

## **Field Visit to the Happy Mountain Bird (HMB) Project**

20-21 May, 2010

CEDAC hosted a field visit to HMB project in Teok Phos, Boribo and Samakey Meanchey districts, Kampong Chhnang Province. CEDAC President, Dr. Yang Saing Koma, along with the project donor, Mr. Fukushima, visited seven targeted villages to monitor and evaluate the progress of the project's beneficiaries, who are mostly the poorest farmers. The Project Officer and Field Trainers accompanied them on the visit of 34 targeted families of the project.

During their visit, Dr. Yang Saing Koma highlighted the advantages of humus that can be found under trees, which is the best compost or fertilizer for all kinds of crops. He said that these resources the farmers can easily find in the forest near their homes and is the best fertilizer especially for household vegetable growing. In promoting the benefits of compost making, Dr. Yang Saing Koma touched also on simple techniques for growing vegetables, which can improve the family income while reducing expenses on chemical fertilizer. The HMB project's beneficiaries promised to practice the techniques as well as to collect humus to make compost.

After visiting the villages, Dr. Yang Saing Koma and Mr. Fukushima met with the Director and Vice Director of the Provincial Department of Education, Youth and Sport (PDoEYS) of Kampong Chhnang Province during a dinner to strengthen their cooperation. The PDoEYS agreed to cooperate and work harder with the project to ensure access to education for children of all poorest families in Kampong Chhnang Province. By May 2010, the project intervention will have affected 34,000 children in 300 target villages in promoting children to have at least finished primary school.

By the end of the field visit, Mr. Fukushima and Dr. Koma were optimistic that the poorest families targeted by the project are adopting innovative agriculture techniques to improve their living standard and overcome poverty. With the support from PDoEYS, the project donor, Mr. Fukushima, hopes that being aware of the importance and necessity of education, parents will ensure their children attend primary school and at least achieve a basic education.

