

G R E A T E R
M E K O N G
S U B R E G I O N

T W E N T Y Y E A R S O F P A R T N E R S H I P



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M E K O N G
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Asia's Next Great Emerging Economic Region

In 1992, the countries and regions surrounding the Mekong River faced great challenges. Plagued by conflict, slow economic growth and historic divisions, the possibility of establishing a dynamic, interconnected region appeared unlikely.

In some instances, it was physically impossible to travel overland from one Mekong country to another. Roads were in disrepair, bridges were not functional, and tense border areas were closed to international traffic.

We have seen a dramatic transition in the last 2 decades. Initially through careful, trust-building conferences among leaders and detailed technical meetings among experts, the situation began to change.

Leaders and technical experts alike understood that the first step in linking together disparate countries for mutual benefit was the simple act of building roads and bridges. In the first years after the establishment of the Greater Mekong Subregion, the countries and regions surrounding this majestic body of water began building the physical links between their areas.

Countries that were once being pulled apart by conflict were coming together to benefit from the global economy.

But physical links alone were not enough to stitch these countries together in a way that would have widespread benefit. Agreements needed to be made to allow the smooth movement of goods and people across borders. Workers and public officials needed to be trained to operate in a regional, not just local, setting. Environments needed to be protected and the doors of tourism needed to be opened.

A wide and diverse range of complex national and regional issues had to be worked out in the last 20 years in order to bring the Greater Mekong Subregion – step by step – to the point where it is today.

Today, the Greater Mekong Subregion is seen as the next great Asian economic region. It is an emerging economic powerhouse of 326 million people working together in an area abundant with human and natural resources, cultural treasures and growing markets.

The Greater Mekong Subregion has developed into a regional force that few would have imagined 20 years ago. Twenty years



Asian Development Bank President Haruhiko Kuroda

from now, it will have blossomed into an area of prosperity and opportunity beyond what we can envision.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "H. Kuroda". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Haruhiko Kuroda
President
Asian Development Bank

The Greater Mekong Subregion: My Memories and Expectations

It was in 1991 when historic agreements brought peace to the Mekong subregion, which had suffered over 30 years of conflict. The first official meeting of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) was conducted in October 1992 at the Asian Development Bank headquarters in Manila in a very low-key manner. There was neither an official inauguration ceremony nor a reception. It was probably the first meeting where all the countries previously in conflict in the subregion got together in a room to talk about cooperation for common development. In fact, having them sit together was itself an achievement.

When we first met we did not even have a name for the group. This was discussed only in a subsequent meeting, when it was decided to call it the Greater Mekong Subregion. The substantive decisions made in the first meeting were that a charter, like those of other multinational groups, was not needed. Neither unanimous nor majority decisions would be required. As long as two or more countries (the rule of 1+1 or more) agree to implement a particular project or program, it would be allowed to take effect.

These decisions reflected our confidence that there was no lack of trust, even though each country had its own history, and cultural as well as political backgrounds. They shared the common values which provided a strong platform to respect each other and work together. Because of that confidence, no country felt the need for a headquarters or secretariat for the group. They decided that necessary support services, including technical inputs provided by ADB, would be sufficient.

I tried to ensure that the meeting would not become a place for negotiation but rather for agreement of purpose. We focused on our common values of modesty, spirit of cooperation, kindness and avoidance of conflict. As I remember, among the hundreds projects and programs discussed, there was only one project that did not push through. This was an amazing fact. The failed project proposal happened to relate to an area of defense, and its rejection was understandable.

I learned many things in the process of forming the GMS. My motivation for thinking about the need for subregional cooperation was from a hydropower project, which was conceived in the early 1980s in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The project would not have been viable if it had not found an energy market in Thailand. It appeared to be almost impossible to put together these two countries in the

existing international political environment. After a few years of persuasion, the two countries, to my happy surprise, found an amicable solution. It taught me that they had the heart to be together and to be friends, irrespective of what was seemingly an adverse situation at that time. I took my hat off to their wisdom to coexist. This convinced me that there was a way for ADB to strengthen peace and stability in the subregion with its neutral role.

After the resolution of the conflict in the subregion, we began informal discussions with five countries for them to start as soon as Cambodia was ready. The occasion finally came. We met the leaders of four political groups in Cambodia to discuss the proposal. I'll never forget the remark of one of the Cambodian leaders. He said that all the countries of the subregion should work together, which would lessen the need for defense spending and increase the budget for poverty reduction, helping villagers and developing human resources.



Noritada Morita

These messages helped us convince decision makers and international donors to support the GMS initiative.

We carried out the process not as a diplomatic effort. Concerned line ministries and planning agencies in GMS countries shouldered the responsibility and ownership of the initiative. Experience and expertise of the directly related staff were crucial to the execution of the program in a highly professional and responsible way.

It is understandable and necessary that relationships between and among the countries be based on the economic benefit of supporting each other. It however does not assure that the countries will work together and maintain stability in the long term. Relying on economic benefit alone is very risky. For example, trade and investment alone cannot establish peace and stability. Something beyond this is needed.

In respect to subregional cooperation, it is my feeling that being realistic and flexible, and having the freedom of many arrangements and approaches, yields greater rewards. To begin with, I emphasized starting something simple and manageable with a strategic impact. At an earlier stage of our activities, I recommended focusing on connecting village roads across borders, even if it was just a 10-meter connection, in order to link countries. The village roads become international roads once they are connected.

While it is important to protect an individual country and make it continuously relevant, the real priority should be on the benefit to the whole subregion. That should be the basis and power for long-term stability. How a country uses its land and human resources depends on the role that it wishes to carry out for its people and the international community. It is essential that these efforts benefit all.

More broadly, humankind must maintain harmony with nature for its own sustenance and peace. As nature constantly changes, people must respond to and adjust with nature while it changes in the course of its evolution. Our tasks, therefore, will never be completed. The same applies to subregional cooperation in the GMS. Every country in the group is relevant and has a role to play. They should never at any stage believe that they

are enjoying complete success. We must keep on improving by utilizing Asian values and modesty in order to deliver peace and happiness to people and respect to the integrity of mother nature.

I congratulate GMS member countries and ADB for successfully carrying out developments in the subregion in a respectful as well as very appreciative manner. The importance of subregional cooperation in Asia is apparent in supporting future development of the region.



Noritada Morita
Director General (Retired)
Programs Department, West (Southeast Asia Department)
Asian Development Bank

The GMS Way: An Enduring and Dynamic Partnership

With a population of 326 million, the Greater Mekong Subregion—if it was a country—would be the world’s third most populous. In terms of land area, its 2.6 million square kilometers would rank it as the 10th largest country on earth. The subregion is home to resilient economies, a wealth of natural and human resources, pristine environments and a rich cultural heritage that is of interest to tourists from around the world.

These powerful attributes have been recognized by members of the Greater Mekong Subregion: Cambodia, the People’s Republic of China (PRC), the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam. In the PRC, the GMS program covers Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Seeking to build on their shared history and culture, as well as potential economic might, the countries and areas surrounding the Mekong River decided in 1992 to band together. This economic cooperation program was to become the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS).

With the Asian Development Bank as its secretariat, and with support from development partners from around the world, the leaders of Greater Mekong Subregion sought to leverage its members’ resources in order to improve the lives of their people.

The work of the Greater Mekong Subregion is focused on the following sectors:

Agriculture—Many GMS members have agriculture-based

economies and the sector is recognized as vital to reducing poverty in the subregion. Members are collaborating to address complex agricultural issues that are more effectively dealt with on a regional basis. These include ensuring food safety, the effects of climate change on food security, rising energy costs, the competitiveness of agri-food products, and changing market demand such as the rise of ethical consumerism. The GMS seeks to be the leading producer of safe food grown using climate-friendly practices and integrated into global markets through regional economic corridors.



Energy—GMS

members are cooperating to establish a competitive and integrated regional power market that will exploit, in a sustainable manner, the rich energy resources of the subregion. The goal is to improve the subregion’s energy security and enhance peoples’ access to modern and affordable energy supplies. Energy access is key to poverty reduction and economic development. GMS members initially focused on the establishment of a regional power trading

system. They are now increasingly cooperating on energy efficiency and renewable energy in order to harness cleaner energy sources and reduce carbon emissions.

Environment—Leaders of the fast-growing economies of the GMS have recognized that the subregion’s ecosystems are increasingly at risk. The environments of the GMS members are interdependent and the issues that need to be addressed are well-suited for a regional response. Work has focused on ensuring the environmental sustainability of

GMS projects and identifying critical ecosystems for management and protection. Work in the years ahead will focus on biodiversity conservation, climate change, rural development, and improved environmental planning, monitoring, reporting, and management.

Human Resource Development—GMS members have been cooperating in the areas of health, education, social development, labor, and migration. Efforts have been focused on managing labor migration, and harmonizing national technical and vocational competency standards to facilitate cross-border portability of educational skills and training. Work has also been done to prevent the cross-border transmission of communicable diseases and human trafficking. Another important initiative has involved the training of junior, middle, and senior managers in the public sector.

Telecommunications—GMS members are seeking to ease the flow of and access to information, as well as lower the cost of transacting business through telecommunications and the internet. Work has been done to establish a regional broadband system that will support voice, data, and internet services. This will be used to establish services and applications for poverty reduction and economic development.

Tourism—GMS countries are seeking to promote the subregion as a single tourism destination. This focuses on the development of multi-country tour circuits along the Mekong River Tourism Corridor. GMS members seek to develop tourism that is sustainable, economically viable and ecologically sound. Members are seeking to minimize negative social impacts on local communities. The work is focused on tourism-related human resource development, subregional marketing and product development, and pro-poor sustainable tourism.

Trade and Investment—Mobilizing resources from development partners and the private sector is a priority for the GMS program. The national chambers of commerce of the six member countries, aided by ADB and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), set up the GMS Business Forum, a multi-country, independent nongovernment organization tasked with strengthening private sector participation in GMS development. GMS members have also prioritized trade facilitation. The smooth movement of people and goods in the subregion is vital

to ensuring competitiveness and a maximum return on investments in infrastructure. An important component of this work is the Cross-Border Transport Agreement (CBTA) established between member countries. Moreover, the GMS countries are implementing the Program of Action for Transport and Trade Facilitation.

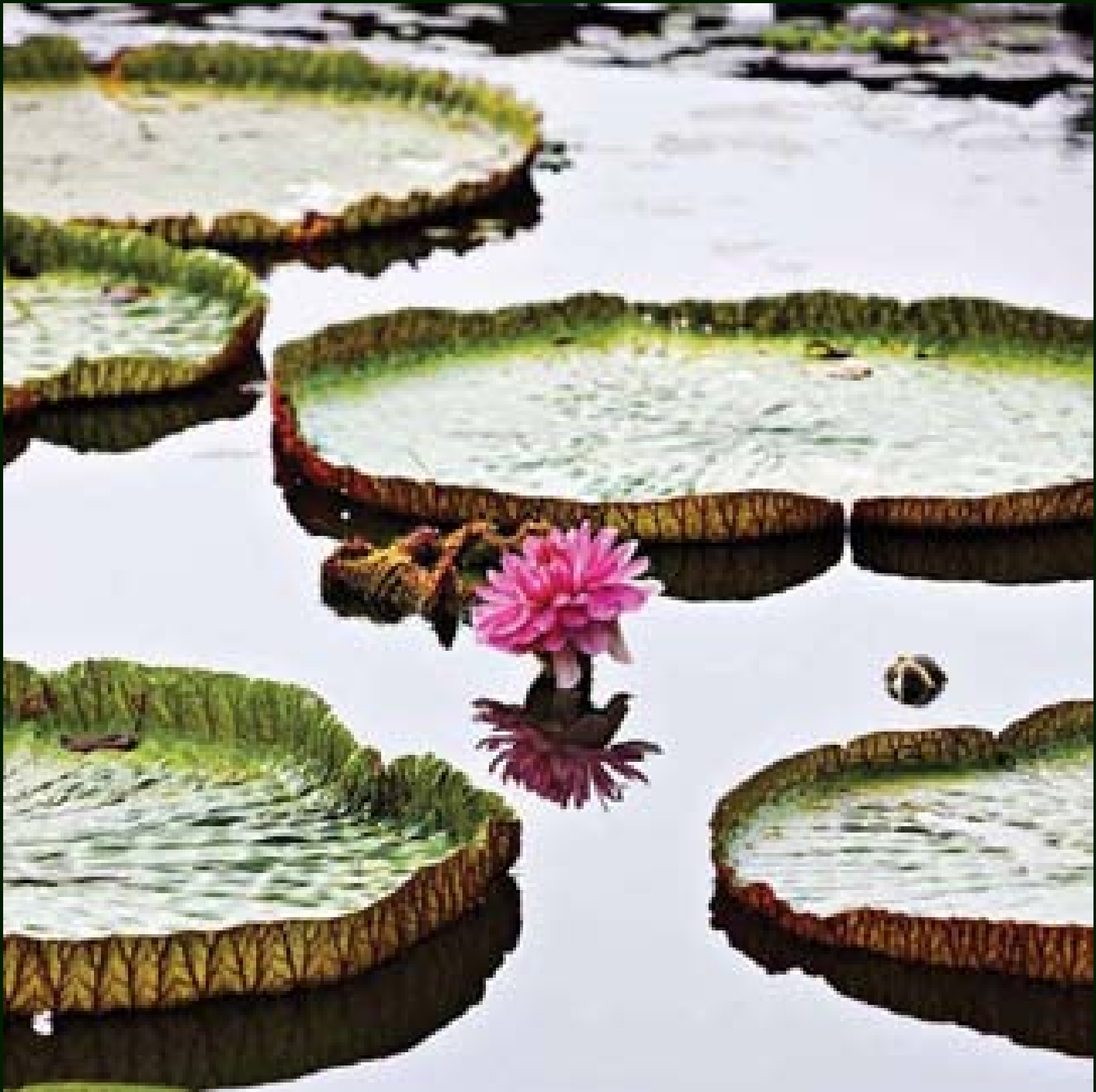
Transport—The building of transport infrastructure was one of the first priority sectors for GMS members. This was expanded to embrace the concept of economic corridors, or areas of investment across a variety of sectors focused on specific geographical areas, usually around major highways that cross national borders. Not only have these corridors linked the subregion together, they have promoted trade, tourism, and investment.

