

Aus4Equality|GREAT Partnering for Change



Empowering Women in the Benzoin and Organic Spice Supply Chains Duc Phu Company

Opportunity

Global demand for benzoin, a fragrant resin used in perfumes, is very high and it is currently only produced in Laos and Vietnam. Vietnam exports benzoin primarily to European markets, but some producers also export regionally, such as to Myanmar. International demand for organic spices, particularly ginger, is also increasing.

Mountainous Van Ban is home to a significant plantation of bode trees, which have often been exploited for timber. However, extracting benzoin is a more sustainable use. To meet demand, benzoin production areas need to be increased. Duc Phu aims to invest in expanding raw material areas, engaging local people in production and applying sustainable harvesting techniques. Supporting farmers to also produce organic spices will allow for income diversification and security.

The benzoin and organic spice sectors offer employment and income opportunities for ethnic minority women if the appropriate support for training, inputs and support services are put in place.

Expected Results

- » **Increased income** for 963 people, including 419 ethnic minority women
- » **41 jobs created** for women
- » Minimum 80% of women report **increased confidence**
- » **Private sector contribution:** AUD 314,788

Challenges

Benzoin remains a relatively new crop in Vietnam and for Duc Phu to access increased production areas, farming households must be convinced of the income potential. A shift away from harvesting bode trees for timber to benzoin extraction must also be made.

The production of benzoin and organic spices requires farming households to meet Fairtrade and organic certification standards. Technical training, access to inputs and other support services will be needed for farmers to understand and meet these standards.

To ensure ethnic minority women can fully and equally participate in employment and income opportunities generated in the benzoin and organic spice sectors, an inclusive approach to sectoral policies that promote gender equality, training, information and access to opportunities will need to be applied.

Solutions for change

- » Support women to develop benzoin and spice production knowledge and skills
- » Support farmers, including women, to meet Fairtrade standards (benzoin) and organic standards (ginger and turmeric products)
- » Coordinate with the Forest Protection Department at the provincial and district levels to ensure the sustainable development of production areas
- » Engage with leading aromatherapy corporations in Vietnam for further investment

