

The ASEAN Community Statistical System Committee's Terms of Reference

We, the Heads of Statistical Offices of Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN),

Guided by the ASEAN Framework of Cooperation in Statistics (AFCS) 2010-2015 that calls for the establishment of an ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS) by 2015 and an ACSS Committee by 2011;

Anticipating increased and more diverse demand for ASEAN statistics;

Recognising the need to establish enabling mechanisms of the ACSS upon endorsement of the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the ACSS Committee by the ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting through the Senior Economic Officials Meeting;

Do hereby adopt this TOR of the ACSS Committee

Done on this 5th day, in the month of July, in the year 2011.

ASEAN Heads of National Statistical Offices

Brunei Darussalam

Kingdom of Cambodia

Republic of Indonesia

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Malaysia

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Republic of the Philippines

Republic of Singapore

Kingdom of Thailand

Socialist Republic of Vietnam

THE ACSS COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND

The ASEAN Heads of Statistical Offices Meeting (AHSOM), was founded in October 1997. The first meeting essentially set the stage of regional cooperation in statistics by agreeing to establish an ASEAN Primary Database, endorsing the formulation of an ASEAN Plan of Action in Statistics and recommending the establishment of a Statistics Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat. Since then, several steps have been taken in the development of ASEAN statistics. In 2001, an ASEAN Framework of Cooperation in Statistics was adopted by the AHSOM, and the objectives and areas of cooperation were specified. The roles of the AHSOM and the Statistics Unit, however, remained unclear.

The AHSOM's institutional arrangement agreed upon at the inaugural AHSOM in 1997 stipulated that AHSOM reports to the Secretary General of the ASEAN Secretariat. In 2006, the Senior Economic Officials Meeting (SEOM) 2/37 held in Kuala Lumpur on 12-13 March 2006 welcomed and endorsed the new institutional arrangement which stipulated that the AHSOM reports to the ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting (AEM) through SEOM.

The adoption of the ASEAN Charter in 2007 gave rise to new demands on national and regional statistics. While the statistical work was reorganised at the ASEAN Secretariat, AHSOM was not included in the Annex 1 of the ASEAN Charter. In 2010, AHSOM adopted an enhanced ASEAN Framework of Cooperation in Statistics (AFCS 2010-2015), which was also recognised by the ASEAN Leaders at their Summit in 2010. The overall objective of the AFCS is to strengthen the organisational framework and statistical capacity of ASEAN towards the establishment of an ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS) by 2015. AHSOM shall, according to the framework, be reconstituted into the ACSS Committee by 2011.

REASONS FOR THE RECONSTITUTION

The ACSS includes all stakeholders of official statistics at the national and regional level. The AHSOM plays an important role as a coordinator of the system, and supports different activities such as the harmonisation of ASEAN statistics. ASEANstats is the secretariat for AHSOM, prepares documents and follows up on recommendations.

The AHSOM needed to clarify its role within the ASEAN cooperation. In order to strengthen its role, there ought to be a clear reporting line to relevant ASEAN bodies. The AHSOM ought to be able to suggest changes in the ACSS and have the necessary resources for the monitoring of the system.

With the reconstitution of the AHSOM into the ACSS Committee, it shall have a more formal mandate for its work.

ACSS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

DUTIES AND BROAD STATEMENT OF THE ROLES OF THE ACSS COMMITTEE

The ACSS Committee shall be the highest policy making and coordinating body on statistical matters in the ASEAN region. It shall be responsible for strengthening regional statistical cooperation in support of the ASEAN Community, and provide professional guidance on the production, dissemination and communication of ASEAN statistics. The ACSS Committee's primary functions are to:

- ensure supply of timely and comparable ASEAN statistics through regional statistical policies, standards and systems based on the AFCS;
- promote improvement of statistical infrastructure at the national level and facilitate human resource and institutional capacity building;
- promote and maintain an efficient statistical system by establishing appropriate mechanisms for statistical coordination and development of the ACSS;
- formulate statistical policies on all matters relating to statistical operations geared towards improvement and harmonisation of ASEAN statistics;
- monitor and evaluate the progress of the implementation of statistical policies, plans and programmes in ASEAN; and,
- establish and enhance institutional linkages with other international statistical bodies to further the statistical development agenda of the ACSS.

Guided by the Broad Framework for the Sustainable Development of ASEAN Statistics, the ACSS Committee has a leading role in the development of statistics at five levels, namely:

1. in the development of the ACSS,
2. in the coordination of regional efforts in support of development of National Statistical Systems, and communicating the decisions of the ACSS Committee to the National Statistical Offices of ASEAN Member States (AMSs),
3. in the communication, through ASEAN Secretariat, to the concerned ASEAN bodies/working groups under all three pillars of the ASEAN Community on relevant progress and issues of statistical cooperation,
4. in the convening of periodic dialogue with producers of ASEAN statistics and key user groups to define statistical priorities and promote wider use of statistics, and in the implementation of international standards and strengthening contacts with international organisations.
5. without prejudice to the position and the role of individual Member States, the position of the ACSS on issues of relevance to ASEAN statistics at international level as well as specific

arrangements for representation in the international statistical bodies shall be prepared by the ACSS Committee and coordinated by the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEANstats).