The major GMS economic corridors include:

- The North–South Economic Corridor, with its three subcorridors: Kunming–Bangkok via the Lao PDR or Myanmar; Kunming–Ha Noi–Hai Phong; and Nanning–Ha Noi. The corridor is virtually complete, except for a bridge between the Lao PDR and Thailand, which is under construction.
- The East–West Economic Corridor, the only direct and continuous land route across mainland Southeast Asia.
- The Southern Economic Corridor, which runs through southern Thailand, Cambodia, and southern Viet Nam and includes the Phnom Penh–Ho Chi Minh City Highway Project.

Other transport projects include upgrading inland water navigation systems, seaports, and railway networks. These transport initiatives have greatly enhanced connectivity in the subregion, cutting transport costs and travel times, and moved the GMS closer to realizing its potential of becoming the key trade link for Asia.

This book presents images that illustrate the progress and challenges of 20 years of work in the Greater Mekong Subregion. It makes no attempt to focus solely on the work of the Asian Development Bank or any one partner. It is a celebration of the work of everyone who has labored to make the Greater Mekong Subregion what it is today.



The History of the Greater Mekong Subregion

In its initial years (1992–1994), the GMS program involved close consultations with the member countries to determine the framework and areas for cooperation best suited to achieve practical results. In the next phase (1994–1997), detailed sector studies were conducted to identify priority initiatives, and feasibility studies were prepared for priority infrastructure investments. The first GMS projects commenced at this time. Project implementation and program consolidation took place from 1998–2001, when several infrastructure and technical assistance initiatives were undertaken. The Asian financial crisis served to further strengthen the countries' resolve to pursue regional cooperation. The endorsement of the 10-year GMS Strategic Framework by the Leaders in their first Summit in 2002 was an important turning point for the program, which saw the member countries cementing their commitment to their joint vision of an integrated, prosperous, and harmonious subregion through efforts to enhance connectivity, improve competitiveness, and build a strong sense of community (the 3 Cs). Priority projects and activities supportive of the 3 Cs have been implemented from 2002–2012, notable of which were the completion of key sections of GMS road corridors, implementation of a comprehensive environmental management and biodiversity conservation program, strengthened agricultural cooperation, joint tourism marketing, promotion and development, and strategic human resource development (especially capacity building of GMS officials under the Phnom Penh Plan). Finally, as the GMS program enters its third decade (2012–2022), a new GMS Strategy (endorsed by GMS at the fourth Summit in Myanmar) will entail a generational shift in the nature of the program. Investment programs will be more multisector, oriented toward urban, rural and integrated development along the corridors, supported by policy and institutional reforms covering trade and transport facilitation, power trade arrangements, sustainable environmental management, marketing the GMS as a single tourism destination and improved human resource use.

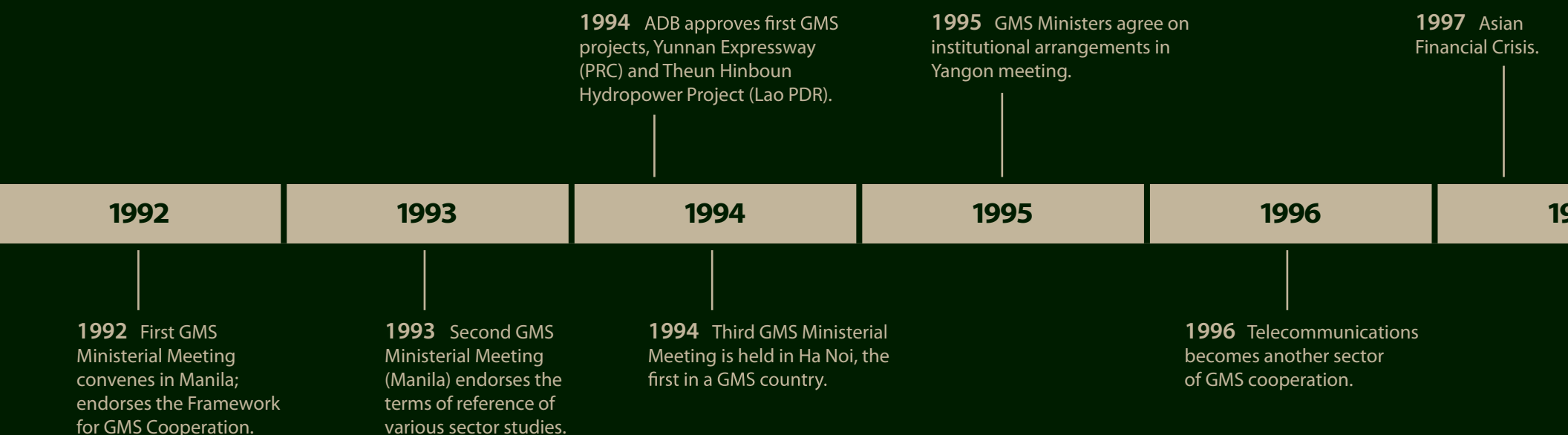
The GMS Program at 20:

The Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) is a natural economic area bound together by the Mekong River, covering 2.6 million square kilometers and a combined population of around 326 million.

The GMS countries are Cambodia, the People's Republic of China (PRC, specifically Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region), the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

In 1992, with assistance from the Asian Development Bank, the six countries entered into a program of subregional economic cooperation designed to enhance economic relations among the countries.

For 2 decades, the GMS Program has been a catalyst for high-priority subregional projects in transport, energy, telecommunications, environment, human resource development, tourism, trade, private sector investment, and agriculture.



Milestones



Agriculture



Energy



Environment

1998 Eighth GMS Ministerial Meeting endorses concept of economic corridors to stimulate growth.

1999 Cross-Border Transport Agreement is signed by three countries—Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

2002 First GMS Summit of Leaders (Phnom Penh) endorses first GMS Strategic Framework (2002–2012) and launches Phnom Penh Plan for Development Management.

1997

1998

1999

2000

2001

2002

2000 GMS Business Forum is established.

2001 10th GMS Ministerial Meeting, in Yangon, includes agriculture as another sector of GMS cooperation.



Human Resource Development



Telecommunications



Tourism

2003 The 12th GMS Ministerial Meeting (Dali) translates GMS Strategy into the 3 Cs: Enhancing Connectivity, Improving Competitiveness, and Building a Community.

2005 First GMS Environment Ministers' Meeting (Shanghai) endorses the Core Environment Program.

2006 The Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office is established in Bangkok.

2007 The 14th GMS Ministerial Meeting (Manila) celebrates 15 years of the GMS Program; discusses midterm review of the GMS Strategic Framework.

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

2008

2003 Entry into force of the GMS Cross-Border Transport Agreement in all six GMS countries.

2004 The 13th GMS Ministerial Meeting (Vientiane) adopts the first GMS Plan of Action. Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region is included in the GMS geography.

2005 The 2nd GMS Summit of Leaders (Kunming) launches the Biodiversity Conservation Corridor Initiative under the Core Environment Program.

2006 The Environment Operations Center to implement the Core Environment Program is inaugurated in Bangkok.

2007 GMS Agriculture Ministers endorse the Core Agriculture Support Program 2006–2010.



Trade and Investment



Transport

2008 Economic Corridors Forum (ECF) is established.

2010 The 16th GMS Ministerial Meeting (Ha Noi) identifies elements for new GMS Strategic Framework; endorses sector road maps (transport and trade facilitation, railways, agriculture).

2011 The 17th GMS Ministerial Meeting (Phnom Penh) reviews proposed new GMS Strategic Framework comprising second-generation initiatives.

2012 GMS Program celebrates its 20th anniversary.

2008

2009

2010

2011

2012

2008 The 3rd GMS Summit (Vientiane) endorses Vientiane Plan of Action 2008–2012.

2009 The 15th GMS Ministerial Meeting (Petchburi) initiates preparation of new 10-year GMS Strategic Framework; endorses new Human Resource Development Framework and energy road map.

2011 The 3rd GMS Tourism Minister's Meeting endorses Refocused Tourism Sector Strategy 2011–2015.

2011 The 4th GMS Summit (Nay Pyi Taw) endorses new GMS Strategic Framework 2012–2022 and new sector programs (tourism, environment, agriculture).



Cambodia



Agriculture

Cambodia relies heavily on agriculture, with much of the population making a living from the soil. In the last 20 years, through national efforts and the support of its GMS partners, Cambodia seeks to increase agricultural productivity and the diversification and commercialization of key crops. GMS agriculture projects are stimulating the growth of competitive farms and rural enterprises, connecting rural areas to markets, and creating jobs. Other projects are building sustainable rural infrastructure, such as irrigation systems, and promoting productivity, competitiveness, and climate change resilience.





Energy

Cambodia seeks to provide an adequate supply of energy throughout the country at an affordable price. This is designed to bring the economic benefits of a reliable energy supply to people in rural areas, while at the same time encouraging investment and building the national economy. In coordination with its GMS partners, Cambodia is exploring sustainable options for the exploration and development of its energy resources. As part of its green growth initiatives, the country is seeking to minimize the detrimental environmental effects resulting from energy supply and consumption.





Environment

Cambodia's forest, wetlands, and coastlines are important biodiversity hot spots. Cambodians have recognized the importance of environmental protection and are balancing rapid economic expansion with sustainable environmental practices. With the help of its GMS partners, vital water resources, such as Cambodia's great lake—Tonle Sap—are being protected. Measures are being taken to control floods that most severely affect the poor and vulnerable. Forest management is being taken seriously and the country is becoming more resilient to climate change.





Human Resource Development

Like other GMS countries, Cambodia needs to develop its human resources in order to sustain the economic growth that creates jobs and reduces poverty. With the support of its partners, Cambodia is educating and training its people to be globally competitive. The country has seen an increase in overall student enrollment, an improved curriculum, and a greater focus on vocational training and career orientation. There has been a particular focus on the training of health professionals.





Telecommunications

The number of fixed and mobile telecommunications users is rapidly expanding in Cambodia, as is internet usage. The government has worked, with its GSM partners, to improve the policy and regulatory environment for telecommunications. With cross-border connections to the Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam, Cambodians are becoming increasingly connected to their GSM neighbors. This has spurred economic activity, and greater access to global and regional knowledge resources.







Tourism

Tourism in Cambodia has taken off in recent years with visitors—many from neighboring GMS countries—touring ancient Khmer sites, such as Angkor Wat. In addition to the lively capital of Phnom Penh, visitors are exploring picturesque Tonle Sap Lake, the majestic Mekong River, the unspoiled Cardamom Mountains, and the southern coast near Krong Preah Sihanouk (formerly Sihanoukville). The country is coordinating with its GMS partners to develop a sustainable tourism sector that reduces poverty and protects natural resources and culture. Projects are underway to develop human resources that serve the tourism sector and build tourist-related infrastructure.





ព្រមាន គ្មានការចូលទៅ
DANGER NO ENTRY
DANGER



Trade and Investment

Cambodia is encouraging trade and investment by developing a strong private sector that supports both small enterprises and large corporations. With the help of its GMS partners, it is strengthening the regulatory regime governing financial institutions. It is also promoting private sector involvement in regional integration. Cambodia's fast-growing economy needs a modern financial infrastructure, including effective bank and insurance regulation. The country has also recognized the importance of microfinance for the poor.



Transport

Cambodia has benefited from the development of the Southern Economic Corridor: a package of diverse investments along three major subregional routes. One cuts across northern Cambodia including Siem Reap, another runs along the southwestern coastal areas, and the third is a modern highway that includes a link between Phnom Penh, Bangkok, and Ho Chi Minh City. This vital thoroughfare has spurred economic growth not only in the three countries involved but in communities all along its path. Agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, and a host of other sectors have benefited from this dynamic corridor. Cambodia is also upgrading its national highway system, particularly roads that link rural areas to cities. The country's airports and rail system have also been improved and will be upgraded further.





People's Repu

A landscape photograph showing a winding road through a hilly area. In the distance, several wind turbines are visible on a ridge. The sky is filled with large, white clouds, and the overall lighting is soft, suggesting an overcast day.

The GMS program covers specifically Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Public of China



Agriculture

The regions of the People's Republic of China (PRC) that are part of GMS are rich agricultural areas. Yunnan Province produces rice, corn, barley, wheat, rapeseed, sweet potatoes, soybeans, tea, and other crops, as well as livestock. Because the area is mountainous, Yunnan Province is home to spectacular rice terraces. Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region is similarly blessed with a wide variety of agricultural products, including oranges, rice, beans, corn, cassava, cinnamon, bananas, vegetables, durian, pineapples, and tea, as well as livestock. The areas trade products and expertise with their GMS neighbors.





