

A father helps his son "Gregorio" with an exercise. Gregorio is 5 years old and has been coming to Katilosa for 1 year, since attending his mobility has improved dramatically. *Photo by Conor Ashleigh*



CASE STUDY // JOSE - TIMOR-LESTE



Jose is 22 years of age and is fortunate to have been diagnosed with polio earlier than most. While living with a disability in Timor-Leste is highly challenging the early intervention and support from a local NGO called Katilosa is enabling Jose to lead a full and rewarding life.

As a person with a disability in Timor-Leste Jose has been subjected to the traditional belief that the disability is caused by wrong doings of a past life or his ancestors. Jose says, "my family thought I was a freak and I was often ridiculed by family friends in our village." He goes on to explain that, "they often played jokes on me because they said I walked like a duck." Because of this treatment he decided to keep quiet

and would not go out into the community.

On a visit to Jose's village Katilosa heard of his story. Jose had the opportunity to speak with them and asked the staff to speak with his family and the community. Over the coming weeks staff from Katilosa spoke with Jose's parents, the village chief and family friends. He is now well accepted in his village.

Katilosa also played a crucial part in facilitating Jose's attendance and support at school. Through close collaboration with the school principal and teachers Katilosa ensured that the school was doing all that it could to support his education. Jose recalls being called to the principal's office and being "encouraged to study hard and to not be shy with the other students and teachers in the classroom".

Jose has graduated from high school and receives training in wood carving through Katilosa. He now produces intricate carvings of horses, eagle, people and elaborate furniture pieces.

Jose also appears on local TV and newspapers when Katilosa exhibits it's work. Jose says, "I am very grateful to KATILOSA for their assistance and I am also grateful for those who helped KATILOSA."