



# CASDP NEWSLETTER

Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project

2023 - Issue #1



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### About the Project

The main objective of the project is to facilitate the development of diversified agriculture value chains in selected geographical areas in Cambodia. The project has four components:

**Component 1:** Enabling Agriculture Diversification

**Component 2:** Supporting Public Infrastructure

**Component 3:** Improving Agriculture Information Systems and Quality Control Management

**Component 4:** Project Management, Coordination, and Monitoring and Evaluation

## A MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR



Greetings from the CASDP Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries! I am pleased to present the annual issue of our CASDP newsletter.

We are more than halfway through the year, and it is proving to be busy tasks for the CASDP. We continue to support recovery and rehabilitation efforts in the 13 selected provinces, working closely with implementing agencies (I.A.), including the Ministry of Economic and Finance (MEF), Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MoWRAM), and agriculture cooperatives, and with the generous support of our partners, the World Bank. We have so far supported 19 agriculture cooperatives that have already signed a 40% matching grant agreement with the CASDP, restarting their livelihood activities through the provision of agricultural inputs for the agricultural production value chain, such as livestock farming, horticulture, fishing, and agriculture like cassava, cashew nut, honey bee, as well as fertilizer and farming tools.

We also continue to work on infrastructure following the demand-driven approach. The component will support government/public actors providing demand-driven, improved infrastructure, such as rural roads and higher-order irrigation infrastructure, for which private sector services are generally not available or accessible. Our activities also focus on selective rehabilitation or upgrading irrigation water conveyance and distribution systems identified in the Diversification Plan (DPI).

Our work now focuses on helping strengthen community-based enterprises through skills training and knowledge sharing on product development, value-addition, marketing, business, and financial planning. These will help ensure communities benefit from market-based incentive systems to encourage continued production of traditional non-rice and crop varieties.

This year, with guidance from H.E. Dith Tina, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, we are also working on the selection of four potential provinces, which consist of likely agriculture cooperatives, namely Kampong Thom, Pursath, Pailin, and Banteay Meanchey. We recognize the selection of these provinces that will further boost efforts in ensuring a sustainable agricultural production chain of the local agricultural resources.

Likewise featured in this issue are our most recent activities on working with the cooperatives and I.A.s to increase resilience against multiple threats to the agriculture sector through the use of all mechanisms set by the project. We feature cooperative members trained by MAFF and are now becoming resource persons on using CamGAP and scientific livestock farming, financial management, and procurement procedures to help other farmers improve their work.

Finally, we thank everyone who worked hard for the year over for the work of CASDP. Whether that's by all means – it does make a country of difference. I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter, which contains just a few exciting project activities annually. We appreciate you taking the time to read it and wish you all a safe and blessed International Holiday and a positive start to the New Year.

Dr. Sar Chetra

Deputy Secretary General, MAFF  
CASDP Director



## H.E. DITH TINA

### Presides the inauguration of the ground-breaking ceremony for four agricultural roads

On June 20, 2023, the Cambodian Agricultural Sector Diversification Project (CASDP) inaugurated the ground-breaking ceremony for 20 km of Double bituminous surface treatment pavement (DBST) road and 2.5 km of laterite road in four districts, including Stung Trang, Prey Chhor, Cheung Prey, and Batheay districts, Kampong Cham province. Those agricultural roads included:

- Two routes with a length of 7.01 km for Stung Trang Agricultural Cooperative located in Stung Trang district.
- An agricultural road with a distance of 10.01 km for Aphivath Srok Yeung is situated in the two sections Cheung Prey and Prey Chhor.
- An agricultural road with a length of 5.5 km for Aphivath Srok Yoeung is located in Bateay.



The four roads above were among 12 target provinces plus Phnom Penh, which the CASDP planned for construction of 250 km. At the event, the local community people expressed their happiness and gratitude for the project that improved this road to serve the agricultural community for transportation of their agricultural products to the market and serve for public use, significantly contributing to the local economic growth and income for the local community.