Energy

The PRC has established itself as a leader in the development of renewable energy and the GMS member areas of Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region are no exception. Hydropower, wind, and solar projects operate in the areas. The two regions also benefit from rural electrification programs of the national government and share renewable energy expertise with their GMS partners.







Environment

Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region are rich ecological areas. Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region is mountainous with a diverse range of plant life. More than a third of Yunnan Province is forested, twice the average of other regions in the PRC. Yunnan Province has more species of tropical, subtropical, temperate, and frigid-zone plants than anywhere else in the country. Both areas are seeking sustainable management of their environments in coordination with their GMS partners.



Human Resource Development

The GMS regions of the PRC have been active participants in human resource development. The areas have conducted cross-border health cooperation programs and short-term training courses in various fields. Government scholarships have also been offered to students from GMS members, and educational exchanges have been held. Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region also cooperate with their GMS partners on migration issues, the protection of women and indigenous groups, and youth development.









Telecommunications

Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region have, in recent years, upgraded their telecommunication connections to the Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam. Work is also underway to expand internet links to Thailand that will enhance video conferencing and e-government services. Within GMS, telecommunications and internet technology is being viewed broadly for use in agricultural pricing, sharing knowledge on health and education, and easing cross-border trade.







Tourism

Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region are home to a variety of sites popular with both domestic tourists and visitors from surrounding GMS countries. Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, for example, is a top destination for visitors from Viet Nam. In Yunnan Province, tourism infrastructure is being developed with a focus on community participation. Both Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and Yunnan Province are developing meeting and convention tourism that draws visitors from GMS countries.

Trade and Investment

Trade between neighboring GMS countries and Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has grown rapidly in the last 10 years. The PRC central government has provided strong support for the participation of these regions in the GMS program. Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam are among the major trading partners of Yunnan Province. Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region have coordinated on easing cross-border trade with their GMS neighbors and have acted as gateways to greater trade with the PRC.





Transport

Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region have played an important role in the road networks and economic corridors that bind together the GMS. This includes the Yunnan Expressway (Chuxiong–Dali) and development of the Southern and Western Yunnan Province roads. The expansion of rail services has also been a key aspect of Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region's contribution to transport in the subregion. The Singapore–Kunming rail project is another important link in the GMS transport system.





Lao People's Dem



Democratic Republic





Agriculture

Agriculture is an important part of the Lao PDR's economy. It generates 28% of the country's gross domestic product and more than 60% of total workforce. Agriculture has also been recognized as a potential driver of poverty reduction efforts. As part of the GMS program, the Lao PDR is improving food security and cross-border agricultural trade, as well as preventing trans-boundary animal disease and fostering climate change resilience. The ultimate goal is to improve the lives of people in rural areas and promoting economic development.





Energy

The Lao PDR is established as a hydropower leader in the Greater Mekong Subregion. The Theun Hinboun Hydropower was one of the first approved GMS projects. Today, the Lao PDR supplies much of its domestic power needs through hydropower and derives substantial economic benefit from selling excess power to its GMS neighbors. The Government of the Lao PDR has recognized that providing widely available and affordable energy to people in both urban and rural areas is important for economic development and poverty reduction.







Environment

The Lao PDR's economy is primarily natural resource based and so environmental sustainability is vital. As economic activity has increased in the Lao PDR, protection of the country's natural resource base has become increasingly important. The Lao PDR is collaborating with its GMS partners to establish biodiversity corridors and protect critical ecosystems.



Human Resource Development

The Government of the Lao PDR is coordinating closely with its GMS partners to address key issues of education and health in the country. This includes vocational training programs, as well as work to improve the skills of the country's health care workers. GMS-supported programs to control communicable diseases and to improve the management abilities of government officials are also underway.





Telecommunications

The Government of the Lao PDR is using mobile and fixed telephone communications, as well as the internet, to promote human resource development, research, business and infrastructure development, and enhancement of the country's education system. Telephone access is being expanded into remote rural locations, including areas where vulnerable minority groups can benefit.









Tourism

The Lao PDR's rich cultural and natural sites are attracting a growing number of visitors. Top destinations include Luangprabang, Champasak, Vientiane, Vang Vieng, and Kaysone Phomvihane (formerly Savannakhet). Direct flights between Cambodia's Angkor Wat and Luangprabang are an example of the efforts to link GMS tourist sites and package them as a single destination. The Lao PDR's strategy is to develop tourism in order to generate jobs, protect natural and cultural heritage, and reduce poverty.





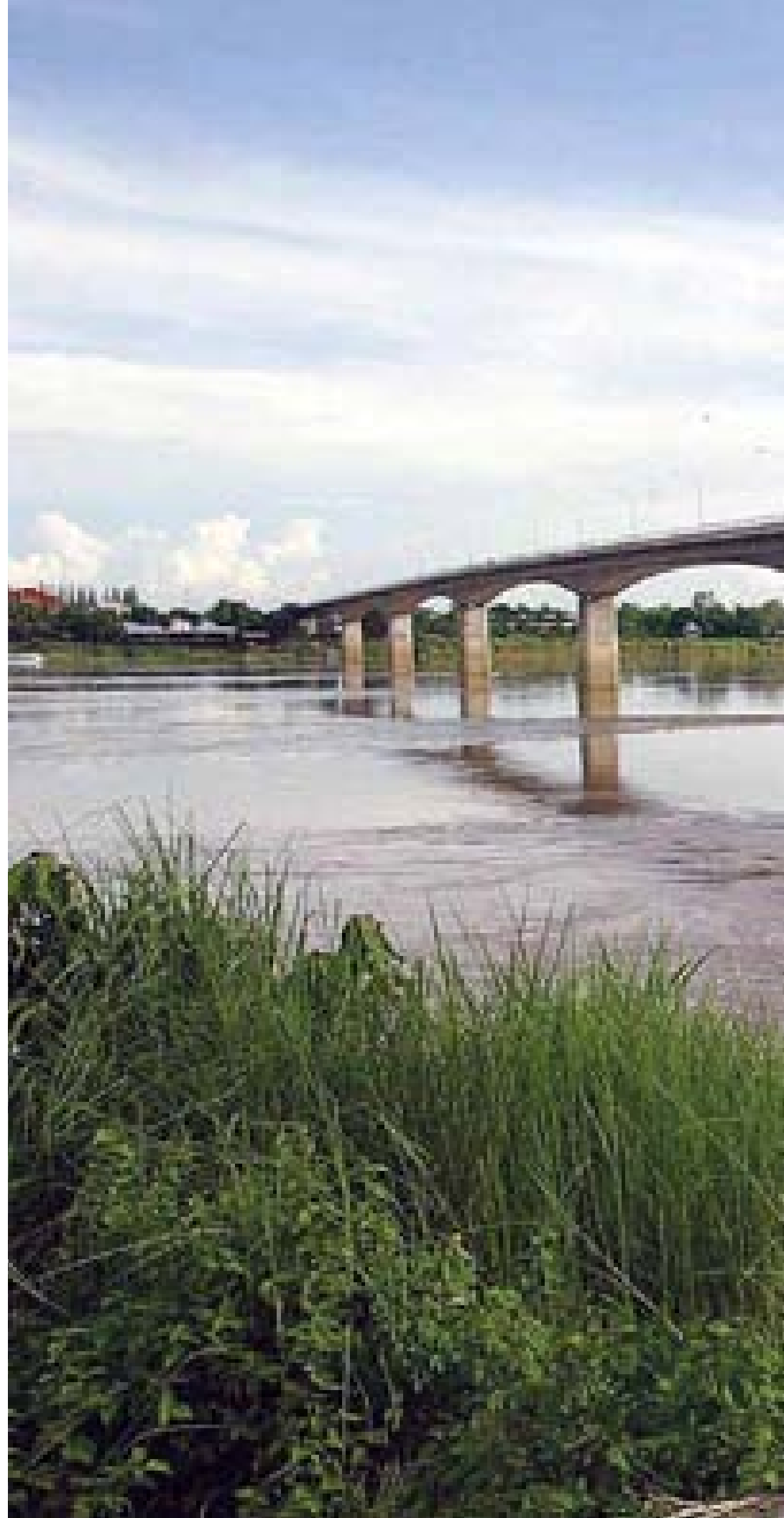
Trade and Investment

The Government of the Lao PDR is actively encouraging trade and investment with its GMS partners. It has worked to promote cross-border trade and has been an active partner in the development of economic corridors using transport infrastructure to drive trade and investment.



Transport

The Lao PDR has highway connections with Cambodia, the PRC, Thailand, and Viet Nam. The country is a vital link in several of the subregion's major economic corridors, including the North–South Economic Corridor, which spans from Kunming to Bangkok via the Lao PDR and traverses the towns of Boten and Houayxay in the northern part of the country, and the East–West Economic Corridor which stretches 1,500 kilometers from Mawlamyine in Myanmar to Da Nang in Viet Nam, passing through Kaysone Phomvihane (formerly Savannakhet) in the Lao PDR. Through these transport corridors, the Lao PDR is transforming from a landlocked into a land-linked country.







Myanmar

An aerial photograph of a large, dark, tiered stupa in the foreground, surrounded by numerous smaller stupas. The background shows a vast landscape with more stupas and a river, all under a hazy, blue-tinted sky.

Agriculture

Myanmar's economy depends heavily on agriculture for employment, exports and gross domestic product growth. The Government of Myanmar has recognized this and is coordinating with its GMS partners to increase subregional agricultural trade while joining efforts to improve food security, address rising energy costs, and develop its production of agri-food products.









Energy

Myanmar has substantial resources of coal, gas, and hydropower, which could support the expansion of commercial energy production. Currently, energy use in Myanmar is heavily dependent on traditional sources such as fuel wood, charcoal, and other forms of biomass. The government seeks to address climate change concerns by promoting the use of alternative fuels in households, promoting wider use of new and renewable energy sources, and promoting energy efficiency and conservation. Cross-border connections with GMS neighbors are being developed for export of hydropower and gas.





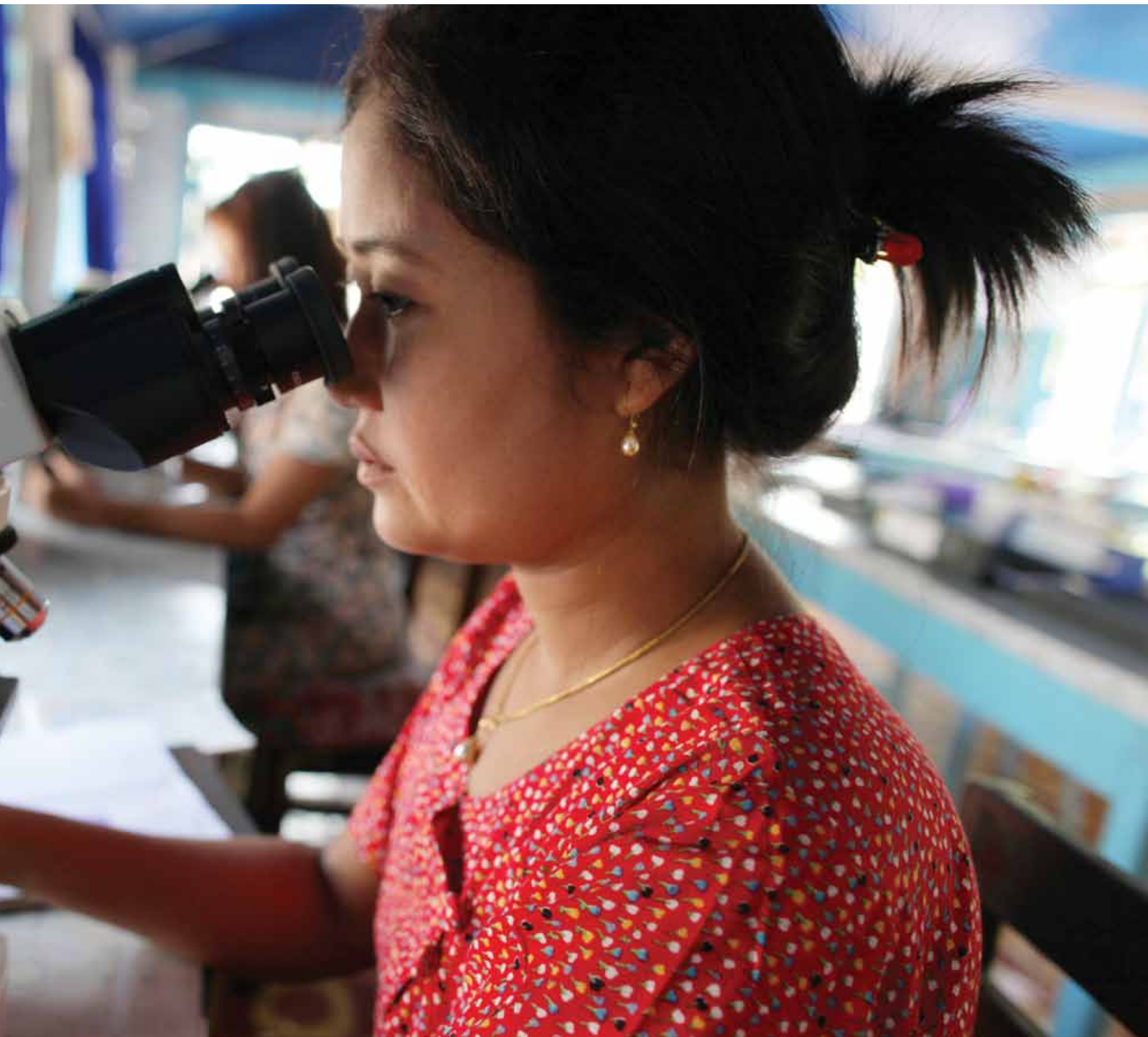
Environment

Myanmar enjoys large freshwater and marine resources, and significant deposits of minerals including oil and gas. Nearly half of the country is covered in forests, some of which hold the world's largest supply of teak. The country is a biodiversity hotspot with more than 1,000 bird species and 7,000 different types of plants. Myanmar is coordinating with its GMS partners on subregional environmental initiatives.

