



## IMPACT STORY

*“An ESS coach is like a teacher, we do not judge students, we can only guide them, help them, and inspire them in many different fields.”*

## ESS COACHES



Image: Manikeo Vorakoun Credit: Swisscontact

Mrs. Manikeo Vorakoun wanted to be an Employment Support Services (ESS) coach because as a teacher, she realized the problems for graduates to get jobs. She works at the Khammuane Provincial Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College as a teacher and she saw the VTESS project as a great opportunity for beneficiaries to get training for future jobs and to get employment support, which will help them find jobs and earn income for their families.

Vorakoun’s main task as an ESS coach is to go to villages to find vulnerable young people, between the ages of 15-35 who have only completed primary school, and to support them to enroll in the project.. “When we advertise to reach our target applicants, some pay attention, and some do not. My challenge is to help young people understand the project’s benefits and inspire them to join.”

Unfortunately, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, some training activities were postponed, and some students who will graduate in this year will face less employment opportunities due to the high number of businesses closing.

However, Vorakhoun said she knows students gained major skills that will help them in their future endeavors, such as: teamwork and team building, time management, and communication.



Image: IVET trainees discussing during a brainstorming session  
Credit: Swisscontact

Vorakhoun also sees that becoming an ESS coach is a good chance for her to enhance her skills and abilities. “Before being trained as an ESS coach, I was a shy person, and when I was on stage, I felt nervous and unconfident. Now I feel that I gained courage to speak more,” she said. “Through the ESS coaches’ training, we also learn many new and interesting things such as labour market surveying skills, and how to conduct surveys. Through this work, we improve our coaching skills.”

The pandemic derailed the professional relationships built by the coaches and the businesses. With many project activities being postponed it was a lot harder to achieve our targets. Manikeo said she relied on her network of coaches and trainees to look for alternative approaches to the postponed activities. Manikeo’s support system also encouraged her to focus on preparing her students for employment and also to make a career path for graduating trainees.

Image: Manikeo with the trainees Credit: Swisscontact



**Inception phase:** August 2019 - March 2020  
**Project duration:** (4 years) August 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)



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