



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



PARTNERING WITH THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN)

ASEAN is a dynamic region with a population of more than 650 million, collectively representing the fifth-largest global economy. As one of the fastest growing regional economies in the world, the 10 member states¹ of ASEAN represent an economy of more than \$3 trillion and an enormous market for U.S. products. Nearly 42,000 U.S. companies export to Southeast Asia, supporting more than 625,000 U.S. jobs.

The Biden-Harris Administration's 2022 Indo-Pacific Strategy commits to modernizing our long-standing alliances, strengthening emerging partnerships, and investing in regional organizations such as ASEAN to adapt to the 21st century's challenges and seize its opportunities.

As part of the United States strategic approach to the Indo-Pacific, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) prioritizes its cooperation with ASEAN. Partnering with ASEAN fosters regional economic growth, strengthens public health security, and reduces transboundary threats - such as trafficking in persons, global climate change and illegal wildlife trade. In our partnership with ASEAN, USAID promotes prosperity and security through economic inclusion, good governance, gender equality and women's empowerment.

OUR WORK

USAID partners with ASEAN to promote unity, consensus-building, and solidarity to bolster ASEAN's credibility, coordination, and institutional capacity to create policies and frameworks to implement endorsed commitments at the national-level across ASEAN member states. This partnership was further cemented in 2020, when USAID and ASEAN signed the first ever, five-year, \$50 million Regional Development Cooperation Agreement to support regional challenges, economic integration, and rule of law to shape policies that influence national sectoral approaches. USAID also has development assistance missions in seven out of ten ASEAN member states.

As an integral element of the United States' whole-of-government engagement with ASEAN, USAID collaborates closely with the U.S. White House Gender Policy Council, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Trade Representative, U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and the U.S. Department of Labor and their ASEAN counterparts. USAID also partners with the U.S. private sector on key ASEAN initiatives.

¹ Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

USAID - ASEAN JOINT COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

Expanding Engagement on Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment: To advance the empowerment of women and girls and bridge gender equity gaps, USAID is leading the U.S. government effort to deepen ASEAN-U.S. commitment on gender issues at the first ASEAN-U.S. Ministerial Dialogue on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in September 2022, co-chaired by USAID Administrator Power with collaboration from the White House Gender Policy Council and the Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues. USAID enhances collective capacity to address transnational challenges to human security and expand rights and opportunities for women and youth for a more connected, prosperous, secure and resilient region. USAID, together with ASEAN and UN Women, helps advance gender equality across Southeast Asia through gender mainstreaming and regional implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.

Advancing Economic Integration: USAID's support for the ASEAN Single Window (ASW), a flagship trade facilitation initiative, spans over a decade. The electronic data exchange platform streamlines customs clearance procedures and reduces costs for traders. Together with the U.S. Customs Border Protection, USAID is working toward linking the ASW with U.S. customs information systems to facilitate U.S.-ASEAN trade. Electronic exchange of customs information will reduce trans-Pacific costs and expand U.S.-ASEAN trade (over \$300 billion in 2020).

Deepening Digital Connectivity: USAID supports ASEAN's efforts to enhance regional internet connectivity and accessibility while adopting approaches that strengthen emerging technologies, digital economy, and data governance. USAID helped ASEAN design its Digital Integration Framework Action Plan, as well as a dynamic monitoring tool called the ASEAN Digital Integration Index to measure progress on digital integration across member states.

Combating Trafficking in Persons: Traffickers are often linked to international criminal networks that take advantage of weak laws, lack of law enforcement, porous borders, and corrupt officials. USAID works with ASEAN to develop regional guidelines tailored for national-level implementation that harmonize standards for the treatment of victims of trafficking, in accordance with the 2015 ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

Countering Violent Extremism: USAID partners with with ASEAN to advance shared peace and security priorities, including Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism. Youth are particularly vulnerable to radical and violent narratives. Together with the the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Counter-terrorism, USAID works to engage youth as one of ASEAN's key stakeholders to raise awareness and community resilience against radicalization and violent extremism. USAID also helped ASEAN develop the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalization and Violent Extremism (2019-2025) or Bali Work Plan to address radicalism and violent extremism in the region.

Prioritizing Health Systems Coordination: The COVID-19 pandemic put a new spotlight on the importance of coordinating response to public health emergencies. USAID is supporting the development of the first multi-country ASEAN Public Health Emergency Coordination System (APHECS) to better unify ASEAN member states in mounting a swift and collective response to public health emergencies across the region. This legal framework will also complement the planned ASEAN Center for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED), an ASEAN- Japan initiative which Australia is supporting financially.

Promoting Science, Technology, and Innovation: USAID helps ASEAN integrate science-based, data-driven solutions to address challenges in the region. USAID's partnership with Underwriters Laboratories to deliver the Science Prize for Women competition promotes and expands leadership in science, a field where women are often underrepresented.

Elevating Youth Engagement: USAID partners with ASEAN to raise youth awareness and strengthen a shared ASEAN identity. The ASEAN Youth Social Journalism and the ASEAN Youth Video contests encourage youth to take action on pressing issues, promote creative solutions, and champion good governance and economic growth as future leaders.

Contact USAID/ASEAN for more information at jakartausaidasean@usaid.gov