

IMPACT STORY

HIGHER YIELD AND PROFIT WITH PROPER USE OF FERTILISER

Though Mrs. Kunthea has been farming and using fertiliser for decades, access to information on the proper use of fertilisers has been very limited for her and most of her neighbours. “Before I just applied [fertiliser] by guessing... I would ask from other farmers but they would be guessing too... On average we got only 1 ton [of paddy] per hectare.”

Despite similar growing conditions, Cambodian rice farmers still achieve a lower yield than farmers in neighbouring countries. Fertilisers have the potential to significantly increase these yields. However, Cambodian farmers have not managed to get the full benefits because they have not had access to the right information.



It was only a few years ago that Mrs. Kunthea got access to information on what the proper techniques are to apply fertilisers. The knowledge came from Mr. Ung You Hai, a fertiliser seller who expanded his business and started selling in her village. Unlike many other fertiliser sellers, Mr. You Hai received training on the proper application of fertiliser and has been sharing his knowledge with his customers, like Mrs. Kunthea.

Since following his advice, Mrs. Kunthea’s yield has increased to 1.8 tons per hectare. The new technique does require her to use more fertiliser but her increase in yield gives her a higher profit than before.

CAVAC, an agriculture program funded by AusAID, supports 11 fertiliser companies to provide training to local fertiliser retailers, like Mr. You Hai, on the proper application of their products. The sellers are encouraged to then advise their customers, the farmers, in turn.

Providing good advice to farmers is a good business incentive for fertiliser companies and sellers since successful farmers will be more loyal to the sellers and also can afford to keep buying their fertilisers and other inputs.

Mrs. Kunthea hopes that the additional profit will help her to realise her dreams of supporting her youngest daughter to get a Bachelor’s degree and to buy more land. As a parent, she hopes that she can have enough land to pass on to all of her children when they get married and still have some for her and her husband to continue farming well into the future.