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TRAINING/WORKSHOP/SLV ACTIVITIES

MI-CSG Training Promotes Regional Power Connectivity



Mekong Institute, in collaboration with China Southern Power Grid Co., Ltd. (CSG) / Yunnan Power Grid Co., Ltd. (YNPG), conducted a two-week professional training program on *Power Market Construction and Development* on July 29 to August 9, 2019. About 30 technicians and middle management personnel from the national energy authorities as well as representatives from the power utilities in the Lancang-Mekong region joined the activity at YNPG Yixing Training Base in Kunming, China. Aside from developing participants' capacities, the training also encouraged cross-cultural communication and interactions through learning sessions on Chinese traditional calligraphy and dumpling making. [Read more.](#)

Strengthening Synergies for Climate Adaptation in the Mekong-Lancang



Water resource experts from the six Mekong-Lancang countries attended the 2nd regional consultation on *Transboundary Cooperation Mechanism on Adaptation to Climate Change and Hydropower Development Projects* on August 6, 2019 in Bangkok. This event is the last of a series of activities planned under the project which was launched in October last year. The activity aimed to foster increased cooperation among Mekong-Lancang riparian countries to improve climate adaptation in the river basin. [Read more.](#)

PROSAFE Training Highlights Agri-Food Packaging and Labeling



Mekong Institute (MI) held a regional training program on *Packaging and Labeling of Processed Agri-Food* on August 12-16, 2019 at MI's Residential Training Center. Supported by the New Zealand Aid Programme, the training targeted to enhance participant's understanding on the fundamentals of food safety, packaging technologies for quality and safety for distribution, storage and sale, Codex standards for food labeling, food preservation and shelf-life determination. About 28 participants from the government and line ministries, agri-food enterprises and supply chain stakeholders in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam attended the training, which also featured a structured learning visit to Tesco Lotus Supermarket to observe actual industry practices. [Read more.](#)

National Consultation Workshops Steer Direction for Efficient Coordination under MLC

On August 14 and 16, MI organized two national consultation workshops in Vientiane, Lao PDR and Bangkok, Thailand, respectively. The national consultation workshops focused on having an in-depth understanding on coordination processes (i) of MLC programs at national and regional levels and (ii) between MLC programs and other regional and sub-regional cooperation programs. About 30 officials and representatives from key ministries, implementing agencies, and concerned institutions, attended the workshop in Vientiane and 15 officials and representatives from key ministries related to MLC's priority areas joined the workshop in Bangkok. [Read more.](#)



Female at the Forefront: Fostering Gender Equality and Women Empowerment across Nations

MI organized an international training program on *Gender Equality and Women Empowerment: Sharing Good Practices and Experiences of Thailand* on August 20 to September 2, 2019. The program hosted government representatives from 18 countries working in ministries and agencies related to education, planning and international relations, foreign affairs, social and economic inclusion, gender equality, women and children welfare and social development. In collaboration with the Thailand International Cooperation Agency, the training intended to equip participants with increased knowledge on gender equality initiatives and implementation as well as heightened appreciation of gender-sensitive planning and budgeting. [Read more.](#)



SEZs and Connectivity: Cementing Cooperation through Physical and Digital Connections

In collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce of Thailand, and with the support of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Special Fund, MI held a workshop on *Enhancement of Business Connections and Information Sharing between Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in Lancang-Mekong (LM) Region*. The workshop discussed issues of coordination, cooperation and information sharing mechanisms and one stop service centers in SEZs in the LM countries and fostered networking among participants for increased intra-regional cooperation. Around 24 representatives from government departments, specialized agencies and institutions related to trade and investment, joined this activity on August 26-30, 2019 at the MI Residential Training Center. [Read more.](#)



MI Young Scholars Pay Courtesy Visits to P.R. China Officials and Development Partners

Mekong Institute Young Scholars (MIYS) paid courtesy visits to senior leaders of P.R. China and development partners of MI on August 25-31, 2019. The visits in Bangkok and Kunming aimed to enrich their understanding of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC) mechanism and its contributions toward regional cooperation and integration as well as knowledge of China's foreign affairs policies and development trends. Executive Director Dr. Watcharas Leelawath led the delegation consisting of MI staff and seven MIYS from P.R. China, Lao PDR, and Myanmar. [Read more.](#)





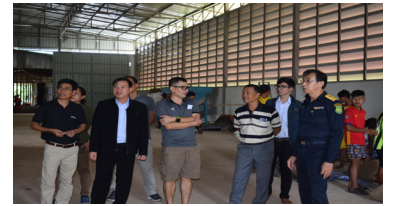
Project Taps on Lao Brewery Company for Market Linkage Promotion

On August 6, the EWEC Lao Field Office facilitated a meeting and company visit to Bounmy and Saiboua Rice Mills, joined by the audit team from Lao Brewery, PAFO representatives, cooperative members, as well as rice mill owners. Following an orientation on paddy collection and rice processing capabilities, the team conducted a site inspection guided by three criterias, namely good manufacturing practices, 5S methodology, and recording or documentation procedures. The results were generally impressive yet areas for improvement include recording and traceability. The audit team expressed potentials of the rice mills to participate in the bidding process, and if approved based on the company’s criteria, can possibly advance to negotiation and MoU signing.



