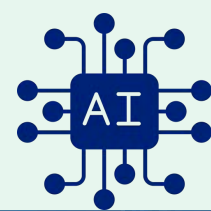
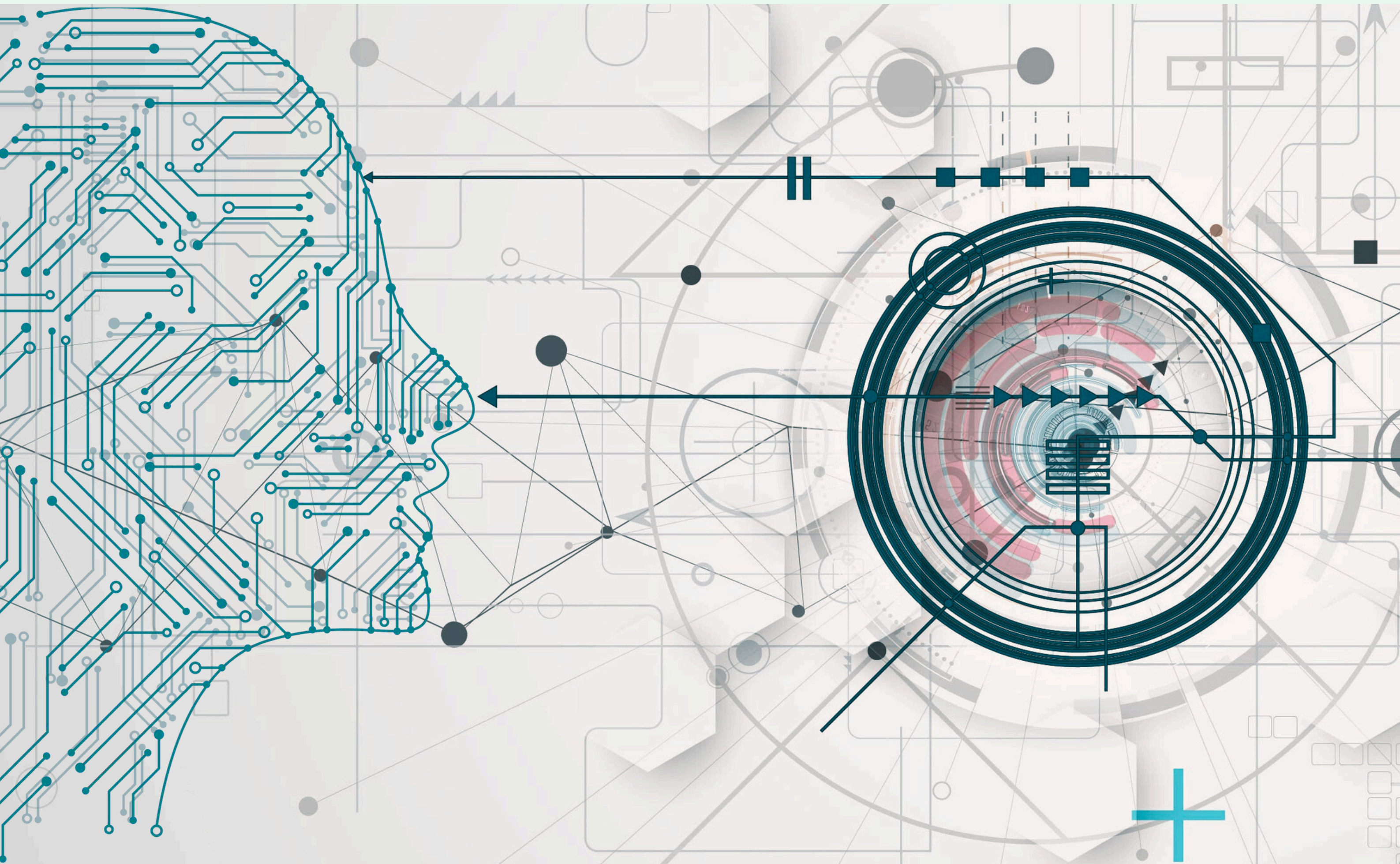




Shaping the Digital Future: Pathways to Enabling Digital Connectivity Ecosystem for Post-Pandemic Resilience in the Lancang-Mekong Countries



SUPPORTED BY
The People's Republic of China

PREPARED BY
Mekong Institute



Shaping the Digital Future: Pathways to Enabling Digital Connectivity Ecosystem for Post-Pandemic Resilience in the Lancang-Mekong Countries

ONLINE EXPERT DIALOGUE

Supported By:

**The People's
Republic of China**

Organized By:

Mekong Institute

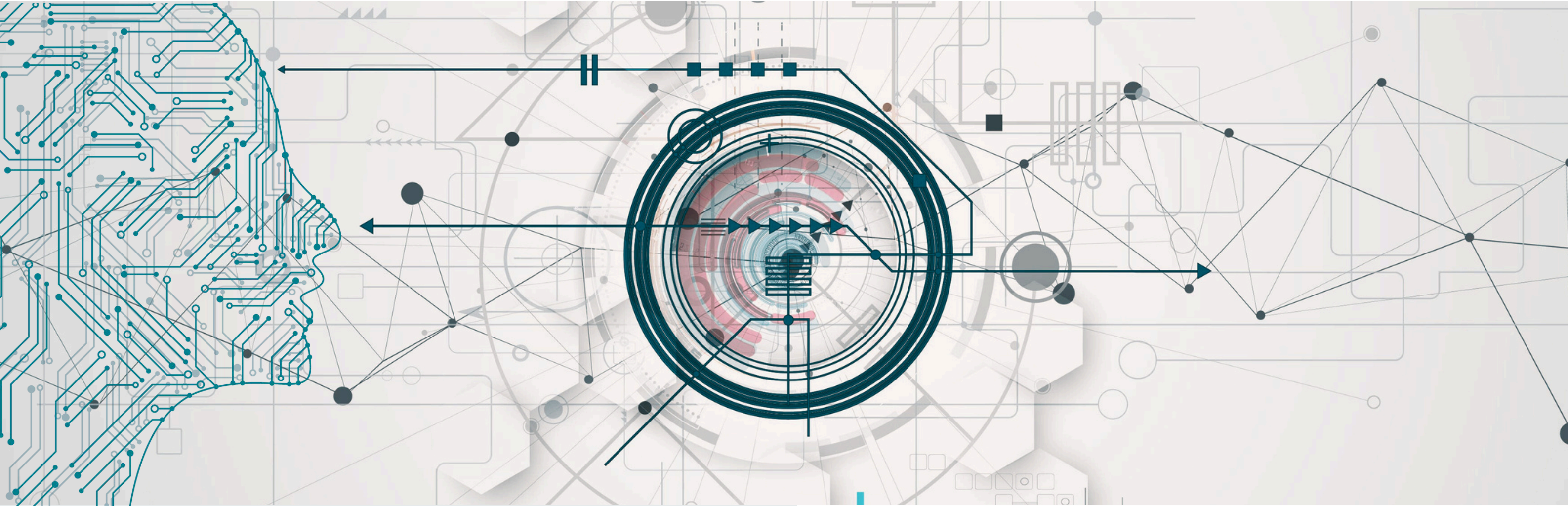
ACTIONABLE FRAMEWORKS FOR ENABLING A ROBUST DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY ECOSYSTEM

