

INITIAL POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS

Country:	<input type="text" value="Myanmar"/>	Project Title:	<input type="text" value="GMS EWEC Highway Development Project"/>
Lending/Financing Modality:	<input type="text" value="Project"/>	Department/Division:	<input type="text" value="SERD/SETC"/>

I. POVERTY IMPACT AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

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

The Country Partnership Strategy 2017–2022 highlights regional connectivity and the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC) as a priority for ADB assistance. The government has stressed as a high priority the need to improve national transport infrastructure and improve connectivity with Myanmar's peripheral states. The project will support the government in both objectives by developing a new highway along the Greater Mekong Subregion connecting the Bago region and Mon state and indirectly improving access to Kayin state and Thailand. As such, the project has a strong, indirect poverty reduction aspect.

B. Poverty Targeting

General Intervention Individual or Household (TI-H) Geographic (TI-G) Non-Income MDGs (TI-M1, M2, etc.)

The project will improve access and connectivity through poor regions of Myanmar—rural areas of Bago region and Mon state—which will open up economic and social opportunities. To ensure that the benefits of the project will be shared by people living along the new highway, the project will also finance the upgrading of rural access roads in the project area. Myanmar has one of the lowest levels of rural road access. Access roads in the project area are mainly basic earthen tracks, which become frequently not passable during the rainy season. The project is classified as general intervention as the improvements will be achieved through indirect actions to address poverty and social issues.

C. Poverty and Social Analysis

1. Key issues and potential beneficiaries.

The main beneficiaries of the project will be the passengers and shippers along the Greater Mekong East-West corridors, and particularly in the Bago region and Mon states which the highway section will connect. The project will also directly benefit to the people living along the new alignment, which will be provided with a basic all-season access roads and will be within short commuting time with Yangon, Bago and H'paan. This will help develop these agricultural areas.

The rural regions of Bago and Mon targeted are particularly vulnerable to climate impacts (floods and typhoons). In both 2015, most of the project area was partially flooded. In 2014, the World Bank estimated that 25% of people in Bago region, and 21% in Mon state, lived below the poverty level of \$1.25 per day. Poverty in rural areas, where township-specific data does not exist, is assumed to be well higher.

2. Impact channels and expected systemic changes.

Most of the project positive impacts on poverty will be indirect, through increased economic opportunities in Yangon and the other the main cities of the GMS EWEC in Myanmar. The communities along the road will also benefit strongly from the road. They will have improved access to social and economic services, allowing them to be used more often and become more affordable. Better climate resilience of the main roads will enable all-year round access.

Benefits will be the highest in communities which will be targeted by the rural road access component. Typical relationships between access and poverty in Myanmar are the following: (i) in absence of a road, agricultural productivity remains low; agriculture is aimed at subsistence as inputs and products have to be carried out by foot or animal; (ii) people requiring routine or emergency treatment have to travel 10 kilometers or more on foot or on the back of an animal; worldwide, 75% of perinatal mortality is associated with inadequate transport; (iii) children living in unconnected villages have access to primary school (often only the first three grades), but as many as 90% drop out afterwards because of the time needed to walk to the nearest village tract or township; (iv) without access, household members have to spend a large part of their time on travel, a task which falls disproportionately on women.

Absence of road access is the main limiting factor to rural transport in Myanmar. Myanmar has a great diversity of means of transport and transport services in rural areas. Once motorable roads are available, passenger trucks and heavy duty pickups quickly appear to provide services at low costs by international standards. However, without a proper road, cost of freight and passenger transport can be 10 times more expensive and travel is much slower.

3. Focus of (and resources allocated in) the PPTA or due diligence.

The TA will: (i) engage local communities in the design process, (ii) define a program of rural road access and social development plan targeting these communities, (iii) develop resettlement plans and hold consultations. About 27.5 person-months of consultant inputs will be dedicated to social management and mitigation.

4. Specific analysis for policy-based lending.

n/a

II. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

1. What are the key gender issues in the sector/subsector that are likely to be relevant to this project or program?

Female workers on road construction sites during implementation and access to employment, health and education opportunities upon completion of the road upgrade. Also, the lack of basic road access disproportionately constrains poor rural women in reaching markets, using health services and other basic services. It amplifies their work load in carrying products, food, wood or even clean water. Women are less engaged than men in township employment and migration to cities, due to their primary responsibility of care for young and old and household maintenance duties. For this reason, basic access to markets and services on a day-return basis is particularly important to women.

2. Does the proposed project or program have the potential to make a contribution to the promotion of gender equity and/or empowerment of women by providing women's access to and use of opportunities, services, resources, assets, and participation in decision making?

