

Viet Nam's Central Region at the Heart of ADB's Poverty Reduction Strategy



THREE PILLARS: ADB activities in the Central Region focus on poverty reduction, livelihood improvement and infrastructure

With the adoption of its Poverty Reduction Strategy in 1999, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) refocused its operations and set its vision—an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. In Viet Nam, this has meant generating sustainable economic growth to increase incomes and employment, promoting inclusive social development and good governance, and adopting a geographic focus on the Central Region, particularly on the poorer Central Highlands and North Central Coast.

Poverty incidence in these two regions remains high at 51% and 42%, respectively in 2002, compared with the national average of 29%. This thus confirms the need for a geographic focus to maximize the impact of operations targeted at poverty reduction. By focusing about one third of its operations in the Central Region, ADB supports in a specific area the goal of poverty reduction through more balanced regional development to promote the growth and integration of rural areas and local urban centers. Specifically, ADB supports poverty reduction in the Central Region through three main activities:

(i) Assistance in implementing the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS) to the Central Region provinces through participatory poverty assessments (PPA) and assistance in preparing provincial development plans. Such activities include PPA in Dak Lak and Quang Ngai provinces and technical assistance for CPRGS roll out to Gia Lai, Dak Lak,

and Dak Nong provinces.

(ii) Community-based livelihood improvement projects focusing on provinces with high incidence of poverty. The Central Region Livelihood Improvement loan for \$43.1 million, including cofinancing from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, was approved in 2001. Two additional projects, the Forests for Livelihood Improvement Project and the Livelihood Improvement in Central Region Coastal Provinces Project, are planned for 2005-2006, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. They will include investment for small-scale rural infrastructure, income-generation activities, and capacity building for local people to ensure long-term sustainability.

(iii) Physical and social infrastructure with regional scope complements community-based development to ensure maximum synergy and development impacts. The Health Care in the Central Highlands Project loan of \$20 million, along with Swedish grant financing, was approved in January 2004. Proposed projects for 2005-2007 include the Central Region Transport Network Project, Central Region Water Resources Project, Rural Infrastructure for Sustainable Livelihood Improvement in the Central Region, and Central Region Sustainable Urban Improvement Project.

Bradford Philips, Country Director of ADB's Viet Nam Resident Mission, undertook a 2-week mission, visiting eight Central Region provinces in the

second half of May. He said, "The field visit has allowed me to discuss with the provincial leaders and see first-hand the significant poverty challenges they face in reducing poverty and creating socioeconomic opportunities for ethnic minorities. Each province faces unique challenges, but all were committed to achieving poverty reduction and sustaining equitable growth."

"The recent successes in participatory processes that build local ownership and ensure the sustainability of investments were highlighted by the local leaders during my visit. Strengthening capacity at the local level to plan and implement official development assistance projects directly combined with strong leadership are both central to achieving the poverty reduction targets being set by the provinces," Mr. Philips added. ■

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In this publication, \$ refers to US dollar

How ADB is Helping the Central Region

ONGOING PROJECTS



Developing infrastructure for growth

Infrastructure

Investment in infrastructure—including power transmission and distribution, transport, and urban and rural development—are helping meet the need to develop a small yet diversified industrial and agro-industrial sector in the Central Region. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$100 million loan for the Central and Southern Viet Nam Power Distribution Project to construct and rehabilitate transmission and distribution networks in 18 provincial towns in the Central Region. Through ADB transport and rural development projects, the transport networks in the Central Region have been considerably improved and developed through the rehabilitation and construction of nearly 1,000 kilometers of national, provincial, and rural roads. ADB helped rehabilitate, expand, and construct water supply and sanitation systems in 10 provincial towns and several rural residential areas in the region. In addition to providing physical infrastructure, ADB has also strongly supported institutional reform, capacity building, and decentralization of responsibilities to the Central Region's provinces.

Health Care

ADB has provided a \$20 million loan (about 65% of the total project cost) to support the Health Care in the Central Highlands Project. The Project is implemented in the provinces of Dak Lak, Gia Lai, Kon Tum, and Lam Dong to provide curative health services to the poor and disadvantaged—including ethnic minorities, women, and children—by upgrading district health centers and enhancing the skills of health care service providers. Through grant cofinancing by Sweden, the Project will support the new government initiative, Prime Minister's Decision 139, aimed at establishing the Health Care Funds for the Poor.