## H.E. DITH TINA

Distributes Cashew Seedlings and Seed of Romduol Rice to Rom Tom Samaki Meanchey Agricultural Cooperative in Rom Tom Commune, Rovieng District, Preah Vihear Province



Photo: MAFF 2023

On May 24, 2023, H.E. Dith Tina, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, together with senior officials, met with A.C. members and delivered cashew seedlings and Rice Seed of Romduol to Romtom Samaki Meanchey Agricultural Cooperative under Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project (CASDP) in Rom Tom Commune, Rovieng District, Preah Vihear Province.

During the visit, H.E. Dith Tina informed the Romtom Samaki Meanchey Agricultural Cooperative members about the potential of organic farming, a target province for organic rice production with high market value and good market competitiveness.

At the same time, the H.E. Minister will help A.C. better market by strengthening contract farming and providing agricultural techniques.

H.E. Minister suggested all stakeholders prepare a concrete plan for breeding and cultivation to supply market demand with less costly and more profitable. On the other hand, the project should raise plans and budgets based on the needs of farmers and provinces so that the implementation follows the principles. At the same time, examining the possibility of managing and using water effectively for agriculture is necessary.

In addition, the organization of agricultural communities with precise management and market for farmers and this province. The Secretary of State of MAFF is in charge of helping A.C. with technical work and other issues to reform for more effective agriculture.



## PROJECT COORDINATION OFFICE

Organizes Training Workshops on the Implementation of Diversification Plans (DPLs) and Business Plans (BPLs), Technical Support for the Proper Application of Matching Procedures

Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project (CASDP) received 63 diversification proposals from agricultural cooperatives (ACs), and 19 ACs have successfully accessed 40% matching grants from the CASDP. Within the period of implementing diversification and business plans, ACs must follow all procedures set by the project, which is considering a new job for the AC.

The problem faced by AC is the need for more knowledge and capacity to prepare the bidding documents, which requires preparing technical specifications and drawings and a bill of quantity (BoQ) for the work. At the same time, AC finds it challenging to seek suppliers or contractors at the cooperative level who are registered and patented.

The Project Coordination Office (PCO), with technical support of the World Bank's CASDP team, organized a training and capacity-building workshop on "the Implementation of DPLs and BPLs, technical support for the proper application of matching grant" to increase



*Photo: MAFF 2023*

awareness and build capacity as well as gain additional knowledge and experiences related to social and environmental safeguards, finance, procurement, and another related matching grant. Seventy-three PDAFF, ACs, TSP, and PFI participants were targeted in a two-day training conducted from May 19th to May 20th, 2023, at the Cambodiana Hotel, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

The workshop was presented and discussed by honored speakers such as H.E. Yang Saing Koma, Minister Attached to the Prime Minister, and Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and Vice Chairman of CARDI, H.E. Dr. HEAN Vanhan, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. As Steering Committee for CASDP, H.E. Lok Chumteav Chamroeun Mudita, CASDP Team leader, the World Bank, Cambodia, Dr. Sar Chetra, Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, and as CASDP Director, and CASDP project consultants discussed finance, social and environmental safeguards, finance, procurement, and credit line and the two day-workshop was actively

involved by the participants and the discussion went fruitfully.

The training aimed to strengthen the technical capacities of relevant staff from MAFF, PDAFF and to support the implementation of the Matching Grant Agreement between CSADP and Agricultural Cooperative related to the endorsed Diversification Plan and Business Plans, and to promote a better understanding of the duties, tasks, and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders (ACs, PDAFF, TSSP) MAFF, MEF-PIU/PFIs) to accelerate the implementation of the approved DPLs.

The training approach was participatory and interactive through plenary discussions and presentations. The facilitator and the management of CASDP selected the topics aimed at delivering the training while addressing the challenges facing AC members and PDAFF officials. The issues presented include Matching Grant Agreement Implementation (MAFF and ACs) and Review DPL/BPL endorsed by AEC to be signed MGA – implementation challenges and proposed solution; Credit Line Facilities Procedures – implementation challenges and proposed solutions; Role and Responsibility of relevant stakeholders during the DPL Implementation (ACs, PDAFF, TSPs, PCO/MAFF, MEF-PIU/PFI); M&E data management and reporting during the DPL implementation; AC procurement Procedures – Contracts of Goods and Civil Work; Matching Grant Disbursement and Reimbursement Procedures, and Environment and Social Safeguards to be applied in DPLs.

