

DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS' MEETING

9 DECEMBER 2021



1400-1620 H Manila/Beijing time, 1300-1520H Bangkok/Ha Noi/Phnom Penh/Vientiane time, 1230-1450 H Nay Pyi Taw time

Via Web-based Conferencing

Background

1. The 7th Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Summit of Leaders, hosted by the Government of Cambodia, carried the theme “GMS: Renewed Strength to Face the Challenges of the New Decade.” It was held virtually on 9 September 2021 and attended by the GMS countries’ Heads of Governments and Asian Development Bank (ADB) President. The Summit endorsed and adopted the GMS Economic Cooperation Program Strategic Framework 2030 (GMS–2030) and the GMS COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan 2021-2023 (COVID-19 Plan), which supplements GMS-2030. The Leaders assessed progress made under the GMS Program, including joint and collaborative actions taken by the GMS countries in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that posed severe challenges to the subregion. The Leaders renewed their commitment to work together and cooperate even more closely and strongly toward the realization of the GMS vision of a more integrated, prosperous, sustainable, and inclusive GMS.

2. The new strategy, GMS-2030, provides a framework for the subregion to act collectively in its response to long-term, challenges GMS-2030 establishes a new Mission Statement for the GMS Program: A subregional cooperation program focused on its fundamental strengths of community, connectivity, and competitiveness while embracing the core principles of environmental sustainability and resilience, internal and external integration, and inclusivity, for building a GMS community with a shared future. GMS-2030 intends to reform the GMS Program as an open platform that cooperates with other regional cooperation and integration (RCI) initiatives and promotes further collaboration with various partners it seeks to engage.

3. The GMS COVID-19 Plan aims to coordinate the efforts of GMS countries on issues that require greater RCI to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic more effectively. The Plan supplements national COVID-19 responses, focusing on RCI priorities and aims to (i) balance health, economic, environmental, and social priorities; (ii) ensure private sector involvement; (iii) engage local governments and communities; and (iv) be widely and effectively communicated.

4. GMS countries continued to seek the assistance of ADB and development partners (DPs) to the GMS Program, providing significant financial, knowledge, and technical support. ADB, as Secretariat, will continue to play a central role in coordinating the GMS Program.

Objectives

5. The meeting aims to:

- (i) To brief DPs on the two strategic documents endorsed at the 7th GMS Summit of Leaders: GMS-2030 and COVID-19 Plan;



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- (ii) To exchange ideas on how DPs can contribute to the GMS-2030 and COVID-19 initiatives, capitalizing on experiences and approaches for effective engagement and partnerships through co-financing, technical assistance, and knowledge sharing;
- (iii) To update on implementation progress of the GMS Regional Investment Framework (RIF) 2022, inform DPs of the new RIF 2025, and discuss potential areas for cooperation; and
- (iv) To discuss the new approach for DP engagement in the GMS Program.

Participants

6. GMS Senior Officials and representatives of development partner organizations will be invited to participate in this meeting.



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PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED PROGRAM AND AGENDA

Chair:	Ms. Sisomboung Ounavong Director General, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Lao PDR
Co-Chair:	Mr. Ramesh Subramaniam Director General, Southeast Asia Department, Asian Development Bank (ADB)
1400-1410 (10 mins)	Welcome Remarks by Chair and Co-Chair
1410-1420 (10 mins)	Session 1: GMS Economic Cooperation Program Strategic Framework 2030 (GMS–2030) and GMS COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan 2021-2023 (COVID-19 Plan)
	<i>The GMS Secretariat will brief the meeting on the GMS–2030 rationale, vision and mission statement, innovative approaches, pillars of strategy, and institutional arrangements. This session will inform participants on forward-looking directions of the GMS Program over the next decade and the COVID-19 Plan, including responses and initiatives across the subregion within the medium-term.</i> <i>(Presenter: Mr. Asadullah Khan Sumbal, Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist, ADB)</i>
1420-1450 (30 mins)	Discussion <i>GMS countries and development partners (DPs) will be requested to share their views on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What strategic areas of the GMS-2030 could DPs contribute to?</i> • <i>What areas are DPs working in which could contribute to the COVID-19 Plan?</i>
1450-1500 10 mins	Session 2: Regional Investment Framework (RIF) 2022 Update and new RIF 2025
	<i>The GMS Secretariat will present highlights of the status of implementation of the RIF 2022 and discuss the new RIF 2025 and potential areas for cooperation.</i> <i>(Presenter: Ms. Pinsuda Alexander, Economist (Regional Cooperation), ADB)</i>
1500-1530 (30 mins)	Discussion <i>GMS Countries and DPs will be asked to share their views on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can more DPs' projects be reflected in the new RIF 2025?</i> • <i>What sector areas would DPs most likely contribute in?</i>



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<p>1530-1540 (10 mins)</p>	<p>Session 3: New Approach for Development Partner Engagement in the GMS Program</p>
	<p><i>GMS countries and ADB acknowledge the role that DPs have played, and the partnerships pursued in implementing the GMS Program. Looking ahead towards the implementation of the GMS-2030, COVID-19 Plan, and RIF projects, GMS Secretariat will brief the participants on a new proposed approach for development partner engagement to help ensure the GMS Program's continued relevance and success into the future.</i></p> <p><i>(Presenter: Mr. Alfredo Perdiguero, Director, ADB)</i></p>
<p>1540-1610 (30 mins)</p>	<p>Discussion <i>DPs may share their views on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What areas could DPs engage in to support the GMS countries? (co-financing, knowledge sharing and technical assistance, participation in sector working groups, etc.)</i>
<p>1610-1620 (10 min)</p>	<p>Wrap Up by Co-Chair and Closing Remarks by Chair</p>