Providing health services for the poor and disadvantaged



Raising productivity of forestry resources

Environment

ADB helps improve the environment in the Central Region through several loan projects. The Forestry Sector Project restored the vegetative cover of the hilly and mountainous areas in critical watersheds and raised the productivity of the country's forestry resources. The Central Region Urban Environmental Improvement Project provided \$44 million to expand water supply and sanitation and upgrade the quality of the urban environment in six towns and their surrounding areas—Dong Ha, Ha Tinh, Lang Co, Tam Ky, and Thanh Hoa—benefiting 700,000 people, of which around 20% are poor.

Livelihood Improvement

In line with the Government's Program 135 and the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS), ADB provided a \$43 million loan for the Central Region Livelihood Improvement Project in 2001. The objective of the Project is to reduce poverty through an integrated approach and to ensure that about 350,000 poor rural Vietnamese, many of them ethnic minorities, can achieve sustainable livelihood and an improved quality of life. ADB also provided \$44.7 million through the Tea and Fruit Development Project to help increase farm incomes and raise the value of agriculture sector production. Thousands of people have benefited from the Project and have been able to escape poverty through additional income generated.



Increasing farm income and value of agricultural production



Supporting poverty reduction programs at provincial level

Support Provincial CPRGS Roll Out

ADB is supporting the Government's CPRGS by participating in the Poverty Working Group and Poverty Task Force. In addition, a technical assistance grant is promoting provincial planning in the Central Highland provinces and adapting the CPRGS. Capacity building support provided under the Project aims at strengthening the skills of the Department of Planning and Investment staff in the local planning cycle, including monitoring and evaluating the 2004 development plan and formulating the 2005 plan. The aim is to enhance the focus on efficient, sustainable, and equitable service delivery, and implement the socioeconomic and poverty reduction program at the provincial level.

Regional Poverty Assessment

ADB supported participatory governance and poverty assessment exercises, working with the Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Home Affairs, and other donor and nongovernment organization knowledge partners. The assessments were aimed at updating and deepening understanding and knowledge of the nature of poverty, marginalization, exclusion, and deprivation. They sought the views of people living in poverty, and those of local government officials, representatives of government agencies, and other sectors. The findings of these reports will contribute to a better understanding of poverty and poor populations in Viet Nam, including ways to increase the impact of government programs that address the issue of poverty.



Understanding the nature of poverty better

FUTURE PROJECTS



Assisting the Government in implementing the forestry policy

Forests for Livelihood Improvement in Central Highlands

A project preparatory technical assistance will assist the Government in implementing a forestry policy that will enhance sustainable natural resource management and environmental protection; improve food and livelihood security; and reduce social, economic, and gender inequities as well as poverty by improving on- and off-farm incomes, particularly of ethnic minorities living in or near forests in the Central Region. The proposed Project, with a total cost of about \$66.5 million, is expected to begin in 2006, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. The goal of the Project is to harness the full development and conservation potential of Viet Nam's forestry sector.

Central Region Water Resources

On 27 November 2002, ADB approved a technical assistance of \$1.4 million to assist the Government in preparing the Central Regional Water Resources Sector loan. The proposed loan will improve agriculture sector production by rehabilitating and expanding irrigation and flood protection systems, and contributing to long-term mitigation of floods and droughts in the region. Improved management practices will be promoted to increase and protect the incomes and livelihoods of people in the region's poorest provinces: Thanh Hoa, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue, Quang Ngai, and Binh Dinh. The proposed project of about \$160 million is expected to commence in 2005, subject to Board approval.



Harnessing water resources

Update on ADB Operations in Viet Nam

Strengthening Public Communications

A two-day consultation workshop on the draft Public Communications Policy (PCP) took place in Hanoi on 13-14 May. Many representatives from nongovernment organizations (NGOs), the donor community, research institutes, government agencies, and project management units joined the workshop and contributed valuable comments to help ADB communicate better with the public.

This was one in a series of consultation workshops held in many countries from April to July 2004 to collect public comments on the policies. The draft

PCP, once approved by ADB's Board of Directors, will replace two existing policies: the Disclosure Policy and the Information Policy and Strategy.

