

F. Country Report: Yunnan Province, People’s Republic of China

1. Province and Country Profile

With a population of 1.2 billion and a huge landmass, the mainland of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) is the dominant region to the immediate north of the GMS. While the PRC is not part of the GMS per se, the Province of Yunnan is its proxy. With a population of 42 million, the Province has a far greater population than Lao PDR and Cambodia. As the most Southwesterly Province of China, bordering three countries of the GMS – Myanmar, Lao PDR and Vietnam – forms the northwestern region of the GMS.

China was not badly affected during the Asian financial crisis, maintaining over 6% GDP growth throughout, after highs of around 10%. The high growth economies within the country have been on the East Coast, leaving the large cities, towns and rural areas of the inland Provinces lagging behind. The rapid economic growth has occurred as a result of dramatic shifts in the economic system. China has moved rapidly from an agriculturally based socialist economy to an industrial nation with market economy reforms that are transforming the landscape of the country. With the movement of people far less restricted than before, millions are leaving their rural homes for the city. This well documented movement of people is reportedly over 100 million. Farming is no longer considered profitable and, despite reforms to support farmers, they are still leaving to find work elsewhere. At the same time, further reforms of state owned enterprises (SOEs) are laying off workers, causing a surplus of workers in urban centres as well.

Table 18: Country Profile – Yunnan Province and People’s Republic of China

		Yunnan	China
GNP per capita (US\$)	Urban	445	860
	Rural	120	
Population		42 million	1.25 billion
Urban Population		28%	n.a.
Annual Population Growth		1.29	n.a.
Life expectancy		65	70
Maternal mortality rate per 100,000		154.6	65
Adult literacy rate		86%	82.8%
Number of Prefectures		17	n.a.

Statistical Yearbook of Yunnan 2000; UNICEF 2000; Human Development Report 2000

Yunnan is the eighth largest Province in China, with a total area of 394,000 square kilometres. It is a mountainous Province on the Yunnan-Guizhou plateau, and shares a 1,997-kilometre border with Myanmar, a 710 kilometre border with Lao PDR, and a 1353 kilometre border with Vietnam. It has areas of high poverty but, with border trade and tourism, it is developing rapidly. Once populated by non-Han population groups, migratory waves of Han people have settled here since the end of World War II and following the communist victory in 1949. The population is

42 million, with non-Han ethnic groups totalling over 13 million. There are 25 ethnic groups with each exceeding 5000. The Yi has the largest population, numbering more than 4 million, and three other groups – the Bei, Hani and Dai – have populations over 1 million.

Despite lagging behind the rapid growth on the coastal Provinces, Yunnan has experienced significant development in recent years. Large investments have been made in health and education. Nine years of compulsory education is mandatory in 34 counties and cities, with six years compulsory education in 90 counties and cities. The attendance rate of school age children is reportedly 98%, with admission into secondary school 76%. Illiteracy is reported to be 14% of the adult population (YASS 1998).

In recent years there has been a surge in road building throughout the Province and dams for hydroelectric power are under construction. The Province remains an agriculturally based society despite recent industrial development. Tobacco has been one of the staple crops of the Province but, with reducing government support and anti-smoking campaigns, the future prospects are not bright.

The capital city, Kunming, is home to approximately 3 million people and has undergone significant change. Infrastructure development is in evidence through modern roads and amenities. Whole suburbs have been replaced with new buildings. Main roads out of Kunming lead west to Dali, a major tourist centre, and then on to Ruili on the Myanmar border; to the southeast and another expanding border area, Hekou, on the Vietnam border; and south to Jinhong, another growth area and popular tourist centre in Sipsongpanna Prefecture.

The data for this study was collected from secondary sources and limited consultations as a country coordinator had not been appointed for Yunnan Province when this study was conducted. Thus there were no focus group discussions or official consultations.

2. Migration and Mobility

The easing of emigration regulations in China allowed some documented movements of workers in the 1980s, but such movements were accompanied by illegal movements overseas – to America, in particular, but later to Europe and Australia as well. These movements continue, with countries like Thailand and Cambodia being popular transit countries, where travel documents are arranged. Most of this movement involves flights and shipping but occasionally overland routes are used as well. There is considerable movement of people from the southern and western Provinces into Thailand, Myanmar, Lao PDR and Cambodia. Sometimes, the movement is documented, such as labourers into Lao PDR and traders or businessmen with authorised documents. However, much of it is unregulated movements of people who cross borders with relative ease. Yunnan is not only the source Province of people moving into surrounding countries but is the transit area for people from surrounding Provinces and more distant Provinces, such as Zhejiang.

Thus, for the past couple of decades, there have been increasing movements with the opening of borders and the increase in trade. Many people in Yunnan have links with relatives, traders or business people in the north of Thailand. Given Thailand's economic expansion during the 1970s and 1980s, there were greater opportunities for wage labour and trading, and this has resulted in migratory flows, especially during the late 1980s, from Yunnan, although the numbers from the Shan State in Myanmar are much greater. The Dai from Yunnan are close relatives of the Shan and of the Northern Thai, and it is mostly those groups and other ethnic minorities that

have taken the opportunity to migrate. However, smaller populations have crossed from other areas in Yunnan and from adjoining Provinces, such as Sichuan and Guianxi.

The following is an overview of migration streams and mobility in and out of Yunnan: from rural to urban and other movements within Yunnan Province; to and from other Provinces; and cross-border mobility to and from surrounding countries.

2.1 Intra-provincial mobility

Kunming is the major centre for attracting rural to urban migration. However, other major centres, such as Dali and border or tourist areas, such as Jinhong, also attract many young men or women. The service sector ranges from small entrepreneurs to hotel and restaurant staff and from department store clerks to skilled professionals, but also includes a range of services where sexual services are provided. Women are also employed as maids and nannies. Both men and women of varying ages, but mostly young people, work in the service industry. The same can be said for the manufacturing sector where factories employ many people. However, reforms of State Owned Enterprises have resulted in the closure of many factories and put many out of work. At the moment, the economy is still buoyant enough to employ a lot of this surplus labour. Construction work and other labouring jobs employ some of these men while others go into street vending. Recently there has been a newspaper 'war' which has involved the employment of as many as 5,000 young people selling newspapers on the streets.

