
ASEAN Framework of Cooperation in Statistics (2010-2015)

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 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),

Anticipating increased and more diverse demand for ASEAN statistics as defined in Section 4 – Scope of Cooperation at both national and regional levels emanating from the implementation of the ASEAN Charter and the commitment of ASEAN Leaders to accelerate the establishment of an ASEAN Community by 2015 (Twelfth ASEAN Summit, Cebu, the Philippines, January 2007);

Recognising the need to develop relevant indicators and compile timely and comparable statistics in support of evidence-based policy making, planning, and monitoring for the ASEAN Political Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) in line with the Cha-am Hua Hin Declaration on the Roadmap for the ASEAN Community (2009-2015);

Realising that an efficient and responsive statistical system that is able to produce, disseminate and communicate timely and comparable statistics requires good governance, strong and reliable institutions, competent human resources, sound statistical infrastructure, and adequate investment;

Realising further the importance of communication and consultation between data users and producers at the national and regional levels to determine statistical priorities and to advocate for increased commitment and support for the development of statistics by governments;

Mindful of the different stages of statistical developments, varying priorities and diverse national practices, and attendant challenges faced by the ASEAN national statistical systems;

Appreciating the gains in the implementation of the 2001 ASEAN Framework of Cooperation in Statistics and the need to enhance strategies to provide appropriate support to emerging statistical requirements of the ASEAN Community; and

Guided by the Broad Framework for the Development of ASEAN Statistics adopted by the Ninth ASEAN Heads of Statistical Offices Meeting (AHSOM) in Singapore in January 2009;

Do hereby commit to deepen and broaden the ASEAN cooperation in statistics by laying down the foundation towards the establishment of an effective community statistical system to promote the production, dissemination and communication of timely and comparable statistics in support of the ASEAN Community;

Do hereby adopt this enhanced ASEAN Framework of Cooperation in Statistics as follows:

1. Objectives

The overall objective of the ASEAN Framework of Cooperation in Statistics is to strengthen the organisational framework and statistical capacity of ASEAN towards the establishment of

an ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS) by 2015 that is able to produce timely and comparable statistics in support of a rules-based ASEAN Community.

The specific objectives are to:

- 1.1. establish the official mandate and appropriate institutional framework for ASEAN statistics in key areas of the ASEAN Community for enhanced statistical cooperation among the national statistical systems and the ASEAN Secretariat;
- 1.2. strengthen the planning, governance and monitoring of statistical development in ASEAN building upon the AHSOM process and national strategies for the development of statistics;
- 1.3. strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems and the ASEAN Secretariat to produce, disseminate, and communicate ASEAN statistics through enhanced technical cooperation and capacity building and implementation of the ASEAN-help-ASEAN mechanism;
- 1.4. increase comparability of ASEAN statistics through adoption of more harmonised definitions, classifications, and methodologies consistent with internationally-accepted standards, guidelines, and recommendations;
- 1.5. support ASEAN regional planning and policy making bodies and national stakeholders through provision of timely and comparable ASEAN statistics;
- 1.6. improve communication between producers of ASEAN statistics and key user groups to define statistical priorities and promote wider use of statistics;
- 1.7. advocate for greater commitment from ASEAN policy makers and national governments to increase and provide adequate public investment for priority statistical programmes, projects and activities;
- 1.8. promote trust and accountability and the highest professional standards by adopting a common code of practice in the production, dissemination and communication of statistics in line with the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and relevant experiences, practices and conditions in the national statistical systems; and
- 1.9. strengthen the leverage of the ACSS on key global statistical issues and concerns.

2. The ASEAN Community Statistical System

The envisioned ACSS shall be defined as the “partnerships between and among the national statistical systems of the ASEAN Member States, the ASEAN Community Councils, and the ASEAN Secretariat”. As an integral part of the ASEAN Community, the ACSS shall comprise:

- 2.1. the ACSS Committee as the highest regional policy-making and coordinating body on ASEAN statistics;
- 2.2. the national statistical systems of all ASEAN Member States, with the national statistical office as country focal point on ASEAN statistics;
- 2.3. the ASEAN Secretariat through ASEANstats as regional focal point of ASEAN statistics and technical arm and secretariat of the ACSS Committee; and

2.4. the ASEAN Community Councils as primary stakeholders.

3. Institutional Roles and Linkages

3.1. *The ACSS Committee*

The ACSS Committee shall be composed of the chief statisticians or heads of national statistical offices of all ASEAN Member States and the head of ASEANstats of the ASEAN Secretariat. Its primary functions are to ensure supply of timely and comparable ASEAN statistics through regional statistical policies, standards, and systems, to promote improvement of statistical infrastructure at the national level and to facilitate human resource and institutional capacity building.

The ACSS Committee shall establish necessary and appropriate mechanisms to facilitate and coordinate regional technical cooperation among national data producing institutions in relevant statistical domains.

The ACSS Committee shall communicate to the concerned ASEAN Community Councils the progress and issues under statistical cooperation that may have some bearing on the statistics needed by the bodies, for information and support, and shall convene periodic user-producer dialogue to consult with concerned ASEAN bodies in the APSC, AEC, and ASCC to discuss, clarify and/or resolve issues related to the demand for statistics.

The ACSS shall be guided by the ASEAN Statistical Indicators (ASI), which is a framework of statistical indicators and ASEAN statistics to be agreed upon by the ACSS.

AHSOM shall be reconstituted into the ACSS Committee by 2011.

