



Project Data Sheet

Project 51178-001

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| Project Name | Sustaining the Gains of Regional Cooperation in the Greater Mekong Subregion | |
| Project Number | 51178-001 | |
| Country / Economy | Regional Cambodia Lao People's Democratic Republic Myanmar China, People's Republic of Thailand Viet Nam | |
| Project Status | Closed | |
| Project Type / Modality of Assistance | Technical Assistance | |
| Source of Funding / Amount | TA 9416-REG: Sustaining the Gains of Regional Cooperation in the Greater Mekong Subregion | |
| | Technical Assistance Special Fund | US\$ 1.50 million |
| | Regional Cooperation and Integration Fund | US\$ 500,000.00 |
| | TA 9416-REG: Sustaining the Gains of Regional Cooperation in the Greater Mekong Subregion | |
| Strategic Agendas | Inclusive economic growth Regional integration | |
| | Gender Equity and Mainstreaming Knowledge solutions Partnerships | |
| Drivers of Change | | |
| Sector / Subsector | Agriculture, natural resources and rural development / Agricultural policy, institutional and capacity development | |
| | Education / Education sector development - Technical and vocational education and training | |
| | Energy / Electricity transmission and distribution - Energy sector development and institutional reform | |
| | Health / Disease control of communicable disease - Health sector development and reform | |
| Sector / Subsector | Industry and trade / Industry and trade sector development - Trade and services | |
| | Public sector management / Public administration | |
| | Transport / Transport policies and institutional development | |
| Sector / Subsector | Water and other urban infrastructure and services / Urban policy, institutional and capacity development | |
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| Gender | Some gender elements | |

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| Description | The knowledge and support technical assistance (TA) will support countries in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) in transforming the GMS Program into a more effective regional cooperation platform that adds value to member countries' national development strategies and benefits the local populations of member countries. |
| Project Rationale and Linkage to Country/Regional Strategy | The GMS strategic framework midterm review reaffirmed the strong ownership and commitment of the member countries in the GMS Program. It identified the following challenges that need to be addressed to improve the effectiveness of the program: (i) weak coordination and decision-making mechanisms; (ii) inadequate mechanisms for project identification, resource mobilization, and results monitoring; and (iii) weak knowledge-based strategic planning. |
| Impact | Regional cooperation and integration in the Greater Mekong Subregion sustained. |

Project Outcome

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| Description of Outcome | Implementation of the GMS Program is more effective. |
| Progress Toward Outcome | In the GMS Regional Investment Framework (RIF) 2022 Fourth Progress Report and Update (November 2021), approved financing (in USD value) increased to 59 billion or about 76% of total RIF value (from 55.6 billion in November 2020 and from 53.1 in March 2018). Moreover, during the same period, 42 projects were completed while 88 were ongoing and 75 still proposed. Thus, in terms of number of projects, 63 % were either completed or ongoing implementation in November 2021 compared to 58% in November 2020. |

Implementation Progress

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| Description of Project Outputs | GMS Coordination and Decision Making Mechanisms Strengthened. Project identification, resource mobilization, and results monitoring mechanism improved. Knowledge-based strategic planning enhanced. |
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In support of enhancing knowledge-based strategic planning, the TA supported the preparation of the new GMS Economic Cooperation Program Strategic Framework 2030 (GMS-2030) as mandated by the Leaders during the 6th GMS Summit in 2018. The draft presented to and reviewed by GMS Ministers during the 24th Ministerial Conference (MC-24) in November 2020 has been finalized at the Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) held on 11 March 2021. The GMS-2030 was adopted by the Leaders at the 7th GMS Summit on 9 September 2021.

As a supplement to the GMS-2030, the TA also supported the preparation of the GMS COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan 2021-2023, a medium term plan to respond to and mitigate the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and accelerate recovery of the GMS. The Plan was also adopted by the Leaders at the 7th GMS Summit.

A Research Program to support GMS-2030 is also being developed through the TA.

GMS-2030 also acknowledged the role of research institutions and called for the establishment of a GMS knowledge network. The TA supported the preparations required for the formal establishment of the network, including the concept note, country nominees for the interim steering group, and country consultation meetings.

The TA supported the conduct of a study, Greater Mekong Subregion 2030 and Beyond: Integration, Upgrading, Cities, and Connectivity, which aimed to provide possible ways for accelerating GMS development through better integrating with global and regional value chains, greater industrial diversification, and tapping the growth driving potentials of cities.

