

I'm *Not Afraid* to Fail

Tui, 39, lives in Mang Village, Phoukoud District with his six family members—his wife, three children, and his parents-in-law. Initially, his family was not selected as a PICRAIL priority target household because, compared to other households in the community, his family is better off. However, because he is active and has the potential to become a community role model, the project welcomed him to a mushroom training held at Phoukoud District Agriculture and Forest Office.

Tui is an active learner. He could clearly recall needed ingredients and equipment, cultivation process, etc. After the training, PICRAIL project manager provided him with some mushroom spawn for an experiment. Wasting no time, he built his mushroom shelters and started his own farm. Tui said that he was not afraid of failure or what he did would be a waste of time. He just wanted to try and prove his capacity. At first, he did not expect to sell his production; he was thinking of consumption only. He thought if he succeeds, his family would have something to eat when their food is low. “I didn’t expect to sell my production as our village is far from the market. I just wanted to know how much I can do and if I will be able to apply the knowledge that they taught me,” said he.

The training took place on 17 August 2020 and by 17 Feb 2021, he has reached his third crop of mushrooms. Besides consumption, he sells for the produce to his neighbors. For the previous two rounds, he could sell 40 kg at a price of 20,000 Kip/kg (2 USD/kg). After recouping, he could get a little amount of profit, which is good as he achieved beyond his expectation.

According to Tui, his endeavor has seen delightful result. Many households have reached out to him and ask him to teach them how to cultivate mushrooms. Having already taught two households, he plans to teach six more in the near future. Because mushroom spawns are difficult to make, he wants the project to support him and once receiving it, he would inform the households and immediately launch the training.

As mentioned, Tui relies on suppliers for mushroom spawns. Even though the cost is not much, but transportation is the main obstacle. Hence, he would like to learn how to cultivate the spawns himself. He knows that he needs to have an expensive machine, and he is not sure if it is worth the investment. However, he at least wants to explore his options first. Furthermore, he also would like the project to conduct more mushroom training as he wants to review if what he is doing is correct as well as exchange lessons, discuss problems and how to solve them with agriculture officers as well as other farmers.

ADRA Laos is gleeful that Tui has applied the knowledge he gained and transferred it to his neighbors. We hope, he and his family would continue growing mushrooms and expand their farm to produce more food and earn more income.



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