Findings and analysis of the training indicated that participants appreciated the selection and delivery of the topics as these topics touched on the challenges they encountered in the day-to-day management of their BPLs. Mistakes were identified during the presentation, and participants acknowledged areas where management practices had not been adhered to. As such, participants appreciated training as an essential project/program performance requirement. In addition, participants enhanced their skills, especially in grants management, financial management, and procurement procedures, in a manner that can guide and improve the general performance of project execution and delivery. Moreover, participants understood



*Photo: MAFF 2023*

the concept of matching, including disbursement and reimbursement to the stakeholders' satisfaction.

Based on the findings and analysis of the training, it was recommended that more time be allocated for similar activity in the future. It was also suggested that participants be trained in project Monitoring and Evaluation and that projects be assisted in evaluations. There were



also recommendations that directors of individual partner organizations be targeted for similar training. In addition, it was recommended that a more specific skills gaps analysis be done before implementing such training to profile respondents' capacity.

The training was expected to enhance participants' understanding of the project, safeguards, procurement, financial management principles, and best organizational and project success practices. It was expected to equip participants with project management and financial management skills to strengthen their capacities to coordinate and manage the Agricultural Cooperative Initiative project activities transparently, effectively, and efficiently.



Photo: MAFF 2023

## ANNUAL REFLECTION WORKSHOP

### On Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project

The annual reflection workshop on the Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project (CASDP) was organized on 1- 12 January 2023 at Sokhalay Hotel, Siem Reap City, to take stock of experiences and achievements during the project implementation in 2022 and identify critical learnings to use forward project implementation in 2023.

H.E. Yang Saing Koma, Minister Attached to Prime Minister, Secretary of State of MAFF, and Vice Chairman of Council for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD), and high representative of His Excellency Dith Tina, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, H.E. Hean Vanhan, Secretary of State of MAFF and Chairman of PSC, and Ms. Mudita Chamroeun, TTL co-chaired the reflection workshop. H.E. Khy Oksal, Under-Secretary of



Photo: MAFF 2023

State of MAFF and as CASD-PSC member, H.E. San Visal, a representative from the Ministry of Economic and Finance, Dr. Sar Chetra, Deputy Secretary General of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery (MAFF) and as CASDP Director highly presented at the meeting.

At the meeting, 105 participants attended the workshop, including representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MoWRAM) as Implementation Agencies (IAs), World Bank (WB), Agricultural Rural Development Bank (ARDB), Technical Service Providers (TSPs), representatives from financial institutions including Cambodian Post Bank, AMK, and Chamroeun Bank, Royal University of Agriculture (RUA), Prek Leap National College of Agriculture, Kampong Cham National School of Agriculture, Small and Medium Agri-Business including Tropicam on Vegetable, and SANTANA Agro Product., Ltd on cashew nut, members of the project steering committee, members of AEC and E.C., and a representative from Agricultural Cooperative (A.C.s/Tasey Samarki).



## HORTICULTURE

Growing safe vegetables in the net house helps Mrs. Lay Sengheung's daughter get her degree at the University of Health Science.

Mrs. Lay Seng Heun is a farmer in a rural country, Pichenda commune, Phnom Preuk district, Battambang province, where she and her husband grow corn, cassava, and various fruits and vegetables. She is the business-savvy half of the couple and leads many of their income-generating activities, including selling some agricultural products to their community.

Climate change and the low harvest have made agricultural inputs scarcer. Still, thanks to a





Mrs. Lay Seng Heung, (with cap) was harvesting her vegetables in net house. Photo: Chuon/2023

CASDP-supported project implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in collaboration with the World Bank, Ponleu Thmey Pichenda Agricultural Cooperative and Mrs. Lay Seng Heun's farm have stood firm.

The project provided 40% of a matching grant, and they received a water pond and net houses to ensure irrigation and learn land and soil conservation techniques to grow various vegetables using 12 net homes supported by the project. Now, she has more than 72,000 kg per month, a rotating growing crop.

Cultivating rotation crops and vegetables is an excellent solution to avoid market congestion and get a decent income to support her family. With income from selling vegetables, she can secure a family budget for her daughter's studies, pursuing her degree at the University of Health Science.