The PCP proposes that ADB will actively seek opportunities to explain ADB's work and solicit feedback. It is based on the presumption that information will be disclosed subject to specified constraints, and with promote awareness and understanding of ADB-assisted activities. As a result of this new policy, ADB will proactively provide more information to the public. Monitoring reports and other information will also be released during the project cycle. ■



VRM Country Director Bradford Philips emphasized the importance of public communication to ADB

ADB Reviews Past Performance and Programs Future Operations

The annual Country Programming Mission was held from 12 to 27 April, to update the country strategy and program (CSP) and develop the lending, technical assistance, and analytical research program for 2005-2007. The Mission conducted close consultations with the core government agencies, line ministries, official development assistance (ODA) partners, and civil society.

The Mission noted that economic growth remains strong, while performance in project implementation has been mixed. Viet Nam has for the first time exceeded ADB's average disbursement ratio, but the number of projects rated "at risk" has also increased. According to ADB's Annual Report 2003, Viet Nam's disbursement ratio for 2003 was 21.3%, compared with the ADB-wide average of 20.2%.

Due to improved macroeconomic management and progress in structural reforms, Viet Nam was rated by ADB as performing above the base case in 2003. This means that it achieved a number of objectives that had been jointly set by ADB and the Government during previous programming missions. As a result, subject to approval of each loan by ADB's Board of Directors, Viet Nam will receive in 2004 a higher share of concessional Asian Development Fund (ADF) lending than in the past.

The Mission and the Government discussed a lending program of about \$430 million per year, through a blend of ADF and London interbank offered rate (LIBOR)-based resources. The program will support sustainable growth, inclusive social development, good govern-

ance, and poverty reduction in the Central Region. Subregional projects will continue to strengthen Viet Nam's connection and integration with the neighboring countries, while private sector operations will provide additional resources in support of infrastructure and financial sector development. Technical assistance operations will provide complementary funds and activities to prepare and implement projects, and carry out the necessary sector studies.

The proposed program will be reviewed by the relevant government and ADB authorities, and discussed by ADB's Board of Directors in August 2004. It is expected that ADB will start preparing its new CSP for Viet Nam to align its timing with the Government's 2006-2010 Plan. ■

Markets for the Poor Activities in Da Nang



Da Nang—a rapid developing city

A delegation comprising staff from the Making Markets Work Better for the Poor project, two international experts from Imperial College University of London and researchers from the Institute of Labour

Sciences and Social Affairs visited Da Nang on 9-12 May to introduce the Participatory Markets and Livelihoods Assessment (PMLA) to the City authorities. Activities during the visit included a workshop to discuss fieldwork methodology and the field-testing of the approach in Hoa Phat (rural commune) and Khue Trung (urban ward). The delegation met with the City's Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (representing the Da Nang Peoples Committee) and the City's Poverty Task Force. The main survey for the PMLA will begin in July in Da Nang. The study will be completed in November. ■

Gender, Poverty, and Rural Development Seminar

More than 30 project directors and managers from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, and Viet Nam attended the seminar on 24-26 March in Hanoi. This was the first seminar to discuss the issues and good practices on how to integrate gender in the daily work of project managers and project officers. Participants found the seminar very useful and recommended that similar type of training be organized for other sectors. ■

Update on ADB Operations in Viet Nam

First Regional Meeting Emphasizes Need for Better Water Governance

Representatives of national water sector apex bodies and water ministries from 13 countries in Asia met in Hanoi on 18-21 May to discuss their role in improving the management of increasingly scarce water resources. The meeting was organized by ADB in collaboration with Viet Nam's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) and hosted by Viet Nam's Office of the National Water Resources Council.

National water sector apex bodies have been established in several countries in Asia to guide national water sector reforms toward achieving sustainable water management. These bodies demonstrate leadership in improving water governance, both in managing water resources and delivering water services. ADB has worked with the governments of Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Viet Nam in setting up or strengthening national water councils or committees. These advisory and coordination bodies have begun to play an important role in promoting a national focus on water sector reforms.



Mr. Arriens, ADB water expert, discussed the role of managing water resources

In his opening address, Mai Ai Truc, Viet Nam's Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, noted that water is essential to sustain development of Viet Nam. "During Viet Nam's process of industrialization and modernization, the Government is striving to protect, exploit, and use water in a sound and balanced manner, recognizing both the social and economic values of the resource," said Mr. Truc.

During the meeting, the delegates discussed the work of national water sector apex bodies in the region. They identified priority needs and opportunities for networking, capacity building, and research, including the development of methodologies for benchmarking and peer review to assess and monitor their effectiveness. ■

Regional Workshop on Participatory Irrigation Management

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) held a workshop on "Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM)-Pathways for Progress" in Ha Long City from 30 March to 2 April to discuss and develop a roadmap for operationalizing PIM.