Human Resource Development

Myanmar cooperates with other GMS countries through the Phnom Penh Plan for Development Management. The country also collaborates with its GMS partners on social protection for children, anti-trafficking initiatives, control of communicable diseases, and safe labor migration. Increasing the accessibility to both basic and higher education is a national government goal, as is greater information exchange with GMS partner countries.





Telecommunications

Myanmar is coordinating with its GMS neighbors to modernize and improve its telecommunications and information communications technology systems. This includes programs for improving international exchange links and developing rural communications systems. The government is working to reduce the digital divide and to establish connectivity nationwide, and is pursuing knowledge sharing and capacity building in cooperation with its subregional partners.









Tourism

Myanmar is coordinating with its GMS partners to promote tourism that generates foreign exchange, creates jobs, and contributes to poverty reduction. The country's attractions include the iconic Shwedagon Pagoda and Bagan. Inlay Lake and Mandalay are also important attractions for visitors. Myanmar participates in a subregional tourism working group that shares expertise with GMS neighbors.

Trade and Investment

Myanmar's private sector is undergoing dramatic changes. Studies are underway to examine how best to support the development of trade and investment in order to spread their benefits to the poor and vulnerable. Regulatory reforms that promote private sector investment are being implemented and investments are being considered in agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, and other sectors. Myanmar is seeking to expand its trade with GMS partners.





Transport

Myanmar has been identified as an important GMS transport link to South Asia. The government has recognized the importance of improving its domestic transport network, including roads that connect to the subregional corridors. The country also has an extensive rail network, an important deep sea port, and a domestic river transport network. Myanmar has worked with its GMS partners on technical studies and information sharing in order to further develop its transport links.







Thailand







Agriculture

Thailand is a strong partner in GMS agriculture programs. With well-developed agro-industries and a highly competitive agricultural export program, the country is a leader in sharing knowledge and promoting subregional agricultural trade. Thailand has developed world renowned agriculture products, including Jasmine rice, and has established the capacity to use agriculture to decrease rural poverty and drive economic growth. The country is increasing private sector participation in agriculture. It is also cooperating with GMS partners to address cross-border plant and animal diseases and to build resilience to climate change.







Energy

Thailand is partnering with GMS members to mitigate global warming and lower carbon emissions throughout the subregion. This includes sharing information and collaborating to develop renewable energy, clean fuels, energy efficiency, and conservation. Thailand has a policy of working with its GMS partners to develop local energy sources, such as biomass, solar, and wind energy that reduce the dependence on fossil fuels.



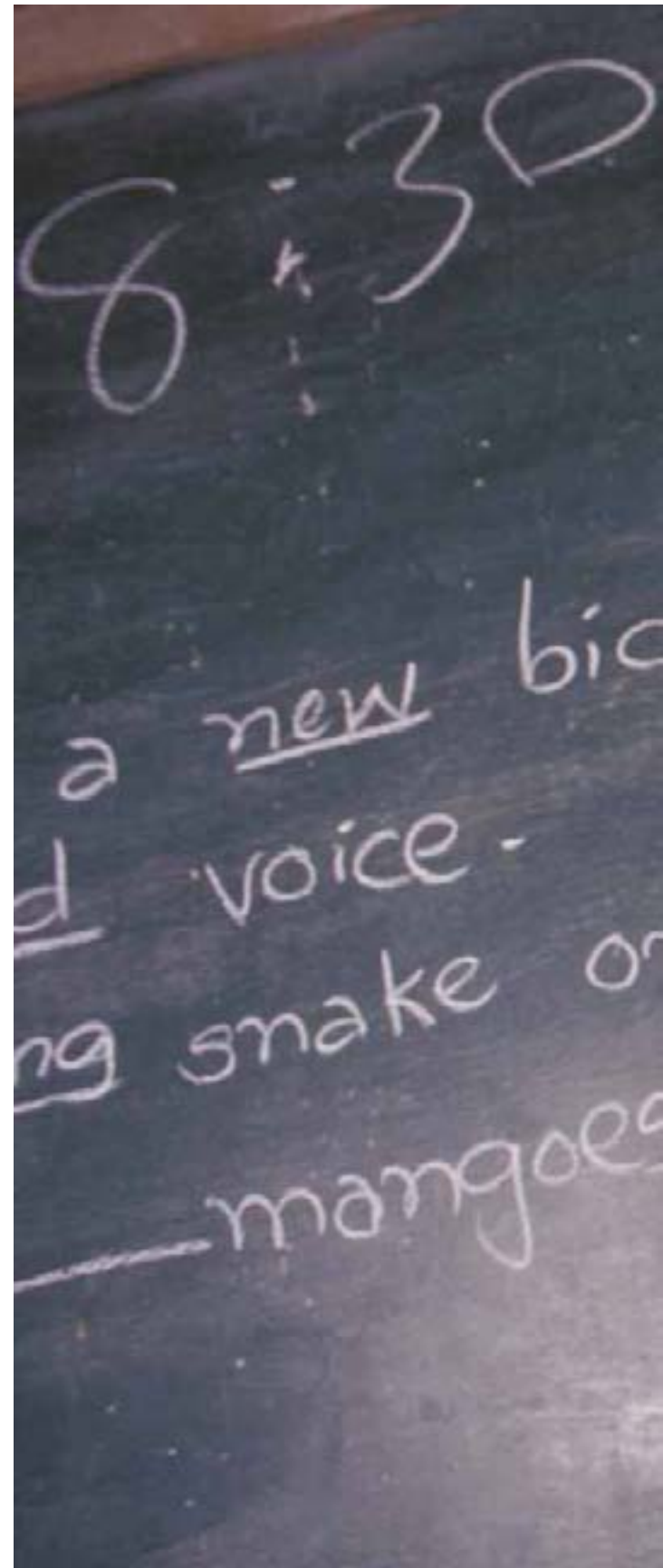


Environment

Thailand enjoys abundant water, forest, fish, and wildlife resources. The country is sharing expertise with its GMS partners to improve water security, decrease forest cover loss, and manage solid and hazardous waste. Thailand has been a leader in decentralizing environmental management to local communities and in partnering with the private sector to enhance and protect the environment. Thailand is home to the GMS Environmental Operations Center, which coordinates environmental initiatives for the subregion.

Human Resource Development

Thailand works with its GMS partners to maintain a wide range of human resource development activities. These include skills development and the mutual recognition of vocational skills. The country also maintains a memorandum of understanding with GMS partner countries on combating human trafficking. Thailand has worked to strengthen subregional capacity to prevent and control the cross-border transmission of disease and has worked with its partners on junior-, mid-, and senior-level government training programs to increase public sector efficiency.









Telecommunications

Thailand is an active participant in subregional telecommunications programs, including the development of cross-border connections under the GMS Information Superhighway Network. Thailand is also developing information and communication technology for rural applications in the GMS. With a well-developed telecommunications infrastructure, Thailand is sharing knowledge and supporting efforts to help the build capacity of other GMS members.

Tourism

Thailand is one of the world's top tourist destinations and is seen as a gateway for promoting GMS as a single destination for global travelers. The country's top destinations include Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and seaside resorts in Pattaya and Phuket. The government is encouraging sustainable tourism that highlights cultural identity, and promotes the conservation of natural and cultural tourism assets and the environment. Thailand is seeking to strengthen its position as a quality destination and to maintain its global competitiveness in tourism.





Trade and Investment

Thailand is easing the flow of goods and services across its borders. It is coordinating with subregional partners on customs procedures; inspection and quarantine measures; and trade logistics. In the area of investment, Thailand has worked with subregional partners to share information and build the capacity for investment promotion. It is an active member of the GMS Business Forum, which promotes private sector involvement in the subregion, and encourages Thai companies to trade with neighboring countries.







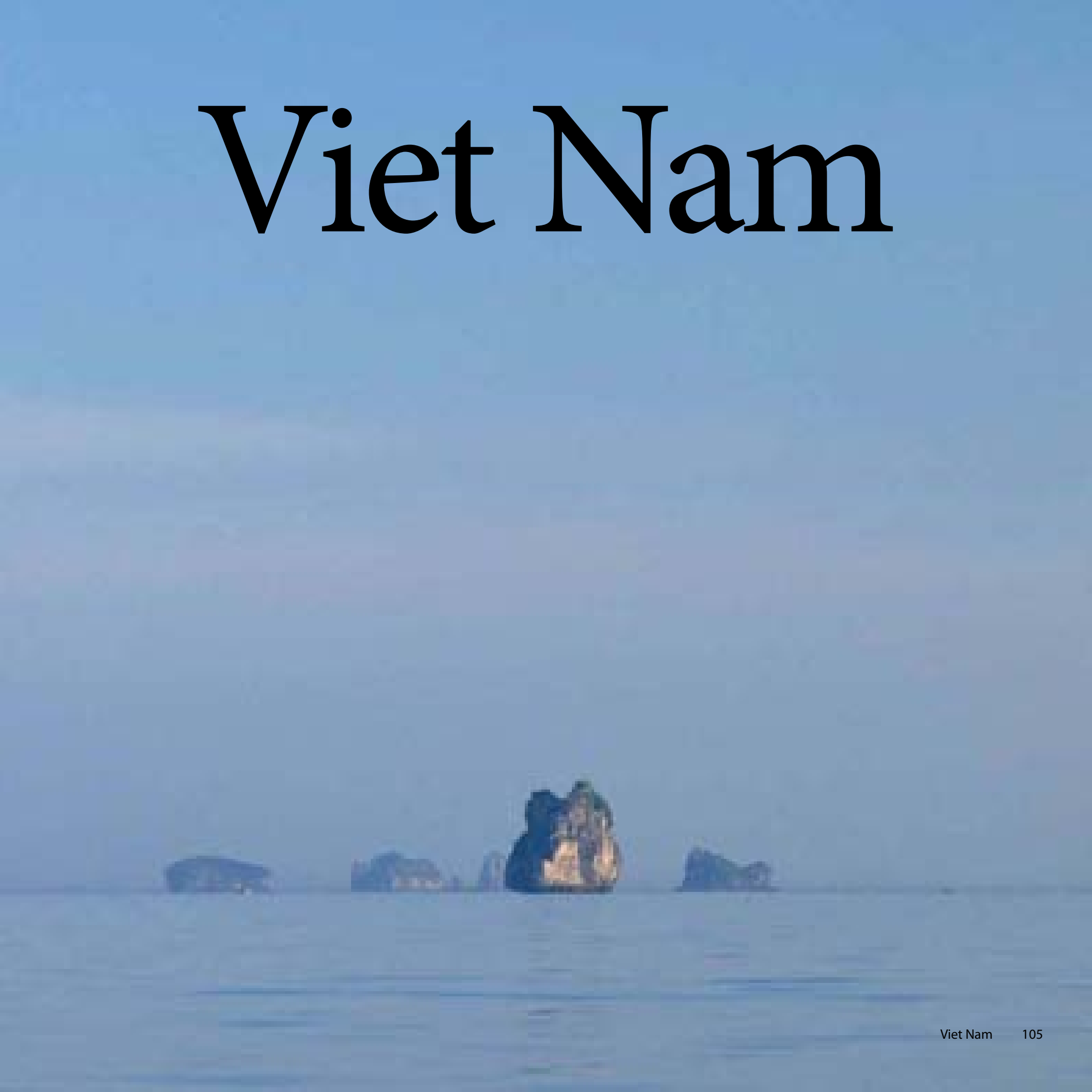


Transport

Thailand's well-developed transport system is an important part of the GMS economic corridors, which focus investment and development on vital highway systems. Thailand has been a driver of economic growth on the North–South Economic Corridor (Kunming–Bangkok Road), the East–West Economic Corridor, and the Southern Economic Corridor. Thailand has worked with its GMS partners to upgrade portions of these important economic corridors and encourage cross-border investments aligned with subregional highways.



Viet Nam







Agriculture

Much of Viet Nam's population lives in rural areas, and the government recognizes that agriculture is important for reducing poverty. Viet Nam has worked with its GMS partners to increase agricultural productivity and share knowledge. The country has prioritized critical reforms that have resulted in steady growth in agricultural output, making Viet Nam one of the world's largest exporters of rice. As in other GMS countries, rural transport and market access have also improved agricultural and rural livelihoods.







Energy

Viet Nam seeks to develop its energy resources with transparency, competition, and economic efficiency in order to attract private investment, which will complement public sector investments for ensuring energy supply security for its rapidly growing domestic demand. Viet Nam is working with its GMS neighbors to participate in power trading arrangements being developed in the subregion and on information sharing regarding the exploration, production, and transmission of energy resources. Viet Nam is also expanding electricity access to rural and remote areas, and boosting the share of renewable energy to total energy supply.



Environment

Similar to other fast-growing GMS economies, Viet Nam has had to respond to pressures on its environment and natural resources. The government has enacted legislation and launched programs to mitigate the environmental impacts of urban expansion. Viet Nam, in coordination with its GMS partners, has invested in tree planting programs that are showing results in terms of slowing the loss of forest cover. Viet Nam is sharing information and working closely with its partners on issues related to water resources and climate resilience.