## HORTICULTURE

### 40% Matching Grant Helps Mr. Ly Leang Keu Expand from 2 up to 30 net houses

Greenhouses or net houses for growing safer vegetables are fundamental when growing crops all year round. Here are some of the most significant benefits of having a greenhouse on a farmer's land, thanks to the Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project (CASDP), initiated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in collaboration with the World Bank.

A member of the producer group from Ponleu Thmey Pichenda Agricultural Cooperative, Mr. Ly Leang Keu, a farmer in Roka Bos village of Kam Rieng commune and district in Battambang

province, said that he has been growing safe vegetables for three years, starting with just one greenhouse from which he earned one million riels. Gradually, he reached 30 greenhouses on a hectare of land.

He said growing safe vegetables is very different from how most simple family plots grew them. Various techniques are employed, and the use of pesticides is more limited.



Photo: MAFF 2023

## HONEY BEE

### Stung Trang Senchey Agricultural Cooperative Received Beehive and Beekeepers from Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project



Mr. Luong Tak, Stung Trang Sen Chey AC Chief (middle). Photo: MAFF/2023

On May 17, 2023, PDAFF officials distributed beekeepers and beehives to Stung Trang Senchey Agricultural Cooperative in Sopheas commune, Stung Trang district, Kampong Cham province.

Honeybees have a considerable role in tropical ecosystems, but unsustainable honey harvesting hurts the local population. Bees are “losing ground” as ecological diversity slips and traditional honey-hunting practices, which can wipe out entire colonies, continue.

Despite the decline, there is still potentially an international market for Cambodian honey, but it will require five- to 10-year programs. In partnership with the World Bank, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) started a honeybee project through the Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project (CASDP), providing a 40% matching grant for better improvement of honeybee production value chain to supply the local and international markets.

Beyond beekeeping, these new beekeepers received ongoing mentorship and training on beekeeping techniques and provided support, infrastructure, etc.

What better day to celebrate honeybees and beekeepers than May 17? Bee is one of the other business plans supported by CASDP that play an essential role in sustainable agriculture, and beekeeping is a crucial provider of jobs in rural communities. This project will benefit 171 AC members, 71 of whom are women.



## LIVESTOCK

### Preah Romkil Agriculture Cooperative Members Received Training on Techniques of Family Pig Raising



Livestock expert, from PDAFF, St.Treng province, was teaching Preah Romkel AC members. Photo: MAFF/2023

Currently, most farmers in Krala Pea's village, Preah Rumkel commune, Borey O' Svay Sen Chey district, Stung Treng province, continue using traditional pig raising, as they need to know how to raise it for a good return.

The measures to prevent piglets and pig fattening from disease, how to spray pesticides on pig farms, keeping pigs in separate cages, and understanding how to identify healthy piglets are needed for pig-raising farmers to make decisions.

From 21 to 22 November 2023, Preah Rumkel, an Agricultural Cooperative member, attended a training course provided by the GDAHP team / coordinated by the Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries through the Cambodian Agricultural Sector Diversification Project (CASDP) on Family Pig Raising, in compliance with the principles of the World Organization for Animal Health, focusing on building cages and equipment to be installed in pig farms, pig selection and breeding, farrowing, sanitation, biological safety and treating sick animal.

After completing the training, about 75 pig farmers learned about pig selection, pig breeding, water feeding, care of pigs and piglets, juvenile and pig fattening, animal health protection measures, and understanding common diseases in pigs and sows. Participants expressed their happiness and gratitude to the project that initiated this training course and committed to applying this knowledge successfully.

## CamGAP

### Training 30 participants from Am Lang Agricultural Cooperative on Good Agricultural Practice CamGAP



Mr. Heng Chhunhy, DD. of DCSH/GDA/MAFF, was teaching AC members, K. Speu, 2023. Photo: MAFF/2023

Due to consumers' growing demand for higher quality and safer food products has become more common for both importing countries and domestic buyers to require certification for good agricultural practices (GAP) in food production and distribution. Cambodia's agriculture sector stakeholders have recognized that GAP needs to be better incorporated into all farming activities to compete with other ASEAN countries and benefit from access to the common market area.

The development and implementation of Cambodia's GAP (CamGAP) will create a demand for reliable, high-quality inputs, increase the value of farms, and develop the skills of farmers. Given the challenges being faced in the country, the Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project (CASDP), with financial support from the World Bank, organized training on "Good Agricultural Practices" on June 26, 2023, at Samarki Am Lang Agricultural Cooperative, Kampong Speu province.

