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■ TRAINING/WORKSHOP/SLV ACTIVITIES

Consultation Workshop on the GMS Transport Information Connectivity

MI hosted the three-day Regional Consultation Workshop on the GMS Transport Information Connectivity (GCIT) from April 19 until 21. The Government of the People's Republic of China partnered with MI to address the region's network of transport, trade, and tourism.



Twenty-five senior government officials from the six GMS countries attended the event. They shared their expertise and suggestions to assess the feasibility of the GTIC project. The participants also provided inputs for the project's design. [Read more >>>](#)



Regional Training on Affordable, Sustainable, and Innovative Technology-Based Energy for Mountainous Rural Area

One of MI's focus is to continuously develop and improve the Lancang-Mekong River Basin's basic energy sources and channels that provide its population efficient means to be connected. Highlighting the region's potential on developing renewable and sustainable rural energy technologies, MI hosted a two-week regional training on Affordable, Sustainable, and Innovative Technology-Based Energy for Mountainous Rural Area at the MI Headquarters. The People's Government of Yunnan Province sponsored the training, which was held from April 24 until May 5.



Twenty-five participants from the six GMS countries collaborated to enhance their capacities, specifically on rural energy and energy efficiency and its promotion. One of the main objectives of this initiative highlighted good regional practices and promotion of sustainable energy production and consumption. [Read more >>>](#)

EWEC (SDC) PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Capacity Development Training for Farmer Associations

A two-day capacity development training for farmer associations was held on April 1 and 2 in Myawaddy, Kayin State, Myanmar. Participants included 40 farmers from the Inn Gyin Myaing Village.



The objective was to increase farmers' knowledge on facilitating community associations. In detail, this included learning points such as how to establish farmer associations. The participants also learned how to assess and analyze their functions and roles within their associations. The Department of Agriculture (DoA) trainers and the village government administration provided lectures and practical methods to facilitate better understanding among the farmers.



At the end of the courses, the farmers presented their acquired knowledge on how to effectively manage farmer associations in the long term. The training also encouraged a farmer organization to reorganize their structure and a new one will also be formed.



Consultation Workshop on Potential Replication of Quadripartite Model

The RLED-EWEC project organized a provincial-level consultation workshop in Quang Tri, Vietnam on April 12, 2017. The workshop highlighted the achievements of the quadripartite model based on the project's previous interventions. The main objective of the event was to develop a sustainable business model where all relevant stakeholders will be involved on the basis of equal competition and mutual benefits. This will also integrate other prioritized crops in the province while simultaneously focusing on the coffee sector in Huong Hoa District.

Representatives of the local government, organizations, SMEs and farmer groups attended the workshop. There were also representatives from the KOICA-sponsored Happiness Program, Roots of Peace, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and sub-divisions, Farmers' Association, Cooperative Alliance and member cooperatives, Binh Dien Fertiliser Company, Agribank, Quang Tri Trading Corporation, Cassava Processing Factory, and other farmer groups.

Promoting Learning Process via Drip Irrigation Schemes and Nursery Model

To address the quality and productivity of coffee, the project developed and completed drip irrigation systems for coffee trees and coffee nursery. These have been recently completed in the Huong Hoa District in Quang Tri, Viet Nam. This activity started in 2016 to promote learning among coffee farmers and assist them in increasing their income. The demonstration models have already provided positive initial results and have also encouraged farmers from neighboring villages to learn and adopt the drip irrigation scheme.



First Khammouane GAP Rice Market Explored at National Level

Lao PDR's Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry organized the first Clean Agricultural Products Trade Fair at Vientiane on April 20-21, 2017. The objectives of the trade fair were to promote sustainable production of chemical-free agricultural products and strengthen private and public sectors to produce and promote food safety in Laos. Thirty booths of organic and GAP agricultural products were displayed and the products sold included vegetables, rice, coffee, fruits, honey, and eggs.



Khammouane rice farmers participated in the event. Their products received positive feedback from consumers and it also drew a potential partnership with Xuanye (Lao) Sole Co., Ltd, - the only authorized company to collect and export milled rice to China.



ADB Organizes Meeting on Boosting Agricultural Cooperation in the GMS

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) organized the Regional Roundtable and Resource Mobilization meeting in Bangkok, Thailand on April 25, 2017. Ms. Maria Theresa Medialdia, Director of the Agricultural Development and Commercialization Department, and Mr. Sudam Pawar, Director of the Innovation and Technological Connectivity Department attended the event. MI is a member of the Drafting Committee on the five-year GMS Strategy in promoting safe and environment-friendly agricultural products. In detail, the event's objectives included highlighting

opportunities and strengthening regional partnerships between various stakeholders. It also aimed to establish a means to improve institutional and program-level coordination to achieve efficient progress from initiatives.

MI Attends KKUIC International Seminar

Khon Kaen University International College (KKUIC) hosted the International Seminar on Conflicts in the Contemporary World on April 24, 2017 in Khon Kaen, Thailand. Dr. Jun Acedo, Senior Program Specialist at MI, shared valuable knowledge on the importance of unity and cooperation to achieve progressive development particularly in the GMS. He emphasized MI's key role as a leading provider for capacity building services in the GMS particularly in doing collaborative work between various stakeholders to strengthen the relationship between Mekong countries.



MI Signs MoU with Alibaba.com and UTCC

MI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Alibaba.com, Hangzhou, China and the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce on promoting market access of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the GMS. The event was held on April 26 in Bangkok, Thailand. The MoU was signed by Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, Executive Director of Mekong Institute (MI); Mr. Zhe Wu, Country Manager of Alibaba.com; and Dr. Sauwanee Thairungro, Associate Professor and President of UTCC. The three parties will co-organize capacity building programs and activities to increase the awareness and knowledge of the GMS members on e-commerce platforms. These will enhance the SMEs' business prospects in the global market especially those in rural provinces. [Read more >>>](#)

Myanmar Participants' Application of Knowledge Gained from MI-Food Safety Project

MI followed up on the implementation of the action plans developing during the regional training program on Food Safety Management Tools in Food Manufacturing. The follow up visit in Myanmar was done on April 27, 2017.

The program aimed to enhance the knowledge of participants on global food safety standards and understand the requirements of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) based on Codex Alimentarius. After the training program, MI participants established a professional network among fellow Myanmar participants.

Two representatives from the private sector - Genius Shan Highlands Coffee and Thazin Nwe Family Trading - worked closely with the representative of Food and Science Technology Association (FoSTA) in developing training courses on GMP and GAP for coffee and mango processors and producers. To meet international standards, the Genius Shan Highlands Coffee established a coffee packing house following the ISO 22000 and 9001 requirements, while the Thazin New Family Trading Company constructed a new mango processing facility according to design layout developed in consultation with a GMP expert and MI staff. Both enterprises target to be certified ISO and GMP in August and December respectively.



■ OTHER ACTIVITIES

Policy Dialogue on Cross-Border Trade Facilitation

MI initiated the pre-dialogue on cross-border trade in the East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC), particularly between Nakhon Phanom, Thailand and Khammouane, Lao PDR. The event was held at Nakhon Phanom on April 27, 2017. The objectives from the previous meetings such as policy changes on cross-border trade and relevant techniques have been covered. This initiative also aims to promote cooperation and development on the organizational level to stimulate trade and investment along the border. The event also included a consultation on establishing a working group for the program.

■ UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

ToT on Certified Logistics Master (Phase III)	May 1 – 5
Regional Training Program on Assuring Food Safety through Pest and Agrichemical Management	May 15—26
Regional Training Program and Action Research on Promoting Women Entrepreneurship for Export Business	May 29—June 9



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