The TA also supported the conduct of a scoping study, Enhancing Collaboration in Trade and Investment under the GMS Program in response to GMS-2030 mandate for the GMS Program to continue its efforts to develop trade and investment facilitation in the subregion and beyond. The work on the scoping study started in September 2021 and was completed in February 2022. The final scoping study document is the result of joint efforts by the GMS country-nominated focal points, the GMS Secretariat, and ADB in-house and external trade and investment specialists. It maps out proposed interventions for both the short- and long-term, while putting forth the consideration of a GMS Trade and Investment Task Force to implement these recommendations systematically. The final draft study and its recommendations were presented to SOM on 10 March 2022.

The TA supported the formulation of the GMS Gender Strategy, which pursues and adds value to the GMS-2030 mandate of a more inclusive subregion. Based on a comprehensive GMS gender assessment, the strategy aims at achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in the GMS, where pre-existing gender inequalities have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The strategy identifies entry points for gender mainstreaming at three levels: cross-cutting themes, sectors, and projects. The document has gone through several rounds of comments and bilateral and group consultations with ADB in-house and external sectoral and gender experts, GMS countries, and presented at SOM level. Work on the GMS gender strategy started in November 2020, and it is expected to seek endorsement at the GMS 25-MC in 2022.

The TA supported the organization and conduct of the following: (1) 24th Ministerial Conference (MC-24) virtually held on 4 November 2020 with the theme, 'Pave the way to a more integrated, inclusive, sustainable and prosperous GMS'. MC-24 convened close to 400 participants, consisting of ministers and senior Officials of the six GMS countries, representatives from ADB, development partners (DPs), and the private sector. MC-24 took note of the (i) GMS countries' immediate responses to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic; (ii) actions taken and achievements made under GMS cooperation mechanisms in response to the pandemic, particularly in the most vulnerable sectors of health, agriculture, environment, transport and trade facilitation, and tourism; (iii) progress and outcomes in other sectors of cooperation; and (iv) key elements of strategic documents to be presented to the GMS Leaders at the 7th Summit (GMS-2030 and GMS COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan 2021-2023). The GMS Ministers were also briefed on the report and recommendations of the GMS SOM; the outcomes of the GMS 11th Economic Corridors Forum; and the discussions of the GMS Development Partners' Meeting (DPM). (2) 23rd Ministerial Conference (MC-23) on 17-18 November 2019 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia carrying the theme, "Greater Integration, Inclusivity and Sustainability in the GMS". MC-23 brought together about 200 participants, consisting of ministers and senior officials of the six GMS countries, representatives from ADB, DPs, and the private sector, to lay the groundwork for the 7th GMS Summit in 2021. The GMS Ministers (i) discussed the draft of the GMS-2030 for reflecting the GMS vision, aspirations, and goals; (ii) reviewed the preliminary results of a research program that aims to support the implementation of the GMS-2030; and (iii) endorsed the GMS RIF 2022: Second Progress Report and Update. A DPM was also held on the sidelines of the conference. GMS countries and their DPs reaffirmed their commitment to work together to achieve the goals of the GMS Program.

The TA supported the following Economic Corridors Forum: (1) 12th Economic Corridors Forum (ECF-12) virtually held on 22 November 2021, chaired by Viet Nam with the theme, 'Enhancing Connectivity, Competitiveness, and Community Along the GMS Economic Corridors: Vital Means Toward Economic Recovery and Sustained Growth', and attended by over 300 participants. The main objective of the ECF-12 was to exchange views and experiences on highly relevant areas of economic corridor development and to enhance collaboration to accelerate the sub-region's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The program included knowledge-sharing and discussion topics such as: (i) transport and trade facilitation, (ii) trade and investment facilitation and liberalization, (iii) cross-border e-commerce cooperation platform, (iv) role of cities and local governments in economic corridor development, (v) safe and regular labor migration, and (vi) gender equality and women's empowerment. (2) 11th Economic Corridors Forum (ECF-11) was virtually held on 28 October 2020, chaired by Thailand, with the theme, 'Boosting Competitiveness, Connectivity, and Community in the GMS Economic Corridors through Focused and Integrated Spatial Development', and attended by about 200 participants. It discussed the: (i) strategic thrusts and principles in the new GMS-2030, that have a bearing on economic corridor development; (ii) the findings of the completed Study on Section-Specific Planning for the GMS North-South Economic Corridor in Myanmar and the Peoples Republic of China; (iii) the experience of Thailand in developing the Eastern Economic Corridor as an example of an individual country corridor; (iv) Further Strengthening multilateralism and free trade among GMS Countries; (v) Possible ways of accelerating and enhancing the implementation of the GMS Cross-Border E-Commerce Cooperation Platform; (vi) updates on the Early Harvest implementation of the CBTA; and (vii) Initiatives on labor mobility and safe migration in GMS Economic Corridors; and (3) 10th Economic Corridors Forum (ECF-10) in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 12-13 December 2018. Bearing the theme, 'Extending Corridors for Inclusive Connectivity in the GMS', the ECF-10 gathered about 150 participants, consisting of ministers and other high-level officials of the six GMS countries, representatives of the private sector, international development organizations, and other institutions. It reviewed and discussed initiatives and interventions aimed at accelerating the development of the GMS economic corridors by effectively contributing to the pursuit of the 3Cs (connectivity, competitiveness, and community).

