ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework 2021–2025

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACC	ASEAN Coordinating Council
ACW	ASEAN Committee on Women
ACWC	ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children
AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
AGMSC	ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Steering Committee
AICHR	ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
AMMW	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Women
APSC	ASEAN Political-Security Community
ASCC	ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community
ASEC	ASEAN Secretariat
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CGEO	Chief Gender Equality Officers (Thailand)
CoP	Community of Practice
CSO	civil society organisation
GESI	gender equality and social inclusion
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GMFT	Gender Mainstreaming Focal Team
HR	human resources
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs (Cambodia)
NGO	nongovernmental organisation
PCW	Philippine Commission on Women
PEGD	Poverty Eradication and Gender Division (ASEAN Secretariat)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID-IGNITE	ASEAN-USAID Inclusive Growth in ASEAN through Innovation, Trade and E-Commerce
USAID-PROSPECT	ASEAN-USAID Partnership for Regional Optimization within the Political-Security and Socio-Cultural Communities
VAWG	violence against women and girls

1. Introduction

1.1 In recent years, there has been increased recognition of the critical importance of gender equality and women's empowerment to sustainable development, and as a result, increased commitment to institutionalising gender mainstreaming approaches by governments and international and regional organisations. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)now include a dedicated Goal—Goal 5—on gender equality, and in recognition that gender equality is multi-dimensional and integral to other development outcomes, it is also envisaged that gender equality will be mainstreamed across all the Goals.[1] In addition, the *2030 Agenda* pledges to "leave no one behind" and to "endeavour to reach the furthest behind first."[2]

1.2 Since its inception, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has consistently articulated a commitment to gender equality and inclusion and to the empowerment of women and girls across all the sectors in which it works. In 1988, with the *Declaration of the Advancement of Women in ASEAN Region*, ASEAN called for the equitable and meaningful participation of women in the political and socioeconomic spheres at both national and regional levels. The 2008 ASEAN Charter states that the organisation's purpose is—among other objectives—"to strengthen democracy, enhance good governance and the rule of law, and to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, with due regard to the rights and responsibilities of the Member States of ASEAN." The *ASEAN Community Vision 2025* envisions ASEAN as "politically cohesive, economically integrated, socially responsible and a truly rules-based, people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN" and "an inclusive community that promotes high quality of life, equitable access to opportunities for all and promotes and protects human rights of women".[3] ASEAN has also recognised and reaffirmed Member States' efforts toward the elimination of violence against women, the advancement of children's rights, and the rights of people with disabilities, and issued Regional Plans of Action on protecting women and children from violence and trafficking, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable groups. There have also been additional commitments on women's economic empowerment, and the welfare and development of women and children.[4]

1.3 This Strategic Framework is rooted in the *Declaration on the Gender-Responsive Implementation of ASEAN Community Vision 2025* and the *Sustainable Development Goals*, which reaffirm the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and restate that gender equality is central to the 2030 Agenda; that forms of discrimination, inequality, and violence that women and girls face are a matter for deep concern; and that gender equality and sustainable development require multisectoral interventions and dialogue among government, donor, private sector, civil society, and community-based stakeholders. The Declaration has nine commitments that can be clustered as follows:

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1 United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2017.

2 UN General Assembly, 2015.

3 ASEAN Community Vision 2025: Forging Ahead Together, 2015.

4 ASEAN's commitments on gender equality include the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the ASEAN Region (2004), the Hanoi Declaration on the Enhancement of the Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children (2010), the Human Rights Declaration (2012), the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children (2013), the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection (2013), the ASEAN Declaration and Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2015), the Manila Declaration to Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2017), the ASEAN Declaration on Culture of Prevention for a Peaceful, Inclusive, Resilient, Healthy and Harmonious Society (2017), the Manila Statement on Mainstreaming Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) in ASEAN (2017), the Joint Statement on Women, Peace and Security (2017), the ASEAN Declaration on the Role of the Civil Service as a Catalyst for Achieving the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 (2017), and the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (2019).

- Enhancing Member States' capacities in collecting, managing, analysing, and disseminating sex-disaggregated data at the national and subnational levels.
- Undertaking gender analyses to inform the design and implementation of policies, plans, and programmes.
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of policies, plans, and programmes on men and women, including assessing the contribution of women in the economy and the economic costs of gender-based violence against women and girls.
- Promoting women's meaningful participation in decision-making bodies and engaging with women's groups and organisations, while also engaging men and boys as allies for gender equality.
- Supporting the development and implementation of gender mainstreaming initiatives across all ASEAN Sectoral Bodies.[5]

1.4 The concept of gender mainstreaming was conceptualised at the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and mandated in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as a strategy to bring about transformative change for women and girls at all levels of development. Governments and development organisations at the conference agreed that they needed to make a dramatic shift in terms of making gender equality integral to their human development efforts, to become more accountable to women, and to address male bias in the institutions responsible for protecting the rights of women and girls. The vision, which analysts argued required "*a seismic change in the global order*" was that "*the concerns for women and gender issues should not remain marginal to the ideas and practices of development organisations, but should be central to them, and hence located in their 'mainstream'*"[10].

1.5 This approach is in line with the aspirations of ASEAN Sectoral Bodies focused on gender issues—such as the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), and ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Women (AMMW) among

Gender Mainstreaming: Definitions, Concepts, and Debates

According to the 1997 Agreed Conclusions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, gender mainstreaming is: "(t)he processes of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetrated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."

As such, gender mainstreaming is a range of context-specific initiatives that are undertaken at policy, programming, and institutional levels to ensure that gender considerations are central to all activities—policy development; research; advocacy/dialogue; legislation; resource allocation; planning, implementation, and monitoring of programmes; and institutional development—and thus contribute to the overall and longer-term development goal of gender equality.[6] In addition to ensuring that gender considerations are integrated in service delivery and sectoral programmes at national and local levels and in public and private organisations, it also aims to challenge the internalised belief systems that shape discriminatory institutions, laws and policies, societal norms, community practices, and everyday habits and relationships that underpin and perpetuate inequality.[7] As Moser et al argue in their 2014 guidance note on gender mainstreaming, "Such progressive changes rely on access to data, gender expertise, sound analysis, supportive cultures, budgets and the mobilisation of social forces."[8]

In practice however, the ways in which gender mainstreaming approaches have been implemented to date have been critiqued for being technocratic" tick box" exercises that lack the political power needed to bring about transformative change for women; and for not being robust enough to counter the multiple sources of backlash against women's rights. As a result, while many governments, development organisations, and donors claim a commitment to mainstreaming gender in their policies and programmes, few are implementing it to the degree that is required. There remains a large gap between the rhetoric around gender mainstreaming and actual development and government practice.[9]

[5] Jones-Renaud, 2019.
[6] Moser et al, 2014.
[7] Hillenbrand et al., 2015.
[8] Moser et al, 2014, p.7.
[9] Pinto, 2019.
[10] Smyth, 2007.

others—which have consistently recognised the need for gender mainstreaming approaches to go beyond the empowerment of individual or small groups of women to taking collective responsibility for critically examining, challenging, and questioning the structures, power relationships, and gender norms that underpin gender inequality.[11] ASEAN also recognises the fundamental link between gender equality and human rights-based approaches, and thus a *focus on* gender *and inclusion,* and ensuring that the voices and needs of the poorest —is a central tenet of this Strategic Framework.

1.6 To effectively promote gender equality and inclusion, gender mainstreaming requires the implementation of multiple contextualised strategies at various levels—there is no one-size-fits-all approach. As the development of this Strategic Framework finds ASEAN at a particular point in its strategy and work planning cycle and in light of ASEAN's unique role and regional mandate as well as its capacity and resources on gender and inclusion issues, this Strategic Framework lays the groundwork for an initial four-year Plan. In the lead up to the establishment of new ASEAN Community Vision Blueprints and Sectoral Body workplans in 2025, this four-year Plan will establish the building blocks for accelerated progress toward operationalising and institutionalising ASEAN's various commitments to promoting gender equality and inclusion.

1.7 Accordingly, this Strategic Framework includes an emphasis on the 'internal' aspect of ASEAN's own policies, practices and organisational culture and structure - and how these shape the way in which the organisation sets priorities, communicates, and works with partners - alongside aiming to progressively increase the volume and quality of its 'external' facilitation, dialogue and programming work on gender and inclusion, as well as a strategic regional approach to supporting Member States' national gender mainstreaming efforts. The Framework thus outlines a strategic direction for a whole-of-ASEAN gender mainstreaming approach by presenting a set of mutually reinforcing objectives, approaches, and activities that will build ASEAN's commitment, capacity, and culture in relation to gender and inclusion, with an emphasis on strengthening coordination and collaboration between the three ASEAN Communities. It is designed to leverage ASEAN's unique mandate, strengths, and ways of working to implement and support effective and transformative efforts to support gender equality and inclusion at the regional, and, eventually, individual Member State levels.

1.8 This Framework was formulated through a participatory and consultative process led by ACWC Malaysia and ACW Philippines, in coordination with an ad-hoc ACW-ACWC Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming. It was informed by the outcomes of Conferences with Senior Officials from the ASEAN Socio-Cultural (ASCC), Economic (AEC) and Political-Security (APSC) Communities organised by ACW Philippines in 2018 and 2019. ASEAN Secretariat staff also participated in interviews and consultations on the challenges to, and opportunities for, embedding a gender mainstreaming approach in their work. A knowledge, attitudes, and practices survey was also undertaken with government and civil society stakeholders across all 10 Member States to understand their perceptions about the progress of gender mainstreaming initiatives in their country, Ministry, and/or department.

1.9 This document begins with a snapshot of the gender and inequality issues in the ASEAN region (with additional detail on selected sectors provided in an Annex that can be made available on request). Thereafter, Section 3 provides an overview of ASEAN's existing institutional framework on gender and inclusion, including a selection of good practice examples across a range of institutional gender mainstreaming initiatives from Member States. That narrative is followed by a brief analysis in Section 4 of the institutional constraints that shape ASEAN's engagement with gender issues. Section 5 aims to articulate the vision and approach to ASEAN's gender mainstreaming efforts going forward, and Section 6 outlines a set of principles and values that will guide this work. Section 7 presents the ACW-ACWC Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming's recommendations for the design of an institutional mechanism that will provide the strategic direction, coordination, and oversight of the gender mainstreaming programme. Section 8 presents a set of strategic objectives, entry points, and their rationale. Section 9 provides some guidelines and principles for monitoring and reporting on implementation of

[11] ASEAN/ Philippines Commission on Women, 2018

the Strategic Framework and Section 10 translates the goals and outcomes outlined in Section 8 into indicative activities and timeframes.

2. Gender Equality and Inclusion in the ASEAN Region

2.1 Addressing gender equality is a stated priority for all ASEAN Member States and for ASEAN. Over the past decade, economic development, government measures, and the efforts of civil society have led to significant improvements in reproductive health, narrowing gender gaps in education and increasing women's labour force participation. However, the World Economic Forum's 2021 Global Gender Gap report revealed a mixed record for the Member States. The Philippines was ranked 17th globally, surpassing countries like Japan, Australia, and Canada, and remaining—despite a drop of eight places—the most gender-equal country in Asia. While the Philippines performed strongly in the economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, and health and survival domains, there was a significant widening of the political empowerment gap. Lao PDR and Singapore ranked second and third best respectively from ASEAN - primarily because of progress in women's economic participation - Malaysia and Myanmar ranked 112th and 114th respectively. On the educational attainment sub-index, Viet Nam has closed 98.2% of the gap, and achieved gender parity in tertiary enrolment rates. On economic participation and opportunity, Viet Nam is one of the 26 countries that has closed at least 76.5% of the gap. In Viet Nam, a woman's income is about 81.9% of a man's income, which positions Viet Nam among the top 11 countries on this indicator.

2.2 Women in the ASEAN region generally have lower levels of labour participation than men, are concentrated in lower skilled, vulnerable jobs—often in the informal sector—and are paid less for the same work. They are also primarily responsible for care and domestic work. Women made up almost 50 percent of all intra-ASEAN migrants in 2015, many of whom were undocumented workers.[12] Women's economic empowerment is a key development priority for national governments and development agencies but there is concern that the predominant emphasis on entrepreneurial and market-oriented activities does not consider the ways in which existing inequalities in access to land, capital, services, social protection, and infrastructure can undermine women's ability to benefit from the market.[13]

2.3 All Member States have fewer women than men in parliament, and with a few exceptions, far less than the 30 percent threshold recommended by the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Those women who do enter the political arena often have to contend with a male-dominated culture, with real power remaining in men's hands. Efforts to institutionalise UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security have also been uneven. Across the region, women's experiences and perspectives during armed conflicts and post-conflict efforts are either ignored or inadequately considered in policy making and implementation. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that 37.7 percent of women in the region have experienced gender-based violence in their lifetime.[14] UN Women reports that an entrenched acceptance of men's power over women fosters environments in which violence against women is accepted and normalised.[15]Women who face all forms of discrimination are often particularly vulnerable to violence, harassment, and abuse.

2.4 There are additional issues posing further challenges and opportunities for women and girls in the region. These include the role of technology, which, alongside the disruptions it brings, may also disadvantage women in the labour market given the digital gender divide, expose women to harassment and abuse, and perpetuate biases given the lack of representation of women in the technology sector.[16]Demographic changes also present challenges—ASEAN has an aging and increasingly urbanising

[12] ASEAN, 2017.
[13] Gerard, 2018.
[14] World Health Organisation, 2013.
[15] UN Women, 2020.
[16] World Wide Web Foundation, April 3, 2020.

population[17]; increasing migration flows; a lack of protection for domestic workers[18]; and trafficking and modern slavery, predominantly of women and girls, and to which internally displaced persons are particularly vulnerable.[19] The impacts of natural disasters and climate change—including the loss of life, livelihoods, and displacement—also disproportionately affect women and further exacerbate gender-based inequalities.[20]Further, there is limited support for women's groups and movements, as well as, in some cases, decreasing political space for women's issues, advocates, and even politicians.[21] Gender-blind policies and practices in the extractive industries also impact women's livelihoods, food security, and unpaid care work.[22]

2.5 The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the gender and social inequalities that were prevalent in the region. While the evidence to date indicates that men are more vulnerable to adverse health outcomes from COVID-19, certain groups of women, for example, healthcare workers and migrant workers, have been gravely and disproportionately affected in terms of exposure to infection and the economic repercussions of the pandemic. Women make up the majority of those in precarious employment, including in the informal sector, where there are few benefits and/or social protection measures. COVID-19 is already having major impacts on women garment workers in international supply chains. This is accentuated by the longstanding unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work at home due to gendered social expectations that limit many women's livelihood choices. Those imbalances have been further heightened by the pandemic with women having to care for children, the elderly, or family members as businesses and schools shut down and as people fall ill with the virus. Lockdown measures have also meant that many women at risk are confined with their abusers; there have been reports of significant increases in the rates of domestic violence. Hotlines for victims of domestic violence in Malaysia, for example, have reported a 57 percent increase in calls since lockdowns began in March 2019. In Singapore, AWARE's Women's Helpline reported a 33 percent increase in February over calls received in the same month last year.[23]

[17] Henning, 2019.
[18] Baruah, 2019.
[19] UNODC, 2018.
[20] Paris and Rola-Rubzen, 2019; Uniacke, 2018.
[21] Liu, 2018.
[22] UN Women, 2020.
[23] Ibid.

