



MEKONG
INSTITUTE

REVISED

ANNUAL WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

2023

Mekong Institute

Khon Kaen, Thailand

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms	3
Executive Summary	5
1. Background.....	8
2. MI Annual Work Plan 2023.....	8
3. Key Changes in the Revised Annual Work Plan 2023	8
3.1. MI's Contribution to GMS Development.....	8
A. Regional Development Themes	9
i. Agricultural Development and Commercialization	9
ii. Trade and Investment Facilitation	9
iii. Sustainable Energy and Environment	10
B. Cross-Cutting Themes	11
3.2. MI's Contribution to Broader GMS/Mekong-related Cooperation Frameworks	12
i. Mekong-Korea Cooperation Fund (MKCF) Management	12
ii. Support in Establishing the ACMECS Interim Secretariat (AIS).....	12
3.3. MI's Flagship Programs	12
3.4. Revised Annual Budget for 2023	13
3.5. Key Strategies and Approaches for 2023	13
3.6. Mid-term Review of MI Strategic Plan 2021-2025	13
4. MI Annual Work Plan 2023 (approved in December 2023)	14
4.1. Annual Plan for MI's Contribution to GMS Development.....	14
4.2. Annual Plan for MI Contribution to Broader Mekong Cooperation Frameworks	21
4.3. Annual Plan for Institutional Strengthening	23
4.4. Annual Budget for 2023.....	30
4.5. Key Strategies and Approaches for 2023	31
5. Annex.....	32
5.1. Annex 1: MI Results Framework 2021-2025.....	32
5.2. Annex 2: MI Capacity Development Model (CDM).....	33
5.3. Annex 3: List of Projects to be Funded under MKCF in 2023.....	34
5.4. Annex 4: Revised Annual Budget for 2023	36
5.5. Annex 5: Opportunity Funds Received as of June 30, 2023	38
5.6. Annex 6: Positions to be Recruited by December 2023	39
5.7. Annex 7: Concept Note on the Mid-term Review of Mekong Institute Strategic Plan 2021-2025.....	40

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACMECS	Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy
ADC	Agricultural Development and Commercialization
AIS	ACMECS Interim Secretarial
AMS	ASEAN Member States
ANGA	ASEAN Negotiating Group for Agriculture
APRACA	Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEAN-CRN	ASEAN Climate Resilience Network
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CA	Coordinating Agencies
CD	Capacity Development
CKM	Communications and Knowledge Management
CLMV	Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam
CLMTV	Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
FMM	Foreign Ministers Meeting
FAOYN	Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of Yunnan Province
FO	Finance and Operations
GB	Governing Board
GDI	Global Development Initiative
GMCA	Greater Mekong Community Affairs
GMS	Greater Mekong Subregion
GS	General Services
HCFs	Health Care Facilities
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resource Development
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
LM	Lancang-Mekong
LMCSF	Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC) Special Fund
OED	Office of the Executive Director
MCU	Mekong Cooperation Unit
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Thailand)

MI	Mekong Institute
MI-CDM	MI Capacity Development Model
MIST	Ministry of Science and ICT (Republic of Korea)
MKCF	Mekong-Korea Cooperation Fund
MOAC	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (Thailand)
MRC	Mekong River Commission
MSMEs	Micro, Small Medium Enterprises
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NSDS	National Strategy for Development of Statistics
NZAP	New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists
PIA	Project Implementing Agencies
PR	Public Relations
PRM	Partnership and Resource Mobilization
PROSAFE	Promoting Safe Food for Everyone
RBM	Results-Based Management
RFD	Rainwater for Drinking
RiceEco	Rice Straw-Based Circular Economy for Improved Biodiversity and Sustainability
ROK	Republic of Korea
RPHL	Regional Public Health Laboratory
SEE	Sustainable Energy and Environment
S.G.s	Strategic Goals
SMEs	Small Medium Enterprises
SMT	Senior Management Team
SOM	Senior Officials Meeting
SP	Strategic Plan
SS & TrC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation
STEPI	Science and Technology Policy Institute
TA	Technical Assistance
TICA	Thailand International Cooperation Agency
TIF	Trade and Investment Facilitation
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
WEF	Water-Energy-Food

Executive Summary

In 2023, the world will embark on a new chapter of post-COVID recovery across different aspects, from socioeconomics to the environment. This could create a dynamic global and regional transition, including in the GMS region, which has a greater demand for upskilling labor, enhancing competitiveness, promoting initiatives, and built-in technology in different sectors: agricultural, transportation investment, tourism, and energy, among others. Capacity building and improving partnerships toward regional cooperation frameworks are essential in responding to this transition. MI is working on the MI Strategic Plan 2021-2025 in alignment with the need for contextual changes. Therefore, the 2023 annual work plan will address MI's events based on the diversity of focus areas prioritized for the new transition.

The MI Annual Work Plan 2023 is presented in three main parts: Part I) Annual Plan for MI's Contribution to GMS Development; Part II) Annual Plan for MI's Contribution to Broader Mekong Cooperation Frameworks; III) Annual Plan for Institutional Strengthening; and IV) Annual Budget 2023.

This document includes the proposed revisions (section 3) to the approved 2023 annual work plan (section 4) by the GB meeting 2/2022.

MI will implement 29 projects in 2023: 11 of them long-term, 11 short-term, and seven one-off activities that three program departments will implement. The project activities/events fall under 24 focus areas of three Regional Development Themes. There are some overlaps of the thematic areas to be addressed by the program departments.

Under the ADC theme, there are six focus areas under which all the program departments will conduct 67 events/activities. Most activities (23) contribute to Food Safety topics. Among the other focus areas, nine activities relate to Sustainable Food Systems, twenty activities on Climate-Smart Agriculture, nine activities will be conducted on Market Access, three activities on Post-harvest Management, and the remaining three activities on Agri Value-Chain Development.

Under the TIF theme, there are diversified 50 events/activities that will contribute to multiple (11) focus areas and be implemented by SEE and TIF departments. Projects under the MKCF alone cover topics including Sustainable and smart tourism; MSMEs Competitiveness; Cross border digital services and e-platforms; and Capacity building.

The SEE theme will be implemented solely by the SEE department with a total of 14 events/activities. However, the SEE department will join in collaborative programs for cross-cutting themes and other thematic areas (nine activities for Sustainable Food System and seven activities on Climate-Smart Agriculture), and provide knowledge products, training, forums, workshops for Food-Energy-Water nexus (five), Green Economy (three), Energy (two), Climate-Smart Technologies for Agriculture and Trade Events (three), Sustainable Smart Tourism (two) and Coordination and Synergy of Regional Framework (two).

MI also works for cross-cutting themes: Digital Economy Innovation which is addressed based on the needs of digitalization markets under the world transition. Five activities will be conducted by SEE and one activity by TIF.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the number of MI program activities/events to be undertaken in 2023, distributed by Thematic Areas and Focus Areas.

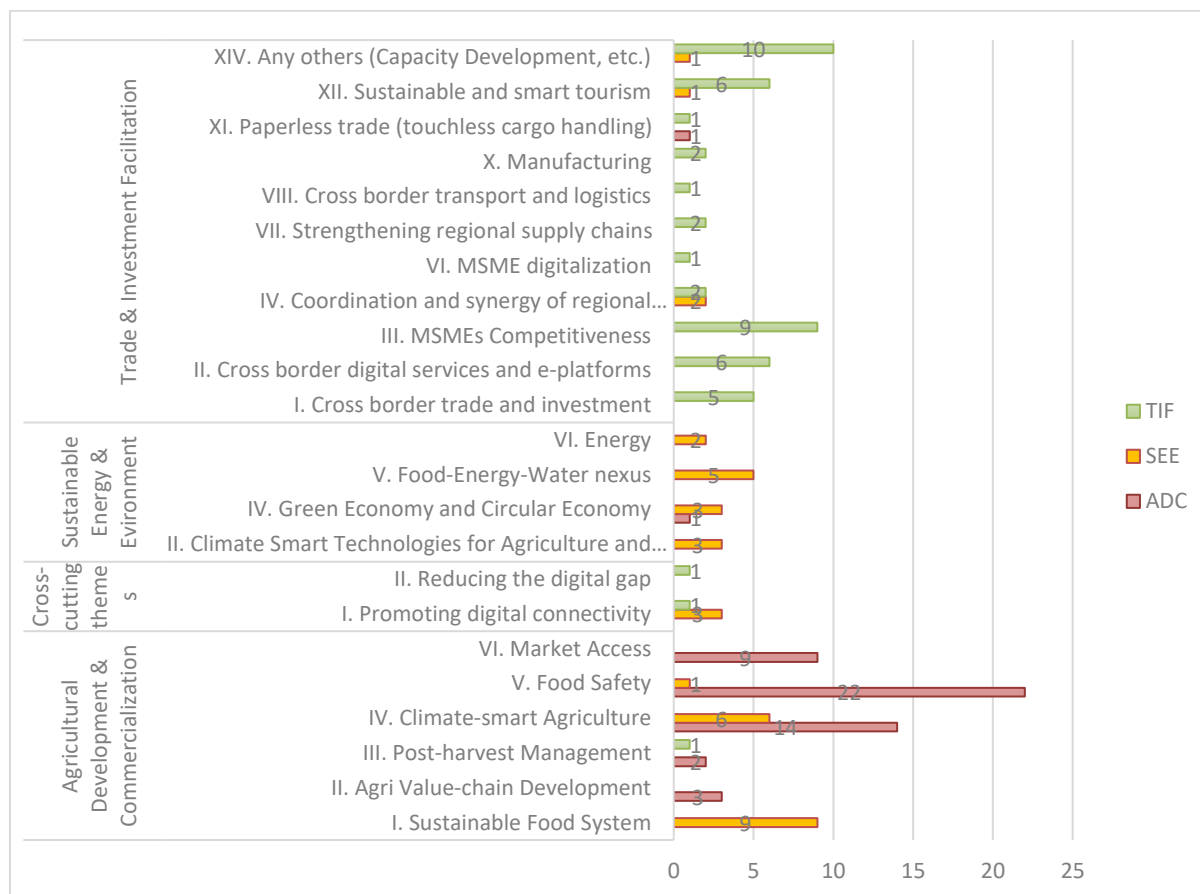


Figure 1: MI Activities by Regional Development and Cross-Cutting Themes, Focus Areas, and Program Departments

Regarding Institutional Strengthening, MI will continue to improve the functioning of operational units by working more strategically, providing better adaptive management practices, transforming new systems, and giving more room for improvement in different operation units (OED, MEL, CKM, PRM, Finance, GS, HR, and Procurement).

Under Strategic Leadership and Management, key activities will focus on in-house improvements to create mutual understanding and enhance cooperation among departments/units.

The Greater Mekong Community Affairs (GMCA) department will support and collaborate with program and operation departments to enhance development synergies and adopt the Results-Based Management system organization-wide. A new agenda for the Joint Monitoring Committee (consisting of MI Steering Committee Members, Coordinating Agencies, key M&E Focal Agencies, and MI Secretariat) will be rolled out to enhance the capacity of GMS Member countries/ development partners and generate outcomes in the GMS member countries from MI intervention.

The Finance and Operations (FO) department will provide support to critical analysis of the finance and human resources to the Executive Director and Senior Management Team (SMT)

from time to time, particularly through supporting the SMT meetings, to ensure MI operates smoothly and maintains its healthy financial status. The main goal of the department is to support MI regarding finance, HR, general services, IT services, and procurement services in achieving the objectives of MI's Strategic Plan 2021-2025. Key institutional areas include having sustainable funds going forward, a better environment and working conditions, reaching the target annual budget of 3 million USD, and increasing MI's reserve fund by at least 3% of the profit from project implementation. MI plans to reach an annual burn rate of up to 95% of the annual budget for 2023. MI will also monitor, follow up and support the PIAs, who receive funds from MKCF, to ensure that PIAs will achieve their burn rate of up to 85% of the annual fund disbursement during 2023.

