

SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	Viet Nam	Project Title:	Northern Mountain Provinces Transport Connectivity Project
Lending/Financing Modality:	Project	Department/Division:	Southeast Asia Department Southeast Asia Transport and Communications Division
I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY			
Poverty targeting: general intervention			
<p>A. Links to the National Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy</p> <p>The Asian Development Bank (ADB) country partnership strategy, 2016-2020¹ priorities are strongly aligned with the Government of Viet Nam's socioeconomic development strategy, 2011-2020 and its accompanying socioeconomic development plan, 2016-2020, which lay out a vision for environmentally sustainable and socially equitable economic development.² Pillar 2 of the country partnership strategy 2016-2020 (increasing the inclusiveness of infrastructure and service delivery) targets regions that have disproportionately high numbers of poor, near-poor, and other vulnerable groups, including ethnic minorities. Under this pillar, ADB will improve transport links between and within secondary towns, especially towns with the highest poverty rates in the northern mountain region. This will help connect remote and rural residents to markets and service delivery. Complementary public expenditure and fiscal management support will be used to develop capacity in the Ministry of Transport to better prioritize resource allocation and introduce medium-term investment planning systems.</p>			
<p>B. Results from the Poverty and Social Analysis during Project Preparatory Technical Assistance or Due Diligence</p> <p>1. Key poverty and social issues. The project aims to enhance access to the Greater Mekong Subregion economic corridors in the Northwest Region by upgrading national and provincial highways where the economic and social development conditions, transport network, topography, and climate change effects are the most challenging in comparison with other regions in the country.</p> <p>2. Beneficiaries. The project area has drastically higher poverty rates compared to the rest of the country. Compared to the national poverty rate of 8.2%, the Northeast Region's poverty rates range from 17.5% to 44.8%.³ The provinces in the project area do not fare much better, with provincial poverty rates ranging from 26.8% in Yen Bai and Lao Cai to 35.0% in Lai Chau. There are 15 ethnic minority groups residing in the three provinces within the project area, where they constitute a majority of the local population. The main groups are Thai, Hmong, Dao, and Tay. Key contributing factors to poverty in the Northwest Region are hilly terrain, limited flat land for cultivation and nonfarm employment opportunities. Access to markets and social services is limited by poor transport infrastructure.</p> <p>3. Impact channels. Economic improvements through time savings and lower transport costs will provide indirect benefits to populations in the project provinces. For those in the immediate project area, there will be direct benefits of improved rural livelihood productivity through the livelihood development program provided under the resettlement plans (RPs) as well as enhanced community welfare through improved awareness of road safety and prevention of HIV and human trafficking. The project design enhances social utility of the roads for the poor, women, and children.</p> <p>4. Other social and poverty issues. The Viet Nam's Northwest Region has the highest poverty rates in the country. There is limited arable farming land and irrigation because of the mountainous terrain. Conversely, there are limited nonfarm employment opportunities because of general infrastructure and economic underdevelopment and a low skill base. The region is a focus of the government's rural development investment.</p> <p>5. Design features. The project will expand the benefits of Greater Mekong Subregion economic corridors to the provinces in the project area. It will achieve this through (i) constructing safe and climate-resilient national highways in lagging provinces in the Northwest Region, (ii) improving axle load control, and (iii) improving road safety in communes along the project roads.</p>			
II. PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERING THE POOR			
<p>1. Participatory approaches and project activities. Meaningful consultation will be conducted throughout final project design and implementation. Social development and mitigation activities will be implemented principally in partnership with community-based organizations. The resettlement and ethnic minority development plans (EMDPs) provide targeted interventions to improving living standards of vulnerable people. These are reflected in the safeguard documents; HIV and human trafficking awareness program; road safety awareness program; and the consultation, participation, and communication plan.</p>			

¹ ADB. 2016. *Country Partnership Strategy: Viet Nam, 2016-2020—Fostering More Inclusive and Environmentally Sustainable Growth*. Manila

² Government of Viet Nam. 2010. *Socio-Economic Development Strategy of Vietnam for the period 2011-2020*. Hanoi; and Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. 2016. *The Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan, 2016-2020*. Hanoi.

