

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE ASEAN WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS' NETWORK



one vision
one identity
one community



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THE ASEAN WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS' NETWORK**

**THE ASEAN SECRETARIAT
JAKARTA**

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States of the Association are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia.

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1. Background

One of the purposes of ASEAN as stipulated in Article 1(13) of the ASEAN Charter is to promote a people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and community building.

The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint adopted at the 14th ASEAN Summit in March 2009 in Cha-am Hua Hin, Thailand, reflects ASEAN's commitment to promote the full participation of women in the productive workforce by enhancing women's entrepreneurial skills and creating favorable conditions for women entrepreneurs in the region. Action Line A.6.ii of the ASCC Blueprint specifically calls for the establishment of a women entrepreneurs' network in the ASEAN region.

The initiative to establish an ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs' Network was announced by Viet Nam at the 6th ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) Meeting held on 7-8 November 2007 in Chiang Mai, Thailand, as part of its proposal to develop a cooperative programme between the ACW and the ASEAN Confederation of Women's Organisations (ACWO) in addressing poverty. The initiative was welcomed by ASEAN Member States.

The 7th ACW Meeting held on 22-23 October 2008 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam, requested Viet Nam and the ACWO to take the lead in the implementation of the initiative with the support from other ASEAN Member States.

The 9th ACW Meeting held on 15-16 November 2010 in Siem Reap, Cambodia, agreed to request Viet Nam to develop the draft Terms of Reference of the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs' Network.

The 10th ACW Meeting held on 3-4 October 2011 in Bogor, Indonesia, reviewed the draft Terms of Reference of the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs' Network developed by Viet Nam.

The 11th ACW Meeting held on 16-17 October 2012 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, finalised and adopted the Terms of Reference of the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs' Network.

2. Vision

- 2.1. Improve the capacity of ASEAN women entrepreneurs and boost ASEAN women entrepreneurs' development and networking through the Network's activities.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 The ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs' Network is a regional network of national women entrepreneurs' associations and/or micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, associations, clubs and/or other economic entities owned or managed by women in all economic sectors in the ASEAN region.
- 3.2 The purposes of the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs' Network are:
 - a) To create a regional forum for ASEAN women entrepreneurs to share information, knowledge and experience on policies, business environment, investment, and socio – political issues and their impacts on business opportunities;

- b) To assist ASEAN women entrepreneurs to improve their business management and skills, such as in communications, leadership and problem solving;
- c) To support ASEAN women entrepreneurs' better access to financial institutions for women in micro, small and medium sized enterprises, science and technology, trainings, market and business opportunities within ASEAN and beyond, and social protection services;
- d) To support ASEAN women entrepreneurs who are starting their businesses;
- e) To link within other international and regional networks/ organizations of women entrepreneurs.

4. Roles and Functions

4.1. The ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs' Network shall:

- a) Organize a regular ASEAN forum to share information and experiences in efficient operating business models, national and regional policies and procedures concerning trade, customs and registration of businesses and investments, as well as other issues related to gender and business. ASEAN Member States will take turn in organising this forum;
- b) Provide capacity building for new women's business leaders to embark on their planned projects and learn from well-established businesses within the Network;
- c) Study and make policy recommendations in the region to support effectively women entrepreneurs to develop

business activities domestically and regionally; establish a common action programme piloted in one country and replicate the model to others, coordinate with banks / financial institutions to support capital for women entrepreneurs to start their businesses;

- d) Establish funds for feasible ideas/projects of enterprises owned by women in the region;
- e) Develop and maintain the Network's website and issue publications to facilitate communications and information sharing among the Network's members;
- f) Organize dialogues among management agencies and women entrepreneurs;
- g) Organize study tours on business model, management model of a typical business, among others.

5. Composition

5.1 Membership

- a) Members of the Network are national women entrepreneurs' associations and/or micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, associations, clubs and/or other economic entities owned or managed by women in all economic sectors from ASEAN Member States as well as organisations participating in promoting business skills and opportunities of women entrepreneurs in their respective countries.

- b) The Network is open to partnerships with women entrepreneurs' organisations from ASEAN Dialogue Partners in undertaking its activities. They are regarded as "Partners" of the Network.

5.2 Organizational Structure

- a) In the first two years of implementing the Network, Viet Nam will be the Coordinator with the support of the Secretariat.
- b) Upon formalization, it shall be a rotation leadership for every year with each ASEAN Member State. Rotation of the Coordinator will be specified in the first two years of the Network's implementation.
- c) The ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs' Network shall adhere to the principles of democracy, participation, transparency, due diligence, and accountability in its structure and processes. Decision making shall be based on consensus.

5.3 Coordinators and Secretariat of the Network

- a) The Coordinator shall:
 - Convene the regular forum of the Network and prepare the agenda of the regular forum for the concurrence of the Network's members;
 - Lead in the preparation of work and financial plan;
 - Report the progress of the Network's work to the ACW annually. For this purpose, the Coordinator shall prepare the accomplishment report;

- Perform other tasks as maybe assigned to the Network's Coordinator.
- b) The Secretariat of the Network shall come from the same Member State assuming the Coordinator role.
- c) The Secretariat is responsible to support the Coordinator in managing the activities of the Network and communications with its members, and to be the repository of all documents of the Network.

6. Resource Support and Technology

6.1. Source of Funding

- a) The Network should mobilize funds to sustain its work which may be sourced from the contribution of its members, private sector, business associations, Dialogue Partners or other donors. Modalities of the fund should be developed by the Network.
- b) At the initial period, ASEAN Member States are encouraged to explore other funding sources to support the participation costs of members to attend the regular forums of the Network depending on the in-country arrangements in each ASEAN Member States.
