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through connectivity



THE WORLD BANK

South Asia Urban *newsletter*

Full assessments are available
online, click on links—

**BANGLADESH****NEPAL****SRI LANKA**

New urban assessments provide insight into policies and interventions to seize benefits of urbanization in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka

Bangladesh: The Path to Middle-Income Status from an Urban Perspective

By 2021, the 50th anniversary of its independence, Bangladesh seeks to attain middle-income status. To accelerate growth enough to do so, Bangladesh needs to build a competitive urban space. In analyzing a survey of 1,000 garment firms, this study reveals that Bangladesh's urban areas are falling behind in all the three drivers of competitiveness – innovation, connec-

tivity and livability. To meet its goal of reaching middle-income status by 2021, Bangladesh will need to transform Dhaka into a globally-competitive metropolitan region, leverage Chittagong City's seaport advantage, promote strategically located export-processing zones, and enable local economic development in small- and medium-size cities.

Urban Growth and Spatial Transition in Nepal: An Initial Assessment

A predominantly rural country, Nepal is urbanizing rapidly. Nepal's urban areas have the potential to drive economic growth to the benefit of the entire country. By leveraging their comparative advantages and unique assets, cities and towns can develop as sustainable tourism destinations, handicraft centers and market and trade centers for Nepal's agro-products. Nepal needs to

prioritize the “where, what, and how” of public investments based on development outcomes, promote development and regeneration of the Kathmandu Valley, and enhance the competitiveness of strategic clusters – such as cultural tourism, handicrafts, and agro-processing – to foster sustainable growth and create economic opportunities in urban areas.

Turning Sri Lanka's Urban Vision into Policy and Action

Sri Lanka's urban vision, as defined in the government's policy framework – the Mahinda Chintana – is to develop as a system of competitive, environmentally sustainable, and well-linked cities and to provide every family with affordable and adequate urban shelter by 2020. To achieve its urban vision, Sri Lanka needs to undertake system-wide institutional and policy reforms,

which include, (i) strategic and integrated national, regional and urban planning, (ii) repositioning Urban Local Authorities as competent and accountable service providers, (iii) improving metropolitan and regional coordination in service delivery, and (iv) enhancing city livability through efficient and inclusive land and housing development.



A predominantly rural country, Nepal is urbanizing rapidly, and urban areas are a major contributor to economic growth and poverty alleviation



Growing secondary cities, such as Kandy, require long-term strategies based on a common vision to develop sustainably and to their full potential



To **listen** to webinar recording and read the discussion, **click here**.

Upcoming Events

- Live chat facebook: **April 10, 8:00AM to 8:00PM EST**
[Managing Nepal's Urban transition](#)
- Webinar: **Mid-May 2013**
[Upgrading Housing in Informal Settlements](#)
- Regional Workshop: **June 3-7, 2013**
["Access to Affordable Land and Housing"](#)
- E course by WBI: **April 22-May 22, 2013**
[Safe and Resilient Cities](#)

Interesting Readings

- Click on links*
- [Gender and Property Rights](#)
 - [Microfinance for Housing](#)
 - [India Urbanization Review](#)

Urbanization Webinar Series
Promoting Regional Growth through Connectivity

The emergence of mega-regions, as effects of urbanization expand beyond the realm of metropolitan areas, is a potential opportunity to mobilize people, goods and services, and develop supply chains over larger spatial areas. Many South Asian countries are preparing strategic plans for [new corridors](#), to connect primate cities with secondary cities or emerging urban areas, such as the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor in India, and expressways in Sri Lanka.

To understand how connectivity can strengthen and capitalize on a system of cities, the World Bank's South Asia urban team in collaboration with the World Bank Institute, organized a webinar on "[Connecting Cities for Growth](#)" on March 11, 2013.

Why are physical and economic connections important for growth?

A well-connected system of cities presents immense opportunities to transform large metropolitan areas, undergoing a post-industrial transition from a heavy manufacturing to higher value-

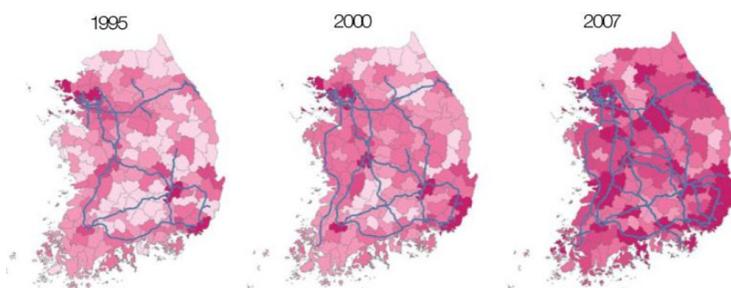
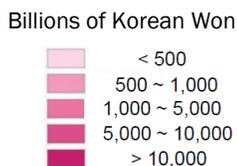
added industry and service-oriented economy. Industries tend to relocate to secondary cities, which are well connected, to reduce high costs associated with labor, raw materials, and land in mature cities.

Korea constructed an [expressway network](#), total length of 2,600km, between 1970 through 2000. These connections reduced travel time significantly, between Seoul and Busan from more than 15 hours to less than four hours. This attributed to higher gross regional domestic product, population redistribution, and greater freight traffic volumes.

Strategies to consider on intra-city connectivity projects.

Actively manage public perception on the impacts of regional connections; Connect lagging regions with sources of employment, to increase economic activity; Analyze underlying socio-economic factors to prepare targeted project interventions; Connect nodes that contribute to regional growth including ports and strategic intermodal hubs.

In Korea, gross regional domestic productivity increased with higher inter-city connectivity



We look forward to your comments and feedback!

Contact Us!
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By 2030, 315 million new residents will reside in urban areas of South Asia. The synergies between South Asia's demographic dividend coupled with structural transformation as the economy shifts from agriculture to services and manufacturing, presents a unique opportunity. The World Bank's urban strategy is to support national, state and local governments in their endeavors to create well-functioning cities. Important aspects of this are leveraging urban agglomeration, managing spatial transformation & land development, and improving local governance & service delivery.