

WHAT'S INSIDE

MI Organizes Capacity Development Program on Labor Migration

Business to Business Meeting Seeks to Advance Cross-border Trade in Khammouane and Nakhon Phanom Borders

New Zealand Ambassador Visits MI

EWEC Vietnam Produces Training Clip on Coffee Wet Processing



TRAINING/WORKSHOP/SLV ACTIVITIES



MI Organizes Capacity Development Program on Labor Migration

MI held a two-week Capacity Development Program on *Strategic Management to Labour Migration in the Greater Mekong Subregion: Addressing the Challenges through Good Practices* on January 14-25, 2019. Supported by the Thailand International Cooperation Agency, the program was attended by 24 participants from labor ministries, recruitment agencies, civil society organizations and the media from Cambodia, P.R. China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. [Read more.](#)

2nd MKCF Project Launched in Cambodia

The 2nd project in Cambodia under the Mekong-Republic of Korea Cooperation Fund (MKCF) was launched on January 15, 2019 in Phnom Penh with the project lead, the Department of Green Economy of the National Council for Sustainable Development, Ministry of Environment, spearheading the event. The project, which seeks to develop guidelines for the certification of green buildings in Cambodia, is one of the six projects being funded by the MKCF under the 2nd call. Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta, Director of MI's Trade and Investment Facilitation Department, provided an overview of the MKCF while Mr. Robby Rosandi, Program Officer at MI, explained the MKCF project monitoring and reporting guidelines.



Business to Business Meeting Seeks to Advance Cross-border Trade in Khammouane and Nakhon Phanom Borders

Some 40 members of the private sector from the twin provinces of Khammouane, Lao PDR and Nakhon Phanom, Thailand met on January 26, 2019 for a Business to Business Meeting to discuss ways forward to advance cross-border trade in the border crossings. The meeting was co-hosted by the Khammouane Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Nakhon Phanom Chamber of Commerce and facilitated by the RLED-EWEC Project in Lao PDR. [Read more.](#)



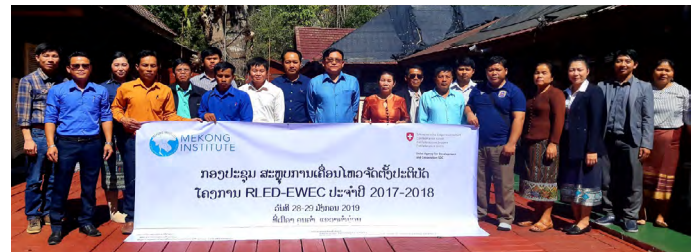
GAP Certification Audit Conducted

From January 15 to 27, 2019, an audit team from the Standard Division of the Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR conducted field inspections on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) standards among eight farmer groups in Khammouane province, four in Savannakhet as well as two rice mills. The EWEC Project has been supporting 19 GAP farmer groups in the provinces through a series of trainings on the criteria standards and certification preparation. Issues found following the audit are expected to be addressed before the final meeting among the inspection committee for consideration of certification issuance at the ministry level.



Coordination Partners Discuss Component 1 Achievements, Progress

The EWEC Project Team of Lao PDR met with coordination members comprising of representatives from the Provincial and District Agriculture and Forestry Offices, Provincial Department of Industry and Commerce and District Office of Industry and Commerce, and cooperatives from Khammouane and Savannakhet provinces on January 28-29, 2019. Held in Khounkham district, Khammouane, the meeting discussed the progress of the project, challenges, lessons learned and recommendations from the implementation of Component 1 (farmer and enterprise development) for 2017-2018 as well as the working plan implementation for 2019.



Efforts to Expand Loan Access for Maize Farmers Continue

As part of continuing efforts to offer local maize farmers and brokers increased access to loans, the EWEC Myanmar Office met with the management of Lotus Bridge Microfinance Co., Ltd., in Hpa-An, Kayin State last January 23, 2019. The company agreed to conduct a survey in Myawaddy Township to further scope out the business environment and the status of the prospective loan beneficiaries.



Roundtable Meeting with Myawaddy Business Sector Focuses on CBTF

Leaders of the Myawaddy Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Myawaddy Transportation and Logistics Entrepreneurs' Association, and the Myawaddy Customs and Brokers' Association sat down with the EWEC Myanmar Team for a roundtable meeting last January 27, 2019. The group discussed the experiences and challenges in cross-border trade particularly importing and exporting with twin borders. Suggestions were solicited for further discussion with other stakeholders and especially for negotiation in the upcoming dialogue with Thailand stakeholders in March this year.





EWEC Vietnam Produces Training Clip on Coffee Wet Processing

The EWEC Vietnam Office collaborated with Quang Tri Television Network and La Viet Coffee, one of the famous specialty coffee processing companies in Da Lat City, Vietnam, in the production of a training clip on Arabica coffee wet processing. Wet processing is one of the most popular techniques of coffee processing although coffee farmers in the EWEC project site are not officially trained on the process. The clip will be shown on local TV as part of the series, Accompany with Arabica, to reach more coffee farmers.



Review Meeting Held with Rubber Farmers

Members of two rubber farmer groups from Cam Lo District, Quang Tri, met with the EWEC Vietnam Team on January 26-27, 2019 to discuss the achievements of the farmer groups as well as the challenges they are encountering under the direct linkage model. The review found that in 2018, 313 tons of latex from 34 household-members of the farmer groups were sold directly to Cam Lo Rubber Factory, skipping the middlemen and bringing in an income of approximately 26,000 USD (600,000,000 vnd) after only seven months of implementing the model.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

New Zealand Ambassador Visits MI

MI welcomed H.E. Mr. Taha Macpherson, Ambassador of New Zealand to Thailand and Mr. James Andersen, Deputy Head of Mission last January 28, 2019. He and Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, MI Executive Director, talked about the New Zealand Aid Programme-supported Food Safety Project as well as other potential ways to further the New Zealand-MI relationship.



MI Joins UNESCAP Forum on Think Tanks

Dr. Watcharas Leelawath joined trade and policy experts in a forum launching the 2018 *Global Go To Think Tank Index Report* last January 31, 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. Dr. Leelawath served as one of the panelists in the roundtable discussion “*Why Facts and Think Tanks Matter: Focus on Building a Sustainable Future.*” Organized by the UNESCAP, the event aimed to elaborate on the role of think tanks and policy institutes in shaping policies as well as the role of “factfulness” in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



MI Meets with Poland Embassy in Thailand

Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta, Director of the Trade and Investment Facilitation Department, met with the Mr. Tomasz Miklaszewski, Counselor of the Embassy of Poland in Bangkok on January 21 to discuss possible collaboration between MI and Poland particularly on upcoming activities in Thailand supported by the Government of Poland to promote startups and trade.



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

FEB

12-13

Synthesis and Evaluation Workshop on Modular Training on SEZ Management Practices

18-22

2nd Modular Training on Green Freight and Logistics Management

25-01
MAR

Regional Training Program on Postharvest Safe Food Handling