3. ASEAN's Institutional Structure on Gender and Inclusion

3.1 ASEAN has a well-developed institutional structure on gender and inclusion that has evolved over time in response to policy developments and trends in the region and globally. Currently, responsibility for gender and inclusion rests predominantly with the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). The *ASCC Blueprint* outlines a vision for ASEAN as "(a)n inclusive community that promotes high quality of life, equitable access to opportunities for all and promotes and protects human rights of women, children, youths, the elderly/older persons, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, and vulnerable and marginalised groups." It goes on to outline a range of objectives relating to women and vulnerable groups, including a commitment to "develop regional strategies and enhance institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming in ASEAN policies, programmes and budgets across pillars and sectors".[24]

3.2 The ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Women (AMMW), which is constituted by minister-level representatives of the national women's machineries in the Member States and sets the strategic direction for ASEAN's regional cooperation on women's issues, sits within the ASCC. The ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), a Sectoral Body and subsidiary of the AMMW, is the oldest women's body within ASEAN, and is responsible for the coordination, implementation, and monitoring of ASEAN's regional commitments relating to women, and for promoting these across the Political-Security, Economic, and Socio-Cultural Communities. Further, the ACW is responsible for collaborating with and building the capacity of national governments, developing policies, and facilitating the exchange of best practices.

3.3 The ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) is tasked primarily with promoting the implementation of the Member States' international human rights commitments, particularly CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Apart from ACW and ACWC, other ASEAN sectoral bodies are engaged in mainstreaming gender perspectives in their respective sectoral areas of work. The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) has been promoting gender equality including through information and communication technologies (ICT). The Senior Labor Officials Meeting (SLOM) is developing guidelines to mainstreaming gender in labor policies and decent work. The Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) has been integrating gender perspectives in social protection including looking at access for older women and women with disabilities.

3.4 Both the ACW and ACWC have, since their establishment, advocated for ASEAN to take more rights-based approaches to women's rights. Their own workplans, declarations, and activities reflect their progressive approaches. The ACW, for example, was instrumental in developing the key operational documents that progressed ASEAN's frameworks for cooperation on tackling violence against women, the Work Plan for Women's Advancement and Gender Equality (2011–2015), and the two Regional Plans of Action to implement the ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Violence against Children. The ACW Plus Three is an annual meeting of the ACW with the Plus Three Countries namely China, Japan and the Republic of Korea, and serves as a regular platform for exchanging policies and good practices on the empowerment of women and girls.

3.5 The ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) is responsible for facilitating collaboration among different ASEAN stakeholders in support of the objectives outlined in the ASEAN Charter, and for operationalising the decisions taken at the Ministerial and Sectoral Body levels by developing action and implementation plans. Within the ASEC, the Poverty Eradication and Gender Division (PEGD), which is housed within the ASCC, provides technical support and advice to other Divisions and Sectoral Bodies,

[24] ASCC Blueprint, p. 3, 7.

and has been tasked with coordinating the development of ASEAN's gender mainstreaming approach across all three Communities.

3.6 Sectoral Bodies across the three Communities also engage with gender and inclusion issues—convening inter-governmental dialogues on specific sectoral or technical areas; undertaking research and assessment studies; commissioning the development of technical resources, plans, and guidelines; organising regional exchange visits and knowledge sharing activities; and undertaking a range of donor-funded capacity-building, awareness-raising, and outreach programmes in different sectors. They have also supported Member States' gender mainstreaming efforts, and examples of this include partnering with UN Women to develop a set of regional guidelines on collecting and using data on violence against women and girls (VAWG) in 2018, partnering with the Philippine Civil Service Commission to produce a training manual on gender mainstreaming in human resources systems in 2016, and developing the 2016 ACWC Gender-Sensitive Guideline for Handling Women Victims of Trafficking. The Community Conferences revealed significant interest and motivation among Sectoral Body officials across the Communities to significantly increase their gender work, and a desire for clear guidance and capacity strengthening support.

3.7 One of the strengths of ASEAN is its mandate to convene the Member States. Through consensus building and consultation, ASEAN is able to facilitate policy agenda setting at the regional level and mobilise political commitment on strategic issues affecting the region. Moreover, ASEAN has established and continues to strengthen an array of consultative platforms that facilitate dialogue not only for government officials but also with civil society organisations and various stakeholders.

3.8 ASEAN's leaders have emphasised a shift toward deepening engagement with civil society and external parties in recent years. Since 2005, civil society organisations (CSOs) have been consulted by a number of ASEAN bodies on a range of issues. Currently CSO participation is channelled in two ways. CSOs can be invited to participate in two annual sectoral forums, one on Migrant Labor and the other on Social Welfare and Development. They can also gain accreditation to a particular ASEAN body, which allows CSOs to submit written statements, recommendations, and proposals to the linked body; propose programmes of collaboration; and attend the relevant bodies' meetings. One such accredited organisation is the ASEAN Confederation of Women's Organisations, which is linked with the ACW. It consists of the National Council of Women's Organisations in each Member State and it holds a biennial Conference for Member States to share best progress and good practice. The ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network and the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry are two further affiliates and provide an interface for ASEAN with women entrepreneurs and businesswomen across the region.

3.9 In recent years, all ASEAN Member States have made progress in establishing institutional structures to support the integration of gender considerations into policy and planning. In line with the varied historical, political, and social contexts of the different countries, these have taken different forms, but can be categorised broadly into: gender equality normative frameworks; governmental gender architectures; supporting the gender capacity of sectoral ministries/ agencies, particularly in terms of tackling VAWG, supporting women's economic empowerment, promoting women's leadership, and strengthening data and statistical systems. In the Philippines, sustained political leadership and resources for gender equality have resulted in a well-developed institutional framework and approach to gender mainstreaming. However, there too, as well as in other Member States, efforts are hampered by challenges with political commitment and accountability, limited awareness of the importance of gender equality, insufficient resources, a lack of robust data, and poor coordination between government stakeholders.[25] Some interesting examples of Member State mainstreaming initiatives—as submitted in the National Reviews to the Beijing 25+ review process—follow.

[25] UNESCAP, 2015.

Good Practice Examples from Member States' Institutional Gender Mainstreaming Efforts

Source: Adapted from the National Beijing 25+ reviews and a wider literature review

In **Cambodia,** the Cambodian National Council for Women, composed of representatives from key line ministries and government agencies, coordinates and monitors the implementation of the laws, policies, and initiatives for the benefit of women. In addition, the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), mandated to lead the coordination of gender mainstreaming and empowerment of all women and girls, advocates and provides technical support to line ministries through Gender Mainstreaming Action Groups, which have developed an action plan to institutionalise gender mainstreaming into policies and programmes. Technical working groups on gender-based violence, women's economic empowerment, and women in leadership and governance provide participatory fora for government, international agencies, CSOs, and the private sector. Focused sectoral gender mainstreaming initiatives support institutional technical capacity to integrate gender considerations into economic planning, education, health, legal protection, women in public leadership and politics, and climate change initiatives. MoWA has also formed working groups on priority women's groups, including the disabled, elderly, ethnic groups, and minorities.

In **Indonesia,** budgetary allocations to the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection doubled from 2014 to 2018. The National Strategy on Acceleration of Gender Mainstreaming through Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting was updated in 2018 to align with the SDGs. There has also been a focus on strengthening the women's machinery at local government levels—33 institutions focus on women's empowerment and child protection at the province level and 514 at the region level. At the sectoral level, line ministries are recognised with Anugrah Parahita Ekapraya awards for gender mainstreaming efforts—the Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing recently received the award's highest category.

In **Lao PDR,** the Lao Women's Union, a state-run, membership-based social organisation includes representatives in all line ministries and equivalent government departments, as well as local government. The National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children has established sub-commissions at almost all government institutions at the central and local level. A National Assembly Women's Caucus was established in 2010 to ensure mainstreaming of gender in new laws and policies and oversee the application of current legislative frameworks; it works through the Lao Women's Union to provide capacity building to Provincial Women's Assemblies.

In **Malaysia,** the Malaysian Statistical Training Institute now offers courses on gender statistics. Malaysia has also been appointed a focal point for a UN initiative to develop training on gender statistics. Malaysia has three priorities for strengthening national gender data over the next five years: establish an interagency coordination mechanism on gender statistics; re-process existing data to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics; and better use and/or improve administrative-based or alternative data sources to address gender data gaps.

In **Myanmar,** the Myanmar National Committee on Women is the main inter-ministerial mechanism for ensuring the implementation of the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women, 2013–2022.The Department of Social Welfare (which sits in the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement) acts as the secretariat of the Myanmar National Committee on Women. Four technical working groups operationalise, budget, and monitor strategic plan commitments in four priority areas: 1) women, peace, and security;2) gender mainstreaming; 3) participation; and 4) ending violence against women and girls. (The four groups are challenged by unclear roles and responsibilities and by limited resourcing and institutional capacity. The Gender Equality Network has more than 130 CSOs, national and international nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), and technical resources, and the Women's Organisations Network represents more than 30 organisations in conflict and post-conflict.

In the **Philippines,** the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) is the primary policy-making, coordinating, and oversight body on gender issues; plays a strong role in advocating for and leading gender mainstreaming efforts; and has become established as an authority on women's issues. The PCW ensures that national government agencies, state universities and colleges, and government-owned and -controlled corporations develop effective annual Gender and Development Plans and Budgets. Now attached to the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the PCW will be able to strengthen the operationalisation of national and international commitments at regional and local levels. Commitments on gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls are integrated in 12 of the 20 chapters of the Philippine Development Plan 2017–2022. The PCW also ensured that the development of the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Plan 2019–2025 was informed by extensive civil society consultations. The PCW also serves as the Philippine focal point to the ACW.

In **Thailand,** in 2010, the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development and the Office of Civil Service Commission created new positions of Chief Gender Equality Officers (CGEOs) and Gender Focal Points (GFPs) at department and ministerial levels in 19 of 20 government ministries. Covering 130 government agencies, CGEOs and GFPs are the principal mechanism for operationalising gender mainstreaming in policy planning and budgeting processes. CGEOs and GFPs promote the collection of sex-disaggregated data in their respective departments/ministries. Annual evaluations are carried out to enhance the impact of these positions and awards are given to recognise innovation and excellence. Early evaluations have shown that while initial activities focused on discrete activities, such as establishing day-care centres or conducting gender sensitivity training, more recent work has shifted toward promoting the integration of a gender perspective throughout agency programming.[26]These evaluations have also shown that gender integration varies greatly across line ministries and that CGEO and GFP measures are not standardised.[27]

In **Viet Nam,** statistical work on sex-disaggregated data has improved over the past five years. The Ministry of Planning and Investment has led in issuing publications and conducting studies and surveys and identified 78 gender indicators for reporting.

[26] CEDAW, 2015.
[27] UNDP, 2014.

4. Institutional Considerations to Operationalising ASEAN's Gender Commitments

4.1 While ASEAN's sectoral gender mainstreaming work—on violence against women and girls, for example—has achieved some success at regional and national levels, progress on translating its commitments to institutional transformation has been variable. To an extent, this is due to factors relating to ASEAN's mandate, ways of working, and institutional structure.

4.2 Currently, responsibility for promoting the gender and inclusion agenda sits within the ASCC, which houses the AMMW, ACW, ACWC, and PEGD—all of the ASEAN institutions with primary responsibility for driving ASEAN's regional cooperation on gender and inclusion issues and for promoting cross-Community action. For example, in its 2016–2020 Work Plan, the ACW agreed to "strongly urge the three pillars of ASEAN, the political-security, economic, and socio-cultural, to work towards achieving gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls by mainstreaming gender perspective in their respective polices, plans and programmes." [However, the AEC and APSC Blueprints pay relatively less attention to these issues.

4.3 As a result, ASEAN has long recognised the role of women in economic growth—as workers and entrepreneurs—ASEAN has adopted the action agenda on mainstreaming women economic empowerment in ASEAN. This is a key gap given that women in the region have often not experienced the benefits of economic growth. Furthermore, growth has often occurred at the expense of marginalised groups and has increased income inequality in some cases.[28] ASEAN has recently started to deepen its engagement with the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. ASEAN has adopted the Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security in ASEAN during the 31st ASEAN Summit in November 2017. The joint statement led to the development of the 2021 ASEAN Regional Study on Women, Peace and Security. The report states: "UNSC Res 1325 recognises, among others, women's right to participate—as decision-makers at all levels—in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and peace-building processes and calls for all participants in peacekeeping operations and peace negotiations "to adopt a gender perspective". As a result, ASEAN cannot only rely on advisory bodies such as ACWC and ASEAN-IPR, or Ministers on Women Officials (ACW) to implement the WPS agenda without the significant involvement of other Sectoral Bodies of the Political-Security and the Economic Communities."[29]

4.4 ASEAN continues to strengthen its engagements with multiple stakeholders across the region. Various modalities of engagements are available to civil society organisations, think-tanks, members of the media, and the private sector. This ranges from undergoing a formal process of accreditation to become an ASEAN-affiliated entity to regular participation in consultative platforms convened by the sectoral bodies. Examples of these include the open sessions for partners annually convened by ACW and ACWC, and the regional forums on social welfare and development organised by SOMSWD and on rural development and poverty eradication by SOMRDPE. However, the new ways of working that emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic may provide important opportunities to expand ASEAN's civil society outreach. ASEAN's stated shifts in recent years toward more people-centred and participatory forms of regional cooperation have increased civil society demand for greater and more critical engagement with ASEAN policies, and more recently for a role in the reporting, monitoring, and implementation of the thematic processes of the three Community Blueprints. The ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People's Forum hold a side event during the ASEAN Summit, from where they seek to influence outcomes on human rights protection, gender, development, trade, environment, youth, and culture issues. However, since 2015, they have been unable to secure an interface with ASEAN Leaders at the Summit.[30]

[28] Dominguez, 2019.
[29] ASEAN, 2020.
[30] Sutthichaya, 2019.

