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TRAINING/WORKSHOP/SLV ACTIVITIES

MI, Republic of Korea Lead Meeting of Technical Working Group on Green Freight and Logistics Development Project

Members of the Technical Working Group (TWG) of the project on *Green Freight and Logistics Development in Mekong Countries* convened at MI on March 8, 2018 for their 1st TWG Meeting. Twelve delegates from government agencies from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam and Thailand, as well as representatives from the German Agency for International Cooperation and the private sector including freight and transport associations, attended the meeting.

MI, as chair of the TWG, presented to the members the project objectives and work plan and likewise solicited their support for its successful implementation. The project is supported by the Mekong-Republic of Korea Cooperation Fund (MKCF). [Read more.](#)



Training Program on Utilization of FTAs Concludes with Synthesis and Evaluation Workshop

Nineteen participants of the modular training program on *Enhancing the Utilization of Free Trade Agreements by SMEs* gathered for a synthesis and evaluation workshop on March 28-29, 2018 at MI. The participants reported on the lessons learned and best practices from the implementation of their action plans following the training in December last year. The training was organized with the support of Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA). [Read more.](#)



RLED-EWEC Project Holds Consultation Workshops in Lao PDR, Vietnam

The first in a series of consultation workshops on the in-depth study on cross-border trade facilitation on agricultural products and inputs was organized in Quang Tri province, Vietnam on March 13, 2018. The workshop, delivered in cooperation with the Quang Tri Provincial People’s Committee, shared the initial findings of the study to leaders and representatives of provincial authorities and agencies as well as businesses of the twin provinces of Quang Tri (Vietnam) and Savannakhet (Lao PDR).



The second workshop was held in Khammouane, Lao PDR on March 15. In attendance were representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lao PDR; participants from the government and private sectors of Khammouane, Savannakhet, and Champasak provinces in Lao PDR; and Nakhon Phanom and Mukdahan provinces in Thailand.



Both workshops, organized by the EWEC Vietnam and EWEC Lao field offices, respectively, allowed the participants to forward their comments on the findings as well as prioritize and discuss action plans with specific interventions. A debriefing workshop at MI followed on March 16 wherein the results and initial actions plans were presented to the MI management team.

MI Supports Business to Business Meeting on CBTF

MI through the RLED-EWEC project, provided support in the organization of a round-table meeting on cross-border trade facilitation on March 10, 2018 in Savannakhet, Lao PDR. Present at the event were representatives of business associations from the provinces of Savannakhet, Mukdahan (Thailand) and Quang Tri (Vietnam). The meeting enabled business associations to exchange issues and propose alternatives at the policy level to facilitate cross-border trade along the EWEC particularly among the three provinces. This will be followed by an enterprise meeting to concretize the proposal for a business to government dialogue.



EWEC Myanmar Carries Out Survey on Contract Farming

The EWEC Myanmar Field Office, in collaboration with Mya Hta Kywe Linn Company, Bio-Supreme Input Company and Myanmar Corn Farmers’ Association, carried out a detailed survey on contract farming in 10 potential villages of Myawaddy last February 14-16, 2018. The team identified interested farmers and collected information on their acreage, variety of seeds, soil type, as well as clarified the dates for the delivery of farming inputs. Mya Hta Kywe Linn Company Managing Director U Saw Than Mya also clarified the process of accessing loan.



Preparations for Contract Farming for Upcoming Season On Track

Following the farmer surveys, the EWEC Myanmar team and partners, Bio-Supreme Company, Mya Hta Kywe Lin and Myanmar Corn Farmers’ Association met on February 28 to discuss further preparations for contract farming for the upcoming season. The groups clarified the implementation in the selected villages, including the amount and variety of inputs, number of demonstration plots, floor price, and the related trainings on fertilizer application and cost-effective production. In another meeting with Mya Hta Kywe Lin Company and technicians from Ye Tun Industry on March 3, the team also discussed the drying facility to be provided to the farmer groups.





MI, SDC Visit Myanmar Project Sites

The MI team led by Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, Executive Director, and Ms. Barbara Jäggi Hasler, Deputy Director of Cooperation and Head of Domain Employment and Skills of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Lao PDR, visited the Myanmar project sites on March 26-29, 2018. The group checked on the project's progress and discussed achievements, opportunities and challenges with local authorities, the private sector and project beneficiaries from Myawaddy and Hpa-an townships. On the last day, the group observed the export/import inspection system in the trade zone of Myawaddy.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

MI Attends Meeting of Working Group on Water Resources of Lancang-Mekong Cooperation

Ms. Jutamas Thongcharoen, Program Manager at Agricultural Development and Commercialization Department, attended the 2nd Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Water Resources of Lancang-Mekong Cooperation on March 1, 2018 in Chiang Rai, Thailand. Ms. Thongcharoen introduced MI's project with the Department of Water Resources, Ministry of National Resources and Environment on *Transboundary Cooperation Mechanism on Adaptation to Climate Change and Hydropower Development* that is expected to start in May this year.



