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## ■ TRAINING/WORKSHOP/SLV ACTIVITIES

### Regional Training Program on Energy Efficiency Policies in the Greater Mekong Sub-region

MI, with the support from the Energy Policy and Planning Office (EPPO), Ministry of Energy, Thailand, organized the *Regional Training Program on Energy Efficiency Policies in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS)* from June 5-16, 2017 at the MI Residential Training Center. Thirty-one participants from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Yunnan Province People's Republic of China and Guangxi Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China attended the two-week training.



*The training included government officials and private sector representatives, who worked together to enhance their capacities in exploring energy-saving potentials in the region.*



*Ms. Thepphachanh, participant from Lao PDR, discussing the details of a policy including the goal of using more renewable energy by 2025.*

The training aimed to increase the understanding of the participants on the accessibility and profitability of energy-saving potentials in the GMS. The training also covered relevant government policies and aimed to improve the knowledge of the participants on regulations as well as on information and market-based measures. This was also a platform for the participants to exchange experiences and good practices in implementing energy efficiency programs in the GMS countries.



*Participants of the workshop explained in detail their respective projects and action plans.*

### Joint Synthesis Evaluation Workshop on SME Cluster Development and Export Consortia Formation and Business Database Development in the Southern Economic Corridor

MI's two-day Joint Synthesis and Evaluation (S&E) Workshop on "SME Cluster Development and Export Consortia Formation" and "Business Database Development in the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC)" was held from June 8 -9, 2017 at the MI Residential Training Center. Twenty-nine representatives of the SME product clusters, provincial trade and industry-related departments, and chambers of commerce and business associations have implemented their action plans since the said training programs' completion in 2016. They actively participated in sharing, reflecting, and learning on the implementation of their APs. This workshop was part of the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF)-funded project on *Enhancing Competitiveness of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) of ASEAN Mekong Sub-region (AMS)*. Read more [here](#).

## ■ TRAINING/WORKSHOP/SLV ACTIVITIES



Ms. Hao Wen, TIF Project Coordinator (seated right most), as she assists participants in facilitating the preparations to the mock trade fair—one of the activities during the training.

### Regional Training Program on Trade Events Promotion

MI successfully organized the one-week Regional Training Program on Trade Events Promotion from June 12 – 16, 2017 at the MI Residential Training Center. Thirty-five representatives from the public and private trade promotion organizations from 19 provinces along the Southern Economic Corridor covering Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam participated in the training program. This initiative is part of the project on Enhancing Competitiveness of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) of ASEAN Mekong Sub-region (AMS). The covered the following interrelated modules: Cross-Border Trade and Investment in the SEC; Promotion of Cross-Border Trade and Investment in the SEC; and Planning and Management of Effective Event for Trade and Business Development. Read more [here](#).

### Regional Training Program on Agri-food Inspection and Audit

MI collaborated with the New Zealand Aid Programme (NZAP) in successfully conducting the Regional Training Program on Agri-food Inspection and Audit from June 19-23, 2017. The week-long course, organized under the Food Safety Project, included 28 government officials from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam (CLMV), aimed to enhance the capacities of the participants in food safety inspection and audit during the processing and distributing stages as well as during cross-border trade. This course provides a solution to CLMV's need to further develop food safety inspection and audit in the region. Read more [here](#).



Participants, the ADC team - headed by Ms. Maria Theresa Medialdia ADC Director, Dr. Watcharas Leelawath - MI Executive Director, and Mr. Mark Burtenshaw - Food Safety Trainer and Auditor, during the launch of the training program.

## ■ EWEC (SDC) PROJECT ACTIVITIES



Representatives of the DOA, PAFO, and a cooperative as they discuss on how to pave the way for developments that should open doors for Khammouane farmers in terms of exporting their produce.

### EWEC Project Assists Khammouane Farmers to Facilitate Accessibility to the Chinese Market

A meeting between the Department of Agriculture, PAFO, and Mr. Bounyong Thavisouk—representative of a cooperative, was held to explore the possibilities of enhancing the capacity of farmers in paddy rice collecting, milling, and exporting Khammouane-produced rice to Xuanye Company – the sole Lao PDR-based rice exporter to China.

