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Food safety is an issue that cuts across sectors and borders as the symposium gathered various stakeholders from Asia, Africa and the US.

MI Hosts Symposium on Global Food Safety: Production, Health and Market

Mekong Institute (MI), together with the University of Georgia and Khon Kaen University, hosted the Symposium on *Global Food Safety: Production, Health and Market* on October 5-6, 2017 at the MI Residential Training Center.

Attended by over 100 participants from the academe, government agencies, and the private sector, the symposium tackled food safety concerns at the global and regional levels, and the roles of the university, government, research institutes and the industry in promoting and ensuring food safety. The symposium was organized with support from the New Zealand Aid Programme (NZAP). [Read more.](#)

MI Concludes Regional Training cum Business Networking on Sustainable Transport and Logistics Planning and Management



Working for a better transport system. Participants of the Regional Training on Sustainable Transport and Logistics Planning and Management gather for a final group shot.

MI successfully concluded the two-week Regional Training cum Business Networking on *Sustainable Transport and Logistics Planning and Management* on October 6, 2017.

The training, which kicked off on September 25, aimed to promote more effective implementation of logistics procedures and services. About 50 participants both from the private and public sectors participated in the training supported by the Policy and Strategy Office and the Department of Trade Negotiation, Ministry of Commerce, Thailand. [Read more.](#)

Labor Migration Training Highlights Labor Market Information System

An enhanced system for sharing data and information on labor migration was one of the key points highlighted in the recently-concluded Regional Training Program on *Labor Migration Management*



Mr. Sudam Pawar, Innovation and Technological Connectivity Director (third from left) and Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, MI Executive Director (fourth from left) with the training participants.

in the Greater Mekong Sub-region. About 20 government officers joined the training held at the MI Residential Training Center on October 16-27, 2017. Organized in collaboration with the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA), the training program sought to improve capacities of relevant government agencies in responding to migration issues. [Read more.](#)

■ TRAINING/WORKSHOP/SLV ACTIVITIES

MI, CAMCONTROL Train Local Food Inspectors



The quest for safer food continues with the Training-Workshop on Food Safety Risk Analysis and Audit for food inspectors in Cambodia.

MI and the Cambodia Import-Export Inspection and Fraud Repression Directorate General (CAMCONTROL) delivered a Training-Workshop on *Food Safety Risk Analysis and Agri-Food Inspection and Audit* last

October 17, 2017. Sixty-two food inspectors from provincial and municipal CAMCONTROL branches in Cambodia joined the training at the CAMCONTROL Headquarters in Phnom Penh. The training was part of the action plan implementation of MI alumni who joined the trainings on *Agri-food Inspection and Audit* and *Mainstreaming Food Safety Risk Analysis* early this year. [Read more.](#)

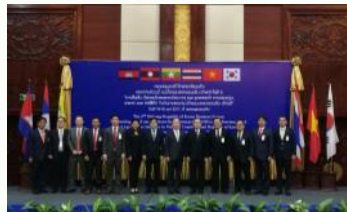
MI Alumni Advance Food Safety Awareness

Efforts to promote food safety continue with the training-workshop on *Food Safety Awareness in Food Supply Chain and Basic Nutrition Awareness for Family in Myanmar*, organized by a group of MI alumni under the MI-Food Safety Project. Over 100 government officials, factory employees and SME owners attended the training, which was held on October 19-20, 2017 in Yangon.

MI Alumni Hold Trade Events in Cambodia

MI alumni organized three trade events in Cambodia as part of their action plan implementation. The trade events aimed to connect local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and buyers with each other, and promote cross-border trade.

Mekong-ROK Business Forum Links Local SMEs with Korean Businesses



Distinguished guests and speakers at the 5th Mekong-ROK Business Forum in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

Mekong Institute and the Republic of Korea (ROK) joined hands for the 5th *Mekong-ROK Business Forum on Tourism, Food and Agricultural Industry* on October 19-20, 2017 at Vientiane, Lao PDR. About 136 delegates from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam and Thailand (CLMVT) joined the event, which sought to strengthen business linkages of local SMEs in the CLMVT with Korean businesses through market access, technology transfer, business support, and product development. A one-on-one business matching was also organized for Korean and Laotian entrepreneurs to explore possibilities for expansion and linking. [Read more.](#)



Kicking off the first in the series was the Cambodia-Vietnam Business Matching 2017 on October 5 in Preah Sihanouk Province. This was followed by the Thailand-Cambodia Buyer-Seller Meet 2017 on October 7 in Battambang Province. The third business matching event was on October 23 in Svay Rieng Province. The trade events were organized by participants from Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam following their

attendance in the Regional Training on *Trade Events Promotion* held June this year. [Read more.](#)

■ EWEC (SDC) PROJECT ACTIVITIES



RLED-EWEC Lao Team and project partners plan next steps forward during the inception workshop.

