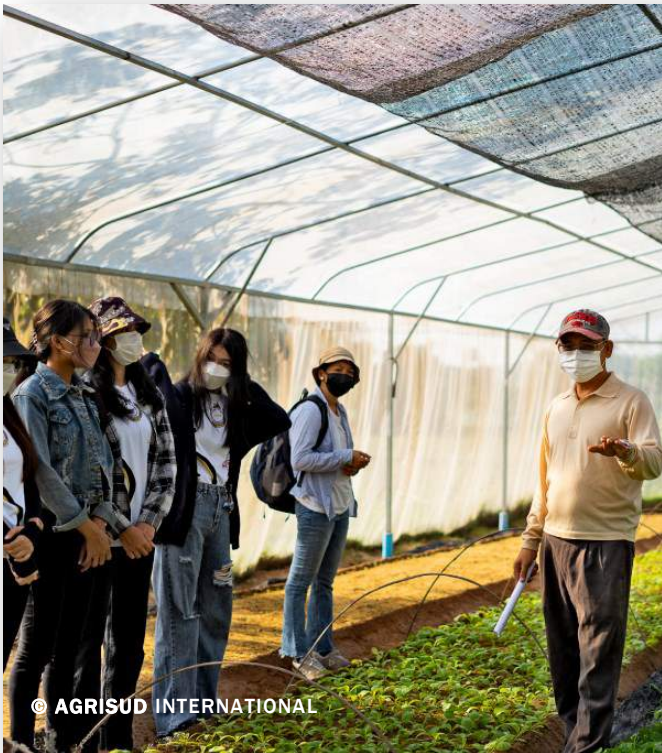


Capitalization sheet

Youth awareness-raising on Agroecology



- **Presentation of the training activities**
- **Setting up and maintenance of the educational garden**

March 2019

Capitalization sheets produced within the framework of the Agro-ecological Intensification and Diversification of Peri-urban Agriculture Project in Siem Reap Province, Cambodia (IADA phase 1)



Youth awareness-raising on Agroecology

Most children and students in Cambodia come from peasant families, and in fact most of them will return to agriculture or at least keep close contact with the producers from their neighborhood or families.

On the basis of this observation, these young people, educated about environment and agro-ecological practices, can act as relays, and changing actors within their entourage by disseminating their knowledge and know-how learned at school.

This environmental and agricultural education initiative also responds to a demand from project donors and helps to operationalize a government orientation of setting up educational gardens in primary schools.



Theoretical training



Practical training

Presentation of training activities

Awareness of the environment and agroecological practices is conducted on two levels: theoretical with classroom animations and practical through the establishment of small educational gardens.

The theoretical training extends over 1 month, with 3 sessions done at rate of 1 day / week. The training period being set according to the start of academic year and availability of the technician, it is usually held at the earliest of the school year, between October and January. During this month, it is recommended, depending on the relevance of the subject, to follow each theoretical session (1 hour approx.) by 1 hour of field application, to illustrate what has been taught. The rest of the year (outside the holiday periods), the sensibilisation work continues with a follow-up and advice phase, once a week on the educational garden, usually from November to June, according to the beginning of the period of training. This second phase consolidates the educational work taught during the first phase of training, and allows children and students to learn by practicing.

Analysis elements

> Classes are often too big, which makes training challenging.

> Low teacher involvement during the animations. One way to improve it could be to give an incentive to the teacher in form of money or vegetables basket for example. Depending of the context, a source of motivation should be thought-after.

Theoretical training

Key topics	Method	Tools
⇒ From land preparation and ways to improve it, to vegetable growth and management of water & waste: - Introduction to the different types of agriculture - Land preparation and soil improvement, mulching - Plant and seasons cycles - Main plant species knowledge, plant growth from seeds and seedlings in nursery, transplantation, compost making - Management of water and waste	Reading, questions-answers, brainstorming	Powerpoint, LCD and computer (if access to electricity) Flipchart (if outside) Paper, board, pens Technical book



Analysis elements

> Ensure to keep the dynamic around the gardens by mobilizing the students in small groups and allowing everyone to get involved during the activities.

