

CIP and CIAT launch new program on linking farmers with agri-industrial markets

CIP and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) officially launched the Program “Linking Livelihoods of Poor Smallholders Farmers to Emerging Environmentally Progressive Agro-Industrial Markets” at a workshop in Hanoi, Vietnam last June 22-25, 2009.

The workshop had 56 participants representing the partner countries, CIAT and CIP. The participants joined the two-day field trip to a medium scale cassava starch factory, a maltose processing factory, small farmers utilizing cassava feed mill wastes, household-based noodle factories and small-scale wet starch processing communes in Thai Nguyen Province and Hanoi suburbs (Hoai Duc and Ha Dong District).

Known simply as the Food, Feed, Fuel and Fiber for Greener Future (4FGF), the program is implemented in Vietnam, Lao PDR, Cambodia and China. Funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the program will work with regional research and private sector partners to empower stakeholders to capitalize on emerging economic opportunities, achieve higher incomes, and improve their food security. As its core implementing strategy, 4FGF is establishing partnerships with 10 IFAD investment projects in the participating countries.

The program aims to help smallholder farmers learn improved agricultural technologies for more efficient sustainable production systems, improved natural resource management and conservation practices. Its target outcome is for farmers to achieve more diverse livelihoods through developing market linkages to increase the value of production, and through enterprises that help to protect the environment.

The 4FGF program will integrate three major research-for-development components:

- Diversified Farming Systems for Increased Income and Food Security
- Producer-Processor Linkages for Agro-Industrial Market and Enterprise Development
- Knowledge Sharing to Accelerate Innovation

UPWARD will provide backstopping to the program in the following areas: socio-economic evaluation, sweetpotato production systems and sweetpotato-based feeding systems.