



GREATER MEKONG SUBREGION

GMS TASK FORCE ON TRADE AND INVESTMENT (TFTI)

FIRST MEETING

28 OCTOBER 2022





GMS Task Force on Trade and Investment

Overview of Endorsed TOR

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1. Background

- To enhance the relevance of the GMS Program to changing regional and global circumstances, **GMS country Leaders endorsed in September 2021 the GMS-2030 Strategic Framework.**
- In its Vision and Mission statement the GMS-2030 introduces the principle of **internal and external integration with increased efforts to facilitate trade and investment** for a more competitive GMS.
- Under its Pillar 3 on “Competitiveness” the GMS-2030 will **enhance competitiveness post-COVID-19 by restoring and promoting trade and investment.**
- GMS Secretariat completed in March 2022 a **scoping study that provided recommendations for short and long-term actions** on both trade and investment in the subregion.
- As part of these recommendations, the establishment of the **GMS Task Force on Trade and Investment** was endorsed by the GMS Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of March 2022 and its **Terms of Reference (TOR) was endorsed by the SOM of June 2022.**



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2. Objectives

🚩 Overall Objective

Fulfill the Mission statement of the GMS-2030 of enhancing internal and external integration with increased efforts to facilitate trade and investment for a more competitive GMS.

🎯 Specific Objectives

- Act as a strategic guiding and advisory body to in prioritizing recommendations for enhanced cooperation in economic recovery and revitalizing GMS economic performance.
- Collaborate with a broad range of GMS stakeholders such as relevant sector and thematic working groups and forums, as well as relevant GMS action programs.
- Formulate a framework for potential initiatives and activities under a future permanent working group



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3. Pillars of Work

Pillar 1 - Digitalization: focus on how to equip local businesses with digital skills to remain competitive, and how to bolster investments in digital infrastructure to support greater digital connectivity.

Pillar 2 - Improving the business climate: (i) identify opportunities to diversify trade and investments (ii) increase regional coordination on investment promotion (iii) support development of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

Pillar 3 - Enhance benefits of Free Trade Agreements: develop and provide training modules and other capacity building activities to GMS countries to implement Free Trade Agreements.



4. Activities

To meet its objectives, the GMS Task Force on Trade and Investment will initiate and coordinate activities:

- Identify priority recommendations and interventions for implementation, with a work plan and timeline.
- Undertake multi-stakeholder consultations to tailor recommendations to each GMS members' circumstance.
- Identify key deliverables, road maps, and desired outcomes.
- Identify and coordinate resources required and, if necessary, conduct capacity needs assessment.
- To avoid overlap with other GMS efforts, facilitate the implementation of priority recommendations and interventions (under the work plan) in close coordination with existing GMS working groups, Economic Corridor Forums, and Senior Officials' Meetings (organizing joint sessions when necessary).
- Support capacity-building activities for GMS officials to achieve identified deliverables.
- Prepare reports on its outputs and activities for consideration at future meetings of GMS Senior Officials' Meetings and Ministerial Conferences.

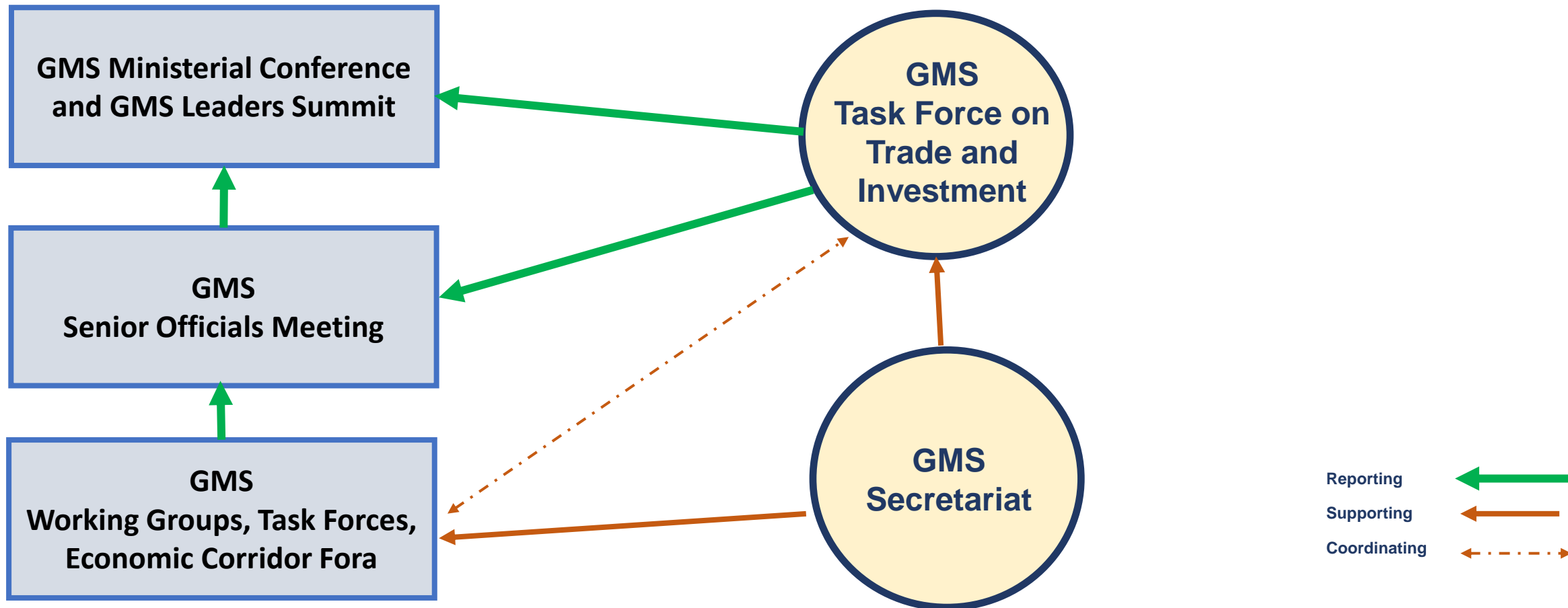


5. Composition, Chairmanship, Participation

- **Composition.** Up to five core members per country. Medium- and high-level officials. Within each country delegation, one official shall be designated as the core coordinating member. When necessary, members for the task force may delegate representation and attendance to other officials. Expanding membership to private sector to be considered after 12-month review.
- **Chairmanship.** The chair of the task force will follow standard GMS Program rotational procedure in alphabetical order. The core coordinating member shall serve as chair of the task force.
- **Participation.** Shall be open to other stakeholders and to be defined on a case-by-case basis according to topics at each meeting. These stakeholders could include (i) private sector (ii) civil society organizations and consumer groups, (iii) development partners, and (iv) think tanks and knowledge institutions.



6. Coordination with other GMS institutions





7. Duration and Meetings Timeline

- **Duration.** shall have a 2-year long mandate from the date of its formal establishment and endorsement of TOR. Further to the midterm review, GMS countries will decide whether to:
 - (i) extend the mandate of the task force by another 2 years,
 - (ii) upgrade the status of the task force and establish a working group, or
 - (iii) end the duties of the task force.
- **Meetings.** To convene at least twice annually, in person or virtually. As a work plan needs to be defined the Task Force will meet three times in its first year of mandate.



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THANK YOU!

