

### INSIDE

CLMV Science Reporters Join MI Training on Communicating Food Safety

MI, Savannakhet Province Sign MOU for Project Scale Up

MI Holds International Training on Green Freight and Logistics Development

MI Celebrates 21st Anniversary

### TRAINING/WORKSHOP/SLV ACTIVITIES

#### Cambodian MI Alumni Share Experience in Promoting Food Safety

Mekong Institute (MI) gathered 30 public and private sector representatives for the National Knowledge Sharing Forum on Food Safety in Cambodia on August 1.



The National Knowledge Sharing Forum in Cambodia was second in the series of forums aimed at building a strong network of food safety actors in the country.

Held in Phnom Penh, the forum served as a sharing platform for Cambodian participants from the first five training programs under the MI-Food Safety Project on their experiences and lessons learned in developing and implementing local action plans. [Read more.](#)



MI alumni promote safe farming for rice and coffee farmers in the region.

#### Vietnamese MI Alumni Organize Localized IPM Trainings

Two participants from MI's recent training programs under the Food Safety Project organized localized trainings for 63 farmers on integrated pest management (IPM) and effective pesticide use on rice and coffee on August 1 and 3. Held in Soc Trang and Lam Dong provinces of Vietnam, the two activities were part of the action plans developed during the *Regional Training Program on Assuring Food Safety through Pest and Agrichemical Management* organized in May 2017. [Read more.](#)



Forum delegates discuss their experience in implementing action plans

#### Myanmar Alumni Identify Local Safe Food Priorities

MI, in partnership with the New Zealand Aid Programme (NZAP), held a one-day forum in Yangon on August 8 to meet 27 Myanmar participants from food safety training programs held since late 2016. [Read more.](#)

## ■ TRAINING/WORKSHOP/SLV ACTIVITIES



The MI team with vegetable producers during the two-day training.

### Svay Reing Vegetable Producers Attend IPM Training

A localized training on pest and agrichemical management on green leafy vegetables was held last August 3–4 in Svay Reing Province, Cambodia. Co-organized by MI, Svay Rieng Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and Svay Reing Agro-product Cooperatives, 20 vegetable producers participated in the course.

The activity intended to guide farmers on pest control using environment-friendly practices to ensure the quality and safety of their fresh produce. [Read more.](#)

### MI Promotes Good Manufacturing Practices

Following the successful completion of the *Regional Training Program on Food Safety Management Tools in Food Manufacturing* last year, MI re-organized the aforementioned safe food course from August 14–18.

Aimed at building the technical capacity of participants on global food safety standards, the training program targeted to enhance participants' understanding of the requirements of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) based on *Codex Alimentarius*. [Read more.](#)



Participants introducing themselves at the start of the program.

### SLV/Business Matching Held to Strengthen Fish Farming SMEs

MI organized a Structured Learning Visit (SLV) cum Business Matching in Thailand for the pisciculture groups on August 15–21. The activity is part of the project on *Enhancing Competiveness of SMEs in the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) of ASEAN Mekong Subregion (AMS)*, funded by Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).

The seven-day business visit brought participants to successful industrial clusters and supportive institutions in Thailand. [Read more](#)



The MI team with the participants during the seven-day training.

### Lao PDR Officials Participate in MI Training in Building the Region's Information Management System

MI, in partnership with Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA), organized a training program on *Effective and Coordinated Information Management System to Facilitate Investment and Business in the GMS* from August 21–September 1.

Seventeen senior government officials and private sector representatives attended the two-week training on enhancing the use of information to database statistics for the industry and trade. [Read more.](#)



Lao government officials and representatives of the private sector with MI staff during the launch of the training.

## ■ TRAINING/WORKSHOP/SLV ACTIVITIES



Freight and logistics participants sharing their experiences and ideas.

### MI Holds International Training on Green Freight and Logistics Development

With support from TICA, MI successfully conducted a two-week Internal Training Program on Green Freight and Logistics Development from August 21–September 1. The training aimed to address the importance of green practices in the logistics sector by enhancing knowledge and skills on logistics operations and services of agencies involved in the transport and logistics sectors. [Read more.](#)

### CLMV Science Reporters Join MI Training on Communicating Food Safety

Thirty-two science communicators and media professionals from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam (CLMV) attended the regional media training course on *Communicating Food Safety* on August 28–September 1.