The TA supported the conduct of various GMS Senior Officials' Meetings (SOMs), both in-person attendance and virtually to, among other purposes: (i) review, discuss, and work toward the finalization of the various strategic and knowledge documents (including the GMS-2030, GMS COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan 2021-2023), and other deliverables for the various key GMS events (e.g., ECF-10, ECF-11, ECF-12, MC-23, MC-24, and 7th GMS Summit), and (ii) to serve as task force for the preparation for the said key GMS events.

The TA supported the DPM held virtually on 9 December 2021 and 20 October 2020. The DPM served as a forum for interactive discussions among GMS senior officials, representatives of DPs, private sector, and civil society that are actively involved in the GMS Program.

The 9 December 2021 meeting discussed (i) the two strategic documents endorsed at the 7th GMS Summit of Leaders: GMS-2030 and COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan 2021-2023; (ii) how DPs can contribute to the GMS-2030 and COVID-19 initiatives; (iii) update on implementation progress of the GMS RIF 2022, the new RIF 2025, and potential areas for cooperation; and (iv) the new approach for DPs engagement in the GMS Program. The meeting was attended by over 200 participants from the six GMS countries and 30 development partner organizations.

The October 2020 meeting (i) discussed GMS responses to COVID-19, including DPs' regional interventions; (ii) briefed DPs on the key elements of the GMS-2030, its vision, mission statement, strategic directions, and results framework; (iii) exchanged ideas on how DPs can contribute COVID-19 initiatives and to the areas of the GMS-2030; and (iv) updated DPs on implementation and projects of the GMS RIF 2022 and discuss potential areas for DPs to support the projects in the RIF 2022. Twenty-two DPs shared their views during the meeting. Close to 200 participants from 54 development partner organizations, private sector, and knowledge institutions attended the meeting.

Provided secretariat support to or supported the organization of various GMS Working Group (WG) meetings to discuss and firm up GMS sector strategies, plans, and projects. The WG meetings supported by way of knowledge sharing and secretariat assistance are as follows: (i) Working Group on Agriculture (WGA), 29-30 May 2018, and 3-4 April 2019 (Consultation Workshop on WGA) 17-18 June 2019 and virtually on 25 June 2020 (GMS WGA Dialogue on Post-Pandemic Food Security Response and Recovery), 9-10 June 2021 (Inception Workshop on the GMS Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security Program, and 7-8 July 2021 (18th Meeting of WGA, and 1 September 2021 (COVID-19 Food Security Response and Recovery Actions in the GMS); (ii) Working Group on Environment, 1-2 April 2019 and virtually on 23 June 2020 (GMS WGE Dialogue on Post-Pandemic Green and Resilient Recovery) and 23-24 September 2021 (Inception Workshop on the GMS Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Program); (iii) Regional Power Trade Coordination Committee, 19-20 June 2018, 21-22 March 2019, 25-27 November 2019 and virtually on 15 October 2020 and 26-27 August 2021; (iv) Tourism Working Group and Mekong Tourism Forum, 25-29 June 2018, 4-5 December 2018, 27-29 May 2019, 27-29 November 2019, 18 June 2020, 3 December 2020, 17 May 2021, and 17 September 2021; (v) WG on Health Cooperation, 10-11 December 2018, 12-13 December 2019, and 8 December 2021; and (vi) Urban Development WG (UDWG), 4-5 July 2018; 5-6 Dec 2019; 17 December 2020; and 23 February 2022. The UDWG meeting in Dec 2019 was also funded by the TA.

