

**" Unleashing
Entrepreneurship
For Development & Trade "**

15-17 November, 2006
At
Hotel Royal Princess
Larn Luang, Bangkok
Thailand

Sponsored by:



**Global Issues and
Sustainable Development,
Swiss Agency for
Development & Cooperation
Bern, Switzerland**

In association with:



**Mekong Institute,
Khon Kaen, Thailand**

Organised by:



**Entrepreneurship Development
Institute of India
Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India**

BACKGROUND

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a significant role in economic development of both developed and developing countries. Much credit for industrialization and employment generation in these countries goes to the impressive economic growth steered by SMEs. Role of SMEs in foreign trade has also been well recognised by now. Economies in the Greater Mekong Sub-region can noticeably prosper with a 'wide and strong based' SME sector. However, although resource rich with tremendous inherent potential, the region by and large lags behind primarily on account of absence of entrepreneurial competence and grit in people; non-conducive business environment; lack of mechanism for public-private partnerships and inconsistency in policy formulation and implementation. For the region to match steps with contemporary economies of the world, it is urgent to ensure that informational asymmetry is avoided; latent entrepreneurial potential is unleashed and awareness, is created about the Sub-region and its inherent scope.

The Global Issues and Sustainable Development (GISD) Division of Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) following its mandate of development and trade, has initiated a number of initiatives in the Region to support the SME sector in the Sub-region, especially in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam. The GISD-SDC package aims at creating suitable awareness in the GMS, building an effective task force for undertaking advocacy on behalf of SMEs at the regional and international platforms, empowering the stakeholders including Industry Associations, Chambers of Commerce, specialized support institutions, NGOs and civil society by creating awareness and building their capacity in trade negotiations and contributing in the policy making process by the concerned governments and international agencies including WTO. In addition, GISD-SDC also intends to support the process by utilizing the experience of India and Thailand, which have emerged as "Anchor Countries" in the Sub-region.

The GISD-SDC initiatives involve premier institutions of Ganga-Mekong region to accomplish its goals. **Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI)**, Ahmedabad, an internationally acknowledged institute in the areas of entrepreneurship training, research and education, has been appointed to broadbase entrepreneurial activities in the region on behalf of GISD-SDC.

Following this, EDI is conducting a workshop in partnership with **Mekong Institute, Thailand** with the broader objectives of spreading the movement of entrepreneurial skills in trade negotiations and strengthening regional trade integration in GMS countries.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To build entrepreneurial skills and competencies
- To strengthen inter & intra-regional trade linkages
- To develop trade, especially in the global markets under prevailing WTO regime
- To enlighten delegates on WTO provisions and its implications on SME entrepreneurs
- To create awareness about skill upgradation and capacity building interventions for the industry

DURATION AND VENUE

The Workshop is scheduled during November 15-17, 2006 at Hotel Royal Princess, Near UN Building, Larn Luang, Bangkok.

THEMES AND COVERAGE AREAS

Day 1: Wednesday, 15 November, 2006

Unleashing Entrepreneurship:

- Strengths and weaknesses of SMEs of GMS countries, with specific reference to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam
- Issues and problems
- Overcoming obstacles
- Policy needs

Day 2: Thursday, 16 November, 2006

Perceptions and Concerns on International Trade:

- Perceptions of GMS countries by international market
- Perceptions of international market by GMS countries
- WTO provisions and implications

Capacity Building Issues:

- Competing in world/regional markets
- Advocacy and negotiations skills
- Export-credit
- Mindset

Day 3: Friday, 17 November, 2006

Building Roadmap:

- Energizing entrepreneurship
- Developing modality for exchange of information on trade and exports
- Role of stakeholders in creating conducive environment for expanding international trade
- Priority sectors

PARTICIPATION

The Workshop is open for senior delegates from Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam representing Ministries/ Public Sector, Chambers of Commerce, Industry Associations, Export Councils, Media dealing with economic issues, Women Associations and Entrepreneurship Training Institutions.

FACULTY

The faculty group consists of entrepreneurship and SME experts from reputed institutions like Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Mekong Institute, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, Trade and Investment Division of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and Economic Institute of Cambodia. Resource persons from Lao PDR and Vietnam institutions will also be invited to supplement the faculty group. Besides, a successful industry association from India would be invited as a 'resource person' for experience sharing.

