

DEVELOPING A HEALTH COOPERATION STRATEGY FOR THE GREATER MEKONG SUBREGION (2018-2022)

Regional health cooperation is a priority under the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Economic Cooperation Program. Efforts to enhance regional integration and cooperation, while fundamental to economic growth in the subregion, expose GMS countries to an evolving layer of health challenges.

Increased mobility and trade facilitates cross-border movement of disease agents and their vectors. Greater intra-regional population movement brings risk of marginalisation of migrant and mobile persons and their exclusion from social protections, most critically access to essential health services. Border economic zone development, while central to GMS countries' efforts to diversify their economies and integrate with regional value chains, carries an inherent risk of adverse public health impacts.

In parallel with these threats, regional integration creates opportunities to draw on the subregion's health leadership, human resource skills and programming experience to address common health challenges.

Acknowledging the pivotal role of health cooperation to the GMS vision of an integrated,

prosperous and equitable subregion, the 22nd GMS Ministerial Conference endorsed the creation of a new GMS Working Group on Health Cooperation (WGHC) and the development of a GMS Health Cooperation Strategy.

The GMS Health Cooperation Strategy 2018-2022 provides a framework to guide collective efforts among GMS countries, health sector stakeholders and development partners to tackle health issues impacting the subregion. Guided by the vision of “an integrated, prosperous, and equitable GMS where health and wellbeing are shared by all”, the Strategy sets out priority areas for regional cooperation, focused around three strategic outcomes:

- Improved GMS health system performance in responding to public health threats;
- Strengthened social resilience to the health impacts of regional integration; and
- Enhanced human resource capacity to respond to priority health issues in the GMS.

Three programming pillars, aligned with each strategic outcome, are defined. Program areas under each pillar constitute the operational priorities for GMS health cooperation. Cross cutting

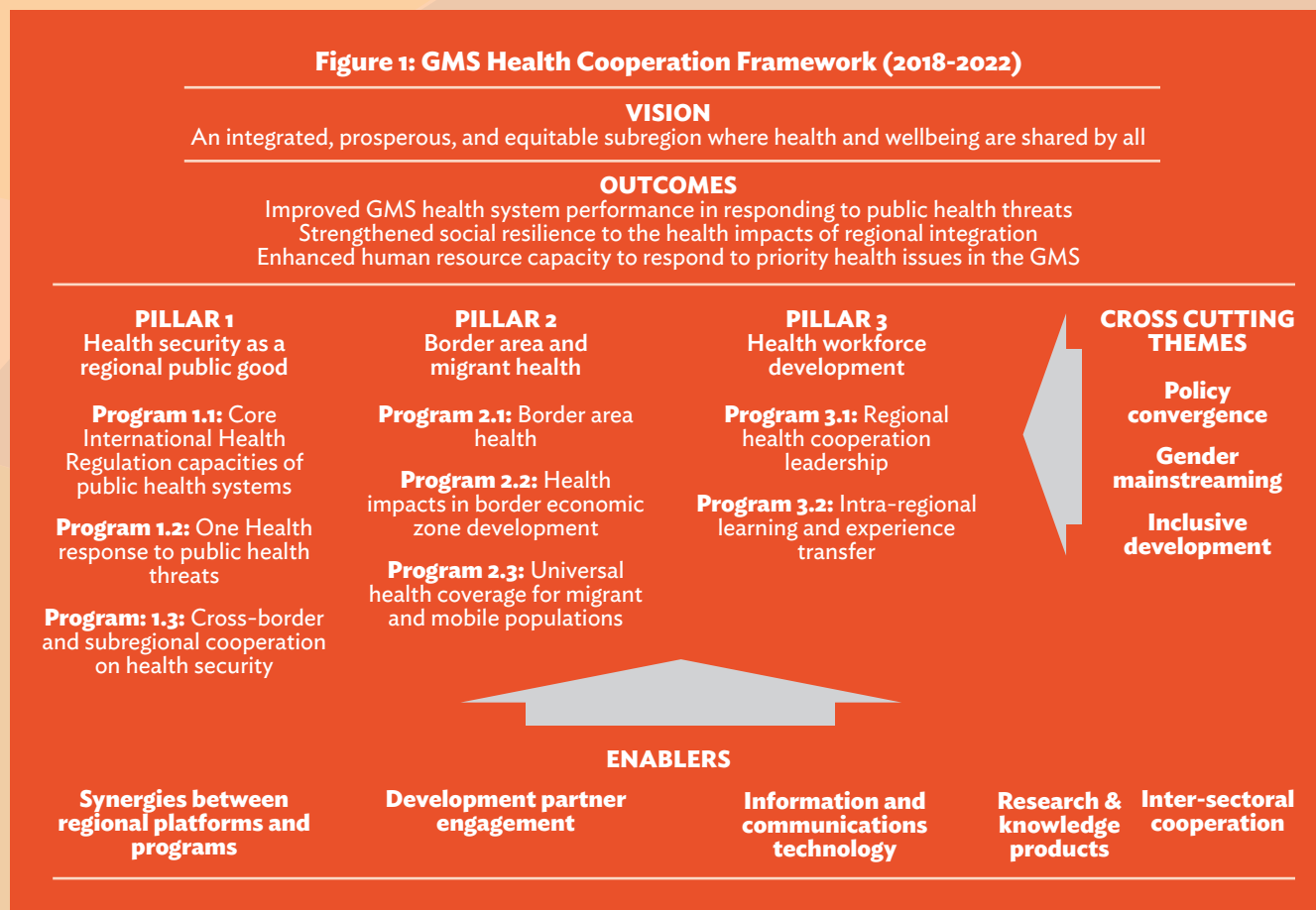


themes to be mainstreamed under each program and key enablers that facilitate effective delivery of health cooperation are identified.

A product of extensive consultation with GMS partners at both country and regional levels, the

GMS Health Cooperation Strategy is currently being prepared for final endorsement by the WGHC and the GMS Health Ministers, or their duly designated officials.

Figure 1: GMS Health Cooperation Framework (2018-2022)



GMS SECRETARIAT
Southeast Asia Department
Asian Development Bank
6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City
1550 Metro Manila, Philippines
Fax: +63 2 636 2226
E-mail: gms@adb.org
Web addresses: <https://www.adb.org/countries/gms/main>
<https://www.greatermekong.org/>