RLED-EWEC Lao Partners Meet to Discuss Project Scale-up

The RLED-EWEC Project in Lao PDR proceeds to its next phase with an inception workshop on October 26, 2017. In attendance were representatives of rice producing groups, rice millers and relevant government staff. Some of the suggestions put forward as part of the project scale-up included working with rice millers to push forward their Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) application, and delivering extension services to promote Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and quality commercial rice production in Savannakhet. One rice miller has

already expressed interest in the project and has invited the project team to her rice mill for initial observation and assessment. Following the inception workshop, the RLED-EWEC Lao team will then identify target rice mills and develop their work plans.

Myanmar Field Office Holds Training on Formation of Farmer Group



Farmers in Hpa Luu Gyi Village select their farmer group officials as adoption of the tripartite models gets underway.

RLED-EWEC's Myanmar Field Office continues its work with farmer groups in Myawaddy with a capacity-building training on *Formation and Strengthening of Farmer Group* organized together with Awba Company. Held on September 28, 2017, about 32 farmers joined the training in Hpa Luu Gyi Village, Myawaddy.

Representatives from the Department of Agriculture of Hpa-An Township and Awba Company discussed the mechanics and regulations in setting up a farmer group. Three guests from In Gyin Myaing Village, one of the first sites to have established a farmer group in June this year, also shared their challenges and experiences. With the adoption of the tripartite models, the project framework identifies a farmer group as a viable mechanism to help increase farmers' income. A farmer group can facilitate the direct selling of maize to local traders and access to loans from Mahar

Microfinance at lower interest rates to purchase quality farm inputs. The one-day training concluded with the farmers selecting their farmer group officials. As part of ways forward, the project will also be providing additional training on cost effective production using inputs dosage.

Local Brokers Join Training on Agri-Trading Mechanism

Twenty-seven local brokers joined the training on *Agri-Trading Mechanisms in Local Standard* organized by RLED-EWEC Myanmar Field Office and Kyaw Khine Myint Trading last September 30, 2017 in Myawaddy. The training aimed to enhance knowledge on grading, measuring and storage systems of maize.



The training speaker, Mr. Kyaw Khine Myint, shared about marketing technology; sorting/grading system based on the quality and moisture content; measuring system; threshing and drying system, and record bookkeeping system. Participants also learned pointers on how to link with local traders, select strategic places for constructing warehouses, and use mobile technology to check prices of agri-commodities online.



Local brokers learn improved system for grading, measuring and storing maize.

Coffee Farmers and Enterprises Discuss Direct Linkage

The Vietnam RLED-EWEC Team has been facilitating dialogues between local enterprises and coffee farmer groups in Huong Phung and Huong Son and Khe Sanh Township, Huong Ha District, Quang Tri since early October this year. The dialogues, which have been carried out prior to the harvest season, were to enable both sides to exchange information on quality requirements, prices and other related issues, and thus build trust for effective and sustained cooperation between coffee producers and processors.

To further develop the coffee sector, the RLED-EWEC Project has also joined hands with the EMEE Project of World Vision to provide technical support in the direct market linkage of 15 farmer groups, thereby increasing the total number of coffee farmer groups to 32 with more than 800 members. Remarkably, this year has seen increased cooperation of farmer groups with each other and the formation of an alliance that enables resource sharing and better negotiation of prices and other preferential conditions for the members.



Coffee farmers and local enterprises discuss ways and mechanisms for cooperation.

EWEC (SDC) PROJECT ACTIVITIES



MI Team brings Thai media to RLED-EWEC sites in Vietnam to introduce activities and project partners.

Thai Media Visit RLED-EWEC Project Sites in Vietnam

The MI team led by Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, Executive Director, accompanied members of the Thai media to a media familiarization trip to the RLED-EWEC Project sites in Vietnam. The trip was organized to introduce the media to the on-the-ground development work of MI and explore opportunities for cooperation. The group met with key stakeholders and representatives of provincial agencies, including the Vice Chairperson of Quang Tri Provincial People's Committee, Mr. Nguyen Quan Chinh.

