

SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	Regional	Project Title:	Greater Mekong Subregion Flood and Drought Risk Management and Mitigation Project
Lending/Financing Modality:	Project Loans	Department/Division:	Southeast Asia Department Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture Division

I. POVERTY ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

A. Link to the National Poverty Reduction Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy

The Mekong River has a major influence on the economies and lives of the people in Cambodia, the Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam. The annual floods, which can last up to 6 months, are normally seen as beneficial because soils became enriched with river-borne sediments and nutrients beneficial to agriculture, and reservoirs are replenished. On the other hand, floods can cause damage to crops and assets and foster waterborne diseases. Drought events are also a common occurrence; periods of low rainfall and the associated very low river flows may cause severe food shortages. The negative impacts of flood and drought events can significantly constrain government efforts in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and in helping communities escape from poverty. The proposed GMS Flood and Drought Risk Management and Mitigation Project is responsive to the Lao PDR Disaster Management Action Frameworks, 2003–2020 and the Viet Nam National Strategy for Natural Disaster Prevention, Response and Mitigation approved by the Prime Minister in 2007 (Decision No. 172/2007), ADB's Regional Cooperation Business Plan, 2012–2014;^a and ADB's *Water for All* policy.^b It also responds to ADB's country partnership strategies for the Lao PDR and Viet Nam.^c

B. Poverty Analysis Targeting Classification: General Intervention

Key issues. Extreme weather events and the resulting floods and droughts are key constraints to the economies of the Lao PDR and Viet Nam, and are contributing factors to persistent poverty in the areas affected. The impact of these events is especially significant since livelihoods along the Mekong River depend heavily on agriculture, which is a major contributor to GDP and employment. Agricultural contribution represents about 40% of GDP and more than 70% of employment in the Lao PDR and about 20% of GDP and 52% of employment in Viet Nam. The flood and drought events also cause substantial damage to infrastructure required for agricultural production (irrigation systems, canals, and rural roads) and crops; and lead to increased levels of waterborne diseases among the poor, who are often disproportionately affected.

Design features. The implementation of the project is part of the regional cooperation and management process to contain floods and conserve water for the dry season—improving agricultural productivity and reducing rural poverty in the GMS. The project is designed to improve flood and drought risk mitigation and management on about 66,000 ha of land at sites in the tributaries and along the main channel of the Mekong river and to reduce the vulnerability to floods of over 1 million people. The project design focuses on the following: (i) regional coordination for management and mitigation of climate extremes; (ii) development and/or upgrading of water management infrastructure; (iii) development of capacity for community-based disaster risk management; and (iv) effective project implementation. Poverty indicators were one of the subproject selection criteria.

II. SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

A. Findings of Social Analysis – Key issues The project will invest in four infrastructure subprojects in Viet Nam and two infrastructure subprojects in the Lao PDR. In the subproject areas, agriculture is the main source of livelihood, either through farming or as hired labor; employment by government or small business is of less significance. Most households have incomes below or close to the poverty line and are particularly vulnerable to economic shocks in case of price increases of basic commodities. Communities in general have reasonable access to basic social services and adequate public transportation.

Flood and drought events exact a heavy toll on the economy in the subproject areas. Flood protection systems are lacking or dilapidated and institutional structures (including laws) related to disaster and risk management are weak and inadequate to address extreme weather events. Weaknesses also exist in respect of institutional arrangements for enforcement, organizational mandates, and funding.

Furthermore, governments have tended to focus on disaster response rather than prevention. The inadequate warnings and lack of preparation by governments and communities contribute significantly to the high economic losses experienced during and after disaster events.

B. Consultation and Participation

1. Stakeholder consultations were conducted during the project preparation, including during the discussion on disaster risk and preparedness, resettlement plan preparations, and socioeconomic surveys in all areas. Stakeholders, including project district governments and officials of the communes, representatives of women's unions, youth organizations, and potential affected people participated in various consultations. Focus group discussions with women and vulnerable groups were conducted to ensure that their concerns and priorities were captured in the project design and the training design of the CBDRM output. Project information booklets written in local languages were distributed and explained to the participants during meetings. During the inventory of loss, potential affected people were consulted on their initial preferences for resettlement and informed of the compensation and entitlements. Stakeholder consultations were carried out in 2012 in the Lao PDR and Viet Nam to update and revise the resettlement plans.