Human Resource Development

Viet Nam has a large rural and young population that is in need of skills development and training. The government has recognized this and is seeking to train million of workers, including many in rural areas. In coordination with its GMS partners, Viet Nam is focusing efforts on poverty reduction and gender mainstreaming in order to help vulnerable workers benefit from national training programs. The country is also coordinating with its subregional partners to protect migrant workers, both domestically and across borders.





Telecommunications

Viet Nam is sharing knowledge with its GMS partners to develop its fixed and mobile telecommunications systems, as well as internet service. To promote competition and universal access, the country is promoting transparent telecommunications licensing procedures and fees (in line with its subregional neighbors) and efficient government regulations. Viet Nam takes part in GMS training programs designed to increase the expertise of officials across the subregion.









Tourism

Viet Nam is collaborating with its GMS partners to strengthen human resources in the tourism sector; diversify the products it offers to visitors; improve service and quality standards; and maintain, restore, and develop its many cultural and natural attractions. In the north, the government is promoting urban, nature, and ethnic tourism in Ha Noi, Ha Long Bay, and Sapa. In Hue, My Son, and Phong Nha Khe Bang National Park, cultural and eco-tourism are the focus. Nha Trang and Ho Chi Minh City in the south are also popular sites.



Trade and Investment

Viet Nam is a strong supporter of plans to accelerate the liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment among GMS countries. The country has worked with its subregional partners to harmonize and simplify trade and investment procedures, particularly among GMS countries. As a host to important sections of the subregion's economic corridors, Viet Nam has worked to foster investment around major international highways.









Transport

Viet Nam is a vital link in the emerging subregional transport system of the GMS. Key sections of major GMS corridors are in the country. These include the Ho Chi Minh City–Phnom Penh Highway, the East–West Transport Corridor, the Kunming–Hai Phong Transport Corridor, and the Southern Coastal Corridor. The country has also embarked on the construction of major expressways to enhance its overall transport efficiency. It also hosts important maritime links via its ports. Viet Nam’s fast growing economy has been a strong contributor to the development of GMS economic corridors that have benefited its own people as well as those of its neighbors.



Going Forward

The Greater Mekong Subregion enters its third decade with a renewed sense of unity and a clear path forward. With the assistance of the Asian Development Bank, the countries of the subregion have prepared and adopted the GMS Strategic Framework for 2012–2022.

The strategy is anchored on the successful approach of focusing on developing economic corridors. New investments will be spread across a variety of sectors, including physical infrastructure and urban and rural development along the corridors.

Investments will be made in urban services, including water and sanitation, as well as in feeder roads and other transport modes, such as railways. Technologically, smart investments in energy and telecommunications will also be made. In addition, green technology will be an important new focus.

The new strategy will also emphasize policy and institutional reforms—the “software” that supports the infrastructure “hardware”—in order to maximize the impact of past as well as future investments. These policy and institutional reforms will touch on, among other areas, transport and trade facilitation, development of the regional power market, promoting GMS as a single tourism destination, sustainable natural resource management, and the development and improved use of human resources.



Cambodia Prime Minister Hun Sen (L), the Lao PDR Prime Minister Thongsing Thammavong (2nd-L), Myanmar President Thein Sein (3rd-L), Thailand Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra (3rd-R), Viet Nam Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung (2nd-R) and the PRC's State Councilor Dai Bingguo (R) attend the Fourth Greater Mekong Subregion Summit in Myanmar's capital Nay Pyi Taw on December 20, 2011. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

The importance of knowledge management and partnership has also been recognized in the new strategy.

GMS partners have acknowledged that the subregion's third decade will be a challenging time, as the program further matures. A fresh infusion of resources will be needed. Support from the private sector will also be necessary to bring subregional cooperation to a new and higher level.

PHOTO INFORMATION

Front and back covers: The Mekong River at Pak Beng in northern Lao PDR near the Thailand border. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 6: Mekong River at sunset at the town of Kratie in Cambodia. Photo credit: hemis.fr

Page 8: Floating lotus leaves and flower on Mekong River at Can Tho, Viet Nam. Photocredit: Image Source.

Pages 14 and 15: Cambodia's Angkor Wat temples reflecting during sunset. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Pages 16 and 17: Rice fields outside the town of Kompong Chhnang in Cambodia. Photo credit: hemis.fr

Pages 18 and 19: Pedestrians and vehicles cross the Japan Bridge as the sun sets in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 20: Children walk through the forest in Cambodia's Kampong Speu Province, some 100 kilometers west of Phnom Penh. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 21: A deer in the jungles of Mondulkiri Province, about 500 kilometers northeast of Phnom Penh. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 22: A nurse in Cambodia looks into a microscope. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Page 23: Vocational training in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Page 24: Young people in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, surf the web at a coffee shop. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 25: A tourist uses her phone to take a photograph as she visits the Angkor Wat temple during sunrise in Siem Reap Province, Cambodia. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 26: Left—The suspension bridge near Kachanh Waterfall, Ratanakiri Province, near Banlung, Cambodia. Photo credit: hemis.fr

Right—Stone sculptures at Angkor Wat Temple near Siem Reap, Cambodia. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Page 27: A tourist poses for a picture at the Bayon temple in Siem Reap Province. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 28: A staff member shows share prices during a launching ceremony at the Cambodian Securities Exchange (CSX) in Phnom Penh. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 29: A rice farmer uses a husking machine purchased through a government-supported microfinance program. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Page 30: Travelers wait to board at the Siem Reap International Airport in Cambodia. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 31: A ray of bright morning sunlight filters through to motorcyclists using the streets of the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Pages 32 and 33: A wind turbine complex on Zhemo Mountain in the outskirts of Dali, in Yunnan Province. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 34: A woman from the indigenous group Hani sells red peppers in a market in Yunnan Province, PRC. Photo credit: Bilderberg.

Page 35: Rice fields in Yuanyang in Yunnan Province, PRC. Photo credit: hemis.fr

Page 36 and 37: Water discharging from the dam of the Xiaowan Hydropower Station in southwest Yunnan Province, PRC. Photo credit: ImagineChina.

Pages 38 and 39: A flock of Asian openbill storks prey for food in the wetlands in suburban Xuanwei, a city in Yunnan Province, PRC. Asian openbill storks, a common species in India, Myanmar, and southern Viet Nam, were first observed in PRC in 2006. Photo credit: Xinhua.

Page 40: Students sing at a celebration in Nanning, capital of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, PRC. Photo credit: Xinhua.

Page 41: An instructor teaches automobile mechanics to young migrant workers in a vocational education center in the Yao Autonomous County of Bama, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, PRC. Photo credit: Xinhua.

Page 42: A woman uses the phone in Yunnan Province, PRC. Photo credit: Photononstop

Page 43: A woman from the Jingpo indigenous group uses the phone in Yunnan Province, PRC. Photo credit: Bilderberg.

Pages 44 and 45: People from Dai indigenous group take part in the Water Splashing Festival at a Dai village on the banks of the Lancang-Mekong River in Xishuangbanna Prefecture, Yunnan Province, PRC. The gathering is a traditional festival in which people splash water on each other to celebrate the New Year and water. Photo credit: Getty Images.

Pages 46 and 47: A woman weaves cotton in traditional Dai-style in the PRC's Yunnan Province. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Pages 48 and 49: An all-electric train travelling along the Nanning-Kunming Railroad passes through the PRC's southwestern Yunnan Province. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Pages 50 and 51: Sunset on the Mekong River in Luangprabang, Lao PDR. Photo credit: hemis.fr

Pages 52 and 53: A worker carries a sack of rice at a mill in Luangprabang, Lao PDR. Photo credit: Getty Images.

Page 54: The Nam Theun 2 hydropower station in the Lao PDR central province of Khammouane. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 55: The Nam Theun 2 hydropower project under construction. Photo credit: Souphavanh Phonmany.

Page 56: The Nam Ou river near Ban Sob Tchen, Luangprabang, Lao PDR. Photo credit: hemis.fr

Page 57: Butterflies in the Tham Khang caves, in the Muang Ngoi region of the Lao PDR. Photo credit: hemis.fr

Page 58: A woman in Luangnamtha Province who learned to sew under the GMS Sustainable Tourism Development Project. Photo credit: Souphavanh Phonmany.

Page 59: Primary school children learning to draw in Sainyabuli Province, Hongsa, Lao PDR. Photo credit: hemis.fr

PHOTO INFORMATION

Pages 60 and 61: Students use a phone card booth in downtown Vientiane, Lao PDR. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Pages 62 and 63: A tourist takes pictures of her family in front of the Victory Monument, locally known as Patouxay, in Vientiane, Lao PDR. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 64: A worker inspects new Thai-made motorcycles loaded atop a bus in Vientiane, Lao PDR. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 65: Colorful fabrics for sale in the Lao PDR. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Pages 66 and 67: Lao PDR-Thai Friendship Bridge. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Pages 68 and 69: Myanmar's Golden City at dawn. Photo credit: hemis.fr

Page 70: A girl sells oranges in Bagan, Myanmar. Photo credit: OnlyFrance.

Page 71: A child sits on a buffalo near Inlay Lake in Myanmar. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Pages 72 and 73: A couple strolling home at the end of the day in brightly lit downtown Yangon, Myanmar. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Pages 74 and 75: Flowers at Ngapali beach in Myanmar. Photo credit: Getty Images.

Page 76: Students recite their lessons during class at a school on Inle Lake, Myanmar. Photo credit: Getty Images.

Page 77: Blood samples are examined under the microscope in Myanmar. Photo credit: Getty Images/Agence France-Presse.

Pages 78 and 79: A girl speaks on the phone as she works with her parents in their fabric shop in Yangon. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Pages 80 and 81: A Myanmar traditional dance display in Yangon. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Pages 82 and 83: Women working at a lacquer factory. Photo credit: Josephine Duque-Comia.

Page 84: Ancient and modern forms of maritime transport co-exist in Yangon, Myanmar. Photo credit: Bilderberg.

Page 85: Train rolls down the tracks in Myanmar. Photo credit: hemis.fr.

Pages 86 and 87: Elephants in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Photo credit: Photononstop

Page 88: Rice harvesting near Khorat, Thailand. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Page 89: Bags of rice being stacked in Bangkok, Thailand. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 90: A Thai Metropolitan Electricity Authority official checks the underground transmission line in Bangkok. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 91: An electrician works on a supply line in Thailand's seaside town of Hua Hin. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Pages 92 and 93: Waterfalls in Erawan National Park, Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand. Photo credit: hemis.fr

Page 94: Culinary students in Bangkok, Thailand. Photo credit: Bangkok Post.

Page 95: A primary school in Thailand, near Mae Sot. Photo credit: Bilderberg.

Pages 96 and 97: Customers try various models of smartphones at a mobile telecommunications fair in Bangkok, Thailand. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Pages 98 and 99: A man swims at dusk in the infinity pool at a hotel in Bangkok, Thailand. Photo credit: Getty Images/Agence France-Presse.

Pages 100 and 101: Employees work at an automobile factory production line in Ayutthaya Province, Thailand. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 102 and 103: Departures hall in Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok, Thailand. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Pages 104 and 105: Ha Long Bay, Viet Nam. Photo credit: hemis.fr

Page 106: Rubber trees in Viet Nam. Photo credit: hemis.fr

Page 107: Harvesting peppers in Viet Nam. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Page 108: Night view of illuminated Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam. Photo credit: Image Source.

Page 109: Generators in the machine room of the Hoa Binh Hydro Power Plant in the northern city of Hoa Binh, Viet Nam. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Pages 110 and 111: Beach at night in Nha Trang, Viet Nam. Photo credit: Image Source.

Page 112: Students learn how to use the internet during a course in Ha Noi aimed at increasing the number of internet users in Viet Nam. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 113: School children in Hoi An, Viet Nam. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Page 114: Using two mobile phones in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam. Photo credit: Photononstop

Page 115: A fruit vendor in Ha Noi uses a lap-top. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 116: A resort in Da Nang, Viet Nam. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 117: Cafes in historic Hoi An, Viet Nam. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Page 118: Workers at the Saigon port in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Pages 118 and 119: A souvenir store in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam. Photo credit: Photononstop.

Page 120: A worker inspects lights inside the Hai Van tunnel on Hai Van pass in central city of Da Nang. Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

Page 121: Resting on the day train from Lao Cai to Ha Noi, in Viet Nam. Photo credit: hemis.fr

Page 122: GMS Leaders at the Fourth Greater Mekong Subregion Summit in Myanmar's capital Nay Pyi Taw on December 20, 2011 Photo credit: Agence France-Presse.

