

Final Workshop on the GMS Agricultural Trade and Facilitation Strategy Study

15 Agriculture and trade NGOs and government officers from The Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) including Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, China and Vietnam were invited to attend the workshop on **the GMS Agricultural Trade and Facilitation Strategy Study** from 3-4 August 2009, at Aranyaprathet district, Sa Keo province, Thailand. From Cambodia, Mr. Keam Makardy, a CEDAC staff member attended this workshop. The workshop was organized by Asia Development Bank (ADB) with the aim to:

- Present the findings of the study on GMS Agricultural Trade and Facilitation Strategy, seek comments, suggestions, and other views on the study results and arrive at common points/agreement for finalizing the study;
- Formulate the regional trade facilitation plan and discuss national implementation plans based on the study results; and
- Observe border processes on custom and quarantine procedures on agricultural trade.

During the workshop, Mr. Florian A. Albuero, ADB's Consultant, presented the study's findings to agricultural experts from GMS countries and development partners in the region for validation. Furthermore, all participants (country experts) of the workshop provided more comments to develop a regional agricultural trade facilitation program to enhance GMS agricultural trade based on the findings of the study. They have also discussed and introduced to develop GMS Regional and National Cooperation Plans.

The participants also visited an asparagus farm in Sa Keo province, Thailand and met with farmer groups as well as the representative of the Swift Company which conducts the daily exporting of fresh and frozen products to UK, Japan, Australia and other countries.

Finally, the participants visited the Aranyaprathet Customs House and Poipet check-point to observe the export & import and quarantine procedures of agriculture products, drawing upon the border point between Thailand and Cambodia as an example.