In many areas, farming is only able to provide a marginal income. Some farmers will seek other work between harvesting seasons. With low crop production and the low status of the farmer, it is not an attractive option for the young.

2.2 Inter-provincial mobility

Most of the mobility between neighbouring Provinces, as well as Provinces further away, is people coming into Yunnan. On the outskirts of the commercial centre of Kunming, just beyond the ring road, are migrant communities from other Provinces. They come from a range of Provinces, many of course coming from Sichuan, as marginalised groups from certain parts of Sichuan are found throughout China as well as many countries throughout the world. People from Sichuan may be found in many occupations but as traders they are known for having market stalls, selling meat or other produce. Otherwise they work in construction work, driving trishaws or cabs, sex work and other occupations.

Construction workers hail from Guizhou and Sichuan and this includes those working in Lao PDR. The same groups may be working in house decoration/renovation, but these may be from Guangdong as well. Skilled workers often hail from Guangdong. One estimate is 10,000 to 20,000. These include cooks, engineers, mechanics and those managing businesses such as bars/nightclubs and beauty salons.

People from Zhejiang, on the East Coast, are traders, often specialising in bargain priced clothing and material and operating as dressmakers. They bring goods from central China into Yunnan and often across the border to Myanmar, Thailand and Lao PDR. They commonly manage beauty parlours as well. People from Hunan may specialise in clothes as well, imported from Korea. People from Guizhou often have restaurants or sell fruit but they may run beauty salons cum brothels, such as in Jinhong (Hyde 2000).

Communities have formed in many areas. The local owners of the properties in the area rent out their premises for business and residential purposes to the migrants. As the numbers have grown, the local landlords have slowly moved to better premises in this new climate of more people being upwardly mobile in socioeconomic status. Some of the communities have a reputation of not being safe and this is reported as another factor causing locals to move. There can be conflict among outsiders and locals in some situations, especially when there are sharp class distinctions, and when some migrants are unemployed.

Many appear to find employment in factories, or undertaking cleaning and other menial tasks but many are self employed, establishing small businesses. Some are able to employ family members or others in the community. Providing garments for factories or wholesalers was common in one of the communities visited.

Many migrants do not have local residency certificates so they cannot work in government. However, they do have temporary resident permits, and some people interviewed had been in the area as long as 15 years. Often the man has come first and then brought his family. However, couples will often leave their children behind with grandparents or other family members. Some do have children while they are residing there or, if they are earning reasonable money, they will bring their children. The problem with children is that they are not subsidised to attend schools and it can be quite expensive to educate them. In Kunming, it was reported that schools are opening branches that will be more affordable than the regular schools that mainly cater for locals.

Road and river linkages connect Yunnan to other Provinces as well as to surrounding countries. Road and rail links, as well as river transport, can take people across to the eastern Provinces. The most common transportation is probably by bus along major highways. However, extensive railway linkages, such as to Chengdu in Sichuan from Kunming, are well utilised. There is also a passenger railway from Kunming through the Province to the Vietnamese border and then continuing on to Hanoi. In 1997, a railway line was completed from Kunming to Nanning in the Guanxi Region. Reportedly, the line runs through some of the poorest parts of the country, with “15 million people living in poverty along the rail line ...” (cited in UNICEF 1998:51)

While the migration flow into Yunnan is large, there is also a substantial outflow. The more developed eastern coastal areas attract many people from Yunnan, both unskilled and skilled workers, trying to make their riches in Guangdong, Hainan, or Shanghai (Liu and Wen 1997).

2.3 International cross-border mobility

The borders with other countries divide groups of people sharing the same customs and culture. The southern reaches, incorporating the infamous Golden Triangle and known for the production and trafficking of drugs, are traditional areas of trade. They link different ethnic groups and communities through various routes dissecting the Shan State and Northwest Lao PDR, that act as buffers between China and Thailand. Following in the wake of wars and conflict this century, much of the trade diminished for a time. Consequently, large movements of people, either as civilians escaping conflict or repression, or soldiers of the Kuomintang armies fleeing the victorious armies of Mao Zedong, settled in Northern Thailand, with some scattered in the Shan State and Lao PDR.

The closures of borders during political tensions reduced trade as well as movements of people. However, some of the trade links have not been lost and, as a result of more political openness

and general development, the area is evolving into a more unified area. This has been acknowledged by business and other institutions and, in the early 1990s, the Economic Quadrangle was conceived, more as a vision than a plan, to transform the Golden Triangle area into a modern trading zone. The financial crisis dampened the enthusiasm for a while but now the potential is real again.

Chinese entrepreneurs have been quick to take advantage of these developments and control much of the commerce in northern areas of Myanmar. They also have large investments in northern Thailand and Lao PDR. The most recent migrants are not escaping conflict or repression but are seeking riches and a better life, through wage labour, petty trading or business.

While many may need to seek their riches or broaden their horizons away from the rigidity of the Socialist regime, the situation is improving. Through greater political stability, the advent of cash crops and expanded trade the Yunnan economy is healthier than those across the border in Myanmar or Lao PDR. Although Thailand is still a major attraction, it is perhaps less appealing than in the past. Some of the earlier migrants would like to move back but farm land has been allotted in the large scale economic and agricultural transformations of recent times and there is no place for them.

Enterprising people sell goods across borders and many have established businesses, from casinos and hotels to many other commercial enterprises in northern Myanmar, Lao PDR and Thailand. The border regions and the trade and economic environment beyond the borders attracts Chinese not only from Yunnan but right across the country. Many of the businesses can include smuggling of goods, drugs, and people.

The entrepreneurs in small and larger border towns, and centres more distant from the border, may hire people from Yunnan but are more likely to hire people from further away, such as Sichuan and Guizhou. The textile traders from Zhejiang, noted above, are common in many vicinities. Across the border in the Wa State, casinos have been established that employ people from such Provinces. There has been rapid development in a lot of small towns across the border in very recent years and these areas attract Chinese tourists. Mostly, tourists would travel across the border just for the day. Anyone who wants to do business could readily pay officials pay to have a longer pass.