4.5 There are important practical constraints that also limit ASEAN's ability to engage with a broad range of actors and, in fact, effectively take on the gender mainstreaming agenda. Both ACW and ACWC have wide-ranging and challenging responsibilities, including promoting inter-Community co-ordination and regional cooperation and engaging with external stakeholders. ASEC has fewer than 300, often overstretched staff, and operates under significant budgetary constraints. The Sectoral Bodies are generally meetings of senior government officials who only convene occasionally and have an already full agenda to get through during their time together.[31]

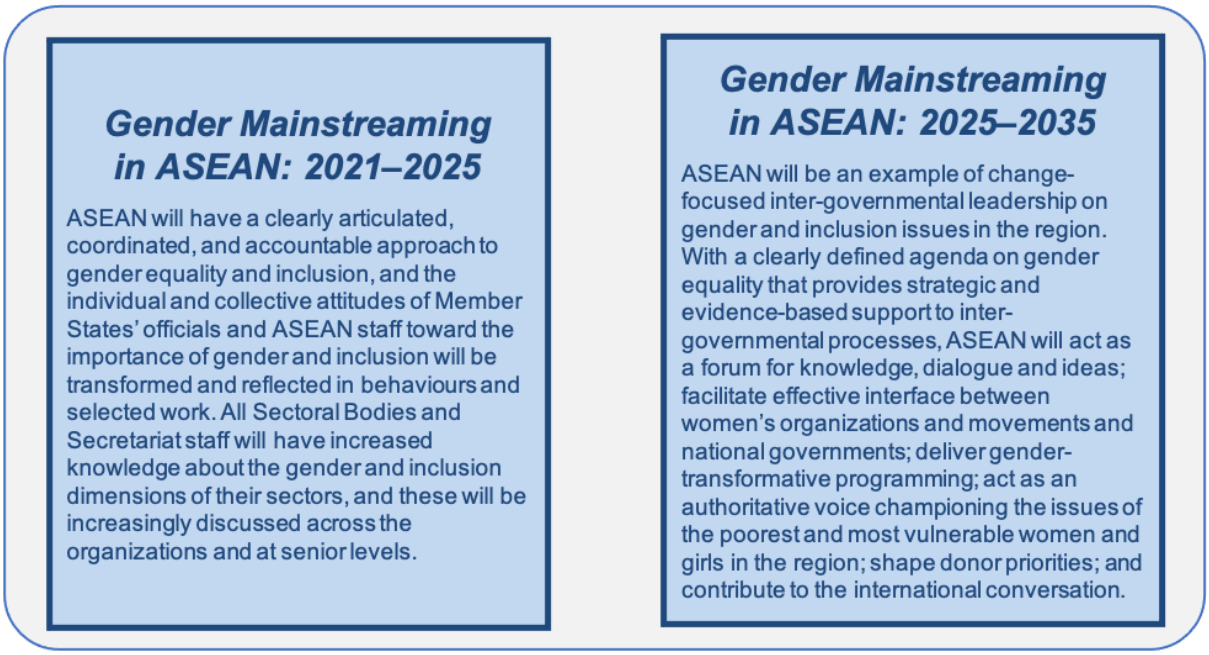
[31]Parks et al, 2018.

5. Vision and Approach of ASEAN's Gender Mainstreaming Strategy

5.1 The approach and objectives in this Strategic Framework were conceptualised on the basis of a close understanding of ASEAN's current political and institutional commitment, capacity, and resources for gender equality and inclusion, as well as its strategy and work planning cycles. Currently, ASEAN is just past the mid-point of implementing its 10-year 2015–2025 Community Blueprints and Sectoral Body workplans. While this means that the scope for embedding gender and inclusion activities into ASEAN's existing workplans and monitoring frameworks is constrained, it also provides an important opportunity to put in place the building blocks—in terms of ASEAN's internal systems, plans, capacities, practices, and organisational culture—that will ensure that gender and inclusion is strongly integrated in the 2025–2035 Blueprints and workplans.

5.2 This Strategic Framework thus provides the groundwork for the development of a four-year Implementation Plan, which is envisaged as one step of a long-term strategy for promoting gender mainstreaming at the ASEAN and individual Member State level. This first phase will focus on building greater commitment and capacity across the three Communities and starting to transform the way ASEAN works. A new Framework and Implementation Plan, to be aligned with the new Blueprints, will need to be developed for 2025–2035. The vision for this two-step plan is shown below.

Vision for Two-Phase Plan



5.3 A key focus of the first phase (2021–2025) will be to ensure that, going forward, gender and inclusion considerations become an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring, and learning of all programmes, and not detached so that the considerations become invisible, under-resourced, and unaccounted for. The building blocks will entail taking a sustained approach to strengthening commitment, leadership, knowledge, competencies, and relationships to:

- Build a common understanding of why gender and inclusion is important to ASEAN's work.
- Strengthen commitment and capacity across the organisation on gender and inclusion issues and gender mainstreaming processes.

- Ensure that specialist technical inputs are embedded across the programme cycle.[32]
- Start to position ASEAN as a thoughtful, change-focused actor on gender and inclusion issues.
- Embed meaningful, actionable commitments to gender and inclusion in the 2025–2035 Blueprints and Sectoral workplans.

Ultimately this will mean that ASEAN's work will include evidence-based and well-managed approaches to gender and social inclusion that aim to change the lives of women and girls—not just in terms of reducing their vulnerability, but also being shaped by their knowledge and skills and recognising, respecting, and supporting their agency.

5.4 It is expected that gender and inclusion issues will have a prominent place in the cross-Community consultations and discussions leading up to the new Blueprints. Alongside these and drawing on the outcomes and learning from the current phase, consultations and the strategic visioning and planning for the new Gender Equality/Mainstreaming Strategic Framework will also begin, and a new 2025–2035 Vision will be developed. The 2025–2035 Vision will be aligned with new Blueprints and workplans for the three ASEAN Communities and will build on the strengthened foundations for a higher profile for gender and inclusion issues with ASEAN; transformed attitudes and values among ASEAN staff and institutions across the three Communities; greater experience of inter-Community coordination; greater capacity on gender and inclusion analysis, implementation, and monitoring; a stronger body of data, research, and analysis; increased knowledge and experience of good and promising practice on gender and inclusion; partnerships and participatory engagement strategies that emphasise the voices and leadership of women as agents of change; well-developed and resourced monitoring and evaluation frameworks and systems; and organisational cultures that are gender-equal, diverse, and inclusive.

[32] These could include, but not be limited to, inputs to support knowledge of the gender and inclusion dimensions of specific sectors, research and analysis, stakeholder engagement, programme planning and design, monitoring and evaluation, and learning.

6. Guiding Principles and Values

6.1 This Framework has been developed in recognition of the complex and interconnected ways in which structural inequalities, institutional constraints, and social norms underpin and perpetuate gender inequality. To ensure alignment with international frameworks, honour ASEAN's commitments to gender equality as well as its mandate and ways of working, and build an understanding of what works to support real change, the following principles and values will underpin the Framework's implementation.

- **Understand that gender and inclusion issues are part of a complex system** that requires multisectoral and multidimensional responses—cutting across the three ASEAN Communities—and taking a comprehensive approach. Also, recognise that 1) patriarchy is structural, and that achieving gender equality requires direct, targeted work, as well as action on the enabling environment; and2) progress in one area supports progress in another.
- **Take a rights-based approach**, which means understanding that women's lack of access to basic services and social, economic, and political participation is a denial of their human rights—and taking action to support women and girls to engage in voicing their needs, demanding accountability, and claiming their rights.
- **Pursue transformative change** and go beyond promoting the individual empowerment of women and groups of women to support women's collective empowerment for engaging in context-specific political action to transform the power dynamics and structures that perpetuate gendered inequalities in a way that benefits everyone—women and men, boys and girls. This approach to gender mainstreaming will thus involve critically examining, challenging, and questioning the structures, power relationships, and gender norms that underpin gender gaps, and supporting women's own capabilities to bring about change.
- **Ensure no one is left behind** by prioritising the poorest and most disempowered women and girls and surfacing and addressing different groups' experiences of discrimination. Inequality is a growing issue in the ASEAN region and the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate and ecological emergency has further marginalised already poor groups, with the brunt of the economic and environmental impacts disproportionately felt by women and girls. The 2030 Agenda calls for particular attention to youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples and local communities, refugees, and internally displaced persons and migrants. In its guidance on the Leave No One Behind agenda, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)[33] highlights groups disadvantaged by geographical location and limited access to services, internet, transport, and other infrastructure; groups disadvantaged by inequitable, ineffective, unaccountable or unresponsive laws, policies, and governance institutions, and whose members are less able to influence decisions that affect them; groups that face disadvantage because of their income, access to assets and resources, and educational attainment; and those groups that are vulnerable to falling into poverty due to the impacts of climate change, natural disasters, economic downturn, violence, conflict, displacement, and health emergencies.
- **Ensure that gender and inclusion are at the core of planning, implementation, monitoring, and learning** by taking the time to ensure that ASEAN stakeholders and teams have the resources, knowledge, competencies, and budgets to meaningfully integrate gender and inclusion in their work, with support from the wider organisational environment. This will ensure gender is not considered an add-on, and therefore left under-resourced and ignored.
- **Emphasise approaches that centre the voices, experiences, and knowledge** of both women and men—and that view those groups and people as leaders and active agents in the programming that affects them. This includes emphasising women's own knowledge and experience by continuously talking to them and collecting qualitative and quantitative information. It also involves ASEAN

[33] UNDP, 2018

staff and officials understanding their own positionality in relation to the women they work with and recognising the role this plays in their interactions and understanding of the issues.

- **Emphasise collective action** by encouraging partnership, collaboration, and participation among ASEAN stakeholders, government agencies, civil society, communities, the private sector, and dialogue partners. This includes making active efforts to ensure that these collaborations place the perspectives of women and girls at the fore, and using innovative ways of working with different constituencies of women—and women's organisations and solidarity networks, academics, youth groups, and professional associations—as the best opportunity to both enhance the reach of programme-level approaches whilst also supporting women-led and women-owned transformations.
- **Work with men and boys,** as champions (and challengers) of women's rights, while taking into account and responding to their gender-related vulnerabilities. This Strategic Framework recognises the key role that men can play in supporting the gender equality agenda—by acknowledging and raising awareness about the advantage and privilege they benefit from; by showing solidarity with women and other disadvantaged groups, both in their everyday and larger struggles; by understanding the drivers of gender inequality; by challenging negative masculinities; by helping to shift unequal power dynamics; and by supporting women's access to spaces, platforms, and leadership.[34]
- **ASEAN Member States have the primary responsibility** to promote and protect women's rights, to ensure gender equality, and to mainstream gender in their respective national laws and policies.
- **Ensure that the implementation** of this strategic framework is consistent and aligned with the principles and priorities of ASEAN in accordance with international law, where applicable, and other relevant international and regional commitments such as the CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action.

[34] Plan International: https://plan-international.org/girls-get-equal/mans-role-gender-equality

7. Opportunities for Institutional Support to Advance Gender Mainstreaming: A Whole-of-ASEAN Institutional Mechanism for Gender Equality

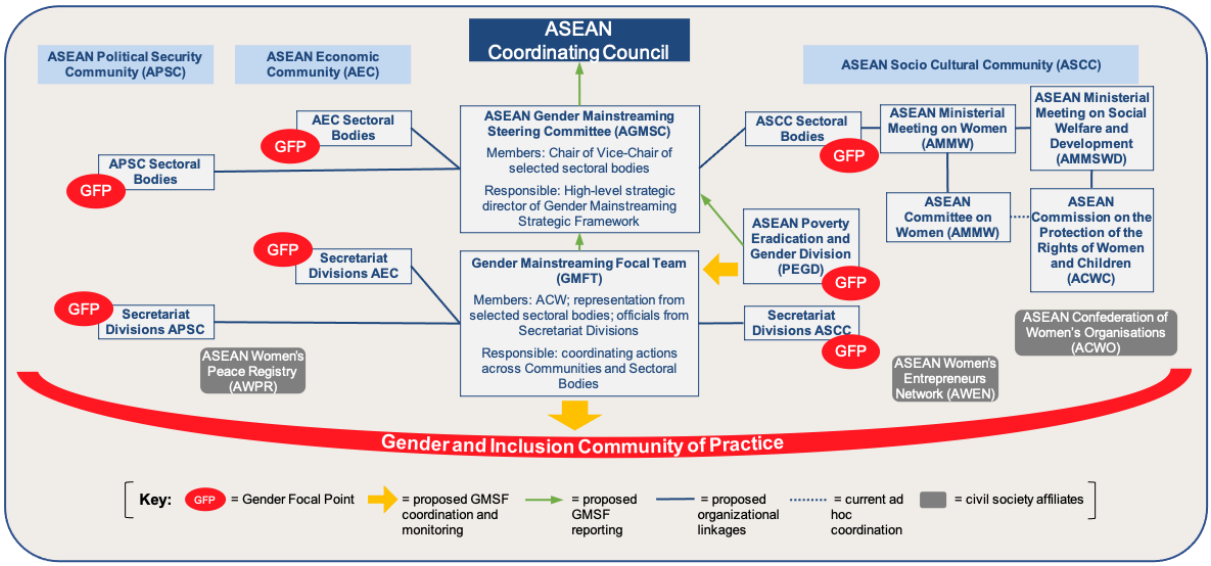
7.1 The effective implementation of this Strategic Framework, as well as any commitments, strategies, and plans established in support of it, is critically dependent on the extent to which high-level ownership and buy-in can be established and sustained, whether adequate resources can be mobilised from Member States and dialogue partners, whether commitment and energy for the Plan as a whole can be maintained and effectively coordinated, and whether ASEAN's leadership can hold staff and officials accountable for progress and results. Thus, a key step to be completed early on is the establishment of an institutional mechanism that can bring together the three Communities and ASEAN's gender institutions in an effective, authoritative, and sufficiently capacitated system that can undertake a sustained advocacy and influencing effort and drive the implementation of a complex gender mainstreaming agenda over the long term. This will require that the different institutions act in a coordinated and strategic manner to leverage their respective strengths, mandates, and constituencies.