The program sought to raise media interest in covering food safety issues in the region. [Read more.](#)



CLMV science reporters join MI to discuss strategies in reporting food safety issues.

## ■ EWEC (SDC) PROJECT ACTIVITIES

### MI, Savannakhet Province Sign MOU for Project Scale Up



To promote further collaboration between MI and Savannakhet Province through the Regional and Local Economic Development-East-West Economic Corridor (RLED-EWEC) Project, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in August 3. Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, MI Executive Director, and Mr. Thonekeo Phouthakaiyalath, Savannakhet Vice Governor, led the signing.

The partnership hopes to further improve competitiveness of the rice sector in Savannakhet Province by promoting GAP and GMP. To achieve this, MI and the Savannakhet Province will work together in laying out a strong foundation to enable strengthened cross-border trade.

### EWEC Scales Up GAP Knowledge Dissemination in Khammouane

A knowledge dissemination activity on GAP was conducted from August 8–16 in 14 villages in Nongbok District, Khammouane Province, Lao PDR. The activity targeted to disseminate GAP knowledge to farmers and encourage them to apply these knowledge in their own paddy fields. Similar activities are being conducted in eight other villages.

Starting in late 2015, farmer groups in three districts of Khammounne Province were involved through different capacity building initiatives on improving rice quality production through GAP. By January 2017, four farmer groups received GAP certification. The current phasing out phase hopes to scale up these achievements to more groups and areas.



## ■ EWEC (SDC) PROJECT ACTIVITIES

### Awba Company, MI Advance Efforts on Cost-effective Crop Production



A one-day training on low-cost cultivation practices was organized on August 7. About 28 farmer leaders from eight villages of Myawaddy Township participated the training.

In collaboration with Awba Company, the training focused on increasing the knowledge and capacity of farmers in using local agricultural inputs provided by Awba Company, including product components and prescribed application methods on specific crops. The activity also aimed to strengthen the relationship between producers and domestic input suppliers.

### EWEC Strengthens Local Partnerships to Support Coffee Replantation Project in Quang Tri Province

The RLED-EWEC project team was invited to attend the dissemination forum on August 2 about the *Replantation and Sustainable Development of Coffee Trees in Quang Tri Province in the Period 2017–2020 Towards 2025 Project* organized by the Quang Tri Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the EMEE Project of World Vision.

Local authorities, SME representatives, and smallholder coffee farmers were present at the forum. The participants expressed their appreciation on RLED-EWEC project's efforts in strengthening the coffee sector development in Quang Tri Province. Particularly, the project, in cooperation with DARD, successfully set up a nursery for a new coffee variety in Huong Hoa District, which has been in operation since June 2017. The forum highlighted the project's target to establish farmer groups and seek their participation in linkage models introduced by MI's project. Upon the proposal of local authorities, enterprises, and farmers, the project commits to provide technical support for farmer group formation and operation of the two linkage models.



### Vietnam Team Reviews Quadripartite Linkage Model



MI's RLED-EWEC Project-Vietnam Field Office carried out a review of the quadripartite model from August 21–23. With the assistance of an external consultant, the team collaboratively analyzed the current local situation, identified strengths and gaps, consolidated lessons learned, and drew up recommendations to improve the quadripartite model in preparation to the project's upcoming phase.

In the past, the project has significantly contributed to improved income of coffee farmers and increased profit of enterprises via various interventions, including the quadripartite linkage model. For its phasing out phase, the project hopes to replicate and scale up current project interventions.

## EWEC (SDC) PROJECT ACTIVITIES

### MI Builds Capacity of Local Partners in Quang Tri Province

From August 24–26, the RLED-EWEC Project team organized a training of trainers on group formation, management, and business planning for potential project partners. Twelve participants from different sectors who are capable and committed to sustain and up-scale the two linkage models in Quang Tri Province participated in the activity.

