

Innovations Asia-Pacific Symposium

From May 04-07, 2009, Mr. Sam Vitou and Mr. Or Thy, CEDAC staff members, attended the *Innovations Asia Pacific Symposium* which was jointly organized by Prolinnova, LI-BIRD, Practical Action, CIAT & ICIMOD, with funding assistance from these organizations and the Research Into Use (RIU), the UK Department for International Development and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) at Katmandu, Nepal.

The main objective of the symposium was to provide an opportunity for researchers, academics, development practitioners, social and commercial entrepreneurs, and local innovators to share and learn from recent research and development experiences in innovation systems in agriculture and natural resources management. This was to demonstrate the importance of building on local initiatives in experimentation, involving both locally developed innovations as well as adapting outputs from formal research to local conditions and purposes.

The symposium brings together researchers and practitioners from around the globe to share experiences and insights on enhancing innovation systems and processes in smallholding agriculture and natural resource management, and to draw lessons for policy, research, development, and practice.

The six key areas identified and tabled for discussion in a 'World Cafe' session that concluded the last day of the **Innovation Asia-Pacific Symposium**. Questioning the fundamentals on a broad range of issues, the participants, in two rounds of roundtable discussions, advanced some of the ways forward.

Intermediaries can open new opportunities, technologies, or processes, and act as a knowledge broker with stakeholders. The degree to which they exercise their roles can make them very powerful. At times this can stifle local initiative and encourage dependency. Thus an exit strategy is very important.

As a result, the symposium finished with a fruitful result and brought some innovative ideas forward.