This expert dialogue is instrumental in discussing the practical strategies to shape the digital future of the Lancang-Mekong region. Focusing on the role of technology and the digital economy, it aims to bolster the growth and development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).





Shaping the Digital Future: Pathways to Enabling Digital Connectivity Ecosystem for Post-Pandemic Resilience in the Lancang-Mekong Countries



ABOUT

PROJECT

With the support of the People's Government of the People's Republic of China (China), the Mekong Institute (MI) is executing a capacity development project titled "Scaling-Up Digital Connectivity for Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises in the Lancang-Mekong Countries for Post-Pandemic Resilience, is aimed at

- **Foster** and explore innovative pathways for enabling digital connectivity ecosystems, especially in the context of post-pandemic resilience.

ABOUT

EXPERT DIALOGUE

This dialogue serves as a pivotal platform for discussing the practical aspects of shaping the digital future of the Lancang-Mekong region. By exploring how technology and the digital economy can synergistically support the growth and development of MSMEs, the collective aim is to pave the way for a resilient, interconnected, and digitally driven economic landscape.

Objectives of the session:

- **Actionable Frameworks for Enabling a Robust Digital Connectivity Ecosystem:** the primary goal is to gain insights into the necessary emergency responses or actions that can be undertaken to mitigate digital gaps, providing stable and affordable access for MSMEs that are currently trailing behind sustainable energy solutions.



EXPERT DIALOGUE AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

How technology and the digital economy can synergistically support the growth and development of MSMEs.



REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Showcase SMEs' digital solutions and strengthen regional cooperation.



ACTIONABLE FRAMEWORKS

Insights into the necessary emergency responses to mitigate digital gaps, providing stable and affordable access for MSMEs in LM Region



Expert Dialogue

Shaping the Digital Future: Pathways to Enabling Digital Connectivity Ecosystem for Post-Pandemic Resilience in the Lancang-Mekong Countries

December 14, 2023 | 13:00 – 16:30 (Bangkok Time)



Tiat Jin Ooi

Founder & Principal Consultant
Curated Connectors

Moderator



Liu Yun

Director
Yunnan Digital Ecosystem
Engineering Research Center
China



Litthideth Khamhoung

Director of Division
DOSMEP, Ministry of Industry and
Commerce, Lao PDR



Liu Qixin

Project Director
Lancang-Mekong Subregional Economic
& Trade Development Center, Department
of Commerce of Yunnan Province, China



Din Suphawat

Team Leader
Digital Economy Promotion Agency
Thailand



Hing Vutha

Senior Project Advisor
Cambodia Development Resource
Institute, Cambodia



Traitip Siriruang

Senior Officer
Digital Economy Promotion Agency
Thailand



Le Kim Hue

Director
Center for Research and Communication
Training and Viet Nam Digital
Communication Association, Vietnam



Wah Wah Min

Founder and Managing Director
Skills for Success, Myanmar

SCOPE OF PROCEEDINGS

The expert dialogue on Shaping the Digital Future examined the impact of digital technologies on MSMEs in the Lancang-Mekong region. The discussions centered on research findings, policy advocacy, and public-private collaboration to enhance digital connectivity. Key topics included the challenges and opportunities for MSMEs in adopting digital innovations and strategies to bridge digital gaps. The dialogue aimed to develop actionable frameworks to enable a robust digital connectivity ecosystem. The primary goal was to gain insights into necessary emergency responses or actions to ensure stable and affordable access for MSMEs currently lagging in digital and sustainable energy solutions. The event sought to provide actionable insights and foster cooperation, contributing to a resilient digital economy aligned with the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation, the Global Development Initiative, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