7.2 In light of learning and global good practice on the types of institutional structures needed to establish and advance gender mainstreaming approaches, as well as ongoing dialogue with ASEAN stakeholders, the following institutional platforms may be pursued:

- Establish an ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Steering Committee (AGMSC) that is made up of high-level officials (Chair or Vice-Chair) of selected Sectoral Bodies from across all three pillars as the **high-level body responsible for the strategic direction** of the Framework. Such a body would have a footing across the three Communities and thus be best placed to provide cross-pillar oversight and support the multidimensional and collaborative approach required to effectively mainstream gender. The AGMSC should work closely with the AMMW, leveraging the AMMW's long history of ministerial-level support for women's issues, mandate for ensuring Member State support for international and regional commitments on gender, and responsibility for gender mainstreaming at the Member State level. AGMSC members will act as Gender Champions and should include a balance of women and men.
- Establish an ad hoc Gender Mainstreaming Focal Team (GMFT), convened and chaired by ACW, and composed of representatives of selected Sectoral Bodies across the three Communities and at least one senior ASEC official from each of the three Communities. The GMFT, in collaboration with the wider ACW and ACWC, will be responsible for developing the Implementation Plan (see Sections 9 and 10) to support the Strategic Framework and for **coordinating the specific actions** in the Implementation Plan. This will require coordination across the Communities, as well as with other Sectoral Bodies, and therefore, those relationships, communication channels, and ways of working will need to be established within the first year. Officials selected for this role will have 50 percent of their role allocated to implementing the Strategic Framework and will have skills and experience in gender and inclusion, programme management, communications, influencing, and partnership building. This group will also need to include or be supported by a cadre of skilled gender experts (who may be identified from within the organisation or recruited). The Monitoring Directorate, ASEAN Community Statistical System, Human Resources Division, and Finance and Budget Divisions will have a critical role to play in the effective and sustainable implementation of the Strategic Framework and must be represented in the GMFT. Once the GMFT has reached a certain level of maturity, a decision can be taken about whether it should be established as an independent and regular coordinating platform or as an adjunct body to the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC).

- Appoint a network of Gender Focal Points (GFPs) across ASEC and the Sectoral Bodies to **encourage and drive actions at the Sectoral Body level,** including supporting the development of Sectoral Body gender and inclusion workplans, the design and implementation of activities and programming, monitoring and reporting on workplans; and engaging in dialogue and knowledge sharing with the Community of Practice (CoP). For this cadre to function effectively it will be important to pay attention to the motivations, skills, influence, and workload of the selected individuals, and it may be important to identify their track record of engagement with gender and inclusion issues. In order for GFPs to play their "agenda setting" role, the cadre must include officials with sufficient seniority and influence. Where senior officials are not available, alternatives such as teaming senior officials with other staff who have complementary skills should be explored. GFPs should have clearly defined performance indicators that are matched with allocations of time and resources for performing these tasks. It is critical that acting as a GFP is not seen as an add-on task that individuals are expected to undertake in addition to all of their existing responsibilities.

Structure of the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Institutional Mechanism



7.3 One of the key roles of the GMFT will be to establish **a Gender and Inclusion Community of Practice** which will draw together the various stakeholders working on gender and inclusion from across ASEAN. It is anticipated that the GFPs will play a key role in managing and driving the activities of the CoP as part of their dialogue and knowledge sharing function. The CoP will convene through meetings, events, and online interfaces—with a view to interacting with each other; sharing experiences, tools, good practices, and solutions to common problems; supporting collaborative learning; and coordinating contributions to implementing the Strategic Framework.

7.4 It will also be important to consider how this institutional mechanism and its constituent bodies interface with civil society and other external stakeholders. In due course, it may be worth exploring the establishment of **a multi-stakeholder advisory body on gender and inclusion** that would include government representatives; academics; representatives from the media, private sector and civil society; and officials from ASEAN's Committee of Permanent Representatives—with a particular focus on women's organisations and networks. The role of the Advisory Body would be to provide high-level strategic advice and input for the operationalisation of the Strategic Framework and relevant initiatives, as well as greater visibility and political insight for ASEAN's gender mainstreaming effort.

7.5 All of the bodies within the institutional mechanism for gender mainstreaming will require representation, including at senior levels, from women, as well as men. An effective gender mainstreaming process needs experienced and dedicated staff who have the time, resources, and leadership support to drive change processes, engage with senior staff, as well as the skills to influence them. Upon adoption of the Strategic Framework, terms of reference should be developed for the AGMSC, GMTF, and the

GFPs to ensure that their roles and responsibilities and relationships with each other and with other offices in ASEAN are clear and understood by all, and that there is no duplication of tasks. Once the terms of reference are agreed, an important step in developing the institutional mechanism will be to engage with senior leadership to secure sufficient time allocations for the members of the GMTF and the GFPs. Staff members and officials who take on gender mainstreaming tasks will also require training on technical issues, communications, advocacy, and influencing and support to form relationships and networks with each other as well as with other gender stakeholders and bodies across the organisation.

8. Strategic Objectives and Entry Points

8.1 This Strategic Framework is structured around a range of strategic objectives, entry points, and indicative activities that should inform ASEAN's gender mainstreaming efforts going forward. These are presented in this section as four goals and an associated set of outcomes. A further set of sub-outcomes, along with indicative activities and timeframes are provided in Section 10. Goal 1 focuses on strengthening ASEAN's institutional commitments and human resources (HR) approaches; Goal 2 addresses individual and collective capacity in terms of attitudes and norms toward gender issues, and access to data and technical and operational skills for gender mainstreaming; Goal 3 supports strengthening Sectoral Body initiatives, with an emphasis on engagement with CSOs as a way of prioritising women's needs; and Goal 4 supports strengthening support to Member States and intergovernmental processes.

8.2 The goals and envisaged outcomes of this Strategic Framework and the component approaches and activities have been conceptualised based on where ASEAN currently stands on progress on gender mainstreaming and on what is politically and operationally feasible in the coming years. While the activities are best understood as interdependent parts of a complex whole, the goals and outcomes are meant to inform and guide the overall direction of ASEAN's efforts on mainstreaming gender across the three ASEAN community pillars. the approaches and activities are all indicative and subject to the consideration of relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat through consultative dialogues and platforms. following such consultations pragmatic choices may inform and guide the sequencing of initiatives, the extent to which they can be fully resourced and realised, and whether some of them happen at all. all of this will be subject to high-level political commitment and buy-in, and resource mobilisation can be established and sustained.

8.3 The Framework aims to support advocacy for budgeting and allocating resources, as well as more detailed planning. It should be used by ASEAN as the basis for gathering feedback from the wider organisation, building buy-in and commitment from senior leadership, and securing resources and technical support from dialogue partners. The priority steps of building senior leadership buy-in, establishing the institutional mechanism, undertaking the gender audit, and securing staff capacity and financial resources will provide greater clarity on the level of commitment, resourcing, and capacity available for gender mainstreaming efforts. The results of these priority steps should be used by ASEAN to consult on, agree, and develop a more focused Implementation Plan that can support the organisation to track progress and achievements, engage in reflection and lesson learning, highlight and communicate achievements and lessons learned within ASEAN and to its external stakeholders for progress on gender equality.

Goal 1: ASEAN policies, institutions, and practices better embody its vision for a fairer, more equitable, and inclusive world

Outcome 1.1: Institutional Commitment and Approach—ASEAN has a clearly articulated and coordinated approach to gender equality.

Commitment and support amongst ASEAN senior leadership and dialogue partners: The effective implementation of this Strategic Framework, as well as any commitments, strategies, and workplans established in response to it is critically dependent on the extent to which high-level ownership and buy-in can be established and sustained, and whether adequate resources can be mobilised from Member States and dialogue partners. Mainstreaming gender and inclusion is not simply a technocratic exercise; it is a complex political process that requires an understanding of context, the different actors and interests involved, and the implications of working on gender mainstreaming at both the programmatic and organisational level.

The development of senior managers who are committed to gender equality has been argued to be a 'turning point', in that this creates conditions where staff 1) can recognise and address their own and

others' gender biases and stereotypes, and 2) are required to deliver on gender mainstreaming commitments for fulfilling those commitments.[35] It is important to understand that gender advisors and focal points can only enable senior leadership actions, but responsibility for systemic progress rests with senior leaders and not with gender advisors.

As such, early engagement with ASEAN senior leadership and, subsequently Dialogue Partners, on an ongoing basis will be critical. This will involve identifying senior-level officials across the three Communities with the organisational power and personal motivation to promote gender equality and inclusion who can champion the GMSF.[36] The Senior Officials Conferences held by ACW in 2018 and 2019 are a good starting point for this—as various high-level ASEAN officials expressed interest in and support for a gender mainstreaming effort. These officials—and any others who are interested—should now be provided briefings, evidence papers, and presentations to orient them to the gender mainstreaming objectives and approach, as well as the need for dedicated financial resources for gender-responsive initiatives; and consulted on the design of the institutional mechanism, a possible cross-Community Declaration/directive on implementing the Strategic Framework, and an ASEAN-wide participatory gender and inclusion audit.

A gender-responsive leadership programme: To drive change, senior leaders and managers need support and accompaniment. A leadership programme would involve gender advisors working with senior officials and managers on an ongoing basis to strengthen their understanding of the concepts and issues; provide them safe, confidential spaces in which to openly discuss their operating context and explore and identify opportunities and levers for change that are within their scope; and offer coaching as they develop and implement individual action plans. Such an approach would encourage active learning, develop a cadre of more knowledgeable senior and middle managers who are able to lead conversations in their teams, and encourage supportive and collaborative approaches among leaders. It is important to note that these leaders would not be expected to become gender and inclusion experts; but to develop their commitment and capacity in order to effectively use their authority to create space for the organisation as a whole to do better.

Performance management and incentives: Experience has shown that leaders can often neglect gender mainstreaming considerations because of competing priorities. To ensure sustained attention to gender and inclusion, the core competencies and performance management frameworks of all staff, especially senior staff, should be revised to include gender mainstreaming. In addition, individuals or teams that are doing good work should be recognised—through visibility, awards, additional resources, or opportunities for career development. Additional incentives could also be awarded for those doing exceptional work.

Implementation of a gender and inclusion audit: A crucial first step in this process is to understand better ASEAN's current policies, practices, attitudes, and organisational culture, and its strengths and challenges in relation to gender mainstreaming. The first year should be focused on undertaking a participatory gender and inclusion audit/review, which is a method of guided self-assessment supported by experienced facilitators and includes a desk review, a survey[37], interviews and workshops with staff, and reporting and feedback to senior officials and the wider organisation.

This audit should reveal staff perceptions about ASEAN's policies, declarations, and ministerial statements; political commitment; HR policies and performance management systems; technical capacity; and organisational culture. Because of their participatory approach, gender audits are a key tool for

[35] Moser et al, 2014.

[36] These should include ACW Focal Points and ACWC Representatives in each Member States; the Chairs of ASEAN Sectoral Bodies with ongoing initiatives on gender and inclusion; representatives from the Committee of Permanent Representatives; ASEC Deputy Secretary Generals, and representatives of selected ASEAN Dialogue Partners. Champions within ASEC – at the Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General and Director levels - will also need to be identified, and should include representation from the ASEC Staff Welfare Committee.

[37] The development of this could build on the survey tools already produced for the Senior Officials Conferences on Gender Mainstreaming, and the development of this Strategic Framework.

understanding the realities for women and men in an organisation, and for exploring formal and informal structures, processes, practices, and attitudes. A gender audit can also be a useful way of identifying good practice and building greater organisation-wide awareness of and interest in gender equality and inclusion principles. The audit should be used as part of a long-term and ongoing process of organisational change, rather than as a one-off exercise. The results of the gender audit will also be used to establish a baseline against which progress can be measured over time, and to support the development of a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework with priority outcomes, indicators, and targets (see Section 9 for more on this).

An audit can be viewed as sensitive by senior leadership. Early engagement and efforts to build their awareness and buy-in are therefore necessary first steps.

An increased commitment to gender and inclusion across the three Communities: Given that progress on gender equality and women's empowerment will require multidisciplinary approaches and deep coordination between the three Communities, building awareness, commitment, and ownership of this across the senior leadership of the three Communities is critical. The first phase of ASEAN's gender mainstreaming journey should include an ongoing process of dialogue and strategising among Sectoral Bodies, the GMFT and ASEC staff across the three Communities, with a view to revisiting the discussion and outcomes from the Senior Officials Conferences. This process will build awareness and consensus about sectoral linkages, support an exploration of opportunities for collaboration and joint initiatives, and identify Sectoral Bodies that are further along in their engagement with gender and inclusion issues and could be supported to develop a more strategic approach/workplan.

Establishment of an institutional mechanism to promote gender mainstreaming: Another key step to undertake early in the process is the establishment of an institutional mechanism, as described in Section 7 above, that can bring together stakeholders from across the three Communities and gender-bodies in an effective, authoritative, and sufficiently capacitated system. Detailed steps for the establishment of the institutional mechanism and its component bodies and platforms are provided in the Indicative Activities matrix in Section 10.

A cross-Community M&E system: Ensuring momentum, learning, and accountability for ASEAN's commitments to gender mainstreaming will require establishing an M&E system—described in Section 9—that can encompass the various workstreams envisaged in this Plan.

Gender-sensitive and inclusive communications policy and guidance: Building the commitment of a large and complex organisation, as well as a more supportive enabling environment, will require building awareness about gender equality and inclusion as well as ASEAN's vision and values. A strategic communications and advocacy strategy should be developed for senior leadership to provide clear and constant messaging about gender equality and inclusion. The strategy should aim to ensure that senior managers and staff are made aware of the implications that ASEAN's revised or new commitments on gender and inclusion will have for them and their work. A communications workstream will also need to run alongside ASEAN's capacity building, knowledge sharing, and dialogue activities (see Outcomes 2.2 and 4.3).