In the Dehong area there are many Burmese doing business, and Burmese sex workers. Most are ethnic Burmans or Dai but there are some people who have been doing business in the area for as long as 10 years who are ethnic Pakistani, Indian or Afghani.

There are three major cross-border areas, which have at least one main crossing but have other national level crossings and other minor crossings. They are presented here in some detail with information on adjoining Prefectures, which then covers the entire international border precincts plus others (see Maps in appendix):

- (1) **Dehong** Prefecture – main border, Ruili-Muse; bordering the northern Shan state, but also close to southern Kachin State
- (2) **Sipsongpanna** Prefecture – main border, Daluo-Mong La; south and southwest bordering the Shan State (Wa State also) and Lao PDR
- (3) **Wenshan** Prefecture – main border Hekou-Lao Cai; southeast bordering Vietnam

(1) Dehong and surrounding Prefectures

Dehong is due west of Dali and Kunming. The connecting route is the Old Burma Road, which is now a major multilane highway between Kunming and Dali. The mountainous route between Dali and to the Myanmar border, through Dehong, is being upgraded. This was the road that was originally carved through the mountains in order for Chiang Kai-shek's forces battling against the Japanese invasion to have a supply route to the port of Rangoon. Due south of Dehong is Lincharng. Both of these Provinces are in the grip of an HIV/AIDS epidemic. This route through to Dali and Kunming is a long established drug trafficking route for heroin.

North of Dehong is Baoshan, and then Mujiang. These Prefectures border the Kachin State and the Kachin (Jingpo in PRC) comprise the major population groups, along with the Tai, or Dai, in this general area. Dehong is known as the Dai, Jingpo autonomous region.

Ruili is the major town on the border and the capital, Mangshe, is almost an hour away. There are frequent flights between Mangshe and Kunming. Wanding, a short distance west, is another main border crossing, and equidistant, northeast of Ruili, is another crossing, Zhangfeng. These are national level border crossings but smaller crossings exist as well and, to the north of Dehong, in Baoshan, there is a crossing into the Kachin State.

Han people have only settled here in recent decades, utilising the Old Burma Road for different purposes. While the type of goods coming up the hight has changed, it still acts as a gateway to Myanmar, at least to the north. The area is one of high mobility with a migrant Burmese community in Ruili, as well as traders and business people from different countries. Right on the border just outside Ruili is Jiegao, an Economic Development Zone with a somewhat sterile atmosphere of company buildings, with little life in the streets. However, just a short distance away, on the border itself, the streets are buzzing with a neutral land buffering the two countries and providing a wide range of goods in a market atmosphere. Drink shops, and places where men congregate with the women serving them, prevail along some sections.

(2) Sipsongpanna and Simao

Jinhong is the well-known capital of Sipsongpanna Prefecture. There are multiple daily flights from Kunming to Jinhong, and soon there will be flights from Jinhong to Thailand. Sipsongpanna has a population of almost one million, with Han immigrants comprising approximately 26%, and the rest mostly being Dai but including Akha (Hani), Yi and other minority groups (YASS 1998). Tourism and trade are both driving the economic expansion with the tourist boom of recent years, which is now spilling over to Simao Prefecture, to the north.

Simao Prefecture straddles Sipsongpanna, bordering the Shan State (commonly known as the Wa State in this section) on the west, and then stretching across Sipsongpanna where it then has a relatively small border in the southeast of the Prefecture with Lao PDR. Below Simao, Sipsongpanna has borders of approximately equal distance with the Shan State and Lao PDR, with two major crossings into the Shan State at Daluo and Damenglong, and one into Lao PDR at Boten. Simao has two major crossings into the Shan State with the main crossing into Bangsang, the capital of the Wa State.

Simao has a total population of over 2.5 million, with 25 national minorities numbering approximately 1.5 million – predominantly Dai, Wa and Lahu (YASS 1998). At the end of 1998, it was reported that 270,000 people lived below the poverty line (UNICEF 1998). Since the

political situation on the border region with the Wa stabilised in the late 1980s, there has been a steady rise in cross-border trade in the area. In 1991, the border crossing at Menglian was authorised and trade promoted in the area. In 1998, there were 240,000 border crossings recorded here (YASS 1998). Most of these crossings would be to village areas immediately across the border, as well as to Bangsang, the capital of the Wa State. There is also regular movement of people to towns further on, and to the Thai border and beyond.

The Dai comprise the largest populations among the border Prefectures, but there are variations between the groups stretching from Dehong to Sipsongpanna, where they are mainly known as Tai (Dai) Leu. Poverty is endemic here, becoming even more conspicuous with border towns thriving and wealthy tourists passing through. Tourists and travellers cross into Myanmar, where they can visit casinos and where transvestite shows (often featuring Thais) are popular.

Urban centres in these Prefectures and some of the border regions are known for drug use. Opium smoking is common in many areas and injecting of heroin is widespread, but not to the same scale as in the Dehong region, where trafficking routes are more established than in these Southern Prefectures. These two Provinces are well known for trafficking gangs that, in the past, took women to Thailand for prostitution, mainly to Bangkok and further south. This movement of women still occurs but more on a voluntary basis (see below).

Some women have found employment in factories, agriculture, or working as housemaids or sales assistants in markets or shops. A significant proportion, particularly women, have found work in massage parlours, karaoke bars and restaurants in the north of Thailand. The numbers are much smaller than those from Myanmar and they are often not distinguishable, especially if they have mastered the language, which they often do given that the Dai and Shan speak a similar dialect to the northern Thai.

A proportion of migrants stay in the north, some gaining local identity cards that permit them to travel within the Province in which they are living. Others venture further south, to Bangkok or more southerly destinations. Some gain local ID papers fraudulently, which allows them to purchase work permits to go to Bangkok or elsewhere. Migrants from PRC seem to have greater access to these fraudulent activities than other migrants or they have access to the necessary money required.

The Chinese have been instrumental in building roads and infrastructure in Lao PDR over the past few decades and, today, as many as 10,000 workers, mostly documented, are employed by Chinese contractors in Lao PDR. They are mostly from Sichuan and other Provinces rather than Yunnan (see chapter on Lao PDR).