INTRODUCTORY SESSION

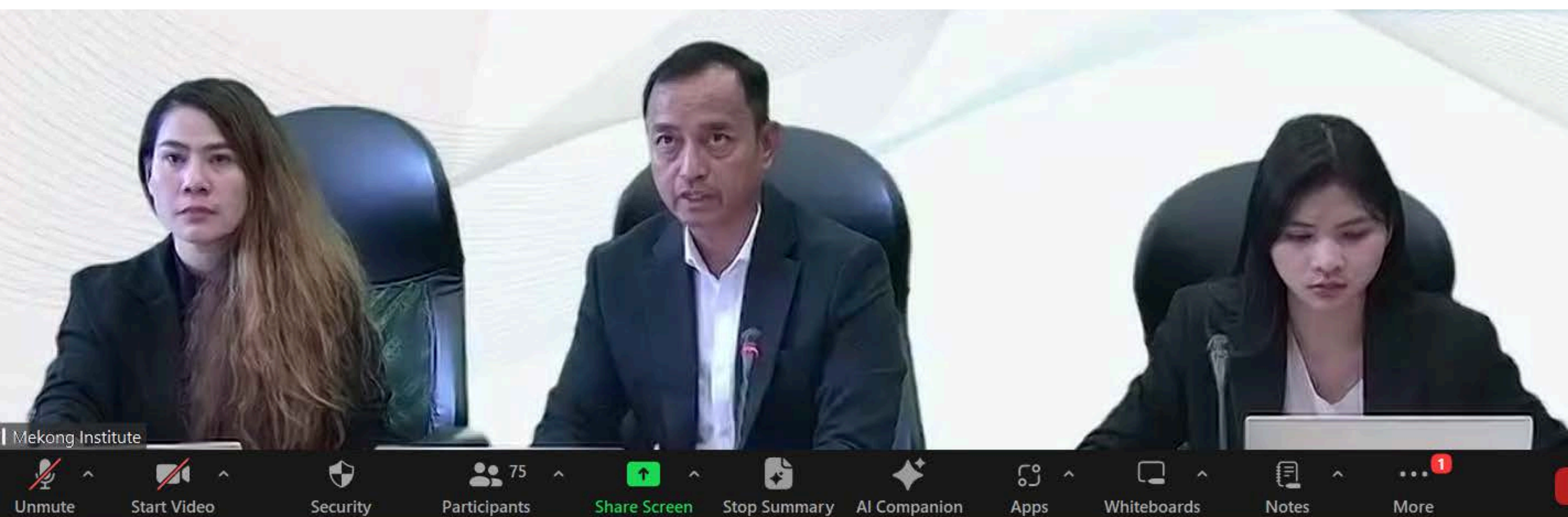
The dialogue begins with a welcome remarks session, followed by expert speeches:

Welcome Remarks by Mr. Rithy Buth, the Director of Finance and Operations, Mekong Institute.



Rithy Buth
the Director of Finance
and Operations
Mekong Institute

Mr. Rithy Buth, Director of Finance and Operations at the Mekong Institute, welcomed and thanked the distinguished audience for their participation in the Online Expert Dialogue. He highlighted the event's timeliness as the region moves towards COVID-19 recovery, emphasizing the crucial role of digital connectivity in fostering resilient pathways for MSMEs in the Lancang-Mekong region. Mr. Buth outlined the objectives of the dialogue, which include exploring the impact of digital technologies, advocating for supportive policies, and fostering public-private collaboration. He underscored the significance of this platform for gathering ideas, addressing key challenges, and setting actionable priorities to enhance digital connectivity and drive sustainable growth. His remarks set a collaborative and forward-looking tone, aiming to leverage the insights and discussions to reinforce regional cooperation and contribute to global development goals.



EXPERT DIALOGUE MODERATOR

The dialogue begins with a welcome remarks session, followed by insightful expert speeches.

Introduction Remarks by Mr. Tiat Jin (TJ) Ooi, Founder and Principal Consultant, Curated Connectors.



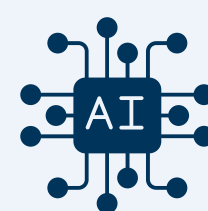
Tiat Jin Ooi

Founder & Principal Consultant
Curated Connectors

Moderator

Mr. Tiat Jin (TJ) Ooi, Founder and Principal Consultant at Curated Connectors, was introduced as the moderator for the Expert Dialogue. With his extensive experience in digital innovation and strategic consultancy, Mr. Ooi brought a wealth of knowledge to the forum. His role was to guide the discussions and ensure a productive and engaging session, focusing on enabling a robust digital connectivity ecosystem for post-pandemic resilience in the Lancang-Mekong countries.

To start the session, emphasized the importance of leveraging digital technologies to address the pressing challenges faced by MSMEs in the Lancang-Mekong region as he opened the session. He highlighted the focus of the discussions on identifying scalable digital solutions, advocating for supportive policies, and fostering public-private collaborations to bridge digital gaps. By addressing these areas, the goal is to build a resilient, interconnected, and sustainable digital future for the region. Mr. Ooi expressed his anticipation for a dynamic exchange of insights and ideas as participants collectively work towards these objectives, marking the beginning of an important conversation.



The dialogue began with a welcome remarks session, followed by insightful expert speeches.

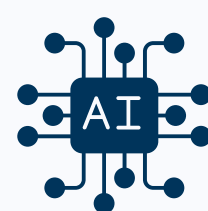
Research Finding on “Empowering MSMEs in Lancang-Mekong Countries: Unleashing the Potential of Scalable Digital Technologies for Post-Pandemic Resilience”



Dr. Liu Yun

Director
Yunnan Digital Ecosystem
Engineering Research Center,
China

To start the session, Prof. Dr. Liu Yun, the Director of the Yunnan Digital Ecosystem Engineering Research Center, and the team shared key findings from the research on “Scaling up Digital Connectivity for Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in the Lancang-Mekong Countries”. His presentation highlighted the significant positive impact of digital transformation on MSME productivity and revenue, the importance of training and online presence, and the productivity gains observed at various stages of digital adoption. He also addressed the challenges MSMEs face in digital transformation and provided strategic recommendations to enhance ICT infrastructure, increase digital skills, and strengthen trust in digital solutions. The table provided captures the essence of the key findings and recommendations.



KEY FINDINGS

The table presented key findings provide a comprehensive overview of the benefits and challenges associated with digital transformation for MSMEs in the Lancang-Mekong region, along with actionable recommendations to support their digital journey.



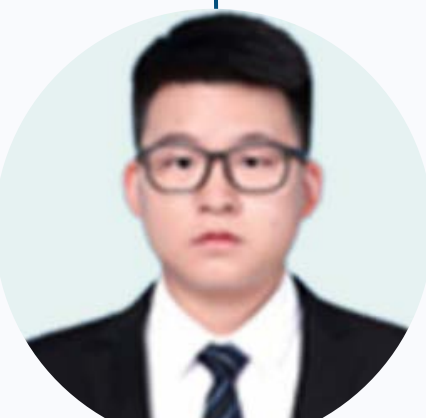
Jinhua Zhao

Senior Engineer
Yunnan Digital Ecosystem
Engineering Research Center,
China



Li Gongjin

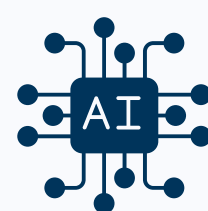
Researcher
Kunming University of Science
and Technology, China