All internal and external communications—including audio-visual outputs, internal and external meetings, conferences, and seminars—should clearly reflect ASEAN's values and objectives relating to gender and inclusion. This includes attention to the kind of language and images that are used, whose voices are heard, which identities are represented, and which perspectives are included. These considerations play an important role in shaping the culture, behaviour, and attitudes within organisations as well as the way in which those organisations are perceived.

Outcome 1.2: Gender and Inclusion in the Workplace—Women are equitably represented in staffing and leadership, staff are able to achieve and balance satisfying work and personal lives, and women feel safe, valued, and respected.

Clear, gender-sensitive, and inclusive HR policies: A gender audit should include a review of HR policies to assess the extent to which these incorporate a gender and inclusion perspective (e.g., on induction, salary, travel, and promotion) to strengthen those that may already partly integrate gender (e.g., hours of work, recruitment and selection, time off in lieu), and to review gender-specific policies

(e.g., maternity leave, paternity leave, and new shared parental leave policy) for ways they could support more gender-transformative outcomes. Policies and procedures on performance management and flexible working hours should also be reviewed and assessed to reveal which of these policies are, and are perceived to be, applied equally and proactively.

Commitments and initiatives to correct entrenched gender imbalances: An important part of an organisation's commitment to gender and inclusion is also the extent to which women are proportionately represented in the organisation and in senior leadership, feel safe and valued, and can balance fulfilling work and personal lives. There are very few women in senior leadership roles, and while—to a certain extent—such disparities in representation are common to organisations globally, it is important that organisations such as ASEAN can work to either shift or maintain the status quo. In fact, as Moser et al argue: "Gender balance and sex composition of an organisation send strong signals regarding its commitment to gender equality. Having insufficient women in senior management positions suggests that an organisation cannot apply policies on gender equality it advocates for others, thus undermining its credibility."[38]

ASEC staff also mentioned the pressures of heavy workloads and the tendency for the gender and inclusion agenda to be considered the responsibility of women in the organisation. These issues can affect women's career progression, their recruitment into senior roles, and their work-life balance. It is proposed that based on the findings from the gender audit, ASEAN work to understand and discuss the barriers facing women in the workplace, set commitments or action pledges on greater representation of women in senior roles, and implement strategies to support women staff, for example, mentoring, leadership training, changing performance management approaches, and revisiting job roles/relationships.

Establishment/strengthening of a gender-sensitive and inclusive complaint mechanism: Grievance and complaint mechanisms are important avenues for women and men to register and resolve problems in the workplace. The power imbalances between women and men, and between people of different races, classes, and ages have underpinned the widespread abuse of power both within the development sector and other organisations. One aspect of this is sexual exploitation and harassment, which is underpinned by gender unequal organisational cultures. The design of a grievance mechanism should be grounded in an understanding of gender norms in the workplace, and its rules of procedure should be sensitive and responsive to general and specific needs of women. Staff managing the mechanism should undergo priority training to assess their own biases, and to learn about identifying and addressing issues that affect women during the complaint process.

Goal 2: ASEAN builds its knowledge, technical competencies, and capacity on gender and inclusion issues

Outcome 2.1: Knowledge, Attitudes, and Norms—Individual and collective attitudes are changed, and staff and leadership internalise and reflect these attitudes and values in their work and behaviours.

Organisational cultures are shaped by formal as well as informal and invisible rules and practices. Individuals become socialised into these cultures, which are replicated through everyday symbols, narratives, and routines. To embody its commitment to gender equity and inclusion, ASEAN must look inward, exploring and interrogating its own behaviours, assumptions, and biases, and understanding how these may shape the way the organisation sets priorities, collects and analyses information, communicates, works with partners, and applies HR policies. This is important both as an end in itself and to improve performance in programming. Bringing about the deep-rooted structural and cultural changes that are required to promote gender equity and inclusion requires supporting an environment in which staff can openly and collectively reflect on, discuss, and learn about the ways in gender inequality and unequal power relations are reinforced.

[38] Moser et al, 2014, p.36.

Reflection and action learning on gender and inclusion: Building this awareness and commitment will require engaging ASEAN officials and staff in an ongoing, facilitated reflection and action learning programme (such as the Gender Action Learning System[39]),which will be gradually rolled out across the ASEC Divisions and Sectoral Bodies. Reflection and action learning approaches are based on the same principles as one-off training—that all staff are change agents. As such, increasing their knowledge about the ways in which gender inequality is sustained can help them to address formal and informal rules, norms, and practices. Building internal cultures of equality requires greater awareness and ongoing individual and collective reflection and learning. This must be based on an understanding of an organisation's history, its work, how it already promotes gender equality, and the key entry points for change.[40] This approach aims to respond to critiques that gender mainstreaming approaches tend to focus on vertical initiatives to support individual women's empowerment, without tackling the gender inequality and exclusion that is deeply embedded in the organisations delivering those initiatives.

Responding to Resistance and Backlash

Gender equality and gender mainstreaming can often encounter significant resistance. Often this is a result of men resisting the inclusion of women in previously male-dominated domains and hierarchies. This resistance can take different forms. For example, stakeholders can feel personally blamed of acting in discriminatory ways; believe that committing to gender mainstreaming will create additional work, deny that gender equality is an issue for their organisation or the issues they work on, demand further research or evidence before any action can be taken, require the development of "a business case" for addressing the needs of women, or insist that gender equality is an issue for women. Such resistance can be rooted in discriminatory attitudes, as well as fatigue from continued organisational change processes or the perception that gender mainstreaming is being imposed from above.

Building an understanding of this resistance, and the need to support change agents with capacity support approaches is an integral part of the process of gender mainstreaming. These efforts require approaches that straddle initiatives that target wider organisational attitudes and aim to build the communications, influencing, and networking skills of ASEAN gender champions and focal points (as described in Outcome 2.2).

Without ASEAN staff and Sectoral Body representatives going through a sustained process of reflecting on their own beliefs and attitudes; how these shapes, and are shaped by, the wider organisational structure; and how this affects their approach to their work, it will not be possible to effectively implement the other objectives in this Strategic Framework. Although the tenure of Sectoral Body officials only lasts from three to four years, it is hoped there is enough time for them to take some action toward organisational strengthening by participating in the programme. This is in line with the rationale behind the approach outlined in the Framework—that building stronger, more gender-equal and inclusive institutional processes will lessen reliance on individuals. Even so, orientation on ASEAN's gender equality and mainstreaming efforts should be included in the induction of incoming Sectoral Body representatives.

Outcome 2.2: Analytical Capacity and Data—ASEAN institutions and staff have increased capacity to understand and integrate gender and inclusion considerations into their work.

Increased access to quality data to support evidence-based decision-making: A fundamental factor affecting ASEAN's ability to understand the needs and realities of women and girls, and to advocate to Member States and dialogue partners accordingly, is access to good quality, disaggregated data—not just by sex, but by other variables such as income, age, race, ethnicity, religion, migration status, disability, and geographic location. While ASEAN leaders are aware of the need for accurate data and information, as well as analytical capacity, to underpin decision-making, there is currently a dearth of high-quality, disaggregated data being generated by the Member States. This has hampered ASEC in

[39] Gender at Work: https://genderatwork.org/gender-action-learning/

[40] Ibid.

fulfilling its core function of collecting regional data to monitor progress in priority areas and ASEAN's engagement with gender and inclusion issues as a whole.[41]

In March 2021, ASEAN launched the "ASEAN Gender Outlook: Achieving the SDGs for all and leaving no woman or girl behind". This effort identifies existing data and sources for data that is disaggregated by sex as well as other variables such as income, location, and ethnicity. The assessment provides an important opportunity for ASEAN to gain an up to date and evidence-based understanding of progress against the SDGs, and for ASEC to map the data sources used, record the existing sex-disaggregated statistics, and note trends and progress for integration into ASEAN's own routine monitoring efforts. Organisations such as UN Women and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) are supporting various Member States to strengthen their national data systems.

In line with the activities presented for Outcome 4.2, ASEAN should align with and support these efforts, including through developing sectoral guidelines on how to collect, process, disseminate, and use disaggregated data (similar to the 2018 ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Violence against Women and Girls, Data Collection and Use). In addition, the Statistics Division and ASEAN Community Statistical System should ensure that emerging data, particularly that which includes multidimensional analysis is collected and made available to the Sectoral Bodies and Secretariat in accessible formats, such as dashboards, infographics, evidence briefs and presentations. Furthermore, it should support capacity strengthening efforts on the generation, collection, synthesis and use of disaggregated data and introduce gender and data statistics in ASEAN's reporting on the SDGs.

Increased knowledge and capacity to integrate gender and inclusion: A key finding from the Community conferences and ASEC interviews is that there is a strongly felt need for structured and resourced capacity building and learning on gender and inclusion for officials and staff involved in research and analysis, programming, M&E, partnership building, and communications. To date, ASEAN stakeholders have received several "gender trainings" which have focused mostly on generic information about gender and inclusion concepts and analytical principles. These are of limited utility, often do not attract senior or male officials, and leave participants with limited understanding of how to change the way they work. USAID-IGNITE's ongoing engagement with the AEC on gender and inclusion issues in economic sectors has revealed a strong demand for sector-specific training and building understanding of the nuanced ways in which different economic issues affect women and men. These specialised technical training programmes should be based on robust needs assessment with a focus not just on *why* gender and inclusion considerations should be addressed, but also *how*. Feedback from quality assurance processes (as outlined in Goal 3 below) should also inform the design of training programmes.

ASEAN staff and officials will need support on a range of capacities and skills:

- *Technical* skills related to the gender and inclusion dimensions of the sector/issue in question, including using data to understand and communicate gender gaps and trends, to support gender-responsive and -inclusive M&E approaches.
- *Operational* knowledge and skills, such as budgeting, work planning and personnel management.
- *Systemic* capacities, including developing and maintaining structures that support effective decision-making and use of resources.
- *Adaptive* capacities, through which actors can respond to learning, and/or changes in the political or operating environment.
- *Influencing* skills, through which ASEAN bodies, teams, and individual staff can represent GESI issues and advocate for and bring about change.

[41] Currently, the ASEAN Statistics Division, housed under ASEC, collects data for 26, primarily socio-cultural, indicators that are either gender-specific or disaggregated by gender. Eleven of these are ASEAN-defined indicators, while 15 are SDG indicators.

The actors within the gender mainstreaming institutional mechanism, and the gender champions and GFPs, in particular, will require priority capacity support on gender mainstreaming tools and approaches, advocacy and communications approaches, and adaptive strategy and implementation.

The way in which capacity support is provided is also important. While evidence shows that one-off training can be beneficial,[42]individual training sessions are most effective if combined with other types of instruction as part of a flexible package of support. In addition to structured training, this includes on-the-job learning, coaching, accompaniment, and dialogue with internal and external gender experts. In addition, experience has shown that workshops and training need to reach a "critical mass" of stakeholders and include senior leaders and middle managers. It is also important that participants *want* to be there and consider the knowledge and skills they will gain as useful, desirable, and directly relevant to their work.

Goal 3. ASEAN policies and action plans better reflect the needs of women and girls in the region, and Sectoral Bodies across the three Communities are able to progressively undertake more effective initiatives that centre their participation and respond to their needs

Outcome 3.1: Women's Voices—ASEAN strengthens the engagement of women's organisations in consultation, planning, and implementation so that the perspectives and needs of all women and girls are better embedded in ASEAN consultation, planning, and implementation processes.

Consulting with a wide range of organisations and individuals who represent women's needs and contributions is critical for relevant, evidence-based, and inclusive decision-making that accounts for the priorities of different groups, including those who are often excluded from decision-making processes. Engaging with advocates and practitioners who have a deep contextual understanding of the political, economic, and social structures; institutions; and norms that can serve to discriminate against, or support, women and girls in a particular setting can help national and regional actors to better define a particular issue; identify and prioritise possible solutions; build ownership; and identify barriers to implementation, risks, and possible unintended consequences. Participatory consultation processes can also support knowledge exchange and mutual learning, as well as build transparency and trust.[43] CSOs also play an important accountability role, ensuring that beyond the initial consultations, the design, implementation, and evaluations of initiatives maintain a focus on the needs and priorities of women and girls. In fact, the Beijing Platform for Action and, more recently, the 2030 Agenda encourage institutional mechanisms and processes that include "non-governmental organisations and community organisations from the grass-roots upwards" in "responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels" (Sustainable Development Goal 16, Target 16.7).[44]

A better understanding of the regional civil society landscape: Civil society in the ASEAN region encompasses a diverse range of organisations with different objectives, constituencies, roles, skills, and levels of formality that are engaged in varied forms of action at the regional and sub-regional level. To understand who to engage with and how, ASEAN first needs to map the status of civil society action on gender and inclusion issues in the region, including areas of action, priorities, and target groups. This must include groups ASEAN has not traditionally engaged. In particular, national- and regional-level umbrella and apex organisations should be assessed on the extent to which they are representative of groups and issues in the region.

Effective and inclusive civil society participation channels: The challenges that ASEAN's formal participation and consultation processes pose to meaningful engagement with the types of rights-based, solidarity-focused organisations that are generally most active on gender and inclusion issues in the

[42] Cited in Moser et al, 2014.
[43] European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender analysis webpage: https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/methods-tools/gender-analysis
[44] Ibid.

region have been discussed in section 4.6 above. And yet, CSOs have been instrumental in bringing about policy change on women's issues across the region. If the perspectives of women and girls are to shape ASEAN's work, then the organisation will have to find ways to engage with the CSOs that represent them. Establishing effective dialogue platforms will require understanding the different formal and informal entry points for CSO engagement with ASEAN processes; the extent to which these provide space for meaningful exchange and dialogue; how the input elicited through them can more effectively inform ASEAN initiatives and enhance CSO initiatives; and how they can be strengthened, augmented, or where relevant, formalised. This will include paying attention to the extent to which women's organisations are able to engage and be heard in sector-wide processes, and to elicit their ideas for more productive ways of engaging.