The initiative's objectives included an introduction on cooperatives as well as expounding on the potentials of rice production in Khammouane Province. This also enabled the representatives to seek opportunities to export rice to China.

This initiative provided positive results and high potentials of collaboration with the company—the cooperative agreed to supply 6,000 tons of non-glutinous rice per annum (with \$710/ton) and 5,000 tons of glutinous rice (with \$610/ton). The meeting resulted in an agreement of a site visit to assess the production facilities, which is envisioned to push through within July or August 2017 to facilitate exportation to China by December 2017.

## EWEC (SDC) PROJECT ACTIVITIES



Farmers as they listen intently to AWBA representatives as they explain the assistance that their company will provide.

### AWBA Group of Company Launches Activity in Myanmar

On June 10, 2017, at Min Lat Pan Village, Myawaddy, Myanma Awba Group of Company opened their company's Myawaddy branch as a response to the need of providing quality input and technical assistance to farmers.

Eighty-three farmers attended the event. Members of the EWEC Project assisted the initiative. AWBA representatives shared information about their services and available quality inputs and application. They also introduced the microfinance program of their company to expand the knowledge of the farmers and assist them in taking advantage of the program.

### Promoting Maize Trade in Kayin State

Members of the EWEC Project met with representatives of Bio-Supreme Company on June 14, 2017 at Hpa-an to share the Project's strategy, assess potential volume and quality of maize produced in the State, particularly in Myawaddy, and evaluate the trading mechanism of the company. The CEO of Bio-Supreme explained their trading practices for maize and other crops to the world market as well as the company's plan to invest in infrastructure development in cooperation with a local company. This also provides demonstration farms to allow farmers to better understand the efficacy of environmentally friendly products for crop production.



The meeting aimed to link the company with local farmers to further the latter's capacities in maize production.



The Project encouraged maize farmers who achieved high productivity for good quality rice.

### EWEC Project Encourages Good Production Practices of Maize Farmers

The Project organized a training session to promote farmers' capacities in maize production on June 18, 2017, at Inn Gying Myaing Village, Myawaddy. Through the session, farmers were motivated to produce market standard quality produce to facilitate access to potential markets. Ten farmers from eight villages were selected according to their high productivity and to their practice of applying high-standard, cost-effective cultivation practices. Forty-three Myawaddy farmers attended the event and the District Officer of the Department of Agriculture (DOA) encouraged the farmers and shared the Department's initiatives on technology sharing, linking external services for farmers, loan provision as well as the coordination mechanism for farmers in their livelihood improvement.

### Project Holds Conference on Border Trade Agreement

The Department of Industry and Trade of Quang Tri Province, in cooperation with MI, organized the conference on *Disseminating of the Border Trade Agreement (BTA) between Vietnam and Lao PDR* on June 15, 2017.

The event was part of the memorandum of understanding signed on March 2017 between Quang Tri and Savannakhet Provinces. Representatives of the local authorities, relevant agencies, business associations as well as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) attended the conference. The participants increased their knowledge on Border Trade Agreement as well as registration process and procedures for cross-border merchants, and regulations and preferential policies on tax and customs procedures applicable to cross border traders and residents in accordance with the BTA.



Participants from local authorities, agencies and SMEs gathered to further their capacities and knowledge on BTA.

## ■ OTHER ACTIVITIES



Representatives of the organizing team visited the Tonle Sap Lake Fishery as part of the Conference's technical tour.

### MI to Co-organize the 4th AFSA Conference

Organizers of the 4th Asian Food Safety and Security Association International Conference on Food Safety and Food Security (AFSA2018) have discussed and finalized the requirements for the forthcoming Conference. The representatives have also envisaged the committees of the event. Dr. Antonio Acedo Jr., MI Senior Program Specialist, represented MI during the meeting, which took place in Siem Reap, Cambodia on June 2-3, 2017.