1. Background

MI has already completed two years of implementation of the Strategic Plan 2021-2025, although MI's first year's initiatives were hugely affected by the ongoing COVID-19 situation. This was primarily due to the travel restrictions, leading to most MI events being held online. In 2022, the world resumed its normal operations, and MI re-started onsite capacity development activities and online events. Thus, MI premises have started to be crowded with participants from the GMS as well as other countries. MI has tried to design diversified work programs in 2023. Based on the experiences gained over the last two years, MI has realized that online events are not all that effective in terms of participation and engagement of the participants. Hence, MI will try to implement onsite events as much as possible this year.

2. MI Annual Work Plan 2023

The MI Annual Work Plan 2023 has four major components: i) Annual Plan for MI's Contribution to GMS Development, ii) Annual Plan for MI's Contribution to Broader GMS/ Mekong-related Cooperation Frameworks, iii) Annual Plan for Institutional Strengthening, and iv) Annual Budget 2023.

3. Key Changes in the Revised Annual Work Plan 2023

3.1. MI's Contribution to GMS Development

In the first half of 2023, MI made significant progress by securing funding for 12 projects, thereby expanding the total number of projects for the year from 17 to 29. Among the total projects, 11 are long-term projects (1 newly added), 11 are short-term projects (5 newly added), and seven are one-off activities (6 newly added) that three program departments and the F&O department (1) will implement. The distribution of projects by departments and project types is shown in the table below:

Department	# of Projects	Long-term	Short-term	One-off
ADC	8	4	4	0
SEE	10	1	5	4
TIF	10	6	2	2
Finance & Operations	1	0	0	1
Total Projects	29	11	11	7

The achievement of getting opportunity projects exceeded the initial target, demonstrating MI's successful efforts in obtaining financial support for its activities.

The newly funded projects encompass various key thematic areas, addressing crucial development challenges in the Mekong region. These funded projects exemplify MI's commitment to addressing development challenges in the Mekong region. Through its strategic partnerships, research, training, and knowledge dissemination efforts, MI is actively working towards fostering sustainable agricultural practices, facilitating trade and investment, and promoting environmental sustainability and energy connectivity. With increased funding

and expanded project portfolios, MI is well-positioned to make a significant impact on regional development and cooperation in the Mekong region.

A. Regional Development Themes

i. Agricultural Development and Commercialization

Compared to the original approved work plan in December 2022, there are three additional projects (Annex 6) and a one-off activity under an existing partnership: The DFAT-funded one-year project titled “Promoting Climate-Smart Agriculture Technologies and Innovation in Lower Mekong Countries” aims to further efforts by MI to promote the adoption of climate-smart agriculture initiatives in Lower Mekong Countries, specifically in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Viet Nam. This project will help facilitate the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices and minimize the adverse impacts of climate change in targeted countries. National consultations will be conducted to assess the practicality of implementing existing climate-smart agriculture practices in the region. These consultations will serve as a crucial step in determining the feasibility of replicating successful initiatives. Regional training programs will be organized to equip agricultural practitioners with the knowledge and skills required for effectively implementing climate-smart technologies along the supply chain. Further, knowledge products will be designed to disseminate best practices and encourage adopting sustainable agricultural practices in the region.

With support from the P. R. China, MI is conducting an assessment of the “Post-pandemic Response for Food Systems in the Lancang-Mekong Region”. The study's results will be shared among researchers, government officials, policymakers, and other stakeholders to provide a framework that will be useful in enhancing the post-pandemic resilience and sustainability of the food systems in LM countries.

With a continuous partnership with the Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (APRACA), one training program on greening the value chain will be organized to disseminate not only the crucial impacts of climate change on agriculture and food systems but also the existing green finance, which may support adaptation initiatives in the region.

ii. Trade and Investment Facilitation

During Jan – June 2023, there were four opportunity projects which got funded (Annex 6), including:

The upcoming project "Accelerating the Development of Regional Logistics Channels and Transportation Infrastructure for the Lancang-Mekong Regional in the Context of the China-Lao PDR-Thailand Railway," funded by Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of Yunnan Province (FAOYN), aims to tackle the challenges associated with logistics channels and transportation infrastructure to enhance connectivity along the China-Lao and Thailand Railway. The rapid assessment study will provide valuable insights into the current state of logistics channels and infrastructure, enabling the identification of critical areas for improvement. This knowledge will form the foundation for the training materials and sessions, enhancing the capacity of stakeholders engaged in logistics and transportation development. By addressing the identified challenges and implementing action plans, the project will

contribute to improved connectivity, streamlined trade, and enhanced investment facilitation within the Lancang-Mekong countries. Ultimately, this will support regional economic growth, foster closer regional cooperation, and strengthen overall connectivity.

The “Survey of the Mekong Regional Cooperation Frameworks and their strategies and responses to the emerging regional and global issues” is a study benefitted from the AMEICC Secretariat- the Association for Overseas Technical Cooperation and Sustainable Partnerships (AOTS). The survey sought to assess the role of these frameworks in tackling global challenges, identify potential gaps in their approach, and use the findings to propose sustainable and scalable co-creation projects aligned with the Mekong-Japan Economic Co-Creation Vision. The study methodology is aligned with the study objectives to identify contemporary global challenges, evaluate the impact of these critical global challenges on the Mekong region and Mekong Regional Cooperation Frameworks & Development Partners addressing such challenges in their program and activities, thereby identify any gaps and Issues to propose for ASEAN Japan co-creation vision.

The Chile -Thailand International Workshop on Trade Negotiation for ASEAN Members took place from May 23 to June 7, 2023, to provide sound knowledge and skills for trade negotiations for ASEAN country members in the world trade context. The workshop is under the trilateral cooperation framework between the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA), the Chilean International Cooperation Agency for Development (AGCID), and the Undersecretariat of International Economic Affairs (SUBREI).

The Paperless Trade Study is a research paper to accompany the summit meeting of the UNESCAP (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border paperless Trade in Asia-Pacific. This agreement provides legal and consultative support to countries that are adopting paperless trade across borders. The importance of paperless trade is recognized by the transition of trading facility methods that provides more job opportunities and enhances connectivity to different international treaty. The case study is implemented in P. R. China, Korea, Fiji, and Argentina to understand this new mechanism's benefits, challenges, and other issues.

iii. Sustainable Energy and Environment

The project “Promoting Greater Energy Connectivity for Equitable Development and Growth in the Lancang-Mekong Region” is under discussion with the support of the P.R. China in collaboration with China Southern Power Grid Co., Ltd. The project is intended to identify implementation paths and approaches for deepening the regional power connectivity and cooperation of key areas that could accelerate sustainable development in the LM Region, explore regional collaborative partnerships for energy connectivity, and enhance the capacity of participants in developing the intervention that could strengthen regional cooperation on energy connectivity. In 2023, the project includes 1) Research on Implementation Paths of Deepening Lancang-Mekong Regional Power Connectivity and Cooperation of Key Areas and 2) Research Findings Dissemination and Discussion.

Supported by the Norwegian Retailers' Environment Fund (NREF), MI has partnered with the Environmental Coalition on Standards AiSBL (ECOS) to implement a project to address the

prevalent issue of single-use plastics in Khon Kaen's street food complexes. The project, titled "Upstream single-use plastics reduction solutions for Khon Kaen's street food complexes," endeavors to combat the regular practice of food packaging and serving using single-use plastics by adopting the city as a case model. A comprehensive case assessment study will be conducted to understand the current practices better and evaluate the feasibility of potential mitigation measures. The findings of this study will serve as the foundation for the development of tailored training materials, which aim to educate and guide market operators, food suppliers, and government officers on alternative strategies to reduce reliance on single-use plastics. There will also be a training session that will be organized to facilitate the implementation of these mitigation measures through proper actions targeting the concerned stakeholders. In addition, a campaign/dialogue will be launched to raise consumer awareness about the detrimental environmental impacts caused by single-use plastics, introducing innovative solutions to residents and encouraging their participation in the advocacy.

B. Cross-Cutting Themes

The project "Comprehensive Human Resource Development for the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation" is being facilitated by the SEE department with the funding from the Yunnan Provincial Government with the aim of supporting economic growth in the LM Region with skilled and knowledgeable human resource supplementation. The crucial role of skilling up is addressed during the discussion of the seventh LMC Foreign Ministers' meeting on July 4, 2022. Accordingly, P. R. China launched six plans in the next stage to share with LM countries the benefits of cooperation and add development momentum.

With the support of the People's Government of P. R. China, the Mekong Forum 2023 will be held in person in Kunming City on July 27, 2023. Under the theme "Driving Transformative Change in the GMS", this year's forum aims to gather and engage the subregion's most influential leaders, policymakers, development practitioners, business and civic leaders, and interested individuals. Designed to be one of the GMS' biggest conferences, the event will shine a spotlight on the GMS, showcasing its transformative potential in driving sustainable economic growth and reclaiming its position as a growth center while advancing the shared vision of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Development Initiative (GDI).

A report to be produced on 'Business Development Plan for the Regional Public Health Laboratory (RPHL) Network' will highlight essential factors for establishing a well-functioning secretariat and presents various governance models and business plans to enhance the 'Regional Public Health Laboratory (RPHL) Network.' Initiated in 2019 by the Department of Medical Sciences, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand, the RPHL Network comprises 12 member countries, including ASEAN countries, Nepal, and Timor-Leste. With valuable recommendations from the report, MI will actively support and provide technical assistance to the RPHL Network Secretariat in implementing the proposed activities.

3.2. MI's Contribution to Broader GMS/Mekong-related Cooperation Frameworks

i. Mekong-Korea Cooperation Fund (MKCF) Management

During 2023, out of 26 ongoing projects, 21 projects will be funded (new and ongoing), while five projects are awaiting disbursement for the following year. Annex 3 provides an updated list of the disbursed projects. The overall budget allocated for these projects amounts to approximately 5 million, which includes the funding budget for the MI - MKCF project.

Additionally, under the MKCF fund, the project "Capacity Building on Regional Project Identification, Design, Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation of MKCF project" is rolled out with the aim of enhancing the capacities of the development agencies and government officials in the Mekong countries and improving understanding of the regional integration process through designing and delivering collaborative development projects for mutual benefit by boosting the quality of project identification, design, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Seven activities of the project are planned to be implemented in 2023, which include one workshop, two training courses, one field visit, and two web-based system and platform developments. The activities are: 1) Inception Workshop of the Project (Online), 2) Training in Regional Projects Identification, 3) Web Cloud-based Projects M&E System Development, 4) Training in Project Monitoring and Evaluation, 5) Structured Learning Visit, and 6) MKCF Roundtable Meeting, and MKCF web-based Platform Design and Social Media Campaign Development.

ii. Support in Establishing the ACMECS Interim Secretariat (AIS)

The draft MoU for the support of establishing an interim secretariat for Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) is to be signed between Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and MI is now under the review of MoFA's legal team. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is likely to be signed once the new cabinet is set up. Also, MoFA is seeking a written mandate to let Thailand sign the MoU on the members' behalf.

On 14 June 2023, an informal ACMECS Senior Officials' Meeting was held, hosted by Thailand in Bangkok, and was attended by ACMECS SOM Leaders from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam. The Meeting welcomed the establishment of the ACMECS Interim Secretariat in Thailand with the technical support of MI as its back office. The Meeting also agreed to the Thai proposal to organize activities on the 20th anniversary of the founding of ACMECS in 2023 such as setting up an official ACMECS website and organizing an ACMECS logo competition and academic seminar. MI is expected to support the activities regarding the anniversary.

3.3. MI's Flagship Programs

The GMS Knowledge Network

Currently, the MoU between ADB and MI is being reviewed. In principle, the MoU shall define the overall knowledge cooperation, with GMSKN as an integral part of the cooperation, while keeping the door open for various knowledge-related activities. Also, the ToR of the

stocktaking study has already been finalized, and a consultant is being sought to deliver the consultancy services, which include developing a draft 2-year work plan for the GMSKN with indicative activities.

