

**Project title:** Model of indigenous Sa Sam tree planting on sandy soil in Hai Ninh commune, Quang Ninh district, Quang Binh province of the Women's Union

**Project duration:** October 2022 to July 2023

**Location:** Hai Ninh Commune, Quang Ninh District, Quang Binh Province

**Project's idea:**

## 1. Background information

Quang Binh Women Development Fund (QBWDF) propose the Project “Female groups planting indigenous Sa Sam in sandy area of Hai Ninh commune, Quang Ninh district, Quang Binh province” aiming at biodiversity conservation and sustainable environmental protection in sandy area of Quang Binh province. Sa sam is a precious herb and can be used as clean vegetable with high nutrient. Its scientific name is *Launaea Sarmentosa*, or commonly known as beach *Launaea*, which is native to coastal areas of Quang Binh province. There are over 1.485 articles and scientific researches on the values of Vietnamese Sa Sam, particularly those with medicinal values such as saponin, polyphenol, flavonoid which help prevent cancer, strengthen the cardiovascular system, and reduce complications from diabetes and respiratory diseases. In Hai Ninh commune, Sa Sam plants grow wildly in larger area than in other coastal communes but remain scattered and have not been cared for and preserved. According to local authorities, Sa Sam plant is currently over-exploited because of high market demand and limited awareness of local people in biodiversity conservation. Therefore, local residents and authority want to have a suitable management model to expand Sa Sam plantation area, increase its values and improve community life, conserve indigenous plants, and contribute to biodiversity conservation.

QBWDF is a local social organization with many years of experience in working with local communities to support women in economic development, address environmental problems, adapt to climate change and contribute to societal life. Through survey and quick assessment of local women's demands, QBWDF would like to formulate the model with

the objective to create opportunities for local residents to involve directly in biodiversity conservation and environmental protection. The Project's goal is to pilot planting Sa Sam in 3,500 m<sup>2</sup> at household scale. The model will later be expanded to the additional area of about 6,500 m<sup>2</sup> in 5 villages of the commune, bringing the total plantation area up to 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>. It is expected to have at least 1,000 beneficiaries, 70% of whom are women and the other 30% are men.

The creativity of the Project is presented in the connection between community development and biodiversity conservation. It derives from the needs of the local community and supply-demand analysis, thereby proposing solutions to market access and application of information technology. Another unique feature of the project is the cooperation with scientific organizations to ensure that the production process can be replicated. The establishment of collaborative groups is to have professional management method that is suitable for local people's capacity, as well as promotes gender equality and capacity building on sustainable development.

## **2. Main purpose and expected results:**

### ***2.1. Main purpose***

a) Main purpose: The Model of indigenous Sa Sam tree planting on sandy soil in Hai Ninh commune, Quang Ninh district, Quang Binh province of the Women's Union contribute to the restoration of indigenous plant varieties, biodiversity protection, and sustainable environmental protection on sandy soils in Hai Ninh commune, district Quang Ninh, Quang Binh province.

b) Specific objectives of the project:

- Members of the cooperative plant pilot native Sa Sam on the sand in a household clean vegetable garden on an area of 3,500m<sup>2</sup> for a period of 5 months.
- Replicating an additional 6,500m<sup>2</sup> of Sa Sam tree area in 5 villages of Hai Ninh commune, bringing the total area of Sa Sam growing to 10,000m<sup>2</sup> during the project implementation period.

### ***2.2. Expected results:***

- Establishment of a cooperative group to grow indigenous Sa Sam trees with 35 members, run by the Commune Women's Union.
- At least 95% of the members of the cooperative group and 90% of the beneficiaries increase awareness of the value of Sa Sam, biodiversity protection and sustainable environment through activities such as seminars, training, communication, propaganda leaflets, etc.
- At least 95% of the cooperative members and 70% of the people benefiting from the project will be guided on techniques for cultivating indigenous Sa Sam trees on sandy soils according to VietGap standards.
- At least 85% of cooperative group members are supported with indigenous Sa Sam tree varieties for pilot planting in home gardens.
- At least 10,000 m2 area of native Sa Sam trees planted in Hai Ninh commune during the project implementation period.

### ***2.3. Target groups and ultimate beneficiaries (disaggregated by gender)***

- Direct project beneficiaries are women in Hai Ninh commune, Quang Ninh district, Quang Binh province;
- Local government, partner units and people in the community.
- Specifically: Beneficiaries: 1,000 people. In which: 700 women account for 70%, 300 men, accounting for 30% (poor and near-poor households account for 0.5%).

