

2020 ASEAN ROADMAP ON THE ELIMINATION OF THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR BY 2025

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INTRODUCTION

The Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) are a shared concern among ASEAN Member States (AMS), where children, especially in remote rural areas and hard to reach sectors, continue to perform hazardous work that may harm their health, safety and morals and where children fall victim to unconditional WFCL, such as human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, including online exploitation.

Available evidence indicates that child labour is primarily associated with hard to reach areas, notably remote rural areas, and with informal economy sector activities. Evidence from national surveys in seven AMS indicates that the highest incidence of child labour is found in the agriculture sector (including forestry and fishery), followed by services and industry sectors.

Child labour has multiple, inter-linked causes, such as poverty and vulnerability to economic shock, unequal access to education, social protection and other services, unsafe migration patterns and low levels of awareness and understanding of the issue and the possible courses of action to prevent and eliminate child labour.

This is well-recognised within the framework of various ASEAN Declarations, such as:

- ASEAN Declaration on Human Rights (initiated by ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights or AICHR)
- Vientiane Declaration on Transition from Informal Employment to Formal Employment towards Decent Work Promotion in ASEAN (initiated by Senior Labour Officials Meeting or SLOM)
- ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Education for Out-of-School Children and Youth (initiated by Senior Officials Meeting on Education or SOM-ED)
- Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Elimination of Violence against Children in ASEAN (initiated by ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children or ACWC)
- ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children (initiated by Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime or SOMTC)
- Ha Noi Declaration on the Enhancement of Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children (initiated by Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development or SOMSWD)
- ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection (initiated by SOMSWD)
- ASEAN Declaration on Culture of Prevention for a Peaceful, Inclusive, Resilient, Healthy and Harmonious Society
- Declaration on the Protection of Children from All Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse in ASEAN (initiated by ACWC and SOMSWD)
- Joint Statement on Reaffirmation of Commitment to Advancing the Rights of the Child in ASEAN (initiated by SOMSWD)
- ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration (initiated by SOMSWD and ACWC)

The ASEAN Declarations also reinforce the commitments to protect children from the WFCL and prevent and eliminate child labour in a number of UN conventions, which have been widely ratified by AMS:

- UN Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) (ratified by all AMS)
- UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (UNCEDAW) (ratified by all AMS)
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) (ratified by all AMS)
- ILO C138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment
- ILO C182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (ratified by all AMS)
- ILO C29 on Forced Labour
- Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children (the Palermo Protocol).

The AMS also actively support and work towards the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), notably SDG target 8.7 on elimination of forced labour by 2030 and elimination of child labour by 2025 and the adoption and implementation of this Roadmap is a key contribution to realising target 8.7 and other SDGs and targets in the ASEAN region.

The AMS also reaffirm commitment to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPR) and the active engagement of the business community, alongside other stakeholders, in the implementation of this Roadmap is a key priority.

The current Roadmap is the natural extension of the first ASEAN Roadmap to eliminate the WFCL by 2016. The 2016 ASEAN Roadmap had a strong focus on ensuring access to education, on enhancing national legal frameworks on child labour, on promoting social protection and labour market policies that lead to formalisation and decent work for adults among other things. Many of these priorities are still relevant for the 2025 Roadmap.

In addition to these policy priorities, the 2016 Roadmap emphasised researching and understanding child labour, strengthening partnerships and coordination of efforts in the region and at the national level.

These priorities are also reflected in national actions. Several AMS have adopted and implemented national Roadmaps, Action Plans or other, similar, policy initiatives aimed at speeding up their national level action against child labour employing coherent and coordinated methods.

While substantial actions have been taken, reaching target 8.7 will require stepping up action at national and regional levels and globally. This Roadmap intends to contribute to increased levels of action to eliminate the WFCL in AMS by 2025.

VISION/OBJECTIVE

The objective of this roadmap is to guide ASEAN to collectively support its AMS over the next five years in working towards the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in the region by building upon achievements and lessons learnt from the implementation of the previous ASEAN Roadmap and similar policy initiatives.

This Roadmap will provide a region-wide framework of cooperation that complements the commitments and actions of AMS against child labour at national and global levels through the focus areas described below.

FOCUS AREAS

ASEAN seeks to support AMS on the following:

- Prohibition of child labour practices and promoting good governance for elimination of child labour including:
 - Labour inspection especially in hard-to-reach sectors
 - Institutional capacity for law enforcement
 - Strengthening good governance for child labour elimination
 - Strengthening coordination and cross-sectoral collaboration
- Prevention of child labour practices including
 - Addressing root causes of child labour
 - Access to education especially in rural and remote areas
 - Rural development and poverty reduction
 - Decent work for young workers
 - Public awareness raising; understanding modern forms of child labour (e.g. web-based exploitation)
- Protection of children including
 - Social protection
 - Improvement of systems to identify, withdraw and support children from child labour

Additional details on the activities that are expected under these priority interventions areas are presented in Annex 1 along with information on timelines and implementing bodies.

IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION

SLOM will be the lead body for the implementation of the Roadmap and other ASEAN bodies will contribute actively in accordance with their respective mandates.

Implementation coordination will focus on sharing of experiences and learning lessons from each other across both countries and sectors. Moreover, the regional level implementation coordination will focus substantial attention on monitoring progress and impact within and across AMS (leveraging SDG monitoring frameworks where possible). Finally, the regional level efforts will prioritise generating and sharing reliable data across the ASEAN region.

Support will be provided through technical assistance and through facilitating sharing of experiences and joint-learning among AMS. This will be done in collaboration with other stakeholders such as ILO, UNICEF, civil society, etc. where relevant.

SLOM shall oversee and coordinate the implementation of this Roadmap. Regular reporting on child labour issues by AMS will be a recurrent agenda item of SLOM. The ASEAN Secretariat shall assist and provide technical support to SLOM in consolidating updates from relevant ASEAN bodies on the status of implementation of this Roadmap as reflected in Annex 1.

The ASEAN bodies will make use of the monitoring framework detailed in Annex 2 based on regular reporting by AMS. The ASEAN Secretariat in collaboration with ILO will assist in consolidating data of AMS for Annex 2.

Achievements resulted from this Roadmap and the impacts will be evaluated in 2025 with a view of continuing efforts towards elimination of worst forms of child labour in ASEAN in line with the realisation of SDG's target 8.7 by 2030.