



PROMOTING INCLUSIVE GROWTH THROUGH INNOVATION, TRADE AND E-COMMERCE

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United States promote a well-integrated and inclusive ASEAN Economic Community by strengthening the enabling environment for cross-border trade that benefits both ASEAN and the United States.

The U.S. Government, through the work of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Inclusive Growth in ASEAN through Innovation, Trade and E-Commerce (IGNITE) project, reduces the cost of international trade, spurs e-commerce and increases productivity in Southeast Asia. IGNITE provides technical assistance to ASEAN bodies in the areas of trade facilitation; digital economy; and science, technology and innovation. The project also promotes cross-cutting objectives of micro, small, and medium sized enterprise (MSME) development and gender mainstreaming.

ASEAN-USAID INCLUSIVE GROWTH IN ASEAN THROUGH INNOVATION, TRADE AND E-COMMERCE

IGNITE works in close collaboration with ASEAN sectoral bodies and the regional and global private sectors to implement the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 across three work streams.

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TRADE FACILITATION

ASEAN is committed to reducing the time and cost of trade through transparency, simplification, predictability and use of technology. These trade facilitation efforts will result in higher business activity and investment that drives economic growth. The lower costs from these efforts will also allow more MSMEs to engage in trade and increase their productivity thus generating additional economic growth. IGNITE's activities also support ASEAN to reduce non-tariff trade barriers, improve logistics, expand access to trade finance and promote the harmonization of standards.

DIGITAL ECONOMY

ASEAN's share of global e-commerce is less than one percent, but its share of global GDP is three to four percent. This suggests tremendous growth potential for the digital economy. ASEAN's SMEs will directly benefit if they can tap into this dynamic market. IGNITE promotes the growth of the regional digital economy by supporting efforts to expand digital finance, improve cybersecurity, strengthen data privacy, improve consumer protection, expand broadband access and affordability, and develop smart cities.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

While several ASEAN Member States are laboratories of ideas for harnessing science, technology and innovation as a vehicle for growth, various global indicators illustrate that the enabling environment in the region restricts the growth of science, technology and innovation. IGNITE promotes measures to improve the enabling environment to provide greater access to technology for MSMEs.

The project also supports growth in human capital particularly for women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and promotes greater linkages among government, the private sector and academia to encourage growth through applied research and development, including commercialization of research.

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