

BRC RESEARCH REPORT No. 11

**FIVE TRIANGLE AREAS IN
THE GREATER MEKONG SUBREGION**

2013

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PREFACE

We have conducted studies focused on urban and border areas in the Mekong Region so far. Urban areas like Bangkok, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City have received the greatest benefits from economic growth. In addition, some border areas along the economic corridors have also returned good economic performances. For a border area can enjoy the advantages of both a higher income country (better infrastructure) and a lower one (cheaper labor costs). For example, Bavet (an area on the border between Cambodia and Vietnam in the Southern Economic Corridor) and Mae Sot (an area on the border between Thailand and Myanmar in the East-West Economic Corridor) have attracted considerable investment in the manufacturing sector, so far.

In triangle areas, however, where three borders meet, it is not easy to garner such benefits in the Mekong Region. The Singapore-Johor-Riau (SIJORI) Growth Triangle joining areas of Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia shows a contrasting picture of prosperity. However, the borders at the triangle areas in the Mekong Region are land borders, while the borders of the SIJORI are sea borders with the prosperous ports located in that area. In other words, the five triangle areas in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) are located in inland areas far away from a coast. Thus, these areas remain very poor, with low population densities and a significant percentage of the inhabitants belonging to ethnic minority groups.

This book, the result of a research project entitled “A Study on Regional Development of Border Areas in the Mekong Region” by the Bangkok Research Center (IDE-JETRO in the fiscal year 2012), tries to show the current situation, opportunities and challenges of the five triangle areas in the GMS.

Our research project included one member each from Cambodia, Laos and Thailand and two members from Vietnam and Japan. We conducted a field trip to the relevant triangle areas during this fiscal year. On the field trip, we visited provincial governments, provincial chambers of commerce, customs houses at borders, embassies and university lecturers. Additionally, we presented the results of our study at a seminar

in Vientiane, Laos to an audience that included government officials, staff of assistance agencies, researchers and university lecturers. On behalf of the project members, I would like to show my sincere appreciation for the cooperation shown by such people. Finally, I would like to mention my hope that these triangle areas will demonstrate good and healthy economic performances by undertaking more effective economic cooperation in the future.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AEM	ASEAN Economic Ministers' Meeting
AMEICC	AEM-METI Economic and Industrial Cooperation Committee
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ACMECS	Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy
BHN	Basic Human Needs
BEZ	Border Economic Zone
BIMP-EAGA	Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines Economic Growth Area
BOT	Build, Operate and Transfer
CDC-CRDB	Cambodia Rehabilitation and Development Board, CDC
CLV	Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam
CLV-DTA	Cambodia-Laos-Vietnam Development Triangle Area
CDTA	Cambodian (member provinces of) Development Triangle Area
CRCD	Cambodian Research Centre for Development
CDC	Consil for the Development of Cambodia
CBTA	Cross-Border Transport Agreement
DPI	Department of Planning and Investment
DBST	Double Bituminous Surface Treatment
EWEC	East-West Economic Corridor
EQA	Economic Quadrangle Area
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FMM	Foreign Minister Meeting
CSO	General Statistical Organization, Myanmar
GSO	General Statistics Office, Vietnam
GSP	Generalized Systems of Preferences
BT-SEZ	Golden Boten Specific Economic Zone
GQA	Golden Quadrangle Area
GT-SEZ	Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone
GOL	Government of Lao PDR
GMS	Greater Mekong Subregion
GT-DTA	Greater Triangle Development Area
GPP	Gross Provincial Product

GRP	Gross Regional Product
IMT	Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand
IP	Industrial Park
IDE-JETRO	Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization
IWEP	Institute of World Economics and Politics, Vietnam
IWEP	Institute of World Economics and Politics, Vietnam
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
JETRO	Japan External Trade Organization
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JOGMEC	Japan Oil, Gas and Metal Corporation
JAIF	Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund
JPY	Japanese Yen
JCC	Joint Coordination Commttee
JEQC	Joint Economic Quadrangle Committee
LDTA	Lao (member provinces of)Development Triangle Area
LAK	Lao Kip
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
LMI	Lower Mekong Initiatives
METI	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan
MW	Maga Watt
MRC	Mekong River Commission
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia
MOF	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MIME	Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy, Cambodia
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MOP	Ministry of Planning, Cambodia
MPWT	Ministry of Public Work and Transport, Cambodia
MTA	Mong Tai Army
NAFRI	National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
NESDB	National Economic and Social Development Board, Thailand
NERI	National Economic Research Insitute, Lao PDR

NIS	National Institute of Statistics, Cambodia
NSC	National Statistical Center, Lao PDR
NSO	National Statistical Office, Thailand
NEDA	Neighboring Countries Economic Development Cooperation Agency
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NTFP	Non-timber forest products
NKER	Northern Key Economic Region
NSEC	North-South Economic Corridor
NSEC	North-South Economic Corridor
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ONCB	Office of Narcotics Control Board
PAT	Port Authority of Thailand
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
QEZ	Quadrangle Economic Zone
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SOM	Senior Officials Meeting
SIJORI	Singapore-Johor-Riau
SME	Small and Midium Sized Enterprise
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SLORC	State Law and Order Restoration Council
SOE	Stat-Owned Enterprise
NCCR	Swiss National Center of Competence in Research
TAT	Tourism Authority of Thailand
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VIE	Vietnam Institute of Economics
VDTA	Vietnamese (member provinces of)Development Triangle Area
VND	Vietnamese Dong
WTEC	World Technologies Evaluation Center