

WHAT'S INSIDE

MI kicks off PROSAFE
2020 with Risk
Communication Training

MI and GMS-FRETA partner
to ease GMS cross-border
trade



TRAININGS/WORKSHOPS/SLV ACTIVITIES



MI kicks off PROSAFE 2020 with Risk Communication Training

MI strengthened capacities of 24 officials representing food safety agencies, universities, and consumer organizations from the Mekong region on effective food safety risk communication to safeguard public health and well-being. The five-day *Food Safety Risk Communication* regional training also included structured learning visits to GAP-certified farms, packinghouses, and a fresh produce market in Khon Kaen, Thailand. The activity was supported by the New Zealand Aid Programme under the PROSAFE project: Promoting Safe Food for Everyone. [Read more.](#)



MI and GMS-FRETA partner to ease GMS cross-border trade

MI and the Greater Mekong Subregion-Freight Transport Association (GMS-FRETA) formalized their partnership to promote deeper connectivity by expanding the GMS Logistics Business Database to help transport and logistics service providers expand their businesses and networks in the region and beyond. The collaboration will also include the development of a Green Logistics Auditor software to reduce carbon footprints in the transport and logistics sector. The Memorandum of Understanding signing ceremony was held last February 28, 2020 at the MI headquarters in Khon Kaen, Thailand. [Read more.](#)





MARCH

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MI Strategic Plan Consultation Workshop
with Government and Development Partners

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MI Strategic Plan Review and Formulation Workshop
with MI staff

9 - 13

Regional Training Program on Postharvest Safe Food Handling

23 - 27

Advanced Training of Trainers on
Green Freight and Logistics Development

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INNOVATION TECHNOLOGY

IS KEY TO REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

Meet **Jian Wang** better known as Tina, the stalwart program coordinator of MI's Innovation and Technological Connectivity Department. Tina has been with MI for 11 years and has contributed to the growth of the intergovernmental organization by leading projects and activities that promote regional cooperation and integration. Get to know this hardworking lady from Harbin, China who speaks three languages.

What are the key innovation and technological connectivity priorities in the Mekong Region?

Technology transfer and resource sharing are key priorities that strengthen regional connectivity because nowadays no issue, challenge, need, or opportunity can be successfully addressed through a one-dimensional approach. Technology transfer and resource sharing are integral to and essential for the development of all sectors in our society as rapidly emerging technologies and innovations—such as big data and 5G technology—have tremendous impacts on our economy and daily life.

How does MI help strengthen innovation and technological connectivity in the Mekong Region?

MI bridges public and private stakeholders to work together in narrowing development gaps by strengthening technological connectivity through innovative ways. Under the six-year *Capacity Building on GMS Power Grid Interconnection* project with China Southern Power Grid Co., Ltd., MI worked with Yunnan Grid Co., Ltd. to develop trainings, workshops, and research studies for the enhancement of power connectivity in the region.

MI also built a communication platform at the managerial and technical levels for GMS officials in the power sector, as well as facilitated a bilateral agreement on technology transfer. Moreover, MI worked with partners who trained Metropolitan Electricity Authority staff to optimize Thailand's services in power and energy distribution.

Overall, these efforts instill sustainability because MI does more than enhance capacities, it presents opportunities for governments and private organizations in the Mekong region to exchange information and jointly implement solutions for a stronger and more collaborative region.

What is the role of China and its contributions in the socioeconomic development of the Mekong Region?

China invests heavily in the Lancang-Mekong region because it believes that the success of one member country rests on the strength of all. Since 2005, China has escalated its support and will remain committed to securing prosperity and harmony in the region.

Take the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation as an example. It is a sub-regional cooperation mechanism established in March 2016 by Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam on the basis of extensive consultation, joint efforts, and shared benefit. Under the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Special Fund—of which China is one of the largest aid donors—US\$300 million was provided to support small and medium-sized cooperation projects from 2017 to 2021. The fund supports the region's economic growth by increasing interconnectivity in the areas of transportation, infrastructure, energy, facilitation of trade and investment, tourism, environment, agriculture, and health. Thus, creating employment, promoting progress, and more importantly, fostering cohesion across the region.

