

GMS Health and Trade collaboration

Collaboration Area 1: Strengthening National Regulatory Authorities

- National regulatory agencies (NRAs) are the gatekeepers of the supply chain of medical products such as pharmaceuticals and medical devices
- When the medical products gatekeeper is weak the population is vulnerable to harm from unregulated supplies, including substandard and falsified (“fake”) medicines and devices

Regional Roadmap for Regulatory Systems Strengthening



Strengthen local regulatory functions

- Establish and implement new regulatory frameworks for enhanced effectiveness and efficiency
- Optimize existing processes for increased regulatory oversight
- Strengthen post-marketing control



Enhance manpower management, staff development, and competencies

- Develop a framework for managing and sustaining resources
- Construct and implement professional development plans



Promote local stakeholder engagement

- Improve inter-ministry communication (intra-government)
- Improve communication with industry, health care professionals, and the public



Improve organizational process governance

- Develop quality management system for entire regulatory system and decision-making process
- Introduce structures and processes to improve transparency and accountability



Improve intra-agency communication between functions

- Enhance information flow among regulatory functions to make quality decisions



Increase regional collaboration

- Participate in interagency collaboration as part of improving local regulatory capacity building
- Support trust-building activities and regulatory convergence



Develop IT infrastructure

- Gather government buy-in and commitment of resources
- Enhance IT capacity to support regulatory system strengthening

Collaboration Area 2: Trade Facilitation through Improved Sanitary and Phytosanitary Handling

- ADB financed the Trade Facilitation: Improved Sanitary and Phytosanitary Handling in Greater Mekong Subregion Trade Project with Cambodia and Lao PDR
- Key areas of focus include:
 - i. surveillance and inspection for plant health, animal health, and food safety;
 - ii. enhanced education levels and university training of SPS specialists; and
 - iii. regional cooperation and harmonization for SPS measures and practices.
- Further opportunities may exist to build on the achievements of the project and/or expand to other countries in the region

Collaboration Area 3: Digital Health

Digital Health Solutions for Improved Outcomes

1. Telemedicine
2. Electronic health records
3. Health information exchanges

There is a need to scale up digital health solutions to improve access to healthcare and support trade and investment in the GMS region.

Collaboration Area 3: Digital Health

Digital Health - Creating Opportunities for Trade and Investment

1. Increased access to healthcare
2. Enhanced efficiency
3. Improved data sharing

Collaboration Area 3: Digital Health

Recommendations for GMC Health Cooperation Strategy 2024-2028

1. Using digital health, improve regulatory cooperation for medical goods and services in order to facilitate smoother trade among GMS members.
2. Create a dedicated working group on digital health solutions, invest in digital health infrastructure, and collaborate with private sector partners to develop and deploy innovative digital health solutions.
3. Continue cooperation and collaboration among GMS countries to improve health outcomes and support trade and investment in the region