This training is the kick-off activity for the Vietnam team for the project's second phase. For the upcoming phase, the project focuses on engaging local partners, who have been actively involved in the initial phase, to carry out the project activities and lead the process of local economic development through direct linkages and/or quadripartite models.



## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### MI Participates on Furthering ASEAN-India Ties



Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta, Director of the Trade and Investment Facilitation Department, attended the ASEAN-India Forum 2107 on August 3–4 in Bangkok, Thailand.

The forum aimed to strengthen the ASEAN-India Economic Partnership by sharing perspectives of lead speakers on the untapped potentials in trade and investment within and outside ASEAN and India, as well as discuss the implications of the ASEAN Economic Community to India and the connectivity of the two regions at present and in the future. [Read more.](#)

### MI Attends Seminar on EWEC Cooperation and Development

MI, in collaboration with the Da Nang People's Committee, organized the seminar on *Cooperation and Service Development on the East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC)* on August 10. The objectives of the workshop were to assess the potentials and advantages of the EWEC for cooperation and service development, and discuss solutions to strengthen regional cooperation. More than 70 representatives of embassies, government departments, and business owners from Vietnam attended the seminar. [Read more.](#)



### KDI Representatives Visit MI

MI welcomed the delegates from the Korea Development Institute School of Public Policy and Management (KDI) at the MI Headquarters on August 24. Eleven representatives from various Korean public and non-government sectors participated in the study visit. This initiative is part of The Asia Foundation (TAF) Korea's multi-year program that aims to strengthen Korea's international assistance efforts from the public and non-governmental sectors.

This year's theme of the initiative highlights the Sustainable Development Cooperation: South-South and Triangular Cooperation, with a focus on Thailand's efforts in implementing efforts promoting trade and economic progress in the southern area of the GMS. In detail, the study visit aims to (a) further the delegates' knowledge on MI's initiatives on its thematic areas, particularly on trade and investment; (b) increase their familiarity with the South-South initiatives, as well as the roles of the different stakeholders and partners, and (c) better understand the challenges of the cooperation and partnerships in the region.

MI has been carrying out strategies to strengthen the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC), where business clusters have been formed to assist and strengthen the capacities of SMEs in Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. The delegates observed two on-going training programs held at the MI Residential Training Center. In addition, they were able to interact with the participants of the *International Training Program on Green Freight and Logistics Development* as well as the *Regional Training Program on Effective and Coordinated Information Management System to Facilitate Investment and Business in GMS*, both implemented by MI in partnership with TICA.



### MI Celebrates 21 Years of Strengthening the GMS

Members of the MI family, together with participants attending in-house training programs, celebrated the Institute's 21st anniversary on August 28. MI marks more than two decades of promoting and putting forward regional development and cooperation. As part of this momentous event, MI donated books and publications to Khon Kaen University.



## ■ UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Technical Assistance for Action Plan Implementation-National Workshop on Promoting Women Entrepreneurship for Export Business in CLMV (Vientiane, Lao PDR)	<b>September 5 - 6</b>
Structural Learning Visit cum Business Matching in Thailand	<b>September 10 - 16</b>
Regional Training Program on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment: Sharing Good Practices and Experiences of Thailand	<b>September 11 - 22</b>
Professional Training on GMS Power Equipment Operation and Maintenance and Safety Management (Kunming, Yunnan Province, China)	<b>September 11 - 22</b>
Technical Assistance for Action Plan Implementation-National Workshop on Promoting Women Entrepreneurship for Export Business in CLMV (Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam)	<b>September 20 - 21</b>
Business Networking on Sustainable Transport and Logistics Planning and Management	<b>September 25 - 29</b>
Regional Training cum Business Networking on Sustainable Transport and Logistics Planning and Management	<b>September 25 - October 6</b>
Khon Kaen Business Forum 2017 on Promoting Opportunities for Trade and Investment Through Sustainable Innovation and Technology Management in GMS	<b>September 26</b>
Technical Assistance for Action Plan Implementation-National Workshop on Promoting Women Entrepreneurship for Export Business in CLMV (Phnom Penh, Cambodia)	<b>September 30 - October 1</b>



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