Yes No

The construction of a new highway will bring in itself only a few limited opportunities to empower women, e.g. for employment in highway operations and at rest areas. The complementary rural road access component will likely to disproportionately benefit women. Its implementation will provide opportunities to empower women, during planning consultations, implementation of works, and routine maintenance of the roads.

3. Could the proposed project have an adverse impact on women and/or girls or widen gender inequality?

Yes No

4. Indicate the intended gender mainstreaming category:

GEN (gender equity) EGM (effective gender mainstreaming)
 SGE (some gender elements) NGE (no gender elements)

III. PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT

1. Who are the main stakeholders of the project, including beneficiaries and negatively affected people? Identify how they will participate in the project design.

The main stakeholders of the project are the rural people of Bago region and Mon state. Other stakeholders are those using the roads and highway to travel to or from Yangon along the main corridors. From the government, the Ministry of Construction and the Department of Highways are the main stakeholders.

2. How can the project contribute (in a systemic way) to engaging and empowering stakeholders and beneficiaries, particularly, the poor, vulnerable and excluded groups? What issues in the project design require participation of the poor and excluded?

Project preparation is engaging communities along the road corridors in a series of public consultations about the project. The consultations seek out particularly the excluded to hear their concerns and suggestions, optimize the alignment and design of the project in order to reduce the negative impacts of land acquisition, and mitigate environmental impacts, and define a program of rural road access and activities which will form the project's social development action plan.

3. What are the key, active, and relevant civil society organizations in the project area? What is the level of civil society organization participation in the project design?

Information generation and sharing Consultation Collaboration Partnership

4. Are there issues during project design for which participation of the poor and excluded is important? What are they and how shall they be addressed? Yes No

Myanmar has a history of limited consultations for road projects. Therefore, having a voice in a major development initiative such as the highway modernization project is important. To ensure this, a consultation and participation plan will be developed during the TA preparing the project to ensure comprehensive stakeholder involvement in further project design and implementation to ensure expected benefits are achievable. The consultation and participation plan for project implementation may include information sharing workshops, community consultations, and involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

IV. SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

A. Involuntary Resettlement Category A B C FI

1. Does the project have the potential to involve involuntary land acquisition resulting in physical and economic displacement? Yes No

The pre-feasibility study indicated that the project would require acquisition of about 550 ha of land along the corridor and may impact about 100 structures. Land to be acquired is mainly paddies and rubber plantations. An income restoration program will be required for people losing access to farm land.

2. What action plan is required to address involuntary resettlement as part of the PPTA or due diligence process?

- Resettlement plan Resettlement framework Social impact matrix
 Environmental and social management system arrangement None

B. Indigenous Peoples Category A B C FI

The project does not cross ethnic minority areas. Its main effects will be in parts of Bago and Mon regions that are predominantly populated by the majority Burmese ethnic group. The PPTA will assess the presence of ethnic groups in the project areas.

1. Does the proposed project have the potential to directly or indirectly affect the dignity, human rights, livelihood systems, or culture of indigenous peoples? Yes No

2. Does it affect the territories or natural and cultural resources indigenous peoples own, use, occupy, or claim, as their ancestral domain? Yes No

3. Will the project require broad community support of affected indigenous communities? Yes No

4. What action plan is required to address risks to indigenous peoples as part of the PPTA or due diligence process?

- Resettlement and ethnic group development plan Indigenous peoples planning framework Social Impact matrix Environmental and social management system arrangement
 To be further assessed during the PPTA

V. OTHER SOCIAL ISSUES AND RISKS

1. What other social issues and risks should be considered in the project design?

- Creating decent jobs and employment (M) Adhering to core labor standards Labor retrenchment
 Spread of communicable diseases, including HIV/AIDS (L) Increase in human trafficking Affordability
 Increase in unplanned migration Increase in vulnerability to natural disasters Creating political instability
 Creating internal social conflicts Others, please specify _____

2. How are these additional social issues and risks going to be addressed in the project design?

Civil works contract documents will include standard provisions covering core labor standards and HIV/AIDS mitigation. These will be monitored during project implementation by the supervision consultants.

VI. PPTA OR DUE DILIGENCE RESOURCE REQUIREMENT

1. Do the terms of reference for the PPTA (or other due diligence) contain key information needed to be gathered during PPTA or due diligence process to better analyze (i) poverty and social impact; (ii) gender impact, (iii) participation dimensions; (iv) social safeguards; and (v) other social risks. Are the relevant specialists identified?

- Yes No

2. What resources (e.g., consultants, survey budget, and workshop) are allocated for conducting poverty, social and/or gender analysis, and participation plan during the PPTA or due diligence?

7.5 person months of international and 20 person-months national consultants are provided in the PPTA. The PPTA includes resources for consultations workshops and surveys.

Source: Asian Development Bank.