



# Aus4Equality|GREAT Partnering for Change



## Empowering Ethnic Minority Women through the Development of Specialty Rice Value Chain in Son La Province

### Agriculture and Forestry Research and Development Centre for Mountainous Regions

#### Opportunity

'Te rau' rice is a specialty within Vietnam and consumer demand is high. It is therefore able to be sold at a higher price than other rice varieties, increasing incomes for farmers. Ethnic minority groups in Son La Province currently produce te rau rice, but in small amounts with varying quality.

The Agriculture and Forestry Research and Development Centre for Mountainous Regions (ADC) aims to expand te rau rice production areas in Son La Province and work with farmers to improve production techniques. It is anticipated that current yields could be increased by 14-28%. The te rau rice will be produced to VietGAP and PGS standards. Specialised branding will also be developed with the te rau rice products targeted at high-end domestic and export markets.

#### Solutions for Change

- » Increase the technical capacity of rice growing households to cultivate rice to VietGAP and PGS standards
- » Increase access to capital for women so that they can invest and develop specialty rice businesses
- » Ensure quality rice processing services are available, and that ethnic minority women can access these services
- » Improve the operational capacity of farmer cooperatives and production groups, including raising awareness of gender equality

#### Challenges

Poor availability of quality seedlings is compounded by a lack of private sector investment in the seed industry and current rice production is scattered geographically. Quality rice processing services are lacking, further reducing the quality of the final rice products.

Farmers and farmer groups are not organised, which reduces their ability to negotiate sales prices collectively, or share costs for services such as transport. Increasing production and quality of te rau rice in Son La Province requires a significant shift from current farming, processing and business practices.

Furthermore, the business skills to access high end markets and the local tourism industry need to be developed.

**The production of a local, specialised rice also presents an opportunity within the growing tourism industry in Son La Province, where local produce is proving an attraction for domestic tourists.**

#### Expected Results

- » **Increased income** for 504 women, including 454 women from ethnic minority groups
- » **30 jobs created**, including 25 for ethnic minority women
- » Minimum 80% of participating women report **increased confidence**



Provincial People's Committee  
Son La Province

