

CASE STUDY # I



“OFFICIAL LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER IS SOMETHING SPECIAL”

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important activities of the project is encouraging for learning from each other. Within the entire project circle, learning across farmers is continuously conducted and coordinated by the project field officer. Even though the learning is so helpful, it has to be more impressive and visualized, especially during two learning events of the project; an exposure trip and the end of project workshop. The two events had provided something special and more official than ongoing discussions and learning within their own compounds and home ground. The most important point is the open discussion with facilitation, framing and free spaces to contribute to the same topic based on an actual situation but not limited to their own context. Other factors which are not applicable within the area helped them to open the world of growing rather than just the technical aspects of vegetable production. There are more than just technical growing and knowledge that they have learned from various technical facilitators or trainers.

II. FIELD TRIP TO KANDAL AND RUA

After continuous learning at their farm-yards, the project team had discovered less interest from farmers to learn from each other. They need something more encouraging and apparently new to them. Then, exposure visit to a more successful growing area is something they do prefer. Providing the opportunity for 25 farmers from Svay Rieng to learn from the better and more experiences was conducted on 12 December 2017 at Saang district, Kandal province. Plus, they went to visit the Farm Station of Center of Excellence for Sustainable Agricultural Intensification and Nutrition (CE-SAIN) of Royal University of Agriculture (RUA) as well.



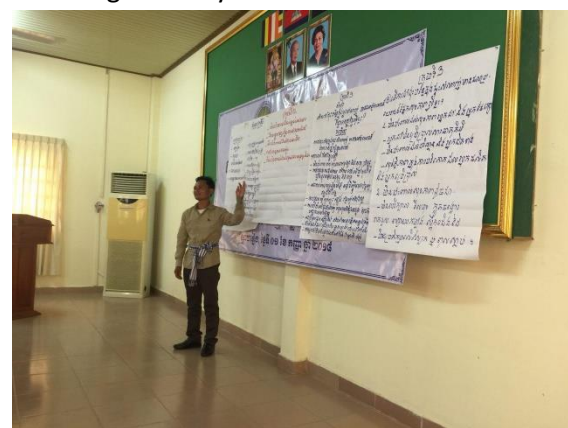
Farmers had indicated their interest to a number of new ways of practices in growing vegetables in net houses. A few points being learnt are:

- There are a number of new techniques and knowledge on growing for vegetable production such as catching pest using glue and efficient watering and system.
- Capital investment at a larger scale could make more productive and lucrative agricultural production.
- Market connection with strong and reliable partners is a helping hand and keep their production alive throughout the year. However, mutual understanding and building trust are the must.
- Reconstruction of net house back home is needed if a more successful production is the destination and aspiration. The quality of net house back home is so poor comparing to the quality in the visiting place. Two farmers have committed to rebuild their net house when they could save enough budget.



III. END OF PROJECT WORKSHOP

The result from debate is something special and fruitful and it will be even more fruitful when technical aspect and facilitation are part of the talk shop. Within the end of project workshop on 01 September 2018 and after listening to the presentation on the project achievement, farmers in Svay Rieng were invited to exchange their practical knowledge with farmers from Battambang and Kandal province. Something amazing and useful emerged. They have discovered that:



- *Techniques that they have learned from experts are not always right and yield the highest productivity.* This is resulted from their discussion on productivity using normal space growing vs plastic mulching. Plastic matching has so many disadvantages and productivity cannot be as high as the one without mulching. Fierce and in-depth discussion with practical experiences have proved the case.
- *Exploring other areas' difficulties rather than complaining.* Farmers in Svay Rieng have realized that they are sleeping on the golden opportunity that they have. They can make more profit if they have invested enough time and focus on their vegetable production. Farmers in Battambang are facing critical problem of market whereas farmers in Svay

Rieng have not grasped the opportunity properly. As a result, at least 3 of them have the willing to invest more on their natural vegetable production.

- The only things that farmers have known to themselves are planning to invest and develop more based on their available resources and take more opportunity to learn to improve their production.



IV.CONCLUSION

It is not the end and it is too early to conclude for the project and Svay Rieng University has promised to continue the activities on net house within their community. Anyway, from the two events, there are good points to learn that “Farmers are interested to external experiences and they have the will to change after seeing a better one”. They are ready to new investment and challenges.

The case is identified and written under the Project “Economic, Health and Ecological Benefits of Organic Vegetable Production through Introduction of Net House and Organic Fertilizer”.

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