



NATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE ON AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATIVE IN CAMBODIA

Preah Sihanouk, Farmer and Nature Net (FNN) held a 2 days and a half dialogue known as “NATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE ON AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATIVE IN CAMBODIA” from 15-17 February, 2011 in Kampong Sila district, and funded by Canadian Co-operatives Association. There were 90 participants (17 women) whom includes 16 cooperatives from Kampong Speu province, Kampong Chhnang, Takeo, Kampot, Prey Veng, Svay Rieng, Battambang and Pursat province. Dr. Yang Sang Koma (CEDAC president and FNN advisor), Mr. Uon Sophal (FNN president), Mr. Pan Sophaep (FNN executive director), Mr. PEL Sokha (FNN advisor) Mr. Chhong Sophal (CEDAC cooperative coordinator), Mr. Tath Sok (SOSOR coordinator) and FNN staff were there.

Mr. Pan Sophaep Mr. Sean Butha (FNN staffs), and Mr. Chhong Sophal were facilitators. The workshop aimed to improve the capacity of all communities in checking (controlling) and making balance all activities in their communities which consists of regular closing entry, income statement (expense and income), capital, number of members, number of shares and stakeholders, asset in community, to promote, to sharpen and to strengthen the knowledge of farmer leader on management and leadership for implementing in their community and to egg farmers to produce more and more rice following the government policy stating that “Exporting rice 1 million tones by 2015”.

Speaking at the workshop, Mr. PEL Sokha explained about how important of the establishment of agricultural community (cooperative) is. He says cooperative is the process of improving the standard of living, increase income and empowerment. The cooperatives will provide a lot of benefits to farmer members. They can commonly set the selling price of their farm products (at high and the same level), and access to loan from both government and NGOs easily. In the second day of the workshop, he presented about the agricultural policies with its objectives and different interventions to reach the objectives: (i) the agricultural price stability, and (ii) increasing the farmer income. Regarding the interventions in rice production development he emphasized the guarantee price of paddy and the loan rate. Regarding the credit, he spoke about the “Death Assurance of the Borrower” in order to release the family from debt.



Dr. Yang Sang Koma also echoed to what Sokha stated. Dr. Koma added that he is very happy to see the progress of each community. There are four main things to know about the advantages of community. They are: farmers can set the selling price of farm products, farmer can access to all of agricultural items (lower price), they can get technical services from government easily and access to loan from the government easily. However, Dr. Koma presented about the financial management and the Profit Theory (Mehrwert Theorie) that could help farmer to have confidence on cooperative. He urges all participants to list down all income and expenses and the quantity of rice (paddy) in store. Farmers must review the weaknesses and strength of community themselves.



Dr. Koma hopes that all participants can do all points as they try hard to catch attention from the government caring them in term of agriculture and help government to produce more and more rice following the policy.

To be nothed that FNN supports 25 cooperatives containing 1881 members and only nine cooperatives have already been registered by provicial department of agriculture. After establishing cooperative, farmers are easy to sell, buy any kinds of products especially agricultural products in a suitable price; they gain revenue from share. The main thing they benefit from cooperative is that they can keep rice flow to outside as they have their own warehouse.

As a result, the dialogue went smoothly. All participants understood all the objectives and their responsibility in community and they will take that knowledge to spread to other member and promise to check and balance on all community activity. To be noted that in the workshop farmer leader were required to share the progress of their community. They really enjoyed talking and discussing together to find the solution to catch attention from government. *By NOY Kimhong*