CSOs also face their own challenges in engaging with regional organisations, including their capacity to undertake political analysis and engage in governance and advocacy processes; capture by elite groups; cohesion and representation among themselves; and engagement with emerging actors, particularly at the community level. It maybe that in providing greater space for CSOs, ASEAN can support them to shape and define their role, functions, and structures in engaging with regional organisations, and play a part in strengthening regional civil society collaboration. ASEAN could also consider facilitating capacity support and technical assistance to women's organisations and networks to support their effective engagement with ASEAN, such as in building representative networks, collecting and presenting data, thinking and working politically, and undertaking advocacy.

Civil society consultation informs ASEAN policy and programming: Given the limitations of ASEAN's formal civil society participation mechanisms, ACWC and representatives of the CoP should take the lead in exploring how informal consultations with a broader range of stakeholders can be systematically communicated to the GFPs and relevant Sectoral Bodies and used to inform their work. In addition, civil society experts could be engaged to provide strategic advice and technical assistance to Sectoral Bodies, for example by forming advisory panels representing a range of perspectives or establishing a multi-stakeholder Advisory Panel as part of the Gender Mainstreaming Institutional Mechanism (see Section 7). Going forward, ASEAN should ensure that civil society actively engage in the development of technical resources, guidelines, and frameworks for action.

Outcome 3.2: Gender-Sensitive and Inclusive Programming—ASEAN progressively increases relevant, high-quality targeted and mainstreamed analysis and programming that address the needs of women and girls.

The primary emphasis of this Strategic Framework is to put in place the systems, processes, and attitudes that will support the integration of meaningful commitments to gender and inclusion in the revised 2025–2035 Blueprints, and encourage and support all ASEAN Sectoral Bodies to integrate gender and inclusion considerations into their work by engaging in the reflection, training, data analysis, and dialogue and knowledge sharing activities outlined in this Framework. Yet there are a number of Sectoral Bodies that have already been working on gender and inclusion whose efforts should be further supported.

In addition, ASEAN has developed a raft of plans, guidelines, and research studies on priority gender issues in recent years that provide strong recommendations for operationalising gender mainstreaming commitments in specific sectors (see box). These can be translated into the design, implementation, and evaluation of some discrete, strategic initiatives that could play an important demonstration role in this

Selected Existing Guidance on Sector-Specific Gender Mainstreaming

- ASEAN Regional Women, Peace and Security Study, 2021
- Regional Guidelines on VAWG Data Collection and Use, 2018
- USAID-IGNITE Gender Analysis Report, 2018
- AICHR Thematic Study on Women in Natural Disasters, 2018
- AMAF's Approach to Gender Mainstreaming the Food, Agriculture and Forestry Sectors, 2018
- Eliminating Violence Against Women Regional Plan of Action, 2016
- AMAF's Approach to Gender Mainstreaming the Food, Agriculture and Forestry Sectors, 2018
- Action Agenda on Mainstreaming Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) in ASEAN, 2017

phase, that is, illustrating what ASEAN could do on gender and inclusion and the outcomes that could be achieved, and generating recommendations and lessons learned for future initiatives.

Selected Sectoral Bodies across the three Communities commit to making progress on GESI: Currently, a number of Sectoral Bodies and ASEC Divisions—and individuals within them—across the three Communities have been actively engaging with gender-related evidence, civil society consultation, capacity-building initiatives, and programme development. There was considerable evidence from the Community Conferences of motivation to do more on gender and inclusion. Thus, a first step for this outcome should be to identify those teams, whose interest, leadership, and existing work can be translated into clear and measurable workplans.

This Strategic Framework takes as one of its guiding principles that there is a two-way and mutually supportive link between system-wide gender mainstreaming initiatives, and the implementation of high-quality initiatives that either target or meaningfully integrate the needs of women and girls. However, as the Community Conferences showed, these initiatives are often undertaken on an ad hoc basis, and there is often limited understanding of what other Sectoral Bodies or Member States are doing, or how these discrete initiatives contribute to ASEAN's high-level commitments. Engaging in a reflection and strategising process—within individual Sectoral Bodies and collectively with other Sectoral Bodies across Communities—will enable the identification of relevant and feasible opportunities for gender and inclusion-focused initiatives that can be undertaken in this phase. This could include engaging GFPs who are sector experts and have an understanding of gender issues or facilitating conversations between gender and technical specialists.[45] This, in turn, will enable clear communication with other Sectoral Bodies, dialogue partners, and Member States and could open up opportunities for funding and collaboration. This should result in Sectoral Bodies developing workplans that outline monitoring indicators, human and financial resources, capacity support needs, coordination with ASEAN and external stakeholders, and knowledge and information management plans.

Selected Sectoral Bodies undertake high-quality, evidence-based gender and inclusion analysis and design and implement high-quality initiatives: In addition to the organisation-wide efforts mentioned in Objectives 1 through 3, Sectoral Body workplans will need to integrate targeted capacity and technical support on the initiatives and activities that they plan to undertake (as will be identified in the workplans). Providing support to the Sectoral Bodies—in terms of approaches and methods—should be underpinned by the same considerations outlined in Outcome 2.2. Sectoral Bodies should be supported to access the capacity support/technical assistance/financial resources they require as a priority, particularly to undertake robust M&E. This will enable them to learn from experience and adapt and improve their approaches accordingly, leading to better performance. It will also enable them to make a meaningful contribution to ASEAN-wide knowledge-sharing processes and demonstrate the potential of gender-sensitive and inclusive approaches.

Goal 4. ASEAN supports intergovernmental processes and Member States' gender mainstreaming and gender-focused initiatives

Outcome 4.1: Member State Gender Mainstreaming Efforts—ASEAN support dialogue and planning on gender mainstreaming at the Member State level.

As an inter-governmental mechanism, ASEAN plays a key role in helping Member States to address shared challenges, by informing and supporting their efforts at the national level.

Agreement on a collective approach to gender mainstreaming: The good practice examples shown in Section 3 provide a snapshot of the different types of gender mainstreaming initiatives that are being implemented within Member States, from establishing whole-of-government institutional structures, to strengthening technical integration at the sectoral level, to strengthening the collection and analysis of disaggregated data. Some Member States, such as the Philippines are global leaders on gender mainstreaming and have a wealth of learning and technical insight, while some Member States are hampered by limited political commitment, expertise, and resources. Developing a regional framework that can accommodate different stages of progress could enable Member States to benefit from dialogue on

[45]Moser et al, 2014.

learning and progress, access support from each other, and even build more context-specific understandings of gender mainstreaming and effective approaches. The objective of this framework would be to guide ASEAN's collective support to Member States, and Member States to each other, and to track progress at a regional level. Once agreed, Member States could provide data and reporting against the agreed indicators and engage in regular knowledge sharing and learning about how the different outcome areas and indicators apply to the Member States, how agreed activities are being implemented, the key challenges and responses to them, and how data on progress is being collected.

Developing and agreeing on such a framework will require a long-term approach. In the first phase, the AGMSF could support discussion and agreement between Member States on priorities and strategies that could be included in a regional Framework, leading to more focused work on identifying outcomes, activities, and indicators in the second phase. A roadmap on gender mainstreaming at the whole-of-government and line ministry/government department level is provided in Supplementary Materials provided to the ASEAN Secretariat and could be used to support these discussions. It has been developed on the basis of international guidelines,[46] regional good practice, and key findings from the Gender Mainstreaming knowledge, attitudes, and practices survey that was undertaken during the development of this Strategic Framework.[47] It includes objectives and suggested outcomes relating to whole-of-government commitments, policies, and strategic plans; ministry/agency-level commitments, policies, and strategic plans; institutional structures and frameworks; gender and inclusion analysis; knowledge, capacity, and skills; access to high-quality data; oversight institutions and monitoring of gender mainstreaming plans; complaints mechanisms; and gender-sensitive and inclusive organisations.

Outcome 4.2: Technical Assistance to Member States and Sectoral Bodies—ASEAN supports the provision of technical advice and assistance on gender and inclusion to Member States, Sectoral Bodies, and inter-governmental processes.

Access to technical assistance and guidance: A key role for ASEAN is to support Member States and Sectoral Bodies to access technical expertise on gender and inclusion and to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into all technical assistance assignments facilitated by ASEAN. This will require building a roster of gender and inclusion experts from the region and internationally, identifying sectoral experts with experience of working on gender and inclusion, and developing modalities whereby thematic experts routinely engage with gender and inclusion expertise. ASEAN should also continue to support the development of approaches, methodologies, tools, and guidelines on priority areas, while also working with Member States to assess their capacity needs in implementing those approaches.

In doing so, ASEC should actively engage with Member States about the kinds of support they require. There is growing evidence, for example, that country governments want better access to experts who understand their country contexts, have practical experience of the issues at hand, and are able to work with them to develop locally relevant solutions. In addition, national governments would like technical assistance approaches to include an investment in developing their institutional and technical capacities so that change can be made sustainable. This is particularly important given the complex, contested, and nonlinear change involved with gender and inclusion issues. ASEAN could explore innovative coaching and accompaniment approaches, for example, where country and regional experts support country processes, and if needed, are supported by international experts as coaches.[48]

A further aspect of technical assistance is supporting intergovernmental dialogue, negotiations, and decision-making processes to ensure these include attention to gender and inclusion commitments and issues. This should include providing evidence-based technical briefings, background papers, summaries of debates, negotiations, and outcomes; supporting preparatory dialogues and consultations; coordinating with women's organisations, advocates, and gender and inclusion experts to provide substantive inputs; and undertaking outreach with key stakeholders to raise the gender and inclusion agenda.

[46] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015

[47] Key findings from the government stakeholders survey are provided in the Supplementary Materials provided to the ASEAN Secretariat

[48] See Results for Development (R4D): https://r4d.org/thecoachingapproach/

Support to mobilising resources: ASEAN's relationship with international agencies and dialogue partners is a key part of its facilitation mandate, and an important way in which it can support national gender mainstreaming efforts. In addition to supporting Member States to access the relevant expertise, ASEAN could also play an important role in supporting countries to mobilise resources from dialogue partners, and where possible, supporting the extension of existing regional technical assistance programmes.

Outcome 4.3: Knowledge Sharing and Learning—ASEAN regional and national stakeholders engage in ongoing knowledge sharing, dialogue, and learning about programming insights, evidence, and debates in and across their sectors.

Internal and external knowledge sharing and communications—of data, information, and learning—are critical to disseminating values relating to gender equality and inclusion, raising awareness about gender mainstreaming objectives and processes, building commitment to those objectives, and providing transparency about progress and challenges, as well as a feedback loop. A focus of this phase of ASEAN's gender mainstreaming approach is to demonstrate the types of initiatives and outcomes that can be achieved when gender-responsive initiatives are developed and implemented. This will help build commitment and motivation among the wider organisation in the lead up to development of the new Blueprints.

Strengthened knowledge sharing platforms: While a small number of ASEC Divisions that are working on gender and inclusion issues indicated that they already organise seminars and panel discussions on those areas, several ASEC and Sectoral Body stakeholders indicated that they would be interested in hearing more about the work being undertaken by other Sectoral Bodies and Member States. ASEAN staff and officials are often under significant time pressure, juggling multiple commitments, so it will be important to create convenient formats for presenters and audiences.

Section 7 proposes a CoP to be established as part of the gender mainstreaming institutional mechanism to support knowledge sharing and learning. In the initial stages, the CoP could focus on events/webinars that are appropriate for busy staff and officials, for example, lunchtime talks or informal brown bag formats, with brief presentations followed by discussion/questions and answers. These could prioritise discussion of ASEAN initiatives and key international and regional policy and research initiatives (such as "ASEAN Gender Outlook: Achieving the SDGs for all and leaving no woman or girl behind", and sharing up-to-date learning resources, best practices, and toolkits. The focus should be on building motivation for knowledge exchange processes. Over time, these could evolve to scheduling and convening a more varied programme of website updates, bulletins, high-level speeches and publications, and monthly/bimonthly workshops, panel discussions, and dialogue activities that respond to current and emerging priorities and engage partners and external expertise. These knowledge sharing activities are a complementary part of the capacity strengthening activities outlined in Outcome 2.2, as they maintain the visibility and momentum of the issues and provide staff and officials a platform for ongoing discussion and engagement on them. As such, while the primary responsibility for the CoP will lie with the GFPs, they will work closely with those in the institutional mechanism who are responsible for the capacity strengthening initiatives as well as with the ASEC Communications Division.

ASEAN's enhanced profile as a key facilitator of evidence-building, dialogue, and regional cooperation: Making strategic contributions to, and addressing gaps in, the body of evidence would support ASEAN's profile as a thoughtful actor on gender and inclusion. Supporting highly relevant, cutting-edge gender research initiatives, which also support ASEAN's work, will require engaging in a reflection and strategising process. Such a process would identify where the key opportunities and needs for gender research are, how research might align with or support the development of Sectoral Body workplans, and how it might support broader regional priorities. The results of this process will enable clear internal communication, and with dialogue partners and other stakeholders. These research studies may feature in individual Sectoral Body workplans and would support Outcome 3.2. Establishing research partnerships with regional and international institutions would help ASEAN secure more strategic support in shaping its research agenda, as well as access research and gender expertise that could support capacity strengthening and technical assistance Outcomes 2.2 and 4.2, respectively.

9. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting on ASEAN's Gender Mainstreaming Commitments

9.1 Effective M&E will provide evidence and learning to 1) inform ASEAN's improved planning, design, and implementation of gender-responsive initiatives; and 2) hold the institutional mechanism, Sectoral Bodies, and ASEAN as a whole accountable for their commitments. ASEAN must be able to react to this evidence by recognising what is and is not found to work, by responding to the challenges identified, and by setting new priorities where necessary. This may require revising work and action plans on an ongoing basis, as well as the Strategic Framework where necessary.

9.2 As mentioned earlier, it is envisaged that the consultation, consensus-building, and resource mobilisation efforts outlined at Outcome 1.1 will be used to translate the strategic objectives, entry points, and indicative activities outlined in this Framework into a Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Plan. Undertaking a participatory gender audit as a priority will generate important analysis about ASEAN's policies, practices, capacities, and organisational culture; provide baseline data against which progress can be measured; and inform the development of indicators that can be feasibly monitored. The Implementation Plan—which should be developed in collaboration with the Monitoring Directorate—should define appropriate indicators, timeframes, disaggregations, data sources, and reporting frequencies.

