

## **Hosting Visit of ACT Representatives**

From October 19-20, 2011, Mr. Bao Vuthy, CEDAC's Program Officer, and Project Coordinator, Mr. Lang Chanthea, together with ACT representatives (including Ms. Mari Suzuki and Ms. Noriko Hirano), visited the "Improving the Livelihoods of Rice Farmers in Kompong Trolach and Samaki Meanchey Districts, Kampong Chhnang Province ILFARM-KTL&SMC)" project. The main objectives of this field visit were to assess the project's progress and achievements as well as to develop recommendations for the target groups and the project team.

During the visit, Ms. Mari Suzuki and Ms. Noriko met the project team members to discuss the project's progress and to get clarification about the annual report. In the meantime, the project team members accompanied them to visit the project's cooperating farmers, the community-led saving groups, the village-based farmer association, and activities such as System of Rice Intensification (SRI), chicken raising, fish raising, and community businesses like animal feed processing and rice mill cooperatives. During the field visits, they discussed certain topics with target groups, such as the farmer groups' progress, sources of incomes, progress of agricultural technical innovation practices, how to operate and manage the saving association, and community businesses.

After the field visit, a reflection meeting was organized at CEDAC's office in Kompong Tralach. At the meeting, they expressed their satisfaction and pride over the remarkable progress and achievements accomplished by the project. They observed that the capital from saving increased significantly so that some communities can get better access to credit services by themselves, but the technical innovations have limitations. In addition, they were concerned about forming community businesses such as community shops, and how the project will support it, and they also gave some recommendations and direction for the future, which included that the project should provide further support to improve technical innovations and to increase the capacity of farmer leaders.

It is important to note that with funding support from the Asian Community Trust (ACT), CEDAC has been implementing a development project titled "Improving the Livelihoods of Rice Farmers in Kompong Trolach and Samaki Meanchey Districts, Kampong Chhnang Province ILFARM-KTL&SMC)," since April 2010. This project will be completed in March 31, 2013. As of October 2011, the project has covered 93 target villages in 16 communes, in 2 districts (Kampong Tralach and Samaki Meanchey districts) of Kampong Chhnang Province.

