

PALD SUCCESS STORIES...

...Escaping Poverty through Raising Mong Cai Sows with the PALD Model

The story of Mrs Nguyen Thi Thiem in Van Chan district, Yen Bai province, Vietnam



Mrs Nguyen Thi Thiem is a 61 year old farmer of Kinh ethnicity. She lives in the Khe Dia 2 village which is in the Cat Thinh commune of Van Chan, Yen Bai. She became a member of a farmer interest group (FIG) for raising Mong Cai sows as part of the PALD project in 2007.

Before joining PALD, her family used to be poor. She has four children and suffers from ill health due to Grave's disease. Each month she spends a large sum of money (1,500,000 VND – equivalent to approximately \$65) on treatment, which makes life difficult for her. In 2005 a sudden flood washed away her house. Thanks to donations from community organizations and a loan, her family bought a small piece of land on which to construct a temporary house.

In 2007, she learnt that the PALD project supports women and gives priority to the poor. This prompted Mrs Thiem to register to participate in the FIG. She also took out a loan to purchase one Mong Cai sow because she thought she would be good at this job and could also utilize the by-products of pig farming.



Photo: Mrs. Thiem and CWU's officer with her piglet herd, August 2014



Photo: Mrs. Thiem's husband is taking care chickens, August 2014

Using livestock production and swine disease prevention techniques, under the guidance of project staff, her family achieved good results. After each cycle of production, she chose to reinvest part of her profits into buying more pigs. By 2010, her

family had nine sows and produced approximately 180 piglets annually, all of which were raised to sell to market. Finishing pigs, as they are known at this stage, have a total weight of about 14 tons per year, generating a total revenue of about 450,000,000 VND per year and a total profit of 80-90,000,000 VND per year (almost \$20,000 and \$3500-4000 respectively).

Mrs Thiem said the PALD project offered training courses which shared new techniques, where she learnt how to mix feed using readily available materials, saving a lot of money on pig food and allowing her to reap high profits.

With these accumulated profits Mrs Thiem built more livestock housing (the initial pigsty had an area of 12m²; it has now been expanded to 200m²). As of 2010, her family's economic status has become quite good in the local area and she can now cover both her medical costs and the school fees of her two children, which cost up to 5,000,000 VND (over \$200) each month.

Since 2013, besides raising pigs Mrs Thiem has expanded to invest in chicken rearing too. This helps her to cope with the negative fluctuation of the price of pork at market, which can result in low profits for pig farmers. In addition, rearing pigs requires more labor and can be challenging for people who are aging. She currently uses the old pigsty to raise 400 chickens per cycle.

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