

Field Note on Field Study on **changing living standards of small farmers: Mrs. Kim Savon**

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Mrs. Kim Savon is 44 years old, a farmer who lives in Tropaing Phnov village, Chres commune, Kampong Trolach district, Kampong Chhnang province. She has 6 people in the family, including 4 sons which are studying at primary school. Besides working in a rice field, she raises animals and grows a little vegetables around her home, and grinds rice grain in the village. The livelihood of her family is difficult due to her total dependence on the rice crop. Amount of rice production is 1,500 kilograms per hectare; therefore it is enough only for consumption in the family. If calculating total annual income, the most she has received is 2 million Riel, which she obtained primarily from grinding rice grain and some from selling rice and chicken.

Up to the middle of the year of 2007, CEDAC's project has expanded to the new target communes by farmer promoters, including Chres commune. Since that time, Mrs. Savon volunteered to cooperate with the project and applied some new innovations such as system of rice intensification (SRI) and ecological chicken raising. She received good results from the first time practicing the new innovations, and her capacity has generally been strengthened in creating of new innovation and producing her production.



As a result, her rice production has increased from 1,500 kilograms per year before the project to 3,300 kilograms per year at present, and income from chicken selling has also increased from 300,000 Riel per year before the project to 5,000,000 Riel per year at present. Up to now she applied other new innovations such as: pig raising, earthworm raising, home garden, and compost making. Beside applying new innovations, she is a member of a saving group, organic rice producer group, pig

insurance group, and rice mill cooperative.

Based on calculation by her, annual income has increased from 2 million Riel before the project to 5 million Riel in the first year, 7 million Riel in the second year and 10 million Riel at present. She has noted an improved living standard of her family from year to year.

Due to annual income increase, she has invested this income in buying rice field, cows for raising, construction of bio-gas stove, and some materials for household use. Her vision for the future includes making a pond for raising fish, a stone fence for improving chicken raising, and improvement of soil fertilizer.

Based on the results above, we have known that there were some key factors which brought her success. These factors focused on:

- Support from outsider on new innovation
- Adaptation of ecological agriculture without use of chemical fertilizer and pesticide
- Using resources in and around her home
- Creative thinking
- Have intention to save a lot of money
- Effort and commitment
- Focusing mainly on rice crop and chicken raising
- Dividing responsibility of work between members of the family