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SUCCESS STORY:

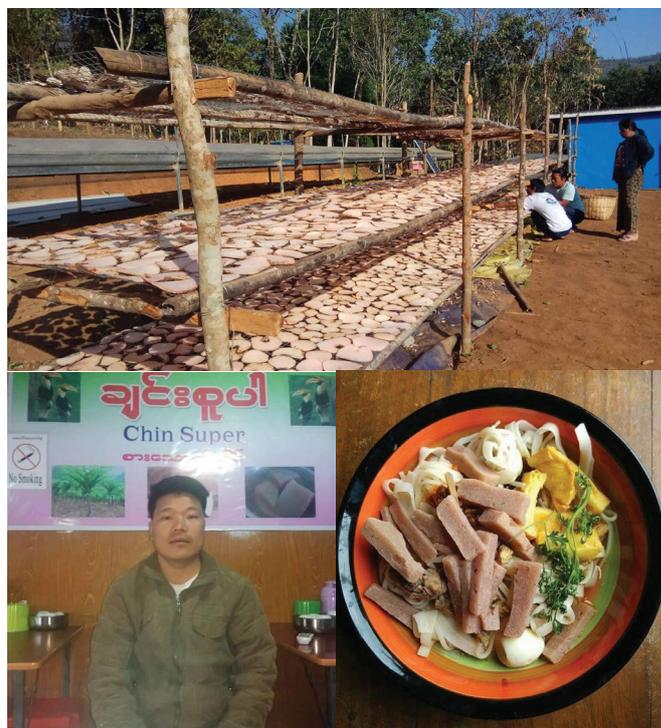
Supporting Innovative Entrepreneurship in Chin

Myo Min Tun, aged 32, is an ethnic Chin farmer-turned entrepreneur who has received support through the Myanmar Fruit and Vegetable Producers Association (MFVP) funded by the UK's Department of International Development (DFID) through the DaNa Facility. He lives in Kanpetlet Town, southern Chin State together with his wife and two children. He cultivates his own three-acre farm growing elephant foot yam and avocado. Previously, Myo Min Tun struggled to make a profit from his land due to low yields and poor quality produce. After joining MFVP's training last year in Kanpetlet Town, Myo Min Tun modified his traditional cultivation methods and started to use a more systematic approach, including proper use of pesticide and fertiliser. Speaking about his experience with MFVP he said: "Most farmers here use traditional growing practices including me, but I changed after I gained knowledge from MFVP trainings. I've attended two sessions so far and learned about organic fertiliser, grafting for avocado, pest and disease prevention and making yam cake."

As an enthusiastic member of MFVP for the past year, Myo Min Tun was selected as Chairman of the Avocado Cluster Group for southern Chin State. He participated in a trade fair conducted in Hopong Township where he also learned from Shan avocado farmers, as part of MFVP's project. Although he has not yet started marketing avocados, he plans to start selling them soon, along with the elephant foot yam that he is already selling to local traders.

Eventually, Myo Min Tun stopped selling dry yam after opening a small restaurant in Kanpetlet named "Chin Super" managed by his wife. The restaurant is open every day and employs two full-time staff members. Myo Min Tun started processing his yam after learning the appropriate techniques from MFVP training and now offers yam curry on the restaurant menu, as well as supplying it to hotels in Kanpetlet Town. Previously, elephant foot yam was not part of most people's diet in the area since it takes effort to prepare it properly to satisfy local tastes.

Myo Min Tun said that opening the restaurant is a direct result of taking part in MFVP's project. He now earns 15,000 MMK (£7.50) per day from yam curry sold at his restaurant: "Mostly, I make yam curry as it needs physical strength in handling the yam processing machine which costs 300,000 MMK. I have been selling so much yam curry that I have ordered a bigger machine from Mandalay, which costs 15 lakhs (1,500,000 MMK), as I want to expand produc-



Yam is made into different types of curries, sometimes mixed with vegetable. Myo Min Tun created and sold yam noodles, yam barbeque, yam stick, spicy yam and mixed it with meat and other vegetables.

tion of yam curry." His income from selling wet yam also amounts to at least 6 million MMK (£3,000) annually. Apart from yam curry, Myo Min Tun also processes and sells avocado juice at his restaurant. He earns between 12,000 - 16,000 MKK (£6 - £8) per day from juice sales. He was one of the participants in a study trip to Kunming Province in China in June 2018 that was organised by MFVP and where an MoU was signed with a Chinese company, Xinping Yiquan Konjac Production and Marketing Cooperative Ltd, to provide technical knowledge to MFVP. He also learned about new cultivation techniques including terrace farming that supports higher yam production, though the required investment is significant as it requires purchasing large machinery. In the future, Myo Min Tun intends to focus on his business in Kanpetlet and plans to expand his farm, enlarge the restaurant to accommodate over 100 customers and learn more about yam processing.

MFVP is arranging yam processing training in Mon State in December 2018 and Myo Min Tun is very eager to join, adding: "The training I have received has improved my family's life. We now have money to reinvest in our fields and support ourselves. I never thought I would be able to open up my own restaurant, but thanks to MFVP, DaNa and DFID I gained the confidence and the skills to succeed."