The workshop received support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Danish International Development Assistance, International Network for Participatory Irrigation Management, and World Bank.

About 110 participants attended the workshop, including a wide range of Vietnamese representatives at all levels: decision makers, irrigation managers, practitioners, water user organizations representatives, academia, and nongovernment organizations. Regional participants from Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Lao PDR, and Thailand also attended the workshop.

The workshop identified gaps at the national, provincial, and local levels and reassessed the situation in light of actions initiated to define necessary future priorities. The workshop endorsed the thrust of MARD's Draft Strategic Framework for PIM but recommended that the strategy be revised to reflect the conclusions of the workshop. The workshop also recommended that MARD issue a clear policy statement that defines PIM and a PIM implementation strategy for Viet Nam, which take into account the Draft Strategic Framework and the conclusions of the workshop. ■

Training programs and workshops by ADB and VRM, January to June 2004

Date	Title
23-27 February	Intensive Course on Anti-dumping
27-February	Gender Workshop
1-5 March	ADB-ASEAN Regional Road Safety Program
5-8 March	Seminar on Disbursement
2-5 March	Seminar on the Use of Consulting Services for Project Management Units
24-26 March	Regional Workshop: Gender, Poverty and Rural Development
29-March	Capacity Building for Secured Transaction Registration
9-April	Consultative Meeting: Linking the Poor with Rice Value Chains
13-April	Workshop on East Asian Institutional Arrangements to Promote Long-term Growth and Industrialization
13-April	Workshop on Preliminary Findings of the Research "The Effectiveness and Efficiency of Microfinance in Viet Nam"
13-14 May	Consultation Workshop: Review of ADB's Draft Public Communications Policy
20 May	Developing an Efficient Debt Capital Market in Viet Nam (organized jointly with HSBC)
18-21 May	Regional Meeting of Water Sector Apex Bodies: Leadership in Water Governance
2-June	Seminar on "The Operation of Land Markets and Poverty in Viet Nam"
June	Participatory Poverty Assessment Findings and Implications for Rolling-down of Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy and Public Administrative Reform

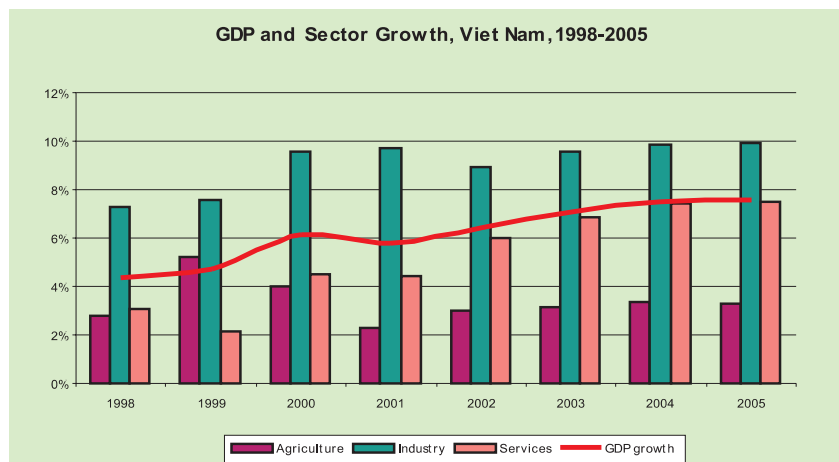
Economic Outlook and Challenges for 2004 and 2005

The Government of Viet Nam aims to achieve an annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 8% or higher in 2004 and 2005, the last two years of the 2001-2005 socioeconomic development plan, to meet the plan's 5-year target.

While challenging, this objective can be achieved, due to several factors: rich natural resources, enterprising people, and a favorable geographical location. To achieve the desired growth level, however, the Government will need to make efficient use of Viet Nam's endowments; to carefully select highly productive investment; and to prudently manage the macroeconomic framework, ensuring fiscal, monetary, and balance of payments stability.

Given the improvements in the business environment and the recovery of external demand, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) *Asian Development Outlook 2004* projects GDP growth to improve to 7.5% in 2004 and to 7.6% in 2005. This growth will be underpinned by strong domestic demand, forecast to increase by 10.1% in 2004 and by 8.1% in 2005, and by annual export growth of 12.0%.

