



# ASEAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INDEX 2022

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Report



one vision  
one identity  
one community



**ASEAN Youth Development Index 2022**  
The ASEAN Secretariat  
Jakarta

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# ASEAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INDEX 2022

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## Foreword



As we make strides towards building a prosperous and integrated ASEAN Community, it is essential that we prioritise our youth as they play a significant role in steering and shaping the future of the region. However, this is not easily achieved against a backdrop of youth disillusionment.

The days of “government knows best” are over. It is our responsibility to ensure that youth are involved in all levels of the decision-making process. Alongside youth participation, data that accurately reflects the realities on the ground is crucial for evidence-based public policy. This will allow the development of policies that enjoy strong grassroots support.

Malaysia’s key priority in the coming years is equity and inclusion of our youth across gender, ethnicity, disability, geographical and economic background. The Skills for Life programme has also been introduced to encourage youth to learn practical skills that will address rising costs of living. This can also serve as a catalyst for youth entrepreneurship and can contribute positively to the country’s economy in the long term. However, there is still much to be done. The second ASEAN Youth Development Index (YDI) can be an effective tool in helping nations bridge the gap as it is based on learnings from youth development within the region. Malaysia looks forward to fully utilising this document as we continue to work closely with the ASEAN platform in further empowering our youth.

— HANNAH YEOH

Minister of Youth and Sports, Malaysia  
Chairperson of the Twelfth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY-XII)

## Foreword



As the youth comprises of a third of Southeast Asia’s population, they are ones of the main driving forces of our development and innovation and play a crucial role in ASEAN’s community-building efforts. As such, the ASEAN Member States are committed to equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

I am pleased with the success of the ASEAN Youth Development Index (YDI) in helping advance youth’s preparedness for their future endeavours as it has been a useful tool and reference point for the ASEAN Member States in measuring the key indicators of youth development across different dimensions, as well as highlighting the achievements, the progress and the challenges among the ASEAN Member States.

In its second iteration, the report underlines the importance of data-driven policymaking and puts forward a comprehensive study on youth in the region across seven domains, namely i) education and skills; ii) health and well-being; iii) employment and opportunity; iv) participation and engagement; v) equity and inclusion; vi) safety and security; and vii) ASEAN values and identity. The report also includes a COVID-19 Pulse Survey, which measures impacts of the pandemic on our youth.

I welcome the positive trend in youth development across the region as highlighted in the report, and at the same time, acknowledge that there are some areas that have room for further improvement. In this regard, there is a strong need for more concerted and innovative efforts in developing policies and programs at the national level that are tailored to the needs of our youth.

In line with the *2022 ASEAN Leaders’ Statement on the Year of ASEAN Youth to Strengthen the Role of Youth in ASEAN Community-Building*, it is also critical to promote the effective and impactful collaboration among all relevant parties towards realising this important goal. We, therefore, must also closely monitor the activities and provision of resources related to its implementation to ensure continuity and efficiency.

I wish to take this opportunity to appeal to our policymakers and key stakeholders to utilise the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN YDI findings in assessing the various aspects of youth development so as to position ASEAN well in charting a brighter future for its young people and the wider community.

— DR. KAO KIM HOURN  
Secretary-General of ASEAN



# Acknowledgement



Under the guidance of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Youth (SOMY), the ASEAN Youth Development Task Force led the development of ASEAN YDI 2022 through support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and coordination by the ASEAN Secretariat. Members of the ASEAN YDI Report, Focal Points of SOMY from all ASEAN Member States, UNFPA team, and Ms. Gemma Wood, as Consultant of ASEAN YDI, as well as the representatives of partner organisations contributed throughout the process to provide expert views and exchange experiences in order to substantiate the content of ASEAN YDI 2022.

Youth leaders representing ASEAN-affiliated youth-led organisations contributed to the development of the 2<sup>nd</sup> YDI Report by voicing their aspirations based on their experiences and case studies from their respective communities during the Workshops for ASEAN YDI development. Views and ideas from the youth have been incorporated in this Report.

Attending partner organisations and youth-led organisations consist of: Committee for ASEAN Youth Cooperation (CAYC), Institute for Youth Research Malaysia (IYRES), ASEAN Youth Forum (AYF), ASEAN University Student Council Union (AUSCU), UNFPA and the members of UNFPA's youth networks, namely: Mr Leo Villar, Philippines - Youth LEAD Communication and Project Officer; Ms Ikka Noviyanti, Indonesia - Youth LEAD Advocacy Officer; Ms. Y Nhi Bui, YPEER AP Intern, Viet Nam; Dr . Sherly, Focal Person of YPEER Indonesia, as well as Dr. Eric C. Thompson, principal investigator of the ASEAN YDI Phase II: ASEAN Awareness, Values and Identity.

# Abbreviations



<b>ACRF</b>	ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework
<b>AMMY</b>	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth
<b>AMS</b>	ASEAN Member States
<b>APRO</b>	Asia-Pacific Regional Office
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>AUSCU</b>	ASEAN University Student Council Union
<b>AVI</b>	ASEAN Values and Identity
<b>AYF</b>	ASEAN Youth Forum
<b>AYO</b>	ASEAN Youth Organization
<b>CAYC</b>	Committee for ASEAN Youth Cooperation
<b>COVID-19</b>	CoronaVirus Disease of 2019
<b>EAPRO</b>	East-Asia and Pacific Regional Office
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>HRD</b>	Human Resource Development
<b>IDEA</b>	International Democracy and Electoral Assistance
<b>IFRC</b>	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>ITU</b>	International Telecommunication Union
<b>LFPR</b>	Labour Force Participation Rate

<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>M4M</b>	Me for Myself (M4M)
<b>NEET</b>	Not in Employment, Education or Training
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>PDR</b>	People's Democratic Republic
<b>PPP</b>	Purchasing Power Parity
<b>RCEP</b>	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
<b>RCF</b>	Robert Carr Funds
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SOMY</b>	Senior Officials Meeting on Youth
<b>SRH</b>	Sexual and Reproductive Health
<b>STI</b>	Sexually Transmitted Infections
<b>UN DESA</b>	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNV</b>	United Nations Volunteers
<b>WEF</b>	World Economic Forum
<b>YDI</b>	Youth Development Index
<b>YFHS</b>	Youth Friendly Health Services Asia
<b>YLL</b>	Years of Life Lost
<b>YPEER</b>	APY- PEER Asia Pacific



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The youth population is key to achieving development goals, both now and in the future. As the imminent leaders, change makers, innovators, and influencers, ASEAN's youth need to be provided with meaningful opportunities to influence policies that have a direct impact on their lives. For this reason, the ASEAN Members States (AMS) have sustained deliberate efforts towards establishing and implementing evidence-based youth development policies and programmes to realise the potential of this segment of ASEAN's population.

AMS have issued youth laws, youth-related policies, and youth development strategies, providing the necessary infrastructure to cultivate a crop of youth willing to contribute to the development of each country and ASEAN as a whole. Therefore, several AMS have incorporated the establishment and use of the ASEAN Youth Development Index (YDI) to serve as a measure of achievements in key dimensions of youth development across the region.

The launch of the first ASEAN Youth Development Index (YDI) in 2017 was part of the priorities of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Youth (SOMY) under the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2016-2020. The ASEAN YDI was developed to assist the ASEAN Youth Sector in developing initiatives for the youth with evidence-based support. Under the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2021-2025, the ASEAN YDI falls under Priority Area 5: ASEAN Awareness, Values, and Identity, as an effort to enable youth to promote ASEAN identity, developing deeper awareness of ASEAN and a greater understanding of ASEAN's shared values, including in the context of promoting and protecting human rights.

The second ASEAN YDI expands on the first, utilising learnings both from youth development within the region and also from YDIs globally. It merged some indicators from the first iteration and incorporated an analysis of data trends for the period 2016-2020. Therefore, the domains under this second ASEAN YDI include Education and Skills, Health and Well-being, Employment and Opportunity, Participation and Engagement, Equity and Inclusion, Security and Safety as well as ASEAN Values and Identity. As established in the first report, the youth age range is between the ages of 15 – 35, and this will be used as reference for this ASEAN YDI report.

Emerging strongly among the results from the second ASEAN YDI is the improvement in Equity and Inclusion as well as Safety and Security across the region from the period 2013 to 2021. It further indicates an opportunity for increased investment in youth policies and programmes relating to Education and Skills as well as Employment and Opportunity. As a result of the closure of schools in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been serious impacts on education outcomes. This is particularly more visible among women and girls, as they become more vulnerable and susceptible to violence, sexual exploitation, and traditional unpaid care work. During any crisis, vulnerable youth, including people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and girls are disproportionately affected.

In this second report, only data sets with at least seven (7) countries having data have been considered. Indicators that were in the first report of the ASEAN YDI were given priority, but with the ever-growing understanding of youth development as well as improved access to data, new Domains and Indicators have emerged.

However, more effort is required to develop better quality data for future ASEAN YDIs, which will reflect the youth situation and enable evidence-based public policy, and therefore improve the performance of youth development in all AMS. This second ASEAN YDI will not be comparable to the first iteration, the global YDI, or any national YDIs in the region, instead, it provides a decade of longitudinal data for comparison over time and within and between countries.

Data and trends for the years from 2020 should be used with caution as impacts of COVID-19, natural disasters, humanitarian crises, as well as political situations in the region, may not be fully incorporated. Future iterations of the YDI as well as global reporting to the SDGs are expected to better capture the impacts of these events on youth across ASEAN.

COVID-19 has had a big impact on young people across the globe. As part of this project, an online survey was disseminated in the national languages of AMS, asking the youth "What are your greatest concerns due to COVID-19? (please select up to 3)". This was not a representative survey across all countries or age groups, but does provide an overview of what were seen as the greatest concerns by the 443 respondents between the ages of 15-35 with *My family members getting ill with COVID19*, *Disruptions to my school or career path*, and *My mental health* being the top 3 responses. Data from the survey can be seen in Section 2.5.

A discussion of the full methodology used in this report can be found in **Appendix A**.

# 01 INTRODUCTION



Following the 2017 ASEAN Declaration on the Adoption of ASEAN Youth Development Index (2017) and the launch of First ASEAN YDI, the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY) has agreed to structure the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2021-2025 based on the five domains of the first ASEAN YDI. The ASEAN youth sector has adopted the Work Plan and its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework. Within the Framework, ASEAN YDI appears as the outcome of the Work Plan, with data collection conducted at the beginning and end of implementation.

The second iteration of the ASEAN YDI looks to expand on the first by using learnings both from youth development within the region and from YDIs globally. The latest iteration of the Global YDI was released in 2021 and included domains on:

					
HEALTH & WELL-BEING	EDUCATION	EMPLOYMENT & OPPORTUNITY	EQUALITY & INCLUSION	POLITICAL & CIVIC PARTICIPATION	PEACE & SECURITY

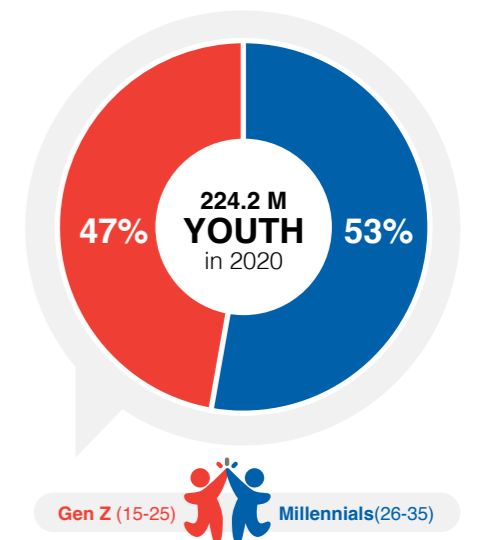
Other domains used since the release of the first ASEAN YDI in national and regional YDIs have included:

				
EDUCATION & SKILLS	SAFETY & SECURITY	COMMUNITY & CULTURE	GENDER	PARTICIPATION & ENGAGEMENT

Impactful development, now more than ever, relies on evidence-informed policy, programming, and implementation. The availability of evidence in the changing world and evaluating progress towards developmental milestones are critical to ensuring that no one is left behind and that even those that are furthest behind are reached with the requisite support.

The youth population is a demographic dividend that provides an opportunity to reach developmental milestones. The importance of youth today certainly cannot be ignored, as they constitute a vital human resource for the economic, social, environmental, and cultural development of most nations.

The ASEAN region had 224.2 million youths in 2020, with 53 percent being Gen Z (15-25 years old) and 47 percent being Millennials (26-35 years old).<sup>1</sup> The proportion of youth as a part of the total population is projected to peak in 2038.<sup>2</sup>



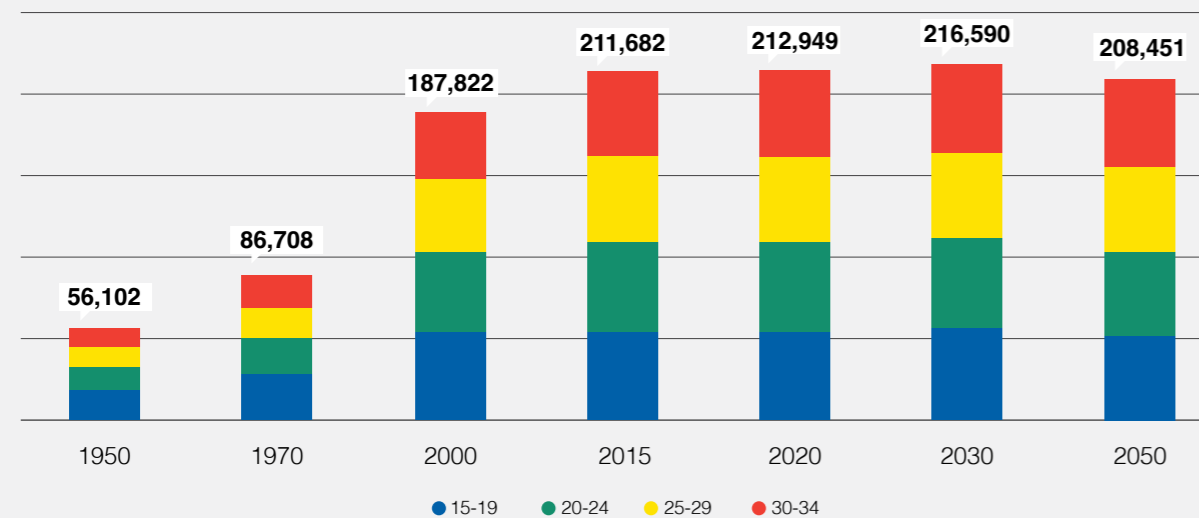
<sup>1</sup> Figures generated by the ASEAN Statistics Division (ASEANStats) based on the data of ASEAN Statistical Yearbook 2021 [https://www.aseanstats.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/ASYB\\_2021\\_All\\_Final.pdf](https://www.aseanstats.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/ASYB_2021_All_Final.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> UN DESA 2022

For this reason, the ASEAN Members States (AMS) have sustained deliberate efforts towards establishing and implementing evidence-based youth development policies and programmes to realise the potential of this segment of ASEAN's population. To that effect, several ASEAN Member States have issued youth laws, youth-related policies, and youth development strategies, in addition to providing the necessary infrastructure to cultivate a crop of youths who are willing to contribute to the development of each country and ASEAN as a whole.

In the context of recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, youth-focus efforts prominently appear under the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF), particularly under *Broad Strategy 2: Strengthening Human Security* and *Broad Strategy 3: Accelerating Inclusive Digital Transformation*. ASEAN recognised the accelerated digital transformation created by the COVID-19 pandemic and, within that reality, the opportunity that ASEAN youth could play an important role in its journey towards recovery and embracing the new normal as a coordinated group. The ASEAN Community has incorporated the establishment and use of ASEAN YDI to serve as a measure of achievements in key dimensions of youth development across the region.

**Figure 1.**  
ASEAN Youth Population ages 15 to 34 (thousands)  
Source: UN DESA 2022



The launch of the first iteration of the ASEAN Youth Development Index (YDI) in 2017 was part of the priorities of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Youth (SOMY) conscripted within the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2016-2020. In the same year, ASEAN Leaders, who are the Heads of State/Governance of AMS, adopted the ASEAN Declaration on the Adoption of ASEAN Youth Development Index at the 31<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summit. The Declaration states a commitment to promote the use of ASEAN YDI in the formulation of responsive and relevant policies and programmes to address youth issues and concerns in each country.

Apart from evaluation purposes, the ASEAN YDI was developed to assist in planning new interventions for the youth. The first iteration covered five domains and indicators identified as important for the ASEAN YDI, namely: Education; Health and Well-being; Employment and Opportunity; Participation and Engagement; and ASEAN Awareness, Values, and Identity. Of these five domains, only the first four and their associated 18 indicators were used as part of the index, with the remaining domain on ASEAN Awareness, Values, and Identity piloted in 2019/2020 and launched in 2021.

Among other achievements, the first iteration of the ASEAN YDI translated into an agreement by the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY) to structure the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2021-2025 based on its five domains. Under the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2021-2025, the ASEAN YDI falls under Priority Area 5: ASEAN Awareness, Values, and Identity, as an effort to enable youth to promote ASEAN identity, developing deeper awareness of ASEAN and a greater understanding of ASEAN's shared values, including in the context of promoting and protecting human rights.

The ASEAN youth sector adopted the Work Plan along with its corresponding Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework, within which the ASEAN YDI appeared as the outcome of the Work Plan, with data collection conducted at the beginning and end of implementation.

Pursuant to that, ASEAN then committed to the development of a second iteration of the YDI. This was demonstrated by the consistent engagement of the ASEAN YDI Task Force, conducting a series of virtual discussions throughout the period 2021-2022 to agree on the preparation and components of the ASEAN YDI. The second iteration of the ASEAN YDI expands on the first, utilising learnings both from youth development within the region and also from YDIs globally. It merged some indicators from the first iteration and incorporated an analysis of data trends for the period 2016-2020. It is in this iteration that the domain of ASEAN Awareness, Values, and Identity is incorporated, along with the addition of the domains on Equity and Inclusion and Safety and Security. Therefore, the domains under this second iteration of the ASEAN YDI include Education and Skills, Health and Well-being, Employment and Opportunity, Participation and Engagement, Equity and Inclusion, Security and Safety, as well as ASEAN Values and Identity.

This second iteration of the ASEAN YDI will not be comparable to the first iteration, the global YDI, or any national YDIs in the region but instead provides a decade of longitudinal data for comparison over time and within and between countries. The formulation of this report is timely, as it coincides with the declaration of 2022 as the Year of ASEAN Youth.<sup>3</sup> In November 2022, at the 40<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summits, ASEAN Leaders adopted the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on the Year of ASEAN Youth to Strengthen the Role of Youth in ASEAN Community Building. The Statement encompasses an agreement to coordinate and strengthen the existing initiatives and mechanisms, including age and sex-disaggregation of data, towards strategic, holistic, and responsive youth actions to promote ASEAN centrality, as well as ASEAN awareness, values, and identity.

Presently, there is no universal definition of the ages that start and end the period called "youth." Young people or youth are often defined more by "who they are not" than by who they are.<sup>4</sup> Regional and international organisations use varying age ranges to categorise young people, and the same is true of national governments. As such, in the context of ASEAN Member States (AMS) the age ranges of youth are defined in the law and regulations which exist in each country. Overall, the youth age ranges are between 15 – 35, and this will be used as reference for this 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN YDI Report as was established in the first iteration.

Similar to the Commonwealth Global Youth Development Index, the ASEAN YDI calculates a score for each country between 0 – 1 which indicates the national average, with 0 being the lowest youth development and 1 the highest.



*no universal definition of the ages that start and end the period called "youth."*

*Overall, the youth age ranges in are between*

**15 – 35 YEARS**

*and this will be used as reference for the ASEAN YDI Reports.*

<sup>3</sup> ASEANyouth2022 – ASEAN declares 2022 as the Year of ASEAN Youth. <https://asean.org/aseanyouth2022-asean-declares-2022-as-the-year-of-asean-youth/>

<sup>4</sup> Furlong and Cartmel, 1997



**Table 1.**  
Selected key development indicators of ASEAN 2021  
Source: UN DESA (2022), ASEANSTATS 2021

No	Data and Indicator	Value/Range
1	Total population (million)	661,826.8
2	Population as % of world population	8.53
3	GDP per capita (US\$)	4,533.2
4	Youth 15 – 35 years old (000)	224,200
5	Below National Poverty Line (%), 2016 – 2021 figure	24.8 – 4.40
6	Unemployment rate (%)	1.7 – 10.3
7	Access to safe drinking water (%)	79.7 – 100.0
8	Access to improved sanitation (%)	75.3 – 100.0
9	Internet subscriber per 100 persons	25.5 – 92.0
10	Cellular phone per 100 persons	60.8 – 166.6

This ASEAN YDI has merged some indicators from the last iteration to ensure that the addition of new and important domains does not impact too greatly on the sensitivity of the index and ensures more balanced domains.

