

STRENGTHENING FAMILY FARMERS' RESILIENCE THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING IN THE FRAMEWORK OF CIRCULAR AGRICULTURE MODEL

Presenter

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Description

Cambodia is located in Southeast Asia (SEA) where the climate is hot and humid. In the last three decades, the weather pattern seems to have changed and presents late rains that cause many problems for agricultural production. Natural resources and agro-ecological systems have been degraded accordingly: lakes, rivers, groundwater, soil quality are becoming poorer and poorer along with the alarming disappearance of some wildlife species, biodiversity and forest.

Climate change has put increasing pressure on farmers, especially small-scale farmers in Cambodia, with limited appropriate technical farming skills, lack of capital to expand agriculture appropriately and difficulty in creating a stable and direct link from farms to markets.

In response to the challenges arising from climate change, CFAP has provided its members with training and capacity-building courses increasing their skills in animal husbandry, technical cultivation of vegetables, technical cultivation of rice and rice seeds, vaccination, water use and management, soil improvement as the story of Som Lida demonstrates.

Som Lida is a farmer with two children who lives in the village of Chensa. He owns 1 hectare of rice cultivation and about 700 square meters of vegetable cultivation. He and his family grow vegetables and rice following agro-ecological practices. As a member of CFAP, he received training on vegetable cultivation, compost production



and botanical pesticides to improve his vegetable and rice production, using organic fertilizer made by his family and the farming cooperative. Lida's family grows rice and vegetables not only for home consumption, but also with commercial purposes.

Also, the farmer cooperative addresses funding problems to expand members' business, by engaging in the following activities: collect rice straw from the field to make compost to sell and to improve production of vegetables or rice as well as diversify cultivated crops in order to provide more stable incomes. In addition, CFAP encourages its members to produce compost from chicken farm waste and from resources that can be found in villages in order to obtain more organic, healthy and nutritious food while respecting the environment.

Another virtuous example in which CFAP has supported its members includes the following case. Sambo Meanchey Agricultural Cooperative became a member of CFAP in 2017 and thanks to the support received, it has progressed from selling quantities of 300 kilograms of lemon grass

and other vegetables to selling 8-10 tons per day in the harvest season or about 1000 tons of lemon grass per year. In addition, the cooperative has contracts to sell 30 liters of

lemongrass oil per month, 500 tons of paddy rice, and 360 tons of rice seeds per year.

Results

1. Self-composting can help reduce fertilizer expenses, as well as produce safe and healthy food.
2. The adoption of compost and organic fertilizers has no harmful effects on the health of consumers and on the health of food producers while growing rice and vegetables.
3. The introduction of new agricultural technical skills has increased the yield about three times or more compared to old practices. Since 2002 onward, CFAP has promoted agroecological practices by training farmers and provided advisory support on how to use manure and compost that farmers can find easily.

Climate smartness

This case is an example on how farmers' association can enable the implementation of practices by building capacities and offering inputs and services such as credit, transportation, and market opportunities to their members. In addition to the above-mentioned benefits, from the use of organic inputs in agricultural production, biodiversity in farm systems can also be positively impacted, as the risk posed by the permanent use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides is reduced, hence ecosystems services such as pollination, soil formation and nutrient cycling, as well as pest and disease regulation (e.g., natural predators) may be stabilized. Benefiting adaptation and resilience capacity of farmers. Additionally, reductions in the carbon footprint associated to the manufacturing, transport, application, and disposal of conventional synthetic inputs compared to local inputs can be achieved. In this sense, value addition opportunities can be seized, for example, the utilization of crop residues as rice straw represents economic options and boost the development of communal composting generating labour opportunities and reducing the reliance to external inputs. While strengthen the social network and development of new business in the region.