The training was delivered by Mr. Heng Chhunhy, Deputy Director of the Department of Crop Sanitation and Hygiene, General Directorate of Agriculture, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (GDA/MAFF), with 30 participants from ALAC.

The training aimed to increase knowledge and capacity building and raise awareness of the good agricultural practices of Cambodia CamGAP to agricultural cooperative members and the registration procedures for farming land; this is expected to promote the optimization of farming resources and access to market opportunities for producers.

As a result, cooperative members can spread the principles of good agricultural practices to other farmers who have been conventionally cultivated. It also helps to supply fresh fruits and vegetables to domestic markets and increases for exporting and can be trusted.



## FIELD VISIT

### CASDP Organized Exchange Visit to Ponleu Thmey Agriculture Cooperative, Battambang Province



Mr. Hun Vutha, P.Pechneda AC Chief (left) was explaining visit, December 2023. Photo: MAFF/2023

The Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project (CASDP), in collaboration with the Department of Agricultural Cooperative, General Directorate of Agriculture, conducted a learning exchange visit to Ponleu Thmey Pichend Agriculture Cooperative in Phnom Preuk district, Battambang on December 18, 2023.

The visit was one of the regional activities under the CASDP aimed at supporting the collection and dissemination of technical information and market intelligence and developing and applying regulations on good agricultural practices (GAPs).

Many Cambodian producers, particularly small- and medium-sized farmers, need more knowledge, skills, and access to modern inputs and processing techniques to commercialize their agricultural output successfully.

To address these challenges, the Government, with financial support from the World Bank, has established the CASDP to facilitate the development of diversified agriculture value chains in selected geographical areas in Cambodia.

The objective of the exchange visit was to facilitate an open and mutual exchange of ideas, knowledge, and sound practices in the horticulture sector.

Presentations were made by Mr. OUK Saroeun, Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture Cooperative, MAFF, and Mr. Hun Vutha, Chief of Ponleu Thmey Pichenda Agriculture Cooperative, and the inputs shared by the CASDP team, on various focusing agricultural best practices.

In addition, 42 participants visited safe vegetables in the net house. They interacted with PDAFF officials from Kampong Speu, Kampong Chnang, Kampong Cham, and Battambang,

and 30 members from six Agriculture Cooperatives, including Ponleu Thmey Pichenda AC, Amatak AC, Amlaing AC, Bonlae Chamros Cheay Krong Kampong Speu AC, Teuk Hout Meanchey Kdey Sangkeum, and Aphivath Srok Yeung.

The main topics covered choosing an elevated and well-drained area for the construction of the net house, draining the field, allowing the soil to dry, and constructing the net house; rotating crops chosen from different plant families to reduce pest and disease problems; monitoring crops closely and use pesticides only when necessary; following local recommendations and safety instructions carefully; cleansing soil of all debris after harvest; maintaining the cleanliness and integrity of the netting, growing plant, marketing, and networking, etc. Participants could identify common safe vegetable pests and diseases and were given sustainable control measures.

During exchange visits, farmers from the five agriculture cooperatives visited another group in Battambang, a different region. Everyone can learn from a different experience and the outcomes of another group. This way, good practices, and success stories can be shared, and each group gets new input in a bottom-up approach.

Finally, during the study visits, our farmer members got ideas for improving their farming practices and strengthening economic literacy, i.e., they will enhance production for sale and market supply in the future.



## CASSAVA

### The Benefits of Using Truck Scales in Agriculture – cassava production

Lack of agricultural inputs remains a challenge in cassava production. Given the new challenges confronting country agriculture, an innovative production system must be designed at the farm level.

Weighing scales play an essential role in farming and agricultural operations, as they can help streamline the harvest management process. The Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification (CASDP), MAFF, in collaboration with the World Bank (WB), has supported Romtum Samarki Meanchey Agriculture Cooperative, Preah Vihear province, installing truck scales and weighing systems tailored for agricultural use.



