MEKONG INSTITUTE

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Sustainable and Smart TOURISM DEVELOPMENT in the Mekong Region

BACKGROUND

The Mekong region is among the world's most visited travel destinations, having welcomed more than 70 million tourists in 2018 alone. As the tourism industries of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand are helping promote economic growth, generate employment, and foster peaceful societies, their governments are increasing efforts to pursue a more balanced, collaborative, and sustainable tourism development.

In support of this, the project aims to create "smart cities" to strengthen the five countries' capacities in meeting the fast-rising and highly competitive tourism inbound market. Implemented by Mekong Institute with support from National Tourism Organizations and local destination management companies of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand, the three-year project will introduce smart tourism tools, techniques, and technologies through learning exchanges, structured learning visits, information-sharing, and adaption of best practices. Such investments are geared to expand small entrepreneurial businesses and deepen cultural interconnectedness and appreciation among and between cities in the Republic of Korea and the Mekong region countries.

DURATION

2020 to 2023

PROJECT COMPONENTS

Facilitate **Smart Tourism Development** in Mekong Countries

Enhance Korea-Mekong **Hospitality Training and Mentoring**

Establish **Historical and Cultural Town Twinning** between Korea and Mekong Countries

PROJECT SUPPORT

| Capacity Building | Platform Building | Tailored Trainings | Technical Exchanges | Seminar or Forum |

OBJECTIVES

Short-term: enhance capacities of tourism-related organizations representing government, the private sector, and academe in the promotion and practice of sustainable tourism

Long-term: wide application by Mekong countries of smart tourism and the "sharing economy" concept to maximize potentials of human capital and enhance innovation and efficient use of endogenous cultural and natural resources

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Higher quality hospitality and tourism services in Mekong countries
- Deeper collaboration between Korea and the Mekong countries through sustained historical and cultural town twinning
- Increased tourism competitiveness among Mekong countries due to the wide and efficient utilization of smart technologies

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Year 1: Facilitating Smart Tourism Development in Mekong Countries
- Online Platform Development
- Regional Workshop
- Regional Training
- Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Year 2: Korea-Mekong Hospitality Training and Mentoring
- Road Shows in CLMTV
- Sustainable Tourism Curriculum Development
- Training in the ROK
- E-Mentoring
- Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Year 3: Twinning of Historical/Cultural towns Between Korea and Mekong Countries
- Exchange Program
- Investment Forum
- Project Monitoring and Evaluation

TARGET SECTORS

Government, private sector, and academic officials from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam