



## **Social Business for young adults with mental disabilities: Farming in Kep, South of Cambodia**

### **Fact sheet**

March 2016

#### **1<sup>st</sup> project for mentally disabled young adults in Cambodia**

There are no long-term institutions in Cambodia for young adults with mental disabilities. Currently, these young adults are either abandoned, placed in state run inhuman hospices for mentally ill people, or live in the center Goutte d'eau founded for children with handicaps where they cannot stay now that they have grown up. To fill this gap, Goutte d'eau has decided to start a new project specifically dedicated to young adults with mental disabilities.

A detailed analysis of various businesses (farming – laundering - running a guest-house) was carried out from June to September 2014 in order to assess the possibility of operating a business providing employment to people with mental and/or physical disabilities in Cambodia. Based on the results of this analysis, Goutte d'eau decided to create a farming Social Business.

Farming has proven to be a very successful way to give young people with mental and/or physical disabilities an occupation that gives them a purpose and value in life. On the top of being a very positive way to help them reintegrate in society, this type of business, due to a growing demand in high quality/organic products in Cambodia, would ensure the economic viability of the project in the long-term.

#### **The project**

During its research, Goutte d'eau found pieces of land in Kep, a very popular coastal area in Cambodia. Their total surface of about 2.3 hectares will allow farming activities and the construction of living areas, as well as the possible development, at a later stage, of a guesthouse and restaurant for the many tourists visiting the region.

A mixture of crops and livestock will be grown and bred on the land. The crops with easiest/highest growth potentials are: onions, garlic, chilies, shallots, herbs and other naturally high resistance/high yield plants; additionally, mangos, cucumbers, mushrooms, cauliflower and capsicums could be grown. Cows, pigs, ducks, chickens and geese would be bred for eggs and to slaughter, and their waste could be used as nutrition for the crops.

The farm will employ both people with disabilities and able-bodied people. The people with disabilities will come from Goutte d'eau current projects, as would some of the able-bodied people, thereby getting assistance in their reintegration process. Agricultural specialists will be hired to establish and oversee the farm and the crops; they will be hired at low/no cost through partnerships with European universities and organizations. Specialized staff (educators, physiotherapists, occupational therapists) will take care of the people with disabilities.