OUTCOME

- Awareness would be created on entrepreneurship capacity building.
- Stronger trade linkages and mechanism for exchange of information would be established.
- Forum for private sector and policy makers for advocacy and negotiations would be put in place.
- Development and trade towards multilateral mainstreaming of regional economic integration would get a boost.
- A conducive environment for expanding entrepreneurial base and international trade would be created.

FOLLOW-UP ACTION

Efforts will be made to sustain awareness generated through the Workshop. This will include suitable mechanisms for review and follow-up on regular basis to prepare the region on advocacy, entrepreneurship and issues like WTO etc.

ABOUT ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE OF INDIA (EDI)

Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI), an autonomous and not-for-profit Institute, set up in 1983, is sponsored by apex financial institutions; the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), IFCI Ltd., ICICI Ltd., State Bank of India (SBI) and the Government of Gujarat.

EDI's pioneering activities in entrepreneurship development training have established that people from all walks of life can become business owners. It has demolished the myth that entrepreneurs are born, and cannot be made. Through well conceived training interventions and capacity building activities, over last 20 years, EDI has equipped thousands of people with entrepreneurial skills.

EDI's successes and commitments have culminated in recognition of its achievements by the Government of India and the State Governments. In the international arena, the entrepreneurship development efforts by way of sharing resources and organising training programmes, have helped EDI earn accolades and support from the World Bank, Commonwealth Secretariat, UNIDO, ILO, FNSt, British Council, Ford Foundation and several other renowned agencies.

The Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India has assigned to EDI the prestigious task of setting up entrepreneurship Development Centres in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam and Myanmar. The Govt. of India and UNIDO sponsored "Inter Regional Centre for Entrepreneurship and Investment Training" set up at the Institute would also focus on New Enterprise Creation and Enterprise Upgradation in Mozambique, Sudan, Yemen and Lao PDR.

In recognition of its achievements, the United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP), Bangkok, Thailand, has declared EDI as a 'Centre of Excellence'.

ABOUT THE SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SDC)

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is Switzerland's international cooperation agency within the Swiss Foreign Ministry. It has a policy analysis unit dealing with international trade and financing for development, called the **Global Issues and Sustainable Development (GISD) Division**. The mandate of GISD consists of a blend of policy influencing endeavours at both the Southern and the Northern end. It's pointing towards:

- Internal counselling of SDC so as to get its plea of coherence better integrated in the Swiss economic policy making; and
- Facilitation of south-south cooperation aimed at helping build up collective assertiveness for developing countries in the multilateral economic negotiations.

Both the elements are closely intertwined. Further, under its broad objective of multilateral economic cooperation programme in South and South East Asia, GISD's focus is on capacity building of GMS countries in terms of trade, investments, environment and fiscal issues.

At the Southern end of its mandate, GISD strives to promote sub-regional and inter-regional economic and trade integration. The external contributions that think-tanks and civil society organisations from regional leading countries can mobilise in support of their information-brokering role is critical for them to stand out to neighbouring countries or across regions. As a first-case typical operation, GISD has entered a test-partnership with CUTS, an international India-based NGO dealing with trade and development policies. The Ganga-Mekong project funded by SDC and implemented by CUTS aims at exploring trade relationship between India and the Mekong Riverside countries, exposing local decision-makers to the Indian influence. GISD exclusively resorts to software, knowledge building, and operations to fulfil its mandate.

ABOUT MEKONG INSTITUTE (MI)

Mekong Institute (MI) is an independent GMS organisation chartered to provide specialised learning programmes for key public and private sector personnel in the areas of leadership, development and regional cooperation. MI's residential learning facility is located on the campus of Khon Kaen University in Northeast Thailand. It serves the countries of the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS): Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam and Yunnan Province of China. Mekong Institute offers professional development programmes and knowledge networks to assist GMS countries in their transition to market oriented economies. The mission of the Institute is to contribute through human resource development and capacity building to the acceleration of sustainable economic and social development and poverty alleviation in the Greater Mekong Sub-region and promote regional cooperation and integration. MI operates as an autonomous institution under the Governance of a Council whose charter is well-defined. The Institute operates as a non profit, autonomous organisation, international in status and non political in management, staffing and operations. It is organized exclusively for educational purposes working in close collaboration with other reputed GMS and international institutions.

For further information, please contact
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