The TA supported the inaugural ADB-IOM Dialogue on Labor Migration in the Greater Mekong Subregion held virtually on 8 September 2020 to prepare for the creation of a proposed Task Force on Labor Migration in the GMS. Participating senior officials from relevant GMS ministries (i.e., Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Labor and Foreign Employment); representatives from ADB, IOM and other international organizations, including ILO, UN Women; civil society organizations; and employers discussed the issues and challenges of labor migration across the GMS and ways to ensure that migration is safe and contributes to subregional development. The proposed Task Force on Labor Migration and its terms of reference were presented at the 24th Ministerial Conference on 4 November 2020. The Ministers mandated senior officials, in collaboration with Ministries in charge of management of migrant workers in the GMS, to further discuss and prepare recommendations for the next steps.

The TA also supported the organization and conduct of the following GMS Subregional Transport Forum meetings: (1) 22nd Meeting of the GMS Subregional Transport Forum (STF-22) in Mandalay, Myanmar on 21-22 June 2018. The forum discussed ways toward achieving the thrusts and priorities set in the new GMS Transport Sector Strategy (TSS) 2030, including the review of the GMS transport sector projects in the GMS RIF 2022 to provide inputs to the RIF 2022 First Review and Update, as well as other important transport sector issues, such as road safety and an assessment of the state of development of the GMS economic/transport corridors.; (2) 23rd Meeting of the Subregional Transport Forum (STF-23) held in Bangkok, Thailand on 14-15 August 2019, to review various efforts toward implementing TSS 2030, including increasing the private sectors engagement, particularly through the GMS Freight Transport Association (FRETA); review of the progress of the GMS Cross Border Transport Facilitation Agreement (CBTA) Early Harvest implementation and the progress of work and plans for the Greater Mekong Railway Association (GMRA); and exchange of country experiences in highway development as well as further efforts toward enhancing road safety in GMS countries. It also conducted the annual review (for 2019) of the pipeline of GMS transport sector projects in RIF 2022.; and (3) Subregional Transport Forum (STF-24) virtually held on 21 January 2021. The theme of STF-24 was 'Forging Greater Transport Connectivity Toward the Visions of GMS-2030'. STF-24 was held to: review the status and update the pipeline of GMS transport sector projects in the GMS RIF 2022; brief the STF on the key thrusts and principles in the draft GMS-2030 and the GMS COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan 2021-2023 that have a bearing on the transport sector; review the progress of the Cross Border Transport Facilitation Agreement (CBTA) Early Harvest implementation and updates on possible future efforts in transport and trade facilitation; update the STF on the work and plans for the Greater Mekong Railway Association (GMRA); discuss recent initiatives to improve road safety regimes in GMS countries and railway planning and financing; and update the STF on the activities of DPs in the GMS transport sector.

The TA also supported the development of a sound concept for a regional investment project on Transboundary animal disease control for competitive livestock value chains in the GMS in consultation with key stakeholders in GMS countries, and based on individual country needs, capacities, and circumstances.

Moreover, the TA supported/is currently supporting the production of various GMS knowledge products:

- (1) Updated RIF 2022 endorsed by the GMS Ministers. This serves as a regional pipeline and planning document for resource mobilization publicly. The RIF 2022 First Progress Report was circulated in March 2019, the Second Progress Report in November 2019; the Third Progress Report in November 2020.
- (2) 4th edition of the GMS Statistical Database booklet (2018) builds on information from previous three editions. Two chapters (tourism and health) were added and the energy chapter was completely revised.
- (3) GMS Projects Database. This functions as a geo-database for spatial and area planning of the GMS. GMS Projects Database is regularly updated and website is active with GMS Projects.
- (4) GMS Program website (www.greatermekong.org) This was developed and maintained as host for GMS statistics, projects database, and dissemination of information of the GMS Program, including articles and e-newsletters highlighting key developments and outcomes of conferences, meetings, workshops, and other events in the GMS. The GMS Program website was transferred in December 2019 to a new and more secure server with bigger storage capacity and bandwidth. During the transfer, the content management system for the main GMS Program site and Projects database were updated. Given the bigger hosting/server capacity, the GMS Program website is also hosting the websites of the WGA and WG on Environment.
- (5) Pilot Study on Section-Specific Planning for the North-South Economic Corridor, Subcorridor 5 (NSEC-5) in Myanmar and the Peoples Republic of China. This study is the first to (i) involve NSEC-5 in GMS economic corridor planning; and (ii) focus on a specific economic corridor route in the GMS. The preparatory phases 1 and 2 (national consultations in Myanmar and the PRC, and a joint workshop in Myanmar) were completed in December 2018. The preparation of the full study was endorsed by GMS countries at the 10th GMS Economic Corridors Forum in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. Inception mission was conducted from 28 June to 4 July 2019 and the national consultants draft country reports (2 economic overview and 8 sector reports) were circulated for review by ADB sector and country focals as well as the government of PRC and Myanmar in December 2019.
- (6) GMS-2030 and the Results Framework - The GMS-2030 provides a new framework for the subregion to act collectively to respond to powerful trends that affect the GMS. On the other hand, GMS-2030 Results Framework measures the achievement of the GMS-2030's objectives.
- (7) GMS COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan 2021-2023 - This plan is an instrument for combatting the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and accelerating the response and recovery of the subregion.
- (8) GMS-2030 and Beyond: Integration, Upgrading, Cities, and Connectivity The main findings and recommendations of this comprehensive research is intended to support the implementation of the GMS-2030. It will guide the subregions development efforts, while ensuring that the right challenges are being addressed and new opportunities are taken advantage.
- (9) Greater Mekong Subregion Tourism Recovery Communications Plan and Tool Kit. This tourism recovery communications plan intends to support a safe and sustainable tourism recovery in the Greater Mekong Subregion.