³ World Bank. 2018. *Climbing the Ladder: Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity in Vietnam*. Washington, DC.

2. **Civil society organizations.** During project implementation, inputs will be sought from CSOs and local village councils during the RP finalization and implementation on aspects such as grievance redress or dispute resolution mechanism, information dissemination, and monitoring. CSOs and local village councils will also be included in the consultation process for social actions for the project, including HIV/AIDS and human trafficking awareness campaigns, community-based road safety campaigns, and livelihood development activities.

3. The following forms of CSO participation are envisaged during project implementation, rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA):

☒ (H) Information gathering and sharing ☒ (H) Consultation ☒ (M) Collaboration ☒ (M) Partnership

4. Participation plan.

☒ Yes. ☐ No.

Key features of the participation plan are as follows: (i) disclose project information and activities to the beneficiary communities and stakeholders; (ii) solicit input and feedback on beneficial and mitigation measures; (iii) encourage the participation of beneficiary communities and stakeholders in project activities that affect or could benefit them such as civil works construction, road safety awareness, awareness-raising activities, and monitoring; and (iv) establish a clear, easily accessible, and effective grievance redress mechanism.

III. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Gender mainstreaming category: some gender elements

A. Key issues. Women and children have differing road uses and travel patterns than men that road design needs to take in to account. Key impacts and risks to women are land acquisition-induced impacts on livelihoods, human trafficking and HIV transmission, and road safety. Women's participation in consultations as well as implementation of social mitigation measures needs to be incorporated in the project design.

B. Key actions.

☒ Gender action plan ☒ Other actions or measures ☐ No action or measure

Key measures included the project design to promote gender equality and women's empowerment include the following: (i) incorporate gender- and socially responsive features during detailed design and implementation (socially inclusive design features enhance social utility of roads); (ii) generate unskilled jobs in road construction for women (contractors' cumulative unskilled labor days will involve at least 30.0% women, for all roads); (iii) ensure gender-responsive social protection for the labor force during project implementation and maintenance (core labor standards incorporated in bidding documents and contracts); (iv) increase women's involvement in and benefits from road safety awareness and enforcement (at least 50.0% of the participants in community-based road safety awareness activities are women and/or girls, and 50.0% of those trained as community-based road safety facilitators are women); and (v) mitigate HIV/AIDS and human trafficking risks resulting from improved connectivity (at least 50.0% of the 136 local facilitators for community awareness raising are women). Implementation by contractors and CSOs will be financed under the project, and oversight of the gender action plan by the PMU2 will be supported by PSCs. Other measures include the HIV and human trafficking awareness and prevention program, and the road safety awareness program.

IV. ADDRESSING SOCIAL SAFEGUARD ISSUES

A. Involuntary Resettlement

Safeguard Category: ☒ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ FI

1. **Key impacts.** The project will acquire a total of 776,897 square meters of private and public lands in Lai Chau, Lao Cai, and Yen Bai provinces, affecting 957 land owners (4,370 affected people). Of these, 115 households (454 affected people) will be severely affected, 6 households (28 affected people) will experience physical displacement, and 634 households (2,669 affected people) will experience economic displacement because of loss of income from affected land or business.

2. **Strategy to address the impacts.** Three draft RPs have been prepared to mitigate the identified involuntary resettlement impacts, in consultation with the affected households. Mitigation of involuntary resettlement impacts includes compensation at replacement cost for affected property; assistance with resettlement within existing communities; a livelihood development program; and ongoing meaningful consultations, including detailed needs assessment for livelihood development. Details of the grievance redress mechanism are included in the RPs. Continuing capacity building for the PMU2 and local authorities will be provided through PSCs.