A full methodology can be seen under **Appendix A**.

The following indicators have been selected based on the feedback from AMS, youth stakeholders, and NGOs taking data availability, quality, and comparability into account. Only data sets with at least seven (7) countries having data have been considered. Indicators which were in the first iteration of the ASEAN YDI were given priority, however, with the ever-growing understanding of youth development as well as improved data access, there are also new Domains and Indicators. This ASEAN YDI will not be comparable to the first iteration, the global YDI, or any national YDIs in the region, but instead provides a decade of longitudinal data for comparison over time – and within and between countries.

## 1.1 Indicators and Domains

This iteration of the ASEAN YDI is based on seven (7) Domains:



There are a total of 30 indicators in the ASEAN YDI, split between the Domains as follows.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS			
Indicator	Description	Source	
Youth Literacy Rate	Literacy rate, youth total, % for ages 15 – 24	UNESCO Institute for Statistics	
Gross Graduation Tertiary	Gross graduation ratio from first degree programmes (ISCED 6 and 7) in tertiary education, both sexes (%)	UNESCO Institute for Statistics	
Mean Years of Schooling	Mean years of schooling (ISCED 1 or higher), population 25+ years	UNESCO Institute for Statistics	
Educational Attainment Rate	Completed lower secondary education or higher, population 25+ years	UNESCO Institute for Statistics	
Digital Natives	Five or more years' experience using the internet, % for ages 15 – 29	ITU/Global YDI	

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING			
Indicator	Description	Source	
Youth Mortality Rate	Probability of dying at ages 15 – 24 expressed per 1,000 youths aged 15	UNICEF	
Mental Disorder	Year Life Lost due to Mental Disorders for ages 15–39	Global Burden of Disease	
Life Expectancy at age 15	The average number of years of life expected by a hypothetical cohort of individuals who would be subject during all their lives to the mortality rates of a given period. It is expressed as years	United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), Population Division (2019)	
Sexually Transmissible Infection Rate	Sexually transmitted infections including HIV, prevalence rate for ages 15–39	Global Burden of Disease	
Substance Use Disorders	Year Life Lost due to substance use disorders including Alcohol and Drugs for ages 15–39	Global Burden of Disease	



**EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY**

Indicator	Description	Source
Youth Unemployment Rate	Unemployment rate for ages 15-24	ILO
Youth Labour force Participation Rate	Labour force participation rate for ages 15-24	ILO
Not in Employment, Education, or training (NEET)	Share of youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET) ages 15-24	ILO
Financial Account	Account denotes the percentage of respondents who report having an account (by themselves or together with someone else) at a bank or another type of financial institution, or report personally using a mobile money service in the past 12 months (% age 15+)	Global Findex
Adolescent Fertility Rate	Adolescent fertility rate is the number of births per 1,000 women for ages 15-19	World Bank



**PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Indicator	Description	Source
Youth Volunteer Time	Responding that they have volunteered time in the past 30 days, % for ages 15-29	Global YDI
National Youth Policy	Current status of National Youth Policy	Youthpolicy.org
Voter Turnout Rates	Voter turnout rate for total population	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)
Internet Usage	Individuals using the Internet (% for ages 15-39)	World Bank



**EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

Indicator	Description	Source
Access to Electricity	Percentage of the population with access to electricity	World Bank
Access to Sanitation	Percentage of the population with access to sanitation	World Bank
Proportion of Women in Managerial Positions	Proportion of females in the total number of persons employed in managerial positions	UNDESA Statistics Division
Gender Parity in Literacy	Gender Parity in Literacy	UNESCO and Global YDI
Disability Supports	Proportion of population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit, by sex (%)	UN DESA Statistics Division



**SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Indicator	Description	Source
Child Marriage	Percentage of women (aged 20-24 years) married or in union before age 18	UNICEF
Interpersonal Violence	Year Life Lost due to interpersonal Violence for ages 15-39	Global Burden of Disease
Poverty Headcount	Percentage of the population living on less than \$1.90 a day at 2011 international prices. As a result of revisions in PPP exchange rates, poverty rates for individual countries cannot be compared with poverty rates reported in earlier editions	World Bank
Conflict and Terrorism	Year Life Lost due to Conflict and Terrorism for ages 15-39	Global Burden of Disease
Disaster Risk Reduction	The indicator for the Disaster Risk Reduction activity in the country comes from the score of the Hyogo Framework for Action self-assessment reports of the countries. The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) was the global blueprint for disaster risk reduction efforts between 2005 and 2015.	European Union










**ASEAN VALUES AND IDENTITY\***

Indicator	Description	Source
Composite AVI Index	2020 survey composite index on Awareness, Values, and Identity	ASEAN YDI phase 2

\*This survey has only been conducted once and so the score is held constant across the 10 years of the YDI.



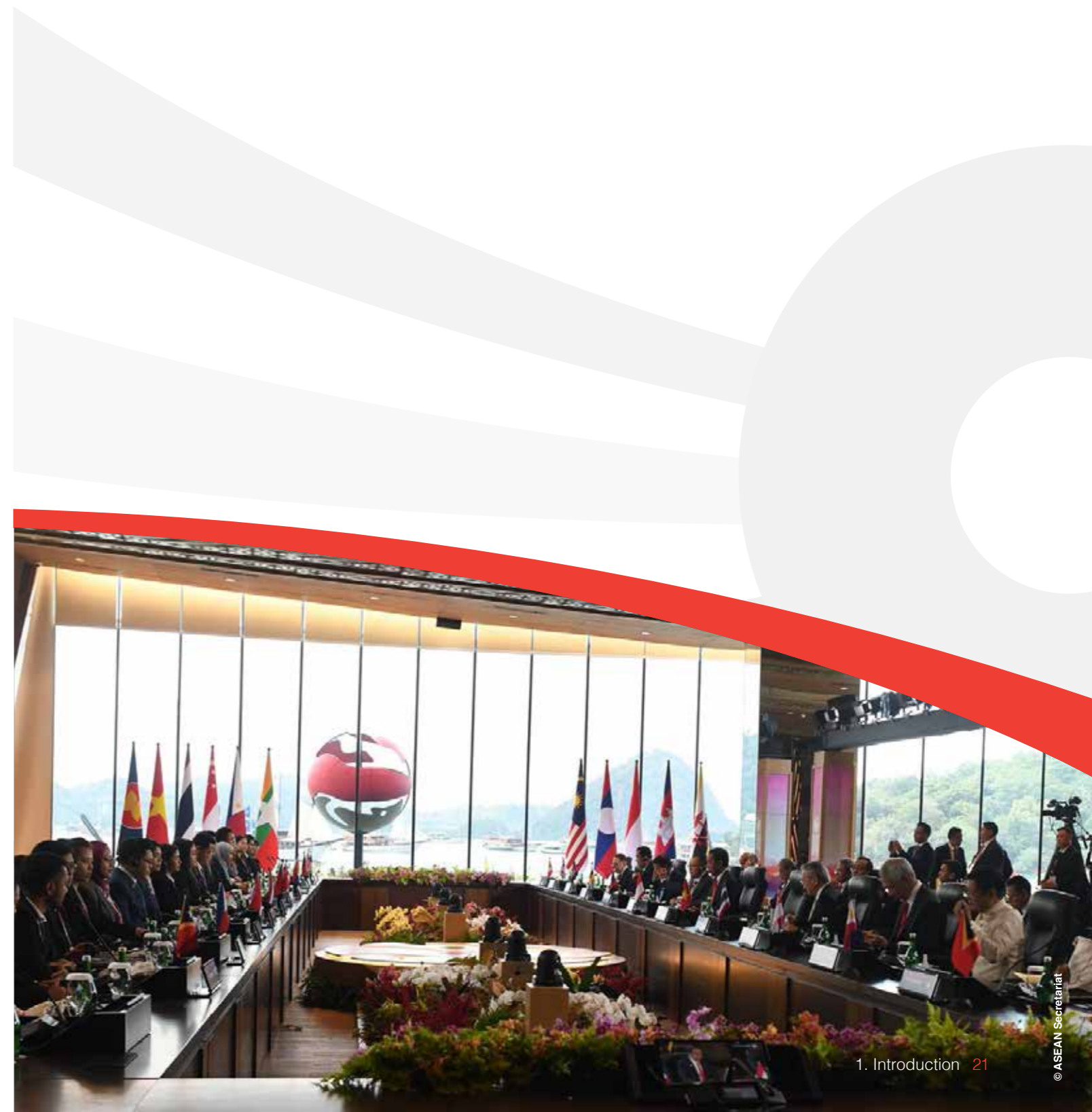
Below is the list of indicators used and which countries were used as “like” countries based on the respective domains from Global YDI 2020. Please note where there is no “like” country, the ASEAN average has been used.

Domain	Indicator	Country with no Data	Country Used
 Education & Skills	Youth Literacy Rate	-	-
	Gross Graduation Tertiary	Cambodia	Myanmar
	-	Malaysia	Viet Nam
	-	Philippines	Indonesia
	Mean Years of Schooling	Lao PDR	Cambodia
	Educational Attainment Rate	Lao PDR	Cambodia
Digital Natives	-	-	
 Health & Well-being	Youth Mortality	-	-
	Mental Disorders	-	-
	Life Expectancy at age 15	-	-
	STIs including HIV	-	-
	YLL Substance Use Disorders	-	-
 Employment & Opportunity	Unemployment	-	-
	Labour Force Participation	-	-
	NEET	-	-
	Financial Institution Account	Brunei Darussalam	ASEAN Average
	Adolescent Fertility Rate	-	-
 Participation & Engagement	Volunteered Time	-	-
	National Youth Policy	-	-
	Voter Turnout Rates	Brunei Darussalam	ASEAN Average
	Internet Usage	Indonesia	Philippines
 Equity & Inclusion	Access to Electricity	-	-
	Access to Sanitation	Brunei Darussalam	Singapore
	-	Cambodia	Myanmar
	-	Indonesia	Malaysia
	-	Viet Nam	Malaysia
	Women in Managerial Positions	-	-
	Gender Parity in Literacy	-	-
Severe Disability Rate	-	-	
 Security & Safety	Child Marriage	Brunei Darussalam	Viet Nam
	-	Malaysia	Viet Nam
	YLL Interpersonal Violence	-	-
	Poverty Headcount	Cambodia	Philippines
	-	Singapore	Malaysia
	-	Brunei Darussalam	Malaysia
	YLL Conflict and Terrorism	-	-
Disaster Risk Reduction	-	-	
 ASEAN Values and Identity	AVI Index	-	-

## 1.2 Youth Stakeholder Voices

As key stakeholders of the ASEAN YDI, young people themselves and youth advocacy organisations were consulted on issues facing young people in the region.

These, along with topics brought forward by other stakeholders, have been included as a literature review to provide greater context and understanding of the experiences lived by young ASEAN people.



# 02 RESULTS



## 2.1 ASEAN YDI in a Global Context

The Global YDI 2020 was the most recent Global YDI, and while it is not directly comparable to this ASEAN YDI due to different indicators and domains, it provides a place to compare ASEAN Member States with 181 countries around the world. ASEAN is not represented as a region in the Global report, but its Member States fall in with its neighbours in South Asia. South Asia did not fare well on the global scale in the Global Youth Development Index 2020, ranking 8<sup>th</sup> out of 9 regions in 2018, the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest-ranked region before Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite this relatively low score, South Asia showed marked improvement in the YDI between 2010 and 2018.

Singapore ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the Global Youth Development Index 2020. The second highest ranked ASEAN Member State in the Global YDI is Brunei Darussalam, which ranks 49<sup>th</sup>.

ASEAN Country	Global 2020						
		Education	Employment & Opportunity	Equality & Inclusion	Health & Well-being	Peace & Security	Political & Civic Participation
Rank							
Brunei Darussalam	49	17	69	46	92	35	95
Cambodia	97	137	49	114	94	86	58
Indonesia	88	98	153	105	71	65	1
Lao PDR	136	131	177	135	109	78	116
Malaysia	50	59	23	66	86	48	74
Myanmar	130	140	113	107	125	111	155
Philippines	133	113	166	98	109	177	40
Singapore	1	4	1	13	1	1	162
Thailand	84	95	42	72	123	114	68
Viet Nam	63	57	85	66	72	52	92

Source: Global Youth Development Report.


Country	YDI 2022 Score
Brunei Darussalam	0.692
Cambodia	0.568
Indonesia	0.578
Lao PDR	0.476
Malaysia	0.699
Myanmar	0.466
Philippines	0.522
Singapore	0.830
Thailand	0.574
Viet Nam	0.661


## 2.2 ASEAN YDI Results Overview


This results section provides an overview of YDI and Domain scores and trends for the 10 AMS.


ASEAN saw an overall improvement in the YDI, improving from 0.535 in 2013 to 0.606 in 2022. All countries showed improvement over time, with Cambodia showing the greatest improvement, from 0.440 to 0.568.


In 2022, Singapore (0.830) ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, followed by Malaysia (0.699), Brunei Darussalam (0.692), Viet Nam (0.661), Indonesia (0.578), Thailand (0.574), Cambodia (0.568), the Philippines (0.522), Lao PDR (0.476), and Myanmar (0.466).


 ASEAN saw an improvement in **Education and Skills** between 2013 and 2022, progressing from 0.486 to 0.573. Singapore (0.992) ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in Education and Skills in 2022, with Myanmar (0.171 – 0.371) showing the greatest improvement between 2013 and 2022.

 ASEAN also saw an improvement in **Health and Well-being** between 2013 and 2022, progressing from 0.582 to 0.605. Singapore (0.958) ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in Health and Well-being in 2022, with Myanmar (0.436 – 0.535) showing the greatest improvement between 2013 and 2022 in Health and Well-being.

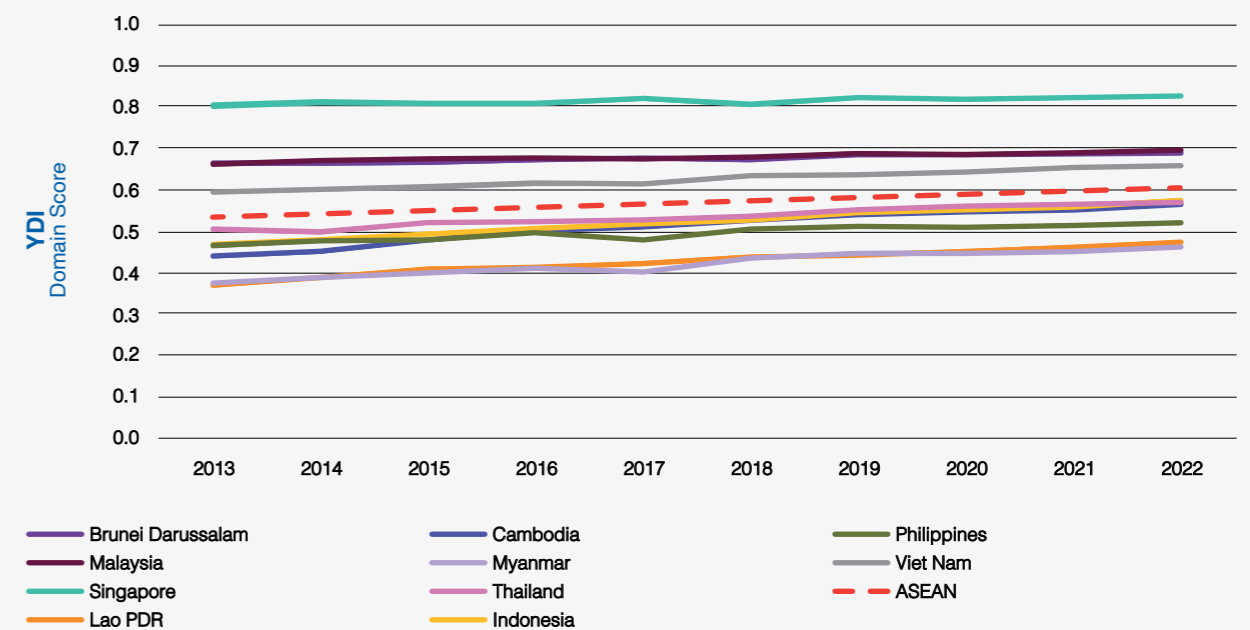
 ASEAN saw an improvement in **Employment and Opportunity** between 2013 and 2022, progressing from 0.522 to 0.541. Singapore (0.768) ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in Employment and Opportunity in 2022, with Indonesia (0.292 – 0.437) showing the greatest improvement between 2013 and 2022.

 ASEAN saw an improvement in **Participation and Engagement** between 2013 and 2022, progressing from 0.447 to 0.577. Viet Nam (0.765) ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in Participation and Engagement in 2022, with Cambodia (0.405 – 0.664) showing the greatest improvement between 2013 and 2022.

 ASEAN saw an improvement in **Equity and Inclusion** between 2013 and 2022, progressing from 0.455 to 0.606. Brunei Darussalam (0.770) ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in Equity and Inclusion in 2022, with Lao PDR (0.385 – 0.713) showing the greatest improvement between 2013 and 2022.

 ASEAN saw an improvement in **Safety and Security** between 2013 and 2022, progressing from 0.651 to 0.722. Singapore (1) ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in Safety and Security in 2022, with the Philippines (0.432 – 0.591) showing the greatest improvement between 2013 and 2022.