(3) Wenshan and surrounding Prefectures

Hekou county in Wenshan Prefecture borders Vietnam. The population in 1997 was almost 80,000. with ethnic minorities, predominantly Yao, comprising 63%. The border town is a thriving centre, with expanding cross-border trade and a growing tourist industry. It is on the railway line between Kunming and Hanoi. In 1997, there were nine hotels that catered for foreigners. There is a busy nightlife, with Vietnamese, as well as Chinese, sex workers. Apart from Hekou, there are national level border crossings at Jinping and Tianbao, as well as smaller crossings.

To the south is Honghe Prefecture, which also borders Vietnam and is comparable to Wenshan in development and in population size. To the north is Qujing Prefecture, with almost six million

people and a higher per capita income. Ethnic minorities comprise only 11% of the total population. The two former Prefectures are known for women being trafficked or otherwise travelling to the eastern coastal areas for marriage markets.

2.4 Trafficking and Human Smuggling

The phenomenon of women migrating alone to Thailand for extended periods has probably occurred since the late 1980s. Several hundred women have been repatriated through formal channels back to Yunnan, after being rescued from brothels in Thailand. Most women are Dai from Simao and Sipsongpanna Prefectures. One estimate suggests that from 500 to 1500 women entered the sex trade in Thailand from Yunnan during 1991 alone (Mahatdhanobol, 1998). From this figure, it is estimated that 3,000 women had entered the sex trade in Thailand during 1990 to 1996, although one study cited 2,500 women migrating in 1995 alone (cited in Caouette 1998). Some of the women from Yunnan travel to, or are trafficked to, third countries such as Malaysia or Japan.

Trafficking routes and networks have been identified for women from Yunnan;. However, over the past few years it appears doubtful that trafficking is a common means of women going to Thailand¹. Women appear to receive support in travelling from friends and acquaintances and others along the way, without any force or deception.

Strict regulations came into force and many traffickers were arrested with some being executed (YASS 1998). In addition, the Women's Federation instigated fairly wide-ranging awareness-raising programs through their grassroots networks. These activities and the law enforcement undoubtedly had some impact on the volume of women migrating. However, they may also have served to speed up the process of the change from trafficking through deception to trafficking as a means of support to women who were making more informed choices.

It seems that the propaganda given to the women was not a major deterrent. It seems that the motivation to leave overcomes a number of obstacles. The women who were repatriated were labelled and stigmatised as women who had been working as prostitutes, even though there may have been some sympathy for their plight. Other women were known to be HIV positive. Thus the movement of women had become synonymous with sex work. This was all fuel for the thorough awareness-raising exercises to deter women but the effect seems limited.

Most women travel overland through the Shan State, following the same route that many others take who work in a range of jobs in northern Thailand. They can readily pass through the border checkpoints. The travelling is difficult through the mountainous terrain and there are checkpoints or ad hoc police checks that migrants have to be wary of. For these reasons, women usually need some assistance in their travel, sometimes using private cars rather than public buses, and perhaps making payoffs to police. In the early days, the travel was more difficult and more clandestine, with traffickers sometimes taking the women around checkpoints at night and walking across mountains. Now roads are improving and the women and the traffickers know how to facilitate the travel process. The cost is still relatively high, as much as B3,000 to reach the Thai border,

¹ Using the current definitions of trafficking as espoused by the ILO and GAATW, especially the former, all movements of people that receive some assistance are being trafficked. In the context here, the earlier forms of 'trafficking' that mainly used deception seemed to have given way to more accurately informed and voluntary movements of people.

but, as they become more attuned to the route, some women can do it much cheaper. In Thailand, women will often need assistance again for road blocks and smooth passage. Those who have been to Thailand one or more times and have learnt to speak Thai can readily pass through.

An alternative route is to travel by boat, which can be caught near the Simao Township and a 2-day trip will see them at Chiang Khong, Thailand. It may be possible to alight here but many of them then catch a fast boat up to Mae Sai. Expenses for this trip may be comparable to those for the land routes. Without the fast boat and using a freight boat it could be done more cheaply.

As mentioned above, there are similar operations that occur from the eastern Prefectures of Yunnan, for women entering into arranged marriages with men on the eastern coastal areas of PRC. In 1998, it was reported that 200 of these women were sent back to Yunnan as victims of traffickers. However, it was suggested that many of them did not want to be returned. It is also reported that women from Vietnam are also induced into marriage markets, mostly in coastal areas but also in remote areas where men cannot find wives.

2.5 Specific Mobile Population Groups

(1) Entertainers and sex workers

Prostitution is illegal in PRC and virtually disappeared after 1949, or especially with the Cultural Revolution in 1959. Since the late 1970s, despite many crackdowns by police, there has been a steady increase at all levels of society, usually disguised as massage, nightclubs, and karaoke. In Kunming, streetwalkers are prevalent in some areas and some three to five star hotels attract women looking for wealthy customers. Massage and hair washing services proliferate throughout the city where men may make arrangements to meet with the women. Some places may provide on-site sexual services but most establishments are wary of police raiding them.

In recent times, there have been more crack-downs through the country with over 7,000 establishments being forced to close in Guangdong in “a province-wide drug and prostitution sweep” (China Daily August 25, 2000). The establishments included 4,000 beauty salons and 388 saunas. A conference report cites that, during 1996 and 1997, there were 10,503 women and children rescued, 1,928 trafficking rings broken and 14,709 traffickers arrested. In addition, 411,700 sex workers were pursued and many sent to reeducation camps (Caouette 1998).

In Yunnan, probably most of the women in the sex trade are from other Provinces. Even as far down as Sipsongpanna, women are from Provinces such as Sichuan and Guizhou. However, in order to fulfil male fantasies, they portray themselves as Dai through dress, hairstyle and manner. This only happens in Jinhong and not in Dehong, where the main clientele are businessmen and other travellers, rather than tourists. Both areas are predominantly Dai but the language and dress differs. Dehong is much more Sinocised whereas, despite the influx of Han Chinese into the South, it is still clearly Dai country. Even more so since the marketing of the area as such. There are some Yunnanese who come from other parts and there are some women from ethnic minority groups, including the Dai. But right down to relatively small border towns women in the sex trade are more likely to be from other Provinces.

In Dehong there are Burmese sex workers, and in Hekou there are Vietnamese sex workers, in addition to Chinese sex workers. And Chinese women can be found across the border, especially in the Shan State, where they are more likely to be more up-market hostesses or call girls.