The Conference delves into food safety and food security issues—particularly on providing sustainable food supply for the world's growing population. This will be co-organized by the Royal University of Agriculture, Cambodia; Mekong Institute (MI); and the Asia Food Safety and Security Association.

### MI Attends the International Trade Theory and Practices

Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta, Director, Trade & Investment Facilitation Department of MI, attended the one-week training on International Trade Theory and Practice at Research and Information Systems for Developing Countries (RIS) in New Delhi, India on June 19 – 24, 2017. The training covered and emphasized recent developments on international trade theories and approaches to enhance research capacities on international trade issues. It included modules on recent developments in trade theory, database and information, tools and techniques in trade analysis, FTAs and regional trading blocs, trade in technology, IPR and other issues. Thirty-six participants from India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Thailand attended the event, which was sponsored by the EXIM Bank of India.



### HTW Chur Switzerland Visits MI to Explore EWEC Project

The HTW Chur Switzerland Delegation visited MI on June 13, 2017, to explore the Institute's initiatives and advocacies. Dr. Mario Barblan assisted the delegation, which was headed by Ms. Barbara Haller Rupf, Director of Further Education, Institute of Tourism and Leisure, University of Applied Science HTW Chur.

The visit led off the discussion on MI's efforts, particularly the initiatives of the East-West Economic Corridor Project (EWEC Project). Mr. Nguyen Hung Cuong, Director of the EWEC Project, explained the Project's objectives and its partnership with the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC).

### Strengthening Capacities: MI Alumni Extend Food Safety Knowledge

Two localized training sessions were carried out by MI Alumni on June 27 and 28, 2017, in An Giang and Vinh Long Provinces, Vietnam. The activities aimed to extend knowledge and expertise on sustainable agrichemical and pest management practices to 60 farmers and farm extension workers.

These activities are part of the MI Alumni's action plans after completing the Regional Training on Assuring Food Safety through Pest and Agrichemical Management last May 2017. [Read more here.](#)



Mr. Dwight Ronan, ADC Project Coordinator and Ms. Hoang Ngoc Han, ADC Program Officer, attended the training sessions.

## ■ OTHER ACTIVITIES



### MI's Food Safety Project Organizes the National Knowledge Sharing Forum

Mekong Institute (MI) organized a one-day National Knowledge Sharing Forum on Food Safety at Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam on June 30, 2017. The forum gathered twelve MI alumni from both public and private sectors who participated in the first three MI-Food Safety Project (FSP) training programs. This event was a component of the MI Food Safety Program supported by the New Zealand Aid Programme that aims to develop food safety knowledge and expertise for various stakeholders in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam. [Read more here.](#)

### NECTEC Partners with MI on Promotion of Technology and Innovation

MI warmly welcomed the representatives of The National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC), headed by Dr. Kanokvate Tungpimolrut - NECTEC Deputy Executive Director, on June 30, 2017, at the MI Headquarters, Khon Kaen, Thailand.

Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, MI Executive Director, together with the MI Innovation and Technological Connectivity Department, headed by Mr. Sudam Pawar, presented MI's initiatives and actions. The visit aimed to promote engagement from both parties in advocating new technologies that support various stakeholders, particularly SMEs in the region. NECTEC is Thailand's national technology center that undertakes, supports, and promotes research and development of electronics and computer technologies to link research communities and industries.



## ■ UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Dissemination Workshop for Field Research on Cross-Border Value Chain Bottlenecks	July 6
Project Steering Committee Meeting for Mid-term Evaluation	July 7
Regional Training Program on Promoting Women Entrepreneurship for Export Business	July 3 – 14
Regional Training Program on Mainstreaming Food Safety Risk Analysis	July 10 – 14
Mekong Forum 2017	July 14
Workshop on GMS Power Equipment Operation & Maintenance and Safety Management	July 20 – 21
Regional Training Program on Promoting Consumer Awareness	July 24 – 28



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