APPENDIX A

List of GMS Investment Projects

No.	Year	Project Name	Country	Status	Total Project Cost (\$ million)
1	1994	Yunnan Expressway	PRC	completed	461.40
2	1994	Theun Hinboun Hydropower	Lao PDR	completed	240.50
3	1995	Saigon Port	Viet Nam	completed	40.00
4	1995	Champassak Road Improvement	Lao PDR	completed	130.10
5	1996	Fangcheng Port Project	PRC	completed	135.00
6	1996	Nam Leuk Hydropower Development	Lao PDR	completed	112.60
7	1996	Second Road Improvement	Viet Nam	completed	213.40
8	1996	Siem Reap Airport	Cambodia	completed	17.00
9	1998	Phnom Penh - Ho Chi Minh City Highway	Cambodia	completed	52.70
10	1998	Phnom Penh - Ho Chi Minh City Highway	Viet Nam	completed	144.80
11	1999	Southern Yunnan Road Development	PRC	completed	770.30
12	1999	East-West Corridor Project	Lao PDR	completed	345.00
13	1999	East-West Corridor Project	Viet Nam	completed	97.00
14	2001	Guangxi Roads Development	PRC	completed	552.70
15	2002	GMS: Cambodia Road Improvement	Cambodia	completed	77.50
16	2002	GMS: Mekong Tourism Development	Cambodia	completed	20.70
17	2002	GMS: Mekong Tourism Development	Lao PDR	completed	14.20
18	2002	GMS: Mekong Tourism Development	Viet Nam	completed	12.20
19	2002	GMS: Northern Economic Corridor	Lao PDR	completed	95.79
20	2003	Western Yunnan Roads Development	PRC	completed	585.00
21	2003	Cambodia: GMS Transmission Project	Cambodia	completed	95.00
22	2004	Guangxi Roads Development II	PRC	completed	726.00

List of GMS Investment Projects

No.	Year	Project Name	Country	Status	Total Project Cost (\$ million)
23	2004	Dali-Lijang Railway Project (Yunnan Province)	PRC	completed	548.00
24	2005	Nam Theun 2 Hydroelectric Project	Lao PDR	completed	958.50
25	2005	GMS-CAM: Regional Communicable Diseases Control	Cambodia	completed	11.17
26	2005	GMS-LAO: Regional Communicable Diseases Control	Lao PDR	completed	7.50
27	2005	GMS-VIE: Regional Communicable Diseases Control	Viet Nam	completed	20.00
28	2005	GMS Kunming-Hai Phong Transport Corridor Noi Bai-Lao Cai Highway Technical Assistance	Viet Nam	completed	8.00
29	2006	Second Power Transmission and Distribution	Cambodia	ongoing	52.36
30	2006/ 2009	GMS Rehabilitation of the Railway in Cambodia	Cambodia	ongoing	141.60
31	2006	GMS Kunming-Hai Phong Transport Corridor: Yen Vien-Lao Cai Railway Upgrading Project	Viet Nam	ongoing	160.00
32	2007	Western Guangxi Roads Development Project	PRC	ongoing	1,570.00
33	2007/ 2010	GMS-LAO: Northern GMS Transport Network Improvement	Lao PDR	ongoing	115.50
34	2007/ 2010	GMS Southern Coastal Corridor	Viet Nam	ongoing	278.70
35	2007	GMS Southern Coastal Corridor	Cambodia	ongoing	18.70
36	2007	Greater Mekong Subregion: Kunming–Hai Phong Transport Corridor—Noi Bai–Lao Cai Highway Project	Viet Nam	ongoing	1,216.00
37	2008	Central Yunnan Roads Development	PRC	ongoing	510.10
38	2008	Greater Mekong Subregion: Sustainable Tourism Development	Lao PDR	ongoing	10.87
39	2008	Greater Mekong Subregion: Sustainable Tourism Development	Viet Nam	ongoing	11.11
40	2008	GMS: Ha Noi-Lang Son, GMS: Ha Long-Mong Cai, and Ben Luc-Long Thanh Expressways Technical Assistance	Viet Nam	ongoing	30.80
41	2009	GMS: Cambodia Northwest Provincial Road Improvement	Cambodia	ongoing	47.89

List of GMS Investment Projects

No.	Year	Project Name	Country	Status	Total Project Cost (\$ million)
42	2009	GMS: Highway Expansion	Thailand	ongoing	179.40
43	2010	GMS-LAO: GMS Northern Power Transmission	Lao PDR	ongoing	65.32
44	2010	Guangxi Southwestern Cities Development Project	PRC	ongoing	299.03
45	2010	Second Greater Mekong Subregion Regional Communicable Diseases Control Project	Cambodia	ongoing	11.00
46	2010	Second Greater Mekong Subregion Regional Communicable Diseases Control Project	Lao PDR	ongoing	13.00
47	2010	Second Greater Mekong Subregion Regional Communicable Diseases Control Project	Viet Nam	ongoing	30.00
48	2010	Second Northern GMS Transport Network Improvement	Lao PDR	ongoing	42.30
49	2010	Second Northern GMS Transport Network Improvement	Viet Nam	ongoing	97.40
50	2010	Yunnan Integrated Road Network Development	PRC	ongoing	1,753.00
51	2010	GMS Biodiversity Conservation Corridor	Cambodia	ongoing	20.90
52	2010	GMS Biodiversity Conservation Corridor	Lao PDR	ongoing	21.80
53	2010	GMS Biodiversity Conservation Corridor	Viet Nam	ongoing	34.07
54	2010	GMS Ben Luc - Long Thanh Expressway Project	Viet Nam	ongoing	627.70
55	2011	Greater Mekong Subregion Nam Ngum 3 Hydropower Project	Lao PDR	ongoing	1,155.95
56	2012	Trade Facilitation: Improved Sanitary and Phytosanitary Handling in Greater Mekong Subregion Trade Project	Cambodia	ongoing	11.41
57	2012	Trade Facilitation: Improved Sanitary and Phytosanitary Handling in Greater Mekong Subregion Trade Project	Lao PDR	ongoing	14.46

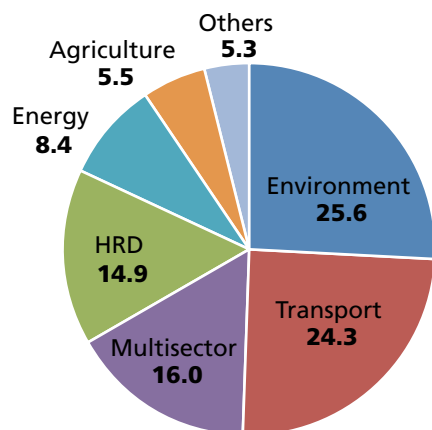
CAM = Cambodia, PRC = People's Republic of China, GMS = Greater Mekong Subregion, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic, VIE = Viet Nam.

Note: A project is classified as "ongoing" if its loan has already been approved and "completed" if the expected completion date is passed.

Source: Asian Development Bank (ADB).

GMS Statistics

ADB-Supported Technical Assistance Projects by Sector, 1992-2012 (%)

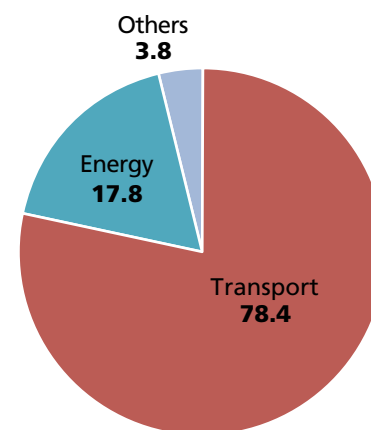


HRD = human resource development.

Note: Sectors lumped as "others" include industry and trade, telecommunications and information and communication technology, and tourism. Total cost of \$289 million for 179 projects.

Source: ADB.

GMS Investment Projects by Sector, 1994-2012 (%)

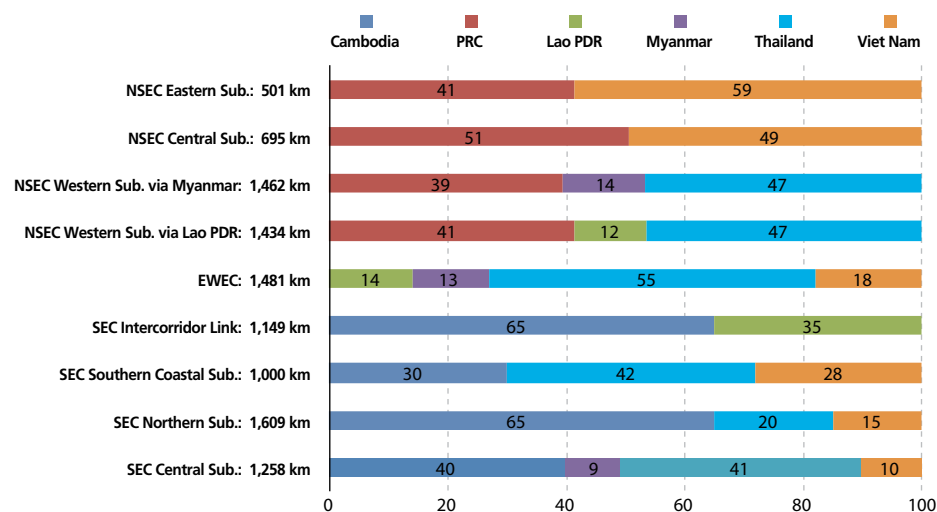


GMS = Greater Mekong Subregion

Note: Sectors lumped as "others" include agriculture and natural resources, health and social protection, industry and trade, and multisector projects. Total cost of \$15 billion for 57 ADB-assisted loan projects.

Source: ADB.

Inter-Country Distribution of GMS Corridors (%)



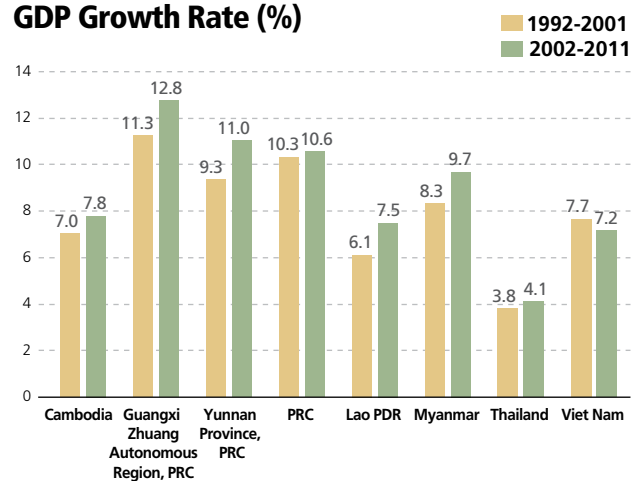
PRC = People's Republic of China, EWEC = East-West Economic Corridor, GMS = Greater Mekong Subregion, km = kilometer, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic, NSEC = North-South Economic Corridor, SEC = Southern Economic Corridor, Sub. = sub-corridor.

Note: The horizontal axis represents the estimated country-wise length of GMS corridors as percent of total. The SEC Central Sub-corridor includes extension to Dawei.

Sources: Strategy and Action Plan for the GMS SEC, NSEC, and EWEC (August 2010) and ADB staff estimates.

GMS Statistics

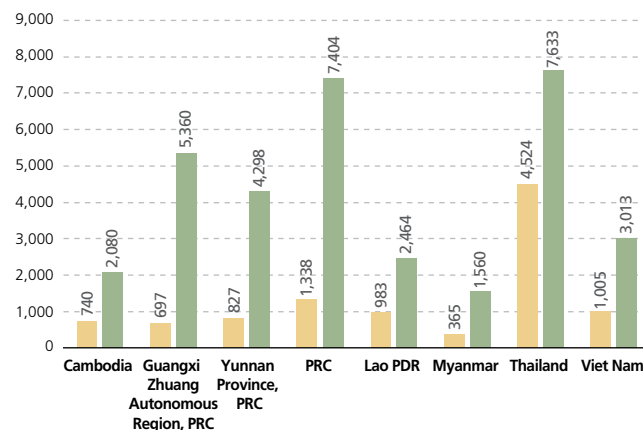
GDP Growth Rate (%)



PRC = People's Republic of China, GDP = gross domestic product, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Sources: International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database (www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2012/01/weodata/index.asp); and ADB staff estimates.

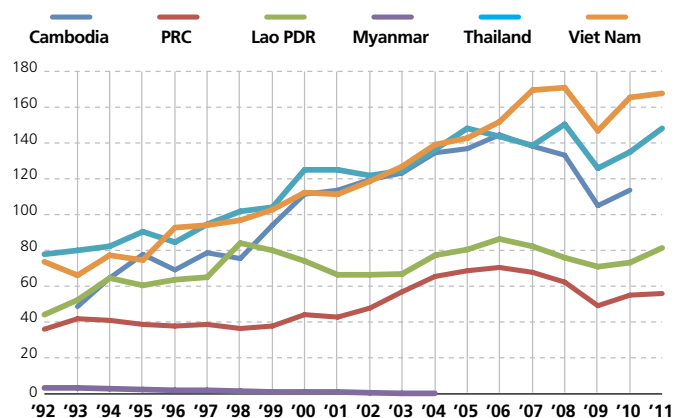
GDP Per Capita (Constant 2005 PPP\$)



PRC = People's Republic of China, GDP = gross domestic product, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic, PPP = purchasing power parity.

Sources: CEIC Data; World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>); and ADB staff estimates.