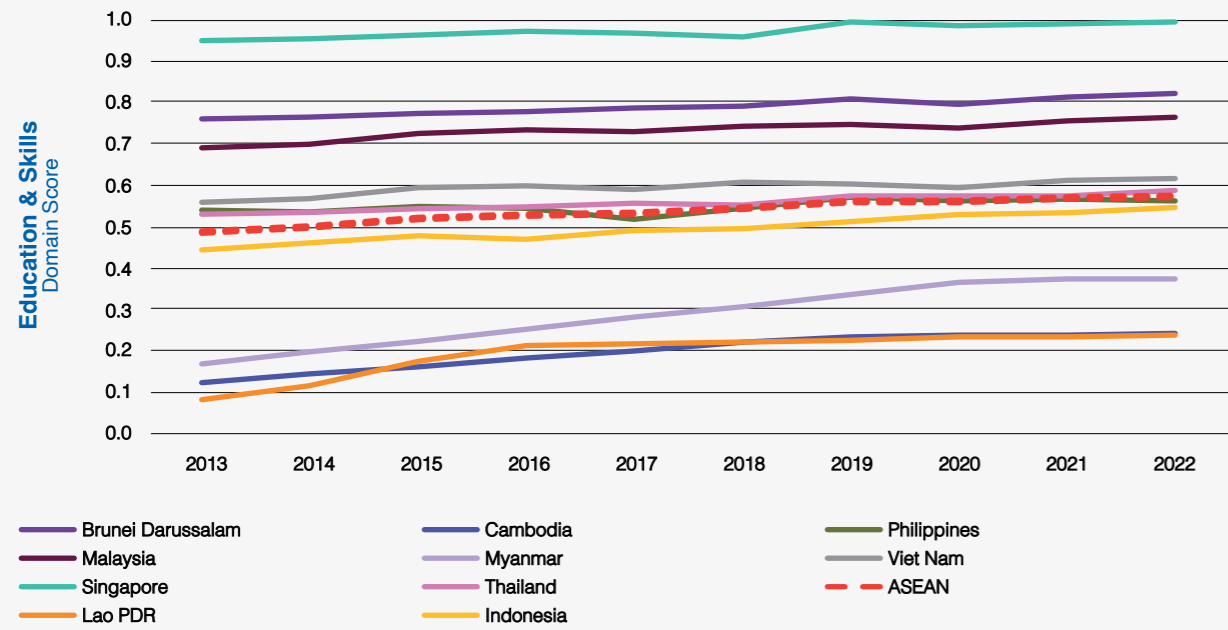
Country	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Brunei Darussalam	0.665	0.664	0.667	0.674	0.677	0.674	0.688	0.687	0.691	0.692
Cambodia	0.440	0.451	0.479	0.502	0.511	0.529	0.542	0.549	0.554	0.568
Indonesia	0.468	0.479	0.494	0.506	0.519	0.528	0.546	0.554	0.561	0.578
Lao PDR	0.368	0.389	0.410	0.413	0.424	0.439	0.444	0.453	0.463	0.476
Malaysia	0.663	0.670	0.676	0.678	0.677	0.681	0.691	0.687	0.693	0.699
Myanmar	0.374	0.387	0.400	0.412	0.401	0.436	0.448	0.450	0.453	0.466
Philippines	0.464	0.476	0.480	0.497	0.480	0.507	0.514	0.511	0.515	0.522
Singapore	0.804	0.813	0.810	0.809	0.823	0.808	0.826	0.822	0.826	0.830
Thailand	0.505	0.498	0.522	0.524	0.528	0.537	0.553	0.563	0.567	0.574
Viet Nam	0.595	0.602	0.608	0.616	0.615	0.637	0.638	0.645	0.657	0.661
ASEAN	0.535	0.543	0.554	0.563	0.566	0.578	0.589	0.592	0.598	0.606



## 2.3 Results by Domain

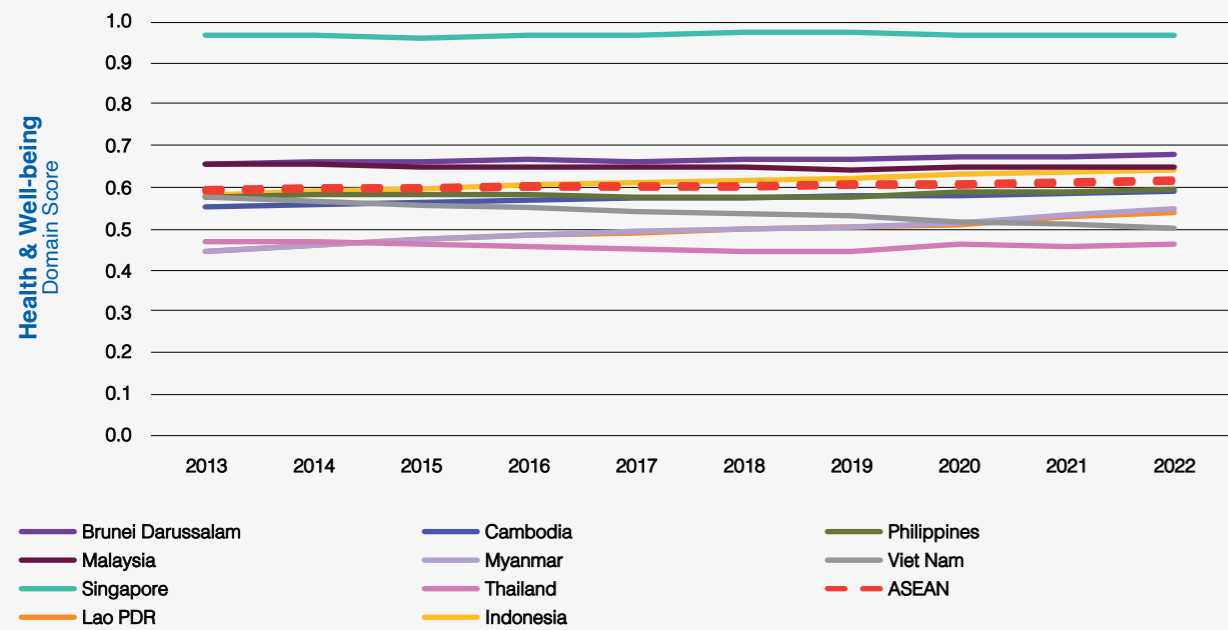
### 2.3.1 Education and Skills

Education and Skills saw the widest range of scores between Member States of all the Domains in the index between 2013–2022. The regional score increased from 0.486 to 0.573. Singapore ranked the highest by a significant amount (0.992). All 10 Member States improved between 2013–2022. Myanmar showed the greatest improvement between 2013–2022.



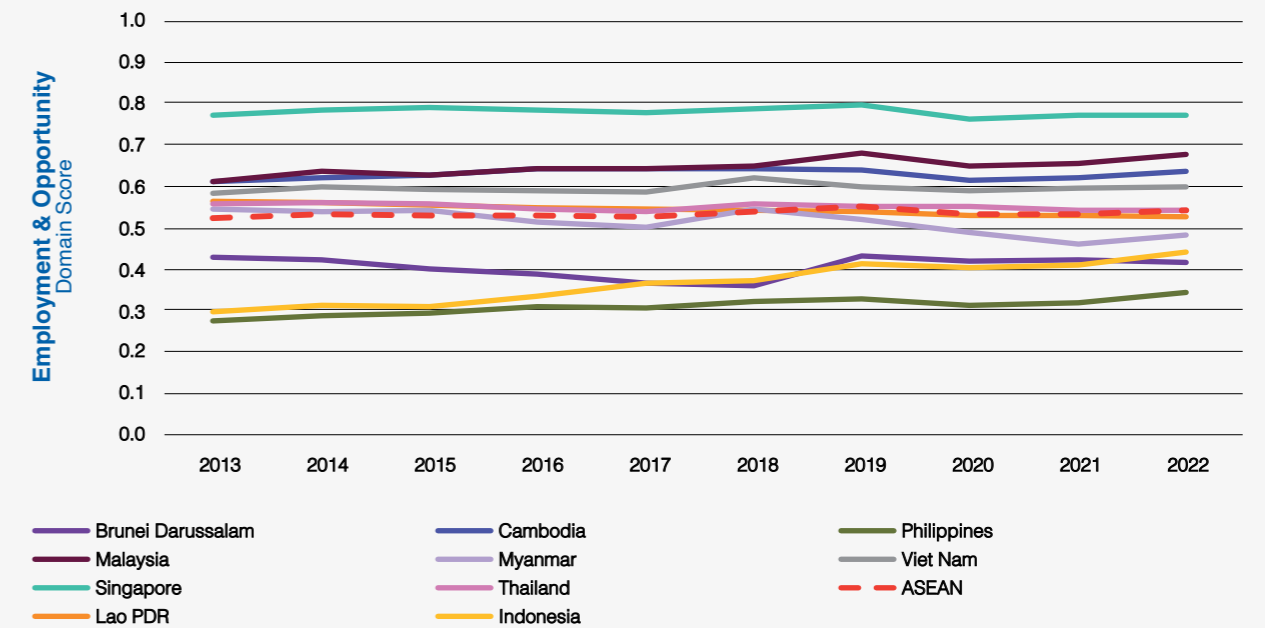
### 2.3.2 Health and Well-being

Health and Well-being saw a wide range of scores between Member States from 2013 to 2022. The regional score increased from 0.582 to 0.605. Singapore ranked the highest by a significant amount (0.958). Of the 10 Member States, 7 countries improved and 3 countries declined from 2013 to 2022. Myanmar saw the greatest improvement between 2013–2022.



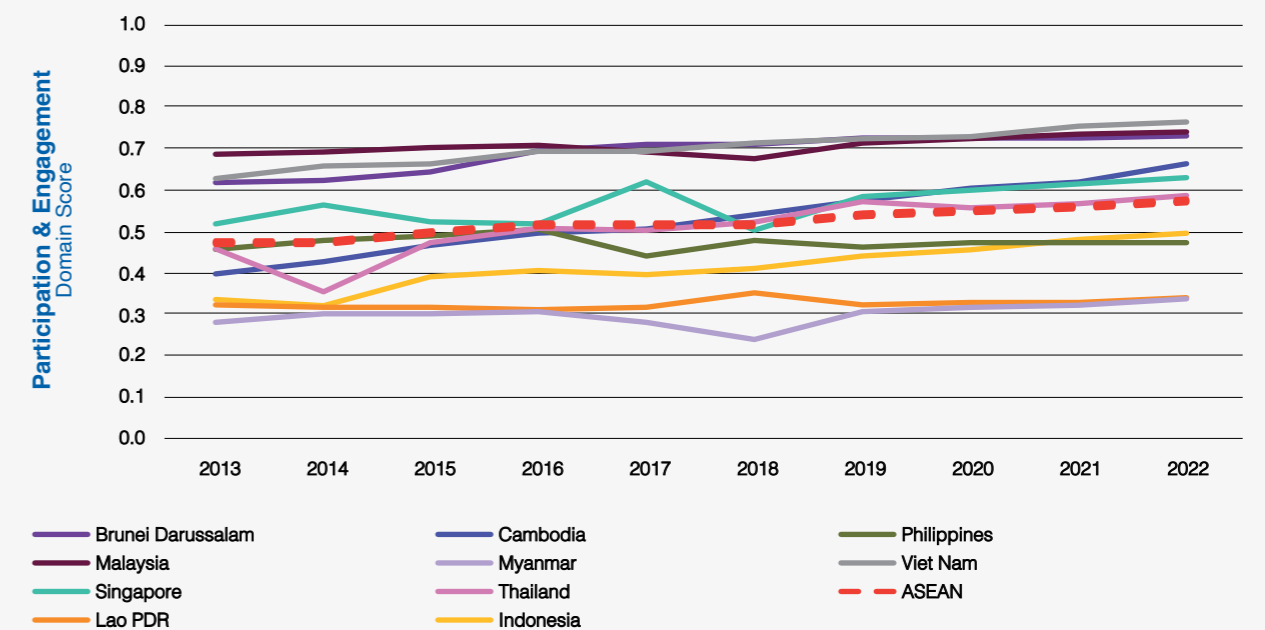
### 2.3.3 Employment and Opportunity

Employment and Opportunity saw a wide range of scores between Member States from 2013 to 2022. Employment and Opportunity was the worst performing domain, with only Singapore scoring above 0.700. The regional score increased from 0.522 to 0.541. Singapore ranked the highest (0.768). Of the 10 Member States, 5 countries improved and 5 countries declined from 2013 to 2022. Indonesia showed the greatest improvement from 2013 to 2022.



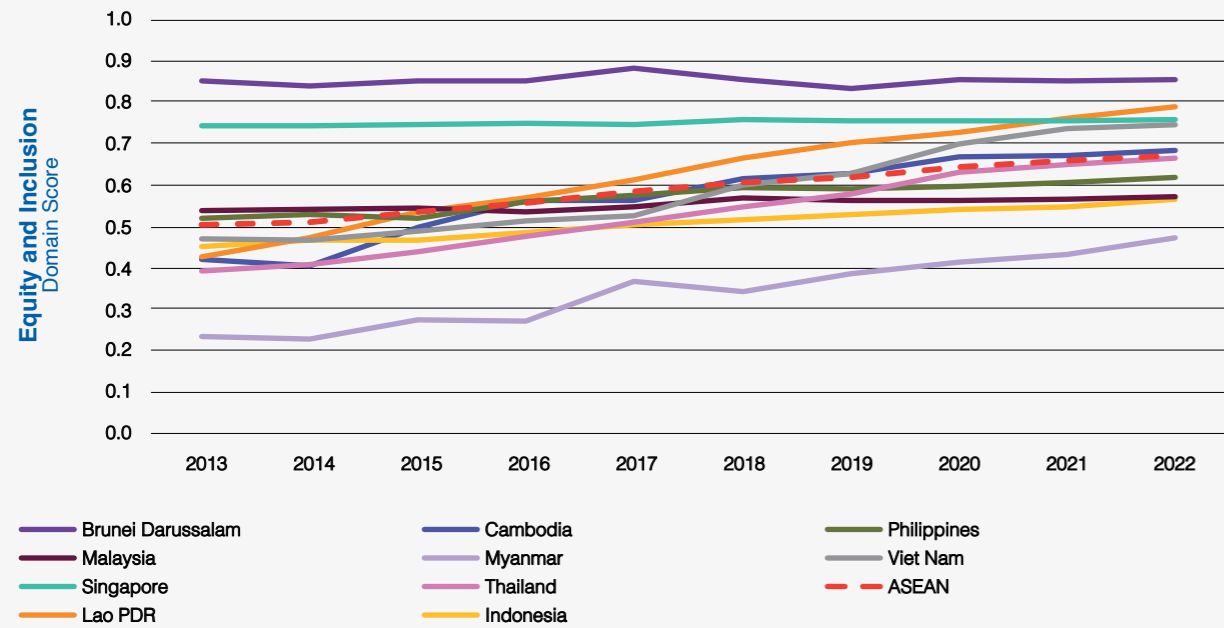
### 2.3.4 Participation and Engagement

Participation and Engagement saw a wide range of scores between Member States from 2013 to 2022. The regional score increased from 0.477 to 0.577. Viet Nam ranked the highest (0.765). Of the 10 Member States, 9 countries improved and only 1 country declined from 2013 to 2022. Cambodia saw the greatest improvement between 2013–2022.



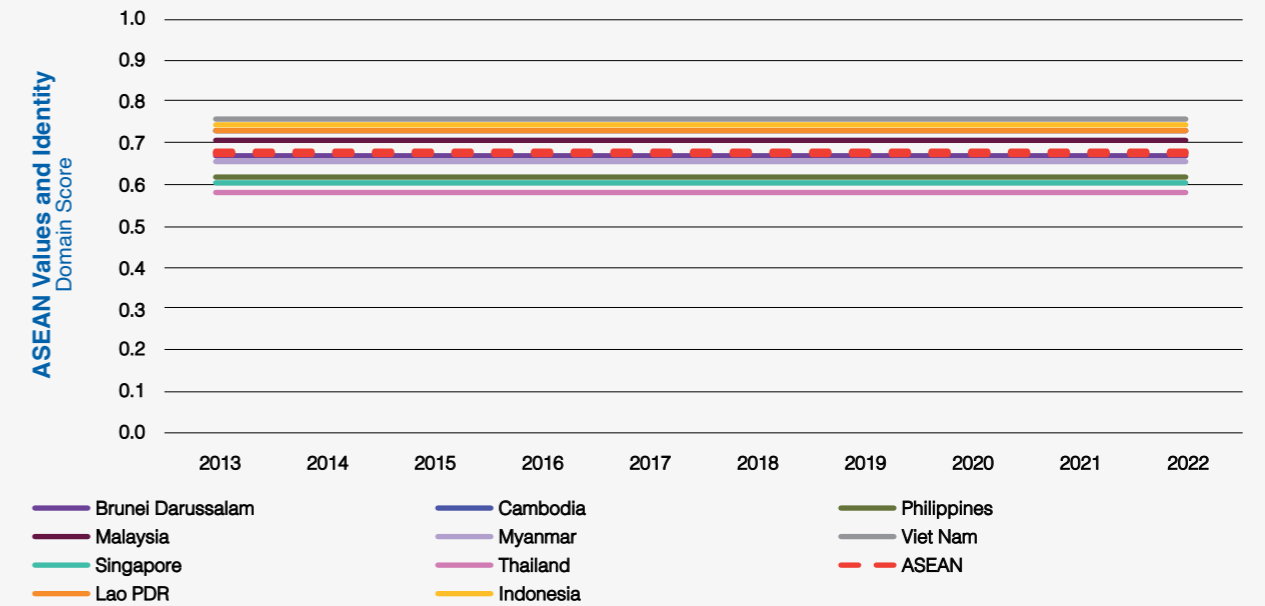
### 2.3.5 Equity and Inclusion

Equity and Inclusion saw a wide range of scores between Member States from 2013 to 2022. The regional score increased from 0.455 to 0.606. Brunei Darussalam ranked the highest (0.770) in this domain. Of the 10 Member States, 9 countries improved and only 1 country declined from 2013 to 2022. Lao PDR saw the greatest improvement between 2013–2022.



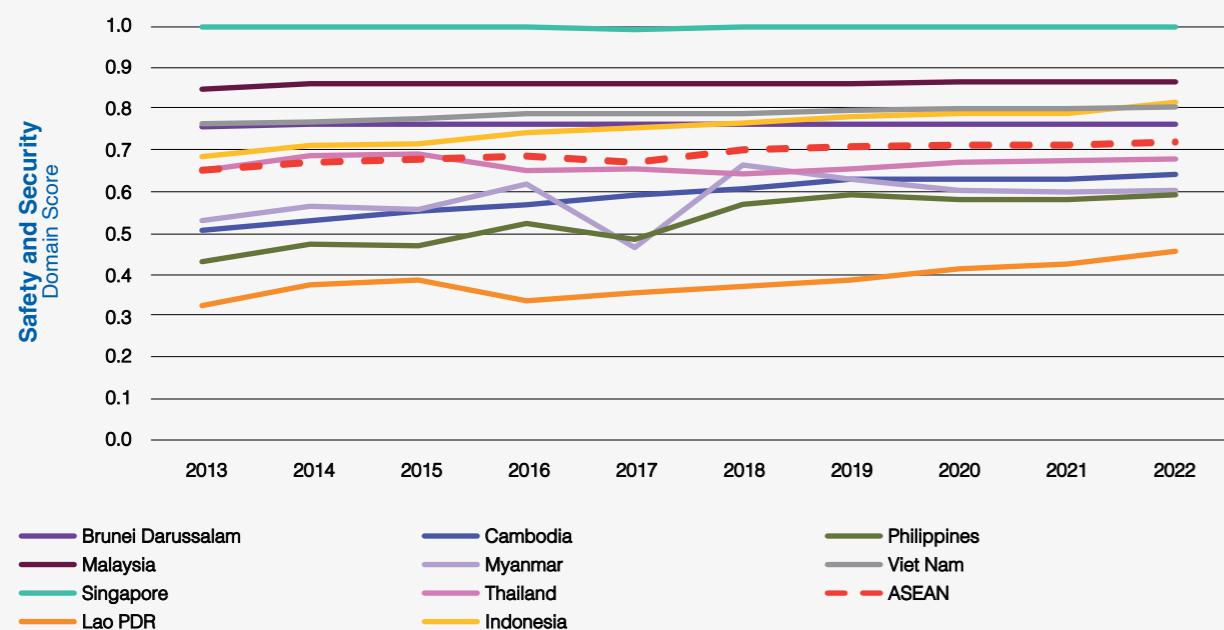
### 2.3.7 ASEAN Values and Identity

There was no change in ASEAN Values and Identity Domain scores across the board, as all indicators had a single year of data (collected in 2020) which was held constant across time. Based on proxy data from 2020, the regional data in 2022 was 0.670. ASEAN Values and Identity was the best performing domain at the regional level, with all Member States scoring above 0.500.



### 2.3.6 Safety and Security

Safety and Security saw a wide range of scores between Member States from 2013 to 2022. The regional score increased from 0.651 to 0.722. Singapore ranked the highest (1.0). All 10 Member States saw an improvement from 2013 to 2022. The Philippines saw the greatest improvement between 2013–2022.



## 2.4 ASEAN Results by Member States

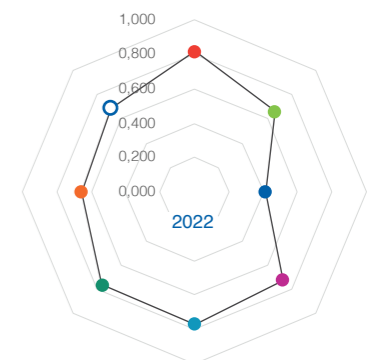
### 2.4.1 Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in YDI out of the 10 countries in ASEAN in 2022, increasing its domain score from 0.665 to 0.692 between 2013-2022.

The greatest improvement was observed for Participation and Engagement, where the score increased from 0.628 to 0.729 in ten years. Most of the change could be attributed to an increase in Internet Usage, which went from 64.50 percent in 2013 to 100 percent in 2022.

The domain for Education and Skills received the highest score of 0.818 in 2022. The biggest difference over the ten years was seen in Gross Graduation Tertiary, which improved from 14.05 percent in 2013 to 28.52 percent in 2022. There was also a slight improvement in the Youth Literacy Rate, while all other indicators within the domain remained constant over the years.

Brunei Darussalam saw a very slight rise in the scores for Health and Well-being, Equity and Inclusion, and Safety and Security. Indicators for Equity and Inclusion and Safety and Security showed no or very little change (less than 0.05 change in the indicator score). For Health and Well-being, Youth Mortality improved significantly, with the rate



of deaths per 1,000 decreasing from 4.48 in 2013 to 2.78. Life Expectancy at age 15 also rose (from 60.70 years to 61.86), while the rate of mental disorders (from 2.70 to 2.85), STIs including HIV (from 12,376.27 to 12,584.31), and Substance Use (30.49 to 37.89) decreased.

