



FACT SHEET

ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC)



one vision
one identity
one community

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- Human Development
- Social Welfare and Protection
- Social Justice and Rights
- Ensuring Environmental Sustainability
- Building ASEAN Identity
- Narrowing the Development Gap

The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community aims to contribute to an ASEAN Community that is people-oriented and socially responsible with a view to achieving enduring solidarity and unity among the peoples and Member States of ASEAN. It seeks to forge a common identity and build a caring and sharing society which is inclusive and where the well-being, livelihood, and welfare of the peoples are enhanced. The ASCC strives to bring out the human dimension of ASEAN cooperation and an abiding commitment to address the region's aspiration to lift the quality of life for its people. The character and depth of cooperation are critical to bring ASEAN closer to peoples' heart and to promote a caring and sharing ASEAN Community. The ASCC Blueprint (2009-2015) provides a framework to strengthen the ASEAN Community's belief in their peoples, appreciation of their shared cultural heritage, uphold and extol shared values, and strengthen the capacities and effectiveness of their institutions.

The ASCC Blueprint provides strategic directions in key focus areas:

- **Human Development:** Equitable access to human development opportunities by promoting and investing in education and life-long learning, human resource training and capacity building, encourage innovation and entrepreneurship, promote the use of English language, ICT and applied science and technology in socio-economic development activities.
- **Social Welfare and Protection:** Alleviation of poverty, ensuring social welfare and protection, building a safe, secure and drug free environment, enhancing disaster resilience and addressing health development concerns.
- **Social Justice and Rights:** Promotion of social justice and mainstreaming people's rights into its policies and all spheres of life—including the rights and welfare of disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalised groups such as women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and migrant workers.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Protection of natural resource for economic and social development including the sustainable management and conservation of soil, water, mineral, energy, biodiversity, forest, coastal and marine resources as well as the improvement in water and air quality for the ASEAN region.
- **Building ASEAN Identity:** Mainstream and promote greater awareness and common values in the spirit of unity in diversity at all levels of society in ASEAN.
- **Narrowing the Development Gap:** Reduction of development gap in particular the social dimensions of development between the ASEAN-6 and the CLMV countries and within ASEAN where some isolated pockets of under development persist.

Progress in ASCC includes key initiatives such as the following:

- The ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook and development of the ASEAN Studies Course for undergraduate students are in place, while the ASCC's priority focus will be on compulsory, early childhood education.
- On health and communicable diseases, an ASEAN Work Plan on Malaria was drafted following the 7th EAS Declaration on Regional Responses to Malaria Control and Addressing Resistance to Anti-Malarial Medicines adopted last November 2012. Activities are also being conducted among 13 areas/cities among ASEAN Member States (AMS) in localising the implementation of

ASEAN Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS through the ASEAN Cities Getting to Zeros Project. Priority initiatives are also articulated by the 11th ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting last July 2012 on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

- ASEAN helps each other in times of disasters and coordinates relief from the region and all over the world to help its fellow Member States rise from natural disasters. The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre) is demonstrating its value to regional disaster resilience. An ASEAN stockpile of relief items was drawn for the first time following the 11 November 2012 earthquake affecting over 6,000 people in the Mandalay and Sagaing regions of Myanmar, and then subsequently in Mindanao, the Philippines, which was hit by Typhoon Bopha in December 2012 affecting over 6 million people.
- The ASEAN Action Plan on Joint Response to Climate Change was adopted by the 12th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment held on 26 September 2012, to implement the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on Joint Response to Climate Change issued in 2010. The road towards a Disaster Resilient ASEAN is not limited to prioritising emergency response, strong disaster management systems and instilling risk reduction, but increasingly about linking environmentally sustainable livelihoods and adapting to climate change. The ASCC is laying more emphasis by making one of this year's priorities to develop a stronger strategic framework in disaster management and climate change.
- The drafting of the ASEAN instrument on the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers is on-going with the target of finalisation by end-2014.
- Regional integration that also improve condition of vulnerable groups are being addressed this year through a regional framework to improve the quality, coverage and sustainability of social protection and increased capacity of social risk management.
- Highlighting challenges and opportunities facing ASEAN's Youth and their contribution to economic development and sustainability of the region is being addressed this year. The establishment of a regional youth volunteer corps will boost ASEAN solidarity through voluntary community services in areas such as rural development, disaster relief, health, education and the environment as well as supporting people with disabilities and fostering entrepreneurial skills.



ASEAN kids enthusiastically joined the ASEAN Day flag hoisting ceremony.

- ASEAN is strengthening its commitment to combat violence against women and children and assist victims through protection, services, rehabilitation, recovery and reintegration. The ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) promotes public awareness through an annual public campaign to stop violence against women and children, compile country best practices in preventing and combating violence against women and children, develop guidelines for non-violent approach to child rearing and child caring in various settings, and draft an ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children.
- The 2012 ASEAN-EU Year of Science, Technology, and Innovation (YoSTI) was a year-long campaign of activities to promote and raise the visibility of S&T cooperation between the two

regions. The Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (READI) funded activities such as ASEAN-EU Journalists workshop in Singapore and two scientific workshops in Indonesia and Viet Nam. The second phase of the SEA-EU-NET project was launched with the ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology holding a dialogue with the European Commission in Brussels in December 2012. Similarly, the 2012 ASEAN-China Year of Science and Technology Cooperation saw the launching of China-ASEAN Science and Technology Enhanced Partnership (STEP) Programme at the 1st ASEAN-China Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology on 22 September 2012 in Nanning, China.

- The Declaration on ASEAN Unity in Cultural Diversity: Towards Strengthening ASEAN Community (adopted in November 2011) further promote a sense of belonging, and enhance deeper mutual understanding among AMS about their cultures, religions, and civilisation. A series of activities under the theme “Festival of ASEAN Cultural Expressions”, together with many other cultural and art initiatives, are being planned to realise this Declaration. An innovative approach to engage younger generation through different information platforms, including new media and the social network, is being pursued to ensure that the information and media sectors contribute more in connecting peoples and bridging cultures towards One ASEAN Community.
- 2013 has been designated as ASEAN Sports Industry Year to engage the private sector in sports and activities to promote healthier lifestyles and contribute to a stronger regional identity.

Efforts towards building an effective governance framework and coordination mechanism leveraging on multi-sectoral partnerships remain an important priority in the ASCC Community. Lively exchanges addressing cross-cutting issues include, among others, Climate Change; Disaster Management; Energy and Food Security; Emerging Infectious Diseases; Poverty Alleviation; Financial Crises.

Resource mobilisation remained a core concern of the ASCC as it examined opportunities for internal resources, including exploring the role of traditional sources of funding such as the ASEAN Development Fund, including the potential of newer sources of funding.

Our ASEAN identity is a source of pride and our common bond.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States of the Association are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia.

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