



farmers with market research, credit assistance and rice yield management.

“When I first became Chair of the Board, I was not very confident in holding this position. Once I became more aware and acquired more knowledge due to the trainings, I began to believe in myself and that I could lead the Agricultural Cooperative.”

– **CHOU METTA**

Fellow board members attribute the success of their AC to Metta's abilities, commitment, and participatory leadership style, with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries also giving it recognition.

Metta noted that the training from DPA, such as understanding legal rights, enabled her to act in many areas of the agricultural industry. She ensured that the AC conducted its business with due diligence and maintained a good working relationship with the commune council.

“It is Metta's power of speech that engenders confidence in her leadership among the farmers,” said Pheakdey Lina, the AC's Deputy Chair. “Under her stewardship, the AC has been able to solve many of the farmers' problems such as poor yields. AC members have received



Ms. Chou Metta signed the farming contract with Amru Rice's CEO, Mr. Song Saran, on behalf of Sdau Agricultural Cooperative in 2019. Photo: DPA

access to financial assistance and training on modern planting techniques. The AC has worked together to find more opportunities and markets for the farmers, expanding their choices for trade and allowing them to sell their produce at higher rates,” added Lina.

Following Metta's footsteps, the women of Sdau commune have started to move away from traditional roles. Their courage and creativity in solving day-to-day problems have inspired the men to develop new habits themselves, such as helping with work at home. This kind of change at a fundamental level is demonstrative of the success and effectiveness of concerted training programmes that support women like Chou Metta to empower themselves.

“If I had not known or joined the training organised by DPA, my life would not have taken this turn. Life is so much better now than in the past. I am very grateful for these opportunities, and I hope that this project can help more communities like it has helped mine.”

– **CHOU METTA**



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