

The ILO / ASEAN partnership for social protection

Promoting and building social protection floors in ASEAN

ASEAN's commitment to create and extend social protection floors.

An extension of social protection coverage within ASEAN is becoming more urgent as the deeper integration brought by the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) approaches.

According to a recent ILO-Asian Development Bank report, the AEC could spur growth of 7 per cent in the ASEAN economy and create 14 million additional jobs. However, these overall gains will not be distributed evenly; while some sectors will flourish, others are likely to see job losses. Workers without the right skills may not be able to seize these new opportunities. Social protection will play a crucial role of compensating for any short-term loss of income and facilitating access to education, skills, and decent employment. This will ultimately increase productivity and economic growth.

Social protection coverage in ASEAN currently excludes a large proportion of its populations who are not formally employed, enrolled in contributory social security schemes, and have limited access to social services.

In October 2013, ASEAN Heads of State adopted a **Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection** (hereafter the Declaration) as one of the key priority areas to achieve growth with equity.

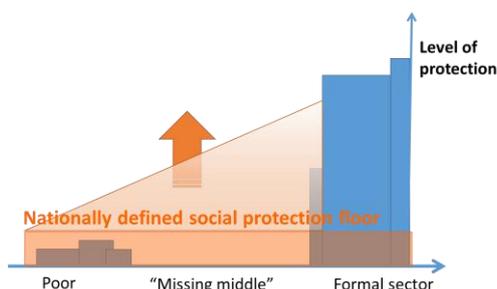
“Every person shall have the right to social security, including social insurance where available, which assists him or her to secure the means for a dignified and decent existence.”

ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, Article 30(1)

What are social protection floors?

Social protection is recognized as a universal human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and has always been promoted by the ILO's tripartite constituents. The two flagships instruments are the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) and the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202).

Social protection floors (SPFs) comprise basic, nationally defined social protection guarantees in the areas of healthcare and income security for children, those of working age, and the elderly.



ILO's partnership with the ASEAN Member States on social protection

The ASEAN Member States have called on ILO technical assistance to help them effectively implement the ASEAN Declaration and support regional cooperation in building their social protection systems.

The ILO's regional level response has been mainly channelled through the **ILO-ASEAN Project on Promoting and Building Social Protection in ASEAN** (hereafter the Project), funded by Japan's Ministry of Health, Welfare and Labour since 2011.

ILO/Japan's support for ASEAN Member States in extending social protection

The Project is implemented by the ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting, Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development, employers and workers organizations of ASEAN, including the ASEAN Confederation of Employers, and the ASEAN Trade Union Council. The objectives of the Project include:

- Advocate for SPF and more comprehensive social security systems in ASEAN countries;
- Provide technical support for the effective implementation of the ASEAN Declaration by, among others, mapping the social protection situation in ASEAN and developing a monitoring framework for measuring progress in extending social protection;
- Engage social partners in implementing the ASEAN Declaration;
- In collaboration with other UN agencies, facilitate knowledge sharing, capacity building and South-South cooperation among ASEAN members and other Asian countries.

Achievements

- Employers' and workers' organizations are recognized as partners in implementing the Declaration;
- ILO is identified by the ASEAN Member States as key implementing partner of the Declaration;
- Evidence and knowledge brought to ASEAN Member States resulted in the extension of social protection coverage (e.g. unemployment insurance in Viet Nam, social health insurance in Lao PDR, old-age pension in Cambodia, inclusion of migrant workers in Viet Nam and Indonesia).



Major ASEAN outputs on social protection in 2014-2016, supported by ILO

- *ASEAN Trade Unions' Statement and Employer's position on strengthening social protection in ASEAN*. The results of a series of capacity building activities and consultations.
- *Tripartite Recommendations on Strengthening Social Protection in ASEAN* (18 November 2014, Bangkok, Thailand). These recommendations were submitted to the ASEAN Inter-Sectoral Consultation on Social Protection (8-9 December 2014, Siem Reap, Cambodia), for drafting the *ASEAN Framework and Action Plan to implement the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection* (22 November 2015, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia).
- A regional report, "*The state of social protection in ASEAN at the dawn of integration*", to inform policy decisions at national and regional levels, and to serve as baseline information against which progress in extending social protection in ASEAN is measured.
- Review of migrant workers' access to social protection in ASEAN, presented at the *8th ASEAN Forum on Labour Migrants* 8-9 November 2016, Vientiane, Lao PDR);
- *Tripartite recommendations on the potential of social protection to build disaster resilience* (24 November 2016, Manila, Philippines).



On the agenda for 2017 and onwards

- *Three year project on extending social security to workers of the informal economy, small and medium enterprises, self-employed* just approved (March 2016-March 2019).

And...

- *Monitoring framework* to measure progress in extending social protection in ASEAN;
- *Experts' Meeting on social protection for migrant workers*, as part of the ASEAN Triangle Projects.

Resources

ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection, Brunei Darussalam, October 2013

ASEAN Framework and Action Plan to implement the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection, November 2015, Kuala Lumpur

ILO/Japan-ASEAN Project on Promoting and Building Social Protection in ASEAN

Tripartite Recommendations on unemployment insurance, income security and active labour market policies, 20-22 March 2012, Ho Chi Minh City.

ASEAN Trade Unions' Statement on Strengthening Social Protection in ASEAN

Tripartite Recommendations on Strengthening Social Protection in ASEAN, 17-18 November 2014, Bangkok

Tripartite Recommendations on Enhancing Social Protection in an Integrated ASEAN Community, 25-26 November 2015, Jakarta

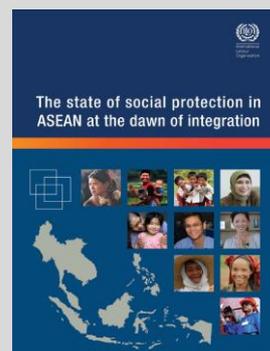
Tripartite Recommendations on the potential of social protection to build resilience to disasters, 22-24 November 2016, Manila

Good practices and training guide on designing and implementing unemployment protection schemes in ASEAN

ILO, 2016: *Social protection in ASEAN: Employers perspectives and recommendations* (Bangkok, ILO)

ILO; ADB. 2014. *ASEAN Community 2015: Managing integration for better jobs and shared prosperity* (Bangkok, ILO)

Ong, C.O.; Peyron Bista, C. 2015. *The state of social protection in ASEAN at the dawn of integration* (Bangkok, ILO).



All photos © ILO

For further information please contact:

Celine Peyron Bista, Chief Technical Adviser
ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
United Nations Building
Rajdamnern Nok Avenue
Bangkok 10200, Thailand

Tel: +662 288 1740
Fax: +662 288 1023
Email: bista@ilo.org
www.ilo.org/asia