3.4. Revised Annual Budget for 2023

According to MI's internal exercise of the revised annual budget proposal from various departments, the SMT agrees and submits the revised annual budget plan for 2023 for the Council's approval (***please see Annex 4***). Total revenue is expected to be US\$3,922,374, which increases 8% compared to the original annual budget; the total expense is US\$3,835,332, including the non-cash expense. With these amounts, the estimated revenue over expenses is at US\$87,042, which is 2.22 percent of the total revenue. However, the earnings are US\$195,740, excluding the non-cash expense, which is 4.99 percent of the total revenue.

3.5. Key Strategies and Approaches for 2023

Addressing a new phase of a transition economy and new collaboration opportunities, MI has started to think ahead of readiness for preparation in different thematic areas with think tanks groups (such as Digital connectivity, Paperless trade, Green Economy, Water-Energy-Food nexus, Power Grid connectivity, and Power trade, Cross border transport and logistics, Coordination, and synergy of regional frameworks). To some extent, there are several opportunities for cooperation, such as AMEICC, UNESCAP, and RPHL Network, that cover the span of MI thematic areas.

3.6. Mid-term Review of MI Strategic Plan 2021-2025

MI is midway through the strategic plan for 2021-2025 and would like to conduct a mid-term review. The overall objective of this mid-term review is to reflect on the progress of the strategic plan implementation, identify challenges, and recommend possible changes and improvements to the strategies/approaches for better implementation in the remaining duration of the strategic plan. MI's SMT members will guide the main exercise of the MTR and the whole process will be led by the MEL unit. However, to make the whole process of the MTR independent, transparent, and unbiased, a regional consultant will be hired, who will provide technical guidance, facilitation, and report writing support to MI.

The mid-term will be conducted during August-October 2023 and will use a mixed-method research approach that will utilize quantitative and qualitative data. All analysis of the data will be incorporated in the mid-term review report with recommendations and guidance for the remaining second half of the implementation of the strategic plan. The mid-term review findings will be presented during the Development Partners' meeting to be organized in December 2023. The recommendations for proposed adjustment to the MI Strategic Plan will subsequently be submitted to the GB 2/2023 for consideration and approval.

4. MI Annual Work Plan 2023 (approved in December 2023)

4.1. Annual Plan for MI's Contribution to GMS Development

The first part of this section incorporates the changing context in the GMS due to the emerging situation and MI's responses under the contextual changes for 2023.

The second part consists of key highlights of activities under MI's core programs, which directly contribute to the GMS development. This is related to the first stream of the MI Results Framework 2021-2025. The critical activities of core programs include assessment, study, awareness campaigns, forums, workshops, training, meetings, coaching/mentoring, and technical assistance to the MI's direct participants. Program activities of the three core programs are related to MI's three regional development themes. However, there is a great deal of overlap in focus areas and activities among the three core programs. Three cross-cutting themes are addressed and mainstreamed in all the core programs.

The third part briefly describes three flagship programs that MI has developed. These programs address the issues and areas related to the post-COVID-reliant economy, GMS Knowledge Network, and GMS City Nodes Network. MI's core programs and flagship programs are intended to be complementary to ensure synergies and impacts.

Program activities contribute to the three Strategic Goals, as per the Results Framework of MI's Strategic Plan 2021-2025, mentioned in the following:

Strategic Goals (S.G.s):

S.G. 1: Strengthened human and institutional capacities to continuously adapt and respond to changing contexts in the GMS.

S.G. 2: Enhanced enabling environment for multi-stakeholder partnerships and synergy to support sustainable development in the GMS.

S.G. 3: Fostered regional connectivity to strengthen regional cooperation and integration in the GMS.

4.1.1. Changing Context in the GMS and MI's Responses

Regional Development Themes

4.1.1.a. Agricultural Development and Commercialization (ADC)

Conflicts and geopolitical situation-fueled supply chain disruptions, climate-change-induced disease and disasters, and vulnerability of small farmers and agri-food processing sectors continue to pose challenges in realizing the full potential of the GMS agri-food sector in global market integration and meeting sustainable development goals (SDGs). Good regulatory practices, critical infrastructure development, better connectivity, and human capital development are crucial to launching the GMS countries as global players in safe, sustainable, inclusive, and resilient food value chains. To address these challenges, MI will continue to scale up interventions under the five main focus areas of agricultural development and commercialization, as identified in the Strategic Plan 2021-2025, and strengthen climate-

resilient food systems. Climate-smart technologies and practices are expected to address the climate challenges and enhance agricultural systems to support the food system under the new realities of climate change.

MI will also develop and utilize stakeholder networks at regional and national levels in food safety, food systems, and agriculture sector development contributing to national socio-economic development and regional economic integration.

4.1.1.b. Trade and Investment Facilitation (TIF)

Cross-border trade and investment

Regional value chains have been broadened and diversified across the GMS countries with the increasing trends in Viet Nam, Cambodia and Thailand. As results, this creates emerging opportunities for private sectors in the region. Enhancing the competitiveness of MSMEs so that they integrate with value chains, and increasing their efficiency, innovation, access to finance, and export potential are all needed for the right track.

Cross-border digital services and e-platforms

The upheaval and changes in digital services and e-commerce platforms require laborers to have more skills and an advantage because capital investment has received more attention than labor investment. It can easily be seen that the characteristics of SMEs' product offerings are changing (should change) to meet the format of electronic goods and services. Specifically, traditional businesses like food merchandisers must adapt to the market needs to order food from Foodpanda, Grab, etc. Therefore, production efficiencies are widening the income gap between workers in industry and agriculture, widening the rural-urban divide.

Promoting digital connectivity

The Mekong region now has 30-50% connectivity in some areas, compared to 85% in Thailand and Viet Nam. Mobile phone and digital changes help reduce the gap in connectivity where mobile phone users dominate. It also provides buyers and sellers efficient and cheap access to electronic commerce.

Reducing the digital gap

Private sectors must face up to the fast-changing digital development. Enhancing knowledge about how to use the internet as a business and personal resource contributes to their competitiveness and opportunities for accessing information (markets and prices). E-services, information portals, and government services reflect information accessibility for mutual benefits.

GMS' unalignment of cooperation

At the regional level, there is a challenge for differing regulatory standards for cross-border trade flows and data privacy, which could be enacted in neighboring countries in the GMS. The confusing policy response on using sales platforms to deliver real-world goods across borders needs a cooperative regional framework.

4.1.1.c. Sustainable Energy and Environment (SEE)

Energy demand will almost certainly rise after the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the effects of the Ukraine conflict. It could be a focus topic for discussion under the regional cooperation framework of the GMS where energy transition could play a key role. However, in the context of high energy demand, the use of fossil fuels is still under consideration for regional and national energy plans. In the meantime, the unabandoned use of fossil fuels could lead to increased carbon emissions which the GMS countries have committed to in their NDC targets. In addition, environment and climate change policies still need more attention among the GMS countries to build a commitment.

4.1.2. Key Initiatives under the Regional Development and Cross-Cutting Themes

MI will implement 17 projects in 2023. Among them, 10 are long-term projects, six are short-term projects, and one is a one-off activity that will be implemented by three program departments. The distribution of projects by department and project type is shown in the table below:

Department	Long-Term	Short-Term	One-Off	Total
ADC	3	2	0	5
SEE	1	4	1	6
TIF	6	0	0	6
Total	10	6	1	17

4.1.2.a. Agricultural Development and Commercialization

Long-term Outcome 1: Increased agricultural, commercial production and strengthened sustainable food systems.

Focus Area: Sustainable Food System, Agri Value-chain Development, Climate-smart Agriculture, Food Safety, Market Access, Post-harvest management.

With the support of New Zealand Aid Programme (NZAP), MI has been implementing a food safety project, "PROSAFE: Promoting Safe Food for Everyone Project," from 2018 to 2023 to advance adequate food safety and quality control systems in the agri-food chain to safeguard health and well-being, as well as to improve livelihoods and spur economic development in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam. MI will continue organizing eight regional training programs and nine forums/workshops related to food safety and market access to improve the food safety system and support agri-food SMEs to improve their practices according to the required market standards. Two research studies will also be carried out on food safety-related issues in CLMV on Food Safety-Food Loss Nexus in the Horticultural Supply Chain and Climate Change Impacts and Food Safety Challenges in Agriculture.

Each regional training program related to food safety and market access targets 28 participants from CLMV, while each forum/workshop targets at least 25 participants.

The 2023 activities under the agricultural development and commercialization thematic area will enhance the food safety control system and compliance with food safety standards across the agricultural value chain to protect consumers and facilitate market access.

PROSAFE project evaluation will be conducted to establish and document project interventions' effectiveness to render donors accountable. It will involve assessing the factors that enhanced or limited the achievement of project targets, documentation of the results achieved, and lessons learned. The evaluation is expected to provide an in-depth analysis of project interventions' relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. The findings and recommendations will contribute to a learning process that enables the project team to draw lessons from its experience.

The End-of-Project Regional Event will also be organized to provide relevant actors with the project impact and lessons learned that will be useful in future food safety efforts and initiatives in their respective countries. The representatives of project partners from government agencies in CLMV will have the opportunity to provide additional information that may contribute to the evaluation and triangulate the results. It will also provide an avenue for them to collaborate in future undertakings.

Focus Area: Sustainable Food System, Climate-smart Agriculture

MI will implement a short-term project on Targeted Poverty Alleviation and Strengthening Food Security in the Lancang-Mekong Countries for Post-pandemic Recovery supported by The People's Government of the P. R. China (Dec 2022-July 2023).

The project comprises a needs assessment, a webinar, and a modular training program. The project aims to identify and promote feasible policies and strategies that could best support poverty alleviation and promote food security in line with the regional development priorities.

Supported by the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Special Fund, MI has been implementing the 3-year project on "Development of Rice Pest and Natural Disaster Monitoring, Forecasting and Warning Center for Sustainable Rice Production under Climate Change in the Mekong-Lancang Subregion" aiming to establish a Rice Pest and Natural Disasters Monitoring, Forecasting and Warning Center in LM countries for sustainable rice production amid climate change. Likewise, the project intends to enhance the scientific climate knowledge of CLMTV and improve the regional coordination and communication channels for more effective rice production planning and management. In 2023, MI will conclude the project by organizing the End-of-Project Workshop to showcase the achievements and outcomes attained by the project in its three years of implementation. The Workshop will also include a presentation on the Impacts of climate change in the agriculture sector to increase the knowledge of the LM partners. In addition, MI will contribute to climate-smart agriculture through the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) funded a 1-year project on "Promoting Climate-Smart Agriculture Technologies and Innovations in Lower Mekong Countries. The project aims to enhance the resilience of agricultural value chains in the Lower Mekong region by ensuring suitable and context-specific CSA approaches, capacitated technical human resources, accessible climate finance services, and increased collaboration among key actors in the value chain.

Focus Area: Sustainable Food System, Agri Value-chain Development, Market Access

MI has been implementing the 3-year project on "Development and Implementation of Common Rice Production Standard in Mekong-Lancang Sub-region," which aims to harmonize the rice product standards of the six LM countries to enhance international and regional rice trade further. This year, MI will also organize the End-of-Project Evaluation Workshop to determine the project's outcomes upon completing the primary activities. This evaluation also aims to identify the factors that influenced the accomplishment of project targets and document the results achieved. Additionally, the Workshop will yield valuable lessons learned for other related projects in the future.

4.1.2.b. Trade and Investment Facilitation

Long-term Outcome 2: Increased access to international markets and cross-border trade

Focus Area: Cross-border trade and investment, MSMEs Competitiveness, Coordination and synergy of regional frameworks, Strengthening regional supply chains, Cross-border transport and logistics, Manufacturing, Sustainable, and smart tourism.