(2) Transport workers

With expanding road networks and the upgrading of major highways, along with increasing trade and commerce, there is an increasing number of trucks. Many trucks travel through the Province to surrounding Provinces and some cross into Myanmar and Lao PDR. Buses are also rapidly increasing to cope with the increasing migration from surrounding Provinces and further away Provinces.

A multilane highway leads away from Kunming on the 7-hour journey to Dali, then a much longer journey to Dehong. At the major border crossing there, the traffic across the border is usually heavy. Gems, teak, farm produce and raw materials enter PRC and electrical goods, fuel and auto parts flow into Myanmar. But this has also been a major trafficking route for drugs, and bribery and smuggling is described as the way of life on the road (Bangkok Post December 15, 1999).

Other major routes are southwest to Hekou, on the Vietnamese border, and south to Simao and Sipsongpanna. The ADB have recently funded the upgrading of large portions of this latter route. Plans are well under way for this route to extend to Chiang Tung in Shan State, and then to Chiang Rai in Thailand, as part of the circuitous route that then runs through Lao PDR and back into Sipsongpanna.

Truck drivers are known to be targets of sex workers, in the sense that they are known to be travelling alone or with another male; a long way from home, and perhaps looking for sexual services. Young women can be seen on the highways flagging down drivers to stop and meet with them. This is a very similar situation to Vietnam where women are sometimes found in remote areas, well away from police and where trucks can easily stop. In the above mentioned highway upgrade, going south along the Jiang-Mohie upgraded section, there are well known areas where bars and other outlets have women available. At border towns and other cities, drivers are likely to be the clientele of sex workers as they wait for goods.

(3) Traders

With the advent of economic reform, the Chinese were quick to take up where they left off in 1949. From that period until 1978, there was no significant trade through Yunnan (Hyde 2000). Now they dominate many of the trading routes in the region. The Han first came to Sipsongpanna in the 1950s, to plant rubber. Their presence was of course strong during the Cultural Revolution and then later planting more rubber so that it is the main resource in the local region. The development of a new economic zone in the late 1980s and early 1990s, with joint venture capital, signalled the area as being the gateway into Southeast Asia (Hyde 2000).

Since that time Chinese petty traders and business people have opened up areas across the borders as well as further into Myanmar, Lao PDR and Thailand. The Mekong River is a major means of transport for goods and people in this wave of commerce and movement. However, with the devaluation of the kip in Lao PDR and devaluations in Myanmar, goods from PRC were too expensive and trade has slowed since the financial crisis.

Women often control much of the border trade (Caouette 1998) and both men and women crossing borders are more likely to be from Provinces other than Yunnan, such as Zhejiang. Traders come the other way also, especially from Myanmar into Dehong where, besides Burmese traders, there are Indian or Afghani, and Vietnamese traders at Hekou. These are joined by local Dai and, sometimes, Hmong traders as well as other groups. The Dai are often at an advantage in

much of this cross-border region being the native speakers of Dai (Tai), while often being able to speak either Chinese or Burmese as well. They are a minority in Yunnan but a majority in Sipsongpanna and, generally, in this border region are often looked upon by other groups as intelligent and enterprising (Hyde 2000). They are the most economically advanced, sometimes letting out rooms to immigrant Han people. The Han still dominate commerce and business, especially the sex trade, which the Dai have not invested in (Hyde 2000).

(4) Construction workers

Many workers are employed on road construction sites, in building construction and in dam construction for hydroelectric power. Much of the construction is conducted by private companies, often in joint ventures, and often the company is from Guangdong, or other areas like Shanghai. Construction work has slumped a little given reduced foreign investment and the general economic downturn in the region. Prior to the slump however, all three areas of construction were booming and continue to do so in some areas.

Another area of labour employment, particularly in the more remote areas, is mining. Yunnan is rich in mineral resources and these have been exploited over the past couple of decades, although the industry is still at a relatively primitive stage of development (Wang Shui 1997).

Road construction has been a massive employer of unskilled labour over the past years, with construction and upgrading of major highways and feeder roads. In terms of transport, the development of airports at the Prefecture level has been rapid over recent years as well, employing many workers in the construction phase. All roads leading to major border locations and cross provincial locations have been upgraded or are in the process of being upgraded. Kunming has had major upgrades in recent years.

Two major dams on the Mekong are under construction with one almost due for completion and the other, the giant Xiaowan Dam, not due until 2012. Construction on the Jinhong Dam has been delayed for some time. It will be the fourth dam since the first was built in 1984, and a further three are planned. Much of the power from the dams will be sold to other countries, such as Thailand.

(5) Tourists

Yunnan is a major tourist destination for domestic tourists and an increasingly important destination for foreign tourists. Kunming is known for its mild climate, is well known as 'Spring City' and has a number of tourist attractions nearby. Dali is a very well known area in PRC and has long been a major tourist area. To the north of Dali is Lijiang, which has the largest old town of traditional buildings in the country, now a UNESCO heritage area.

Jinhong, in Sipsongpanna, is the centre of the Dai culture and has become an oasis for northern Chinese wanting to experience this exotic culture. In 1997, it was reported that there were almost two million domestic tourists and 47,000 foreign tourists (YASS 1998). Popular art forms and myth enhance the exotic nature of the culture, which reifies the beauty and sensuality of Dai women. By the mid 1990s, cultural tours to Sipsongpanna extended to sex tours where, after business meetings in Kunming, men could fly down to Jinhong as a reward (Hyde 2000). Hotels, resorts and tours abound in this once poor and remote area, with the opportunity to cross into the Shan State and spend Yuan in Chinese run casinos and other entertainment venues.

Increasingly, mainland Chinese are travelling to Thailand where recent news reports highlight scams among tour operators, which include unscheduled tours to bars with sex shows. Chinese

are among the fastest growing populations of Asian tourists to Thailand. In 1998, the number of tourists to Thailand was 432,995, a 23% increase over 1997. While many are legitimate tourists, some do not return, settling in Thailand or travelling through to third countries (Far Eastern Economic Review, June 24, 1999).

