



# IMPACT STORY

# IVET TRAINEES

*“I studied well to apply the skills I have learned to support my family in the future”*  
- Davan



Image: Khamphai Sengthammavong (left) and Davan Soulivong Credit: Swisscontact

Ms. Khamphai Sengthammavong and Ms. Davan Soulivong both recently graduated from the Certificate 1 course with an Agricultural degree from the Integrated Vocational Education Training School (IVET). They became close friends after joining the programme.

Along with their mutual interest in agriculture, they discovered that had a similar family history. Prior to studying agriculture, both had only finished the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Neither of their families had enough money to support their education, so both had to leave school and help tend to their families’ farms.

When they saw a student recruitment advertisement in their village to join the VTESS training programme, they both jumped at the chance. Each was determined to pursue further studies in agriculture as they both have a fondness for this subject. They felt that it could be beneficial in improving the livelihood of their families as well as an opportunity for each of them to run their own businesses in the future.

**“I wanted to study both agriculture and animal husbandry. However, I chose to study agriculture because I wanted to know more about things like soil analysis and cropping, then I could practice agriculture correctly. Next, maybe I'll learn more about animal husbandry to further expand my knowledge,”** said Khamphai.



Image: Sengthammavong and Soulivong with their classmates. Credit: Swisscontact

VTESS supports the build-up and strengthening of an inclusive vocational education and training system in Laos. Learn more about Swisscontact’s VTESS project at: <https://www.swisscontact.org/en/projects/vtess>



Although they both consider the 4-month course as short, it gave them a good foundation. They even learned about the different types of fertilizers, planting methods, and also marketing related to agriculture. Now, they have a basic working knowledge of the subject, and when they face problems, they now know how to solve them. The practical training of the course has been particularly helpful in this aspect.

Davan expressed that what she liked the most about the classes was the practical lessons. “Because we learned exactly what we need to do to get it right. If we learned only theory without practice, it would not help me understand the lessons as much as I did,” she emphasized.

Davan shared that she studied hard to learn the skills she needed for the future for her family, but also that joining this programme helped her develop herself.

They also learned other skills during the internship, “It was a good practice for us before we really start working. Every business is different. We need to learn how to adapt to different situations and overcome it,” explained Khamphai.

Both said that they had good relationships with their classmates. Although there were many different ethnic groups in their class (Hmong, Khmu, and Phuan), there was no discrimination. They provided support and advised each other on all aspects. Their teachers are also equally helpful in providing advice and providing the trainees with the needed tools for their future careers. The both expressed that without the support from this project, they would not have been able to go back to school, and are really grateful for this opportunity.



Images above: Khamphai and Davan with their classmates.  
Credit: Swisscontact

**Inception phase:** Aug 2019 - March 2020

**Project duration:** (4 yrs) Aug 2019 - July 2023

**Funded by:** Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

**Implementer:** Consortium Swisscontact / Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts

**Key implementing governmental partners:**

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

**Target Groups:**

- Early school-leavers: young people (15-35 years of age) who have completed primary, but not lower secondary education, and are subjected to income poverty.
- Wider: Teachers from IVET schools, staff from job centres or similar institutions (career counsellors, job coaches, community or youth workers, village facilitators, social workers)

