

# RLED-EWEC FACT SHEET

RESULTS IN MYANMAR  
2013 – 2019



## INTRODUCTION

The **Regional and Local Economic Development-East West Economic Corridor (RLED-EWEC) Project** has been supporting maize value chain development in Kayin State, Myanmar since 2013. Implemented by Mekong Institute and supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Project has been instrumental in improving the livelihood of smallholder maize growers in Hpa-an and Myawaddy townships and the economic performance of small and medium enterprises in the areas.

## MAIZE VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT

**1,189**

farmers reached  
(trained and received  
value chain services)

**1,093**

direct farmer household  
beneficiaries and other indirect  
beneficiaries increased  
household income by \$647,308  
(\$592 per household)

**16**

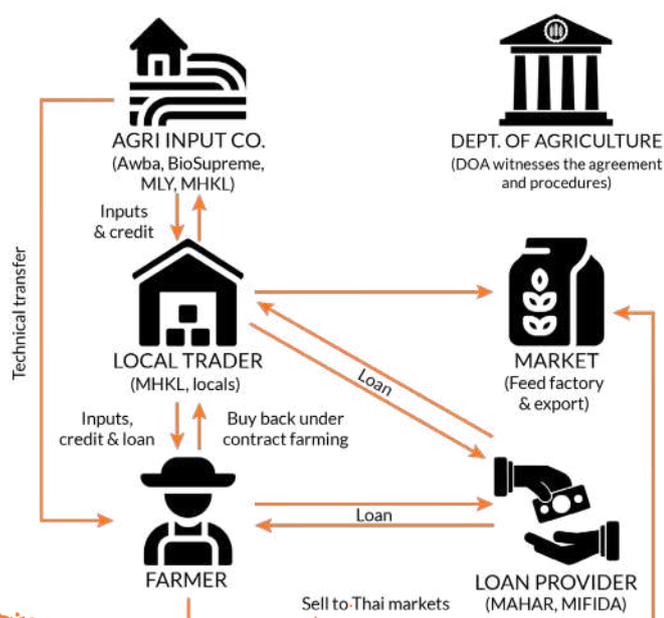
SMEs earned profit of  
\$238,349 by participating  
in value chain activities

Given that maize farmers in Kayin state lack financial resources to purchase quality inputs such as certified seeds, fertilizers and herbicides, the Project's most significant achievement has been in enabling access to inputs, including loans and credit, to maize growers. Through the business linkage model, it also successfully linked farmers directly with domestic/local traders and SMEs, therefore offering them added cushion from potential risks like a volatile market and border closure by the Thai Government (maize has been originally traded with Thai traders). By bringing in local input companies such as Myanmar Awba Group, Bio Supreme Company, Ma Har Company, Mya Htay Kywel Lin Company and more recently, Mawlar Myaing Company and Microfinance Delta International Company, farmers from the northern and southern parts of Kayin State received better access to farm inputs and loans. In this business model, the Department of Agriculture (DOA) participates as a witness, overseeing the whole process and fostering trust among the stakeholders.



As a result of these linkages, participating maize traders, input retailers and companies, and loan providers also increased their profit by \$238,349. The delivery of an array of knowledge capacity building activities such as trainings on farmer group formation, leadership and management, crop management techniques, cost-effective cultivation methods, integrated pest management (IPM) and postharvest management, also helped over 1,189 farmers improve their cultivation practices.

The Project also facilitated the formation of 27 farmer groups that participated in value chain activities in Hpa-an and Myawaddy of Kayin state. Farmers likewise entered into contract farming arrangements and gained access to seed and fertilizers while commanding premium price for their products from local agricultural companies.



## CROSS-BORDER TRADE FACILITATION

One of the outcomes targeted by the RLED-EWEC Project is “improved enabling environment for local economic development and trade in and between the target districts and provinces.” As such, a number of efforts have also been undertaken as part of the Project’s overall objective of enhancing cross-border trading.

A joint consultation workshop between the provinces of Kayin and Tak were held in December 26, 2016 that served as an interactive platform for both sides to discuss views and perspectives on cross-border trade issues. The results of the workshops were reported to the government agencies in national level meetings in Nay Pyi Taw on February 21, 2017. The event also deepened the countries’ priorities on trade facilitation through enhancing the regulatory environment for cross-border trade between Myanmar and Thailand. The regional workshop on March 22, 2017 gathered national stakeholders from both public and private sectors from the four countries for a one-day consultation in each location to share views and discuss policy solutions for the development of CBT at the specific border crossing points and the EWEC as a whole.

Similarly, in order to promote cooperation and partnership between agencies in both sides of the border crossing for smooth coordination, the Project also supported two structured learning visits for staff members of the Myawaddy Plant Quarantine Division to the Mae Sot Plant Quarantine office in Thailand in July 2017 and 2019. Aimed at promoting the use of standardized sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures in cross-border check points, the learning visit allowed the Myawaddy experts to observe inspection protocols on selected agricultural products.

A big step in the Project’s efforts to facilitate cross-border trade in the country was the Business to Government (B2G) meeting on April 25, 2019 in Mae Sot. Around 100 stakeholders both public and private sectors engaged in discussions toward seamless trade and strengthened collaboration between the two provinces. Discussion points were drawn from the private sector stakeholders in a Business to Business (B2B) meeting on February 21, 2019 in Mae Sot. Bringing together key business actors from the border provinces of Tak in Thailand and Myawaddy, the meeting aimed to resolve trade-related issues and propose solutions to improve the enabling environment for cross-border trading in the border provinces. After the B2G meeting, the Project organized a training workshop on *Initial Implementation of the Cross-Border Transportation Agreement (IICBTA)* on August 20, 2019, aiming to provide local stakeholders with in-depth knowledge on IICBTA and its implications. In particular, the training intended to increase capacities of relevant government agencies to streamline the implementation process and effectively facilitate the enterprises; similarly, it builded capacities of local logistics enterprises to adjust their business operational plans in line with emerging issues and opportunities. For other key issues on enhancing efficiency and transparency of cross-border transactions including issuance of licenses and permits, taxation and regulations, import-export procedures, and border operations, each government promised to either conduct further meetings with relevant agencies at ministry level or raise the issues to appropriate channels.



More information about the RLED-EWEC Project: <http://www.mekonginstitute.org/what-we-do/ongoing-projects/rled-ewec-project>