> Beware of accidents during the practice, and if possible involve the teacher to help out and keep an eye on them.

> It is recommended to use a small protected pond for irrigation instead of a well when working with primary schools.

> The project is financially covered by Agrisud (material, training, seeds)

> Some parents do not accept that their children get involved in the gardens for its maintenance because they claim they are in school to "learn". For this reason, the learning goal and usefulness of the training activities should be well explained to the parents from the start.

Practical training

The 2 main objectives are:

- ⇒ to develop children's taste for vegetables and their interest in the environment
- ⇒ to allow children to put into practice and deepen their theoretical learning

The practicals follow the topics learned during the theoretical phase.

Method	Tools
Application of theoretical lessons in the field once a week. The technician shows the example and distributes the tasks by groups of students. The material are brought back to the storage area after use and kept in a sheltered and sealed area to respectively prevent them to be damaged over time and to cause accidents.	A set of tools is distributed by Agrisud, and adapted to the size of the garden and the number of students. For a class of 40 to 50 students: 4 Hoes, 2 Rakes, 2 shovels, 4 watering can, 1 fork, baskets, seeds. The irrigation system (motor, pipes, pump ...) has to be adapted to the field and needs of the school. A cleaning place is also provided.

Setting up and maintenance of the educational garden

Setting up of the project

To set up the project, the 4 main following steps are considered:

- 1- Get in touch with the school principal, teachers and parents association.
- 2- Organize an information meeting to present the organization, its mission, the sensibilisation project and its objectives. A pedagogical staff should be held responsible as early as possible for the field maintenance outside the days of intervention with the technician.
- 3- Observe and delimit with the school, the field that will be used as the educational garden. This one must be located away from any balls playgrounds, close to a water point, and have a minimum space of 150m².
- 4- Define the crops calendar according to school holiday periods.



Garden layout



Vegetable strips



Analysis elements

> Once the project is under way, a good idea is to ask the students to take organic fertilizers (compost, manure, etc.), mulching for use in the garden, if necessary.

> It is important to have a person who is held responsible for the garden during the week. A compensation for the work has to be defined to keep the person motivated.

> Ways should be thought-after to help the school to get involve in the project.

Setting up of the pedagogical garden

To set up the garden, another 4 steps are followed:

1- Defining the boarders of the field

2- Deciding on the location of the water basin

3- Defining the garden's layout and location of:

- the strips of crops (l = 1m, L = 10m)

- the composting area (3m * 4m)

- the storage of liquid compost

4- Selecting the crops, planning their plantation and organizing them in their layout. Crops are defined according to the specific needs of the school and climatic & soil conditions. For example, a catering school may have special needs depending on the menu it offers.

In the province of Siem Reap, the main following crops that are grown:

During the dry Season: Morning glory, Long bean, Cucumber, Eggplant, Tomato, Turnip, Cabbage, Petsai, Pock Choy, Lettuce, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage and all mint varieties.

During the rainy season: spond gourd, Cucumber, Corn, Lettuce, Beans, Eggplant and all varieties of mint.

Besides, it is advisable to grow them in vegetable squares or in bounded soil strips, because they can be trampled by children if they are not protected.

Harvest use

Different pathways can be identified depending on the context:

The vegetables produced can be sold and the money obtained from the sale, reinvested in the garden (for purchase of seeds and small equipment) or they can be used in the training school restaurant or school canteen. Otherwise, they can be redistributed to the children and to the pedagogical manager of the garden, in exchange of his/her work on the garden.



To remember...

Raising youth-awareness through school to change agricultural practices and environment's consideration.

A training on both theoretical and practical aspects with a pedagogical garden on site.

Importance of the group sizes and involvment of the teacher and students for the success of the project.

Capitalization sheets produced by Agrisud International



With the participation of :



And the financial support of :