Ma Yi

Researcher
Kunming University of Science
and Technology, China

Key Findings	Details
Impact of Digital Transformation on MSMEs	positive correlation between digital investments and MSME productivity and revenue.
Importance of Training and Online Presence	MSMEs prioritizing staff training and effective use of online platforms for marketing and sales see substantial gains in productivity and business performance.
Productivity Gains by Stage of Digital Adoption	MSMEs at intermediate stages of digital adoption exhibit 16% higher productivity than those at the basic stage.
Challenges in Digital Transformation	key challenges include weak infrastructure, rapid technological changes, unclear market regulations, and intense competition.
Role of AI in Digital Transformation	AI technologies enhance data analysis, process optimization, decision-making, and the development of new business models, improving operational efficiency.
Recommendations for Promoting ICT and Digital Infrastructure	Enhance ICT infrastructure investment, ensure affordable high-speed internet access, and expand broadband coverage beyond urban areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Digital Skills and Knowledge 	Support MSMEs in upskilling employees, integrate digital literacy into education, and provide guidance on effective digital tool utilization.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Digital Literacy and Awareness 	Amplify awareness campaigns, assist MSMEs in crafting digital strategies, and promote supportive government policies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate Access to Financial Solutions 	Improve digital payment systems and ensure accessible, cost-effective, and reliable financial tools.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen Trust in Digital Solutions 	Enhance legal frameworks for data privacy and cybersecurity, raise awareness of digital fraud, and provide training on cybersecurity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivize Digital Technology Adoption 	Provide tax incentives and funding for digital upskilling, expand support programs, and facilitate access to business partners and expert advice.



The dialogue began with a welcome remarks session, followed by insightful expert speeches.

Embracing Digital Transformation: A Study of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in Cambodia's Tourism Industry



Hing Vutha

Senior Project Advisor
Cambodia Development
Resource Institute, Cambodia

Speaker

To better understand the digital landscape of Cambodia, Vutha Hing, Senior Project Advisor at CDRI, presented "Embracing Digital Transformation: A Study of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in Cambodia's Tourism Industry." The presentation underscored the critical role of digital transformation in enhancing the productivity and growth of MSMEs in Cambodia's tourism industry. It provided actionable policy recommendations to support this transition, emphasizing key areas by

↗ Enhancing ICT infrastructure:

- Improve digital infrastructure.
- Ensure affordable high-speed internet access.

↗ Increasing digital literacy and skills:

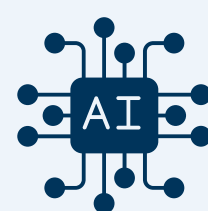
- Promote training and education to develop digital skills among MSMEs.

↗ Providing financial solutions:

- Offer financial incentives and support to facilitate digital technology adoption.

↗ Strengthening legal frameworks:

- Build trust in digital technologies through robust legal frameworks and public awareness campaigns.



The dialogue began with a welcome remarks session, followed by insightful expert speeches.

Progress of GMS Cross-border E-commerce Cooperation Platform



Liu Qixin

Project Director
Lancang-Mekong Subregional
Economic & Trade Development
Center, Department of Commerce
of Yunnan Province,
China

Speaker

To understand better the benefits of scaling up digital connectivity, Mr. Liu Qixin, Project Director, Lancang-Mekong Subregional Economic & Trade Development Center, Department of Commerce of Yunnan Province, China, shared experiences and progress on the GMS Cross-Border E-Commerce Cooperation Platform. The presentation provided valuable insights into the progress and future directions of the GMS Cross-Border E-Commerce Cooperation Platform, highlighting the platform's role in fostering digital connectivity and cooperation across the Greater Mekong Subregion. He highlighted the following key points:

↗ Framework development:

- Recognized at the 7th GMS Economic Corridors Forum, the platform's business alliance now includes over 300 digital and e-commerce enterprises.

↗ Best practices and industry cooperation:

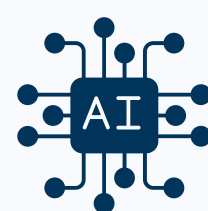
- Identified 100 replicable cross-border e-commerce practices and encouraged industrial park construction for GMS industries' cooperation.

↗ Policy and standards communication:

- Promoted the Governors' Mechanism, organized 38 events, formulated an annual progress report, and expanded innovations in the GMS e-commerce cooperation mechanism.

↗ Future plans:

- Strengthen dialogue mechanisms, enhance technical training, encourage local government participation, organize economic cooperation events, seek new partners, and focus on digital cooperation within the Belt and Road Initiative.



The dialogue began with a welcome remarks session, followed by insightful expert speeches.

Empowering Lao PDR's Digital Future: Overcoming Challenges and Scaling Up Digital Connectivity

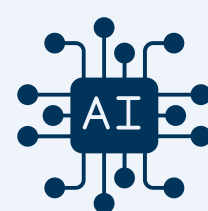


Litthideth Khamhoung

Director of Division
DOSMEP, Ministry of Industry
and Commerce, Lao PDR

Speaker

Mr. Litthideth Khamhoung, Director of Division, DOSMEP, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR, presented, "Empowering Lao PDR's Digital Future: Overcoming Challenges and Scaling Up Digital Connectivity," explores the nation's experience in fostering a thriving digital landscape. Despite low internet penetration, high costs, insufficient infrastructure, and limited digital literacy, the Lao government has implemented initiatives such as the National Digital Economy Master Plan, the ICT Development Fund, and the e-Government Strategy to address these issues. Key enablers for a sustainable digital ecosystem include supportive government policies, infrastructure investment, public-private partnerships, capacity building, and awareness-raising. Success stories like the Lao National Broadband Network (LNBnet), Lao ICT Park, and Lao Digital Academy illustrate progress in digital connectivity. The presentation emphasizes the importance of a clear vision, strong leadership, stakeholder engagement, and adaptability in digital initiatives. Looking forward, the focus will be on adapting policies, improving telecommunications pricing, investing in rural infrastructure, promoting digital adoption among startups and MSMEs, and fostering innovation and local content development.



The dialogue began with a welcome remarks session, followed by insightful expert speeches.

