



LAO-WRN-AGR-P01, Mai District, Laos
Reporting Period: July 2016 to June 2017

New Agriculture for a Better Life

Budget: \$26,670 fully funded. This is the first year of a 3-year project.

Update:

Entrust is working with several other partners in a large, transformative project aimed to improve livelihoods and reduce poverty in 16 communities in the Mai District of Phongsaly Province through a range of different activities. One of those activities is improving agricultural practices, and this is the aspect Entrust funds are allocated to. Entrust is supporting livestock revolving funds, training in improved animal husbandry including feed and vaccinations, training and demonstration of new cash crops such as coffee and cardamom, home garden plots and fruit trees, improved cropping techniques and marketing skills.



- Staff learned about drying cardamom using ovens and shared the information with 2 families who were previously supported by the project to plant cardamom. The quality of the dried cardamom was much better than when it was dried using traditional means and the ovens enabled the farmers to dry a lot more cardamom in a shorter time.
- In May, the project provided 13,938 kg of galangal rhizomes to 98 households in 6 villages. The project subsidised the purchase of barbed wire for 27 households to fence a large area where they could plant galangal and protect it from cattle.
- In October, seeds for kitchen gardens were provided to a total of 55 households in 11 villages. 3 kinds of plants were provided to all 55 households: Malabar spinach, another spinach and moringa. In addition, chayote was provided to just one cluster area. The team demonstrated how to plant each kind, and informed participants about their health benefits.
- During the year, another 4 villages started revolving goat-raising funds, with 3 families per village being the first to receive the goats (which they will pass on to other families after they produce their first offspring). All of the families built pens for the goats and most of them also planted grasses as feed for the goats. 10 goats were provided to each village to kick-start the revolving fund.
- 20 village vets were trained on the diseases that affect cattle in the local area. Cattle were vaccinated as part of the training. In another cluster, the training was the same but the practical part focused on treatment, because there was already a disease outbreak.



There were some challenges promoting improved pig-raising because villagers are used to free-ranging their pigs which requires very little effort. Our partners will continue to analyse the barriers to pig confinement and work with those willing to try the new methods.

Community members are involved in the planning of each activity, coordinating the projects, selecting the participants and monitoring the progress of the activity. The projects focus on building knowledge and skills of the villages so that they can continue to improve their livelihoods after the project finishes.

Thank you for your generous support enabling us to undertake these activities in partnership with communities in Phongsaly.