

Civil Society and Pro-Poor Markets Case Study

Increasing Voice to a Line Agency

Sahakum Akpiwat Kaksekam Angkor Dong Tung is an agricultural development cooperative in the Trapaing Rosey Village in the Kampot Province. The Community Based Organization (CBO) was established on November 6, 2008 and has 55 members. It was established to improve food production and to increase the price received for local goods with a focus on the following:

- Collective buying and selling of rice paddy
- Milling rice paddy
- Collective savings and the provision of credit services
- Promoting agro ecological innovation
- Communicating and negotiating prices for local goods with local buyers

Working with CEDAC and CSPPM

In October of 2008, CEDAC began working with the CBO and assisted them in joining the CSPPM project. The CBO registered with CSPPM in December of 2008. After registration was complete, CEDAC initiated training sessions and providing mentoring and coaching to the CBO. The CBO requested and received training in the following areas:

- Proposal Writing
- CIP development process and participation
- Increasing voice with an emphasis on natural resource management and community business practices

CEDAC also facilitated learning and offered assistance to the CBO through field visits and constant dialogue in a number of areas, such as:

- Strengthening practical management and leadership of the CBO
- Assessing the real needs of members and how to prioritize those needs
- Developing a small grant project on community management for submission to CRS

Overcoming Challenges and Achieving Results

When the CBO was formed it was recognized by the Commune Council (CC), but not by government line agencies, such as the Provincial Department of Agriculture. As such, the CBO was not eligible for receiving many of the benefits that official farmer development associations receive, such as preferential access to extension services and access to micro-lending.

In addition to this obstacle, as executive members worked collectively to buy and sell rice, they lacked the organizational strength for effective business negotiation.

With CEDAC's help, the CBO was better able to understand the problems at hand and work towards a solution. CEDAC coached the CBO's executive members on how to consult with community farmers on the issue of increasing voice to both the line agencies and buyers.

As a result of these consultation meetings, the CBO made registering as an "Agricultural Development Cooperative" a top priority. Through registration the CBO felt it would increase recognition by line agencies,

local authorities, and businessmen as well as have the ability to better advertise their products.

Small Grant Support

In order to move forward with the CBO's goal of obtaining registration, CEDAC facilitated the development of a small grant project with the community. The CSPPM went towards strengthening management and the CBO organized a general assembly to finalize CBO regulations and hold elections. During the general assembly, Mr Mak Seung, Director of Department of Agriculture Extension, Mr Chan Jesda, Director of Kampot PDA, Dr Yang Saing Koma, President of CEDAC and local authorities participated in the meeting. The participation of the Ministry and Department of Agriculture in this general assembly resulted in improved understanding of the CBO and its needs.

The CBO was registered and officially recognized as the *Angkor Dong Tung Agricultural Development Cooperative* by the PDA of Kampot on 8th June 2009.

Moving Forward Sahakum Akipiwat Kaksekam Angkor Dong Tung Today

Now that the CBO is officially registered as an Agricultural Development Cooperative, it can receive both financial and technical support from MAFF. In fact, on July 8, 2009 the CBO received funding in the amount of 1,500,000 riel in a first round of support from MAFF. In addition, MAFF and the PDA promised to provide further technical and financial support.

Since cooperation with CSPPM members began, members have improved their knowledge and

understanding of problem solving, proposal development, the importance of being a registered cooperative, and are attuned to the advantages of collective business, as well as improved natural resource management. Moreover, the cooperation and communication with line agencies has increased remarkably and the PDA is now offering strong support.