In 2023, five long-term projects are planned, the majority of which are funded by MKCF to promote sustainable and smart tourism, agriculture supply chain development, and project management and evaluation in Mekong countries. One long-term project is funded by LMCSF to promote agribusiness and investment in the processed food sector in Lancang-Mekong countries.

The "Sustainable and Smart Tourism Development in the Mekong Region" project aims to create "smart cities" to strengthen Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Viet Nam, and Thailand's capacities in meeting the fast-rising and highly competitive tourism inbound market. With support from each country's National Tourism Organizations and local destination management companies, the three-year project will introduce smart tourism tools, techniques, and technologies through learning exchanges, structured learning visits, information sharing, and adaptation of best practices. Such investments are geared toward expanding small entrepreneurial businesses and deepening cultural interconnectedness and appreciation among and between cities in the Republic of Korea and the Mekong region countries.

The activities planned in 2023 include: 1) 3 Roadshows in CLMVT and ROK; 2) An exchange Program in CLMVT and ROK; 3) An Investment Forum; 4) An Application Development; and 5) an End of Project Evaluation.

The "Sustainable and Smart Agricultural Supply Chain Development in Mekong Countries" project aims to improve production effectiveness and efficiency, reduce post-harvest losses, and increase energy efficiency in agricultural supply chains through cold chain development and smart and sustainable technologies in the post-COVID situation in five Mekong countries, namely Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam. To achieve this, the project will be carried out for 18 months (or one and a half year) to provide capacity development for stakeholders and beneficiaries through a series of activities including an assessment study with field data collection through Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews, consultative meetings, training, a workshop, and a forum. The activities planned in 2023

include: 1) Forum to reflect and synthesize the project activities, and 2) End term evaluation including consultation for policy recommendations.

“Facilitating Cross Border Trade through Synchronization of Rules and Regulations in the ACMECS” project aims to address the regional issue of cross-border trade facilitation in the ACMECS countries while synchronizing the trade rules and regulations for seamless trade among the ACMECS member countries. The regional project is designed based on the issues identified by the ACMECS member countries on digital and paperless trade, interconnected Smart Sustainable Cities, and Cooperation on Trade and Investment Fairs and Exhibitions, and to study the feasibility of establishing a Common Control area aimed at facilitating trade to provide opportunities for ACMECS countries by increasing the benefits from open trade and contributing to economic growth and poverty reduction.

Lancang-Mekong Business Forums is part of a long-term project funded by the LMCSF of P.R. China and has been organized by MI in each of the Lancang-Mekong countries, namely Cambodia, P.R. China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Viet Nam, and Thailand, since 2018 in Coordination with the Ministry of Commerce of Thailand. The Business Forum is an important platform for sharing innovations, good practices, challenges, and opportunities in the agro-food processing industry of LM countries. It provides a unique opportunity for the agro-food processing industry value chain actors to seek potential partners and discuss partnership and investment plans. It allows a transition to sustainable processed food in LM countries to be established as the ultimate objective. MI has organized four forums since 2018 and the two remaining forums will be organized in P.R. China in 2023.

4.1.2.c. Sustainable Energy and Environment

Long-term Outcome 3: Increased adoption of power grid connectivity, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and climate-smart technologies in agriculture and trade initiatives

Focus Area: Energy, Climate Smart Technologies for Agriculture and Trade Activities

MI is implementing the component on "Smart Renewable Energy Technologies for Agricultural Supply Chains in the Mekong Region" under the 18-month project "Sustainable and Smart Agricultural Supply Chain Development in the Mekong Region (December 2021- May 2023). The project is supported by the Mekong-Korean Cooperation Fund (MKCF) and aims to improve production effectiveness and efficiency, reduce post-harvest losses, and increase energy efficiency in agricultural supply chains through cold chain development and smart and sustainable technologies in post-COVID situations in five Mekong countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam). The 2023 activities consist of: 1) a Pilot implementing activity in Mekong countries with technical and financial assistance, 2) a Workshop on supplementary knowledge required during the implementation of the pilot activity, 3) a Hybrid Forum to synthesize the project activities, and 4.) Evaluation.

Focus Area: Energy, Water, Food, Science, and Technology

With the financial support of the RoK 's Ministry of Science and ICT (MSIT) in collaboration with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), and the Science and

Technology Policy Institute (STEPI), the Mekong River Commission (MRC) and MI are implementing a five-year project on Triangular Cooperation on Sustainable Development in the Lower Mekong Basin based on the Water-Energy-Food (WEF) Nexus (RoK-UNOSSC Facility Phase 3) from September 15, 2021, to December 31, 2025. The project is intended to strengthen access to water, food, and energy for vulnerable communities living in the Lower Mekong Basin (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam) through strengthening development approaches and management in these sectors. It will take integrative and multi-sectoral approaches in the application of highly demanded technologies on water, energy, and food to improve the livelihoods of the people based on South-South and triangular cooperation (S.S. & TrC) modalities. In 2023, the project includes the Capacity building of the STI application.

4.1.2.d. Cross-Cutting Themes

Social inclusion, labor mobility, and the digital economy will be mainstreamed in the project development of MI. Specifically, regarding the digital economy and innovation, MI will continue to implement the project "Scaling-Up Digital Connectivity for Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Lancang-Mekong Countries for Post-Pandemic Resilience" from December 2022 to - August 2023. The project will focus on cross-cutting areas, including promoting digital connectivity, reducing the digital gap, and promoting digital governance (services, policies, regulations). The final objective is to enhance the understanding of the potential of digitalization in MSMEs for post-pandemic resilience in LMC, strengthen MSMEs for economic resilience and sustainable development through enhanced digital connectivity in LMC, and share good practices in scaling up digital connectivity in MSMEs in LMC.

4.1.3. Key Initiatives under the MI's Flagship Programs

Focusing on the emerging priorities and needs of the GMS and complementing the Core Programs, MI is currently implementing three Flagship Programs.

i) Towards Post COVID-19 Resilient Economies is intended to support capacity development of the GMS countries in response to the implementation of COVID-19 responses and the recovery plan in key sectors. MI's core programs have mainstreamed COVID-19 recovery-related strategies and activities in their projects to address the needs. MI Secretariat will continue to explore additional support to implement the program in a larger context.

MI will conduct a short-term project on "Global Development Initiative Leverages Sustainable Development in the Lancang-Mekong Region' for Post-Pandemic Resilience" from March - November 2023. Supported by the People's Government of the P. R. China, the project includes one webinar and three consultation workshops. At the end of the project, it is expected that the participants will be able to obtain a better understanding of the GDI; explore the strategies, interventions, and approaches of synergizing the GDI and LMC; develop action plans to leverage the sustainable development and collaboration partnership in the Lancang-Mekong region and identify capacity building needs of relevant key stakeholders to support the implementation of the GDI.

ii) The GMS Knowledge Network is being implemented in collaboration with the GMS Secretariat and supported by the GMS Ministerial Meeting and SOM. MI would play the role of a coordinator for this network. This network will bridge knowledge and policy as guided by the GMS Long-term Strategic Framework 2030.

As the contract has not yet been signed, no concrete work plan has been developed for 2023. The ToR of the stocktaking study is expected to be finalized around the end of 2022, and a consultant will be hired to deliver the consultancy services. The workplan will be developed at the beginning of 2023. MI will assume the role of regional coordinator and co-chair of the GMS Knowledge Network.

iii) GMS City Nodes Network is intended to mobilize knowledge and tools available to support GMS economic integration focusing on key selected GMS cities which are considered gateways to the GMS and could act as "light houses" for other GMS cities. Several activities are planned to be implemented in various identified locations in the GMS countries, namely Nanning and Kunming in P.R. China, Poipet and Bavet in Cambodia, Vientiane and Savannakhet in Lao PDR, Mandalay and Myawaddy in Myanmar, Bangkok and Khon Kaen in Thailand, and Hanoi and Danang in Viet Nam. The concept of the GMS City Nodes Network was presented and discussed in the Mekong Forum held in October 2022 with no specific commitment received from stakeholders and development partners to support the program.

4.2. Annual Plan for MI Contribution to Broader Mekong Cooperation Frameworks

4.2.1. Mekong-Korea Cooperation Fund (MKCF) Management

The Mekong-Korea Cooperation Fund (MKCF) is one of the cooperation mechanisms between the five Mekong countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam) and the Republic of Korea (ROK). MKCF was established in 2013 to encourage and support cooperation among five Mekong countries through an annual contribution from the Republic of Korea (ROK). The MKCF provides grants to support catalytic and innovative activities in the seven priority sectors: (a) Culture and Tourism, (b) Human Resources Development, (c) Agriculture and Rural Development, (d) Infrastructure, (e) Information and Communication Technology, (f) Environment, and (g) Non-Traditional Security Challenges.

MI is assigned as the Fund Coordinator with the major responsibilities for the Coordination and implementation of the fund, including assisting in the areas of project management, financial management, monitoring and evaluation, and quality assurance of activities undertaken by the Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs). In 2023, MI will conduct the following activities:

- Coordinate with the project implementing agencies (PIAs) and prepare the materials for the launching of the projects.
- Process the project agreements and administrative costs.
- Prepare materials for Mekong-ROK Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) and Foreign Ministers Meeting (FMM)

- Announce the 7th MKCF call for Expression of Interest (EOIs)
- Review and evaluate EOIs of prospective fund recipients from CLMVT, ROK and International Organizations which have operating offices in Mekong countries and ROK.
- Monitor the implementation of ongoing MKCF projects.
- Review the MKCF midterm and final project reports.
- Review project proposals under the 7th MKCF
- Provide advisory service and technical assistance to MKCF project implementing agencies.

In 2023, the planned disbursement for MKCF amounts to US\$5 million for the 21 projects (either ongoing or new) to be implemented by PIAs from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam, and the Republic of Korea. The list of the projects with their objectives is given in Annex 4.3.

4.2.2. Support in Establishing the ACMECS (Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy) Interim Secretariat (AIS)

As the backend office of the Mekong Cooperation Unit (MCU), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Thailand, MI, will support the establishment of the smooth functioning of the ACMECS Interim Secretariat. The MoA between MI and MFA is expected to be signed by January 2023, and the project activities for MI will be started in early 2023. MI will implement this ACMECS project for three years (January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2025).

MI will support AIS with the following roles:

- (1) Policy, planning, and Coordination:** MI will provide Support for efficient planning, Coordination, and execution of the corporate, strategic, external relations, and intersectoral activities under ACMECS; recommend the areas of cooperation to be presented to ACMECS Senior Officials; and conduct academic projects and activities to strengthen the ACMECS process and performance.
- (2) Conferencing services:** MI will support preparing and organizing high-level and Coordinating Committees' meetings as needed, on a case-by-case basis.
- (3) Project management:** MI will support efficient management and monitoring of the activities under ACMECS, ensuring that the goals and objectives of the ACMECS Master Plan are met; building the capacity of the stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation (M&E); reviewing the implementation of ACMECS prioritized projects; and providing recommendations to improve project implementation.
- (4) Strategic communications:** MI will support the development of a communication strategy and undertake communication activities to promote public visibility, awareness, and recognition of ACMECS through various means and appropriate media and channels.

4.2.3. Support GMS Economic Cooperation Program

Through the MI Flagship Program on "The GMS Knowledge Network," MI will act as the regional coordinator of the GMS Knowledge Network.

4.3. Annual Plan for Institutional Strengthening

Strategic Goal (S.G.) 4: MI Transitions to a more Sustainable and Dynamic Organization

4.3.1 Strategic Leadership and Management

4.3.1.a. Leadership

Goal: To ensure better strategic management for MI's growth and effective implementation of the MI Strategic Plan 2021- 2025.

Outcome 1: Strengthened accountability and transparency among GMS member countries and MI.

