

Impact Story

Beneficiary

“If you have a passion, focus on it and be confident. If you have concerns, seek advice directly from your mentor, and success will come knocking on your door.”

Chan Vilaythong



Image: Chan Vilaythong Credit: Swisscontact

Chan Vilaythong, a young mother of two, lives in Oudomxay province with her husband. During years she and her husband struggled to make ends meet, barely earning 50'000 KIP per day. Her main income source was from selling vegetables from her garden. Her husband, a construction worker, chipped in occasionally but the income was still not enough to cover the living costs of her family of four.

When she heard about the Coaching Cycle for the first time through the village chief, she was intrigued by it and decided to apply.

“What I liked about the Coaching Cycle was that I could choose the profession I wanted, and I could learn skills directly from a business. When I was younger, I dropped out of school because I never enjoyed it. The Coaching Cycle seemed like something new that could fit me”, she explained.

After exploring different options of professions with her coach for employment she decided to enroll in tailoring classes for men clothing. *“I chose tailoring because it matches my detail-oriented and independent personality. I also love to see how people feel more confident and smarter when wearing nice clothes. The training at the business was eye opening because I met real customers and real complaints”,* she shared.

After graduating from the Coaching Cycle in June 2022, Chan planned for her own tailoring shop. When the VTSS project offered Basic Entrepreneurship Training, Chan joined as well. She also applied for Seed Money and was awarded it for her good business idea. Two months later she opened her shop but had very few customers. She then started to promote her services on social media which drew the attention of her villagers and quickly the number of customers increased.



Image: Girl dress was made by Chan Vilaythong
Credit: Swisscontact

“Being a business owner is not easy. I had my moments of doubt throughout the whole journey, but I was lucky enough to have the support of my coach for employment and my business mentor. They encouraged me not to quit”, she shared.

Chan is known as a quick and efficient worker. She can impressively make a Lao skirt within 60 minutes.

People are ready to pay much more when they need something urgently. Majority of her clients are women, so she decided to upskill herself by joining tailoring classes for women clothing. She is proud of herself because she could pay for the course with

her own savings. She also makes traditional Khmu clothes for ethnic events.

For the next months, Chan plans to hire an assistant to support her with the growing number of customers. She also wants to support and train other young disadvantaged people as a way of giving back.

“If you have a passion, focus on it and be confident. If you have concerns, seek advice directly from your mentor, and success will come knocking on your door”, she asserted.

*Image: Preparing fabric for tailoring shirt for customer
Credit: Swisscontact*



Project duration: Phase 1: Aug 2019 to November 2023; Phase 2: December 2023 to November 2027
Funded by: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Implementer: Consortium Swisscontact / Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HSLU)

Key government partners:

- Ministry of Education and Sports - MoES (Lead)
- Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare - MoLSW

Target Groups:

- Main target: people of 15-35 years' of age who have completed primary and/ or lower secondary education and are subjected to income poverty
- Wider: Teachers, coaches and other key staff from project implementation partners in the provinces and in Vientiane such as IVET schools, Women & Youth Unions, Non Profit Associations (NPAs), Enterprises and others



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