3.2. *The National Statistical Office*

The national statistical office shall 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.

3.3. *The ASEAN Secretariat (ASEANstats)*

ASEANstats shall initiate the formulation of policies and standards for the development and harmonisation of ASEAN statistics and lead the implementation and monitoring of these policies and standards.

ASEANstats shall serve as the technical arm and secretariat of the ACSS Committee.

ASEANstats shall support national statistical systems in the implementation of policies and standards for ASEAN statistics.

ASEANstats shall also serve as the link between the ACSS Committee and the ASEAN Community Councils and other stakeholders, including the international community.

ASEANstats shall undertake the compilation of ASEAN statistics, administer the ASEAN Statistics Database, and develop statistical products and services to disseminate and communicate ASEAN statistics.

3.4. The ASEAN Community Councils

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

4. Scope of Cooperation

This enhanced framework of cooperation shall address the production, dissemination, and communication of *ASEAN statistics*, which shall henceforth refer to *the indicators and statistics in the ASI, including the enabling mechanisms defined in the Broad Framework for the Development of ASEAN Statistics*.

ASEAN statistics shall cover statistics produced by the national statistical systems, which include those produced by the national statistical offices and by the mandated line ministries/departments or competent national authorities.

ASI shall comprise broad statistical domains and priority indicators and statistics corresponding to key, relevant policy concerns in the APSC, AEC and ASCC blueprints.

5. Strategic Areas of Cooperation

All ASEAN Member States, through the concerned ASEAN Community Councils and AHSOM/ACSS Committee, and the ASEANstats shall work towards the attainment of the above objectives through the following strategies:

5.1. Developing the organisational framework for an effective ACSS

- The establishment of the ACSS depends on clear and strong mandate that provides for concrete organisational structure, linkages, and systems.
- AHSOM/ACSS Committee shall lead consultations with ASEAN stakeholders towards the development of appropriate instruments, mandate and structure for the ACSS in line with the rules-based principle defined in the ASEAN Charter in key statistical areas.
- The national statistical offices shall conduct an assessment of the national statistical systems with respect to the requirements and potential implications of the ACSS to ascertain their level of preparedness as well as interventions that may be needed to facilitate the establishment of the ACSS. The national statistical offices shall consult with relevant national institutions.
- At the regional level, the ASEANstats shall conduct studies and consult with the ASEAN Community Councils on the requirements and processes needed to develop the regional organisational framework and mandate for statistics and their implications to policy and decision making processes in their respective areas.

5.2. Strategic planning and monitoring

- The production, dissemination and communication of ASEAN statistics, including the process towards the establishment of the ACSS shall be aided by a *medium-term strategy for the development of statistics*.
- Guided by the vision to establish the ACSS by 2015, the *strategy* will define the mission, core values and principles, and goals of the ACSS, establish the scope of work, identify the development strategies, programmes, and outputs. More importantly, the strategy will define the appropriate enabling mechanisms, including appropriate instruments that support a rules-based ASEAN Community.
- Coordination and communication among stakeholders will be enhanced to work out ways of integrating ASEAN Community statistical priorities in the national strategies for the development of statistics and facilitating support to ASEAN Member States.
- Progress of implementation of the strategy shall be monitored and evaluated periodically towards the achievement of the medium-term goals.

5.3. Technical cooperation on the development and harmonisation of ASEAN statistics

- Existing technical cooperation work on the development and harmonisation of selected ASEAN statistics shall be continued. As deemed necessary, regional cooperation shall be established on other priority statistical domains that may emerge during the transition process. All cooperation activities must conform to the thrusts and principles of the envisioned ACSS and work towards long-term statistical development objectives.
- Sharing of data using common references and standards shall be expanded to build a comprehensive database of ASEAN statistics and facilitate dissemination and communication of statistics among stakeholders. Harmonisation guidelines, data dissemination and communication policies, and data sharing and exchange mechanisms shall be developed and implemented in line with the rules-based principle defined in the ASEAN Charter.
- Advocacy for adherence to and application of internationally-recommended statistical principles, standards, and guidelines shall be strengthened to increase comparability of ASEAN statistics.

5.4. Institutional building, key statistical infrastructure improvement, and human resource development

- Institutional building includes coordination among data providers, producers and users. Inter-agency coordination will be promoted and facilitated among institutions with shared responsibilities to produce key statistics.
- Improvement of other key statistical infrastructure such as business registers for economic statistics, methodological documentation and metadata systems, and data quality assessment frameworks shall be promoted through sharing of knowledge, experiences and technology.

- In addition to enhancing competence and skills on technical subject matter, training activities on statistical management and coordination, classifications and information technology applications in statistics shall also be pursued.

5.5. Stakeholder consultations

- Stakeholder consultation is important to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness of the ACSS and to enable the system build sustainable new directions.
- Improved communication and interaction between the ACSS and key user groups at the regional and national levels shall be strengthened to help in the determination of regional statistical priorities and promote wider application of statistics in policy creation, decision making and monitoring in the ASEAN Community.

Resolved to actively implement strategies and programmes defined in this framework and subsequent instruments towards the achievement of the above objectives.

Done on this 19th day, in the month of October, in the year 2010.

ASEAN Heads of National Statistical Offices

Brunei Darussalam

Kingdom of Cambodia

Republic of Indonesia

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Malaysia

Union of Myanmar

Republic of the Philippines

Republic of Singapore

Kingdom of Thailand

Socialist Republic of Vietnam

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