Framework for Promoting Accessibility for All
in ASEAN Digital Broadcasting

Proposed by Thailand

I. Background
II. Objectives and Expected Outcomes
III. Model of Accessibility for All
IV. Proposed Framework of Cooperative Actions

I. Background

Building on the shared goals of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the ASEAN Vision 2025 in building an inclusive and resilient community, the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint 2025 outlines measures that promote a high quality of life and equitable access to opportunities, and protect human rights. Further, the ASEAN Communication Master Plan II (2018-2025), or ACMP II, adopted at the 14th Conference of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI) held in 2018 enunciates the overarching message "ASEAN: A Community of Opportunities for All". Responding to the commitment to transition to digital broadcasting in ASEAN requires improving equitable access to broadcasting services for news and entertainment for all groups of people, especially the vulnerable population such as senior citizens, and persons with disabilities.

The concept of "Accessibility for All" was introduced at the 4th and 5th Senior Officials Meeting Responsible for Information Working Group on ASEAN Digital Broadcasting (SOMRI WG-ADB) held in July 2018 and July 2019, respectively, in Bangkok. In the information paper presented, "Accessibility for All" refers to broadcasting access services, which are Closed Captions (CC), Audio Description (AD), and Sign Language Interpretation (SL). These broadcasting access services will create opportunities and reduce barriers for all groups of people, enabling them to gain access to broadcasting content. According to basic human rights, these services shall be available and accessible for everyone, including persons with disabilities, the vulnerable, and senior citizens, so that they are able to be informed, educated, and entertained for their better quality of life, as well as providing a platform for reflecting the feedback. With the challenges in today's world, it is crucial for people to receive accurate and timely public information, especially in times of crises and natural disasters. This concept encourages equitable access to information and bolsters the realisation of an inclusive ASEAN Community.

Digital technology makes it possible for the transmission of broadcasting access services to be more efficient and comprehensive. The SOMRI WG-ADB meetings agreed with the concept and suggested that Thailand develop the proposal into a non-binding framework. Therefore, the Framework for Promoting Accessibility for All in ASEAN Digital Broadcasting has been developed as guidelines for ASEAN Member States (AMS) to take into consideration as they provide their national broadcasting services to benefit all groups of people, including persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and vulnerable citizens.
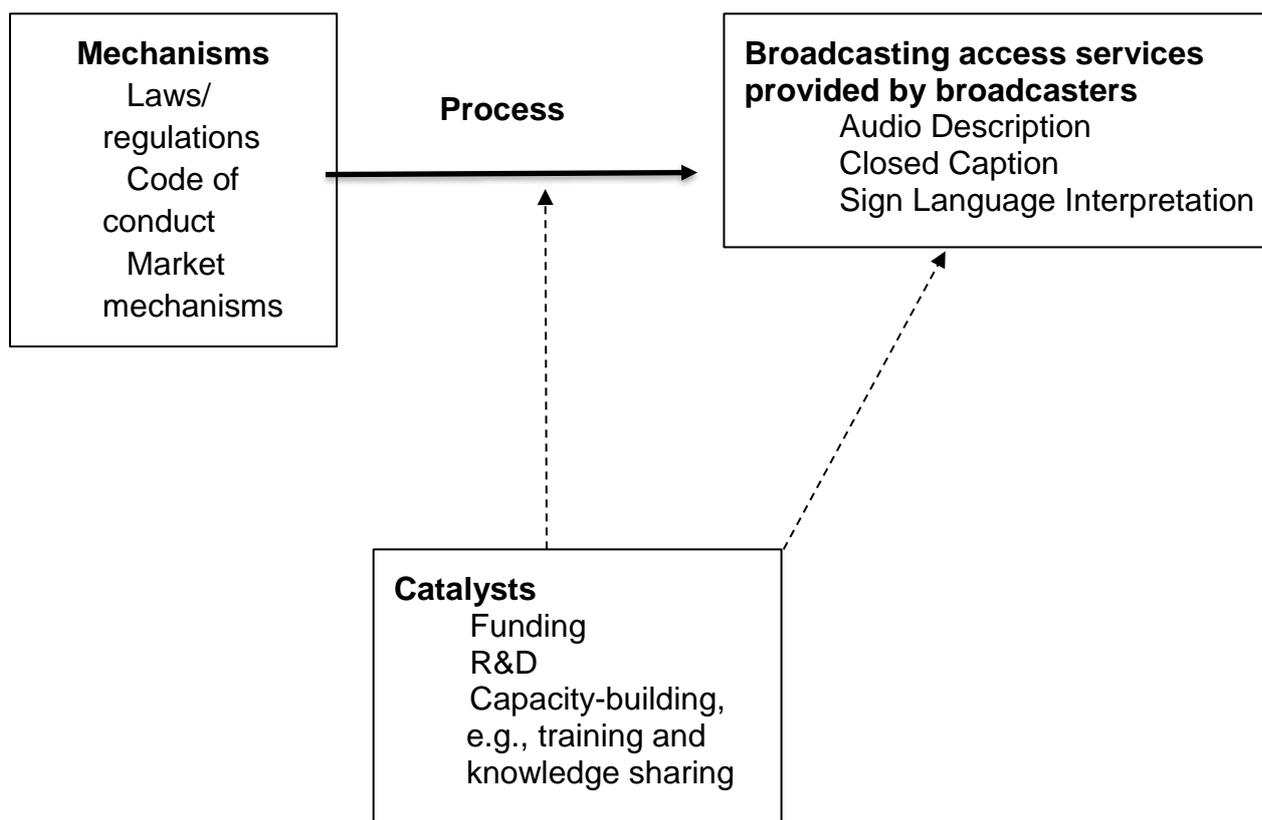
II. Objectives and Expected Outcomes

