

Private-public partnership to improve working conditions and economic opportunity in Thailand unveils impressive results

Brussels, September 13, 2018 – *The Ministry of Commerce of the Royal Government of Thailand and amfori, the leading global business association for open and sustainable trade, unveiled at a multi-stakeholder forum in Bangkok on 12 September the outcomes and best practices from a joint project: “Enhancing Capacities of Thai Companies on Social Performance for European Markets”. In line with the UN Sustainable Development Goal 17, to foster collaboration between public and private bodies, the project’s long-term impacts will be to strengthen trade relations between Thailand and export markets.*

The 12-month project empowered 68 Thai producers from the food, fisheries and other processing industries to understand, embed and implement responsible business practices. Tailor made training and on-site support targeted three different functions in each companies’ operations: human resource managers, production supervisors and sourcing managers. Each was trained to identify risks to workers’ rights in their specific functions: recruitment, workers supervision on the factory floor, and interactions with suppliers. The project is fully supported by the Ministry of Commerce and built on amfori’s 15 years of experience in helping companies improve their supply chain’s sustainability performance through its social initiative, amfori BSCI, and environmental initiative, amfori BEPI.

As well as acknowledging the engagement of all participating companies, the Thai Ministry of Commerce and amfori gave special recognition to the project’s six highest achievers.

- **Pataya Food Industries, Ltd** for investigating the recruitment process of migrant workers and root cause of unfair fees charged to workers in order to address the problem in a systemic manner
- **PK Silver Group Co, Ltd.**, for its preparations to recruit migrant workers in order to manage the potential shortage of skilled workforce
- **Siam Fashion Jewelry Co., Ltd** for increasing basic wages for all operators, effective as of May 2018
- **Rayong Fish Sauce Industry Co, Ltd** for increasing transparency in the recruitment process of workers from Myanmar and Cambodia, and avoiding unfair fees or document retention
- **Seafresh Industry PCL**, with over 50% of its workforce being migrants, for the identification of authorised recruiting agencies in Thailand and Myanmar
- **S.Ruamthai Co., Ltd** for issuing a policy committing the company to ensure migrants have the same rights and freedoms as Thai workers, in accordance with the law

Based on amfori’s belief that sustainability should be included in a company’s core business strategy, the project engaged CEOs and top management to generate company-wide awareness. While workers will directly benefit from increased transparency and fairness in the recruitment and employment processes, companies will see economic gains by becoming trusted business partners for existing and new European and international buyers.

All the companies involved in the project stand out as local business leaders. Their achievements and the resulting economic benefits will inspire others to move towards responsible recruitment and employment practices.

Mr. Supapat ONGSANGKOON, Commercial Advisor, the Ministry of Commerce of Thailand said “*With increasing involvement of stakeholders from all sectors in shaping trade policy in Europe, high quality and reasonable pricing are no longer the only market requirements for products entering into the European market, but they have been broadened for producers to include all social issues e.g. labour and environment responsibility into their consideration as well as applying them throughout the entire supply chain.*” “*This is the first collaborative project that we, the Ministry, have with European business association to strengthen the capacity of Thai producers to be able to comply with such requirements and we thank amfori for their excellent collaboration and contribution to the success of this project*”.

“It is the first time that amfori embarked on such an ambitious collaboration with a government and we are ready to build on its success in other parts of the world,” said amfori Vice President for Public Affairs Stephanie Luong. “*Thanks to this partnership with the Thai Ministry of Commerce, amfori broadened the scope of its action and reached companies that have no direct commercial relation to our members’ supply chains, including small producers and sub-suppliers, strengthening their capacity for export markets. This project stands out as a great example of one of amfori’s core values – collaboration. Only by working together we can influence and drive positive change at scale and contribute to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals*”.

The International Organization for Migration was involved as a partner in the project, building on a long-lasting engagement and collaboration with amfori.

Notes to editor:

High-resolution pictures from the award ceremony and the event can be downloaded from [Flickr](#), copyright amfori

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We offer our members a practical framework and world-class tools that enable them to manage the social and environmental performance of their supply chains and anticipate trends. We also advocate for progressive policy and collaborate with impactful stakeholders to achieve common aims. www.amfori.org