The Government is expected to maintain an expansionary, but manageable, fiscal stance to cover the increasing cost of salaries and pensions of civil servants, and the cost of other reforms. This fiscal position will also help keep domestic demand strong. While the level of fiscal revenues, at 22% of GDP, is fairly high given Viet Nam's per capita income level, the composition of rev-



enue sources will need to evolve significantly in the coming years, as progressive taxation on private individuals and corporations gradually replaces declining revenues from tariffs and duties on external trade and state enterprise's contributions.

The 2004-2005 outlook is not free from risks such as uncertainty over access to foreign markets, oil price fluctuations, uneven performance in Ho Chi Minh City's economic growth, and possible public health emergencies.

In foreign trade, the Government has taken steps to diversify export markets for Vietnamese goods. While garments exported to the United States market have been capped to \$1.7 billion for 2004, the European Union has recently increased its quota for Vietnamese garments.

In 2005, however, Viet Nam will face more challenges. The Multi-Fiber Agreement, which practiced a quota-based entry for textiles and garment products, will end in 2004. World Trade

Organization (WTO) member countries exporting textiles and garments will enjoy most favored national treatment from January 2005. This situation will present a new challenge for Viet Nam, increasing urgency in the bid to access WTO.

Further implementation of commitments of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Free Trade Area, preparation for WTO accession, and strong domestic demand, on the other hand, are likely to increase imports and external competition. Crude oil price is likely to decline substantially in 2005, which may mean lower revenue for Viet Nam from its oil industry. As an exporter of crude oil and importer of refined products, however, Viet Nam is relatively protected by oil price swings, which tend to affect both imports and exports in the same manner.

The Ho Chi Minh City's GDP, which accounts for about one fifth of the national GDP, grew by 9.5% in the first five months, thanks to a recovery of industry and services following a slowdown in the first quarter. While the recovery augurs well for Viet Nam, the weaker performance at the beginning of the year underlines the need for regional balance so that overall economic growth will not rely heavily on one or a few geographic areas.

In recent years, the incidence of public health problems including the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and avian flu has increased, with social and economic implications. These incidents call for more serious government attention to public health (including animal health), which may require additional future public spending. ■

Major Economic Indicators, Viet Nam, 2001-2005, (%)

Item	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
GDP growth	5.8	6.4	7.1	7.5	7.6
Gross domestic investment/GDP	25.9	31.3	33.7	35.3	35.0
Inflation rate (consumer price index)	-0.4	3.8	4.0	4.5	4.5
Money supply (M2) growth	25.5	17.6	21.0	16.4	14.7
Fiscal balance/FDP	-3.0	-3.8	-4.8	-4.6	-4.2
Merchandise export growth	6.5	7.4	16.5	12.0	12.0
Merchandise import growth	6.0	19.5	27.0	14.0	11.0
Current account balance/GDP	1.5	-2.8	-5.8	-5.7	-5.7
Debt service ratio	10.6	8.3	8.3	7.5	7.3

Sources: General Statistics Office; State Bank of Viet Nam; International Monetary Fund and staff estimates



\$7 Billion Pledged to Fight Poverty in Asia and the Pacific



ADB President Tadao Chino addressed the 37th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors

ADF IX negotiation

Twenty-eight donor members of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have agreed on a \$7 billion total replenishment of the Asian Development Fund (ADF). ADF IX, as the replenishment is called, will cover the 4-year period from 2005 to 2008. The amount is significantly higher than the \$5.65 billion agreed at the conclusion of the last replenishment negotiation. Japan remains the largest ADF contributor with \$1.18 billion, followed by the United States with \$461 million, Australia with \$218 million, and the United Kingdom with \$202 million.

ADF loans are provided on concessional terms to ADB's poorer developing member countries with limited debt repayment capacity. They support poverty reduction through pro-poor sustainable economic growth, provision of social development such as education and health care, and the promotion of good governance. They carry minimal interest rates (1-1.5%) over long repayment periods (24-32 years).

Donors have agreed to establish grants under ADF IX to lessen the burden of development finance in the poorest countries, and assist countries in transition from postconflict situations to peace and stability; combat HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases; and support capacity building. Grants will

represent 21% of total ADF funding.