The links between Kunming and Thailand are escalating, with at least two flights per day, which usually stop at Chiang Mai. There are plans to have flights from Jinhong to Chiang Mai. Road links, mentioned above as being under construction, that link the four countries through the Golden Triangle will enhance cross-border tourism as well.

3. Typology of Mobile Populations

The population groups discussed so far are shown in Table 19, with locations where they are found, population size, and risk assessment (refer to the Methodology section for definitions and means of assessment). Different patterns of movement exist, with a relatively large movement of rural to urban migrants, but some of this movement is from other Provinces. Also, some of the interprovincial movement may be from urban areas in other Provinces to urban areas such as Kunming. There are some movements out of Yunnan to other Provinces but the greatest flows are into Yunnan and Kunming, and some of these flows continue to border areas and border crossing areas. Then there are local Yunnanese, both Han and minority groups, who trade or travel across borders for work or other reasons.

While most are occupational groups the main exception is tourists. The other groups that do not appear in the discussion are business and private sector professionals and uniformed officials. Private sector professionals are a special white-collar group that includes both locals and foreigners. Business and development workers often require extensive travel throughout the Province and outside the Province and, as has been discussed elsewhere in the report, can be classified as being at risk. Higher class hotels are well-known throughout the country for being places where women seek out clients. Uniformed officials, including, military, border police, and regular police are an important category that are clearly acknowledged as high risk in the Vietnamese and Cambodian sections of this report.

Another exception to occupational groups is ethnic minorities. They are classified as such because of their particular relationship to rapid social and economic change. They can also appear in other categories, such as sex workers, factory workers and traders.

Women appear in all occupational categories with the exception of truck drivers, although there may be some as women who do drive trucks and buses. As long distance drivers they would be rare. It is thought that there are a few women in mining and construction work. They are the majority in the service industry, especially in entertainment services.

Table 19: Typology of Migrant and Mobile Population Groups and Assessment of Their HIV Risk Situations in Yunnan Province

Migrant and Mobile Population Groups	Popn. Size	Geographical Locations	Risk Situation Assessment
Internal provincial movements			
Factory workers	**	Kunming and other cities	*
Service workers	***	Kunming, Jinhong, Hekou, in Dehong and Dali Prefectures	**
Entertainment workers	***	Same as above, plus border towns and roadside stops	****
Construction workers	**	Roads and dams	**
Transport workers	***	Major highways	****
State officials (public servants)	**	Country-wide and cross-border	***
Business/private sector professionals	*	Country-wide and cross-border	**
Uniformed officials	**	Province-wide and at borders	***
Ethnic minorities	***	Most Prefectures, border areas	**
Cross-border movements (emigrants)			
Entertainers/massage	**	Thailand, Myanmar, some to Lao PDR	*****
Labour	*	Thailand, Myanmar, some to Lao PDR	**
Traders	*	Myanmar, Lao PDR, Thailand	***
Transport workers	*	Shan State, Lao PDR	***
Ethnic minorities	***	Myanmar, Lao PDR, Thailand, Vietnam	**
Tourists and visitors	*	Myanmar	***
Immigrant mobility (provincial and foreign)			
Traders	*	From neighbouring and Eastern Provinces, also Lao PDR, Myanmar	**
Labour/self employed	****	Neighbouring Provinces Eastern Provinces	**
Entertainers	**	Neighbouring Provinces Eastern Provinces, also Myanmar	****
Tourists and visitors	**	Neighbouring and northeastern Provinces, HK, Taiwan, Thailand	**

** The number of asterisks proportionately signifies population size or severity of risk situations (see definitions in Methodology)*

4. HIV/AIDS in Yunnan and PRC

4.1 HIV/AIDS Profile

PRC is characterised as a low prevalence country. However, because of its massive size and population, it represents a major potential focus of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Asia. Reported HIV infections to mid-year 2000 are 17,000, but experts estimate the actual number of HIV infections to be between 500,000 to 600,000. In recent years, the Chinese government has announced a series of campaigns to prevent an "Africa-style" AIDS epidemic in the country. The commitment to fighting AIDS, however, is still ambivalent and appears to be waning in some instances. This is reflected in the low government expenditures on AIDS programs compared to other countries in the region.

The majority of reported HIV infections and AIDS cases, about 70%, are among IDUs in Yunnan Province. The epidemic was first detected among IDUs in Dehong Prefecture in 1989. The Dai and Jingpo (Kachin) populations were the most affected but, over the years, this has shifted to equal numbers of Han and minority populations. The epidemic has spread out from Ruili, in Dehong, to surrounding Prefectures and to Kunming, with rates of infection at several sites over 50%. In 1999, the prevalence rate ranged from 2.6% to 75%, with an average rate for the Province of 27.8%, showing an increasing trend (see Table 20). IDUs still make up the greatest proportion of infected persons – 75% – with sexual transmission reaching almost 14% in 1998.

Table 20: HIV Prevalence Rates for Injecting Drug Users 1992-1999

HIV prevalence	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
No. of Prefectures With HIV+ cases	1	2	3	7	8	13	13	14
Detected rates (percent)	0-73	0-56.3	0-47.1	0-73.2	0-76.8	2.2-66.7	5.7-70.6	2.6-75
Average rates (percent)	6.0	5.3	6.5	6.8	22.4	26.4	24.4	27.8

Sexual transmission occurs in the Southern Prefectures among women who have been working in Thailand. This has been detected since the early 1990s. The rate of spread of HIV via these women is thought to be slow but there is no reliable data to track the spread. There are small numbers of sex workers in Kunming and border regions, and other women infected are spouses of IDUs. In 1999, the overall rates of infection were:

- sex workers - 2.2% (19/847)
- male STD patients - 1.8% (53/2951)
- among pregnant women - 0.2% (14/6417)

In Baoshan, there were rates of 4.1% among male STD patients. There are only 7 reported cases of mother-to-child transmission. This is very low considering a consistent rate of 0.2% over the last 8 years from sentinel surveillance. The overall rate of adult infections is 0.18%, deaths total

260 reported cases, with 335 the total number of PLWHAs . HIV is now found in all 16 Prefectures of Yunnan and in 88 Counties (Cheng 2000).

