



SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD MODEL: ORGANIC POTATO CULTIVATION IN COASTAL THANH HOA PROVINCE

Overview

The project **Improving the Resilience of Vulnerable Coastal Communities to Climate Change-Related Impacts in Viet Nam** is supporting sustainable livelihood activities to compensate for the temporary loss of household income caused by mangrove plantation and regeneration in Thanh Hoa province.

To date, aquaculture and poultry farming activities have brought in a good harvest. However, farmers face potential risks when selling their products due to market fluctuation, buyer-controlled prices, or middlemen without a specific commitment from purchasing enterprises.

Establishing strong partnerships between farmers, research institutions, and businesses is critical to building more sustainable production processes.

In order to better support farmers' long-term success, the project has worked in coordination with the Institute of Agro-biology, the Orion Vina Company, and local communities to implement **30 hectares of organic potato cultivation** in three coastal communes of Thanh Hoa province.

Objectives

- Set up a **three-party commitment** between farmers, quality seed suppliers, and product purchasers.
- Create **livelihood opportunities** for farmers, gradually diversifying products towards sustainability and creating commodity products while protecting mangroves.
- Take advantage of labour resources, promote **traditional knowledge**, improve **economic efficiency**, and create more **jobs** for local people, especially women.
- Build farmers' capacity to apply **advanced technical knowledge** in producing and selling organic potatoes along the value chain.
- Provide **instruction and technical guidance** on how to minimize pests and diseases, reduce production costs, increase efficiency, and create organic products with a lower impact on the environment.

MODEL SUMMARY



Status: Completed

Duration: 10/2020 – 04/2021

Geographic Coverage: Da Loc and Hung Loc communes (Hau Loc district) and Nga Bach commune (Nga Son district), Thanh Hoa province

Implementing Partners: Institute of Agro-Biology, Orion Vina, Commune People's Committees of Da Loc, Hung Loc, and Nga Bach, and Thanh Hoa Provincial Project Management Unit



Who benefits from this project?



375
households
in 3 communes
(17% women-
headed)



1,041
direct
beneficiaries
(46% women)



375
farmers trained in
organic potato
farming techniques
(43% women)



Results

Farmers harvested **16 tons of potatoes per hectare**, of which 13.5 tons were for commercial purposes and the rest for seeds. This brought the total revenue to approximately 104 million VND per hectare (~US\$4,500), with a **net profit of 45 million VND per hectare** (~US\$1,900), increasing farmers' income by up to 300%.

ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY

- **The potatoes brought in profits 3 to 4 times higher than traditional local crops** such as rice, corn, and peanuts, even though they are considered a secondary (winter) crop.
- **Technical guidance introduced farmers to intensive cultivating practices** for seed treatment, soil preparation, planting, tending, fertilization, cultivation, irrigation, pest control, and harvesting.
- **All products that met the requirements were sold immediately after harvesting** and farmers received timely payment at the agreed price, building trust in the '4-body linkage' (state - scientists - enterprises - farmers).

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFICIENCY

- **Farmers were trained on an organic process** of using fertilizers, herbicides, and manure in balance, reducing pesticide and chemical residues.
- **Soil fertility and porosity were significantly improved** after harvest, **farmers used less fertilizer and labour** for the following crops (rice, corn, peanuts), and **pests and diseases were limited**.

SOCIAL EFFICIENCY

- **The model contributed to jobs and stable incomes** for farmers and reduced the negative consequences caused by improper collection of forest products.
- **The model contributed to the formation and development of organic potato production areas** consumed according to the value chain. During the COVID-19 pandemic in particular, the price of many agricultural products dropped, but the potatoes were fully consumed at the agreed price.

Lessons Learnt

- **Farmers, suppliers, and buyers should be as committed to achieving each other's objectives as to their own in order to build a stronger partnership.** Agreements cannot achieve this by themselves, so, individual commitments are also key.
- Setbacks should be acknowledged and corrected in time through **regular monitoring and technical support**.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Mr. Vu Thai Truong

Project Management Specialist,
UNDP Viet Nam
vu.thai.truong@undp.org

Ms. Phan Huong Giang

Media & Communications Analyst,
UNDP Viet Nam
phan.huong.giang@undp.org

