



*One farmer in Svay Rieng province was struggling to meet her family's needs. She faced a lot of problems in growing her own vegetables, rice, and chickens due to disease and insects. Moreover, her family income generation came only from her husband, who had to migrate to work in another country, while she could not earn income to support her family, which she thought is shameful. However, since 2015 her family's life has been improving significantly after she registered as a member of a Self-Help Group (SHG) with ICC-Family and School Transformation (FAST) project.*

Having heard the information provided by a community development volunteer and from her neighbour about the benefits of becoming a SHG member, she decided to join a SHG in 2015. Since then, the farmer and her family have been able to gain access to financial support in terms of savings and loans. The SHG also provided her family with skills and technical training on raising farm animals such as chicken and fish, and other training related to agriculture, health care, sanitation, gender, effects of domestic violence, child's rights and child's protection. Before becoming a member of a SHG, she never had any opportunities to attend this kind of training as she only focused on her home-based vegetable gardening and raising chickens through traditional methods. In doing so, she faced many challenges due to diseases, insects, and the lack of modern agriculture techniques. Furthermore, the only source of income for her family came solely from her husband, who was working as a migrant worker in another country. This made her feel really bad, and this is what motivated her to join a SHG.

Since the farmer and her husband are able to make use of those new modern agriculture techniques from ICC-FAST, her husband does not need to migrate to work anymore. As a result, her family is able to increase their chicken yield because they know how to look after their chickens by giving proper vaccinations, balanced food, keeping to a feeding cycle, and cleaning the cage regularly. This allowed her family to earn around USD 355 in just six months from selling only chickens.

Right now they are able to improve their daily diet, provide for children's educational support and reserve a small portion of their income for saving in the SHG. To generate more income and food supply for her family, the farmer and her family are now raising fish and growing more vegetables. For their future plan, they are planning to expand their farm to increase to more agricultural products and to improve their family standard of living. They are also helping other SHG members to generate income locally through knowledge and skill sharing on agriculture, and also encourage other members to use their own available resources inside the community in order to cut down on unnecessary expense.

It is very impactful to see how people in the community, especially SHG members, are able to improve their own livelihood through the participation in SHG's activities where the members can acquire all the necessary knowledge and technical skills, and access financial support. It is very inspiring to see that the community feels empowered to work together to access collective benefit and sustainable livelihood.