

## Impact Story

## Beneficiary

*“I feel grateful for the advice from teachers and trainers to help me be successful in my own business.”*

*- Noy Kanvongsa*



Image: Noy Kanvongsa Credit: Swisscontact

Noy Kanvongsa is an owner of a small restaurant business in Xayaburi Province. Before being a beneficiary of Swisscontact’s coaching cycle program she had been helping her parents with farming. When teachers from the Integrated Vocational Education (IVET) school held a recruitment event in her village in 2021, she was very interested, but was worried about the application process as she had only finished primary school. However, Kanvongsa was determined to find a better job and earn more income. As part of the application process, she was invited to attend a work exposure event in tailoring and cooking.

**“I chose cooking as I already had skills in that area,” she said.**

Kanvongsa trained at the Vieng Restaurant in Xayaburi Town for three months and then applied for seed money to create her own business. She said that along with restaurant training, she also learned social skills and gained confidence in interacting with others. “I feel grateful for the advice from teachers and trainers to help me be successful in my own business,” she said.

Kanvongsa managed her seed fund carefully - she built the restaurant and bought cooking ingredients and restaurant equipment.

Kanvongsa also records her income and expenses daily but is facing a challenge of increasing food prices due to inflation. However, she can't increase prices because she fears that will drive away customers. She now buys her vegetables from soldiers at the nearby military camp, which has led to the soldiers also becoming her customers.



Image: Noy Kanvongsa preparing food in her shop. Credit: Swisscontact



Currently, Kanvongsa has many lunchtime customers from nearby schools and a military camp. Although it can be challenging to ensure timely service with a busy crowd, she is happy with the high number of customers. She believes they enjoy her delicious menu items, which includes pork and buffalo noodle soup. They also appreciate her reasonable prices and friendly demeanor.

Since opening the restaurant, she has been able to earn about 3-4 million kip per month. She separates her income for business expenses and savings, which she believes has helped her buy a motorbike.

Kanvongsa runs the restaurant on weekdays but still works as a farm laborer to clear weeds on weekends. In May 2023, she plans to increase her income by buying bulk animal feed and then selling small bags at her shop as people in the village raise livestock.

Kanvongsa said she is grateful to the VTESS project for giving her the opportunity and support to reach her goal to become a business owner.

*Image: Noy Kanvongsa serving customers in her restaurant.  
Credit: Swisscontact*



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

**Project duration:** August 2019 - November 2023 (4 years)

**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:**

- Main: Early school-leavers - young people (15-35 years of age) who have completed primary school only and are deprived socially and economically.
- Wider: Teachers from IVET schools, staff from job centres or similar institutions (career counsellors, job coaches, community or youth workers, village facilitators and social workers).



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