

## TRADE DEVELOPMENT FACILITY 2 – CASE STUDIES

### Ms Thiphapone from EDC attends Coaching Training at AIM in Manila

Trade has an impact on incomes – an increase in the volume of trade of 10 per cent can raise per capita income by over 5 per cent. Due to the important positive benefits of trade on economic growth and poverty reduction, the Australian Government has set an aid for trade target that represents 20 per cent of the total aid budget by 2020. In Laos, the Australian aid for trade objective is to build a stronger trade regime and more competitive private sector. Support to the micro, small and medium-sized enterprise sector aims at improving the competitiveness and ability to export of Lao businesses, with a particular focus on women entrepreneurs.

This case study focuses on Ms Thiphapone from EDC and how, with support from the BAF, she attended a training on “Coaching Skills for Leaders and Managers” at the Asian Institute of Management in Manila which led to an increase in the value that her company placed on HR training.

#### THE SECOND TRADE DEVELOPMENT FACILITY (TDF-2)

TDF-2 is a multi-donor project funded by Australia, the European Union, Germany, Ireland, the US and the World Bank and implemented by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce focused on improving trade and private sector development in Lao PDR.

The TDF-2 includes the Business Assistance Facility and the Garment Skills Development Centre.

#### THE BUSINESS ASSISTANCE FACILITY (BAF)

The Business Assistance Facility is part of the “diversification and competitiveness” sub-component of TDF-2. BAF is designed to support individual firms build their skills and experience so that they can grow and become more competitive internationally. This is achieved through two main activities: (i) direct consulting services to individual firms regarding their business growth plans; and (ii) matching grants to assist individual firms to purchase specialized business development services in support of their growth plans. BAF commenced operations on 1st October 2013 and is scheduled to conclude on 31st March 2017.

#### ENTERPRISE & DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS (EDC)



EDC is a 100% Lao consulting business. Created in 2000, EDC has 4

shareholders who both co-manage and consult for the company. EDC has 13 staff and a network of associates with institutes in Laos such as ICT and the Faculty of Agriculture as well as consulting firms from other countries in Asian such as Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines and Japan.

The company provides consulting in four areas including enterprise development & trade promotion, project development and management, capacity development for organisations and translation and event management.

EDCs clients include international development organisations such as Swisscontact, SNV, ADB and the World Bank, Government agencies such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the private sector including companies such as LBC, RMA, MMG and the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



## THE BAF GRANT



Participants of the Coaching Skills for Leaders and Managers training – Manila - May 27-29, 2015

EDC heard about the BAF grant when the BAF coordinator presented at a workshop organised by EDC and informed participants about the BAF.

EDC applied for the BAF in May 2015 for one of their consultants/shareholders, Mrs Thiphaphone, to attend training on Coaching Skills for Leaders and Managers at the Asian Institute of Management in Manila, Philippines. It was a 3 day program. Mrs Thiphaphone attended along with 17 participants from the Philippines. EDC was the only foreign participant. The total cost of the training was \$3,000 (including airfare, accommodation, and training), 50% of which was supported by the BAF grant. The content of the training covered coaching theory with illustration from real life cases.

## WHAT CHANGED?

Ms Thiphaphone felt that from the training. During the training, she was exposed to real cases from other participants relating to different industries such as manufacturing, hospital, government, private companies and had to apply the coaching skills in each different context. This helped Ms Thiphaphone to develop her training skills for different clients.

EDC would not have joined the training without the BAF grant. It was the first time they considered training of this kind. As a positive result of this training, EDC Human Resources Manager is now considering other training to improve the skills of their staff. They will look for co-financing again as the company cannot support the full cost alone.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Ms Thiphaphone informally shared her learning from the training with her colleagues. Through this and other networking she feels that the BAF is becoming well known in the consulting and business sector:

*"In meetings or in workshops, when the people talk about co-finance and getting assistance, I often hear about the BAF grant. Business people talk about the BAF grant"*

For EDC, applying for and receiving the BAF has triggered an orientation for the company to upgrade their skills through formal training sourced in the ASEAN region. This should lead, in turn, to an improvement in the quality of the consulting they provide. As a well networked company they are also spreading the word about the BAF so that a wider range of companies have the opportunity to apply for the BAF which may help to improve the targeting and effectiveness of the BAF.



A training workshop organised by EDC