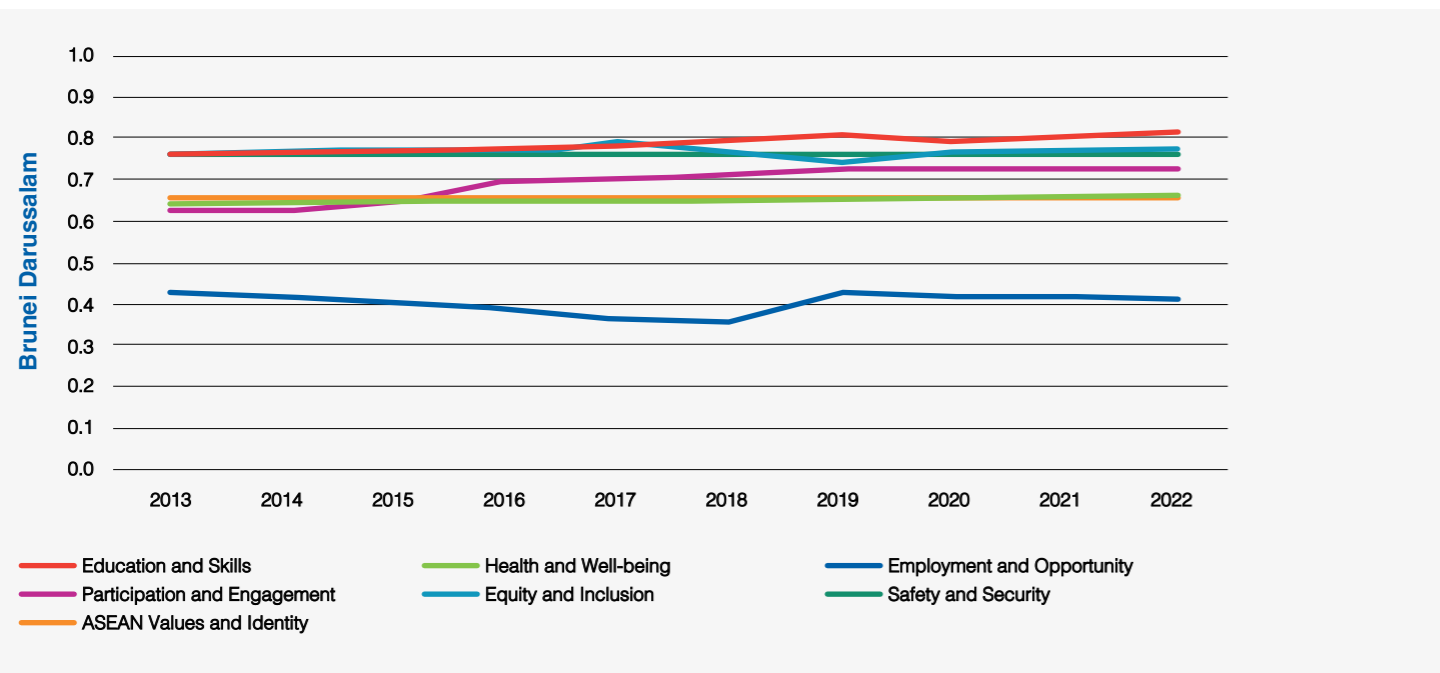
Overall, Employment and Opportunity declined due to a big increase of NEET and a decrease in Youth Labour Force Participation. However, there was an improvement in Unemployment Rate, Financial Institution Account, and Adolescent Fertility Rate indicators.

Brunei Darussalam was ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in ASEAN Values and Identity with a score of 0.660.

Brunei Darussalam may benefit from the targeted policies on Graduation Tertiary, Mental Disorder, and Disaster Risk Reduction, as well as Employment and Opportunity. Employment and Opportunity was affected by the Labour Force Participation, which dropped from 0.29 to 0.20 from 2013 to 2022 and low scoring on NEET and Youth Unemployment.

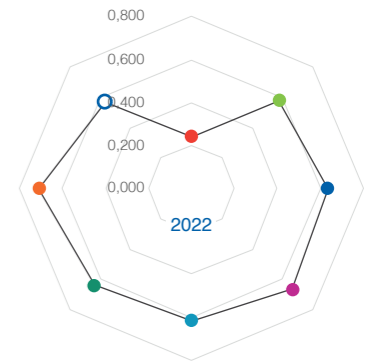
Domain	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Education & Skills	0.759	0.766	0.772	0.779	0.785	0.792	0.808	0.796	0.811	0.818
Health & Well-being	0.648	0.651	0.653	0.655	0.654	0.655	0.657	0.660	0.662	0.664
Employment & Opportunity	0.427	0.419	0.399	0.384	0.363	0.355	0.430	0.416	0.420	0.413
Participation & Engagement	0.628	0.631	0.648	0.699	0.710	0.712	0.728	0.727	0.727	0.729
Equity & Inclusion	0.767	0.756	0.767	0.768	0.795	0.770	0.751	0.769	0.769	0.770
Safety & Security	0.761	0.761	0.761	0.762	0.762	0.762	0.762	0.763	0.763	0.763
ASEAN Values & Identity*	0.660	0.660	0.660	0.660	0.660	0.660	0.660	0.660	0.660	0.660
YDI	0.665	0.664	0.667	0.674	0.677	0.674	0.688	0.687	0.691	0.692

\* As only one year of data was available in 2020, it has been held constant across all years of the index.



## 2.4.2 Cambodia

**Cambodia ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of the ten countries in the ASEAN YDI in 2022, despite the sharpest increase between 2013 and 2022 of all ten countries, increasing to 0.568 in 2022 from 0.440 in 2013. Its overall rank improved from 8<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> in those 10 years.**



Cambodia saw the greatest improvement in Participation and Engagement among all ten countries, mainly due to an increase in Voter Turnout Rates, which increased 30 percentage points and Internet Usage, which increased 59 percentage points.

Equity and Inclusion also saw a massive jump in its domain score due to an increase in Access to Electricity, Women in Managerial Positions, and Gender Parity in Literacy. The percentage of the population with Access to Electricity almost doubled in the 10 years from 2013 to 2022, while Women in Managerial Positions increased from 28.39 percent to 33.45 percent. Severe Disability Rate remained constant, while Access to Sanitation decreased.

Cambodia made significant improvements in the Education and Skills and Safety and Security domains as well. There was a 0.132 increase in the domain score of Safety and Security because of a decline in poverty rate, which saw the 5 percent of the population earning less than 41.90 a day decrease from 8.96 percent to 0.20 percent. The country also saw a 0.112 increase in the Education and Skills score because of an increase in Youth Literacy Rate from 83.93 percent to 100 percent.

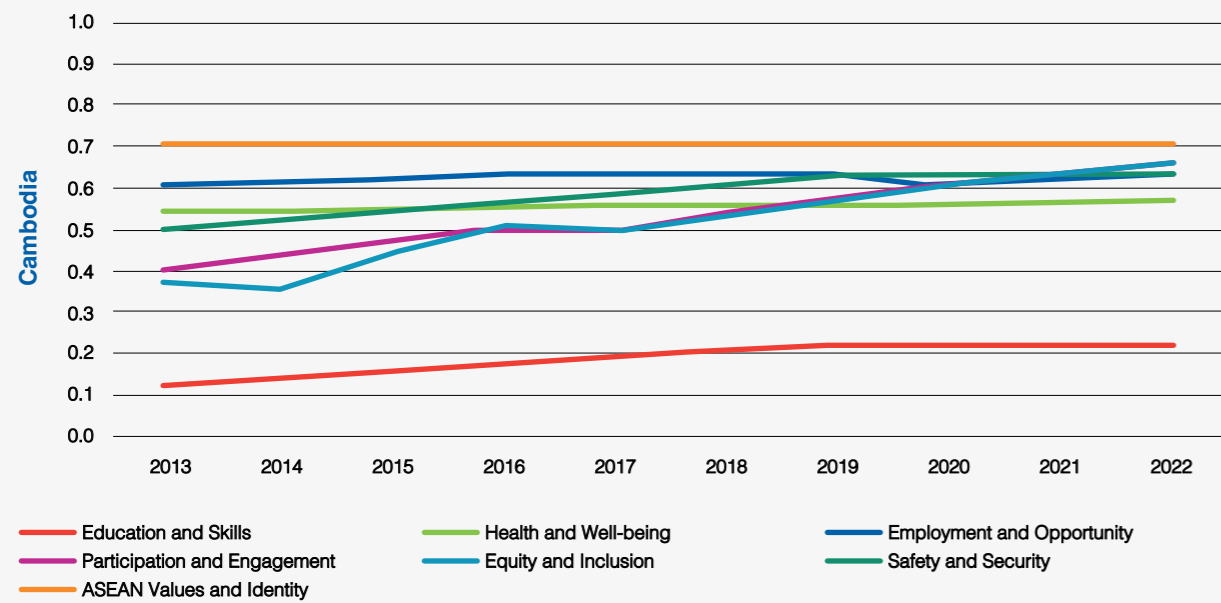
A slight improvement was also observed for both Health and Well-being and Employment and Opportunity, where the increase in score for the domains was 0.033 and 0.026 respectively. For Health and Well-being, big improvements were seen in Youth Mortality (from 10.01 deaths per 1,000 to 7.19) and Life Expectancy at age 15 (from 55.75 years to 57.63 years), while the other indicators declined a little over the 10 years. For Employment and Opportunity, scores for Not in Employment, Education, and Training (7.86 percent to 7.12 percent), and Financial Institution Account (8.98 percent to 30.20 percent) improved even while the other indicators declined slightly.

Cambodia is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the ASEAN Values and Identity domain with a constant score of 0.710 across the ten years. Cambodia may benefit from the targeted policies on Disaster Risk Reduction, Adolescent Fertility, Financial Institution Account Rate, Volunteered Time, and the entire Education and Skills Domain. Education and skills were affected by the constant number of Gross Graduation Tertiary, which has been 0.09 from 2013 to 2022.

Domain	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Education & Skills	0.128	0.146	0.164	0.182	0.201	0.219	0.233	0.235	0.236	0.240
Health & Well-being	0.544	0.551	0.555	0.559	0.563	0.565	0.567	0.566	0.574	0.577
Employment & Opportunity	0.609	0.617	0.626	0.639	0.642	0.640	0.637	0.611	0.619	0.635
Participation & Engagement	0.405	0.436	0.473	0.503	0.512	0.544	0.578	0.607	0.622	0.664
Equity & Inclusion	0.379	0.365	0.448	0.507	0.509	0.555	0.567	0.603	0.605	0.616
Safety & Security	0.508	0.529	0.553	0.568	0.589	0.606	0.630	0.630	0.630	0.640
ASEAN Values & Identity*	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710
YDI	0.440	0.451	0.479	0.502	0.511	0.529	0.542	0.549	0.554	0.568

\* As only one year of data was available in 2020, it has been held constant across all years of the index.

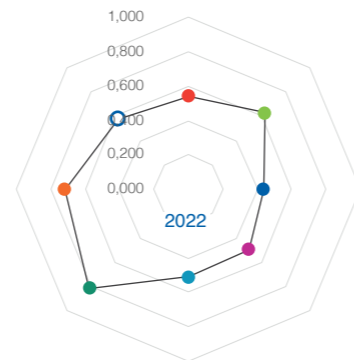




### 2.4.3 Indonesia

Indonesia showed improvement from 2013 to 2022, with its overall ASEAN YDI rising to 0.578, ranking 5<sup>th</sup> out of the ten countries in ASEAN in 2022. It ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> out of the ten countries in ASEAN Values and Identity with a score of 0.72, and ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in Health and Well-being.

Like the other countries, Indonesia also saw a big improvement in Participation and Engagement despite Voter Turnout Rates falling from 75.62 percent to 71.05 percent. This was mainly due to a significant increase in Volunteered Time and Internet Usage. The percentage of Volunteered Time doubled from 0.37 in 2013 to 0.74 in 2022, while Internet Usage increased from 32.70 percent to 52.69 percent.



Indonesia also performs well in Safety and Security. It has a score of 0.815 in 2022, mainly due to very low rates of Interpersonal Violence and Conflict and Terrorism. It also reduced the percentage of people earning less than \$1.90 per day (2011 PPP), from 7.3 percent to 0.3 percent, and improved its Disaster Risk Reduction Capability.

The country also saw a significant rise in its domain score for Education and Skills, Employment and Opportunity, and Equity and Inclusion.

For Education and Skills, a marked improvement was observed for Gross Graduation Tertiary, Mean Years of Schooling, and Educational Attainment Rate. The sharpest increase in the score was seen for Gross Graduation Tertiary, with the proportion of the population completing first-degree programmes in tertiary education rising from 16.42 percent to 27.68 percent in the ten-year period.

For Equity and Inclusion, Indonesia performs well in providing Access to Electricity to all of its population. It has also strived to provide Access to Sanitation to 80.96 percent of its population in 2022, up from 71.75 percent in 2013. Yet the biggest positive is seen in the percentage of Women in Managerial Positions, which increased by 12.59 percentage points.

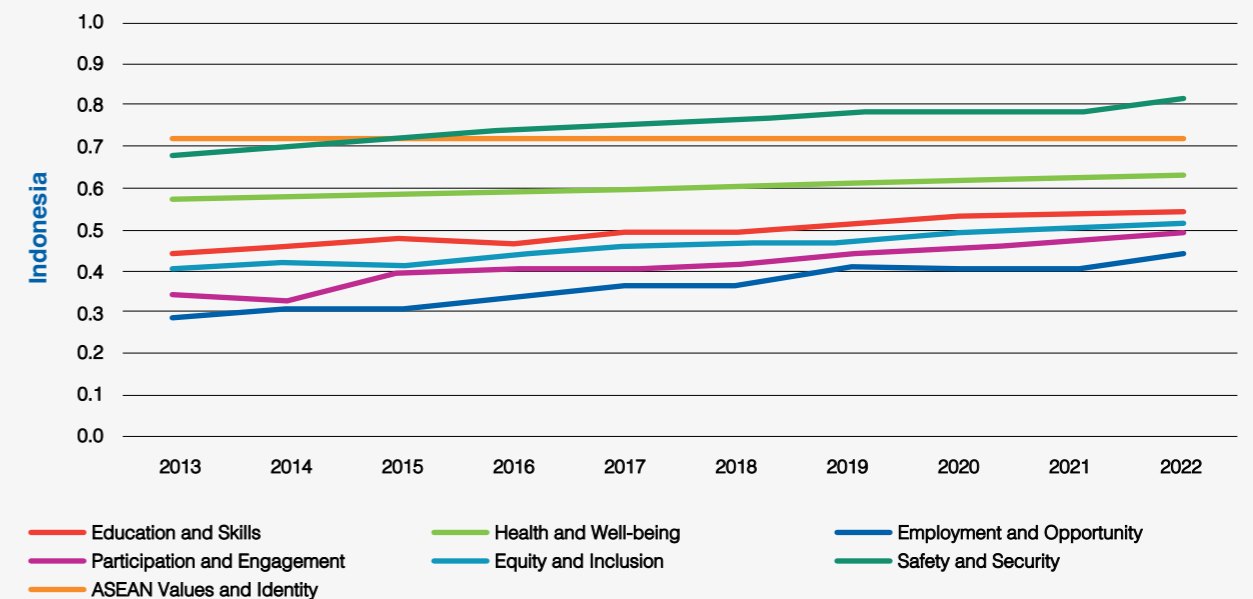
Despite a rapid rise in its domain score for Employment and Opportunity, Indonesia still might benefit from the targeted policies to reduce the Unemployment Rate, its share of NEET, and the Adolescent Fertility Rate.

A slight improvement was observed for Health and Well-being due to a decrease in Youth Mortality from 11.12 percent to 9.39 percent and an increase in Life Expectancy at age 15 from 57.12 years to 58.92 years.

Indonesia may benefit from the targeted policies on Severe Disability Rate, National Youth Policy, Digital Natives, and Child Marriage.

Domain	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Education & Skills	0.446	0.461	0.478	0.469	0.491	0.494	0.512	0.529	0.533	0.544
Health & Well-being	0.575	0.581	0.587	0.594	0.601	0.607	0.612	0.618	0.624	0.630
Employment & Opportunity	0.292	0.308	0.307	0.332	0.362	0.368	0.412	0.400	0.408	0.437
Participation & Engagement	0.342	0.327	0.395	0.409	0.402	0.416	0.443	0.460	0.480	0.495
Equity & Inclusion	0.407	0.422	0.420	0.439	0.455	0.466	0.476	0.489	0.493	0.511
Safety & Security	0.685	0.711	0.717	0.743	0.754	0.766	0.780	0.789	0.789	0.815
ASEAN Values & Identity*	0.720	0.720	0.720	0.720	0.720	0.720	0.720	0.720	0.720	0.720
YDI	0.468	0.479	0.494	0.506	0.519	0.528	0.546	0.554	0.561	0.578

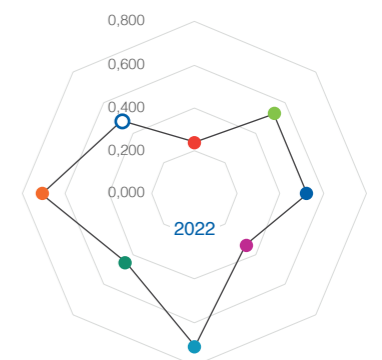
\* As only one year of data was available in 2020, it has been held constant across all years of the index.



### 2.4.4 Lao PDR

Lao PDR was ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in YDI out of the ten countries in ASEAN in 2022. Its overall YDI score was 0.476, up from 0.368 in 2013.

Over the last ten years, Lao PDR has shown notable improvement in the Equity and Inclusion domain. The change in the domain score was bigger than in any other AMS. It went from being ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in 2013 to being 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2022. The rise in its rank among all AMS can be attributed to increased access to electricity and sanitation by the general population and a higher literacy rate for its female population.



The country also saw a positive change in both Education and Skills and Safety and Security, even though it ranked last among all AMS for these domains. For Education and Skills, Youth Literacy Rate jumped from 72.06 percent to 100 percent, while all other indicators within this domain remained relatively constant. For Safety and Security, the rate of Interpersonal Violence and the percentage of the population earning less than \$1.90 per day (2011 PPP) more than halved, even while its rate of Child Marriage remained the highest in all ten countries. Their score for Disaster Risk Reduction also decreased over the years.

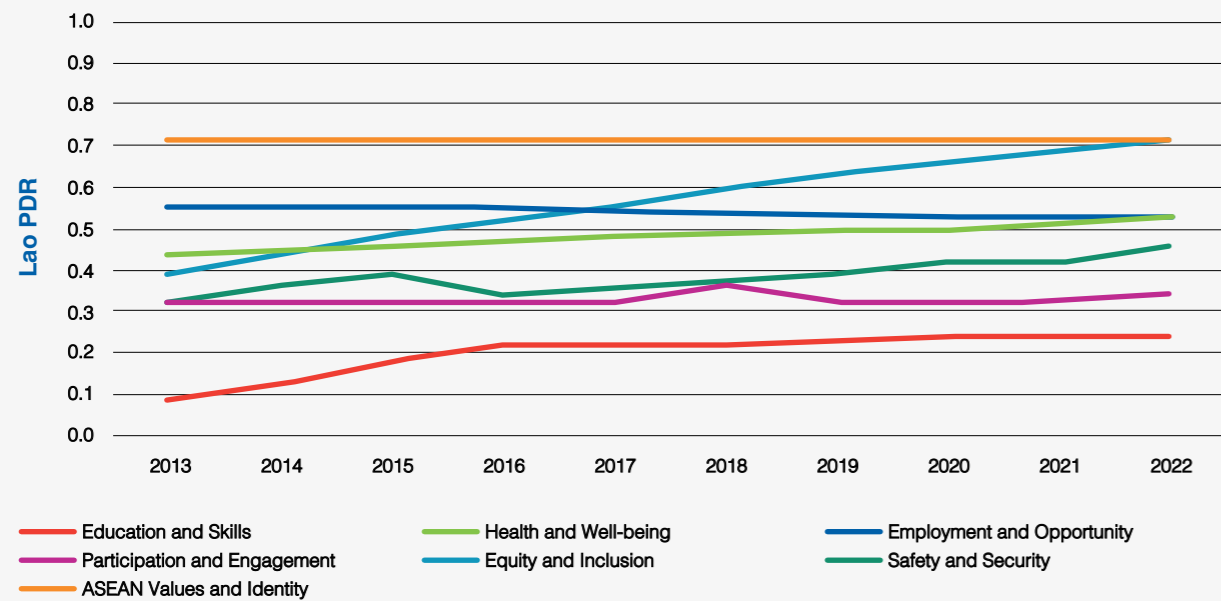
Domain scores for both Health and Well-being and Participation and Engagement also showed slight improvement, with the biggest developments observed in Youth Mortality, Life Expectancy at age 15, and Internet Usage. On the other hand, scores for Mental Disorders (from 0.08 percent to 0.11 percent), STIs including HIV (from 20,395.83 to 21,592.29), and Volunteered Time (0.00 percent down from 0.24 percent) decreased. All other indicators remained relatively constant.