Every six months, sentinel surveillance data is gathered from four groups, namely: sex workers, IDUs, male STD patients and pregnant women. Truck drivers are being included in this list. There are 37 sentinel sites in Yunnan. It should be noted that most of the surveillance data from IDUs and sex workers comes from those in detention.

The Australian Red Cross was the first agency to have a collaborative prevention program, but other agencies, such as, SCF UK, Oxfam, UNICEF, and the Salvation Army have been working on AIDS in Yunnan for some time, and now DFID, the British AID organisation, has begun a large prevention program. There has been a focus on youth and school programs. Community-based efforts and peer education projects have been implemented on HIV/AIDS, as well as on drug use and its suppression as well as harm reduction. The leading agency in conducting such drug-related programs, the Yunnan Institute of Drug Abuse (YIDA) has had a major focus on drugs incorporating mobile populations in recent years. Otherwise, there has been little in the way of targeting mobile populations. Elsewhere in the country, mobile populations have been addressed mainly through extensive research and some programming in relation to long distance drivers and large numbers of transport workers in the railways have been trained. Through the railway system, there has been extensive use of different media to reach an estimated 100 million transport users, many of them male migrants (UNDP 1999). Migrant workers and mobility have been acknowledged as issues and some effort has been made to address the problem.

In Yunnan, there has been no extensive programming undertaken in any of the border regions, some of which present as the most vulnerable areas for the spread of HIV in the region. Even in the Ruili area, in Dehong, where the epidemic was detected in 1989, there has been little in the way of international agency support except for UN funds that created little in the way of effective programming. ESCAP has coordinated some of the programming that YIDA and other agencies have implemented for drug use reduction and HIV/AIDS has been incorporated into this programming. Government and international agencies have moved into Dehong in very recent years to extend programming in prevention and care.

4.2 HIV/AIDS Risk Situation

Drug use is still the main mode of transmission for the country, through the use of shared injecting equipment. In recent years HIV epidemics have been detected among IDUs in Xinjiang, Guanxi, Sichuan, and Guangdong. HIV infections by all transmission routes are increasing in absolute numbers but most new cases, 70%, are still related to sharing needles among IDUs. There are 600,000 registered drug users in the country but the real number is estimated to be several times higher (UNAIDS 2000). The numbers are increasing and, reportedly, the proportion that are sharing needles is increasing.

HIV infections are believed to be increasing among heterosexuals in Southern PRC, especially in Guangdong and in Guangxi where, in 1998 one sentinel survey site showed 5% (15/333) of sex workers were infected (UNAIDS 2000). Blood supplies still provide some threat for, despite the outlawing of selling blood in 1998, the practice still continues in many areas with as many as five million people regularly selling blood (NY Times August 2, 2000).

The increase in prostitution and the rise of STDs in the country pose the biggest threat for accelerating the spread of HIV. From the virtual eradication of STDs during the Mao era, more

than 300,000 cases were reported in 1995 (UNAIDS 1998). One study of 500 entertainment workers in three Provinces showed the prevalence rate of STDs to be 19.2%, and the rate of condom use less than 10% (Chen Ie, 1999). This is reflected in Yunnan where prostitution flourishes in cities, towns and border locations throughout the Province. Significant increases in STDs have been reported in Dali Prefecture, a well-known tourist area in Yunnan (Nopkesorn 1997).

As suggested in the above study, condom use is generally low. While condoms are freely available and given prominent shelf space in pharmacies and department stores, there are still restrictions on promotion due to the conservative attitudes that prevail among authorities. Awareness and knowledge of AIDS and STDs is generally low, as reported by a number of studies, but this is especially true among rural populations and in ethnic minority areas.

4.3 Hot Spots of Population Mobility and HIV/AIDS

With little evidence of a sexually transmitted epidemic, the main focus is on areas where HIV prevalence is known to exist, where other STDs are increasing and where there are entertainment services and service girls catering to large mobile or migrant populations (see Table 21).

In Dehong Prefecture, where HIV was first detected in 1989, there are prevalence rates of over 50% at some sites. This area borders Shan State in Myanmar where there are also intravenous drug use epidemics, and where sexual transmission is occurring. Ruili is the focal point for the intravenous drug use epidemic and is the major border crossing linking not only Yunnan but also the east coast of PRC with Myanmar.

Ruili is the main link in the trafficking routes, from which it is thought that the intravenous drug use epidemic has sprung. Thus, major towns linked with Ruili along the Old Burma Road, and communities nearby, are implicated in the spread of HIV. Mangshe is the capital of Dehong and is on this route. Within reasonable proximity of the border, and a major stop over for travellers and traders of many sorts, it is a major hot spot. Baoshan city is on this route also, and then Xiaguan and other parts of Dali, which is not only a centre of drug use but a very well-known tourist area, with many hotels and entertainment establishments.

Travelling further along this route is Kunming, which is a thriving metropolis that has developed rapidly in recent years and is well known for entertainment and hospitality services. Travelling southwest, by road or rail, the final destination before the Vietnamese border is Hekou. With Chinese and Vietnamese women available in the thriving entertainment scene, and widespread drug use, this ranks probably as the third centre after Ruili area and Kunming.

Due south of Kunming are Simao and Sipsongpanna. As with other routes there are truck stops and many establishments with service girls en route. The destination here is Jinhong, which is another thriving area due to the rapid expansion of tourism as well as the increased border trade. In recent years it has developed as a Mecca for men seeking an experience of the exotic, in which Dai women play the central fantasy role. In Simao, there is a small but growing area with an increasing number of entertainment venues. There is also drug use in the area and drugs are readily available, especially across the border in Wa State where the capital, Bangsang, is only several kilometres away. Many women in this area have contracted HIV from working in sex work in Thailand.

Further south, closer to the border, is the busy town of Meng La, said to have 30-40 dance halls where women can be contacted, plus numerous karaoke bars and other venues.