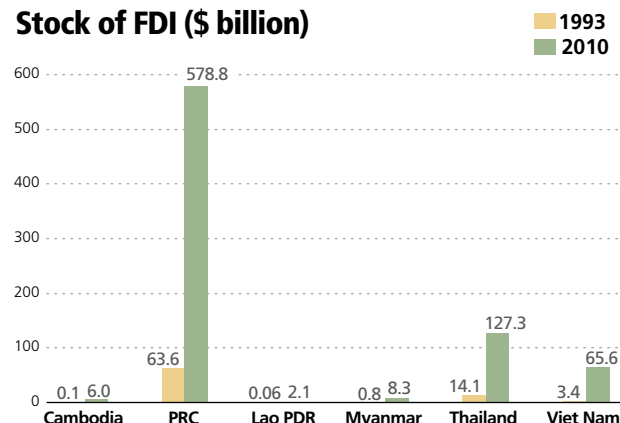
Trade to GDP Ratio (%)



PRC = People's Republic of China, GDP = gross domestic product, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

Stock of FDI (\$ billion)

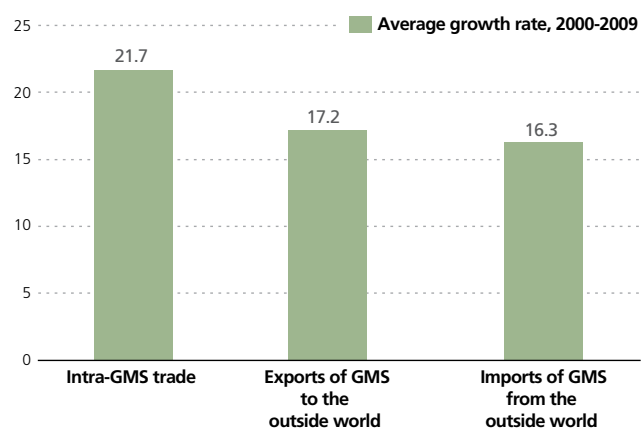


PRC = People's Republic of China, FDI = foreign direct investment, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Source: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UNCTADstat (<http://unctadstat.unctad.org>).

GMS Statistics

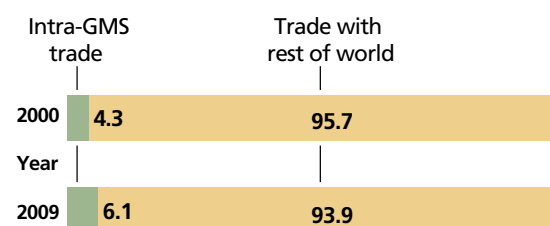
Trade within GMS and with the Outside World (%)



GMS = Greater Mekong Subregion.

Sources: United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database (UN Comtrade) and ADB staff estimates.

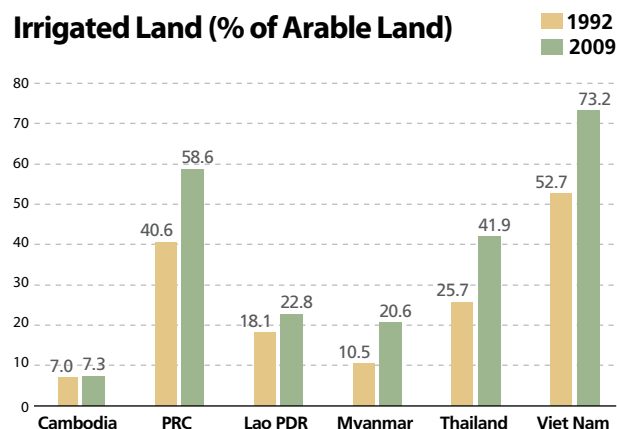
Share of Intra-GMS Trade and of Trade with the Outside World in Total GMS Trade (%)



GMS = Greater Mekong Subregion.

Sources: UN Comtrade and ADB staff estimates.

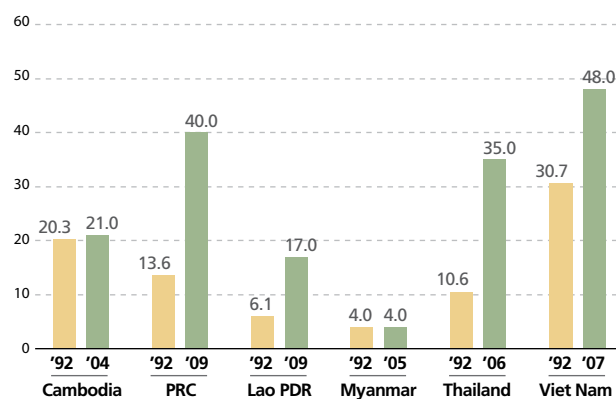
Irrigated Land (% of Arable Land)



PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Sources: Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, FAOSTAT database online (<http://faostat.fao.org/sia/377/default.aspx#anchor>); and ADB staff estimates.

Road Density (km of Road per 100 sq. km of Land Area)

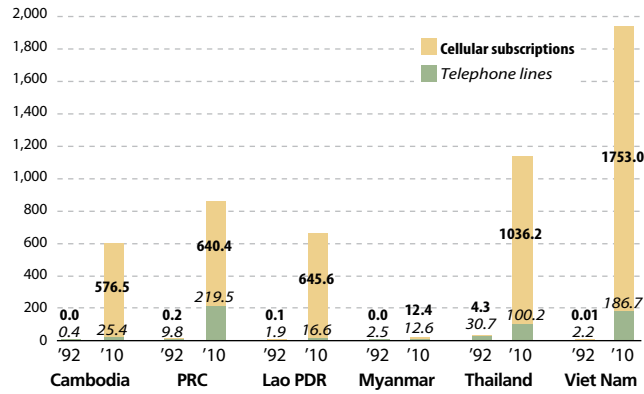


PRC = People's Republic of China, km = kilometer, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic, sq. km = square kilometer.

Sources: ADB, 2007. *ADB's Infrastructure Operations: Responding to Client Needs*. Manila. Asian Development Bank and World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

GMS Statistics

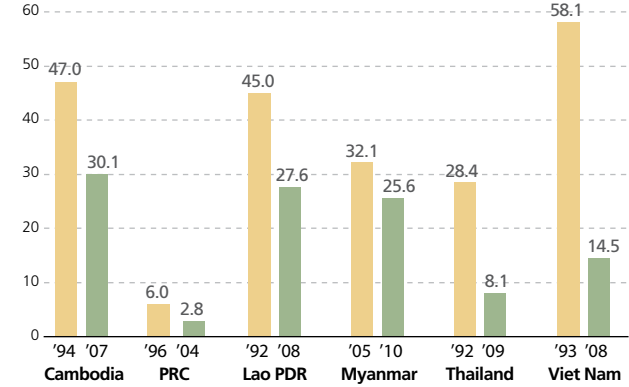
Phone Subscriptions (per 1,000 People)



PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

Poverty Rate (% of Population)

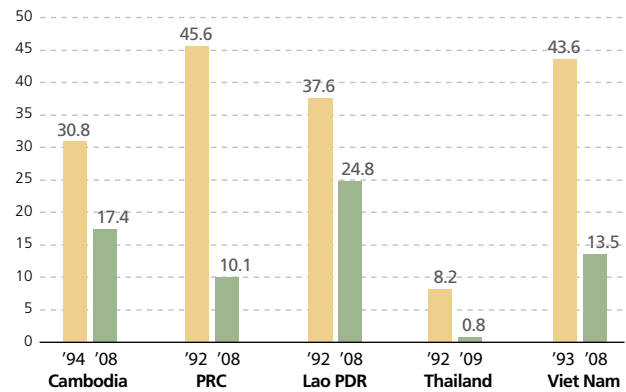


PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Note: Poverty rates are based on national poverty lines.

Sources: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>); and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for data on Myanmar.

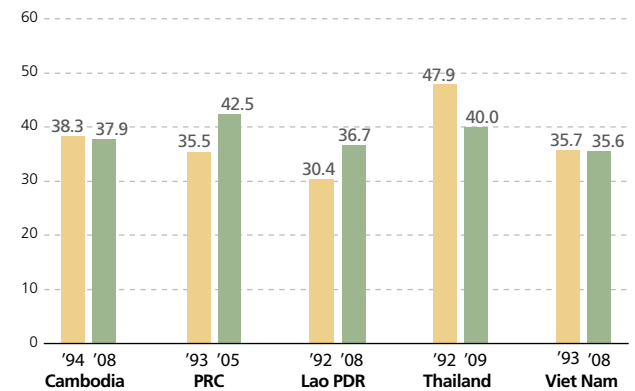
Poverty Gap at \$2 a Day (PPP) (%)



PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic, PPP = purchasing power parity.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

Gini Index of Inequality

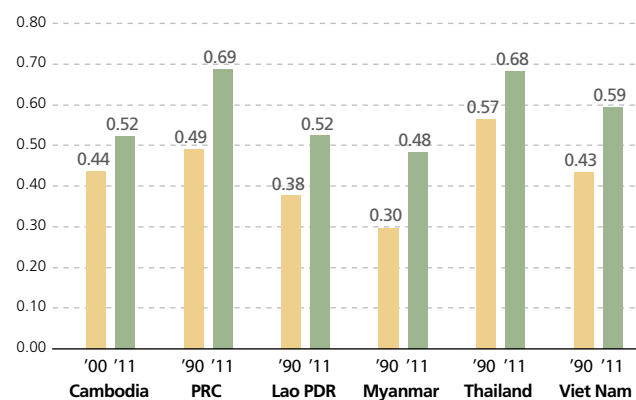


PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

GMS Statistics

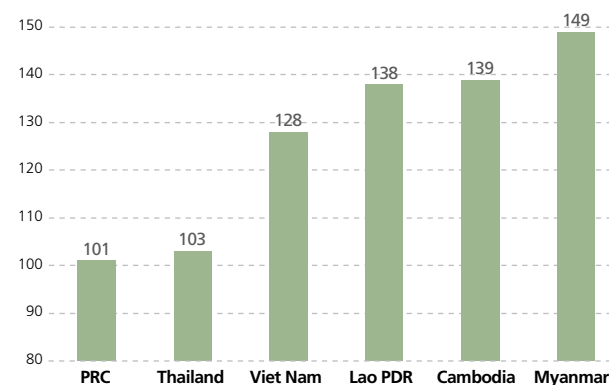
Human Development Index



PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Source: UNDP Human Development Report (2011).

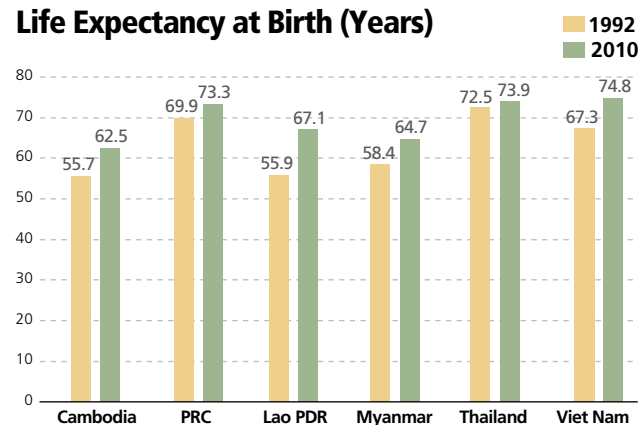
HDI Rank in 2011 (Out of 187 Countries)



PRC = People's Republic of China, HDI = Human Development Index, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Source: UNDP Human Development Report (2011).

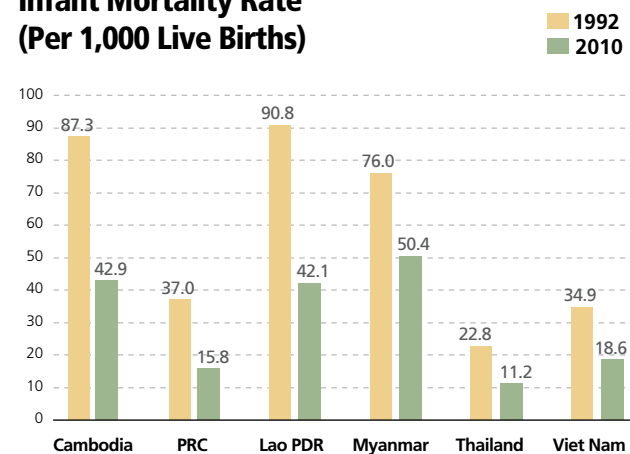
Life Expectancy at Birth (Years)



PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

Infant Mortality Rate (Per 1,000 Live Births)

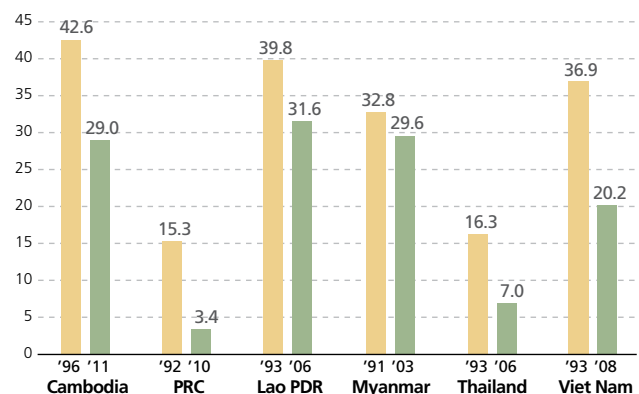


PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

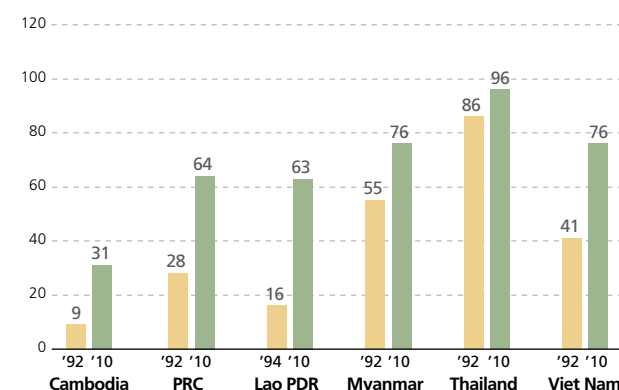
GMS Statistics

Malnutrition Prevalence, Weight for Age (% of Children Under 5)