MI Secretariat will conduct regular meetings with the SMT, the Chairman of the Steering Committee, and members of the Coordinating Agencies, focusing on the implementation of MI strategies, policies, and procedures. MI continues to improve its reporting formats following the RBM approach.

Outcome 2: Strengthened management leadership in MI Secretariat initiatives and operations.

The Secretariat will continue the practice of making major decisions jointly with the consultation of SMT members. Decisions will be circulated as soon as possible in Executive Orders to inform the MI staff.

Outcome 3: Established norms and values shared by MI stakeholders and Secretariat staff members towards "One MI."

The Executive Director will continue organizing bi-monthly meetings with all MI staff to inform them of the progress of MI operations and discuss critical issues.

4.3.1.b. Organizational Structure and Culture

Goal: To support clear lines of accountability and a culture that rewards mutual learning, creativity, and innovation towards "One MI"

Outcome 1: Fully operationalize the New organizational structure and governance mechanism.

MI will continue to fulfill the new organizational structure and fill the necessary positions to complete the structure. MI will revisit the structure of MI in the mid-term review to be held in the second half of 2023. MI will enhance governance mechanisms through regular SMT and G.B. consultations.

Outcome 2: Increased consultations and joint decisions by SMT and Extended SMT members

The Secretariat will organize regular meetings with SMT members and Extended SMT members for joint decisions at least once a quarter.

Outcome 3: Increased communications, mutual sharing, and learning through participatory consultative processes across MI to foster deeper internal synergy and cooperation.

MI will continue organizing in-house workshops to promote mutual sharing and learning. MI will also produce e-briefings, enhance MI websites, and implement cross-departmental projects to increase internal synergy and cooperation.

4.3.1.c. Business Model

Goal: To increase and diversify sources of funding to support MI's operations to bring about long-term development results and sustainability to the GMS

Outcome 1: Increased number of programs/projects implemented by MI in a partnership approach.

MI will explore new partnerships, including with Australia, England, and other technical development partners, in 2023.

Outcome 2: Increased and diversified products, services, and sources of funding to support MI's operations.

MI will organize the Mekong Forum and utilize the platform to seek sources of funding. MI will diversify its services by supporting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Thailand, in the establishment and execution of the ACMECS Interim Secretariat (AIS).

Outcome 3: Increased annual contributions of GMS member countries

MI will continue to discuss with the representatives of the GMS member countries an increase in their annual contributions. Without a sufficient budget to run its operation, the MI Secretariat will not be able to plan and implement the activities according to the needs of the countries.

4.3.2 Greater Mekong Community Affairs

Goal: To strengthen strategic leadership and results-based management towards enhanced development synergies, regional cooperation, and GMS development

4.3.2.a Monitoring Evaluation and Learning

Goal: To facilitate the development and implementation of the Results-Based Management (RBM) system by the MI Secretariat, its GMS member countries, and development partners toward evidence-based decision-making

Outcome 1: Developed and operationalized transparent and accountable Results-Based Management (RBM) system

MI will continue the facilitation of Results-Based management (RBM) system implementation and focus on developing more structured results-based reporting mechanisms. Google form-based M&E data collection tools will be developed for the real-time updating of the

events/results, abandoning the Excel tools. In addition, a robust Outcome Monitoring mechanism will be developed with the help of a program MEL focal of MI.

Outcome 2: Enhanced capacity of staff in MI's Results-Based Management (RBM) system

Regular capacity development activities will be organized to introduce any new tools/systems that will be developed. Training/workshops/orientation will be organized both for MI staff and GMS country representatives under the Joint Monitoring Committee activities. MI also will facilitate both program departments and institutional units to implement MI's MEL Strategy, Policy, and SOPs.

Outcome 3: Fostered a culture of collaboration, learning, and adaptation in MI.

MI will conduct an Annual Performance Review and Planning Workshop 2023 as well as organize semi-annual sharing, reflection, and learning events for MI staff that will foster collaboration and learning within MI.

Outcome 4: Enhanced capacity of GMS member countries/development partners on Results-Based Management (RBM)

With the approval of the MI Governing Board (GB), MI will operationalize the Joint Monitoring Committee (consisting of the MI Steering Committee, Coordinating Agencies (CAs), M&E Focal Agencies, and MI Secretariat). MI will facilitate MI's boundary partners/stakeholders in the GMS to implement/adopt MI's MEL Strategy (Six GMS Countries). Moreover, capacity development events will be organized with the key M&E focal agencies of the six GMS member countries to implement the joint activities under the Joint Monitoring Committee towards establishing and enhancing outcome monitoring at the country level.

Outcome 5: Increased collaboration with GMS M&E focal and academic/research institutions for monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning

Under the MoU between MI and Khon Kaen University International College (KKUIC), joint research will be conducted with the involvement of MI and KKUIC staff members in areas of mutual interest. In addition, internship and cooperative education opportunities for KKUIC students will be developed, focusing on research activities. Both parties will exchange academic materials, research reports, information, and networks.

4.3.2.b Communications and Knowledge Management

Goal: To increase international and regional awareness of MI services and impacts and to engage and empower GMS stakeholders and champions for effective knowledge-building and sharing

Outcome 1: Broadened public and internal awareness and understanding of MI's expanded portfolio of services

To broaden public and internal awareness and understanding of MI's expanded portfolio of services, regular updates on all MI platforms, namely the website and social media channels, will be made. Also, corporate publication relations (PR) materials will be developed with customized key messages to reach the target audience. In addition, to establish a good rapport with the media in the GMS, activities to reach out to both local and international media

in the GMS will be conducted to engage them, such as by paying courtesy visits, conducting media interviews, and organizing bilateral meetings, media trips, and media training, among others.

In 2023, the current MI website will also be upgraded in terms of the website interface and backend system and support to comply more with the latest technologies and features. For this, MI will engage an external web developer and upgrade/optimize the digital platforms.

Outcome 2: Increased impact visibility of MI's capacity development, research advocacy, and advisory services

Aside from the reports, other forms of writing and communication materials will be explored and developed. For example, feature stories, interview scoop, or infographics which highlight MI's impact on the ground.

To track the reach, impact, or PR value of the conducted activity, a tracking sheet will be developed to systematically track the PR activity being conducted, including seeking external Support from a PR agency to provide media coverage compilation and calculation of PR value. At the end of the year, a media coverage report will be produced to provide an overview of the P.R. value of MI, as well as the activities of Departments and projects.

Outcome 3: Enhanced Support in wider GMS stakeholder engagement and collaboration through appropriate tools, channels, and platforms

To provide a clear orientation and a coherent approach to all communication activities of MI, a practical communication strategy will be developed to provide strategic direction as well as outline concrete plans and priorities for the year 2023. The strategy will be developed based on consultation with SMT and departments. Also, corporate design guidelines will be revised.

Moreover, to provide a clear orientation to all MI staff, knowledge-sharing sessions will be organized so that all staff understands the concept and the process.

Lastly, a communication strategy specific to social media will be developed. The aim is to provide a clear strategic direction to the different channels. This is to maximize its potential considering the resources at hand.

Outcome 4: Fostered engagement of GMS's stakeholders and MI staff for effective knowledge building and sharing.

MI will organize knowledge-sharing sessions or Support in the organization of such activities. Knowledge-sharing sessions for external stakeholders may be held on a case-by-case basis.

4.3.2.c Partnership and Resource Mobilization

Goal: To advance synergy across cooperation frameworks through a partnership with GMS governments and development partners for cohesive and holistic impacts for GMS

Outcome 1: MI recognized as a regional convener across GMS-related cooperation frameworks; Strengthened partnerships with regional cooperation frameworks; Strengthened partnerships with development partners.

In 2023, MI has planned to develop a partnership and resource mobilization strategy. In coordination with the SMT members, MI will explore the ongoing relationships with existing partners, and where relevant, MI will leverage those relationships for greater collective impact.

Outcome 2: Sustained and strengthened partnerships with existing and potential development and resource partners, including private sectors, through innovative partnership and collaboration model.

MI will map/develop a database of MI's Key development partners' profiles and another database on the active regional cooperation framework in GMS. MI will strengthen partnerships with existing regional cooperation frameworks.

Outcome 3: Effective and optimum utilization of resources (financial, manpower, and other resources) required for the implementation of MI Strategic Plan 2021-2025

MI will implement several activities to enhance partnership and resource mobilization. The activities include GB meetings, development partners' consultation meetings, and supporting ACMES Interim Secretariat, among others. MI will also organize courtesy meetings/study trips to maintain the relationship with existing partners and to explore potential new partners in the GMS and beyond.

4.3.3 Finance and Operations

Goal: To establish an accountable, transparent, effective, and efficient finance and operations system for better planning and management in delivering the best services to bring the optimum results to the GMS

4.3.3.a Financial Management

Goal: To establish an accountable, transparent, effective, and efficient finance and operations system for better planning and management in delivering the best services to bring the optimum results in the GMS and ensure MI's healthy financial performance and sustainable fund, support each department/unit to operate most efficiently in achieving their goals.

Outcome 1: Increased burn rate of the projects' budget against the approved budget for both MI and PIA.

To attain a sustainable and robust financial management process and the plan of execution for meeting the day-to-day requirements of MI, Finance has planned all activities in such a way as to avoid the formulation of all such planned activities becoming stuck due to unforeseen circumstances. At the same time, Finance will make sure that it establishes an accountable, transparent, and effective mechanism during operations, which will lead to helping the SMTSMT in planning and program execution.

Goal: To ensure MI's healthy financial performance and sustainable funding, support each department/unit to operate most efficiently in achieving their goals

Outcome 2: Improved financial liquidity of MI throughout the year.

Finance tracks its deliverables which are planned vs. achieved and executes them in a timely manner. This covers day-to-day payment processing of staff and external stakeholders, donor

reporting, bank & cash management, PIAs monitoring, PIAs document verification, fulfillment of regulatory compliance, recording of transactions in accounting software, coordination with auditors, and timely data submission to auditors for review and finalization of books of accounts.

Outcome 3: Developed and operationalized organization-wide effective and efficient financial and accounting system.

There are some new proposals for the development of accounting software:

- Develop the online system to provide real-time project financial performance.
- Development of a tool to monitor the cash operation.

Outcome 4: Minimized the risks of financial management for MI.

An external audit will be conducted to support the unit for reconciliation and flag issues (non-compliance events), which could ensure mitigating risk to a minimum.

Finance keeps track of the organizational budget, projects' approved budget, and the actual spending incurred against those budgeted to ensure no overspending or underspending. Finance is able to circulate the updated finance information on time so that the SMT is aware of the financial strength of MI and makes any financial decision that is well-backed by facts and figures.

4.3.3.b General Services Management

Goal: To optimize MI's internal facilities and efficiently deliver excellent services to the staff, participants, and visitors to MI.

Outcome 1: Enhanced general services for MI participants, visitors, and staff

Outcome 2: Ensured efficient operation and optimum use of MI assets and equipment.

General Services (GS) will check and renovate the facilities and supplies in the accommodation rooms to better serve the participants and guests. GS will pay attention to room booking through the use of using Appsheet and prepare the daily plan with clear roles and responsibilities of individual staff. The MI fixed assets will be prepared, verified, and counted physically to make sure that such assets are kept in order and updated. For the disposable asset, it will be proposed for withdrawal from the list of broken items.

In addition, GS will prepare, control and monitor the internal income from the accommodation rooms, conference rooms, transport, packaging of the training material, and others.

Outcome 3: Increased safety and security of people and assets in MI

GS will advise the security company to serve MI with good service and keep MI safe 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition, GS will continue to take care of the daily office supplies, stationery, kitchen supplies, souvenirs, and transportation arrangements.

4.3.3.c Human Resources Management

Goal: To optimize the productivity of the human resources of MI by attracting skilled and efficient professionals and further enhancing their capacity to deliver the expected outputs and services.

