



SUCCESS STORY

Cocoa Brings New Markets, Confidence

Intercropping cocoa trees gives small farmers new crop options



Photo: SUCCESS Alliance

Tran Van Thanh inspects a cocoa tree in his intercropped farm in Ba Ria Vung Tau Province.

“The SUCCESS Alliance training has brought us growing techniques as well as building up our confidence,” says Tran. “We are now quite confident to invest in this tree.”

Mixed cocoa cropping improves land fertility and water and soil conservation. But while cocoa trees have been grown in southern Vietnam for years, it had never developed into a major cash crop. The lack of production expertise and an accessible market for cocoa beans constrained the cocoa’s development and limited farmers’ confidence in their ability to grow the crop successfully.

To encourage the growth of Vietnam’s cocoa industry, and to promote the prosperity of small cocoa farmers, USAID launched the Sustainable Cocoa Extension Services for Smallholders Alliance — the SUCCESS Alliance. Operating from Ba Ria Vung Tau and Ben Tre Provinces, the SUCCESS Alliance provides quality cocoa seedlings to more than 2,000 farmers and shows them sound production techniques. The SUCCESS Alliance’s close links with major chocolate manufacturers around the world has also strengthened farmers’ market

network.

Farmer Tran Van Thanh became a member of the SUCCESS Alliance, learning sound production and marketing techniques. He then began to train other farmers in sustainable cocoa production methods. Following Tran’s lead, they now eagerly grow cocoa with more confidence in the product’s market potential.

Tran says Vietnam’s cocoa crop will be successful. “The program has helped us to invest in this new tree without interfering in our existing harvest,” says Tran. “The SUCCESS Alliance training has brought us growing techniques as well as building up our confidence. We are now quite confident to invest in this tree.”