

IMPACT STORY

Vilavong Hotel



“By adopting these measures, we not only reduced our environmental footprint but also saved costs.”

- Mr. Catter Duangthavy

Image: Mr. Catter Duangthavy Credit: Swisscontact

Vang Vieng, Laos – Under the management of Mr. Catter Duangthavy, Vilayvong Hotel has been a model of eco-friendly practices, showcasing the power of effective waste management and employee training initiatives. With over 12 years of experience, Mr. Catter has guided the hotel through a collaborative partnership with the Waste to Value (W2V) project.

Effective Waste Management Practices

We used to generate a significant amount of food waste daily, which not only increased costs but also caused unpleasant odors and environmental problems,” Mr. Catter shares. The expenses for general waste management collection were substantial, and the use of plastic bags for disposal further compounded the issue.

This began to change when Vilayvong Hotel started attending W2V training sessions on better waste management, specifically focused on Food Waste and Plastic Waste. As a member of the Hotels and Restaurants Group (HGGV) in Vang Vieng, Vilayvong Hotel became an early adopter of this initiative, promoted by HGGV.

Over the duration of the project, multiple staff members from Vilayvong attended several trainings organized by W2V, covering topics such as food waste reduction, green marketing, plastic

waste reduction, and resource efficiency. They gained skills and knowledge that not only improved their service quality but also heightened their environmental awareness.

The impact was immediate. The hotel introduced a comprehensive waste separation policy where recyclable materials could be sold, and the proceeds kept by staff. This incentivized employees, with some earning income from selling up to 100 kilograms of recyclables per month. Food waste, which had previously been a burden, was now transformed into compost, aiding cost reduction and fostering better kitchen management.



Image: Mr. Catter guiding participants during food preparation and food waste reduction training, Credit: Swisscontact

Plastic reduction also became a core focus. Instead of single-use plastic bottles, the hotel now offers jugs and glasses for meetings, encouraging customers to embrace sustainability. Staff received refillable water bottles as part of an internal campaign to minimize plastic usage.

Commitment to Sustainability and Vision for the Future

Beyond operational changes, the W2V project enabled Mr. Catter to step into a new role as an industry trainer. Through this position, he shares his knowledge with other businesses, fostering a culture of sustainability across the district.

In addition to reducing waste, the hotel embraced digital marketing strategies to promote their green business practices, minimizing the need for printed advertisements. This shift aligned with their eco-friendly vision, further reducing paper waste. Vilayvong Hotel's transformation is an inspiring model for others. Mr. Catter hopes the W2V initiative will expand across Laos, driving more businesses towards sustainable practices.

Through its partnership with W2V, Vilayvong Hotel has set a standard for sustainability in Vang Vieng, proving that turning waste into value is not just a possibility but a reality.

“I envision a future where eco-friendly businesses are the norm, leading to cost savings and higher service standards,” - Mr. Catter Duangthavy

Image: Mr. Catter and other industry trainers receiving the certificates of training, Credit: Swisscontact



Waste to Value Project

Main objectives: to improve the environmental performance of service sector SMEs through access to green products and better waste management practices; and to enhance the business operations of informal waste pickers to improve their livelihood.

- Project duration:** February 2022 – December 2024
- Project location:** Xaysetha and Chanthabouly in Vientiane Capital, Vang Vieng in Vientiane Province
- Project partners:** Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Hotel and Restaurant Associations, Green suppliers and service providers, National University of Laos, Local district authorities.
- Target Groups:** Service sector SMEs and informal waste pickers