SLV Highlights Enhanced Cross-Border Inspection Procedures

Through the initiative of the Myanmar Field Office, Mae Sot Plant Quarantine Station hosted representatives of Myawaddy Plant Quarantine Station for a structured learning visit (SLV) on August 9, 2019. Centered on System of Plant Quarantine Mechanism and Phyto and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures, the SLV aimed to increase knowledge on plant quarantine operations between the twin border cities; promote standardized SPS measures at the border checkpoints; encourage knowledge transfer and application; and strengthen relations for continued cooperation between the two quarantine stations. The visit was also an opportunity for heads of the respective stations to discuss regulations in place as well as exchange ideas and strategies for efficient quarantine procedures. [Read more.](#)



Furthering Coffee Value Chain Development in Quang Tri Province

Representatives from 18 coffee farmer groups discussed the challenges and constraints encountered in implementing the two business models and reviewed the roles of each participating party including farmer groups, enterprises, and other stakeholders. Held on August 9 in Huong Hoa district, the meeting identified issues related to effective performance and partnerships between farmer groups and enterprises, which led to drafting a list of proposals and recommendations to local authorities and business partners for continued support of coffee value chain development in the province.



Monitoring Post-Dialogue Updates and Progress

On August 15-17, the EWEC Vietnam Field Office (VNFO) conducted a follow-up on the updates and progress after two RLED-EWEC led events. Enterprises from Quang Binh expressed appreciation of the improvements in terms of goods and post-border gate clearances; while Cha Lo BCP’s clearance procedures have promoted smoother flow of goods and vehicles as a result of the B2G between Khammouane, Nakhon Phanom, and Quang Binh.



Succeeding the Business Forum, six MoUs were signed between enterprises from Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand to formalize cooperation for supporting and speeding up enterprise development. A meeting with Quang Binh enterprises tackled inevitable challenges including import-export procedures of agricultural products and language barriers. Based on that, the VNFO worked with Quang Binh agencies (Department of Customs, Department of Industry and Trade, Department of Foreign Affairs) to determine solutions and develop action plans in support of the enterprises.



Series of Meetings Kickoff Contract Farming for Wet Season in Lao PDR

Meetings were conducted on August 18-24 between farmer groups from Nhommalath, Mahaxay and Nongbok Districts and two rice mills represented by Mr. Bounyong and Ms. Kaikeo, Managing Directors of Saiboua Rice Mill and Bounmy Rice Mill, respectively. Spearheaded by the RLED-EWEC Project, the meetings clarified and settled the contract agreements which covered requirements, incentives, collection period, payment terms, as well as the promotion and standardization of GAP. The farmer groups are expected to submit members' data on rice varieties, cultivated land area, and estimated sales volume to the rice millers for their work and budget planning in preparation for the harvest season in November-December this year.

Stakeholders Gear Up for CBTA Implementation between Thailand and Myanmar

A total of 50 cross-border traders, farmers, farm managers and agricultural merchants joined the training on *Cross-border Trade Procedures of Agricultural Products* held on July 30-31, 2019 in Nakhon Phanom, Thailand. Aimed at strengthening import-export transactions between Nakhon Phanom and Khammouane, Lao PDR, the training covered topics on cross-border trade standards and policies as well as up-to-date practices and procedures. The training program was jointly organized by MI and the Office of Commercial Affairs, through the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. [Read more.](#)



Coffee Farmers Set to Establish Alliance

A farmer group alliance is set to be established as agreed by the leaders of 13 coffee farmer groups in Huong Phung commune during their August 28-meeting. Spearheaded by an active member, the alliance will be guided by regulations to ensure efficient and smooth coordination between the bank, fertilizer company, and farmer groups.



Maize Farmers Visit Loikaw

A group of 38 maize farmers from Myawaddy, accompanied by staff of Myanmar Field Office and the Department of Agriculture, participated in a structured learning visit (SLV) to Loikaw, Kayah State on August 28-29. The SLV focused on increasing knowledge on quality maize production and post-harvest management by visiting and observing actual practices at farmers and demonstration fields, feed factory, and the State Agricultural Institute. The visit also served as an avenue for networking and sharing of experiences and techniques with fellow farmers in Kayah State.





MI Welcomes Korean Research Experts and Academicians

MI welcomed a group of researchers from Seoul National University and Sun Moon University last August 14 at the MI headquarters. They were greeted by Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, MI Executive Director, and Ms. Pornwilai Pumira, External Relations Manager. Part of an ongoing research project on Mekong-Korea cooperation, the meeting focused on the current status of the Mekong-ROK Cooperation Fund and its priority sectors encompassing infrastructure, agriculture and rural development, and human resource development, among others. [Read more.](#)



MI Speaks at GCMS Workshop

The Global Center for Mekong Studies (GCMS) Workshop was held on August 21-24, 2019 in Pakse, Lao PDR. Centered on the theme *Building Mekong-Lancang Economic Development Belt (LMEDB): Prospects and Challenges*, the workshop served as a platform to discuss issues and challenges associated with the LMEDB and collectively identify ways to maximize potentials and opportunities. As one of the session speakers, MI Executive Director Dr. Watcharas Leelawath expounded on the progress and challenges in strengthening agricultural value chains in the Mekong Sub-region.



SEPTEMBER

2-13

Regional Training Program on Food Safety Emergency Management in the Supply Chain

9

2nd Business to Government (B2G) Meeting on Cross-Border Trade Facilitation between Mukdahan, Quang Tri, and Savannakhet

25-26

Workshop on Power Market Construction and Development

30-11
OCT

Regional Training Program on Food Risk Management

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