Pathways To Enabling Digital Connectivity Ecosystem for Post-Pandemic Resilience in Myanmar



Wah Wah Min

Founder and Managing Director
Skills for Success, Myanmar

Speaker

To explore the pathways to enabling a digital connectivity ecosystem for post-pandemic resilience in Myanmar, Ms. Wah Wah Min, Founder and Managing Director, Skills for Success, Myanmar, shared valuable insights from her experience. She provided a comprehensive overview of the current state and future directions for digital connectivity in Myanmar, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and continuous learning for post-pandemic resilience. Her presentation highlighted the following key points:

↗ Current landscape in Myanmar's SMEs:

- Increased use of online applications, social media, and payment gateways.
- Shift towards e-commerce platforms and individual business websites.

↗ Challenges for SMEs expanding regionally/globally:

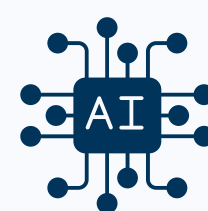
- Digital literacy issues.
- Logistic and supply chain challenges.
- Need for better regional and global networking.

↗ Initiatives and projects:

- MWEA's projects to enhance women's participation in the ASEAN economy using ICTs.
- E-Business skills training and mentorship for women-led SMEs, with a focus on regional e-commerce platforms.

↗ Pathways to digital connectivity:

- Strengthening digital infrastructure through collaboration.
- Establishing networks for ongoing communication and collaboration.
- Emphasizing continuous engagement in relevant events and forums.



The dialogue begins with a welcome remarks session, followed by expert speeches:

Enhancing Digital Resilience and Competitiveness of Viet Nameese MSMEs through Strategic Digital Transformation



Le Kim Hue

Director
Center for Research and
Communication Training
Viet Nam Digital Communication
Association

Speaker

Ms. Le Kim Hue, Director, Center for Research and Communication Training and Viet Nam Digital Communication Association, emphasized the importance of collaboration, continuous learning, and supportive policies to build a robust digital connectivity ecosystem in Viet Nam.

Ms. Hue provided insights on enabling a digital connectivity ecosystem for post-pandemic resilience in Viet Nam, highlighting the following key points:

↗ Current state of digital adoption in Viet Nameese MSMEs:

- Viet Nam has a good rate of broadband subscriptions and digital payment usage but faces challenges with low digital transaction rates and online payments compared to other Southeast Asian countries.

↗ Challenges faced by MSMEs:

- Barriers to digital adoption: digital literacy, financial constraints, cybersecurity, logistical, and supply chain issues.

↗ Government policies and support mechanisms:

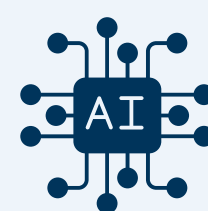
- Government support through policies like Decree 80/2021/ND-CP and Circular 06/2022/TT-BKHDT, which provide financial assistance for digital transformation solutions for SMEs.

↗ Best practices and case studies:

- Examples of successful digital transformation stories in Viet Nameese MSMEs.
- Lessons learned and applicable strategies.

↗ Expert suggestions:

- Capacity building through digital training and continuous learning, support startups with incubators and accelerators, promote innovation by investing in R&D, and foster cross-sector collaboration between the government, private sector, and educational institutions



The dialogue begins with a welcome remarks session, followed by expert speeches:

Scaling Up the Digital Economy: DEPA's Role in Advancing Thailand's National Digital Agenda



Din Suphawat

Team Leader
Digital Economy Promotion
Agency, Thailand

Speaker

Mr. Din Suphawat, Team Leader at the Digital Economy Promotion Agency (depa), Thailand, discussed DEPA's pivotal role in promoting digital scaling up as a national agenda to advance the digital economy. His presentation highlighted DEPA's strategic initiatives and contributions to fostering a robust and sustainable digital economy in Thailand. Emphasizing the importance of collaboration, innovation, and supportive policies, Mr. Din underscored collective efforts across the Lancang-Mekong countries to create a resilient and interconnected digital future. Key points included:

↗ **Strategic framework aligning with national policies:**

- DEPA's mission is to develop digital economy promotion strategies aligned with national policies and plans on digital economy and society.

↗ **Capacity building for digital skills:**

- DEPA focuses on enhancing digital skills across different age groups and professions, initiatives include developing new skills such as Big Data, AI, and IoT for students and providing continuous learning opportunities for the workforce.

↗ **Developing digital ecosystems and infrastructure:**

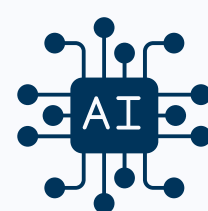
- DEPA is building a robust digital ecosystem by establishing infrastructure, innovation labs, and digital hubs to support digital businesses and startups.

↗ **Strengthening partnerships and collaboration:**

- Strengthening partnerships among private sectors, academic institutions, and government entities to build an open platform for global startups

↗ **Advocating for supportive digital policies:**

- DEPA plays a crucial role in proposing, expediting, and following up on amendments to intellectual property protection laws and regulations related to the digital industry.



The dialogue begins with a welcome remarks session, followed by expert speeches:

Scaling Up Digital Connectivity: DEPA's Strategies for Building a Sustainable Digital Ecosystem in Thailand

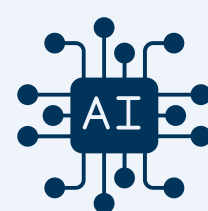


Traitip Siriruang

Senior Officer
Digital Economy Promotion
Agency, Thailand

Speaker

Mr. Traitip Siriruang, Senior Officer at the Digital Economy Promotion Agency (DEPA), highlighted DEPA's mission to transform Thailand into a digitally-driven economy. He emphasized initiatives to empower communities, build a robust digital innovation ecosystem, and develop digital skills. Key strategies include implementing smart technologies for SMEs, enhancing smart tourism and marketing through AR/VR, and improving waste management and product tracking systems. Mr. Traitip discussed the importance of funding from national and local governments and private sector CSR contributions. By integrating digital demand and supply, fostering public-private partnerships, and promoting digital literacy, DEPA aims to create a sustainable digital ecosystem. Mr. Traitip also highlights on vision for Thailand's digital future includes continuous collaboration, innovation, and supportive policies, setting an example for other countries in the region.



