, after getting the information from the facilitator about job sharing and gender issues from FAS, it reminded them and changed their mindset in their own village and it has been so easy for them to facilitate with each other.

