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ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and Investment



ASEAN flags and emblem situated at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Photo credit: USAID

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Connectivity through Trade and Investment is a five-year project of the United States Agency for International Development and the Department of State to increase U.S. economic engagement and cooperation with ASEAN countries. Asia is an increasingly inter-connected region and with the launch of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015, the U.S. government has aligned its development assistance priorities in support of regional integration.

Trade between the United States and ASEAN is estimated at \$200 billion. The project encourages ASEAN to adopt free, transparent, sustainable and inclusive trade practices as it moves toward economic integration. This includes technical support for customs integration, trade and investment facilitation, small and medium-sized enterprises, clean and efficient energy, and information and communication technologies. These areas are also priorities under key U.S. strategic agreements and policies such as the ASEAN-U.S. Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement, Enhanced Economic Engagement Initiative and Enhanced Partnership Plan of Action.

ASEAN SINGLE WINDOW DEVELOPMENT FOR CARGO CLEARANCE

The project is helping to create an ASEAN Single Window that can connect and integrate national windows of the 10 ASEAN member states. This will enable streamlined electronic data submission for cargo clearance and lower the cost of doing business across the region. The ASEAN Single Window will also increase transparency in customs systems and improve customs compliance. For U.S. and other businesses, the system will reduce clearance times and costs, and help ensure that trade regulations are administered equitably for all businesses.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

The project facilitates trade and investment, including harmonizing business standards in priority integration sectors in collaboration with the private sector. These measures help businesses by creating a more level playing field and boosts consumer confidence in the quality of goods they receive according to common definitions of inputs and final products.

SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

The project trains entrepreneurs, especially women in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, to help bridge the gap between developing and developed countries and to promote greater participation in emerging economic opportunities stemming from the AEC.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

The project supports the development and application of regulatory and technology solutions to rural broadband access in line with the objectives of ASEAN's Information and Communications Technology Master Plan.

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