Farm scales can significantly affect efficiency and profitability, depending on applications. From tracking agricultural yield to handling feed, high-volume farmers and farming enterprises rely on weighing solutions to ensure ultimate precision in their day-to-day weighing processes. The project intervention helps cassava farmers enhance harvest management efficiency while reducing overhead costs.

Agri-industry experts suggest that the cooperatives have an accurate and efficient weighing system for their agricultural application. Because the truck scales are quick, accurate, and reliable every time, the time it takes for trucks and products to get weighed is expedited.



## DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA

PDAFF's CASDP focal points from 13 target provinces received training on digital and social media

Project information is usually a paper-based report, and registering for social media posts with quality pictures has yet to be exercised on social media platforms, especially Facebook. As of today, the Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project (CASDP) may need help finding PDAFF's focal points, which do not have some form of communication via social media, considering that training in social media is essential for PDAFF.

In Kampong Cham province, on 30 November 2023 – The Department of Extension for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DEAFF), with the support of the CASDP, conducted digital and social media training for 15 CASDP focal points from the Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (PDAFF) in the 13 target provinces.

During the one-day training session, the project team discussed how the project communications were to be strengthened among PDAFF's officials for the skills of social media use, ICT, and writing individual story-telling for social media posts to promote project results.

After training, accessibility to social media via mobile phones has assured this. Most local governments have a social media platform, i.e., Facebook or YouTube. With our uncomplicated and interactive social media training course, PDAFF's focal points can take full advantage of social media and, in doing so, better engage the masses.

## AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

The two-wheel tractor helps cassava farmers save time, money, and energy



**Mr. Poeung Tryda**, PDAFF Director, Preah Viphear (middle) at the event 2023. Photo: Chuon/2023

Improved land management practices applying soil and water conservation techniques and improved agricultural inputs could improve agricultural production. Lack of farming inputs (agricultural inputs and tractors) remains the main challenge for the continued cassava production value chain.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, in collaboration with the World Bank through the CASDP, has integrated a 40% matching grant into agriculture cooperatives' business plan to support the improvement of the cassava production value chain for market supply. Among the agriculture cooperatives that requested the CASDP's intervention, Phnom Pech Borey and Leuk Kampos Kasikor Agriculture cooperatives in Preah Vihear province have completed their procurement processes to buy two wheel-tractors during the harvest season.

Cooperative members of Phnom Pich Borey received 30 two-wheel tractors, 20 units in August, and 10 teams in December 2023. In the same year, cooperative members of Leuk Kampos Kasikor received 14 two-wheel-tractors in September. Mr. Poeung Tryda, Director of Preah Vihear Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, witnessed a handover event at the offices of the two cooperatives.

During the event, the Kubota company representative taught cassava farmers how to operate and maintain the tractor. The good thing about the tractors, most cooperative members say, is that they can be used for seeding, pumping water, threshing wheat, transporting loads, and plowing. They also say the two-wheel tractor would help save time and energy as it presses twice as fast as the traditional system using oxen. In addition, it does seed and applies fertilizer at the same time. This machine would help get the right fertilizer proportion for the different sources and crop types.



## CREDIT LINE

### MEF-PIU / CASDP Organizes Training Courses on “Agricultural Value Chain Financing Strategy”



**PFI Staff and Lecture, at the ACLEDA AIB Training Centre.** Photo: MEF/2023

From 12 to 22 September 2023, at the ACLEDA AIB Training Centre, the Cambodian Agricultural Diversification Project Implementation Unit (MEF-PIU / CASDP) organized a training course, “Agricultural Value Chain Financing Strategies,” for Partner Financial Institutions (PFIs) involved in the project to support the successful implementation of the credit line towards the agriculture sector. The course is facilitated by the Frankfurt School of Finance & Management based in Germany and the ACLEDA Business Institute (AIB), a project partner experienced in value chain financing training.

The training was designed to strengthen the capacity of the financial institutions involved in the project implementation and other financial institutions involved in the agricultural sector to provide a more comprehensive and efficient value chain financing.

The training course was divided into two levels: Level 1 for senior officials of financial institutions focusing on Strategies for development and finance concepts, and Level 2 for credit officers focusing on providing PFIs with the strategic knowledge and practical skills of value chain financing.