Employment and Opportunity declined. Unemployment Rate fell from 1.81 percent in 2013 to 3.32 percent in 2022, even while Labour Force Participation contracted. The rate of NEET also increased from 5.67 percent to 8.25 percent.

Lao PDR ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in ASEAN Awareness, Values, and Identity. Lao PDR may benefit from the targeted policies on Severe Disability Rate, Adolescent Fertility, Child Marriage, National Youth Policy, and Educational Attainment Rate.

Domain	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Education & Skills	0.085	0.118	0.176	0.214	0.216	0.221	0.223	0.233	0.234	0.239
Health & Well-being	0.439	0.452	0.464	0.473	0.481	0.487	0.491	0.496	0.515	0.525
Employment & Opportunity	0.560	0.557	0.552	0.547	0.542	0.539	0.535	0.527	0.526	0.524
Participation & Engagement	0.328	0.323	0.324	0.320	0.323	0.352	0.332	0.332	0.335	0.342
Equity & Inclusion	0.385	0.427	0.482	0.513	0.553	0.599	0.633	0.655	0.686	0.713
Safety & Security	0.325	0.373	0.386	0.336	0.354	0.369	0.385	0.413	0.422	0.453
ASEAN Values & Identity*	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710	0.710
YDI	0.368	0.389	0.410	0.413	0.424	0.439	0.444	0.453	0.463	0.476

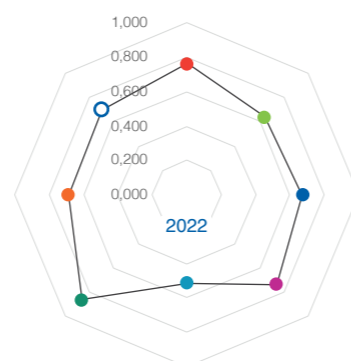
\*As only one year of data was available in 2020, it has been held constant across all years of the index.



### 2.4.5 Malaysia

Malaysia was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in overall YDI out of the ten countries in ASEAN in 2022, up one spot from 2013. Its score increased by 0.037, with only Health and Well-being declining in those ten years.

Education and Skills saw an improvement, largely due to an increase in Gross Graduation Tertiary and Educational Rate even while Youth Literacy Rate fell by 2.64 percentage points.



Employment and Opportunity saw a similar increase in its domain score mainly because of a decrease in the percentage of NEET and an increase in the proportion of the population over the age of 15 with an account at a financial institution.

Participation and Engagement, Equity and Inclusion, and Safety and Security remained relatively constant with only slight positive changes being observed for each of them. For Participation and Engagement, Internet Usage increased from 57.06 percent to 97.97 percent, even while scores for Volunteered Time and Voter Turnout Rates decreased. For Equity and Inclusion, it was Access to Sanitation that made the biggest difference. Between 2013 and 2022, the proportion of Malaysia's population using safely managed sanitation services increased by 9.21 percentage points. No notable change was found for Safety and Security other than a slight decline in Conflict and Terrorism.

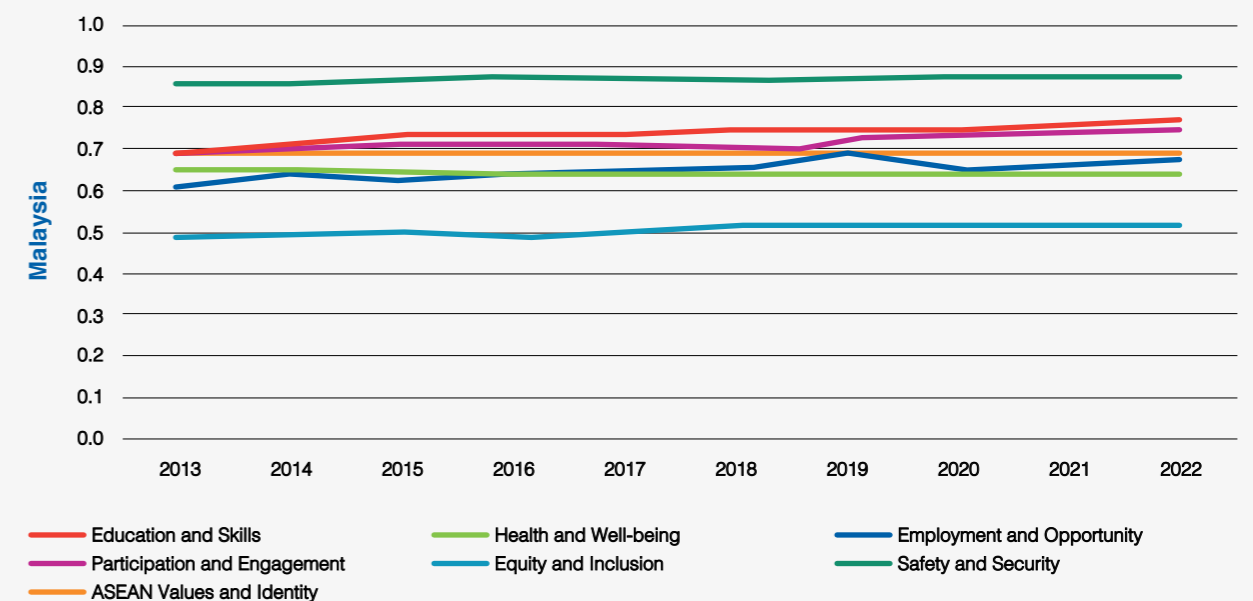
Malaysia ranked 5<sup>th</sup> for ASEAN Values and Identity, with a score of 0.69.

Equity and Inclusion was the lowest-scoring domain, scoring between 0.49 and 0.52 in the ten-year period. This domain was affected by Gender Parity in Literacy and Severe Disability Rate. Gender Parity in Literacy dropped from 0.45 to 0.44 and Severe Disability Rate did not improve, with the score remaining at 0.31 between 2013 -2022.

Malaysia may benefit from the targeted policies on Graduation Tertiary, Youth Labour Force Participation, STI, and Women in Managerial Positions.

Domain	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Education & Skills	0.690	0.698	0.725	0.731	0.727	0.742	0.745	0.737	0.754	0.763
Health & Well-being	0.642	0.640	0.640	0.637	0.636	0.636	0.634	0.640	0.639	0.639
Employment & Opportunity	0.609	0.633	0.624	0.640	0.640	0.647	0.677	0.646	0.652	0.675
Participation & Engagement	0.694	0.695	0.708	0.711	0.697	0.683	0.718	0.726	0.735	0.740
Equity & Inclusion	0.485	0.488	0.492	0.483	0.495	0.512	0.507	0.508	0.511	0.515
Safety & Security	0.850	0.861	0.861	0.861	0.862	0.863	0.863	0.864	0.865	0.866
ASEAN Values & Identity*	0.690	0.690	0.690	0.690	0.690	0.690	0.690	0.690	0.690	0.690
YDI	0.663	0.670	0.676	0.678	0.677	0.681	0.691	0.687	0.693	0.699

\*As only one year of data was available in 2020, it has been held constant across all years of the index.



### 2.4.6 Myanmar

**Myanmar received an overall YDI score of 0.466 in 2022, ranking last among all AMS. However, it has improved by 0.092 since 2013, mostly due to an increase in the domain score for Education and Skills.**

Although Myanmar ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in Education and Skills for all ten years, it has improved the most out of all ASEAN countries. The country's proportion of the population aged 15-24 who can read and write (Youth Literacy Rate) has increased by 25.91 percentage points.

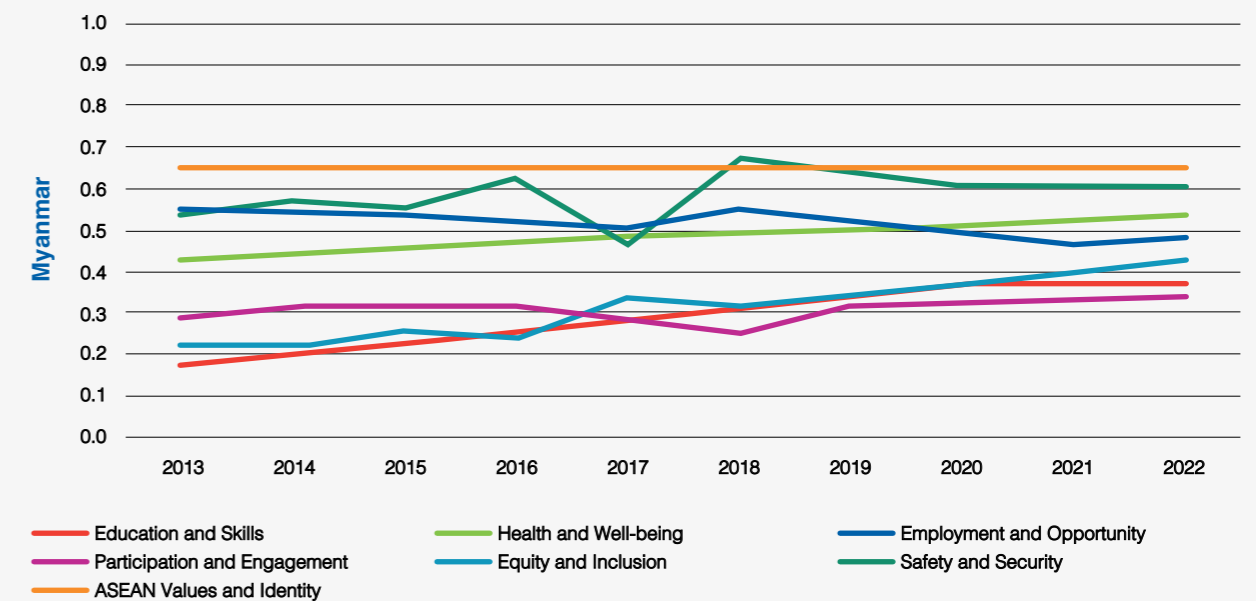
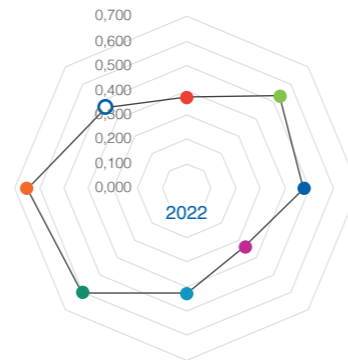
It also had a similar rise in the Equity and Inclusion domain score, where all indicators except Access to Sanitation improved significantly. Access to Electricity increased from 56.34 percent to 73.89 percent, Women in Managerial Positions from 26.16 percent to 40.63 percent, Gender Parity in Literacy from 0.980 to 1.014, and Severe Disability Rate from 0 to 17.40 percent.

Domain scores for Health and Well-being, Participation and Engagement, and Safety and Security also improved. For Health and Well-being, it was mostly a decline in Youth Mortality and a rise in Life Expectancy at age 15. For Participation and Engagement, a sharp growth in Internet usage was offset by a similar drop in Volunteered Time. For Safety and Security, it was a significant growth in the rate of Conflict and Terrorism that made up for an 8.00 percent drop in Poverty Headcount.

Employment and Opportunity in Myanmar declined, with Unemployment Rate rising from 1.60 percent to 6.70 percent, even while Labour Force Participation dropped by approximately 20.00 percentage points. However, NEET and the Adolescent Fertility Rate dropped and the number of people with an account with a financial institution increased.

The country was ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in the ASEAN Values and Identity Index, with a score of 0.650.

Myanmar may benefit from the policies that target reduction in Disaster Risk Reduction, Life Expectancy, Severe Disability Rate, Digital Natives, and National Youth Policy.



### 2.4.7 Philippines

**The Philippines was ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in YDI out of the ten ASEAN Member States in 2022, increasing its domain score from 0.464 to 0.522 from 2013 to 2022.**

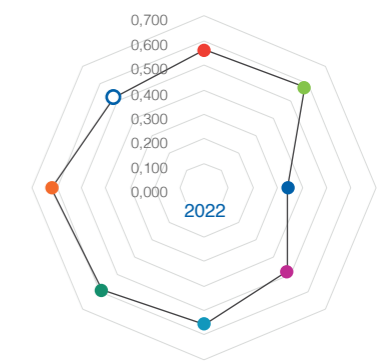
This increase in overall YDI score is mostly due to the country's improvement in the Safety and Security domain, which increased by 0.159. The Philippines was able to reduce its Poverty Headcount from 8.97 percent to 0.2 percent, which contributed to the significant rise in its score. It also reduced Interpersonal Violence within the country and improved its score for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Philippines had a significant improvement in the Equity and Inclusion domain as well (by 0.88), primarily because of an increase in Access to Electricity and Sanitation and a rise in the percentage of Women in Managerial Positions. The share of population with Access to Electricity rose from 87.50 percent in 2013 to 98.69 percent in 2022, while those with access to proper sanitation increased from 52.495 percent to 62.88 percent in the same period. Meanwhile, the proportion of Women in Managerial Positions grew from 47.54 percent to 51.41 percent.

Despite a similar increase in Employment and Opportunity, the Philippines ranked last out of all countries in the domain for all ten years. Unemployment Rate decreased, but this improvement can be attributed to a fall in Labour Participation Rate (lowest in ASEAN). Meanwhile, NEET has decreased by 7.03 percentage points, the share of the population with an account in a financial institution has jumped from 27.93 percent to 35.80 percent, and Adolescent Fertility Rate has dropped from 56.65 births per 1,000 women to 53.43.

A slight increase was observed for the Education and Skills domain. Significant improvements in Youth Literacy Rate and Gross Graduation Tertiary were offset by similar decreases in Mean Years of Schooling and Educational Attainment.

Health and Well-being and Participation and Engagement only saw marginal change (positive) in their domain scores. For Health and Well-being, there was an increase in Life Expectancy at age 15, even while substance use and rate of STIs rose. For Participation and Engagement, there was a slight decline in Volunteered Time and Voter Turnout Rates, but a jump in Internet Usage to 52.69 percent from 32.70 percent allowed the domain score to increase slightly.



Domain	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Education & Skills	0.171	0.198	0.226	0.253	0.281	0.308	0.335	0.363	0.371	0.371
Health & Well-being	0.435	0.451	0.465	0.474	0.482	0.488	0.494	0.503	0.523	0.535
Employment & Opportunity	0.542	0.535	0.538	0.511	0.499	0.541	0.519	0.486	0.456	0.478
Participation & Engagement	0.285	0.305	0.306	0.311	0.284	0.248	0.311	0.320	0.327	0.337
Equity & Inclusion	0.212	0.205	0.247	0.244	0.331	0.310	0.347	0.372	0.391	0.427
Safety & Security	0.531	0.564	0.558	0.619	0.467	0.664	0.630	0.603	0.600	0.602
ASEAN Values & Identity*	0.650	0.650	0.650	0.650	0.650	0.650	0.650	0.650	0.650	0.650
YDI	0.374	0.387	0.400	0.412	0.401	0.436	0.448	0.450	0.453	0.466

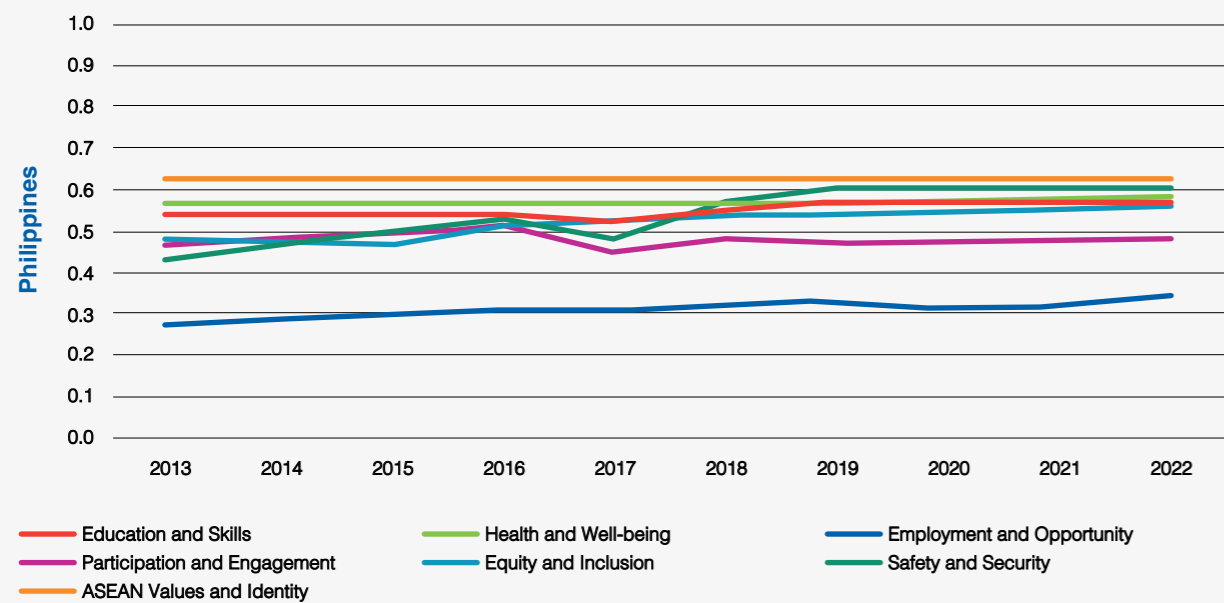
\*As only one year of data was available in 2020, it has been held constant across all years of the index.

The country was given a score of 0.620 in the ASEAN Values and Identity Index, ranked 8<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 ASEAN Member States.

The Philippines may benefit from policies focusing on Interpersonal Violence, Severe Disability Rate, Youth Labour Force Participation, Digital Natives, and Life Expectancy.

Domain	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Education & Skills	0.541	0.537	0.549	0.546	0.518	0.544	0.570	0.562	0.567	0.561
Health & Well-being	0.567	0.570	0.573	0.571	0.570	0.568	0.568	0.576	0.578	0.580
Employment & Opportunity	0.271	0.284	0.290	0.305	0.303	0.318	0.324	0.308	0.317	0.341
Participation & Engagement	0.465	0.480	0.490	0.507	0.450	0.485	0.469	0.477	0.480	0.480
Equity & Inclusion	0.469	0.476	0.469	0.505	0.520	0.534	0.533	0.539	0.547	0.557
Safety & Security	0.432	0.473	0.471	0.521	0.485	0.566	0.592	0.579	0.579	0.591
ASEAN Values & Identity*	0.620	0.620	0.620	0.620	0.620	0.620	0.620	0.620	0.620	0.620
YDI	0.464	0.476	0.480	0.497	0.480	0.507	0.514	0.511	0.515	0.522

\* As only one year of data was available in 2020, it has been held constant across all years of the index.

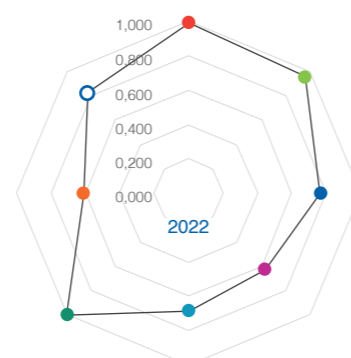


### 2.4.8 Singapore

Singapore ranked 1<sup>st</sup> out of the ten countries in the overall ASEAN YDI in 2022, increasing from 0.804 to 0.830 from 2013 to 2022. It ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in four out of the seven domains used, including Education and Skills, Health and Well-being, Employment and Opportunity, and Safety and Security.

The greatest improvement was, once again, seen in Participation and Engagement due to a substantial increase in Volunteered Time and Internet Usage, which increased from 31.0 percent to 45.0 percent and from 80.9 percent to 96.67 percent respectively.