Organization strategy policy and guidelines

HR will facilitate, coordinate and recruit an external consultant to review and revise the current MI Operations Manual, including the staff salary survey, which has not been updated for several years. The revised Operations Manual is to reflect and adapt to the changing environmental context and the current needs of the organization.

Outcome 1: Strengthened and transparent recruitment strategies and procedures

In response to the incoming new projects and some positions being vacant, HR will prepare the staff recruitment plan for 2023. HR will set up the staff recruitment panel, make the announcement, update the job descriptions, prepare the shortlist, arrange the logistics for the interview, conduct the reference check, make an offer to the successful candidate, and prepare the employment contract. The recruitment team will ensure that the candidate evaluations are based on the requirements set out in the job description. The selection committee will apply the same evaluation grid for all candidates, reflecting the criteria mentioned in the call. Selection Committee members, at the time of appointment, are informed of internal procedures, particularly the Operations Manual.

Outcome 2: Enhanced capacity of staff for better productivity and performance

HR will implement the staff career progression guidelines announced and approved by SMT recently. HR will screen and submit the eligible staff list according to the criteria set for the decision-making by SMT regularly. HR will prepare and consolidate the staff development for 2023 from the staff annual performance appraisal to support MI staff effectively. In addition, MI will strengthen staff skills and career paths. In this respect, HR will search for training and workshop topics and announce the entities to relevant staff.

Outcome 3: Increased recognition, standard salary, incentives, and other benefits for staff delivering the optimum outputs and services with greater satisfaction.

Outcome 4: An enhanced working environment for staff toward a diversified, inclusive, multi-cultural, and positive working environment

Staff benefits and engagement.

HR continues to improve MI's salary payment schedule, including a payroll slip system and benefits on time. This will help create an open and positive work environment for staff to contribute and work on organizational assignments without worrying about their pay. HR will continue regularly organizing recreational activities like staff team building, staff retreats, Thai language learning for non-Thai staff, and other benefits like annual health check-ups and insurance, per MI's practices.

Staff annual performance appraisal

A performance review will be conducted twice yearly for staff to reflect on and self-assess their strengths and weaknesses and for supervisors to offer constructive feedback for skill development.

New staff orientation

HR will prepare and consolidate the orientation schedule for new staff. HR coordinates, facilitates, and handles all logistical arrangements. HR ensures that new staff are treated well from the start of their time in MI. HR will also support and answer any queries and concerns from newcomers even after the orientation is completed.

Other Support

HR supports the staff visa arrangement for both new staff and existing staff and prepares the staff leave record and sports program.

4.3.3.d Procurement Services Management

Outcome 1: Effectively managed the procurement of goods and services for MI.

An annual procurement plan for 2023 will be prepared by all departments and units to address the needs of the departments. In addition, a consultant's database on the Appsheet program will be developed to update supplier information and provide better functional procurement.

4.3.3.e Information Technology Management

Outcome 1: To optimize MI's information technology capacity and provide excellent services with secure, reliable, and updated technologies for effective and efficient implementation of programs and operations of MI.

IT starts to update software such as Windows, Microsoft Office, VPN, Zoom, Studio Production Application, and Auto Interface to ensure that staff laptops and desktops are functioning well and running smoothly. IT will closely monitor the cloud storage to ensure there is enough space to store all files (such as big video files) and, if needed, will increase the cloud capacity as per the needs of MI. In addition, IT will check the share-drive, LCD projectors in the conference rooms, telephones, CCTV, email, changing passwords, and Google workspace.

4.4. Annual Budget for 2023

According to MI's internal exercise of the annual budget proposal from various departments, the SMT agrees and submits the annual budget plan 2023 for the approval of the Council. Total revenue is expected to be US\$3,922,053, and total expenditure is estimated at US\$3,835,219, including the non-cash expense, respectively. With these amounts, the estimated revenue over expenses is US\$86,833, which is 2.21% of the total revenue. However, the gross earnings are expected to be US\$195,532, excluding the non-cash expense, which is around 5.0% of the total revenue.

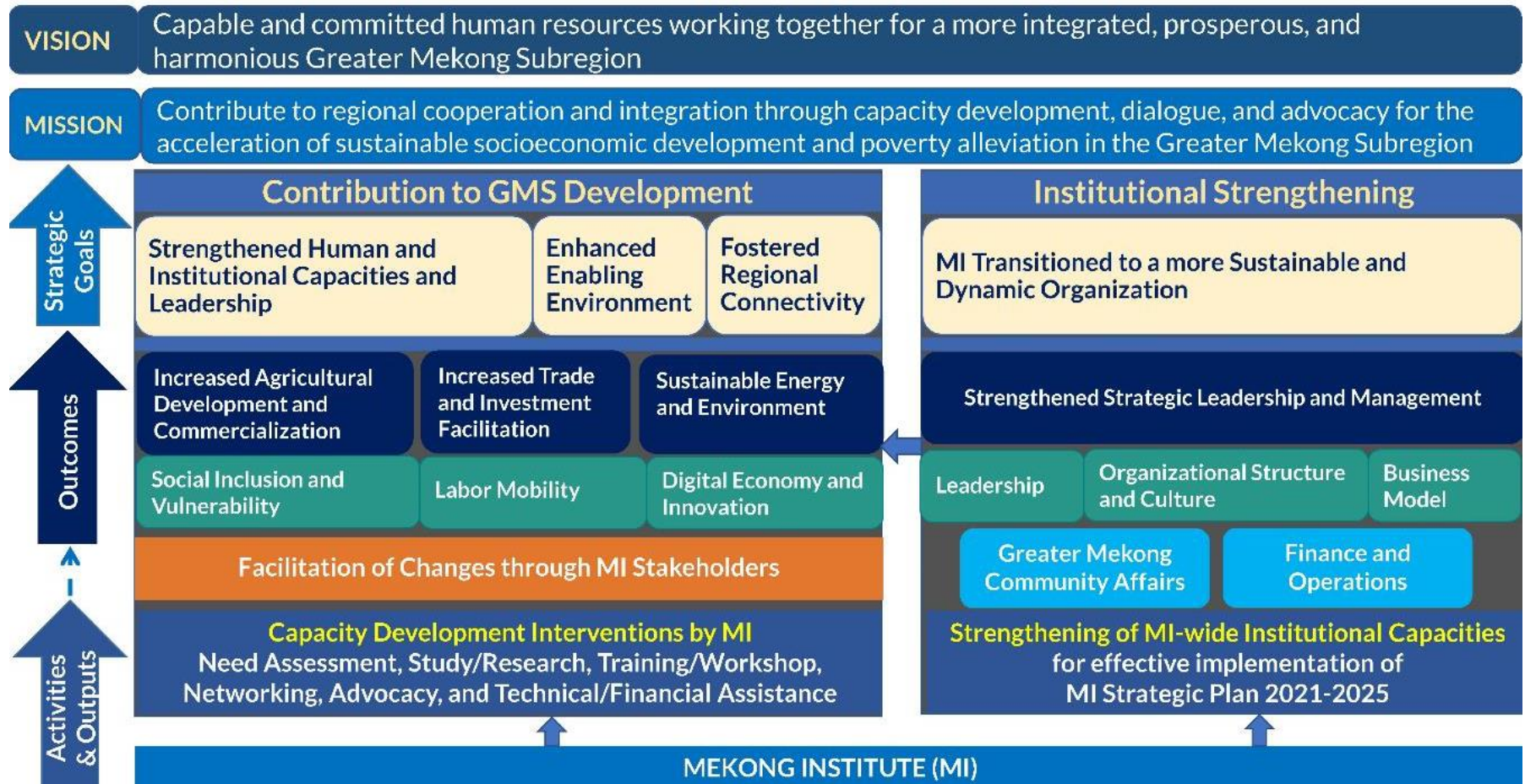
4.5. Key Strategies and Approaches for 2023

The world is still going through COVID-19 and requires strong efforts to recover from the losses. MI will mainstream the COVID-19 recovery support within its core programs and flagship programs.

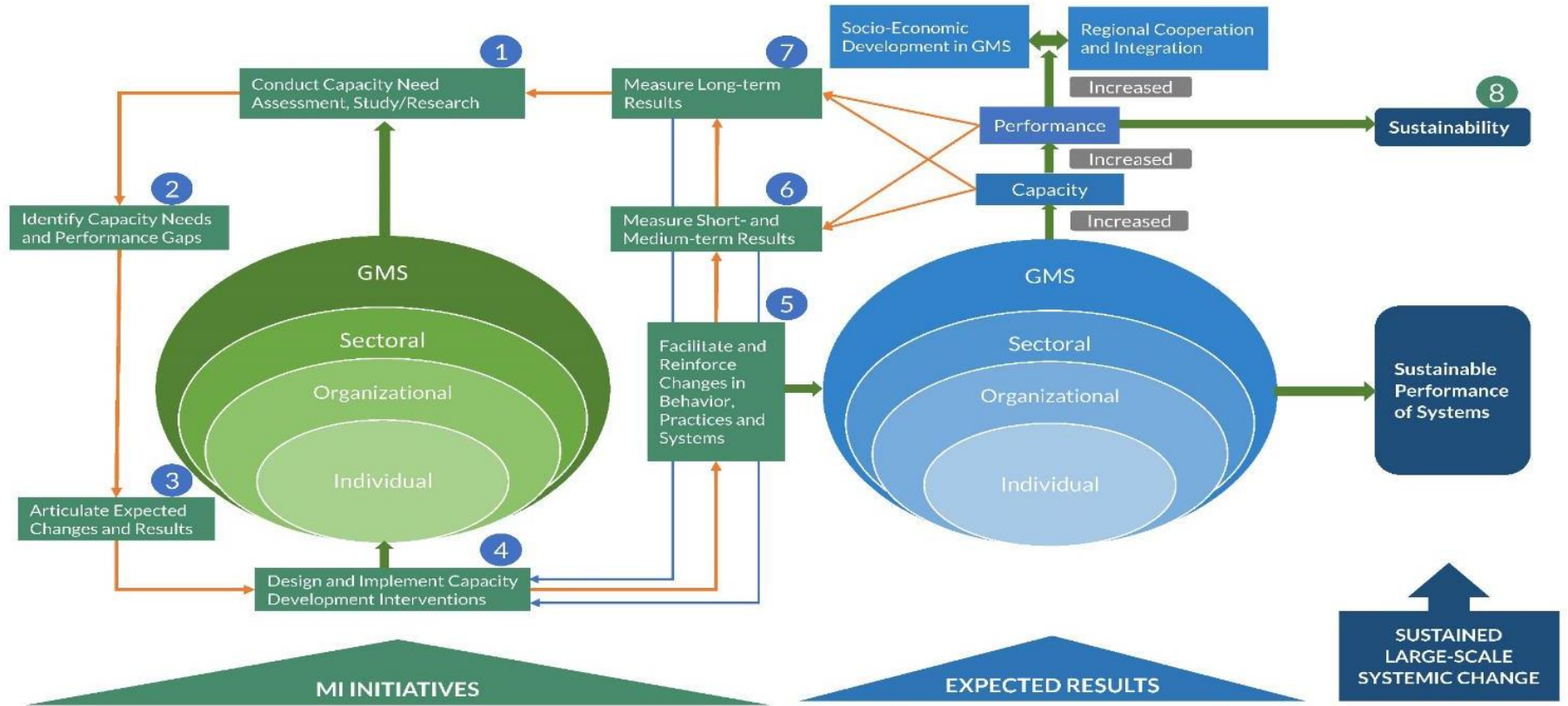
- MI will continue to pursue its institutional strengthening initiatives and provide quality services with a special focus on human resources development.
- Leveraging MI's comparative advantages
 - Mekong Forum 2023 – showcasing MI, resource pooling, building technical linkages, and engaging wider stakeholders.
 - MI's ASEAN Prize Recipient Program
 - Maintaining existing partnerships and exploring new development partners (e.g., Mekong Plus, SDG Support, etc.) and implementing partners will be continued; joint proposals will be developed with the line ministries.
 - National/local research will be conducted,
 - MI Alumni will continue to increase, and the alumni network will help MI in expanding its reach to the wider community.
- A mid-term review of MI Strategic Plan 2021-2025, to be held in the second half of 2023, will further help MI sharpen its strategies and approaches for its greater contribution towards socio-economic development in the GMS.
- The new NZAP program will emphasize some more areas for the regional development theme of Agricultural Development and Commercialization.
- As the coordinator of the GMS Knowledge Network, MI will place emphasis on linking knowledge to policy implementation and exploring research grants.
- MI has been newly mandated to support the establishment and execution of the ACMECS Interim Secretariat. This will expand MI's involvement with one more regional development framework (ACMECS) and provide an opportunity for MI to implement projects under the ACMECS master plan.

