

Project Closing and Graduation Ceremony for Community Management Course

December 15, 2009

The Friedrich-Naumann Foundation for Liberty (FNF) and CEDAC organized the Project Closing and Graduation Ceremony at the Cambodiana Hotel in Phnom Penh for 130 students (41 female students) who were graduating from the Community Management Course. The graduating class – composed of commune council members, teachers, government officers, farmer representatives, students, monks and NGO staff members - attended this ceremony.

The ceremony was presided over by H.E. Rafael Dochao Moreno, Chargé d' Affairs of European Commission to Kingdom of Cambodia. During the ceremony, Mr. Rafael Dochao Moreno recognized the efforts of the Friedrich-Naumann Foundation for Liberty, CEDAC and especially those students who worked very hard to complete this course. "Today's ceremony is not just about the accomplishment of the course, but about the commitment to apply your skills in community development" Mr. Rafael Dochao Moreno added. Mr. Moritz Kleine-Brockhoff, FNF Project Director for Malaysia and Cambodia said that people need both practical knowledge and freedom to effectively develop their community, especially themselves. Dr. Yang Saing Koma, CEDAC's President, and Mr. Khim Sophanna, FNF Project Manager for Cambodia, agreed that the course would substantially contribute to poverty alleviation in Cambodia by building the capacity and knowledge of the commune council members, teachers, government officers, farmer representatives, farmers, local NGOs, and relevant stakeholders to manage their communities. "This will contribute to improve peoples lives," said Dr. Yang Saing Koma.

FNF and CEDAC began implementing a three-year project in 2007 that focused on Community Management and Capacity Building for Self-reliance and Sustainable Poverty Alleviation in Cambodia. The European Commission funded the project, jointly with FNF. The course, which ran for one year, was provided free of charge to 521 commune council members, teachers, government officers, farmer representatives, farmers, local NGO staff members and students (33% females) who lack access to educational opportunities. Another component of the project - Capacity Building - successfully

organized 79 two-days workshops (40 Development Dialogues and 39 Teacher Forums) focusing on the best-practice experiences relating to personal development, self-help saving group formation, empowering women in participatory approaches, System of Rice Intensification (SRI), growing organic rice, ecological animal husbandries and multi-purposes home garden, etc. The 10 target areas of the course were Phnom Penh, Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Kampong Chhnang, Pursat, Siem Reap, Takeo, Kampot, Prey Veng and Svay Rieng Provinces.