Education and Skills also saw a significant improvement, from a score of 0.951 to 0.992. This was mainly due to a slight improvement in 4 out of the 5 indicators within the domain. Only Digital Natives remained constant, as it already had a very high score of 88 percent.



Health and Well-being improved because of a significant rise in Life Expectancy at age 15, from 67.17 to 69.01 years. However, the rate of STIs (including HIV) also increased from 13,109.47 to 14,716.29.

An increase in Gender Parity helped improve the score for Equity and Inclusion in Singapore. The percentage of Women in Managerial Positions increased from 33.70 percent in 2013 to 36.57 percent in 2022. There was also a slight increase in the Gender Parity in Literacy score for Singapore.

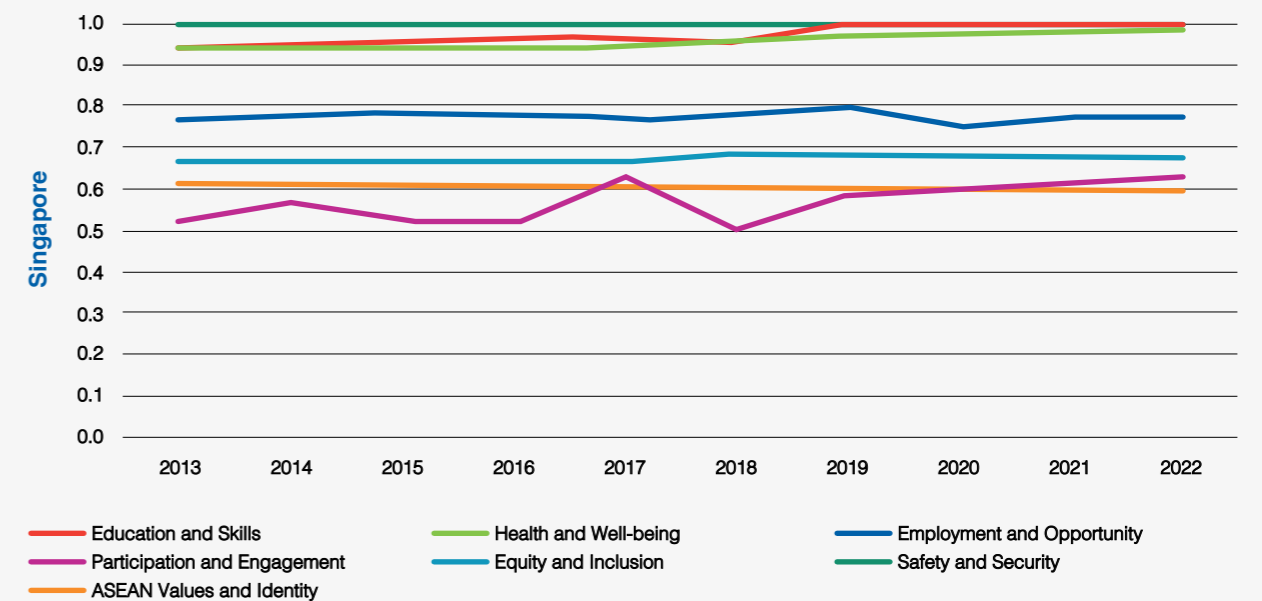
No improvement was observed for Safety and Security. This is mainly because Singapore had achieved the best score for all indicators in the domain from 2013 to 2022.

ASEAN Values and Identity also remained constant for Singapore, with a score of 0.61, ranking it 9<sup>th</sup> out of the ten Member States.

Singapore may benefit from targeted policies on National Youth Policy<sup>5</sup>, Youth Labour Force Participation, Women in Managerial Positions, and Gender Parity in Literacy.

Domain	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Education & Skills	0.951	0.955	0.961	0.969	0.965	0.959	0.991	0.982	0.985	0.992
Health & Well-being	0.956	0.955	0.954	0.955	0.957	0.959	0.959	0.958	0.958	0.958
Employment & Opportunity	0.771	0.782	0.790	0.781	0.776	0.787	0.795	0.759	0.771	0.768
Participation & Engagement	0.528	0.568	0.533	0.526	0.619	0.511	0.587	0.602	0.614	0.629
Equity & Inclusion	0.669	0.670	0.672	0.675	0.673	0.683	0.680	0.681	0.682	0.685
Safety & Security	0.999	1.000	0.999	0.999	0.999	0.999	0.999	1.000	1.000	1.000
ASEAN Values & Identity*	0.610	0.610	0.610	0.610	0.610	0.610	0.610	0.610	0.610	0.610
YDI	0.804	0.813	0.810	0.809	0.823	0.808	0.826	0.822	0.826	0.830

\* As only one year of data was available in 2020, it has been held constant across all years of the index.

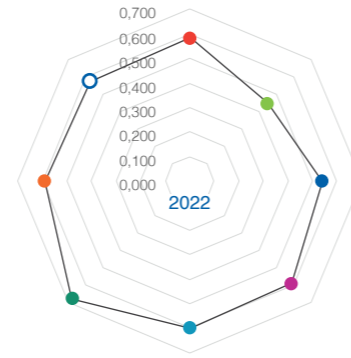


<sup>5</sup> Youth in Singapore are viewed as a segment of the larger population and national policies are designed around the interests and needs of the various segments of the population. Singapore has established a national body, National Youth Council, to oversee youth development and ensure youths are well represented in national issues and policies.

### 2.4.9 Thailand

The overall YDI score for Thailand grew to 0.574 in 2022, up from 0.505 in 2013. In spite of this increase in overall score, the country's rank dropped from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> in that ten-year period.

Equity and Inclusion saw the biggest improvement, with the domain score increasing by 0.244. The percentage of Women in Managerial Positions (from 33.02 percent to 38.90 percent) and the proportion of the population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit (0.00 percent to 100.00 percent) were the main contributors to this growth. All other indicators also showed positive change.



Similarly to other countries, Thailand also saw a significant increase in its Participation and Engagement score. The percentage of the population using the internet increased from 28.94 percent to 78.87 percent. Voter Turnout Rates also rose from 64.92 percent to 69.40 percent.

Small improvements were observed for Education and Skills and Safety and Security. For Education and Skills, an increase in Mean Years of Schooling and a percentage increase of individuals completing lower secondary or higher education were the key drivers in the increase in the domain score (by 0.053). For Safety and Security, a significant decline in Interpersonal Violence and Conflict and Terrorism was offset by a decline in the country's Disaster Risk Reduction capability.

Thailand was ranked last in the Health and Well-being domain, with its score decreasing from 0.454 in 2013 to 0.449 in 2022. A significant increase in Life Expectancy at age 15 (from 60.82 years to 63.30) was offset by an increase in substance use and mental health disorders.

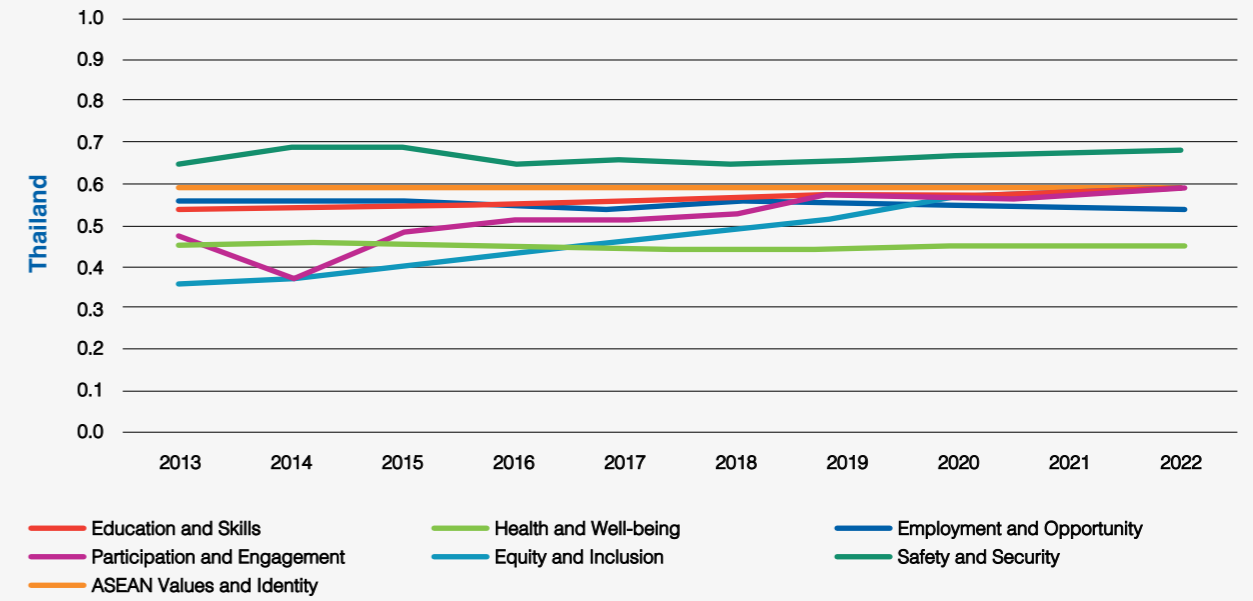
The domain score for Employment and Opportunity also declined for Thailand. Over the ten-year period, there was a drop in Unemployment Rate (from 1.27 percent to 5.83 percent) and Labour Force Participation (43.87 percent to 38.66 percent). The percentage of youth NEET increased from 14.37 percent to 16.08 percent. Thailand increased the number of individuals with an account at a financial institution and decreased the number of births per 1,000 women.

The country was given a score of 0.59 (ranked 10<sup>th</sup>) for ASEAN Values and Identity Index.

Thailand would benefit from targeted policies on Access to Sanitation, STI, Youth Labour Force Participation, Youth Mortality, Volunteered Time, and Child Marriage.

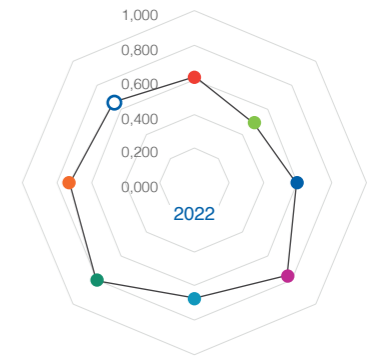
Domain	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Education & Skills	0.531	0.537	0.542	0.550	0.554	0.554	0.571	0.571	0.575	0.584
Health & Well-being	0.453	0.455	0.452	0.447	0.444	0.438	0.436	0.451	0.448	0.449
Employment & Opportunity	0.555	0.557	0.556	0.543	0.536	0.554	0.550	0.548	0.541	0.540
Participation & Engagement	0.462	0.365	0.480	0.510	0.506	0.525	0.575	0.557	0.570	0.588
Equity & Inclusion	0.355	0.367	0.395	0.429	0.461	0.492	0.520	0.569	0.587	0.599
Safety & Security	0.650	0.686	0.692	0.651	0.654	0.646	0.656	0.671	0.675	0.679
ASEAN Values & Identity*	0.590	0.590	0.590	0.590	0.590	0.590	0.590	0.590	0.590	0.590
<b>YDI</b>	<b>0.505</b>	<b>0.498</b>	<b>0.522</b>	<b>0.524</b>	<b>0.528</b>	<b>0.537</b>	<b>0.553</b>	<b>0.563</b>	<b>0.567</b>	<b>0.574</b>

\* As only one year of data was available in 2020, it has been held constant across all years of the index.



### 2.4.10 Viet Nam

Viet Nam ranked 4<sup>th</sup> out of the ten countries in the ASEAN YDI in 2022. Its overall YDI score increased from 0.595 to 0.661, with the largest improvements observed in Equity and Inclusion and Participation and Engagement. ASEAN Values and Identity Index stayed constant at 0.730 (highest score given) while Health and Well-being declined significantly over the ten years.



For Equity and Inclusion, all indicators showed a change in the positive direction. Access to Sanitation increased by 9.21 percentage points, while the percentage of disabled people receiving cash benefits jumped to 100.00 percent (from 0.00 percent). Women in Managerial Positions, although still low, increased from 23.91 percent to 27.91 percent.

Similarly to other countries, Internet Usage went up (from 36.80 percent to 83.00 percent). Volunteered Time increased as well, while Voter Turnout Rates fell. Overall, the Participation and Engagement domain score for Viet Nam increased significantly.

Education and Skills also increased, with change being observed only for the Gross Graduation Tertiary indicator. The percentage of the population having completed a first-degree programme in tertiary education jumped to 25.42 in 2022, up from 11.47 in 2013.

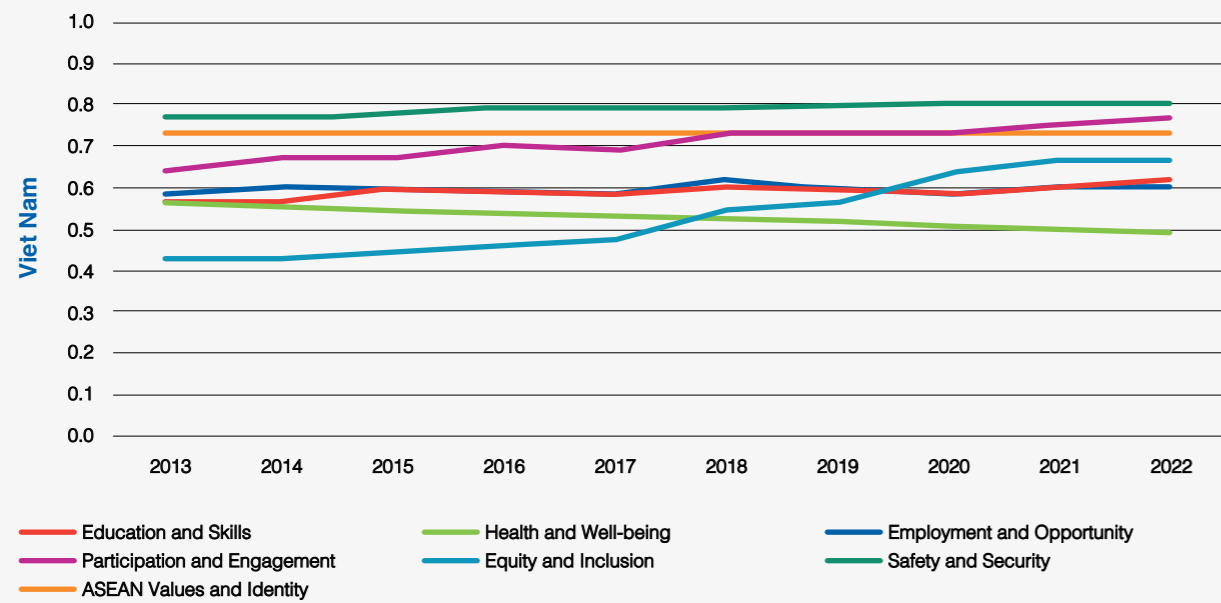
Both Employment and Opportunity and Safety and Security grew only slightly. Over the ten-year period, there was a considerable drop in Unemployment Rate and Labour Force Participation. The decline was neutralised by the significant rise in the number of individuals with an account in a financial institution and a drop in the number of births per 1,000 women. On the other hand, all indicators for the Safety and Security domain, except for Child Marriage (which remained constant), showed an improvement.

A significant drop was observed over the ten-year period for the Health and Well-being domain score. There was an increase in Mental Health Disorders, STIs (including HIV), and Substance Use. In spite of the drop, Life Expectancy at age 15 increased from 61.96 years in 2013 to 62.27 years in 2022. The probability of death for ages 15-24 also declined from 7.25 to 5.85.

Viet Nam may benefit from targeted policies on Substance Use Disorders, STIs, Women in Managerial Positions, Volunteered Time, Graduation Tertiary, and Gender Parity in Literacy.

Domain	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Education & Skills	0.562	0.568	0.593	0.596	0.590	0.604	0.602	0.593	0.610	0.615
Health & Well-being	0.563	0.554	0.546	0.538	0.531	0.524	0.519	0.507	0.500	0.493
Employment & Opportunity	0.581	0.597	0.589	0.585	0.582	0.619	0.596	0.586	0.592	0.597
Participation & Engagement	0.638	0.666	0.671	0.698	0.697	0.718	0.726	0.731	0.753	0.765
Equity & Inclusion	0.424	0.421	0.441	0.462	0.473	0.541	0.566	0.630	0.665	0.672
Safety & Security	0.767	0.771	0.776	0.789	0.789	0.791	0.795	0.799	0.800	0.806
ASEAN Values & Identity*	0.730	0.730	0.730	0.730	0.730	0.730	0.730	0.730	0.730	0.730
YDI	0.595	0.602	0.608	0.616	0.615	0.637	0.638	0.645	0.657	0.661

\*As only one year of data was available in 2020, it has been held constant across all years of the index.



## 2.5 Youth COVID-19 Pulse Survey Results

COVID-19 has had a big impact on young people across the globe. As part of this project, an online survey was disseminated in the AMS national languages, asking young people "What are your greatest concerns due to COVID-19? (please select up to 3)". This was not a representative survey across all countries or age groups, but does provide an overview of what were seen as the greatest concerns by the 443 respondents aged between 15-35, with *My family members getting ill with COVID19*, *Disruptions to my school or career path*, and *My mental health* being the most common responses.

The survey was disseminated in English, Khmer, Burmese (Myanmar), Lao, Vietnamese, Bahasa Indonesia, Tagalog, and Thai language and remained open for 2 months. 463 people responded, with 443 being between 15-35 years of age. Only these have been included in the analysis below.

Greatest Reason for Concern due to COVID-19	Response Count
My family members getting ill with COVID19	260
Disruptions to my school or career path	242
My mental health	227
Uncertainty about the future	217
Me getting ill with COVID-19	118
Earning enough money to pay my bills	96
Food and water security	91
My job security	65
Me getting treatment for other physical health problems	39
Being able to get the substances I use (prescription and non-prescription medication, alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs, etc)	35
My housing security	33



# 03

## LITERATURE REVIEW



Youth development and youth issues span far wider than what can be used in an index. As such, the following gives an overview of the Domain areas included in the Index as well as for Digital and Media Citizenship, which was discussed at length in the planning phase. These sections also contain text boxes which have been provided by a range of experts, including young people themselves.

### 3.1 Education and Skills

The Education and Skills Domain seeks to measure the educational outcomes of young people in the formal and informal education sectors. While there is limited data on informal learning and life skills development, they have been deemed important by all stakeholders of the ASEAN YDI.

Higher education enables ASEAN countries to move beyond the ability to merely generate goods and services to also deliver highly skilled workers for innovation and technological advancements.<sup>6</sup> Investing in secondary and tertiary education has a positive impact on the economy in ASEAN Member States (AMS).<sup>7</sup> Enrolment rates in high school and tertiary education are found to have a significant positive impact on economic growth, and more investment in each student shows a direct benefit to the economy.<sup>8</sup>

It is important to note that literacy and numeracy differ to functional literacy, which is defined by UNESCO as:

“...the capacity of a person to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective function of his or her group and community and also for enabling him or her to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his or her own and the community’s development”.<sup>9</sup>

Even where literacy and numeracy are improving, functional literacy often lags behind, and has a broader impact on school completion and employability.<sup>10</sup>

6 Maneejuk, P. and Yamaka, W., 2021. The Impact of Higher Education on Economic Growth in ASEAN-5 Countries. Sustainability, 13(2), p.520.

7 Cabautan, R.R. and Manalo, R.A., 2018. A Comparative Analysis on Selected Issues on Economics of Education in ASEAN Countries. Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research, 7, pp.68-78.

8 Maneejuk, P. and Yamaka, W., 2021. The Impact of Higher Education on Economic Growth in ASEAN-5 Countries. Sustainability, 13(2), p.520.

9 UNESCO [uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/functional-literacy](https://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/functional-literacy)

10 Mar, I. & Ancho, I.V. (2019). The English Teacher, 48 (1), 1 – 10, [http://www.journals.melta.org.my/TET/downloads/tet48\\_01\\_01.pdf](http://www.journals.melta.org.my/TET/downloads/tet48_01_01.pdf)



# MY STORY

## THE STUDY FRIEND: A FRIENDLY WAY TO LEARN

— Fayola Maulida, 16, Indonesia



**Education is a cause that is very close to my heart. I got into elementary school a year earlier and was part of the acceleration programme in high school. This means that even though I am currently 17, I am in my second year of college, two years ahead of where I am supposed to.**

Being a very academic-oriented kid has affected me in some ways. Ever since fifth grade, I have taken midterm and final exams so seriously that I used to fall ill for a week after. The pressure of academics and having the image of a ‘top student’ made me lose confidence in myself. I became a person who could not tolerate mistakes and would see failure as a sign of weakness.

