

“From Natural Gardening to Organic Greenhouse Farming

Building Sustainable Income and School Lunch Support in Dakbong Village”



“We used to grow vegetables out in the open, where heavy rain caused the crops to rot and insects destroyed them. After receiving technical training and a greenhouse from the GLAD Project, we can now grow vegetables year-round. Today, besides providing safe, organic vegetables for our children, we generate regular monthly income to buy rice, notebooks, and pencils for school, while also contributing a portion of our earnings to the School Lunch Fund” – Nang Vanmixay

This story is shared by Nang Vanmixay, a 27-year-old woman from the Taliang ethnic group living in Dakbong Village, Dakchung District, Sekong Provinc. Living with her husband and three children, her family relies mainly on upland farming, gardening, and coffee cultivation.

In the past, the family faced severe hardships. Vanmixay recalled that their 0.8-hectare rice paddy yielded insufficient grain due to harsh weather conditions. Traditional open-air vegetable farming was plagued by aphids and insects, while Dakchung's near year-round rainy season routinely ruined crops. Lacking capital to buy plastic sheeting for greenhouses and missing technical knowledge for crop maintenance, their vegetable harvest was barely enough for home consumption and generated no income. Consequently, the family struggled to purchase rice from local markets and cover household utility costs (water, electricity) alongside school supplies (notebooks, pencils) for their children

A new hope emerged when the “Improving the Nutritional and Living Situation of Children and Families” Project launched activities in their village. After attending a community meeting organized by the Village Education Development Committee (VEDC), Vanmixay's passion for farming motivated her to sign up for project activities.

The project provided technical training and essential inputs. Following technical guidance, her family scaled up vegetable cultivation, growing mustard greens, lettuce, green onions, and cabbage. They implemented key lessons from the training, including proper bed preparation, installing greenhouse shelters to protect crops from heavy rain, soil aeration, and applying self-made compost and organic fertilizers to ensure chemical-free crops.

Today, the family earns a stable recurring income of 8,000,000 to 10,000,000 LAK (355 - 443 USD) per year from organic vegetable sales. Each month, a portion of these earnings is contributed back into the village School Lunch Fund, while the remaining profits support general household expenses.

Children in the community are now able to attend school at the age-appropriate level, thanks to community contributions, the establishment of livestock and vegetable producer groups, permanent home gardens, local knowledge of compost and bio-extract production, and the school lunch fund. These initiatives serve as a reliable guarantee that the Dakbong village community will sustainably produce organic food, generate income, and support children's education and nutritious school meals over the long term.

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