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# PROJECT UPDATE: ELEPHANT FODDER PLANTATION PROJECT

## BACKGROUND

Before the pandemic, the Elephant Conservation Center (ECC) employed farmers to grow elephant fodder and allowed elephants to graze on private land after harvests. However, due to the pandemic, farmers returned to their land, leading to competition for food and grazing areas between elephants and cattle. The ECC now has to pay for additional food, and the elephants have started losing weight, raising concerns about their welfare. Additionally, the increasing use of herbicides and pesticides in Laos agriculture has made growing food at the ECC important for the elephants' safety.

## PROJECT UPDATE

Thanks to the funds received by the Elephant Health & Welfare Emergency Lifeline Fund we created 5 new plantations around the ECC grounds. The plantations were scattered strategically so mahouts could feed the elephants in several locations. A total of 2600 banana shoots and 3000 plants of Bana grass were planted across the 5 locations. Initially, it was planned to fence the plantations. However, since some of the plantations will be extended next year, it was decided to wait until then before fencing them in. It was also originally intended to make six plantations. Two of the plantations were very close to each other, so it was decided to join them together (see picture below, plantation B1). This will facilitate the management of the area.



The estimated size for each plantation is:

- B1: 1 ha
- B2: 0.4 ha
- B3: 0.82 ha
- B4: 0.2 ha
- B5: 0.75 ha

**Combined total: 3.17 Hectares**

The ECC hired 3 dedicated farmers to maintain the plantation. The farmers were supervised daily by Mr Kan. They did an excellent job cleaning the areas, planting the food, and cutting the weeds regularly, Thanks to this work, 90% of the planted plants survived, ensuring the elephants will have a good amount of supplementary food for the upcoming dry season.

In addition, these plants will be used to increase the size of these plantations and the creation of new areas according to the needs of the center.

We would like to truly thank you for your support as this plantation will help feed the elephants during the dry season and when elephants are sick and need to be fed near the elephant hospital.

PHOTOS OF THE DIFFERENT PLANTATIONS





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