### 3. Specific action plan for project implementation

Month	Description of activities	Implementing agencies
10/2022	<p>Organizing introductory workshop:</p> <p>A workshop to introduce the results of scientific research on the health effects and nutritional value of Sa Sam will be implemented in the commune with the participation of 60 people from the local government, the Commune Women's Union and the people. The workshop is organized by the PNPT Support Fund in collaboration with specialized agencies to sign a memorandum of agreement to jointly implement the project, demonstrating the support and participation of the stakeholders.</p>	QBWDF
10/2022	<p>Establishing a cooperative group to plant indigenous Sa Sam trees:</p> <p>A small workshop will be organized by the Commune Women's Union to collect opinions and make a list of those who wish to participate in planting and preserving the native Sa Sam variety. The cooperative will be established with at least 35 members from 5 villages, managed and operated by the Commune Women's Union, under operating regulations. Each women groups have 7-10 members, who wish to grow and preserve the native Sa Sam plant variety, have experience in growing clean vegetables and have at least 100 m<sup>2</sup> of land.</p>	Hai Ninh Commune Women's Union

10/2022	<p>TOT training to guide the technique of planting native Sa Sam plant:</p> <p>The members of the cooperative group and the Commune Women's Union will be guided on cultivation techniques for growing Sa Sam on the sand according to VietGap standards, how to choose indigenous plant varieties, suitable soil, how to plant, care and maintain production. The Women's Support Fund invites experts with technical qualifications and experience.</p>	QBWDF
10/2022-2/2023	<p>Pilot planting of Sa Sam from native seed sources:</p> <p>Planting Sa Sam from native seed sources in the households of the cooperative group members on an area of 3,500 m<sup>2</sup> (with at least 35 participating households receiving seed support, density 25 x 25cm/tree, each household planting 100 m<sup>2</sup>).</p>	Hai Ninh Commune Women's Union
11/2022	<p>Distributing leaflets introducing the nutritional and health values of Sa Sam to raise people's awareness of biodiversity protection.</p>	QBWDF
10/2022-7/2023	<p>Promote and introduce Quang Binh Sa Sam on mass media</p> <p>Project activities are reported on the Fund's website and fanpage SA SAM HAI NINH- QUANG BINH; Quang Binh Newspaper, Quang Binh Radio and Television Station; mass media such as the website of the Provincial Women's Union, Zalo group, Facebook or trade fairs.</p>	QBWDF

April 2023	<p>Product introduction seminar</p> <p>A product introduction seminar will be held to introduce products harvested from Sa Sam leaves - an extremely clean vegetable with very high nutritional value. The workshop has the participation of members of the Cooperative, the Commune Women's Union and clean agricultural store owners, restaurant, hotel and supermarket owners in Quang Binh province to promote products, connect markets and bring Sa Sam to a large number of consumers.</p>	QBWDF
3-7/2023	<p>Technical training on growing Sa Ginseng will be organized by cooperative members to provide technical guidance, expand Sa Sam cultivation to other households in the commune, and provide loans for households who wish to grow Sa Sam.</p>	Cooperating groups; QBWDF
4-7/2023	<p>Support to register for VietGap certification, promote product consumption and connect output markets for Quang Binh Sa Sam products.</p>	QBWDF
5/2023	<p>Organize a study tour for representatives of cooperative group members in Ben Tre province on processing products from Sa Sam such as tea bags, nutritional powder, matcha...</p>	QBWDF
6/2023	<p>Training on harvesting and processing products from Sa Sam, towards the professional business model of the cooperative group. Support the factory to sort, clean, pack and process leaf and tuber products.</p>	QBWDF

7/2023	Make 01 video (about 3 minutes long) and design a leaflet to evaluate the project's performance and impact.	QBWDF
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#### 4. Sustainability of the project

##### *4.1. Sustainability of the project*

- The development and implementation of the model result directly from the people's needs, especially women, and receive supports from local authorities. The project simultaneously preserves indigenous plant varieties, creates more jobs and increases income for women. The project is also highly favoured and supported by the locals.
- QBWDF selected Hai Ninh Women's Union – an organization with experience in successfully implementing potato production cooperatives and other clean vegetable models for many years. The team is enthusiastic, dedicated, close and had good relationships with the community. Thus, the team can empower women and encourage people to participate in conserving native plants and promoting biodiversity and protecting the environment.
- QBWDF will support local members to get loans (up to nearly 50 million VND/member) to purchase seeds, take care of the plants, expand the model, and open manufacturing workshop. That will encourage people to maintain and develop the long-term model (at least after 3 years until the most valuable product of Sa Sam is harvested), and afterwards continue to maintain production.
- Local authority highly supports and encourages the project because of its potentials for propagating and preserving native plant varieties, gradually raising the value and building Sa Sam brand into a famous product of Quang Binh sandy. The model of Sa Sam cultivation aims to transfer the technical process of growing Sa Sam on sand to communes along the Quang Binh coast, increasing the area of Sa Sam, thereby

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providing the market with a safe source of medicinal herbs and clean vegetables, and meeting the increasing market needs.