"I am truly gratified by this very strong show of support from ADB's donors. It clearly demonstrates the commitment of shareholders to our institution," said ADB President Tadao Chino. "The \$7 billion replenishment will enable ADB to continue to vigorously pursue its mission of fighting poverty in the Asia and Pacific region."

37th Annual Meeting

The successful conclusion of ADF IX negotiations came on the eve of ADB's 37th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors. Annual meetings are statutory occasions for Governors of ADB members to provide guidance on ADB administrative, financial, and operational directions.

This year's annual meeting took place in Jeju Island, Republic of Korea from 15 to 17 May. Around 2,500 participants, including finance and economic planning ministers, senior government officials, representatives of the multilateral development bank community, investment bankers, representatives of nongovernment organizations, academics, and journalists attended the event.

Speaking at the opening of the 37th Annual Meeting, ADB President Tadao Chino noted that, given the region's strong economic fundamentals, the economies of developing Asia and Pacific are expected to show robust

growth, but he cautioned against several remaining risks. At the global level, these include geopolitical concerns, rising oil prices, and imbalances in industrial economies. The region will also be at risk if financial and corporate reforms are implemented slowly.

The meeting highlighted the significant infrastructure financing needs of the region, which exceed \$250 billion a year. Financing shortfalls would pose a serious constraint to continued growth and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and ADB will continue to explore innovative approaches to finance infrastructure.

During the meeting, finance ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)+3 countries discussed how to strengthen bond markets in the region to provide an additional channel for development financing. A one-stop information clearinghouse on bond markets was launched on this occasion. It can be accessed via Internet at <http://asiabondsonline.adb.org>.

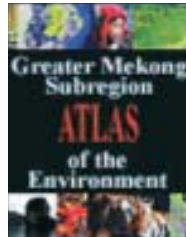
At the close of the meeting, Mr. Chino reaffirmed that ADB will implement all its commitment to become a more accountable, efficient, and transparent institution. He also reiterated that ADB is firmly committed to reducing poverty in the Asia and Pacific region, home to two thirds of the world's poor, mostly women. ■



ASEAN+3 Meeting of finance ministers discussed the Asian bond market

New Publications

GMS Atlas of the Environment



216 Pages

On-line edition: Free of Charge

Hardcopy: Available at VRM Development Resource Center

The publication champions the environment of a unique part of Asia, an area straddled by rivers great and small, with bountiful watersheds, wetlands, and forests. The Atlas celebrates the peoples of the subregion, and presents the environmental challenges they face and their responses. It reminds us that the subregion's peoples and communities are key to maintaining its environment. This book captures for the first time in one volume maps, remote sensing images, and essential information on one of the most culturally, ethnically, and biologically diverse regions in the world. This Atlas is the story of the Mekong on its 4,200 kilometer journey from the mountains in the southwestern People's Republic of China to the sea. ■

Asian Development Outlook 2004

The annual Asian Development Outlook 2004 (ADO) provides a comprehensive economic analysis of 41 economies in developing Asia and the Pacific. On the basis of ADB's unique knowledge of the region, this 16th edition provides an overview of aggregate trends and medium-term prospects by subregion (East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, and the Pacific) in the context of global economic movements.



314 Pages

On-line edition: Free of Charge
Hardcopy: Available at VRM Development Resource Center

The ADO 2004 includes a special chapter on foreign direct investment in developing Asia. ■

Regional Poverty Assessment



On-line edition: Free of Charge

Hardcopy: Available at VRM

Development Resource Center

The Viet Nam Resident Mission, with the support of knowledge partners, Action Aid Viet Nam and Vietnam Solutions, carried out participatory poverty and governance assessments in Quang Ngai and Dak Lak provinces and in the Central Coast and Highlands in Viet Nam.

These reports will help translate the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy into action. The studies will be used as instruments to support planning and build capacity at provincial levels of government so that the regional fight against poverty will be improved. ■

ADB Viet Nam

The quarterly newsletter of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Viet Nam Resident Mission (VRM) aims to enhance communications between ADB and its client groups. It disseminates information on ADB activities and provides a forum on development issues in the VRM. Articles in the newsletter, however, do not necessarily reflect the official ADB view. We welcome readers' comments and suggestions.

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Events

- Briefing seminar on National Level Oversight Mechanisms in Viet Nam to be held in July 2004 at ADB Viet Nam Resident Mission office.
- The book Key Indicators of Developing Asian and Pacific Countries will be launched in August 2004.