

How SASEC Works

Since 2001, SASEC countries have implemented 49 regional projects worth over \$10.74 billion to strengthen road, rail, and air links, and create the conditions necessary to provide reliable energy, boost intra-regional trade, and develop economic corridors. SASEC governments have contributed more than \$4.5 billion worth of total investments.



The Asian Development Bank (ADB) helps SASEC countries strengthen regional infrastructure, and promotes cooperation that will contribute to future prosperity. ADB provides financial and technical support to

- improve regional multimodal transport, and energy infrastructure connectivity
- build linkages between economic corridors in South Asia, integrating urbanization and industrialization to boost productivity
- strengthen trade facilitation procedures and regulatory reform to ensure optimal returns from enhanced physical infrastructure
- boost institutional and human capital and capacity

SASEC countries coordinate and implement projects at a national level, as well as across borders. National road and rail networks, for example, are planned to link up across national borders with transport networks in neighboring countries. Connecting transport networks efficiently speeds access to ports and markets, and eases the movement of goods, people, and business within South Asia.

Regular exchange of information and knowledge helps SASEC countries develop institutional and human capacity, and sharing international best practices strengthens the planning of effective development initiatives. ADB has financed more than \$71 million worth of technical assistance projects that support SASEC knowledge-sharing initiatives. ADB also serves as the SASEC Secretariat.

More than \$10.74 billion invested in SASEC transport, trade facilitation, energy, and economic corridor development regional projects, 2001–2017

About the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Program

The South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Program brings together Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka in a project-based partnership to promote regional prosperity by improving cross-border connectivity, facilitating faster and less costly trade among member countries, and strengthening regional economic cooperation.

Since 2001, the Asian Development Bank has financed loans, grants, and technical assistance to member countries to improve physical infrastructure, support reform processes and build capacity in the key areas of transport, trade facilitation, energy, and economic corridor development. SASEC also creates knowledge platforms that promote a regular exchange of information and experience-sharing in the subregion and ensure that international best practices underpin and strengthen the planning of effective regional development initiatives. The Asian Development Bank serves as the SASEC Secretariat.

For more information, contact:

SASEC Secretariat

Regional Cooperation and
Operations Coordination Division
South Asia Department
Asian Development Bank
6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City
1550 Metro Manila, Philippines
Fax +63 2 636 2221

-  sasec@adb.org
-  [@sasecprogram](https://twitter.com/sasecprogram)
-  [sasecprogram](https://www.facebook.com/sasecprogram)

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SASEC Projects



Multimodal Transport

Since 2001, SASEC has invested more than \$8.48 billion in support of 32 road, rail, air and sea port projects to build the critical multi-modal transport networks that will enhance intra-regional trade and investment in the subregion, and boost economic growth. Road transport dominates in South Asia and has absorbed \$5.68 billion of SASEC financing. Expanded /upgraded rail networks account for \$2.66 billion. Together, air and sea ports have seen investments of almost \$150 million that are helping open up trade opportunities for landlocked Bhutan and Nepal.



Trade Facilitation

The SASEC Trade Facilitation Program is working to enhance cross-border trade in the region through development of modern and effective Customs administrations, streamlined and transparent regulations and procedures, and improved services and information for traders and investors. Since 2012, SASEC countries have invested \$69 million to implement the SASEC Trade Facilitation Program in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal, and the SASEC Customs Reform and Modernization for Trade Facilitation in Nepal.

South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation Transport Corridors:

- SAARC Corridor 1
- SAARC Corridor 2
- SAARC Corridor 3
- SAARC Corridor 4
- SAARC Corridor 5
- SAARC Corridor 6
- SAARC Corridor 7
- SAARC Corridor 8
- SAARC Corridor 9
- SAARC Corridor 10



Energy

SASEC is working to improve energy security and access in the region by developing essential energy infrastructure, and promoting intra-regional power trade to reduce costs and import-dependence. With an increasing focus on 'green growth' in renewable energy options, more than \$1.48 billion has financed 11 energy projects under SASEC.



Information and Communication Technology

The SASEC Information Highway Project is working to provide faster, more affordable and reliable broadband Internet connectivity to parts of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal. It uses virtual connectivity to open up access to knowledge and information for remote village communities, which increases the potential to find jobs and locate services, and helps ordinary people participate more fully in the global information economy.

The South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Program

SASEC brings together Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka in a project-based partnership to promote regional prosperity and improve opportunity and the quality of life for the people of the SASEC subregion.

There is tremendous potential to increase mutually beneficial trade between the seven SASEC countries – which remain some of the least economically integrated in the world. More distant Asian and global markets can be opened up by creating transformational connections through Myanmar, to Southeast Asia, the People's Republic of China and the world beyond. SASEC helps transform this potential into reality by

- improving multimodal cross-border transport connectivity and networks
- facilitating faster and less costly trade to move people, goods, and business seamlessly across borders
- strengthening reliable national energy supplies and boosting vital cross-border energy trade
- promoting synergies and linkages between economic corridors across SASEC countries to optimize development gains and boost productivity

SASEC members have gathered regularly for over a decade to discuss and address shared interests, creating support and ownership for the program. This successful cooperation has built confidence and mutual trust that helps SASEC countries decide on coordinated actions for the benefit of all.

The SASEC vision seeks to increase intra-regional trade and cooperation within South Asia



Economic Corridor Development

SASEC aims to harness synergies between economic corridors being developed in individual SASEC countries. The economic corridor development strategy promises a faster rate of industry growth and improved productivity, creation of higher-paying jobs and skills development, an influx of foreign investors, and increased exports. Loans, grants, and technical assistance in economic corridor development in South Asia now totals \$698 million.