It got worse when I was in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. It was a time when I had to sit for the national exams. It was one of the low points in my life. I had started thinking of my friends as rivals/competitors... I spent all my time working hard to achieve my targets, not focusing on anything else.

It did not end well as I got rejected from every school that I wanted to study in. After that, I asked myself, why was I pushing myself so hard? Was there a reason for being so stressed? It felt like once I finished the exams, I got nothing. I did not even make any friends. I was so hard on myself that it affected my mental health. I knew that this was not normal.

Therefore, I decided to learn something completely new and joined a free four-week summer club for young girls

provided by Generation Girl (Yayasan Generasi Maju Berkarya) to learn skills such as computer science, robotics, web and app design, and much more.

It was life changing. I made friends from various places and backgrounds, entered every class with a smile on my face, gained knowledge, and understood that learning was not supposed to be as painful as I had experienced. Learning is more than just getting a good mark. Sure, it may be a long and thorough process, but you don't have to embark on the journey alone. Why not make a supportive circle together and encourage each other?

In December 2019, and moving on from that lesson I learned, I initiated The Study Friend, a youth-led organisation dedicated to building a safe environment by using the peer-to-peer approach, thriving to make quality education accessible and embracing students to learn. Driven by their curiosities! What's interesting about The Study Friend is that I had no prior leadership experience. I, along with four of my friends, crafted our programme through trials and error.

Our first and most notable programme was ‘TemanBelajar’, which ran from July to August 2021. It was a free four-week UTBK (Indonesia's university entrance exams) tutoring programme. What made TemanBelajar different was that the participants were taught by other students who were only a year or two older than them. This made the learning process more enjoyable and engaging. We also tried to have five students per learning group so the participants could bond with their new friends. Not only that, every week, we had a session called ‘NgobrolBareng,’ a talk show with inspirational guest speakers, so they could also meet their role models and feel more motivated after joining the programme.

At first, it was hard. I did not think that making things ‘free’ would come at a cost. Some people, at first, were not committed and would not show up for every class. But eventually, given the hard work of our team and stricter rules, that problem was solved, and we saw improvements in attendance rates. It was also our first time inviting external communities to be media partners, working with guest speakers, crafting ToRs, and so on. I am, to this day, grateful that though everything was very new, the whole team was willing to take the risk of making that effort.

At the end of our first TemanBelajar, we gained a total of 128 mentees, with the help of 40 mentors, in 4 weeks. It is inspiring how mentors (who are just my age!) were passionate about sharing their knowledge. Seeing the

willingness to learn from all the mentees was fulfilling as well. It was also a massive leap for us, The Study Friend; making us believe in our capabilities more and building our motivation to produce more significant and exciting events!

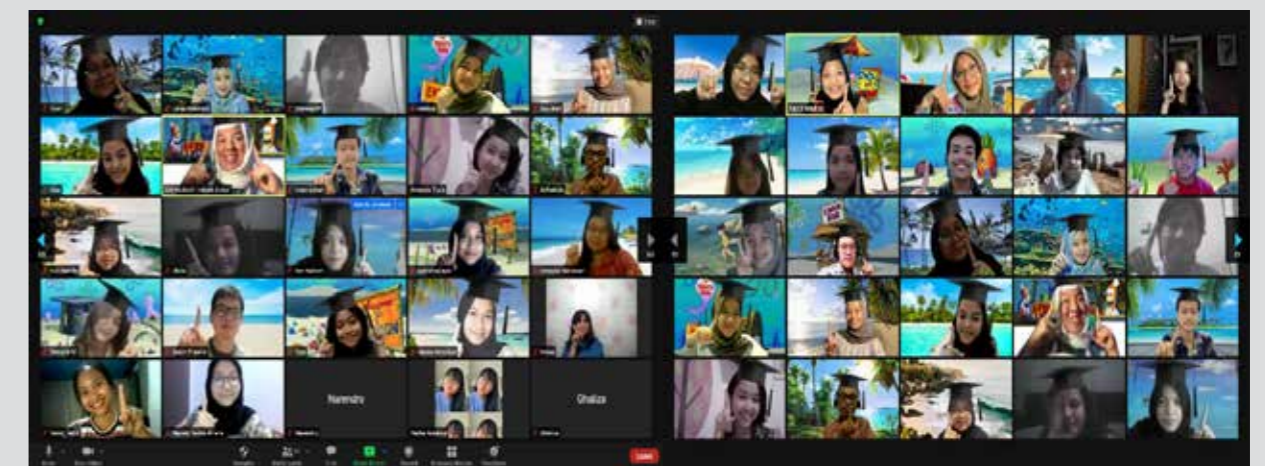
This experience also taught me that for all I have known, every inch of myself is made by the people surrounding me. Be it good or bad, the experiences I shared with them have crafted me into the person I am right now. It took a long while to understand this concept, yet I have learned about the power of surrounding, beyond empowering, but as an avenue to mould and guide to betterment.

From that experience, I learned about my passion for educating and how the feeling of fulfilment I achieve from sharing my knowledge and doing fun things together is precious.

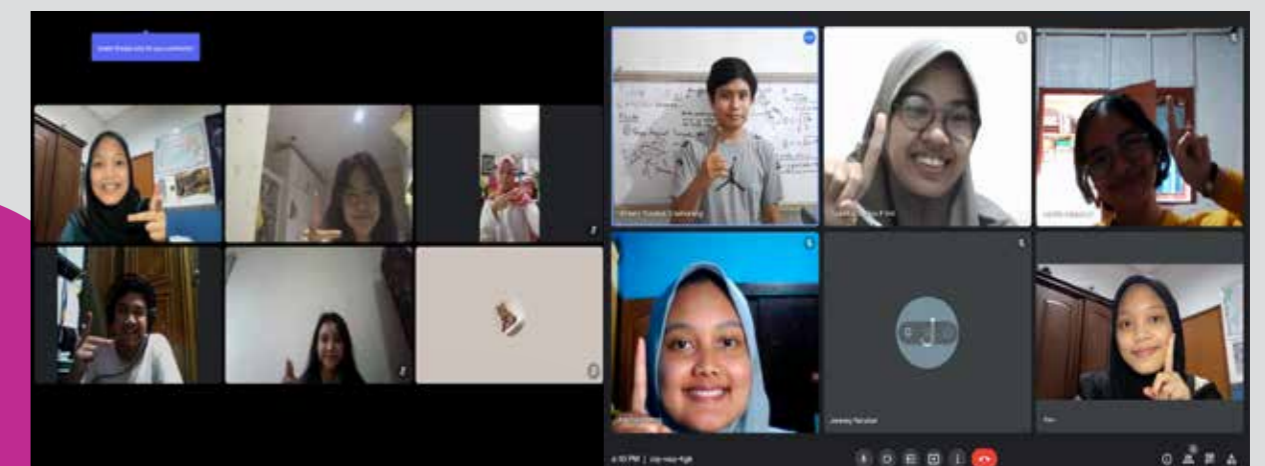
After our first TemanBelajar success, we finally held our more minor tutoring programme called ‘Mini

TemanBelajar’ in October-December 2021 and carried on with our second TemanBelajar in January-March 2022. The Study Friend, which was once just the five of us, has now grown into 20+ youth volunteers to help us grow. Those who once had no learning community now have an active Discord learning server of 1.6k+ participants. We hope that we can sustain and build our community. We can't wait to see more happy faces after learning new things together!

ASEAN can help many communities to get more recognition and training. Small communities face many constraints, such as a lack of knowledge on leadership, financial conditions, hardships in expanding their reach. ASEAN can help by providing avenues for young leaders to learn how to make impacts, idea incubators, grant funds, summits for young leaders, and much more! So many areas to explore and get young minds to make the most out of their potential. These steps can be very beneficial in making initiatives more sustainable and positively influencing the world.



(snaps from mentor's farewell event!)



(snaps from the classes!)



The Regional Study on Human Resource Development (HRD) Readiness in ASEAN suggests that beyond promoting economic goals such as higher growth, productivity, prosperity, or competitiveness, HRD can also contribute to the enhancement of cohesion and social integration in society and may become a driver of poverty reduction<sup>11</sup>. While there are some reasons for ASEAN Member States to be proud of achievements in the economic aspects, measures to instil future-oriented perspectives in peoples' learning and development and in the acquisition of a broader range of 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills could be strengthened.

The occupations with the highest demand in ASEAN countries include teaching, information technology, engineering, accounting, management, and nursing.<sup>12</sup> The ASEAN region stands to benefit from taking a regional approach in developing an outcome-oriented competency framework for teacher development across ASEAN countries in vocational training.<sup>13</sup>

For AMS youth, access to education is reduced for those who have one or more of the following characteristics: live in rural or remote locations, have a disability, live in slums, whose first language is from a linguistic minority, who are orphaned, have migrated, or who live in extreme poverty.<sup>14</sup> The dropout rate of 50 percent of students with disabilities in primary and secondary education in Southern Asia is one example of the need to ensure the vulnerable youth have the opportunity to participate fully in society.<sup>15</sup>

Evidence on out-of-school children shows that, in several countries in the region, safety on the way to school and in the school environment is an important concern, as bullying, sexual violence, and stigmatisation can impede the academic progress of the students involved. As such, policy considerations aimed at ensuring road safety and the provision of safe public transportation for young girls and boys can influence families' decisions about whether to invest in secondary education.<sup>16</sup>

Students with disabilities are far less likely to be enrolled in school due to parental concerns for student safety.<sup>17</sup> In Asia and the Pacific, one in six students has some form of disability.<sup>18</sup> Solutions for increasing enrolments need to target the stigma around disability, improving knowledge around disability and greater collaboration between support services.<sup>19</sup>

Closure of schools due to COVID-19 impacts education outcomes, particularly for women and girls, who become more vulnerable to violence, sexual exploitation, and traditional unpaid care work.<sup>20</sup> In a crisis-vulnerable youth, including people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and girls are disproportionately affected.<sup>21</sup> The United Nations have identified that participation by women in peacekeeping deployments and national security institutions are two opportunities to enhance safety for women across AMS.<sup>22</sup>

COVID-19 has not been the only barrier to school attendance, with some areas lacking adequate facilities. Investing in the construction of school classrooms in remote rural locations, together with offering food programmes as part of the school day, has been found to provide an incentive for parents to send children to school.<sup>23</sup>

11 ASEAN Secretariat, 2021. Regional Report on Human Resources Development (HRD) Readiness in ASEAN, pp. 11.

12 Velmonte, G.L., 2020. Job that fits for graduates in the Asean integration. *International Journal on Integrated Education*, 3(7), pp.9-25.

13 Grosch, M., 2017. Developing a competency standard for TVET teacher education in ASEAN countries. *Jurnal Pendidikan Teknologi dan Kejuruan*, 23(3), pp.279-287.

14 Price, R., 2020. Key barriers to girls' education in the ASEAN and Pacific region, Institute for Development Studies.

15 ASEAN Development Outlook: Inclusive and Sustainable Development Jakarta, ASEAN Secretariat, July 2021.

16 Karin Hulshof, World Economic Forum on ASEAN, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/09/heres-how-we-prepare-asean-youth-for-the-future>.

17 Price, R., 2020. Key barriers to girls' education in the ASEAN and Pacific region, Institute for Development Studies.

18 Price, R., 2020. Key barriers to girls' education in the ASEAN and Pacific region, Institute for Development Studies.

19 Price, R., 2020. Key barriers to girls' education in the ASEAN and Pacific region, Institute for Development Studies.

20 Price, R., 2020. Key barriers to girls' education in the ASEAN and Pacific region, Institute for Development Studies.

21 Price, R., 2020. Key barriers to girls' education in the ASEAN and Pacific region, Institute for Development Studies.

22 UN Women, 2021. ASEAN Gender Outlook, Achieving the SDGs for all and leaving no woman or girl behind, [https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/ASEAN/ASEAN%20Gender%20Outlook\\_final.pdf](https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/ASEAN/ASEAN%20Gender%20Outlook_final.pdf)

23 Price, R., 2020. Key barriers to girls' education in the ASEAN and Pacific region, Institute for Development Studies.

Across the region, there are educational plans in place to modernise the sector. For example, in Indonesia, the education sector has a five-year work plan with priorities that includes digital transformation, learning metrics, 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills, and a teacher competency framework.<sup>24</sup> The link between career pathways, income levels, and education is well researched, with higher levels of schooling increasing income equality, but this does not necessarily mean there is a skills match to employment pathways.<sup>25</sup>

By moving away from the traditional school model, there is a potential to better meet the needs of all young people, especially those who are already out of the system, or those who have a creative mind. This includes, for example, exploring ways to harness the potential of artificial intelligence to improve the education sector, providing access to knowledge and skills through technology, and considering the role of the private sector and social enterprises.<sup>26</sup>

Vocational training can provide a rapid pathway to the reintegration of marginalised youth, including immigrants and those who have suffered sexual exploitation.<sup>27</sup> This can include training and developing skills such as running a small business, or working in restaurants or retail.<sup>28</sup> Improvements to the inclusion of students with disabilities in education can be achieved by having the government define and communicate definitions of inclusive education, providing teacher training and through the promotion by school leadership.<sup>29</sup>

The implementation of the ASEAN Community into a single market has led to the free flow of skilled workers and goods.<sup>30</sup> The establishment of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in 2022 demonstrates the commitment of the ASEAN Community to strengthen inclusive, fair, open, and rules-based trading.<sup>31</sup> Taking a structured approach by way of a regional framework for education, including faculty, resources, and students, has been found to promote educational mobility and provides educational and economic benefits for the region.<sup>32</sup>

## 3.2 Health and Well-being

The Health and Well-being Domain seeks to measure both the physical and mental health as well as risks for young people. While mental health is becoming better understood and measured across the globe, there is still limited data that is suitable for the purpose of this iteration of the YDI.

24 Human Resources Development (HRD) Readiness in ASEAN-Regional Report Jakarta, ASEAN Secretariat, April 2021.

25 Asian Development Bank, 2017, Education, Globalization, and Income Inequality in Asia, <https://www.adb.org/publications/education-globalisation-and-income-inequality-asia>

26 Karin Hulshof, World Economic Forum on ASEAN, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/09/heres-how-we-prepare-asean-youth-for-the-future>

27 Rafferty, Y., 2021. The identification, recovery, and reintegration of victims of child trafficking within ASEAN: an exploratory study of knowledge gaps and emerging challenges. *Journal of human trafficking*, 7(2), pp.145-167.

28 Rafferty, Y., 2021. The identification, recovery, and reintegration of victims of child trafficking within ASEAN: an exploratory study of knowledge gaps and emerging challenges. *Journal of human trafficking*, 7(2), pp.145-167.

29 Wong, T.P., Inclusive education in ASEAN countries: how to support children with disabilities in schools, Asia Research Institute, University of Nottingham.

30 Velmonte, G.L., 2020, Job that fits for graduates in the Asean integration. *International Journal on Integrated Education*, 3(7), pp.9-25.

31 Association of Southeast Asian Nations, The RCEP Agreement Enters Into Force, 1Jan2022, <https://asean.org/rcep-agreement-enters-into-force>

32 Chao, R.Y., 2020. Intra-ASEAN student mobility: overview, challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*.



Road accidents continue to be the number one cause of injury or death of young people in ASEAN countries.<sup>33</sup> With economic growth comes an increase in motor vehicle activity and increased risk.<sup>34</sup> There is widespread awareness of the issue within ASEAN countries and improvements can be made through youth education on road safety.<sup>35</sup>

Suicide and self-harm pose the second greatest threat to mortality after road accidents for young people aged 15-29 in ASEAN countries.<sup>36</sup> Psychological stressors for young people that are associated with suicide include loneliness, anxiety, and an absence of close friends.<sup>37</sup> These issues are exacerbated by drug and alcohol abuse.<sup>38</sup> According to the Global Survey on Youth and COVID-19 by the ILO, more than 40 percent of young people in the survey sample representing Asian countries, including AMS, were possibly affected by **anxiety or depression**. The effects on mental health were found to be strongest among young people whose education or work had been disrupted.<sup>39</sup>

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) is a current issue among ASEAN youth. The fastest-growing HIV epidemic in the region is among young men who have sex with men. At the same time, young people with sexual orientation or gender identity/expression continue to face tremendous stigma and discrimination, which contributes to elevated levels of violence and poor SRH.<sup>40</sup> The Internet has changed the way young people communicate, learn, and experience SRH, as it offers increased access to information, people, and communities, as well as increased anonymity. These characteristics both offer important opportunities for youth SRH and create new risks. By including the youth voice, there is potential for the development of culturally appropriate and innovative digital tools that both reduce the risk of harm and support SRH.<sup>41</sup> Young adults (aged 20-24), including post-secondary students, are more likely to engage in risky behaviours such as substance use and unsafe sexual practices, which can lead to an increased risk of STIs.<sup>42</sup>

33 Kitamura, Y., Hayashi, M. and Yagi, E., 2018. Traffic problems in Southeast Asia featuring the case of Cambodia's traffic accidents involving motorcycles. IATSS research, 42(4), pp.163-170.

34 Kitamura, Y., Hayashi, M. and Yagi, E., 2018. Traffic problems in Southeast Asia featuring the case of Cambodia's traffic accidents involving motorcycles. IATSS research, 42(4), pp.163-170.

35 Kitamura, Y., Hayashi, M. and Yagi, E., 2018. Traffic problems in Southeast Asia featuring the case of Cambodia's traffic accidents involving motorcycles. IATSS research, 42(4), pp.163-170.

36 World Health Organization, 2017. Mental health status of adolescents in South-East Asia: Evidence for action.

37 Pengpid, S. and Peltzer, K., 2019. Early substance use initiation and psychological distress among adolescents in five ASEAN countries: a cross-sectional study. Psychology research and behavior management, 12, p.1003.

38 Pengpid, S. and Peltzer, K., 2019. Early substance use initiation and psychological distress among adolescents in five ASEAN countries: a cross-sectional study. Psychology research and behavior management, 12, p.1003.

39 Tackling the COVID-19 youth employment crisis in Asia and the Pacific: International Labour Organisation, Bangkok (Thailand), and Asian Development Bank, Manila (Philippines), 2020, pg. 16

40 UNFPA, 2021, My Body is My Body, My Life is My Life: Sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people in Asia and the Pacific, <https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/en/publications/my-body-my-body-my-life-my-life-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-young-people>

41 UNFPA, 2021, My Body is My Body, My Life is My Life: Sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people in Asia and the Pacific, <https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/en/publications/my-body-my-body-my-life-my-life-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-young-people>

42 Soe, N. M. K., Bird, Y., Schwandt, M., & Moraros, J. (2018). Substance use preferences and sexually transmitted infections among Canadian post-secondary students. Patient preference and adherence, 12, 2575.

# MY STORY

## ME FOR MYSELF (M4M): A YOUTH-LED INTERNATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING CAMPAIGN

— Y-PEER Asia Pacific



The **LiveNow Campaign** began as a collective effort by young people from more than eight countries in the Asia Pacific region to provide a platform for youth to share positive messages and stories.

The campaign was launched in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which left many young people isolated from their social networks. LiveNow is made up of volunteers, storytellers, young people, students, and friends who 'devoted their energy and time to turn a small corner of the web into a meaningful and positive experience for young people'.

In response to the adverse mental health impact of the COVID pandemic on young people, Y- PEER Asia Pacific (YPEER AP), with the support of its partners, initiated the Me for Myself (M4M) campaign in June 2021. Unlike the LiveNow campaign, which included components of mental health, M4M's primary objective was to raise awareness about mental health issues and to help young people develop coping mechanisms. The M4M campaign was supported by LiveNow, YouthLEAD, Robert Carr Funds (RCF), Youth Friendly Health Services Asia (YFHS), and UNFPA Asia and Pacific Regional Office (APRO).

YPEER AP and M4M sought applications for volunteers between the ages of 15-30 who were interested in engaging with and promoting issues relating to mental health and well-being, and who had skills such as writing, video-making, poster designing, etc. More than 600 applications were received, from which a little over 250 were selected. Due to a high level of interest, a second call was initiated, and 350 people were selected from over 900 applications.

