

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: MKOC

TA No. and Name TA6084-REG: Promoting Subregional Cooperation among Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam (Phase V)			Amount Approved: \$1,000,000	
			Revised Amount: not applicable	
Executing Agency: Asian Development Bank	Source of Funding: TASF	TA Amount Undisbursed 11,173.62	TA Amount Utilized 988,826.38	
Date			Completion Date	
Approval 19 Dec 2002	Signing	Fielding of Consultants Feb 2003	Original 28 Feb 2004	Actual 31 Oct 2005
			Closing Date	
			Original 28 Feb 2004	Actual 28 Dec 2005
Description				
<p>This RETA aimed to strengthen ADB's capacity to support the implementation of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Economic Cooperation Program and thereby to promote mutually beneficial economic cooperation among Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam.</p>				
Objectives and Scope				
<p>The TA's principal objective was to strengthen subregional cooperation by ensuring continuity of the GMS Program and supporting the process of implementation of the GMS Ten Year Strategic Framework. The TA included the following components: (i) updating of the development matrix and refining the 11 flagship programs, (ii) intensifying resource mobilization efforts by expanding the involvement of development partners and the private sector in subregional activities, (iii) enhancing the participation of stakeholders in the GMS program, (iv) continuing information dissemination, and (v) reviewing institutional arrangements for the GMS, including the role of the GMS working groups and national institutions.</p>				
Evaluation of Inputs				
<p>The RETA resources were critical in supporting more effective operationalization of the GMS institutional mechanism. The RETA also provided the substantive and logistical inputs for enabling the wider participation of stakeholders and provided a strong basis for effective information dissemination. The individual consultants recruited had the expertise and experience required and their performance was rated as satisfactory. The studies conducted were also satisfactory. The RETA resources supported continuity in ADB's role as catalyst and facilitator of the GMS Program and as key provider of knowledge products on regional cooperation in the Mekong subregion.</p>				

Evaluation of Outputs

The RETA achieved significant outputs. Under the RETA, substantial improvements were made in the design and content of the GMS Development Matrix, enhancing its effectiveness as a planning and programming tool. The RETA also helped to increase the participation of development partners in the GMS Program including from the private sector, as well as the mobilization of additional financial and intellectual resources for supporting the economic and social development of the subregion. In addition, the identification of priority areas of cooperation for the different GMS sectors, the incorporation of cross-cutting themes in social sector activities and the formulation of a road map for future GMS environmental initiatives in the GMS allowed increasing the impact of the GMS Program.

The consultations required to define and approve these outputs were carried out at various levels. This included convening of sector working groups, consultations with development partners including in the private sector, and of a GMS Ministerial Meeting. Information dissemination was stepped up with the convening of the Mekong Development Forum in Paris and the High Level Public-Private Sector Consultative Meeting in Bangkok. These outputs were building blocks in the preparation of the successful Second GMS Leaders Summit in July 2005.

Overall Assessment and Rating

The TA is assessed as successful. It contributed significantly to strengthening subregional cooperation by supporting the implementation of the GMS 10 Year Strategic Framework. The 11 GMS flagship programs were further refined and the development matrix updated. Stakeholders' participation and the process of knowledge sharing and information dissemination were strengthened, which contributed to increased resource mobilization. The complex nature of regional cooperation and its continuing evolution and broadening scope of action contributed to the delay in closing the RETA.

Major Lessons Learned

The RETA confirmed the importance of two key factors in promoting regional cooperation: (i) strong country ownership, and (ii) the need for an effective knowledge dissemination and information flow to achieve optimum stakeholder participation.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

The RETA enabled ADB to play a very important catalytic role in regional cooperation in the Mekong region. This was acknowledged by the Leaders at the GMS Summit in July 2005. Continued RETA support is recommended to enable further qualitative improvements in the management and performance of the GMS Economic Cooperation Program.

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