Table 21: Hot Spots of Population Mobility and HIV/AIDS Risk Situations in Yunnan

Hot Spots	Migrant and Mobile Population Groups	Popn. Size	HIV Risk Situations
Northwest			
Ruili (& Jiegao), Dehong	Transport workers, female service workers, migrant labourers, traders, state and uniformed officials, private sector	***	*****
Mangshe (Dehong)	Transport workers, female service workers, state and uniformed officials	***	***
Baoshan town, Baoshan	Transport workers, sex workers, traders, state and uniformed officials, labourers	**	**
Xiaguan, Dali	Transport workers, service workers, traders, tourists, state and uniformed officials, private sector	***	***
Central			
Kunming	Transport workers, service workers, traders, tourists, state/uniformed officials, private sector, factory workers	*****	****
Southwest			
Hekou	Tourists, transport workers, service workers, construction workers, state and uniformed officials, traders	**	****
South			
Jinhong	Tourists, traders, transport workers, sex workers, state and uniformed officials, private sector	***	***
Mengla	Traders, transport workers, sex workers, state officials, uniformed officials, tourists	**	***
Menglian	Traders, sex workers, state officials, drivers, uniformed officials, tourists	*	**

** The number of asterisks proportionately signifies population size or severity of risk situations (see definitions in Methodology).*

5. Conclusion

Since the outbreak of HIV among IDUs in Dai and Jingpo (Kachin) communities in the Ruili area in 1989, HIV has spread throughout and beyond Yunnan Province. It has spread to rural areas and to Han populations. However, the epidemic is still largely fuelled by transmission through drug use via the sharing of needles. The rapid escalation of the spread of HIV into the general population has not occurred as was expected and, at present, there is only limited evidence of an imminent epidemic through prostitution and other sexual contact. Of course, this may be due to limited testing, despite the fact that there is fairly reliable surveillance data from systems that have been in place for several years. Some Prefectures have not had good coverage or have not always been forthcoming with their findings.

Being on the verge of the Golden Triangle, bordering the Shan State in Myanmar, which clearly has both an intravenous drug use epidemic and a sexually transmitted epidemic, and with Thailand not far south with both epidemics, the area is highly vulnerable. The relatively low prevalence and slow spread makes it difficult to determine which groups are most vulnerable. This report was undertaken with limited research, and the links between mobile groups and HIV/AIDS that might be particular to Yunnan are not well known. However, some assessment can be made on the basis of an understanding of risk and mobility in the region.

Over the past 10 years, there has been an expansion of trade and movement in the area. The sustained economic growth of PRC over this time, and during the financial crisis, is increasingly having an impact on western Provinces, including Yunnan. The economy, however, is still in transition and, while some people are benefiting and infrastructure development is gaining pace, others are struggling to find their way in the transition.

Yunnan is receiving tens of thousands of economic migrants, who make their way to Kunming and other cities and towns. Many move through Yunnan and cross into Myanmar, Lao PDR or on to Thailand. The economy is still buoyant enough to cope with the high unemployment rate and the vast movements of people. However, drug use is increasing along with prostitution and crime. More people are on the move than ever before in PRC and many have money in their pockets. In this context, the rise in prostitution is characterised not so much as a new phenomenon but as a return to pre-liberation days.

There are major cross-border sites with Myanmar and Vietnam, as well as with Lao PDR, that are potentially among the most risky border areas in the region. There is both intravenous drug use and widespread commercial sex, and a mix of nationalities and ethnic minority groups. Traditional trading routes are becoming modern trading routes with the expansion and upgrading of roads, easing of border restrictions, and the provision of more border checkpoints. Some of these routes also facilitate human trafficking and the trafficking of drugs.

Highways are extensive in the Province and the volume of traffic is increasing with the expansion of trade and economic growth, which brings with it infrastructure development, social development and tourism. Transport workers are numerous throughout the Province and major truck stops in rural locations, as well as in cities and towns, attract entertainment services and women to serve truckers and other mobile populations. Construction workers from Yunnan and other Provinces are also numerous, in line with the pace of development over recent years. They are often single men hired by eastern coastal companies, or joint venture projects, bringing in workers from elsewhere.

The Dali area has long been a popular tourist destination for Chinese tourists from the north and eastern Provinces, as well as Hong Kong and Taiwan. Over the last decade Sipsongpanna has emerged as another major tourist destination with national and foreign tourists, including many from Thailand. Kunming is a rapidly expanding capital known as Spring City and has many tourist attractions in and around the city.

At a time when prostitution is booming and population movements are increasing with the greater social freedoms and economic prosperity, PRC still displays a certain ambivalence in opening up to the world. Because the epidemic has not spread as fast as was predicted some years ago, many authorities seem to be becoming complacent, and thus there is no drive to expand programming and increase expenditure. When a crucial part of HIV/AIDS programming is the marketing of condoms as an every day item, the authorities revert to dogma and decry the supposed loss of social values. They argue that condoms may inadvertently promote promiscuity among the young.

The Government has shown initiative in the past, in relation to drug use, even though prohibition and law enforcement and moral education are still the major modalities. In Yunnan the situation has gone from bad to worse, but the spread of HIV has fortunately been more gradual than the rapid spread expected. Roads fan out from Kunming in all directions to centres where there are increasing drug problems and rising prostitution. With amphetamines adding to the problems, the Golden Triangle is as untameable as ever and all countries in the region have to confront these problems. Yunnan has the added dimensions of economic growth and changing economic structures, which involves many jobs becoming redundant, greater freedoms but certain restrictions, and population exchanges not only across provincial borders but across international borders.

The Dai are the largest group in the border counties. In Dehong, in the north of Yunnan, many of their communities have been decimated by the twin epidemics of intravenous drug use and HIV/AIDS, as have the Kachin. In Sipsongpanna, to the south, Dai women are marketed as sensuous beauties and a thriving sex industry has arisen in recent years. With increases in STDs the minority groups who were once held responsible for spreading AIDS – through drug use in Dehong – may be at risk of sexually transmitted HIV. Other minority groups with a lower socioeconomic status than the Dai may be at greater risk in a context of a more rapid spread of HIV. Already, many women from the Dai as well as some other groups are known to have been infected while working in Thailand and Myanmar.

The prerequisites for the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS already exist in Yunnan. Of these prerequisites, one is migratory populations with limited knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS. The southern reaches of Yunnan have been remote and closed areas for decades. Now, Yunnan is part of the Mekong region and, with large infrastructure development and tourism, the area is on the verge of opening up to the world. The transition to greater economic development will be a challenge for many people, with increased cross-border movements as more and more people seek a better life.