



IMPACT STORY

ESS COACHES

“I learned a lot about how the labour market works.”



Image: Saykham Phetpanya Credit: Swisscontact

Mrs. Saykham Phetpanya and her family have often helped children and the poor. And in the past, she has also organized activities to support disadvantaged children and women. So, when she learned that the VTESS project provides disadvantaged people with employment opportunities she was excited to become involved and applied to become an Employment Support Services (ESS) coach in late 2020.

Mrs. Saykham works at the Provincial Lao Women's Union of Xayaboury Province. Although she graduated from the Luangprabang Teachers' College and is a skilled teacher, she believes that with progressing training as an ESS coach that her skills of speaking and communicating have improved. “I also learned a lot about how the labour market works,” she added.

She explained the steps to select the target beneficiaries require interested applicants to first complete the application form and submit it to the coach. Then the coach will select eligible applicants based on initial information and make an appointment for an interview.

Some of the interviews happen on the phone and others are face-to-face.



Image: Saykham is presenting result of group work during training Credit: Swisscontact

“Being a coach is mostly listening to the person,” Mrs. Saykham said. “As coaches, we are not the ones that fix all the problems, but we are there to help a person to learn possible ways to solve their problems and to encourage them to make decisions.” She explained that coaches also need to be respectful. “Because as a good mentor, we must gain the confidence of the person we want to support,” she emphasized.

The project’s planned approach for the implementation has faced many obstacles, such as: the agenda not being followed correctly, participants changing their short-term internship placements, and a bulk of the challenges are

because of the current pandemic. COVID-19 has impacted every activity we planned so far.

Mrs. Saykham said she adapted her approach based on discussions with other coaches and she also managed to apply her new skills to her duties at the Lao Women’s Union Office.

After that, Mrs. Saykham observed that a lot of participants changed their perspective in a positive way; especially, when they are given the chance to voice their opinion.

*Image: Coach Saykham conducted group meeting on data collection of private sector
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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