They also visited Hue University in Thua Thien Hue Province to discuss educational and capacity development programs. The trip culminated at the Da Nang Sea Port, which plays a central role in the chain of logistics services in Central Vietnam. On the way to Vietnam, the team also paid a courtesy visit to Mr. Danai Karnpoj, Thai Consul-General in Savannakhet, Lao PDR.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

MI Executive Director Visits New Zealand Ambassador

Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, MI Executive Director, paid a courtesy visit to H.E. Mr. Peter Rider, New Zealand Ambassador to Thailand on October 2, 2017 at the New Zealand Embassy in Bangkok. Dr. Watcharas and Mr. Rider talked about the historical relationship between MI and New Zealand and MI's *Food Safety Project*, an initiative under the auspices of the New Zealand Aid Programme (NZAP).



New Zealand is one of MI's long-standing partners in its work.

MI Attends Trade and Investment Forum

Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, MI Executive Director, joined trade experts and stakeholders from Southeast Asia in a forum on *Trade and Investment Policies in the New Economy: Opportunities for Inclusive Transformation in Southeast Asia* on October 10-11, 2017 in Yangon, Myanmar. The meeting was organized by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) as a venue for key stakeholders in the region to discuss global and regional trends in business and policy, and identify priorities for action to build up regional and multilateral policy strategies in trade and investment.



Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta with fellow participants at the expert meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

MI Joins UN FAO Expert Meeting

Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta, Director of Trade & Investment Facilitation (TIF) Department, joined the *Expert Committee Meeting on Small Scale Forest Enterprises* in

Colombo, Sri Lanka on October 19-21, 2017. The UN-FAO organized the meeting to validate the findings of its stocktaking study in Asia. The meeting participants drafted a regional program to support the sustainable development of small scale forest enterprises in Asia. [Read more.](#)



Committed to agricultural development. The ADC Team with other stakeholders at the MELA meeting.

MI Attends MELA Meeting

Two MI staff from the Agricultural Development and Commercialization (ADC) Department attended the 3rd Annual

Meeting of the Mekong Learning Alliance (MELA) on October 30 - November 1, 2017 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. Ms. Maria Theresa Medialdia, Program Director of ADC, served as session moderator, while Dr. Jun Acedo, ADC Senior Program Specialist, presented a poster on MI's regional and country initiatives in food safety under the MI Food Safety Project. The MI team joined about 50 other participants from the region working in agricultural extension and rural advisory services.

[Read more.](#)

■ OTHER ACTIVITIES



MI Staff Present Papers in International Conferences

Two MI staff from the Agricultural Development and Commercialization (ADC) Department presented their respective papers in academic conferences this month.

Mr. Ra Thorng, Program Coordinator, attended the Echo Asia Agriculture and Community Development Conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand on October 3-6, 2017 where he also bagged the Best Poster Presentation award for his paper, “Edible Wild Plants and their Contribution to Livelihoods and Diet of Ethnic Communities in Northeastern Cambodia.”

Meanwhile, Ms. Ngamnet Aektasaeng, Program Officer, also presented her paper titled “Nutrient Recycling for Food Security and Safety in Mekong Countries: A Closing Loop of Manure Management in Smallholder Farming” at the World Resources Forum 2017 on October 24-25 in Geneva, Switzerland.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

National Knowledge Sharing Forum on Food Safety, Vietnam	November 2
Trade Event: Dawei–Thailand Trade Mission	November 4 - 8
Project Steering Committee Meeting of SEC-JAIF Project	November 13
Investor Forum cum Business Matching	November 13
National Consultation Workshop on Drafted Cambodian Standard for Iodized Salt	November 13
Training on Food Safety and Consumer Protection	November 14
Training on Agri-food Inspection and Audit and Food Safety Risk Analysis	November 15-16
Synthesis and Evaluation Workshop on Promoting Women Entrepreneurs for Export Market	November 15-16
Training on Good Hygiene Practices	November 17



MEKONG INSTITUTE

123 Mittraphap Road, Muang District
Khon Kaen, 40002 THAILAND
Tel. : +66(0) 43-202-411 to 2;
+66(0) 43-202-268 to 270

Email: information@mekonginstitute.org