MI Takes Active Role in Regional CBTA Work

Leveraging on its expertise in trade facilitation and logistics and transport management, MI has been tapped to develop the approach for the monitoring and evaluation of the early harvest implementation on cross-border trade facilitation agreement (CBTA). Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, together with Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta, Director of Trade and Investment Facilitation (TIF) Department and Mr. Quan Anh Nguyen, TIF Program Specialist, presented the M&E approach of the MoU implementation during the joint committee meeting arranged by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on March 14-15 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

MI-IDRC Projects Presented in IDRC Conference

Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta, TIF Director, joined the 4th Canada ASEAN Business Forum and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Conference on March 21-23, 2018 in Singapore. Mr. Dutta presented MI's experiences with its IDRC-supported projects such as the recently-concluded project on women entrepreneurship.



MI Joins GMS in Anniversary Celebration

As a key actor in the Greater Mekong Subregion, MI took part in the seminar on *GMS 25th Anniversary: Achievement, Lessons Learned and the Way Forward* held last March 14, 2018 in Bangkok. The seminar, organized by the ADB together with the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, and the GMS National Coordinator for Thailand, is part of the 25 years celebration of the region's cooperation program.

MI Present at 6th GMS Summit

Mekong Institute reaffirms its commitment to regional cooperation with its attendance in the Sixth Greater Mekong Subregion Summit on March 29-31, 2018 in Hanoi, Vietnam. MI Executive Director Dr. Watcharas Leelawath joined representatives of other international organizations, development partners, business delegates and leaders and officials from the GMS countries in the event organized by the ADB. The gathering featured the GMS Business Summit where participants deliberated on key development issues of the region and ways to reinforce stronger cooperation





MI at SETA 2018

Mr. Sudam Pawar, Director of Innovation and Technological Connectivity (ITC) Department, served as moderator of the panel on *Energy Inter-connectivity in ASEAN Plus Region: Government and Private Sector Perspectives* during the SETA 2018 Conference on March 21-23, 2018 in Bangkok. The session tackled the importance of trans-boundary interconnection and power trade in the overall regional economic cooperation and integration framework, and brought in insights from energy experts from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand.

SME Cluster Group in MI-JAIF Project Shortlisted for Women Award

Ms. Saroeuth Morn of Khmer Golden Silk (KGS), one of the selected small and medium enterprise (SME) clusters in the MI-JAIF project, was shortlisted in the Women of the Future Southeast Asia Awards 2018-Social Entrepreneur category. Ms. Saroeuth attended the MI regional training program on *SME Cluster Development and Export Consortia Formation* in September 2016 as part of the project on *Enhancing Competitiveness of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises along the Southern Economic Corridor* supported by the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).

MI Executive Director Speaks About Cooperation along Border Areas

MI Executive Director Dr. Watcharas Leelawath served as discussant in a workshop that tackled language skills acquisition for working and coordinating with neighboring countries on March 8, 2018 in Loei, Thailand. Dr. Leelawath expounded on the cooperation pattern in the border areas of Thailand and Lao PDR and the issues and challenges faced by those working in the borders.



Indonesia Delegation Visits MI

Ms. Yuni Rizlina, representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Bangkok, visited MI last March 12, 2018. Ms. Pornwilai Pumira, MI External Relations Manager, welcomed the group and introduced them to MI's works and projects. In turn, the group presented the Indonesian Government's Technical Aid offered to CLMV countries.



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

APRIL

3-5

Regional Modular Workshop on Development of Transport Information Connectivity System along the Economic Corridors of the GMS

23-4 MAY

Regional Training Program on Sustainable Transport and Logistics Planning and Management

23-5 MAY

Communication Skill Capacity Building for the Regional Cooperation and Integration in the Lancang-Mekong Region

MEKONG INSTITUTE
123 Mittraphap Rd.,
Muang District
Khon Kaen 40002,
Thailand

+ 66 (0) 43 202 411 to 2
+66 (0) 43 204 041 to 2
+ 66 (0) 43 203 656
information@mekonginstitute.org