

THE LOWER MEKONG INITIATIVE ENGLISH PROJECT, YEARS 1-4

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR LEADERS IN BURMA, CAMBODIA, LAOS, THAILAND, AND VIETNAM

Training for mid- to upper-level government officials in the six LMI pillars of Health, Connectivity, Environment and Water Security, Agriculture and Food Security, Energy Security, and Education, in the English communication skills that are needed for participation in regional meetings and international conferences.

YEAR ONE (2012):

Four countries held four 40-hour seminars in the fields of Environment, Health, and Infrastructure over a ten-month period. The specialized seminars brought participants from four LMI countries (Burma was not included) together to receive training in each of the LMI capitals, and to network with their regional counterparts. Six extra seminars were held by some of the countries. In all, 18 seminars were held and over **200 people** were trained. A distance learning course was launched. Budget: \$462,326.

YEAR TWO (2013-2014):

Energy Security, Education, and Agriculture/Food Security were added to the curriculum. Burma joined the project, and co-chaired the Agriculture and Food Security Pillar. Each of the five LMI countries held six 40-hour seminars over a ten-month period, all in their respective capitals. In all, 30 seminars were conducted and over **525 people** were trained. Two regional fora were held in Bangkok for 90 participants from the seminars, and a concluding Symposium, also held in Bangkok, was attended by 120 specialists in English for Specific Purposes from LMI and ASEAN countries. Distance learning continued for 200 participants, with a low completion rate. Budget (not including Thai government support): U.S. budget: \$525,000.

YEAR THREE (2014-2015):

Thirty-two (32) seminars were conducted and nearly **575 people have been trained**. Burma had the largest number of participants (115). Two regional fora were held in Bangkok for 90 participants from the seminars, and a concluding Symposium, also to be held in Bangkok, was attended by 75 specialists in English for Specific Purposes from LMI and ASEAN countries. Distance learning has continued for 184 participants, with a low completion rate of 16%. U.S. budget: \$609,856.

YEAR FOUR (2015-2016) GOALS:

- Continue to provide seminars for mid- to upper-level government officials and others engaged in the six LMI Pillar fields
- Train and mentor a group of local educators so they can teach the same skills at institutions in their countries
- Conduct teacher training outreach to underserved areas beyond the capital city



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YEAR 4 (2015-2016) EXPECTED RESULTS:

1. After each seminar, participants will demonstrate improved ability to communicate effectively in English at international meetings and conferences
2. Approximately 25 local instructors will be able to teach the Professional Communication Skills for Leaders curriculum at their home institutions to hundreds of faculty and students.
3. New connections will be established in the region between professionals and academics in the LMI Pillar fields

SPECIAL EVENTS:

1. Forum in Spring 2016 in Bangkok: Distinguished participants will network with their LMI regional colleagues
2. Symposium in Summer 2016 in Bangkok : Invited educators will meet to address English for Specific Purposes/Professional Communications for LMI and ASEAN Professionals

PARTICIPANT SELECTION:

The Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Embassy in each country of the lower Mekong region will collaborate with host country government ministries and agencies in identifying appropriate participants for all project activities.

BUDGET REQUESTED:

\$766,175 including expanded teacher training outreach and \$59,000 in Government of Thailand contribution.