5. Annex

5.1. Annex 1: MI Results Framework 2021-2025



5.2. Annex 2: MI Capacity Development Model (CDM)



5.3. Annex 3: List of Projects to be Funded under MKCF in 2023

No	Project Title	PIA's name	Country
1	Assessment of Heavy Metal Contamination in Soil and Water for Safety Crop Production in Myanmar	Land Use Division, Department of Agriculture	Myanmar
2	Data Collection and Processing for the Cambodian Irrigation Schemes Information System and Sharing Information on Water Resources between the Mekong-ROK	Department of Planning and International Cooperation, Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology, Cambodia	Cambodia
3	Development and Promoting of Solar Dryer for Agricultural and ODOP Products	Research Institute for Energy and Mines, Ministry of Energy and Mines	Lao PDR
4	Enhancing People-to-People Connectivity to Address Non-traditional Security Challenges in the Mekong Region	Department of Provincial Administration, Ministry of Interior of Thailand	Thailand
5	Rice straw-based circular economy for improved biodiversity and sustainability (RiceEco)	International Rice Research Institute Vietnam Country Office (IRRI)	Vietnam
6	“Strengthen the Water User Organizations (WUOs) for Irrigated Agriculture Development in the Mekong Delta”	Project Management Unit, Ministry of Natural Environment	Vietnam
7	Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Adaptation to Climate Change and Forest Fire Management in Mekong Region	Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO)	ROK
8	Strengthening TVET Management and Upskilling TVET Personnel to Meet Industry Demand Reflecting IR 4.0	School of Industrial Training and Education (SITE)	Myanmar
9	Capacity Building for Sustainable and Climate Change Resilient Water Resource Management in Mekong River Basin	Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MOWRAM)	Cambodia
10	Building a portal of ecosystems and biodiversity information for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development for the Mekong Delta	Southern Institute of Ecology (SIE)	Vietnam
11	Promoting of Innovative Rainwater for Drinking System as a Sustainable Water Supply in Rural Health Care Facilities and/or Schools	Seoul National University	Rok

No	Project Title	PIA's name	Country
12	Sustainable Smart Tourism Development in the Mekong Region	MI	MI
13	Sustainable and Smart Agricultural Supply Chain Development in Mekong Countries	MI	MI
14	Capacity Building Project on Regional Project Design, Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation of MKCF Projects (MI)	MI	MI
15	"Guidelines and Certification for Green Buildings in Cambodia" Project for period 31/12/2018 - 31/12/2020	Department of Green Economy, National Council for Sustainable Development, Ministry of Environment	Cambodia
16	Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening for Logistics Monitoring and Evaluation Database Development in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam	General Department of Logistics, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Kingdom of Cambodia	Cambodia
17	Soil, Water and Nutrient Management (SWNM) for increasing Farm Households	Department of Agricultural Land Management, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), Lao PDR	Lao PDR
18	Livelihood Development for Sustainable Forest Governance in Northern Laos	Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR	Lao PDR
19	Demonstration of Model Community Forests to Promote Community Forestry Development and Improve Livelihood of Local Community	Forest Department Head Office, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Myanmar	Myanmar
20	Impact of Migration on Rural Development with Special Emphasis on Agriculture of Mon State, Myanmar	Mawlamyine Univesity, Myanmar	Myanmar
21	Developing of Climate-related Disaster Hazard Zoning Map and Enhancing the Salinity Intrusion Monitoring Network in Can Tho City	Can Tao Climate Change Coordination Office	Viet Nam

5.4. Annex 4: Revised Annual Budget for 2023

REVENUE		Donors	Dept.	Revised budget
A. Long Term Project				
A1	Promoting Safe Food for Everyone in CLMV (PROSAFE)	NZAP	MI ADC	924,234
A3	MKCF Fund Management #Call 4 - Call 5	MKCF	MI TIF	189,073
A4	MKCF: Sustainable and Smart Tourism Development in the Mekong Region	MKCF	MI TIF	286,241
A7	Lancang- Mekong Business Forum	MLSF	MI TIF	175,016
A10	Development and Implementation of Common Rice Production Standard in Mekong-Lancang Sub-region	MLSF	MI ADC	78,681
A11	Development of Rice Pest and Natural Disasters Monitoring, Forecasting and Warning Center for Sustainable Rice Production under Climate Change in Mekong-Lancang Sub-region	MLSF	MI ADC	133,999
A15	RoK-ACMECS Regional Branding Project - Facilitating Cross Border Trade through Synchronization of Rules and Regulation in the ACMECS	MKCF	MI TIF	29,240
A17	Sustainable and Smart Agricultural Supply Chain Development in Mekong Countries - TIF	MKCF	MI TIF	47,753
A17	Sustainable and Smart Agricultural Supply Chain Development in Mekong Countries - ADC	MKCF	MI ADC	33,644
A17	Sustainable and Smart Agricultural Supply Chain Development in Mekong Countries - SEE	MKCF	MI SEE	62,618
A18	The Triangular Cooperation Project on Sustainable Development in the Lower Mekong Basin based on the Water-Energy-Food (WEF) Nexus	ROK-UNOSSC	MI SEE	41,589
A19	Capacity Building on Regional Project Design, Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation of MKCF projects	MKCF	MI TIF	376,238
A20	Promoting Climate-Smart Agriculture Technologies and Innovations in Lower Mekong Countries - ADC	DFAT	MI ADC	110,773
A20	Promoting Climate-Smart Agriculture Technologies and Innovations in Lower Mekong Countries - SEE	DFAT	MI SEE	39,583
	Subtotal from long term project revenue			2,528,682
B. Short term project				
B5	Impacts of COVID-19 on Food System in the LMC	P.R. China	MI ADC	54,872
B17	Knowledge Management in Agricultural Development Y3	APRACA	MI ADC	55,449
B31	Targeted Poverty Alleviation and Strengthening Food Security in the Lancang-Mekong Countries for Post-pandemic Recovery	P.R. China	MI SEE	90,000
B32	Scaling-Up Digital Connectivity for Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Lancang-Mekong Countries for Post-Pandemic Resilience	P.R. China	MI SEE	90,000
B35	Global Development Initiative Leverages Sustainable Development in the Lancang-Mekong Region	P.R. China	MI SEE	18,035
B36	ASEAN-CRN Secretariat Facilitator to support for ASEAN-CRN and ANGA	GIZ	MI SEE	95,074
B37	Development of Regional Prototype on One Country One Priority Product in Asia and the Pacific and Pilot Project Implementation in Lao PDR and Thailand (OCOP)	FAO	MI ADC	59,222
B38	Survey of the Mekong Regional Cooperation Frameworks and their Strategies and Responses to the emerging regional and global issues	AOTS	MI TIF	39,630
B39	Accelerating the Development of Regional Logistics Channels and Transportation Infrastructure for the Lancang-Mekong Regional in the Content of the China-Lao PDR-Thailand Railway	FAOYN	MI TIF	75,000
B40	Upstream single-use plastic reduction solutions for Khon Kaen's street food complexes	NREF	MI ADC	17,076
B41	Promoting Greater Energy Connectivity for Equitable Development and Growth in the Lancang-Mekong Region	P.R. China	MI SEE	75,755
	Subtotal short term project revenue			670,112
C. One-off Activities				
C37	Forum on Accelerating Innovation through Energy Technology Cooperation in the Greater Mekong Subregion	P.R. China	MI SEE	39,313
C40	Appsheet Developer Mobile App for H.R. automate system	MRC	MI FIN	16,000
C41	Chile – Thailand International Workshop on Trade Negotiation for ASEAN Members	AGCID, TICA	MI TIF	20,000
C42	Comprehensive Human Resource Development for the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation	FAOYN	MI SEE	75,000
C43	Mekong Forum for 2023	P.R. China	MI SEE	21,119
C44	The Regional Public Health Laboratory (RPHL) Network	RPHL-Thailand	MI SEE	4,412
C45	UNESCAP Paperless Trade Study	UNESCAP	MI TIF	13,000
	Subtotal one off activities			188,844
	Total project revenue			3,387,638
D. Countries contribution				
D01	Cambodia			20,000
D02	P.R. China			150,000

REVENUE		Donors	Dept.	Revised budget
D03	Lao PDR			20,000
D04	Myanmar			20,000
D05	Thailand			292,482
D06	Vietnam			20,000
	Subtotal countries contribution revenue			522,482
E. Other revenue				
E01	Other revenue			11,903
E02	Interest			29
	Subtotal Other Revenue			11,932
	Total Revenue			3,922,053
EXPENSES				Revised budget
F. Projects and MI Programs Delivery				
F01	Long term Project			1,521,264
F02	Short term project			254,870
F03	One off activities			68,650
	Subtotal project delivery cost			1,844,785
F04	Program administration (Personal cost, travel, cost sharing and supplies)			752,716
F05	Business Development			50,388
	Subtotal program administration and Organization development			803,104
	Subtotal for program expenses			2,648,001
G. Operating Expense Budget				
G01	Salary and common staff benefit			808,719
G02	HRD and organization activities			63,050
G03	Business traveling			16,663
G04	General operation expenses			56,009
G05	Contractual service			35,121
G06	Repair and maintenance			19,500
G07	IT improvement			21,184
G08	Communication and knowledge management			15,000
G09	Official functions (Government Board and C.A. Meeting)			43,386
	Subtotal operating expenses			1,078,633
	Total expenses			3,726,521
	Earning or (Deficit) for MI operation before non-cash expenses			195,740
G10	Depreciation and loss of asset disposal			82,206
G11	Loss of F.X. and unrealized loss of investment			24,199
E03	Loss (Gain) from foreign exchange rate (F.X.)			2,293
	Total non-cash operation cost			108,698
	Total Expenses			3,835,219
	Earning or (Deficit)			86,833
	Earning or (Deficit) %			2.21%

5.5. Annex 5: Opportunity Funds Received as of June 30, 2023

MI has received the opportunity fund as of June 30, 2023, in the amount of U.S. Dollars 960,501 among U.S. Dollars 2,609,240 for the submitted opportunity fund; this amount equals 37%.

