

# Seeding the Way with Systems of Rice Intensification in Cambodia

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Mrs Tea Sarim is one of the participating farmers in a European Union funded multi-country (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam and Thailand) project called “Sustaining and Enhancing the Momentum for Innovation and Learning around the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) in the Lower Mekong River Basin” (<http://www.sri-lmb.ait.asia/>). Mrs Sarim is from Kampot Province in Cambodia, where she farms paddy rice. She is a 57 year old farmer who has readily shared her SRI adaption experiences with others. She has enlightened many women farmers with SRI farming techniques in her small village called Deim Pour in Angkor Chey district. She was selected to participate in a season long training for farmers called CFPAR and later became one of the smartest farmer trainers to transfer knowledge of SRI techniques to other farmers in her community by conducting various Farmers Participatory Action Research projects. Khmer women farmers are very hard working and have a hectic work life supporting their family needs, daily household jobs and other agricultural works. Sarim is one of those too, and is responsible for feeding her family. Having practiced farming for five years, Sarim was unable to feed her family well and conventional farming consumed a lot of time and labour. She experienced her workload being reduced after adapting SRI in her fields. Today, she produces more than 6 tons per hectare by spending less cost on seeds, water, labour, and other resources. In three years span, after adapting SRI, she has watched her sticky rice field grow well with tillers producing many seeds and reduced about 20% of her workload. Today, she is very happy with the results of SRI and able to support basic and other commercial needs of her family. Sarim is one of the popular SRI farmer trainers in her village and wishes to help many other women farmers in her neighbouring villages to improve their economic condition. Dr. Abha Mishra, the Team Leader of the Mekong SRI regional project and Co-Director of Asian Centre of Innovation for Sustainable Agriculture Intensification (ACISAI) at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT),

provided the following insights about the system and challenges.

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