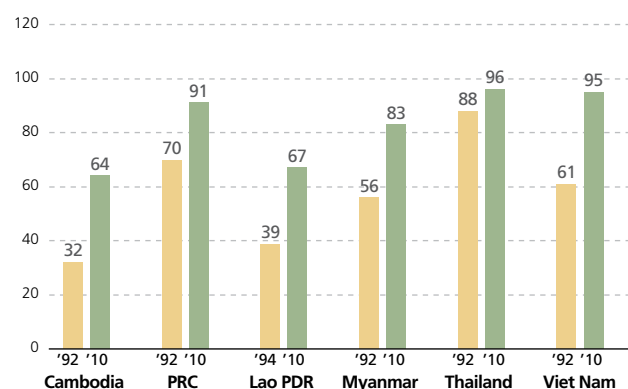
PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.
Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online
(<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

Improved Sanitation Facilities (% of Population with Access)



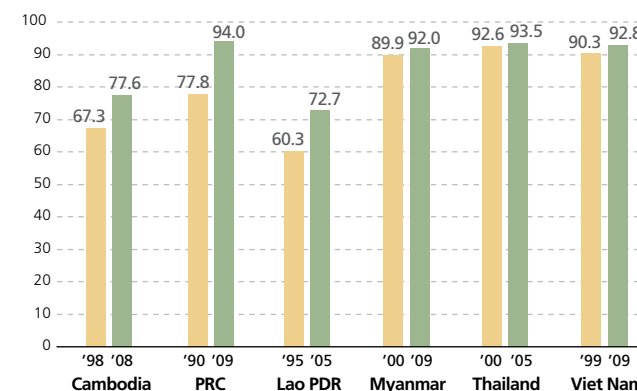
PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.
Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online
(<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

Improved Water Source (% of Population with Access)



PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.
Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online
(<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

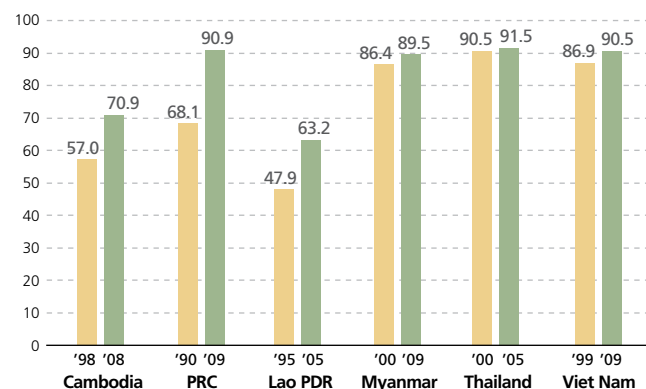
Adult Literacy Rate, Total (% of People Ages 15 and Above)



PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.
Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online
(<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

GMS Statistics

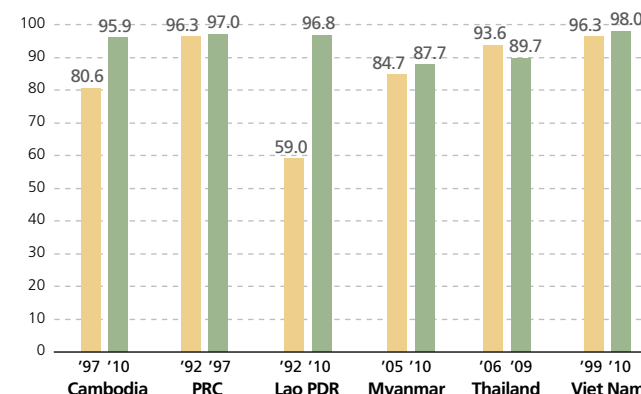
**Adult Literacy Rate, Female
(% of Females Ages 15 and Above)**



PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

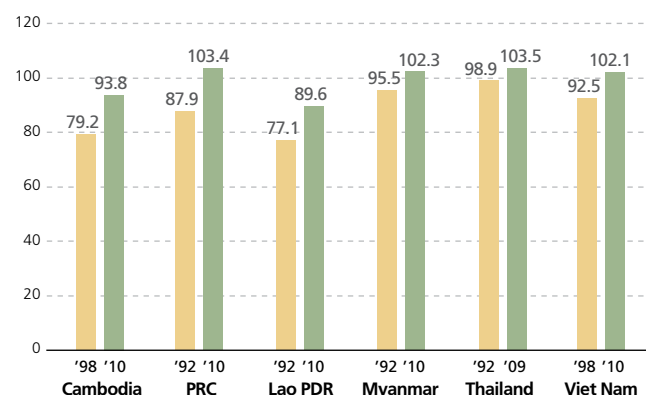
Net Enrollment Ratio, Primary School (%)



PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Sources: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>); and UNDP for data on Myanmar.

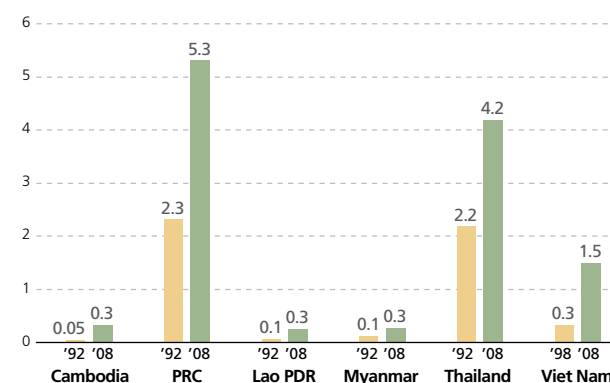
**Ratio of Girls to Boys in Primary
and Secondary Education (%)**



PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

CO2 Emissions (Metric Tons Per Capita)

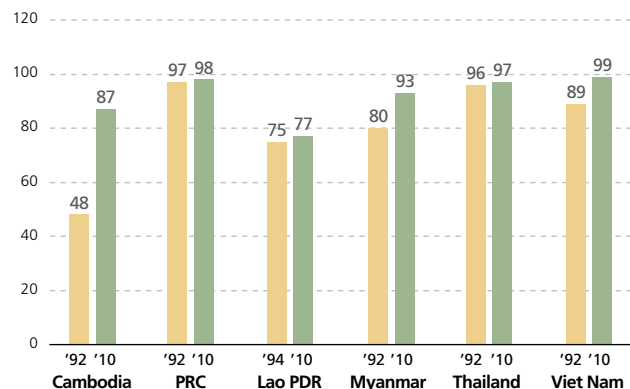


PRC = People's Republic of China, CO2 = carbon dioxide, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

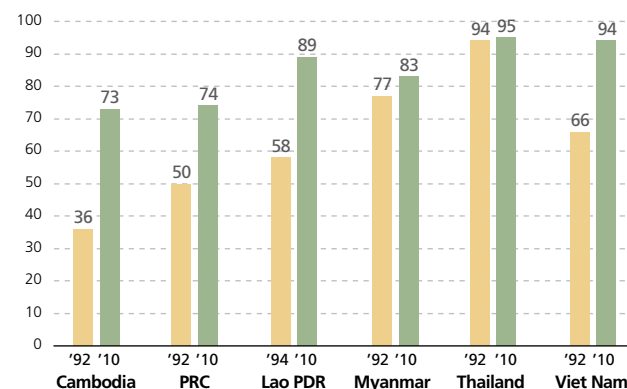
GMS Statistics

**Improved Water Source, Urban
(% of Urban Population with Access)**



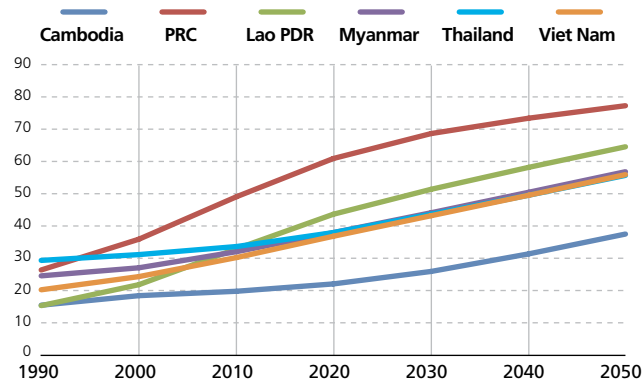
PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.
Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online
(<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

**Improved Sanitation Facilities, Urban
(% of Urban Population with Access)**



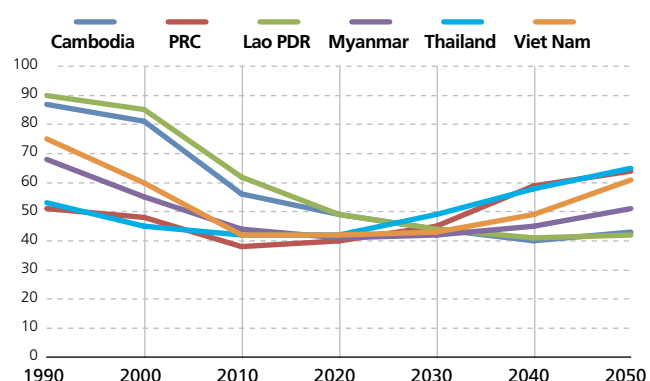
PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.
Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators Online
(<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

Urban Population (% of Total Population)



PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.
Source: United Nations (<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/index.htm>).

**Age Dependency Ratio
(% of Working-Age Population)**



PRC = People's Republic of China, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.
Note: Age dependency ratio is the ratio of population in the ages of 0-14 and 65 or more to the working-age population (ages 15-64).
Source: United Nations (http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/unpp/panel_population.htm).

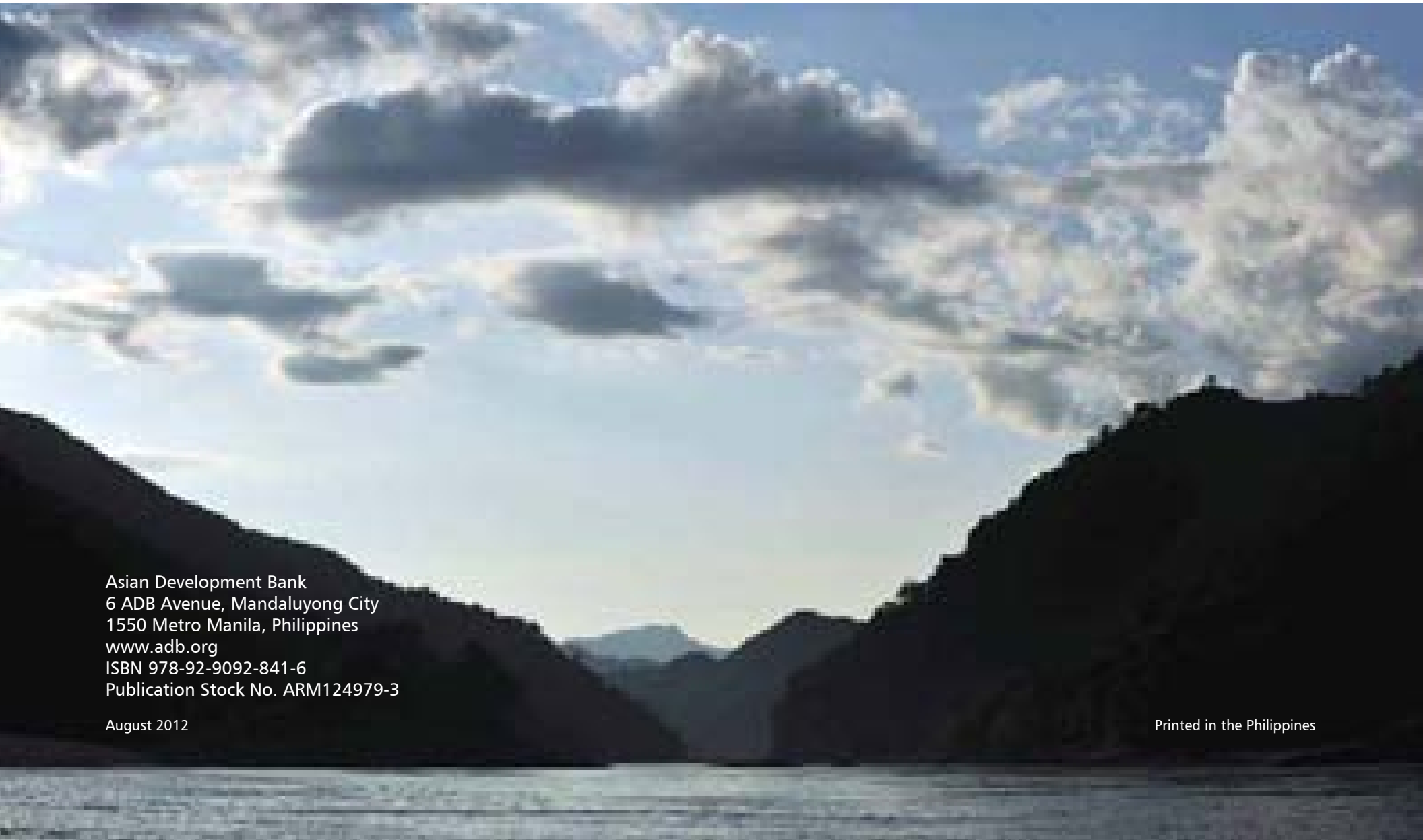
Greater Mekong Subregion: Twenty Years of Partnership

This collection of images illustrates the progress and challenges of 20 years of work in the Greater Mekong Subregion. It makes no attempt to focus solely on the work of the Asian Development Bank, or any one partner. It is a celebration of the work of everyone who has labored to make the Greater Mekong Subregion into what it is today.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB's vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region's many successes, it remains home to two-thirds of the world's poor: 1.8 billion people who live on less than \$2 a day, with 903 million struggling on less than \$1.25 a day. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.



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