



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

USAID and AUSTRALIA MEKONG SAFEGUARDS PROGRAM

Social Safeguards in Climate Smart Infrastructure

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- 5 years (August 2018 – August 2023)
- Goal is to reduce environmental and social impacts of large energy and transportation infrastructure in the Mekong Subregion (Thailand, Lao PDR, Vietnam, and Cambodia)
- Implemented by Asia Foundation-led consortium
- Funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)





Social Safeguards in Infrastructure Development: Value Proposition

- Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG): Set of ESG factors considered by companies/investors with a focus on risks, impacts and opportunities
- **S** in ESG: Social safeguards to minimize and manage social issues

Value Proposition:

- Enhances sustainable development
- Creates long-term value that benefits all stakeholders
- Allows companies to identify non-financial risks and opportunities and enhance financial outcomes
- Optimizes risk management including reputational risks



Social Safeguards: Key Focus

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Stakeholder engagement central to assessing social risks and impacts and designing appropriate mitigation and management measures.
 - Culturally appropriate inclusive consultation and participation
 - Gender and vulnerability considerations
 - Indigenous knowledge on use of local resources/design for climate resilient infrastructure
 - Grievance mechanism
- **Land-based Impacts:** Impacts to land and livelihoods one of the major impacts in infrastructure development.
 - Land acquisition and resettlement challenges
 - Impacts on informal land users/tenants
 - Climate hazard considerations in resettlement planning



Social Safeguards: Key Focus

- **Livelihood Restoration:** Impact to livelihoods (e.g agriculture, fishing, access to ecosystem services)
 - Development opportunity to address existing climate challenges on livelihood
 - E.g Focus on climate smart agriculture
- **Cultural Resources:** Impacts to cultural heritage resources needs more focus
 - Impacts on tangible and intangible cultural heritage resources
 - Indigenous people
- **Labor Issues:** Workers' protection, supply chain issues, labor influx and its impact on community health, safety and security key to assess.



Strengthening Social Safeguards in Infrastructure Projects

- **Training and Capacity Building**
 - Regular training and advisory services to the project team
 - Training to contractors (contractor management is key)
 - Development of tools, frameworks, best practices
 - Promote GESI-responsive procurement
- **Management Systems:** Integrating social safeguards measures into the overall policy, and systems critical
 - Development of E&S policies and management plans and integration into the management systems
- **Capacity Building of CBOs**
 - Capacity building of local communities/CBOs to promote accountability



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