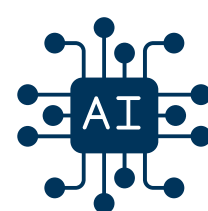
KEY TAKEAWAYS

The forum concluded with a session on actionable frameworks for enabling a robust digital connectivity ecosystem, focusing on practical strategies and collaborative efforts to build and sustain a resilient digital infrastructure.

ACTIONABLE FRAMEWORKS FOR ENABLING A ROBUST DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY ECOSYSTEM

The final session of the dialogue on shaping the digital future of the Lancang-Mekong region concluded with a focus on actionable frameworks for enabling a robust digital connectivity ecosystem. Throughout the sessions, several key takeaways emerged:

1. **Trust:** Establishing trust is fundamental for a secure and reliable digital ecosystem. Ensuring data privacy and security is crucial to building confidence among users and stakeholders.
2. **Infrastructure:** Developing and enhancing digital infrastructure is essential for providing the necessary backbone for connectivity and technological advancements. This includes expanding broadband access and upgrading existing infrastructure.
3. **Capacity Building and Education:** Empowering individuals and businesses with digital skills through comprehensive capacity-building and educational initiatives is critical for fostering a digitally literate population and workforce.
4. **Financial Support:** Providing financial support and resources, especially for MSMEs, is vital to facilitate access to digital technologies and innovations. This includes government funding, private-sector investment, and CSR initiatives.
5. **Collaboration and Connection:** Fostering collaboration among governments, private sector entities, academic institutions, and other stakeholders is crucial for creating a synergistic environment that drives innovation, growth, and sustainable development.



"By focusing on trust, infrastructure, capacity building, education, financial support, and collaboration, we can pave the way for a resilient, interconnected, and digitally driven economic landscape in the Lancang-Mekong region. Together, we can create a sustainable and prosperous digital future."

– Concluding Remarks from the Expert Dialogue on Shaping the Digital Future





Shaping the Digital Future: Pathways to Enabling Digital Connectivity Ecosystem for Post-Pandemic Resilience in the Lancang-Mekong Countries

ONLINE EXPERT DIALOGUE

PROGRAM AGENDA AND SPEAKER PROFILES



Program Agenda:

Shaping the Digital Future: Pathways to Enabling Digital Connectivity Ecosystem for Post-Pandemic Resilience in the Lancang-Mekong Countries

December 14, 2023, 13:30 – 17:00 (GMT+7)

Time (GMT+7)	Topics/ Event	Resource Persons
Expert Dialogue on Shaping the Digital Future: Pathways to Enabling Digital Connectivity Ecosystem for Post-Pandemic Resilience in the Lancang-Mekong Countries		
13:00 – 13:30	Registration	
13:30 – 13:45	Opening Remarks	Mr. Rithy Buth Director of Finance and Operations Mekong Institute
13:45 – 14:00	Workshop Overview	Ms. Yupaporn Siribut Program Officer Sustainable Energy and Environment Department Mekong Institute
14:00 – 14:30	Research Finding on “Empowering MSMEs in Lancang-Mekong Countries: Unleashing the Potential of Scalable Digital Technologies for Post-Pandemic Resilience”	Prof. Dr. Liu Yun Director Yunnan Digital Ecosystem Engineering Research Center Kunming University of Science and Technology Yunnan, China
14:30 – 16:00	<p>Role in Shaping the Digital Future and Enabling Digital Connectivity Ecosystem for MSMEs in the Lancang-Mekong Countries</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Tiat Jin (TJ) OOI Founder & Principal Consultant Curated Connectors</p> <p>Q&A (via Zoom Chatbox, 5 minutes)</p>	<p>Panel: Speakers (10 minutes each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Litthideth Khamhoung Director Entrepreneur Development Division Ministry of Industry and Commerce Department of SME Promotion (DOSMEP) Lao PDR. - Ms. Wah Wah Min Founder and Managing Director Skills for Success, Myanmar - Mr. Liu Qixin Project Director Lancang-Mekong Subregional Economic & Trade Development Center, Department of Commerce of Yunnan Province, China



Program Agenda:

Shaping the Digital Future: Pathways to Enabling Digital Connectivity Ecosystem for Post-Pandemic Resilience in the Lancang-Mekong Countries

December 14, 2023, 13:30 – 17:00 (GMT+7)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Hing Vutha Senior Project Advisor Cambodia Development Resource Institute, Cambodia - Mr. Din Suphawat Team Leader Digital Economy Promotion Agency (DEPA), Thailand - Mr. Traitip Siriruang Senior Officer Digital Economy Promotion Agency (DEPA), Thailand - Ms. Le Kim Hue Director Center for Research and Communication Training and Viet Nam Digital Communication Association, Hanoi, Viet Nam
16:00 – 16:15	Synthesis and Call to Action	Mr. Tiat Jin (TJ) OOI Founder & Principal Consultant Curated Connectors
16.15 – 16:30	Way Forwards and Closing Remarks	Mr. Suriyan Vichitlekarn Executive Director Mekong Institute



PROFILE

MR. TIAT JIN OOI (TJ)

Founder & Principal Consultant Curated Connectors

TJ founded Curated Connectors following numerous engagements with MSMES both locally and globally, intending to help them grow their businesses through strategic and curated connections. His passion for empowering MSMEs stemmed from his days with the Singapore Chemical Industry Council (SCIC), where he was a member of the secretariat and managed the industry's Responsible Care program, being actively involved in helping SMEs adopt. Subsequently, as General Manager of Absotech, a local chemical distribution company, his engagement deepened as he chaired the SCIC's SME Committee and represented SME interests on both the SCIC Responsible Care Committee and the National Chemical Management & GHS Taskforce.

With a career spanning more than 20 years, TJ brings to the table a wide range of skill sets from strategic planning, organizational transformation, and business development to corporate administration, events management, and public speaking. He enjoys engaging audiences of all sizes and has had the opportunity to share with both the public and private sectors at regional and international platforms such as the WTO Public Forum.