2. What level of consultation and participation (C&P) is envisaged during the project implementation and monitoring?

C&P is envisioned to commence starting from the preparation and implementation of the CBDRM, land acquisition, and resettlement plans toward the technical design and implementation of subprojects, in collaboration with displaced persons and stakeholders. Consultation will also be conducted during the resettlement plan updating process, and participatory monitoring tools will be introduced.

Information sharing Consultation Collaborative decision making
 Empowerment

3. Was a C&P plan prepared? Yes No

The design of the project incorporates a number of mechanisms to ensure participation by a wide range of stakeholders, including the CBDRM approach.

C. Gender and Development

Key issues. The different roles and social situation of men and women in the project areas indicate different capacities and vulnerabilities regarding the response to, and impact of, flood and drought. In general, men are better connected to early warning mechanisms because of their movement in public spaces and access to various channels of communication. Women often have limited access to information related to disaster risks in their communities, even though they have active roles in helping their families and communities to cope during and after disaster events. Rural women's awareness and knowledge of climate change impacts, water conservation, drought resilience farming techniques, and sanitation are limited. Moreover, lack of women's participation and awareness of the impact of extreme weather events may complicate and extend the time and resources needed for a community to recover from disaster.

Key actions. The project gender action plan ensures (i) at least 40% female trainees in all training on disaster risk assessment and analysis; prioritization and implementation of locally appropriate risk management measures; (ii) at least 40% participants in all public consultations for the development of safer village and commune plans will be women; (iii) at least 40% of community facilitators of the public consultation will be women; (iv) 50% implementers of the CBDRM measures will be women; (v) at least 40% of the Commune CBDRM Coordination Committee members will be women; (vi) contractors will prioritize the use of local unskilled labor for civil works and at least 30% unskilled laborers (20% in Lao PDR) will be women and equal pay for equal work will be ensured; (vii) at least 30% of project staff will be women; and (viii) gender-related performance indicators are included in the project monitoring and evaluation framework.

Gender plan Other actions/measures No action/measure

III. SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS ISSUES AND OTHER SOCIAL RISKS			
Issue	Significant/ Limited/ No Impact	Strategy to Address Issue	Plan or Other Measures Included in Design
Involuntary Resettlement	Significant: A significant number of people with established settlements in the protection corridors of the canals and Mekong river will be resettled to give way for the subprojects. Land acquisition and resettlement shall affect more than 200 people in each subproject site.	Resettlement plans have been developed for each infrastructure subproject, defining the compensation and entitlements of displaced persons. Special attention has been given to vulnerable persons, including women-headed households.	<input type="checkbox"/> Resettlement Framework <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement Plan <input type="checkbox"/> No Action
Indigenous Peoples	No Impact Screening for each subproject has been conducted. There are a very limited number of indigenous peoples within the subproject locations, and all are found to be integrated within the main groups.		<input type="checkbox"/> Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Other Action <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous Peoples Framework <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Action
Labor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Labor retrenchment <input type="checkbox"/> Core labor Standards	Significant impact The civil works involved in the infrastructure subprojects are labor-intensive and will employ a number of people in the villages, including the members of households who are to be resettled.	Concerns are incorporated in safeguards documents, i.e., the project will ensure that the civil works contractors will not hire children or minors as laborers, and women will be hired at equal pay for equal work.	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Action <input type="checkbox"/> No Action
Affordability	Limited impact		<input type="checkbox"/> Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Action
Other Risks and/or Vulnerabilities <input type="checkbox"/> HIV/AIDS <input type="checkbox"/> Human trafficking <input type="checkbox"/> Others (conflict, political instability, etc), please specify	Limited impact No other risks and/or vulnerabilities are anticipated to arise from the project.	Contractors will be required to brief staff on these issues and to locate temporary camps away from local habitation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Other Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Action
IV. MONITORING AND EVALUATION			
Are social indicators included in the design and monitoring framework to facilitate monitoring of social development activities and/or social impacts during project implementation? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			

ADB = Asian Development Bank, CBDRM = community-based disaster risk management, GDP = gross domestic product, GMS = Greater Mekong Subregion, ha = hectare, Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

^a ADB. 2011. *Regional Cooperation Operations Business Plan, 2012–2014*. Manila.

^b ADB. 2003. *Water for All: The Water Policy of the Asian Development Bank*. Manila.

^c ADB's country partnership strategies for the Lao PDR and Viet Nam.

Source: Asian Development Bank assessments