9.3 The indicators for the first Phase (2021–2025) will need to be carefully considered in order to reflect this Phase's focus on establishing the building blocks—including the commitment, capacity, and institutional mechanisms and relationships—for gender and inclusion considerations to become an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring, and learning of all programmes going forward. As such, it may be appropriate in this Phase for the indicators to be more implementation- and process-focused. Even so, monitoring should be able to assess the extent to which ASEAN's effort are contributing toward their purpose—and the ways in which staff are experiencing organisational changes—and so associated indicators should be developed to capture this.

9.4 The M&E framework will need to track progress on the activities outlined in the Implementation Plan, encompass various further workstreams envisaged in this Strategic Framework, and enable collective analysis and learning. This includes:

- Reporting on the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Plan.
- Reporting on Sectoral Body workplans (Outcome 3.2 in the Indicative Activities matrix).
- Reviews and evaluations of ASEAN gender-responsive initiatives (Outcome 3.2.).

Developing M&E frameworks for the individual workstreams will require careful consideration of how to capture the complexities of change on gender and inclusion, and, where appropriate, complementary results and outcomes across the three Communities. This will require flexible and adaptable indicators which, to the extent possible, are disaggregated for different groups. It will also be important to be aware of risks and to track unintended and possibly negative consequences.

9.5 Understanding how to measure the link between activities and the longer-term outcomes and goals envisaged in ASEAN's suite of regional frameworks, strategic plans, and Sectoral workplans will be a key challenge, especially given that gender-related change processes are complex, nonlinear, and messy. This will require building the capacity of the Sectoral Bodies and ASEC on contribution-based approaches, including the use of participatory qualitative methods such as outcome mapping and Most Significant Change. These can support tracking the extent to which activities are contributing to process-related outcomes, such as changes in policies, procedures, and awareness levels, as well as overall goals. Monitoring and reporting will also need to include both quantitative and qualitative data to illuminate the complex processes of change. While quantitative data can explain what is happening, and provide a compelling case for why addressing gender and inclusion is important to a broad range of audiences, qualitative information supports understanding the how and why by providing a deeper, more

contextualised engagement with the social processes and power dynamics that shape the pathways of change toward gender equality—and that are difficult to measure with quantitative methods.[49] As such, monitoring should not only track progress on activities, but also indicate the extent to which transformational dynamics are taking root and help identify potential sources of resistance to change. In this way, monitoring tools and processes should be embedded in a continuous cycle of learning, adapting, and improving.

9.6 It is likely that some investment will be needed to strengthen the capacities of the ASEAN monitoring and statistical teams, as well as those of Sectoral Body and ASEC officials and staff. The relevant teams will also need time to design and plan M&E approaches. This will include ensuring that any primary data collection efforts integrate gender and inclusion considerations in the development of the study design and methodology, and that female researchers and enumerators are involved in data collection.

9.7 Monitoring and reporting will occur at two broad levels:1) PEGD and the Monitoring Directorate within ASEC; and 2) the ACC. PEGD and the Monitoring Directorate will be responsible for coordinating and producing annual monitoring reports for submission to the AGMSC/AMMW for approval and further submission to the ACC. Tasking the ACC with oversight for monitoring of the Strategic Framework will ensure that any recommendations are received by an ASEAN body with sufficient cross-Community authority and influence to issue further guidance or policy directions. ASEAN will also undertake a Mid-Term Review of this Strategic Framework no later than 2023 to assess progress and identify and integrate lessons from the first two years of implementation.

[49] Moser et al, 2014.

10. Indicative Activities

10.1 This section aims to translate the strategic objectives outlined in Section 8 into indicative activities and timeframes that could feature in the agreed Implementation Plan. It is understood that the development of the Implementation Plan will need to be approached with an element of pragmatism, and that the sequencing and implementation of the activities and initiatives will be dependent on the resources that can be secured, as well as on the priorities of the AMS and the dialogue partners. Nevertheless, it will be important to bear in mind that the relationships between the outputs and outcomes are interdependent, complex, and mutually reinforcing and so omitting pre-requisite initiatives or disrupting the sequencing may shift progress or affect what might be considered successful outcomes. ***Sustained high-level political support and the mobilisation of resources are the two key assumptions underpinning this Plan and constitute the greatest risks to its implementation.***

10.2 This Framework is also intended to be a living document—and it is likely that it will need to be revisited once the institutional mechanism is established and its mandate and level of resources become clear. The Implementation Plan should be reviewed and revised every year as the resources, capacities, and commitments available to the gender mainstreaming agenda and this Strategic Framework evolve, and as ongoing monitoring and the Mid Term Review generate recommendations for improvements.

Indicative Activities

#	Sub-Outcome	Output	Activity	Time-frame	Responsible Entity
Goal 1: ASEAN policies, institutions, and practices embody its vision for a fairer, more equitable, and inclusive world					
Outcome 1.1: ASEAN has a clearly articulated and coordinated approach to gender equality					
1	Commitment and support for gender mainstreaming from ASEAN senior leadership and dialogue partners	i. Engagement with ASEAN senior leadership	Prepare and provide briefings, evidence, and presentations to senior leadership on gender mainstreaming objectives and approach, the design of the institutional mechanism, a possible cross-Community Declaration/directive on implementing the Plan, and the need for an ASEAN-wide gender audit	Y1	ACW/ACWC
		ii. High-level Champions of the GMSF	Identify and engage with senior-level officials to champion the implementation of the GMSF	Y1	ACW/ACWC/ PEGD
		iii. Gender-responsive leadership programme	Provide training/coaching/accompaniment programme for senior leadership, including informal working group environments and support to developing and implementing individual action plans	Y1	ACW/ ACWC/ PEGD
		iv. Strategic communications	Develop a strategic communications and advocacy strategy for senior leadership to provide clear and constant messaging about gender equality and inclusion	Y1	ACW/ ACWC/ PEGD/ Communications Division
		v. Performance management	Develop a clear and realistic plan for adding core values, competencies, and performance criteria on gender and inclusion for all ASEC staff and Sectoral Body representatives, with a particular focus on senior staff	Y2	Gender Mainstreaming Focal Team (GMFT)/ HR
		vi. Incentives and recognition	Explore possibilities for and establish an incentives scheme that recognises Sectoral Body and ASEAN Secretariat teams and individuals doing exceptional work on gender and inclusion	Y2	GMFT/ HR
		vii. Engagement with Dialogue Partners	Increase engagement with Dialogue Partners about ASEAN's gender mainstreaming approach and objectives with a view to mobilising resources, technical support, and strengthening regional-international linkages		
2	An institutional mechanism for gender mainstreaming is established	i. ASEAN institutional mechanism for gender mainstreaming	Design and establish an institutional mechanism to lead and coordinate gender mainstreaming efforts across the three Communities. ***Given the importance of an effective architecture for the implementation of the Strategic Framework, more detailed steps for this action are provided below***	Y1	ACW/ ACWC/PEGD
			• Develop a discussion paper on the establishment and strengthening of ASEAN mechanisms and platforms to implement the GMSF	Jan 2021	
			• Conduct an internal coordination meeting within the ASEAN Secretariat to identify the mechanisms and platforms	Jan 2021	
			• ACW and ACWC hold internal discussion on the establishment and strengthening of ASEAN mechanisms and platforms to implement the GMSF	Feb 2021	
			• Develop and adopt the mandate and terms of reference of any new ASEAN mechanisms and platforms	Mar 2012 onward	

#	Sub-Outcome	Output	Activity	Time-frame	Responsible Entity
			• Identify and recruit the members of the bodies of the institutional mechanism, ensuring these represent women, and including men, including from senior levels	Mar 2021	
			• Introduce an additional mandate on GM for existing ASEAN platforms and mechanisms	Mar 2021 onward	
			• Induct all members of the bodies of the institutional mechanism, particularly the GFPs, into their duties and responsibilities	Apr 2021	
			• Develop a Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Plan (including M&E framework (see 1.1(5)I below)	Apr 2021	
			• Undertake a mid-year stocktaking on the progress of establishing and strengthening of ASEAN mechanisms and platforms to implement the AGMSF	Jun 2021	
			• Report to AMMW on the status of Year 1 progress of the Implementation Plan including the establishment and strengthening of ASEAN mechanisms and platforms to implement the GMSF (with Indonesia as the incoming AMMW Chair)	Oct 2021	
		ii. GFP network	Establish, and appoint members of, the network across Sectoral Bodies, with clear Terms of Reference and allocation of time and resources	Mar 2021	GMFT
3	ASEAN's vision and policies are informed by an evidence-based analysis	i. Participatory gender audit/assessment	Review ASEAN's policies, practices, and culture—and how these impact staff individually and at the work unit and organisational levels—with a focus on understanding the needs of women of different ages and levels in the organisation. The gender audit should include a desk review, a survey, interviews and workshops with staff, and reporting and feedback to senior officials and the wider organisation.	Y1	ACW/ PEGD/ HR
4	All ASEAN Communities commit to integrated approaches to gender and inclusion	i. Cross-Community, cross-Sectoral Body dialogue	Facilitate ongoing cross-Community, cross-sectoral dialogues to build awareness and consensus, identify areas of support, and identify short- and long-term entry opportunities for coordinating gender mainstreaming activities across Communities	Y1-4	GMFT
		ii. High-level dialogue	Convene an annual high-level dialogue event bringing together ASEAN and ASEAN Member State representatives and external stakeholders	Y2-4	ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Steering Committee (AGMSC)
		iii. ASEAN Community resolutions on gender equality/ mainstreaming	All three ASEAN Communities adopt resolutions on gender mainstreaming and make integration of gender and inclusion analysis, activities, and indicators in all future Blueprints and Sectoral Bodies' workplans mandatory	Y3	ASEAN Community Councils for ASCC, AEC and APSC
5	Cross-Community M&E frameworks and systems are developed	i. Monitoring and reporting system established	ASEAN Monitoring Directorates and Statistical Offices design a cross-Community monitoring and evaluation system, including developing and agreeing indicators and targets against the Implementation Plan, and drawing together and supporting analysis of different reporting streams, including Implementation Plan reporting; Sectoral Body workplans (see Outcome 3.2(1)(i)); AMS Gender Mainstreaming Regional Framework (see	Y1	ASEAN Monitoring Integration Directorate

#	Sub-Outcome	Output	Activity	Time-frame	Responsible Entity
			Outcome 4.1(1)(i)); and programming evaluations and reviews (see Outcome 3.2(2)(iii)) for the Action Plan with support from the Institutional Mechanism.		
		ii. Budget tracking	Develop a plan to establish a financial tracking mechanism to determine expenditure on initiatives on gender and inclusion	Y3	GMFT/ Finance and Budget Division
6	ASEAN has clearly stated organisational values and policies relating to gender equality and inclusion	i. Communications policy and guidance	ASEAN has a clear communications policy that makes gender and inclusion issues integral to internal and external information dissemination, and provides guidelines for how to communicate about gender and inclusion issues	Y1	Communications Division/ GMFT/ GFPs
		ii. Awareness of ASEAN's organisational values, policies, and processes	Senior officials/managers are provided training on ASEAN's gender-sensitive policies, and engaged in discussion and feedback on how to apply to them equally		
			All ASEAN staff, officials, and stakeholders are provided awareness-raising activities on key policy changes		
			HR policies are presented in accessible ways and disseminated and understood by all staff		
Outcome 1.2 Women are equitably represented in staffing and leadership, staff are able to achieve and balance satisfying work and personal lives, and women feel safe, valued, and respected					
1	ASEAN HR policies are clear, gender-sensitive and inclusive	i. Gender and inclusion review of HR policies	As part of the gender audit, undertake a gender and inclusion review of human resource policies and performance management systems, to include building an understanding of the organisational and structural factors driving gender imbalances	Y2	HR
		ii. Revision of HR policies	Review policies on equal opportunities, recruitment and selection, induction, performance management, travel policies, hours of work, maternity leave, paternity leave, and shared parental leave and ensure these are gender-sensitive and -inclusive, and ideally oriented toward more gender-transformative outcomes. Ensure policies on ethics, anti-harassment and bullying, Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, disciplinary processes, grievance, and equity/diversity/inclusion are updated and aligned with one another	Y2	HR
2	Commitments are established to correct entrenched gender imbalances in ASEAN senior bodies, Sectoral Bodies and ASEC departments	i. Women's representation in ASEAN sectoral bodies	On the basis of the gender audit, initiate dialogue on pursuing goals for gender representation/ balance in sectoral bodies within ASEAN and in ASEAN as a whole	Y2	HR
		ii. Women's career progression in ASEC	On the basis of the gender audit, develop a strategy on ways of strengthening the career pathways of women staff in ASEC	Y4	HR
		iii. Work-life balance	On the basis of the gender audit, develop a strategy to address work life balance for female and male staff, including attention to job roles and work culture to enable women and men to accommodate care responsibilities	Y3	HR
		iv. Gender-friendly space and services	Ensure infrastructure, physical space and resources are appropriate for men and women (e.g., women's bathrooms, childcare facilities, breastfeeding spaces, safe transport to work, prayer space, etc.)	Y2	HR

