

## **Collaboration on sugar R&D to continue**

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A strong consensus for continuing the collaboration in sugar research and development emerged at the recent CFC/ISO/20: Sugarcane Variety Improvement in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Project Results Dissemination Workshop.

Highly satisfied with the results of the 5-year project, representatives from member-countries Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand expressed their unanimous desire to pursue the exchange of sugarcane varieties, as well as other R&D activities even outside the project.

“Networking should persist because we all need this to sustain the successes achieved under the program. Moreover, this is the only way by which we can maximize the opportunities to come up with better sugarcane varieties,” Philippine Sugar Research Institute Foundation, Inc. (PHILSURIN) Director General and CFC/ISO/20 Project Manager Leon M. Arceo said.

Common Fund for Commodities Project Manager Eltha Brown backed the move, highlighting the fact that linkages boost the R&D programs of participating institutions. She added that the CFC/ISO/20 project demonstrated that the efficient flow of knowledge and expertise among sugar-producing countries contribute to the institutional strengthening of all participants.

“In our case, partnerships with other sugar research organizations helped shape the entire Philippine R&D program, Mr. Arceo said.

A major component of the proposed continued collaboration is the exchange of sugarcane varieties which is recognized as a key factor in the enhancement of productivity and quality of sugarcane. Sugarcane growers across the region are the ultimate beneficiaries of these linkages.