In practice, this means that the ACSS Committee will be the main forum for discussions and decisions regarding the development of the ACSS and activities linked to ACSS. The ACSS is dependent on the progress of the National Statistical Systems and on the support of ASEAN authorities and international organisations, and as such shall contribute to good relations with these bodies.

The ACSS Committee shall be consulted on:

- (a) proposed developments and priorities in Strategic Plan for the Establishment of ACSS and Development of ASEAN statistics;
- (b) the Annual Work Plan on ASEAN statistics;
- (c) issues concerning statistical confidentiality;
- (d) the measures which the ASEAN bodies/working groups under all three pillars of the ASEAN Community and ASEAN Secretariat (ASEANstats) intend to take for the production, dissemination and communication of ASEAN statistics, their justification on a cost-effectiveness basis, the means and timeliness for achieving them;
- (e) any other questions, in particular issues of methodology, arising from the establishment or implementation of statistical programmes that are raised by its Chair, either on its own initiative or at the request of a Member State.

ORGANISATION

The ACSS Committee shall consist of Chief Statisticians or Heads of National Statistical Offices of all AMSs. Each of them represents their National Statistical System at the Committee meetings. The Head of ASEANstats of the ASEAN Secretariat is also a member of the Committee.

The ACSS Committee shall be chaired on a rotating basis by a representative from one of the AMSs, and meet once a year. If there are urgent matters to be discussed, a special meeting of the Committee may be convened.

The ACSS Committee shall establish 'The Bureau', which constitutes Heads from three AMSs, i.e., the incumbent chair, the preceding chair, and the succeeding chair.

The ACSS Committee shall establish working groups and task forces for the development of parts of the ACSS, when required.

ROLES OF THE PARTNERS OF THE ACSS

The National Statistical Office

The national statistical office shall coordinate within the national statistical system the implementation of policies formulated by the ACSS Committee. The national statistical office shall also coordinate the development and harmonisation of ASEAN statistics produced by the national statistical system, including those produced by line ministries/departments or competent national authorities.

The national statistical office shall also coordinate the provision of ASEAN statistics to stakeholders in ASEAN through the ASEANstats and function as the country focal point in matters related to the regional cooperation in statistics.

The ASEAN Secretariat (ASEANstats)

ASEANstats shall serve as the technical arm and secretariat of the ACSS Committee and shall perform the following functions:

1. initiate the formulation and lead the implementation and monitoring of statistical policies, methodologies and standards for the harmonisation of ASEAN statistics
2. support national statistical systems in the implementation of policies and standards for ASEAN statistics.
3. serve as the link between the ACSS Committee and the ASEAN Community Councils and establish partnership with other stakeholders, including the international and regional organisations.
4. undertake the compilation of ASEAN statistics, administer the ASEAN Statistics Database, and develop statistical products and services to disseminate and communicate ASEAN statistics.
5. coordinate with donor community for possible technical assistance and funding of statistical capacity building programmes for the region as prioritised by the ACSS Committee.

The ASEAN Community Councils

The concerned ASEAN Sectoral Bodies under the Community Councils are expected to provide guidance concerning the data needs and strategic directions for statistics development in the ASEAN Community.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

The activities of the ACSS Committee will be conducted according to an annual work plan and a multi-year action plan that are drawn up by ASEANstats and presented to the ACSS Committee for discussion and approval. The plans are based on the Broad Framework for the Sustainable Development of ASEAN Statistics. The agenda for the meetings of the Committee shall reflect topics that are outlined in the annual work plan. A main activity of the Committee is to adopt plans and assess the results presented.

The annual work plan covers the following activities:

- Coordination, facilitation, monitoring and evaluation of activities under the ASEAN cooperation in statistics
- Development, maintenance and expansion of ASEAN statistics, data frameworks, and systems for monitoring and dissemination/communication of ASEAN Community goals and initiatives
- Harmonisation of ASEAN statistics---standardisation and documentation of concepts, definitions, classifications and adoption of internationally recognised methodologies
- Enabling mechanisms and capacity building.

A great deal of the work during 2011 concerns further development of IMTS, FDIS, SITS and MDG supported by projects financed by donors. Another task for the ACSS Committee is to pursue a policy for increased resources, including external resources, to meet the ACSS's requirements in implementation of the Strategic Plan on the Establishment of ACSS and the Development of ASEAN Statistics. The plan covers:

- Strengthening Institutional Framework
- Strengthening ASEAN statistics
- Narrowing the Development Gap

REPORTING LINE

The ACSS Committee shall report to the ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting (AEM), through the Senior Economic Officials Meeting (SEOM), its plans, progress and issues. However, as far as pillar-specific inputs and consultations are needed, the ACSS Committee shall consult the respective ASEAN bodies under the respective pillar; the outcome of which will also be reported to the AEM. The reporting line is illustrated in Annex 1.

INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENTS

The work of the ACSS Committee shall be implemented and monitored both at the national and regional levels. At the national level, there are systems in place for monitoring, e.g., scorecards for the evaluation of progress. At the regional level, the annual plans shall be monitored through a system of scorecard compliances or by other means of monitoring endorsed by the ACSS Committee. The implementation gaps among AMS shall be monitored with appropriate indicators.

BUDGET

The ASEAN Secretariat can only cover the expenses for the ACSS Committee and its related meetings organised at the ASEAN Secretariat premises. For ACSS Committee and related meetings hosted by AMS, the expenses for organisation of the meetings, excluding travel and per diem for participants, shall be borne by the host AMS.

PROCESS FOR ADOPTION AND ENDORSEMENT OF THE TOR

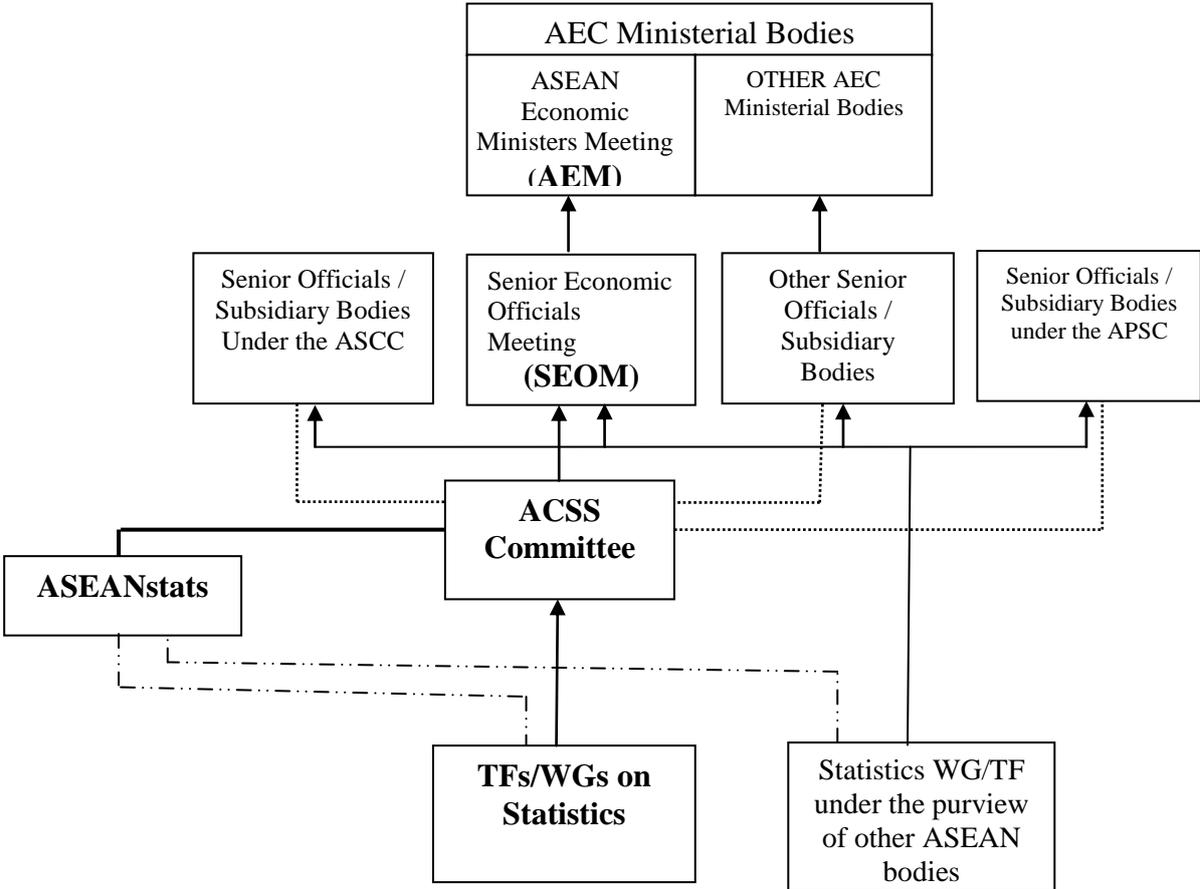
The following process shall be undertaken:

- (1) AMS' national statistical office/ country focal point to review the TOR with concerned national institutions;
- (2) AHSOM to adopt the TOR;
- (3) ASEAN Secretariat (ASEANstats) to update the CPR and seek acknowledgement;
- (4) AHSOM Chair to seek AEM's endorsement of the TOR, through SEOM.

In order to give the ACSS Committee a formal status within the ASEAN organisation, the AHSOM Chair shall seek AEM's endorsement, through SEOM, for the ACSS Committee to be included in the updated Annex 1 of the ASEAN Charter.

Annex 1

The ACSS Committee's Reporting Line



- NOTES:**
- ▶ REPORTING LINE
 - CONSULTATION LINE
 - · - · - · COORDINATION LINE
 - TECHNICAL ARM