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SUCCESS STORY:

From Seed to Market: Smallholder Farmers Adding Value in Chin and Shan States



U Salai Kapling tending coffee seedlings

U Salai Kapling, a 50-year-old farmer from Matupi Township in Southern Chin State, is an innovator. After attending a training course on crop diversification, Salai began cultivating a six-acre orchard, growing coffee, avocado, oranges, and monkey cry fruit.

The training course was one of a number of activities implemented by the Myanmar Fruit, Flower, and Vegetable Producers’ Association (MFVP) under the ‘Economic Empowerment of Highland People through Upgrading of Coffee, Avocado and Elephant Foot Yam Value Chains’ (CAEFY) project.

Upgrading value chains in the horticultural sector involves improving agricultural practices and establishing connections between suppliers, traders, and markets, enabling smallholder farmers to add value to their produce, resulting in additional income.

The CAEFY project, supported by the UK aid-funded DaNa Facility, aims to directly improve jobs, incomes, and livelihoods for at least 2,000 small agricultural producers in the upland communities of Chin and Shan States.

Salai is constantly on the lookout for ways to improve his business and in July 2018 opened the “Yar Dwe”

“Expanding the farm to include the nursery has increased my income and helped improve my family’s standard of living.”

Seedlings Nursery – named after his village. His new venture was inspired by the CAEFY project, which provided training on business skills, helping him to understand the importance of developing a business plan and keeping accurate, up-to-date records.

The project also supplied some of the materials Salai needed to get the business off the ground; greenhouse netting, drip irrigation kits, and fencing were provided and installed; mother plants, which provide the cuttings used to grow seedlings, were sourced and supplied to the nursery.

Salai’s income is growing in tandem with the business. In 2018 and 2019, he sold over 21,000 bags of coffee, avocado, orange, and monkey cry fruit seedlings to farmers from villages across Matupi Township, earning him 5,100,000 MMK (£2,638).

“The project has had a real impact on my business. Expanding the farm to include the nursery has increased my income and helped improve my family’s standard of living,” said Salai.

The horticultural sector is extremely important for Myanmar’s development. Through its work to upgrade value chains in Chin and Shan States, the CAEFY project is helping smallholder farmers increase their incomes by maximizing the value of their produce from seed to market.