He firmly believes that every small business can impact and empower lives as they grow and flourish. Hence Curated Connectors was set up with the vision of Empowering Lives through Connecting Businesses. In his ongoing work with the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), he is also the Lead Consultant for the Entrepreneurship, Start-ups, and Innovation (E-S-I) Knowledge, an exciting initiative and exploration of the E-S-I ecosystems where research, thought leadership and business practicality blend in evolving synergy.

TJ graduated with a Bachelor' Degree (Hons) in Electrical and Electronic Engineering from the University of Manchester, United Kingdom.



PROFILE

PROF. DR. LIU YUN

Director
Yunnan Digital Ecosystem Engineering
Research Center, China

Prof. Dr. Liu Yun is the Director of the Yunnan Digital Ecosystem Engineering Research Center and General Manager of Yunnan Intra Technology Investment Co., Ltd. He also serves as a Professor at Kunming University of Science and Technology and an Adjunct Professor at the University of New South Wales. Prof. Liu holds a DBA in Digital Management Business Administration from Belhaven University and a Ph.D. in Electronic and Electrical Engineering from the University of New South Wales.

Prof. Dr. Liu Yun has dedicated many years to research in information technology, digitization, and intelligence, with a particular focus on new-generation information technologies such as the Internet of Things, Big Data, and Artificial Intelligence. His extensive work includes significant achievements in the development of digital technology applications and data security. Through a wide range of research methods and data analysis, Prof. Dr. Liu provides both theoretical knowledge and practical guidance for digital applications. His research aims to improve business efficiency, expand market share, create new value, and enhance customer experience through digital transformation.

In addition to his research, Prof. Liu teaches undergraduate, graduate, and MBA courses on various topics including computer networks, digital communication, network security, and digital transformation strategy.

**PROFILE****DR. HING VUTHA**

Senior Project Advisor
Cambodia Development Resource Institute,
Cambodia

Mr Hing is a trade economist, holding his PhD in Economics from the University of Adelaide, Australia, and Master's in International Trade Law and Policy (LL.M) from the University of Barcelona, Spain. He has been actively engaged in economic research and policy debate for nearly 20 years through his research profession at the leading development research in Cambodia. He was a research associate at Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI) between 2004 and 2008 and a research fellow since 2009. Most of his research works were on trade, economic integration, and labour market and his core research abilities are trade policy analysis using quantitative methods and research grant writing. He is currently working at CDRI as senior research fellow. Mr. Hing is also an advisory Board member of the National Council on Science, Technology and Innovation, Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation, Cambodia.

Through his PhD research, Mr. Hing has built his strong interest and specialization in global value chains analysis using quantitative research method. His PhD dissertation on 'the role of human capital in global value chains in East Asia'. He has a number of value chains analysis papers on the pipeline for publication and they are: assessing the determinants of global value chain participation in East and Southeast Asia: cross-country analysis; the impacts of human capital on firm participation in value chains: firm-level analysis in East and Southeast Asia; SMEs participation in global value chains: evidences from Indonesian manufacturing firm analysis; does servicification enhance productivity: evidences from Indonesian manufacturing firms; and innovation, technology and productivity: evidences from Cambodian firms.



PROFILE



MS. WAH WAH MIN

**Founder and Managing Director
Skills for Success, Myanmar**

Wah Wah Min is a dynamic entrepreneur and founder of Skills for Success (Kaung Lin Khant Co., Ltd), a leading provider of Recruitment and Human Resource Services. With a wealth of experience in the field, Skills for Success has helped countless individuals find careers that align with their unique skills and interests. Wah Wah holds LL.B and MBA degrees. Her passion for empowering individuals in their career pursuits has led her to mentor and train numerous youths, fresh graduates, and women returning to work after a career break. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, she launched the skills for success net digital job platform, providing much-needed job opportunities to those affected by the economic downturn. Her efforts on women's economic empowerment have been recognized with awards such as the Myanmar Women Entrepreneur Award (MWEA) and the ASEAN Women Entrepreneur Award (ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network, AWEN). She is currently serving as a Head Trainer for ASEAN- Korea E-Business for Women MSME Project and central executive committee member of Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Association.

She is passionate about social enterprise and empowering women economically. She is also a certified Corporate Governance professional, holding a director certification from the Thai Institute of Directors. She is committed to sharing her expertise and helping to shape the next generation of leaders is committed to sharing her expertise and helping to shape the next generation of leaders.



PROFILE



MR. LIU QIXIN

**Project Director
Lancang-Mekong Subregional Economic
& Trade Development Center, Department
of Commerce of Yunnan Province, China**

Project Director, Lancang-Mekong Subregional Economic & Trade Development Center, Department of Commerce of Yunnan Province, China.

Mr. Liu Qixin has been a driving force in regional economic development for over a decade, serving at the Lancang-Mekong Subregional Economic & Trade Development Center since 2009. With a Bachelor's degree in Aviation Transport and English from the Civil Aviation University of China, Mr. Liu specializes in fostering economic collaboration and trade development within the Lancang-Mekong region. His work has significantly contributed to enhancing economic ties and promoting sustainable growth across the participating countries. His expertise in regional economic strategies and cross-border trade initiatives has positioned him as a key figure in the economic integration efforts of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation framework.



MR. DIN SUPHAWAT

Team Leader
Digital Economy Promotion Agency (DEPA),
Thailand

PROFILE

As Team Leader, Digital Economy Promotion Agency (depa), Thailand. Mr. Din Suphawat leads pivotal initiatives at the DEPA focusing on advancing the national digital economy agenda. With a comprehensive legal background, Mr. Suphawat holds a Master of Laws in Internet Law and International Trade Law from the University of Essex, UK, and a Bachelor of Laws from Ramkhamhaeng University. He has also served in significant regulatory roles at the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the National Broadcasting and Telecommunication Commission (NBTC) of Thailand. His diverse experience has equipped him with a deep understanding of the regulatory frameworks and strategic imperatives necessary to drive digital transformation. Under his leadership, DEPA is fostering digital innovation, supporting digital startups, and enhancing the digital infrastructure necessary for Thailand's economic growth.