#	Sub-Outcome	Output	Activity	Time-frame	Responsible Entity
3	Gender-sensitive complaint mechanisms is established	i. Complaint mechanism	Establish and resource an appropriate, effective, and confidential grievance mechanism, including measures to handle complaints of unethical behaviour, bullying, and sexual harassment	Y2	HR
			Ensure staff responsible for the complaint mechanisms are provided training on Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse; safeguarding; and dealing with workplace	Y2	HR
Goal 2. ASEAN builds its knowledge, technical competencies, and capacity on gender and inclusion issues					
Outcome 2.1: Individual and collective attitudes are changed, and staff and leadership internalise and reflect these attitudes and values in their work and behaviours					
1	ASEAN staff and officials across all levels engage in reflection and action learning on gender and inclusion	i. Advocacy with senior leadership to invest in an ongoing reflection and learning programme	Engage in advocacy with senior leadership to move beyond one-off training to a longer-term programme of reflection and action learning, for example using the Gender Action Learning System methodology.	Y1	AGMSC
		ii. Engagement with dialogue partners	Engage with dialogue partners to mobilise resources for reflection and learning activities	Y1	GMFT
		iii. Gender training/ reflection/learning	Roll out a comprehensive ASEAN-wide gender reflection and action learning programme. Ensure senior leadership from across the three Communities participates fully in all activities	Y2-4	GMFT
Outcome 2.2: ASEAN institutions and staff have increased capacity to understand and integrate gender and inclusion considerations into their work					
1	ASEAN officials and staff have greater access to data to support evidence-based decision-making	i. Disaggregated data	Use the ASEAN Gender Outlook being prepared by UN Women to map existing data sources, record existing sex-disaggregated statistics and gender-specific indicators, and integrate these into routine tracking processes	Y1-2	ASEAN Integration Monitoring Directorate/ Statistical Offices
			Build engagement with dialogue partners and international agencies supporting national data systems—e.g. UNESCAP and UN Women—and explore opportunities for providing regional support	Y2	
			Ensure disaggregated data is available and accessible to Sectoral Bodies and ASEC staff	Y2	CoP
2	ASEAN officials and staff have increased knowledge and capacity to integrate gender and inclusion into their work	i. Needs assessment	Undertake a consultation with stakeholders, including top officials, mid-level officials, technical staff, operations and administrative staff, and ASEC staff, to understand capacity support needs	Y1	GMFT
		ii. Database of training institutions and training providers	Develop a database of training institutions, opportunities, trainers, and facilitators	Y1	CoP
		iii. Training plan and technical support packages	Develop and provide flexible packages of competence development support to Sectoral Bodies, ASEC Divisions and ACW, and the different staff functions within them, including, as appropriate, sector-specific structured and on-the-job learning; ongoing training with periodic needs assessments; mentoring, coaching, and accompaniment	Y2	GMFT
		iv. Induction processes	Gender and inclusion module developed and included into the induction processes and materials for all new Sectoral Body officials and Secretariat staff	Y2	HR/ GMFT

#	Sub-Outcome	Output	Activity	Time-frame	Responsible Entity
		v. Sector-specific gender resources	Research, develop and disseminate sector-specific evidence briefs, toolkits, and other guidance and resources, possibly in collaboration with civil society partners	Y2	Selected Sectoral Bodies
		vi. Guidelines and quality assurance	Review and revise guidance on integrating gender and inclusion considerations into proposal development and introduce a peer review process	Y1	GMFT/ GFP
		vii. GFP capacity building	Provide priority capacity-building support to appointed GFPs, including on gender mainstreaming tools and approaches, advocacy and communications approaches, and adaptive strategy and implementation	Y1	GMFT
Goal 3. ASEAN policies and action plans better reflect the needs of women and girls in the region, and Sectoral Bodies are able to undertake more and better initiatives that benefit women and girls					
Outcome 3.1: ASEAN strengthens the engagement of women's organisations in consultation, planning, and implementation					
1	ASEAN has a better understanding of the different types of CSOs active on gender and inclusion issues across the region and their priorities	i. Civil society mapping	Map civil society, academic organisations, networks, and individuals that represent women, especially regional networks, apex organisations, unions, and informal worker organisations—at international, regional, national, and local levels	Y1	Gender Focal Points (GFP)
2	ASEAN develops effective and inclusive civil society participation channels	i. Civil society consultations	Undertake consultations with civil society on ideas for collaboration, communication, and preferred forms of engagement on gender and inclusion issues. Continue to convene regular meetings and dialogues with civil society partners to consult on planning, report on progress, and discuss lessons learned and good practice.	Y2	ACWC/GMFT
			Explore and support the use of information and communications technology as a way of enabling local-level CSOs to engage and participate in ASEAN processes and consultations in a more sustained way	Y2	GMFT
		ii. Capacity strengthening and technical assistance	Provide support to women's organisations and networks to build their skills to support engagement with ASEAN, including on building representative networks, collecting and presenting data, thinking and working politically, and undertaking advocacy skills to support engagement with government officials at the ASEAN level	Y2	ACWC/ GMFT
		iii. Inclusive formal participation processes	Undertake internal advocacy to establish inclusive, participatory, and transparent civil society consultation processes on gender and inclusion issues	Y3	GMIM
3	Broad-based civil society consultation better informs ASEAN policy and programming	i. Informal consultations inform GESI related work	Build on the ACWC's approach of informal consultations with a broad base of organisations and activists not formally accredited. Consult civil society on ASEAN's role in gender mainstreaming and ASEAN-wide and sector-specific policy and planning, and ensure that the insights and outcomes from these are systematically disseminated to the GFPs and relevant Sectoral Bodies	Y1	ACWC/ CoP
		ii. Civil society expert engagement	Engage civil society experts to provide strategic advice and technical assistance to Sectoral Bodies, for example by forming advisory panels representing a range of perspectives	Y2	ACWC

#	Sub-Outcome	Output	Activity	Time-frame	Responsible Entity
4	CSOs have greater awareness of ASEAN's GESI initiatives	i. Communications strategy	Develop a communications strategy (including events and written and online channels) to provide progress updates to civil society partners on ASEAN's gender equality and mainstreaming initiatives and to disseminate knowledge and evidence from projects	Y2	Communications Division
Outcome 3.2: ASEAN progressively increases relevant, high-quality targeted and mainstreamed analysis and programming that addresses the needs of women and girls					
1	Selected Sectoral Bodies across the three Communities commit to making progress on GESI	i. Development of Sectoral Body GESI workplans	Build relationships with and advocate to selected Sectoral Bodies and Secretariat Divisions to integrate gender mainstreaming/equality initiatives and indicators into their existing workplans or develop gender-focused workplans	Y1	GMFT
			Sectoral Bodies engage in individual or cross-sectoral processes of reflection and strategising, identifying priorities and opportunities for integrating gender and inclusion into their activities and workplans	Y1	Sectoral Bodies
			Selected Sectoral Bodies develop workplans that outline monitoring indicators, human and financial resources, capacity support needs, coordination with ASEAN and external stakeholders, and knowledge and information management plans	Y1	Sectoral Bodies
2	Selected Sectoral Bodies undertake high-quality, evidence-based gender and inclusion analysis and design and implement high-quality initiatives	i. Capacity strengthening for specific initiatives	Sectoral Bodies identify and access appropriate capacity support, including training, accompaniment, and coaching, to support the delivery of their workplans and specific initiatives	Y2	Sectoral Bodies
			Sectoral Bodies develop sector- and issue-specific guidance that can be institutionalised in their ongoing work on gender and inclusion analysis frameworks, data collection methodologies, stakeholder analysis, results frameworks, programme partnerships, and M&E frameworks	Y2	Sectoral Bodies
		ii. Quality assurance	Gender analyses and the recommendations made to embed gender and inclusion in programming are reviewed for quality by in-house or external experts, and feedback is integrated into training and technical support plans	Y2	PEGD/ ACW/ ACWC
		iii. Access to specialist gender and inclusion expertise	Sectoral Bodies are supported to access the appropriate sectoral/thematic/technical expertise for the specific initiatives/activities in their workplans	Y2	GMFT
		iv. Support to undertake robust evaluations	Sectoral Bodies are supported to access capacity support/technical assistance/ financial resources in order to undertake robust reviews and evaluations of their gender-responsive initiatives	Y2	ASEAN Monitoring Integration Directorate
Goal 4. ASEAN supports intergovernmental processes and Member States' gender mainstreaming and gender equity initiatives					
Outcome 4.1 ASEAN supports dialogue and planning on gender mainstreaming at the Member State level					
1	Member States agree on a collective approach to gender mainstreaming	i. Regional gender mainstreaming Framework	Initiate an ongoing discussion on developing a regional framework setting out Member States' priorities and objectives on gender mainstreaming	Y1	ACWC Philippines
Outcome 4.2 ASEAN supports the provision of technical advice and assistance on gender and inclusion to individual Member States and inter-governmental processes					
1	Member States are able to access regional guidance and expertise	i. Gender and inclusion expert database	Develop a roster of regional gender and inclusion advisors for technical assistance to Member States and Sectoral Bodies	Y1	CoP

#	Sub-Outcome	Output	Activity	Time-frame	Responsible Entity
		ii. Substantive support to Member State dialogue	Support Member State dialogue by providing technical briefings, background papers, summaries of debates, negotiations, and outcomes; identifying speakers; and supporting preparatory dialogues and consultations	Y1	GMFT/ CoP
		iii. Technical guidance and resources	Continue to develop approaches, methodologies, tools, and guidelines on common priority areas	Y2	GMFT
2	Member States are supported to mobilise resources for GESI initiatives	i. Resource mobilisation	Support Member States to raise funding for gender equality and mainstreaming initiatives from dialogue partners		GMFT
Outcome 4.3 ASEAN's regional and national stakeholders engage in ongoing knowledge sharing, dialogue, and learning about programming insights, evidence, and debates in and across their sectors					
1	Knowledge sharing platforms strengthened and/or established	i. Community of Practice	Establish a CoP with systems for capturing, storing, and sharing knowledge, and supporting discussion and dialogue across the three Communities	Y2	GFP
		ii. Knowledge sharing and dialogues	Convene events, dialogues, exchange visits for ASEAN and Member State stakeholders to regularly engage with and learn from each other, civil society partners, and external stakeholders; engage with key regional and international research, policy, and programming initiatives	Y2-4	CoP
		iii. Knowledge sharing and collaboration networks	Facilitate relationships between officials from different governments, and provide ad hoc, demand driven support to these clusters to support bilateral and regional operational cooperation	Y3-4	GFP
2	ASEAN enhances its profile as a key facilitator of evidence-building, dialogue, and regional cooperation on gender and inclusion issues	i. Research initiatives	Based on a stronger understanding of the evidence base, identify key research areas, develop a research agenda to plan for strategic and reactive research projects, undertake/commission a discrete number of strategic and highly relevant research initiatives	Y2	Sectoral Bodies
		ii. Research partnerships	Establish a strategy for research partnerships with regional and international institutions	Y2	GMFT
		iii. Knowledge products	Develop and disseminate knowledge products on data, research, progress, and results by theme	Y4	CoP
		iv. High-level regional events	Facilitate one annual high-level regional knowledge sharing and learning event	Y4	CoP

ANNEX 1: Concepts and Definitions

Gender refers to the attributes, roles and opportunities that are associated with being women and men. These attributes, roles and opportunities are socially constructed and women and men, and society at large learns them through socialisation processes. These ideas shape how society understands the value of women and men, and the kinds of characteristics and behaviours that are considered appropriate and desirable for women and men. Gender does not refer simply to women or men but also to the relationship between them. These social definitions are not fixed and differ in different contexts and change over time.[50]

Gender equality refers to women and men having equal and equally respected rights, and equal access to resources and opportunities. It is as concerned with the situation of men as women.[51]However, as it is often women who face greater risks and vulnerabilities in different sectors, it is often associated with a greater focus on women.

Gender equity refers to the process of ensuring fairness for women and men, and creating a level playing field for them. This goes beyond treating women and men equally, and actively compensating for the historical processes of discrimination which shape women's current economic, social, and political disadvantages.

Gender norms are ideas about how men and women should be and act. These ideas are often learned and internalised as "rules" early in life and underpin a lifecycle of gender socialisation and stereotyping.

Social inclusion is linked to social exclusion, which refers to when individuals or groups are unable to participate in the economic, social, political, and cultural life of their society. They can be economically excluded from or have restricted access to labour markets, land, and livelihood opportunities; they can be politically excluded from or have restricted access to citizenship rights, the ability to organise, exercise voice, demand rights and influence decision-making that affects their lives; and they can be socially excluded or have restricted access to infrastructure, basic services and amenities, social protection, public safety and social networks. *Social inclusion* thus refers to improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of people to take part in society.[52]

Gender mainstreaming refers to the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or development programmes, in all areas and at all levels. Gender mainstreaming makes women's as well as men's voices, perspectives, and expertise central to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.[53]Gender mainstreaming consists of, but is not limited to: analysing gender disaggregated data and qualitative gender analysis data to identify key issues; ensuring the participation of both women and men in determining policy priorities; promoting and modelling gender equal social norms and ways of working as well as positive masculinities; and setting, monitoring and evaluating gender disaggregated policy and programming objectives linked to allocated budgets. Mainstreaming does not necessarily mean that targeted activities to support women are no longer necessary, but the aim is to incorporate the women's perspective throughout every policy and programme, even if they are not targeted at women.

Gender analysis identifies, analyses and informs action to address inequalities that arise from the different roles of women and men, the distribution of resources, opportunities and power between them, and the consequences of these inequalities on their lives. Gender analysis seeks the perspectives of women and men, and then ensures that these meaningfully inform the development of policies, programmes, and projects. It also involves acknowledging the historical and underlying causes of gender inequalities and discrimination in order to inform the setting of relevant and targeted objectives and

[50] UN Women Gender Mainstreaming webpage: www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsandefinitions.htm
[51] Ibid.
[52] World Bank, 2013, p. 4
[53] ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions 1997/2, United Nations Economic and Social Council, 1997

measures to eliminate gender inequalities. It involves collecting and analysing relevant data to provide a picture of the gender equality situation in a given context; uncover the underlying causes of gender inequalities; exploring the representation and participation of women and men in different policy sectors and at different levels; and providing evidence based and credible recommendations for the policies, programmes and projects developed on the basis of it.[54]

Empowerment refers to an increase in people's ability to make their own decisions and, in doing do, bring about changes in their lives that they desire. Programming interventions often focus on empowering women because of the inequalities in their socio-economic status. Women's empowerment involves increasing awareness, building confidence, having increased access to resources, having more choices, as well as tackling the imbalances in power and the structures and institutions that discriminate against people and perpetuate gender inequality.[55] The process of empowerment is as important as the goal.

Agency refers to people's ability (or inability) to make choices and decisions about their own life, to feel like they are able to act, and to be able to act on those choices to achieve a desired outcome, free of violence, retribution or fear. This can include women's ability to earn and control income and to own, use, and dispose of material assets; to move freely; to make decisions over when and whom to marry, how many children to have, and when to leave a marriage; to live free of violence; and to have a voice and influence in society.[56]

[54] European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender analysis webpage: https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/methods-tools/gender-analysis

[55] UNDP, 'Gender Mainstreaming Made Easy: Handbook for Programme Staff', UNDP Somalia, 2013

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