

CAMBODIA



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CHAIN II - CAMBODIAN HORTICULTURE PROJECT ADVANCING INCOME AND NUTRITION PHASE II



Horticulture farmer supported by CHAIN II in Stung Treng Province

Currently, more than 50% of fresh fruits and vegetables consumed in Cambodia are imported from Thailand, Vietnam and China. Fast economic growth has resulted in more demand for safe local fruits and vegetables. This provides a huge opportunity for smallholder farmers and processors, particularly women, to increase income and food security. Moreover, improved rural infrastructure has increased the mobility of rural poor people, providing them access to diversified markets and job opportunities. Responding to these challenges and opportunities, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has developed the Cambodian Horticulture Advancing Income and Nutrition (CHAIN) programme in close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries through the General Department of Agriculture (GDA) and the provincial departments of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (PDAFF).

BACKGROUND

Agriculture still dominates the Cambodian economy, accounting for 27% of GDP and representing about 53% of employment for the rural labour force. Poverty remains largely a rural phenomenon, as about 80% of the 2.5 million poor people live in rural areas. Most Cambodian farmers are smallholders with less than two hectares of land per household. A significant portion of the population remains 'near poor' and is at high risk of falling back into poverty at the slightest income shock. With more than 65% of Cambodian women engaged in farming, women-headed households and children (30% malnutrition rate) are the most vulnerable. Low productivity of smallholder agriculture is the result of limited access to quality agricultural inputs, technical know-how and innovation, as well as marketing opportunities and market information. Pressure on water resources and the effects of climate change are additional challenges. Restricted involvement of the private sector in agricultural extension services and poor cooperation with public sector actors restrain the development of prosperous smallholders.

APPROACH

Building on the good results and experiences of the first phase, CHAIN II will continue to use the market development approach aimed at strengthening the inclusion of poor people (with a strong focus on women) in the market to secure better access to agricultural goods and services and to gain higher incomes. The key element of this approach is a facilitation process for involving private and public partners as well as civil society organisations in the delivery of goods and services on the input and output side of the horticulture value chains (e.g. extension, inputs, marketing and market information) that appropriately meet the needs of poor farmers and processors. CHAIN II has three complementary intervention areas: 1) Improving service delivery to farmers; 2) Catalysing market development and inclusive business relationships between suppliers, traders, buyers and farmer groups; and 3) Strengthening the enabling environment for continued support to the horticulture sector development in Cambodia.

PROJECT AT A GLANCE:

Duration

Phase 1: Dec 2014-Nov 2017

Phase 2: Dec 2017-Dec 2020

Budget

SDC budget of phase 2:

CHF 4.5 million

SDC overall budget:

CHF 10 million (8.5 years)

Implementing agencies:

Consortium of SNV (lead) and Swisscontact, local partners

Government partners:

Cambodian Ministries:
Ministry of Agriculture,
Forestry and Fisheries,
Ministry of Women's Affairs
and Ministry of Commerce

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Photos by SDC Cambodia and
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Lessons learnt will be shared through multi-stakeholder platforms among sector actors. Farmers will be supported to use social media for exchange among themselves. Case studies will help to better understand the influential factors determining success and failure.

The project has developed the Women's Economic Empowerment strategy to ensure the successful engagement of women and indigenous people in commercial horticulture as a means to increase their power over economic decisions that influence their lives. Men will be involved in the application of the strategy to address issues regarding more equitable sharing of agricultural workloads and responsibilities to balance a lasting involvement in commercial horticulture.

Potential risks of natural disasters have been assessed during the first phase. Disaster risk reduction mainstreaming will be continued in CHAIN II based on established action plans.

Sustainability is at the core of CHAIN II as it aims at strengthening horticulture market systems and the capacity of the sector actors to provide services to the targeted farmers. CHAIN II establishes a network of interactions between market stakeholders to ensure access to supplies, knowledge and technologies as well as marketing of the local production. The established networks, policies and market systems will continue to function once the programme ends, as sector actors and farmers will have reached a critical mass large enough to become a profitable and self-sustaining market.

Three specific outcomes will be achieved:

- Outcome 1: Increased access for farmers to, and use of gender responsive extension and business development services of private and public horticulture sector actors.
- Outcome 2: Improved functioning of the horticulture market system with inclusive business links providing farmers with access to inputs, knowledge and markets.
- Outcome 3: Improved enabling environment supporting the development of the horticulture sector in four targeted provinces.

CHAIN II is aligned with the Royal Government of Cambodia strategic orientation for the agriculture sector (ASDP 2014-2018), aiming at an annual growth rate of 5% through enhanced productivity, diversification and commercialisation.

Results of CHAIN Phase I

CHAIN I has reached out to 6,000 farmers and processors (70% women and 10% indigenous people). Vegetable farmers increased crop yields and farm incomes, while households consumed more vegetables. CHAIN built networks of farmer groups, input suppliers and traders for adjusting production and trade to market demand. Project facilitated close collaboration between public and private sector partners, and improved their capacity to provide effective and gender-sensitive services to farmers.

OVERALL GOAL AND EXPECTATIONS

CHAIN II with its results-driven market development approach and its proven capacity for working extensively with public and private value chain actors has the overall goal to improve income and nutrition of rural households through safe horticulture production and trade. It will support the Government in the transition from subsistence farming into commercial farming by establishing inclusive extension services for safe production and for advanced small farmers' productivity.

It is expected to provide sustainable income growth to 15,000 homestead farmers, 3,000 commercial farmers, 1,200 processors and improved household food security and nutrition for 72,000 people by end of 2022. The programme's intervention zone will expand to further districts in the four provinces of Oddar Meanchey, Preah Vihear, Kratie and Stung Treng.

