



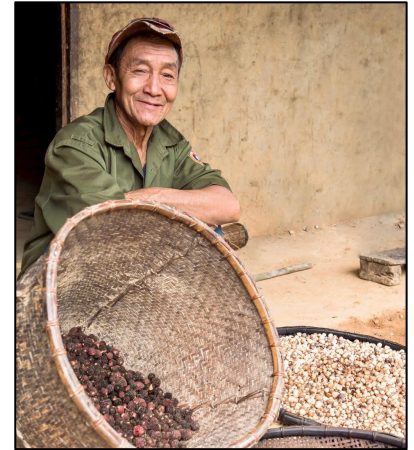
LAO-WRN-AGR-P02, Mai District, Laos
Reporting Period: January – June 2018

New Agriculture for a Better Life

Budget: \$30,000. Fully funded. This is the 2nd year of a 3-year project.

Update:

Entrust is working with a number of their partners in a large, transformative project aimed to improve livelihoods and reduce poverty in 16 communities in the Mai District through a range of different activities. One of those activities is improving agricultural practices, and this is the aspect Entrust is focused on. 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 management and use of wild forest products and fisheries. The bulk of the agriculture work is done in the first half of the calendar year whereas in July to December the focus is on monitoring and planning.



Progress against objectives:

- The team followed up on coffee and cardamom production (see photos above, right and below) assisting families to sell their coffee to a quality coffee company in the area. Construction of cardamom drying ovens was subsidised and training was provided on how to use them effectively.
- Previously supported home gardens were monitored and training on the nutritional benefits of each plant was provided. Fruit tree seedlings, rhizomes and training on how to care for and propagate them was provided.
- 6 additional families benefitted from the expanding revolving goat fund.
- The 7 fish conservation areas were monitored and evaluated by village leaders who now understand the regulations and processes needed to raise fish.

Challenges:

- Not all families follow the correct advice or take the management of goat-raising seriously so their goats die.
- Many households don't bother harvesting their coffee even though they have grown it.
- The price of cardamom dropped dramatically in this period either because of over-supply or collusion by traders to buy at a low price.
- The biggest issue that is holding back village development is drug addiction. Methamphetamines and opium are widely available and consumed by most villagers and their leaders. This affects the solidarity and effectiveness of the Village Development Committees and has a huge impact on the livelihoods of the community as a whole. Finding a successful approach to raising and solving this issue will be a core focus in the coming year.

Thank you for your generous support of this transformative project and for making this work possible.

