

Meeting of Key Farmer Leaders of Kampong Cham Province

KAMPONG CHAM: In order to reinforce and stimulate the activities of provincial and local networks in Kampong Cham, FNN and CEDAC organized a joint meeting on May 14, 2011 at CEDAC's office in Skun in Cheung Prey district. In total, 22 key farmer leaders, including 6 females, from FNN representing 15 associations across 5 districts were present, including CEDAC's President/FNN Advisor, Dr. Yang Saing Koma, FNN President, Mr. Uon Sophal, FNN Director, Mr. Pan Sopheap, and Principal of Kor High School, Mr. Chheng Sophannarum. The meeting was facilitated by Dr. Yang Saing Koma, Mr. Uon Sophal, and Mr. Pan Sopheap. The outputs listed below were achieved as a result of the meeting:

- The progress of 15 potential self-help savings associations from 5 districts was shared. To date, the 15 self-help associations have saved a combined capital of 293,365,000 riel (about US\$71,552.50) amongst their 428 savings members. This can be compared to when the 15 associations started with only 208 savings members and 6,552,000 riel (about US\$1,599) in savings capital.
- The development of 8 Saving Communities for Prosperity (SoSor) in the 5 districts was shared. To date, the combined savings capital of the 8 SoSor is 11,186,200 riel (about US\$2,728.35) by 1,007 savings members in 36 villages and 18 communes.
- Mr. Uon Sophal shared his best practices relating to savings and credit, mobilization of human and financial resources, management and leadership, and cooperation and collaboration with local authorities in Dangtung district, Kampot province.
- Mr. Chon Met, Chairperson of the savings association in Lvea Krom village, Sdao commune, Kang Meas district shared the experiences of his association, which started in 2008 with 12 members and 200,000 riel (US\$50) in savings capital. Today, his association consists of 68 savings members with a combined savings capital of 94,000,000 riel (US\$22,926.90).
- The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the self-reliance savings associations was reviewed.
- Ideas and recommendations for future improvement of the savings associations were collected.
- A plan and vision was developed for future activities, especially relating to the concept of self-reliance and sustainable development.
- The use of biogas digesters was promoted for family use.
- Potential new and existing self-reliant associations were selected for the next meeting.

As a result of participation in the meeting, participants had developed a clearer idea about the concept of self-reliance and sustainable development. In particular, participants better understood about the terms "MEANS" and "END GOAL". The next meeting, which will be organized on June 18, 2011, will discuss further planning and strategies as well as provide an opportunity for sharing updates and progress developments. The meeting will especially focus on collection of membership fees and contributions to maximize self-reliance and sustainable development.