No.	Department	Title of the Project	Duration of Project	Budget Proposed
Long-term project				
1	ADC	Enhancing Agricultural Livelihood Resilience through Climate-smart Vegetable Farms	2023-2024	247,550
2	ADC	Strengthening Small Farmers Food Standards Compliance for Food Safety and Market Access	2023-2024	248,500
3	ADC	Provision of Guidance Concerning GAP to Farmers and Farmers Associations by Experts	2023-2024	88,963
4	ADC	Upstream Single-Use Plastic Solutions for Khon Kaen Street Food Complexes	2022-2023	90,000
5	OED	ACMECS Interim Secretariat		199,684
6	ADC	Strengthening Digital Platforms for Agricultural Practices, Products and Prices	16 months	160,020
7	ADC	Knowledge Management in Agricultural Development	2023	55,449
8	ADC	Promoting Safe Food for Everyone in CLMV (PROSAFE) to implement from Jan - June or Jan - Dec and the staff salary included till Dec 2023	2023	541,677
Short-term project				
9	TIF	Regional Workshop on Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) adoption in the manufacturing sector in the ASEAN Mekong Sub region (AMS)	March-May 2023	60,000
10	TIF	Chile – Thailand International Workshop on Trade Negotiation for ASEAN Members	April-May 2023	20,000
11	SEE	Powering Sustainable Development through Energy Connectivity in the Lancang-Mekong Region	2023	90,000
12	SEE	Promoting Nutritional-sensitive and Sustainable Agriculture Development in the Lancang-Mekong Region	2023	90,000
13	ADC & SEE	Promoting Climate-Smart Agriculture Technologies and Innovations in Lower Mekong Countries	2023	150,356
14	OED	Socialization Workshop on the Implementation Plan for the Framework for CLMV Development	May-Oct 2023	66,615
15	TIF	Accelerating the Development of Regional Logistics Channels and Transportation Infrastructure for the Lancang-Mekong Region in the Context of the China-Lao PDR-Thailand Railway	2023	75,000
17	SEE	Promoting Greater Energy Connectivity for Equitable Development and Growth in the Lancang-Mekong Region	2023	75,755
18	TIF	Survey of the Mekong Regional Cooperation Frameworks and their strategies and responses to the emerging regional and global issues	2023	39,630
One-off activity				
19	SEE	Regional Sustainable Food Security Cooperation	5-months	75,000
20	SEE	Comprehensive Human Resource Development for the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation	2023	75,000
21	TIF	UNESCAP Paperless Trade Study	2023	13,000
22	FIN	Appsheet Developer Mobile App for H.R. automate system	2023	16,000
23	SEE	The Support from the Government of P. R. China for Mekong Forum 2023	2023	21,119
24	OED	The Regional Public Health Laboratory (RPHL) Network	2023	4,412
25	SEE	Harnessing People-to-People Exchange in the Lancang-Mekong Region	2023	50,512
26	SEE	Workshop on Promoting Corporate Governance for Power Enterprises in the Lancang-Mekong Region	2023	30,000
27	SEE	Training on Promoting Cross-cultural Corporate Governance for Power Enterprises in the Lancang-Mekong Region	2023	25,000

Total submitted Opportunity Fund as of June 30, 2023

2,609,240

Actual Opportunity Fund received as of June 30, 2023

960,501

% of Opportunity Fund vs planned

37%

5.6. Annex 6: Positions to be Recruited by December 2023

Sl. No.	Position	Department	No. of Positions
1	Director	SEE	1
2	Program Coordinator	SEE	1
3	Program Coordinator (temporary)	ADC	1
4	IT Manager (an upgraded position)	FO	1
5	HR Officer (to be joined on July 17, 2023)	FO	1
6	ED Secretary (to be joined MI on July 21, 2023)	OED	1
7	Project Operations Support Assistant (replacement)	FO	2
8	Finance Assistant (temporary)	FO	1
Total			9

5.7. Annex 7: Concept Note on the Mid-term Review of Mekong Institute Strategic Plan 2021-2025

1. ABOUT MEKONG INSTITUTE

Mekong Institute (MI) is an intergovernmental organization (IGO) founded by the six member countries of the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), namely Cambodia, P.R. China (Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region), Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. Mekong Institute was established under the Memorandum of Understanding between the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade; and the Thai Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation (presently known as Thailand International Cooperation Agency - TICA) in August 1996. MI provides, implements, and facilitates integrated human resource development (HRD), capacity-building programs, and development projects related to regional cooperation and integration. MI works with and through various local government authorities, development partners, and local organizations to deliver and implement standardized and customized learning programs, workshops, seminars, policy consultation, and research and development projects.

2. RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

In 2020, in the last year of its implementation, MI reviewed its previous Strategic Plan 2016-2020 as one of the preparatory steps to developing the strategic plan for 2021-2025. MI consulted with many stakeholders, including the Governing Board, development partners, alumni, and others. The results of these consultations have provided valuable guidance for MI in deciding on the strategic priorities that will enable the greatest contribution to regional development over the next five years, from 2021-2025. MI is midway through the strategic plan for 2021-2025 and would like to conduct a mid-term review.

The overall objective of this mid-term review is to reflect on the progress of the strategic plan implementation, identify challenges, and recommend possible changes and improvements to the strategies/approaches for better implementation in the remaining duration of the strategic plan.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

- Review relevant documents, including policy and strategy documents, project completion/evaluation/study reports, publications, and other related documents.
- Discuss with MI staff, Governing Board members, Development partners, MI Alumni, and other relevant stakeholders; collect required data by applying the most suitable data collection methods; and analyze the data.
- Review the relevance, effectiveness, and utility of the Strategic Plan 2021-2025, which includes the progress, performance, and results of Mekong Institute in implementing the plan.
- Review the Results Framework and Logical Frameworks for MI's Contribution to GMS

Development and Institutional Strengthening and adjust, if required.

- Provide recommendations for further improvement of the performance of Mekong Institute and any course correction, if required, in implementing the strategic plan for the remaining period until 2025.

4. METHODOLOGY

MI's SMT members will guide the main exercise of the MTR and, the whole process will be led by the MEL unit. However, to make the whole process of the MTR independent, transparent, and unbiased, a regional consultant will be hired, who will provide technical guidance, facilitation, and report writing support to MI. The mid-term review will use a mixed-method research approach that will utilize quantitative and qualitative data.

Data Collection:

A. Documents and Literature Review

Documents and literature review will focus on both qualitative and quantitative data collection and be drawn from the following extant sources and compared to the current MI Strategic Plan, its goals, objectives, and activities:

- i. Documentation of the regional frameworks and key players in the context of the GMS region or direct relationship with MI.
- ii. Documentation on MI's strategic evolution, previous mid-term/final reviews of the strategic plans, annual reports, as well as organizational policy and operational manual, etc.
- ii. Approved project proposals/concept notes by the donors and MI's implemented projects' progress reports, completion reports, study/research reports, evaluation reports during 2021-2023, etc.
- iii. Publications from MI, including policy briefs, newsletters, etc.
- iv. Organizational and projects' M&E data about the current strategic plan.

B. In-house Learning Workshop on Implementing Strategic Plan 2021-2025

Key staff from the Program, Finance and Operations, and GMCA departments will jointly review the progress, performance, and results of MI within two and half years of implementing the strategic plan. The workshop will focus on critically reviewing and jointly reflecting on MI's strategies, approaches, success, challenges, and lessons learned.

C. Online Survey

i. A semi-structured survey questionnaire will be developed to conduct the survey. The survey questionnaire will collect both quantitative and qualitative data from the individuals predominantly, but not limited to, from the MI Secretariat staff, collaborating partners/agencies, and participants/alumni. The SurveyMonkey platform will be used to design and conduct the online survey.

ii. Quantitative data parameters will be developed to discover information regarding the relevance, effectiveness, and utility of the strategic plan. Quantitative data will utilize both Likert rating scales (1-5, 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) and ranking.

ii. Qualitative data will be collected by asking open-ended questions in the survey to provide complementary data that can, in a mixed methods approach, be further used and followed up with more in-depth interviews in a second round of data collection where required to investigate further.

The respondents of the online survey will be selected based on the recommendations of MI's Coordinating Agency members from the six GMS countries, the Executive Director, and the Directors/Managers of the Program departments.

D. Online Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Interview guidelines/guiding questions will be developed to conduct KIIs for collecting in-depth qualitative data from the relevant stakeholders. The KIIs will complement the online survey. An online Zoom platform will be used to conduct the interviews with the relevant stakeholders. The conversations will be recorded with the prior consent of the respondents and will be transcribed for data analysis.

The key informants will be selected from the following stakeholder groups:

- MI Council Members
- MI Steering Committee Members
- MI Coordinating Agency Members
- Donors/Development Partners (INGO, Governments, Business)
- Collaborating/Implementing Partners (Public and Private Sectors and Institutions)
- Project participants/alumni
- MI Secretariat (Project Leads, Senior Staff) – onsite, face-to-face

E. Online Focused Group Discussions (FGDs)

If the participants and IT technologies are available, some online FGDs will be conducted using guided questions with the relevant government ministries/departments/agencies from the six GMS member countries, which are directly related and well-informed about MI activities. The FGDs will try to understand the group's perceptions regarding the relevance and effectiveness of the MI's strategic plan.

F. In-house Workshop to Review the MI Results Framework/Logical Framework

Based on the mid-term review process findings, a workshop will be organized with key staff from the Program, Finance and Operations, and GMCA departments to review the current Results Framework. Besides, the results statements and indicators of the Logical Frameworks for MI's Contribution to GMS Development and Institutional Strengthening will also be updated, guiding the ongoing monitoring data collection and final review of the strategic plan implementation at the end of 2025.

Data Analysis:

The major quantitative primary data will come from the online survey. Suitable software(s) will be used to analyze the data. Moreover, secondary MEL data reported by the project teams will provide evidence of the effectiveness of implementing the strategic plan.

MI documentation will also be analyzed regarding the content of training/workshops conducted and reported results (outputs, outcomes) of activities in MI's Mid-Year Performance and Annual Performance reports. This work will indicate where MI has successfully focused its energy and show any gaps or lack of performance.

Qualitative data collected in the in-house learning workshop, online survey, Key Informant Interviews, and Focused Group Discussions will be analyzed using appropriate software. They will complement the analysis of the quantitative findings of the online survey.

All analysis of the data will be incorporated in the mid-term review report with recommendations and guidance for the remaining second half of the implementation of the strategic plan. The mid-term review findings will be presented during the Development Partners' meeting to be organized in December 2023.

5. KEY PROCESSES

- Develop and finalize methodology for the mid-term review.
- Develop data collection tools for each of the data collection methods.
- Conduct data collection and analysis and prepare the mid-term review report.

- Give a presentation to the MI leadership on the review's findings, receive feedback from the audience, and incorporate the feedback in the report.
- Share a preliminary draft of the mid-term review report with MI staff and/or the relevant stakeholders and participate in 2-3 rounds of edits (depending upon the quality of the first draft) before finalization.
- Finalize the mid-term review report, including specific recommendations for further improvement of the performance of MI.
- Review and finalize the Logical Frameworks for MI's Contribution to GMS Development and Institutional Strengthening based on the mid-term review findings.

6. BUDGET

MI will use its internal budget for hiring the consultant and other necessary expenses for the mid-term review.

7. WORK SCHEDULE AND TIMELINE

The mid-term review process will be started in July with the development of methodology and tools. Data collection will be conducted in August-September 2023. The first draft of the report will be prepared by the end of October, feedback will be collected and accommodated in the draft report in November, and the final report will be shared with the stakeholders by the first half of December 2023. The detailed tentative work plan of the mid-term review is presented the **Table 1** following:

Table 1: Schedule of the Mid-term Review of MI Strategic Plan 2021-2025

SL #	Name of Activities	Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec	
		1-15	15-31	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30	1-15	15-31
1	Finalize the methodology and develop tools for the mid-term review												
2	Conduct In-house Learning Workshop on Implementing the Strategic Plan												
3	Conduct an Online Survey with the MI staff and relevant stakeholders												
4	Conduct Online Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with the relevant stakeholders of MI												
5	Conduct Online Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) with the relevant stakeholders of MI												
6	Data processing												
7	Data analysis												
8	Report writing												
9	Presentation of preliminary findings to the MI leadership and collect feedback												
10	Conduct an In-house Workshop to review the Results Framework and Logical Frameworks												
11	Share draft report with MI staff and relevant stakeholders												
12	Feedback received on the draft report												

SL #	Name of Activities	Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec	
		1-15	15-31	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30	1-15	15-31
13	Accommodate feedback and submit the final report												
14	Dissemination of the final report with the relevant stakeholders												
15	Present the findings of the mid-term review in the Development Partners' Meeting												