**PROFILE****MR. TRAITIP SIRIRUANG**

**Senior Officer
Digital Economy Promotion Agency (DEPA),
Thailand**

Mr. Traitip Siriruang has played a significant part in promoting the digital economy & society of the northeastern part of Thailand. His expertise is the digital transformation for Thai SMEs, community enterprises, farmers, and so on, in addition to his interest & experiences in digital transformations for society, for example, the transformation towards vulnerable groups, students, etc., as well as the promotion of Smart Cities to local government organizations, universities, hospitals and so on.

For almost two years of service at the Digital Economy Promotion Agency (depa) of Thailand, he has developed his digital transformation expertise, blended with his educational background in Education, and Labor Economics & HR Management, in addition to his status as a PhD candidate at Tokyo Institute of Technology, Tokyo, Japan (under Japanese Government scholarship), with a commitment to contribute to the promotion of digital economy & society of Thailand to the national scale.



MR. LITTHIDETH KHAMHOUNG

**Director of MSME Support and
Development Division, MSME Promotion
Agency, Ministry of Industry and Commerce**

PROFILE

Mr. Litthideth is a passionate and experienced professional with a proven track record of success in supporting micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Lao PDR for the past 17 years. A highly motivated and results-oriented individual with a strong understanding of the Lao MSME landscape, business development principles, and financial management best practices. Skilled in developing and implementing effective programs and initiatives that promote MSME growth, employment creation, and economic development. Possesses excellent communication, interpersonal, and analytical skills, and a commitment to working collaboratively with stakeholders at all levels.



Shaping the Digital Future: Pathways to Enabling Digital Connectivity Ecosystem for Post-Pandemic Resilience in the Lancang-Mekong Countries



Expert Dialouge



ORGANIZER TEAM



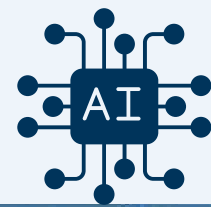
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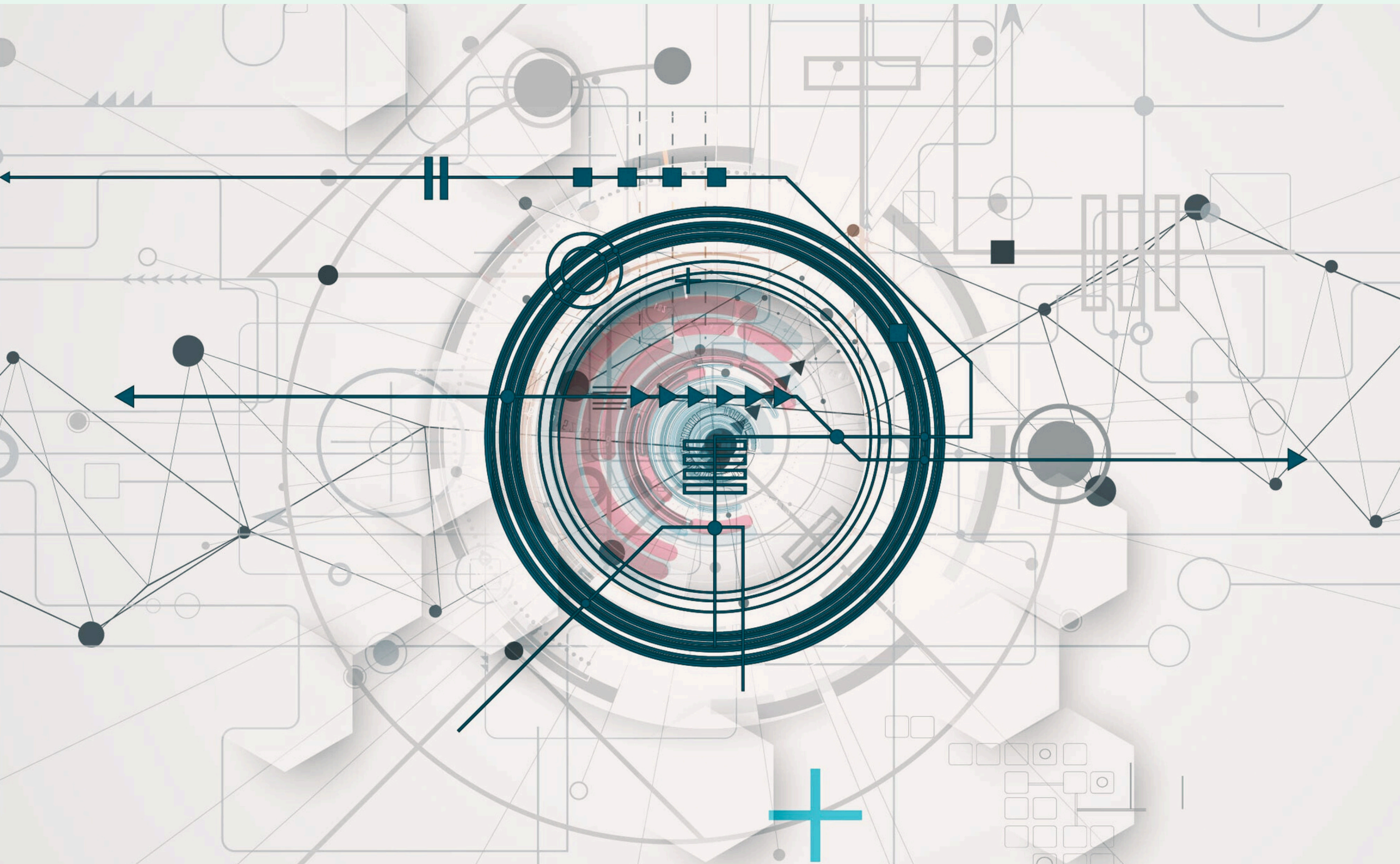




MEKONG INSTITUTE

ABOUT MEKONG INSTITUTE

Mekong Institute (MI), an intergovernmental organization owned and operated by the six countries of the Greater Mekong Subregion (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam and Yunnan province and Guangxi Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China), promotes regional cooperation and integration through capacity development programs and projects in three thematic areas namely, Agricultural Development and Commercialization, Trade and Investment Facilitation and Sustainable Energy and Environment.



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