3. Plan or other Actions.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement and indigenous peoples plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Resettlement framework	<input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement framework and indigenous peoples planning framework
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental and social management system arrangement	<input type="checkbox"/> Social impact matrix
<input type="checkbox"/> No action	

B. Indigenous Peoples

Safeguard Category: ☐ A ☒ B ☐ C ☐ FI

<p>1. Key impacts. Ethnic minority people are the overwhelming majority in the project area. Accordingly, impacts of involuntary resettlement, risks of HIV transmission and human trafficking, and risks associated with road safety primarily affect ethnic minorities. Involuntary land acquisition and resettlement impacts will not involve displacement outside traditional or customary lands. While Vietnamese is commonly spoken in addition to ethnic languages, education levels are low. Additional attention to communication needs for local communities will be required.</p> <p>Is broad community support triggered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>											
<p>2. Strategy to address the impacts. EMDPs were prepared in compliance with ADB's Safeguard Policy Statement (SPS) (2009) and disclosed on ADB's website in August 2018. They cover mitigation measures set out in other relevant programs and plans (i.e., RPs; HIV and human trafficking awareness program; road safety program; and consultation, participation and communication plan).</p>											
<p>3. Plan or other actions.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples plan</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement plan and indigenous peoples plan</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples planning framework</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement framework and indigenous peoples planning framework</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Environmental and social management system arrangement</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples plan elements integrated in project with a summary</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Social impact matrix</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> No action</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement plan and indigenous peoples plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples planning framework	<input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement framework and indigenous peoples planning framework	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental and social management system arrangement	<input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples plan elements integrated in project with a summary	<input type="checkbox"/> Social impact matrix		<input type="checkbox"/> No action	
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<p align="center">V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS</p>											
<p>A. Risks in the Labor Market</p> <p>1. Relevance of the project for the country's or region's or sector's labor market, indicated as high (H), medium (M), and low or not significant (L).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> unemployment <input type="checkbox"/> underemployment <input type="checkbox"/> retrenchment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (M) core labor standards</p> <p>2. Labor market impact. Not relevant.</p>											
<p>B. Affordability. Not relevant.</p>											
<p>C. Communicable Diseases and Other Social Risks</p> <p>1. The impact of the following risks is rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA):</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (M) Communicable diseases <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (M) Human trafficking</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (H) Others (please specify): road safety</p> <p>2. Risks to people in project area. The increased risk of HIV transmission is mostly associated with the construction phase because of an influx of workers and a related mobile population; this compounds the preexisting risk of low levels of awareness. There is a preexisting risk of human trafficking because of general poverty, low levels of awareness, and proximity to border areas. Impacts of land acquisition may exacerbate this if not appropriately addressed. Risks will be addressed through an HIV and human trafficking awareness and prevention program targeting the local population, construction workers, and high-risk groups. Cumulative risks because of land acquisition will be addressed through the livelihood development program implemented under the RPs. Road safety risks are related to low levels of awareness, low adherence to traffic regulations, and increased road use. The project will implement a community-based road safety awareness program.</p>											
<p align="center">VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION</p>											
<p>1. Targets and indicators. Land acquisition and resettlement activities aim to ensure that affected people are compensated at replacement cost and assisted in restoring the livelihoods in compliance with the SPS. Local labor employment will be maximized and monitored as part of the environmental monitoring plan. Consultations on project concerns and awareness-raising campaigns on HIV/AIDS and other related issues are to be conducted regularly for construction workers and local populations. At least 35.0% of unskilled labor days are prioritized for women. At least 68,000 people in the project area, 50% of whom are women, improved their awareness on road safety, HIV/AIDS and human trafficking. These targets will be reassessed during the midterm review.</p> <p>2. Required human resources. The PMU2 will include focal points for social safeguards and social development matters; the PSC will include international and national social safeguards, social development, and gender specialists; and the ADB project team includes social safeguards and gender specialists.</p> <p>3. Information in the project administration manual. Quarterly progress reports will be submitted and a project completion report will be prepared.</p> <p>4. Monitoring tools. Internal monitoring indicators and reporting requirements for mitigation of social risks are specified in the RPs, EMDPs, and gender action plan. External monitoring is required for social safeguards instrument implementation. A resettlement and social development consultant will prepare gender- and ethnicity-disaggregated monitoring indicators in the inception of the project implementation phase. A benefits monitoring framework will be prepared during project implementation.</p>											

Source: Asian Development Bank.