The framework seeks to:
1. provide guidelines for AMS to promote broadcasting access services for all groups of people including the vulnerable population such as persons with disabilities, and senior citizens;
2. enhance cooperation on, development of, and commitment to broadcasting access services among AMS.

Expected outcomes:
1. **Individuals and society:** People are assured of access to information and content to better their quality of life and to have timely information in times of crises;
2. **Broadcasting industry:** Broadcasters or media organizations could fulfil their responsibility to provide efficient and effective broadcasting services that reach all groups of people;
3. **National and regional levels:** ASEAN and its Member States achieve their goals in building an inclusive and resilient society.

III. Model of Accessibility for All

Mechanisms	Process	Broadcasting access services provided by broadcasters
Laws/ regulations Code of conduct Market mechanisms		Audio Description Closed Caption Sign Language Interpretation

Catalysts
Funding
R&D
Capacity-building, e.g., training and knowledge sharing

The practices in broadcasting access services are likely to differ from one AMS to another. There are several factors that can affect provision of broadcasting access services to the public, as follows:

(1) Laws and regulations require licensed broadcasters to broadcast or produce their programmes with these accessible services to some degree;

(2) These services can also be initiated by the professional standards or code of conduct of the media industry;

(3) Market mechanisms can be another motivation for broadcasters to provide better services to the public without requirement by laws and regulations;

(4) Funding for research and development in new technology and techniques, and capacity-building, training, and knowledge sharing could be stimuli for the development and implementation of the broadcasting services in each country.

IV. Proposed Framework of Cooperative Actions

The table below is the framework for Promoting Accessibility for All in ASEAN Digital Broadcasting. Three key stakeholders are involved in the implementation of broadcasting access services, namely government, broadcasters/ private sector, and people and civil society. In addition, the framework provides recommended actions for each stakeholder as a guideline for the promotion and implementation of broadcasting access services in AMS. Each AMS may apply these recommendations to better suit its national context.

Stakeholders	Recommendations/ suggested actions
1. Governments/ responsible or related state agencies	1. Recognise and give priority to national policies, or develop regulations for broadcasters, especially state-run agencies, encouraging them to provide public broadcasting access services; 2. Encourage cooperation, knowledge sharing and best practices among AMS and broadcasters; 3. Support broadcasters in their implementation of broadcasting access services, through provision of funding, facilities, and technical support and training; 4. Foster research and development in technology and related matters, as well as collaborating with regional and international partners; 5. Collect feedback and preferences from target audiences and utilise them to develop policies and standards for better broadcasting access services; 6. Expand access services to other media platforms, including digital media and emerging forms of media.
2. Broadcasters/ private sector	1. Promote awareness of the importance of broadcasting access services to broadcasters and media practitioners and their roles, as well

	as highlighting markets and business opportunities for broadcasting access services; 2. Study the possibilities for providing broadcasting access services and developing a code of practices for the services; 3. Seek cooperation with state agencies and business partners from the public and private sectors locally and regionally.
3. People, civil society	1. Know/ recognise their rights and benefits, and utilise broadcasting access services in ways to access information and content that fulfil their needs; 2. Work together with stakeholders in developing broadcasting access services; 3. Equip people with media and information literacy and digital competency for creatively and responsibly utilising broadcasting access services for their daily lives, including creating quality content

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx