

CEDAC Staff Members and FNN Farmers Join AFA Regional Consultation Workshop

October 6-10, 2009

The Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA) extended an invitation to FNN and CEDAC staff members Mr. Meas Somica, Ms. Kong Sokchoin, Mrs. Hay Lekena, Mrs. Khuon Sey and Mr. Chea Sorn to attend their consultation workshop, "Farmers' Voices, Farmers' Choices: AFA Regional Consultations on Food Sovereignty, Climate Change, and Marketing" held in Bangkok, Thailand. There were 42 people from eight countries who attended the event including farmer leaders and women representative from each of the eight membership organizations of the AFA. The workshop was conducted parallel to the UN intercession meeting on climate change that was held in Bangkok, Thailand from September 27 - October 9, 2009.

The objective of this consultation workshop was to deepen the understanding of small-scale male and female farmers on regional and global events and the implications of these events for those farmers.

There were three main AFA events during the workshop: the AFA Excom Meeting; the regional consultation on "Asian Women Farmers Reclaiming Space for Food Sovereignty Amidst Climate Change"; and the "Regional Knowledge Sharing of AFA Members' Marketing Initiatives - Basics in Engaging the Market." During the workshop, all of the representatives from the membership organizations presented their respective marketing initiatives concerning things such as organic rice, coconut, cassava, resin and other organic products. Sharing knowledge in this manner provided participants additional knowledge and insight into how to develop and improve their marketing strategies for the identified focus crops. A framework for commodity-based organizations was formulated during the workshop that will hopefully guide farmers' associations as they begin forming commodity-based groups.