Geographical Location Cambodia - Nation-wide; China - Nation-wide; Lao People's Democratic Republic - Nation-wide; Myanmar - Nation-wide; Thailand - Nation-wide; Viet Nam - Nation-wide

Summary of Environmental and Social Aspects

Environmental Aspects

Involuntary
Resettlement

Indigenous Peoples

Stakeholder Communication, Participation, and Consultation

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| During Project Design | The TA concept paper was presented at the GMS Senior Officials Meeting on 7 July 2017 in Bangkok. ADB's support to GMS was greatly appreciated by GMS officials. |
| During Project Implementation | The TA supported preparation of briefing papers and presentations on outcomes and directives from the 6th GMS Summit for sector working group meetings that met in H1 of 2018 (Agriculture, Tourism, Energy, Transport, Urban Development and Health) with participation of officials from 6 GMS countries, development partners, and representatives of private sector and civil society. The TA also supported the preparatory phases (1 and 2) of the proposed Pilot Study on Section-Specific Planning for the North-South Economic Corridor, Subcorridor 5 (NSEC-5) in Myanmar and the PRC, wherein national consultations with officials from relevant ministries/agencies and local resource persons/experts in both countries were conducted. Joint consultations between PRC and Myanmar were held. The NSEC-5 integrative report was also circulated to both governments and meetings to discuss this with each government were held many times before its finalization. GMS Senior Officials and Ministers have also been consulted a number of times on the Long-term Strategic Framework of the GMS Program (GMS 2030). |

Business Opportunities

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| Consulting Services | A total 223 total individual consulting inputs will be allocated as follows: (i) 24 person-months to eight international consultants, (ii) 196 person-months to 21 national consultants and (iii) three person months to seven resource persons. The international contracts (including out-of-pocket expenses) are estimated to cost \$442,000 while the national contracts are estimated at \$644,000. The total package for the resource persons/facilitators (under the workshop budget) is estimated at \$58,000. Individual consultants will be recruited using Individual Consultant Selection. | |
| Procurement | In organizing meetings and workshops, ADB will procure goods and services such as rental of equipment and meeting rooms using the Shopping Method. | |
| Responsible ADB Officer | Sumbal, Asadullah Khan | |
| Responsible ADB Department | Southeast Asia Department | |
| Responsible ADB Division | Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Div, SERD | |
| Executing Agencies | <i>Asian Development Bank</i> | |

Timetable

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| Concept Clearance | 11 Sep 2017 |
| Fact Finding | - |
| MRM | - |

Approval 30 Oct 2017

Last Review Mission -

Last PDS Update 23 Mar 2022

TA 9416-REG

Milestones

| Approval | Signing Date | Effectivity Date | Closing | | |
|-------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | | Original | Revised | Actual |
| 30 Oct 2017 | - | 30 Oct 2017 | 31 Dec 2019 | 30 Oct 2022 | 01 Feb 2023 |

| Financing Plan/TA Utilization | | | | | | | | Cumulative Disbursements | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|--------------|-------------|--------------------------|--|
| ADB | Cofinancing | Counterpart | | Project Sponsor | Others | Total | Date | Amount | |
| | | Gov | Beneficiaries | | | | | | |
| 2,800,000.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 2,800,000.00 | 23 Feb 2023 | 2,778,409.61 | |

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