- The model will be implemented as a business model (referring to the Canvas model attached in the Appendix slide). The project's products meet the demands for people's health protection and the market's consumption needs, ensuring to solve core problems in the locality while staying within the sponsored budgets.
- The project will pilot planting on 3,500m<sup>2</sup> household area (100m<sup>2</sup> per household) with the naturally growing Sa Sam variety collected by local people and planted according to VietGAP standards. After that, the area will be expanded to the sandy land allocated by the Commune People's Committee and households in 5 villages of the commune with an area of about 6,500 m<sup>2</sup>, bringing the total area of Sa Sam growing during the project implementation period to 10,000m<sup>2</sup>, and creating a sustainable development ecosystem.
- The establishment of a large-scale, technical-guaranteed Sa Sam growing cooperative group will contribute to the conservation and development of Sa Sam in both quantity and quality, raising the value of the native Quang Binh Sa Sam, utilize the advantage of sandy land, contribute to greening the coastal vacant land, prevent desertification, protect the environment, improve public health and ensure social security.
- To raise awareness and change people's behavior towards conserving indigenous Sa Sam varieties, the project will organize communication activities about the values of Sa Sam, the importance of biodiversity protection and environmental sustainability.

### ***4.2. Risks and solutions***

- One difficulty is that Sa Sam is suitable for hot weather, so during the rainy season the harvest of leaves is not as high as in the summer months. Therefore, the pilot planting of Sa Sam in a small area in the household's clean vegetable garden right

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in the rainy season (from October 2022 to February 2023), thereby drawing the best growing technique. before being put into mass planting is a solution to reduce risks.

- The biggest difficulty and concern of the people is dealing with the output when harvesting leaves with its true value. Currently, Sa Sam is sold on the market for about 50,000 VND/kg of leaves and medicinal tubers for 4-5 million VND/kg, but traders buy it at a very cheap price. Therefore, connecting with clean agricultural products stores, supermarket systems, restaurants and hotels in Quang Binh province, aiming to gradually expand the market to other provinces, build a wholesale system. and agents, will then develop to diversify products from Sa Sam such as Sa Sam tea bag, Sa Sam nutritional powder ... to meet the needs of consumers is an effective solution for people. peace of mind to plant Sa Sam, preserve Sa Sam and create sustainability even after the project ends.
- Currently, in Quang Binh, there is a Dung Na clean vegetable production facility that has experimented with growing Sa Sam with plant varieties purchased from Ben Tre Province - which has been very successful in growing and processing products. Sa Sam is exported to many countries around the world. However, because the variety was purchased in Ben Tre - where the climate is hot all year round, when planted in Quang Binh province, in the dry season, the tree grows very well, about 1 month can be harvested. Harvest leaves, cut the root about 1 cm, next month can be harvested again, but in the rainy season the tree is flooded, rotten and withered. In fact, according to local people, the native Sa Sam on Hai Ninh sandy soil still grows and develops well both in the hot season and in the rainy season, because the native trees here have adapted to the weather. The weather, natural soil and climate is hot, sunny and rainy.

### **5. Contribution to thematic areas of VB4E:**

The project is suitable for the thematic field “Biodiversity conservation”.

### **6. Total budget:**

488,166,000 VND (fund already granted)

### **7. Partner organization:**

- The project has both horizontal and vertical coordination with local organizations, community organizations such as Women's Union, Farmers' Union... as well as coordination with district and provincial departments and specialized agencies. In terms of state management, the project is under the supervision of the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Planning and Investment, the Department of Industry and Trade, and periodically reports and consults with the Departments. Regarding the content, the project is under the management and monitoring of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Center for Agriculture and Fisheries Extension, the Agricultural Service Center, the Department of Science and Technology, the Plant Protection Sub-Department, and periodically. report, consult as well as integrate project activities with policies and action programs to protect biodiversity and develop sustainable environment of the province.
- The project connects with clean vegetable production facilities, a system of stores and supermarkets to link markets and output consumption. The project cooperates with NGOs with the same goal of protecting biodiversity and environment to share information, lessons, documents at seminars, conferences, or introduce results in the project area and the Center for Research and Applied Science on Gender - Family - Women and Adolescents, contributing to the promotion of gender equality.

*Please contact the coordinator at [VB4EAlliance@gmail.com](mailto:VB4EAlliance@gmail.com) for more information if you are interested in project ideas.*



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