The training participants included Rural Development Bank and Agriculture Bank of Cambodia Post, AMK Microfinance Institution Plc., Chamroeun MFI, Small and Medium Enterprise Bank of Cambodia, ABA Bank, KB PRASAC Bank Plc. And LOLC Microfinance Institution (Cambodia) Plc.

The main success factor for the training course was the indications from participants on the usage of the seminar knowledge – the step from classroom training to practical implementation of the command can sometimes be huge. As most of the participants had an operational focus, there might be a need for individual support/ meetings at the executive level to introduce the new concepts at their financial institutions.

Training participants propose that coaching starts with one-hour introductory sessions for each CASDP PFI, during which the basis for the hours of core coaching sessions is laid. During this session, expectations about the coaching program would be clarified (e.g., confidentiality and transparency), and milestones would be reviewed for the remaining coaching sessions.



Photo: MEF 2023

## LIVESTOCK

### 40% Matching Grant Helps Preah Romkel Agriculture Cooperative Member Expanse Pig Raising and Create Two Additional Businesses

Mr. Ou Samkhith, 35 years old, lives in Krom Village, Preah Rumkel Commune, Borey O'Svay Sen Chey District, Stung Treng Province, was encouraged by Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project through his membership in Preah Romkel Agriculture Cooperative, using a 40% matching grant to initiate pig farming in his village.

At the start of the pig-rearing business, he faced significant challenges with limited money to buy piglets and feed. Before becoming a livestock business, he worked on cassava farming land and reared three pigs, where he could only save a small amount of money during the lockdown due to the spread of Covid 19. Moreover, the piglets' mortality rate and disease incidence were also high due to less expertise in this field.

Consequently, the Cambodia Agricultural Sector Diversification Project of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), in collaboration with the World Bank, has



discussed these issues with the livestock experts from the Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Stung Treng province. On PDAFF's advice to get the scientific ingenuity of the piggy enterprise, Mr. Ou Samkhith attended specialized training in pig farming with other cooperative members at the Preah Romkel Agriculture Cooperative Office in 2023. They have also taken guidance and did exposure visits to the nearby farms in the province.



**Mr. Ou Samkhith**, pig fattening and piglet raising farmer, and a members of Preah Ramkel Agriculture Cooperative. Photo: Chuon/2023



*I started raising pigs in 2015, and it has been eight years. I had many problems raising pigs during the COVID-19 19 due to the lockdown, and cassava-making was the same problem, so I turned to raising pigs.*

*Before the project intervention, I faced challenges raising pigs because I did not know about swine disease; I did not know why it was sick and what medicine I should use for it.*



With the support of CASDP, he received a 40% matching grant to expand his pig-raising business, and he was invited to join the training on pig raising, care of piglets, and feeding pigs; he understood how to observe pig breeding, etc.; after training.

During the training, the PDAFF's experts also paid particular attention to regular deworming, timely vaccinations, and proper cleaning of the animals and sheds to reduce on-farm mortality. Accordingly, by adopting adequate management practices guided by the PDAFF expert, he sold his first stock of 30 adult pigs and 50 piglets in 2023, keeping the remaining piglets as parental stock. He also disposed of the male and old pigs for pork. As for the pig market, he pledges to village buyers and pig traders from the province.

Currently, Mr. Samkhith has changed a lot after opting for piggery. Now, he has extensive pig farming land and owns a slaughterhouse. The income from the sale of pigs helped to support his family, and he used the rest to expand his business, such as planting cashews and cassava, about 10 ha of cashew nuts, and about 3 to 4 ha of cassava.

He had made a reputation for good quality pigs, and the demand was so high that traders were looking for them. He decided to sell the pigs directly to the traders to cut brokers offering low prices. Traders from Stung Treng City have also begun to approach him for the pig fattening. Both the farmers proved to be role models in this business. Being delighted by his success, many farmers from different communities visited his farms, and 15-20 farmers have already started their piggery unit. They are now happy and satisfied with their decision and have no issues remaining a pig farmer for life.



*I am happy with the pig-raising business. I thank the CASDP project for providing a 40% matching grant to support my rearing pig, enabling me to expand two more businesses.*



In the meantime, he encourages women in the village to consider pig-raising like him because they can earn money to support their families. Finally, he suggested the CASDP project to provide more experience to farmers like him and help find a better pig market for better prices than before.



Photo: MAFF 2023



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