In order to encourage interaction and promote community spirit, volunteers were grouped into teams on the basis of age-bands e.g., 16-17 years, 17-18 years, etc. A total of 22 teams were formed and included names such as Rising Phoenix, Team Sparkle, Team Heal Warriors, Team Small Steps, Team WEvolve, Team Valiant Soul, Team Pleasant Petrichor. One volunteer from each team was then chosen to be a core volunteer as a communication focal point with team mentors.

There was a total of 8 mentors representing five countries to support the 22 teams. The role of mentors was to guide coordination within and between teams. To select mentors, YPEER conducted a poll of Y-PEER AP members and youth from the Asia Pacific region who were working on Mental Health Issues.

Regular tasks relating to mental health were assigned by M4M core group members to the teams, with teams being scored every month on the basis of their active participation and content creation. M4M was successful in leveraging the passion of young people and the power of social media to develop creative content on mental health issues on Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, and YouTube. More than 300 posts in the form of posters, video, poems etc. carried unique content on mental health and young people, with some garnering hundreds of views each. M4M also used this platform to share the helpline numbers for mental health across 21 countries in the region.

### To learn more, visit:

- [www.m4m.space](http://www.m4m.space)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqO0i4SJ718>
- [www.fb.com/m4m.space](http://www.fb.com/m4m.space)
- [www.livenow.space](http://www.livenow.space)
- [www.instagram.com/m4m.space](http://www.instagram.com/m4m.space)
- [www.fb.com/livenowtogether](http://www.fb.com/livenowtogether)
- [www.instagram.com/livenowtogether](http://www.instagram.com/livenowtogether)

Actions for the improvement of SRH outcomes are exemplified in Cambodia, whereby public/private partnerships are utilised to reach the vulnerable youth, provide information and services together with a focus on research, and the development of effective policies and programmes.<sup>43</sup>

Adolescent girls are more vulnerable to health risks during COVID-19, particularly trafficking and pregnancy.<sup>44</sup> COVID-19 has exacerbated equity in health outcomes with school closures disproportionately affecting female youth, particularly in rural areas.<sup>45</sup> Attendance in education is a protective factor against health risks for adolescent girls, including violence and sexual exploitation and unintended pregnancies.<sup>46</sup> During COVID-19, access to comprehensive sex education and health services has been reduced.<sup>47</sup> In 2020, the rate of skilled birth assistance provided in ASEAN countries was above 90 percent.<sup>48</sup> However, 33 percent of births by women in poor, rural households were not attended by skilled personnel.<sup>49</sup>

There have been major improvements in nutrition overall, however female adolescents aged 15 to 19 are vulnerable to being underweight and anaemic.<sup>50</sup> A rise in the consumption of highly processed food presents a new threat to the health and well-being of young people in ASEAN.<sup>51</sup> Periodic national reports for the Youth Development Index are used by countries such as the Philippines to monitor progress towards achieving health outcomes towards national and international goals including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>52</sup>

Substance use (alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs) contribute to the global burden of disease and are responsible for large expenditures and significant strain on health care systems, reportedly affecting hundreds of millions of people annually.<sup>53</sup> In this iteration of the ASEAN YDI, drug and alcohol abuse have been merged with other substance abuse to allow for the addition of new domains and indicators. This does not mean that they are not issues in their own right and should not have separate strategies.

STIs are the most prevalent communicable diseases worldwide, infecting over 360 million people annually. Young adults (aged 20–24), including post-secondary students, are more likely to engage in risky behaviours such as substance use and unsafe sexual practices, which can lead to an increased risk of STIs.<sup>54</sup> In the first iteration of the ASEAN YDI, HIV was separated from other STIs. HIV remains a serious health concern for many young people in the region, particularly in key populations (sex workers and their clients, gay men, and other men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs, and transgender people) and their partners.<sup>55</sup> It is not uniform across the countries, with Thailand having more than double the rate than the others in 2019, and Singapore having an extremely low rate when compared across the globe.

43 UNFPA Cambodia, National Strategy for Reproductive and Sexual Health in Cambodia, 2017-2020 <https://cambodia.unfpa.org/en/publications/national-strategy-reproductive-and-sexual-health-cambodia-2017-2020>

44 Price, R., 2020. Key barriers to girls' education in the ASEAN and Pacific region.

45 Price, R., 2020. Key barriers to girls' education in the ASEAN and Pacific region.

46 Price, R., 2020. Key barriers to girls' education in the ASEAN and Pacific region.

47 Price, R., 2020. Key barriers to girls' education in the ASEAN and Pacific region.

48 UN Women, 2021, ASEAN Gender Outlook, Achieving the SDGs for all and leaving no woman or girl behind [https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/ASEAN/ASEAN%20Gender%20Outlook\\_final.pdf](https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/ASEAN/ASEAN%20Gender%20Outlook_final.pdf)

49 UN Women, 2021, ASEAN Gender Outlook, Achieving the SDGs for all and leaving no woman or girl behind, [https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/ASEAN/ASEAN%20Gender%20Outlook\\_final.pdf](https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/ASEAN/ASEAN%20Gender%20Outlook_final.pdf)

50 UN Women, 2021, ASEAN Gender Outlook, Achieving the SDGs for all and leaving no woman or girl behind, [https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/ASEAN/ASEAN%20Gender%20Outlook\\_final.pdf](https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/ASEAN/ASEAN%20Gender%20Outlook_final.pdf)

51 Baker, P., Machado, P., Santos, T., Sievert, K., Backholer, K., Hadjidakou, M., Russell, C., Huse, O., Bell, C., Scrinis, G. and Worsley, A., 2020. Ultra-processed foods and the nutrition transition: Global, regional and national trends, food systems transformations and political economy drivers. *Obesity Reviews*, 21(12), p.e13126.

52 National Youth Commission, 2017 Philippine Youth Development Index

53 UNDESA, Substance abuse WPAY <https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/substance-abuse-wpay.html>

54 Soe, N. M. K., Bird, Y., Schwandt, M., & Moraros, J. (2018). Substance use preferences and sexually transmitted infections among Canadian post-secondary students. *Patient preference and adherence*, 12, 2575.

55 UNADIS, Fact Sheet World Aids Day 2021, [https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media\\_asset/UNAIDS\\_FactSheet\\_en.pdf](https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/UNAIDS_FactSheet_en.pdf)

# MY STORY

## Youth LEAD



**Youth LEAD is a regional network of young key populations (YKP) that exist to empower and strengthen regional partnerships among national young key population organisations in the Asia-Pacific region. Youth LEAD has developed training courses and modules on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) to empower young people.**

### 1. *Teengen: A Leadership Training Course for Adolescents from Key Populations in Asia and the Pacific*

The Asia-Pacific region is home to over half the world's 1.2 billion adolescents, with those in the region accounting for a quarter of new HIV cases among adolescents globally. In 2015, around 233,000 adolescents aged 10 to 19 in Asia and the Pacific had HIV. While AIDS-related deaths fell by 28 percent between 2005 and 2014, AIDS-related complications became the second highest cause of mortality among adolescents in this same period.

In the Asia-Pacific region, where many countries are experiencing concentrated HIV epidemics, reaching and working with young key populations is critical for an effective response. Young key populations at higher risk in the region include:

- Men who have sex with men (MSM).
- Sex workers and their clients.
- Transgender persons.
- Seronegative partners in serodiscordant couples.

- People who inject themselves with drugs.
- People living with HIV.

It is estimated that over 95 percent of all new HIV infections in the Asia-Pacific region are among young people (aged 15-24). It is also well recognised that many behaviours that place people at a higher risk of HIV often start at an early age. As such, it is important to work with adolescents and young people.

TeenGen provides a leadership training course for adolescents from key populations in the Asia Pacific region. TeenGen aims to build the knowledge and skills of adolescents on HIV, leadership, and human rights. Youth LEAD recognises the need to develop the capacity of youth activities, which will help sustain and expand the youth and key population movement. The training, which generally lasts three days, is aimed at 13 -17-year-olds. Thus far, TeenGen has been carried out seven times in six countries since 2016.

### 2. *Young Key Population Sensitisation for Health Care Workers*

A greater understanding and sensitivity of sexual orientation and gender identities and mental health issues are important components that need to be taken into consideration when providing HIV services to Young Key Populations (YKPs). However, stigma and discrimination, victimisation from health care providers, and risks around privacy and confidentiality often discourage many young key populations from accessing HIV services. Moreover, the timings of public clinics are ill-suited to the daily routines of young people, and the services offered by these clinics do not always match their needs.

In response to this issue, Youth LEAD developed the [Regional Healthcare Worker Training Manual](#), with financial support from the Global Fund Asia Pacific Multi-Country grant called SKPA (Sustainability of HIV Services for Key Populations in Asia Program) and UNAIDS RST Asia Pacific. The manual provides a comprehensive guideline to train and develop the capacity and skills of healthcare workers to understand the needs and realities of YKPs and provide them with friendly services. The overall regional objective of this activity is to increase the uptake of HIV services by YKPs. The manual has already been piloted in Papua New Guinea and will be further rolled out in Cambodia, Indonesia, and the Philippines, with the aim that countries will further scale up the manual into other provinces.

### 3. NOKEN: Reproductive Health Training Module for Adolescents and Young People

The HIV epidemic in Indonesia has entered a concentrated epidemic stage (except for the provinces of Papua and West Papua). According to Integrated Biological and Behavioural Surveillance (IBBS) in 2011, about 1 in 3 people affected with HIV are young people (aged 15-24) and have experimented either with drugs or with their sexuality. Despite this, the specific requirements of the young population need to be addressed. HIV prevention programmes in Indonesia still tend to focus on young people in schools. Only a few programmes address the needs of at-risk young people that do not go to school.

With this background, Inti Muda Indonesia (the national Young Key Population organisation in Indonesia) and the Indonesian Positive Women's Association (IPPI), in collaboration with PITCH funding sources and technical support from Youth LEAD, created a module as an effective training and campaign method to equip young people outside of school with information on Leadership and Sexual Health Education. The module, Noken, was developed with the help of 23 young people, aged 15-23. It was inspired by a traditional Papuan bag in Sentani, Jayapura. The module development was completed in June 2019.

The first training using the Noken module was held in Jakarta, between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of September, 2019. The involvement of young people in the development of the module resulted in participants having an easier time understanding the materials. The meaningful engagement of young people in intervention efforts targeting young people is thus very important. The module was disseminated to network partners and stakeholders on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September, 2019 so that they can be utilised in an effort to increase capacity for young people in Indonesia in the context of Sexual and Reproductive Health.

#### Challenges

The challenges found in the implementation of this module are:

1. Un-learning process. As a group that is systematically stigmatised, letting go of the various forms of stigmatisation experienced by young people is not an easy endeavour. Many young people "accept" the discriminatory acts committed against them because of their low bargaining position in society. Therefore, un-learning is a difficult process, but it is important in implementing this module.
2. Simplification of the context. As a module, of course, the authors want the context in this module to be widely accepted and understood. However, in its implementation, facilitators need skills in simplifying the context of the existing materials, so that they can be understood effectively by the trainees.

#### Recommendation

The recommendations we have for ASEAN and donors regarding the SRHR programme are:

1. Design a programme that specifically responds to the needs of young people, especially young key populations related to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, one of which is capacity building and leadership carried out by young people themselves.
2. Put young people in decision-making positions for programmes that are specifically designed for young people. Young people can identify their own needs, which will then develop into meaningful and enjoyable activities. The budget allocation can also be increased to respond to the inequality experienced by young people.

## 3.3 Employment and Opportunity

The Employment and Opportunity Domain seeks to measure Labour Force Participation, security, and impediments to economic opportunities.

The main determinants of youth unemployment in ASEAN countries are foreign direct investment, inflation, and gross domestic product.<sup>56</sup> The effectiveness of the transition from school to employment is also another factor affecting employment.<sup>57</sup> The transition of youth into employment during secondary schooling may have a positive impact on the economy, however when employment becomes more important than schooling, the long-term benefits to youth and the economy are diminished.<sup>58</sup>

In their final statement to the ASEAN Civic Society Conference-ASEAN People's Forum ACSC/APF 2021, the youth call on ASEAN policymakers and government leaders to set a standard for national employment policies that is inclusive of all communities. This includes addressing the needs of people with disabilities, providing mental health counselling, and ramping up the COVID-19 vaccinations programme to allow workers to return to their workplaces, and for job seekers to have an increased chance of securing employment.<sup>59</sup>

The World Economic Forum has identified that youth show agility in utilising digitalisation as the means adapt to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19.<sup>60</sup> Young people are particularly responsive to technology as a means for greater financial inclusion and access to banking.<sup>61</sup> Access to technology and financial inclusion are accelerants of economic development.<sup>62</sup> Technology encourages start-ups to flourish and social enterprises to spread into communities, benefitting households.<sup>63</sup> This economic growth can be further accelerated by providing youth with loans and insurance guarantees.<sup>64</sup> Improvements in inclusive digital adoption can be found by ensuring that youth in remote locations have access to affordable and quality internet connection and the skills to participate online.<sup>65</sup>

Access to mobile phones and banking on mobile phones is a major contributor to youth accessing banks in ASEAN countries.<sup>66</sup> Factors that influence the adoption of mobile banking include network coverage, particularly in rural areas, awareness of mobile banking, standardised services that are easy to use, trust in digital money, and the availability of cash facilities when required.<sup>67</sup>

56 Hasan, Z. and Sasana, H., 2020, Determinants Of Youth Unemployment Rate In Asean, International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research, 1(03), pp. 6687-6691.

57 Hasan, Z. and Sasana, H., 2020, Determinants Of Youth Unemployment Rate In Asean, International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research, 1(03), pp. 6687-6691.

58 Cabauatan, R.R. and Manalo, R.A., 2018. A Comparative Analysis on Selected Issues on Economics of Education in ASEAN Countries. Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research, 7, pp.68-78.

59 Youth of Southeast Asia, <https://aseanyouthforum.org/yics2021>

60 World Economic Forum, Insight Report October 2021, ASEAN Digital Generation Report: Pathway to ASEAN's inclusive digital transformation and recovery, Available: [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_ASEAN\\_Digital\\_Generation\\_2021.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_ASEAN_Digital_Generation_2021.pdf)

61 Tjahjadi, A.M., 2018. Assessment Role of Youth in Financial Inclusion: ASEAN Context. Jurnal Studi Pemuda, 7(1), pp.59-63.

62 Fernandez, D. and Rakotomalala, M., 2020. Financial technology and inclusion in ASEAN, Singapore Management University.

63 Fernandez, D. and Rakotomalala, M., 2020. Financial technology and inclusion in ASEAN, Singapore Management University.

64 Tjahjadi, A.M., 2018. Assessment Role of Youth in Financial Inclusion: ASEAN Context. Jurnal Studi Pemuda, 7(1), pp.59-63.

65 World Economic Forum, ASEAN YOUTH SURVEY 2020 EDITION JULY 2020, COVID-19 – The True Test of ASEAN Youth's Resilience and Adaptability Impact of Social Distancing on ASEAN Youth, Available: [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_ASEAN\\_Youth\\_Survey\\_2020\\_Report.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_ASEAN_Youth_Survey_2020_Report.pdf)

66 Babu, A.A., A Comparative Analysis of Best Practices of Mobile Banking in ASEAN Countries and India. seaps, p.21.

67 Babu, A.A., A Comparative Analysis of Best Practices of Mobile Banking in ASEAN Countries and India. seaps, p.21.

While technology can be a lever for inclusion and innovative job development for youth, it can also be used to automate certain jobs. In this sense, governments can explore policy options, including public funding and incentives for the development and adoption of workforce-enhancing rather than workforce-replacement technologies. Policies supporting workforce empowerment in compensation negotiations and public support for reskilling and job search, among other things, can help prepare young people to adapt to a changing labour market.<sup>68</sup>

Other factors need to accompany the expansion of technology in order to ensure inclusive access to opportunities, such as a strong regulatory environment, infrastructure, and human capital development.<sup>69</sup> Country-level economic commitments for inclusive, equitable economic empowerment, such as in Malaysia, identify youth development, adoption of technology, improvements to transport infrastructure, and public services as key contributors to economic advancement.<sup>70</sup> Corruption is identified as a major impediment to progress, reinforcing the need for oversight, particularly in relation to government procurement and contracts.<sup>71</sup>



68 Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2022, <https://www.southsouth-galaxy.org/publications/economic-and-social-survey-of-asia-and-the-pacific-2022>

69 Fernandez, D. and Rakotomalala, M., 2020. Financial technology and inclusion in ASEAN, Singapore Management University.

70 Government of Malaysia, Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2021, Twelfth Malaysia Plan 2021-2025, <https://rmke12.epu.gov.my/en>

71 Government of Malaysia, Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2019, Shared Prosperity Vision, <https://www.malaysia.gov.my/portal/content/30901>

# MY STORY

## WORKING FROM ANYWHERE: GIG ECONOMY

— Senjaya Mulia, Founder of the ASEAN Youth Organization



**Personal or Organisation's Experience ASEAN Youth Organization (AYO) is a youth-led community and registered Foundation in Jakarta, Indonesia, comprising more than 700,000 Southeast Asian youths. AYO is an ASEAN-approved non-profit organisation that spreads awareness of ASEAN to over 200 million young people in Southeast Asia.**

Through our regional programmes such as ASEAN Youth Conference, ASEAN Youth Training, AYO Ambassador, and ASEAN Youth Exchange, we empower youths to take action and engage in local communities to implement impact-driven ideas/projects so as to create positive, sustainable change. Our mission is to impact 10 million youths by 2025, improving social mobility through inclusive quality education and employment/self-employment opportunities.

Since its establishment in 2012, the ASEAN Youth Organization has successfully conducted hundreds of events and activities that both empower the young people in the region and connect them to one another, and it will keep growing.

The Work of the Organisation Highlight; the ASEAN Youth Organization conducted the ASEAN Youth Digital Forum (AYDF) in 2021, which aimed to help spreading knowledge, encouraging and preparing young people to be digital talents that understand

their role in tackling the challenges of digitalisation processes in a digital age in order to contribute to the achievement of a single ASEAN Digital Community in the future, particularly through three major sectors, among others, education, security, and economy.

Capable participants and young professionals attended a capacity-building workshop series comprised of 4 events to target specific digital literacy skills, namely:

1. Webinar on Youth and Digital Literacy
2. Workshop on Youth and Cybersecurity
3. Webinar ASEAN Cross-border Virtual Internship
4. Workshop on Digitalisation of Gig Economy

Towards the end of the ASEAN Youth Digital Forum (AYDF) 2021, the representatives and participating parties agreed to acknowledge, support, and propose key recommendation aspects to tackle development index literacy and education challenges in digital literacy, cybersecurity, ASEAN cross-border virtual internship, and gig economy.

### Challenges being faced

The COVID-19 global pandemic accelerated the whole world's dependency on technology, including the ever-lasting frontier of youth engagement in various industries. The massive flow of information in the current digital era therefore demands that people be able to distinguish between fact and opinion. People must learn strategies to detect biased information and malicious content like fake news and phishing emails.

Based on a survey of the World Economic Forum (WEF), ASEAN youths adjusted to the COVID-19 environment by significantly increasing their digital footprint, where 87% of youths increased usage of at least one digital tool during the pandemic. The survey reveals unprecedented digital transformation among ASEAN youths. According to a WEF report, some of the biggest concerns during the pandemic are the increase in cyberattacks and data fraud. A report of the COVID-19 cybercrime impact on Asia and the South Pacific region by the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) shows that the key COVID-19-related cyberthreats are phishing/scam/fraud (59%), malware/ransomware (36%), malicious domains (22%), and fake news (14%).

Nearly nine out of ten young people said they had increased their use of at least one digital tool during the pandemic, while almost half (42%) had picked up at least one new digital tool. A clear majority said

their switch to digital would be a permanent feature in their lives from now on. Though those numbers have fluctuated as the pandemic has stretched on, experts expect that the global trend toward remote work will continue to accelerate moving forward.

**Recommendations for ASEAN**

The representatives and participating parties of the ASEAN Youth Digital Forum (AYDF) 2021 came to an agreement to propose the following points in response to the Challenges arising in the new digital era while corresponding their responsibility to help spread knowledge, encourage, and prepare young people to be digital talents.

**Digital Literacy**

1. Notes to educate ASEAN citizens about the impact of the internet and social media platforms by instilling a culture of respect and mindful engagement online;
2. Affirms the importance of digital literacy skills for ASEAN citizens, particularly youths in the region, through the provision of accessible learning platforms by ASEAN-related stakeholders;
3. Reaffirms ASEAN's commitments to equal opportunities in accessing and obtaining digital literacy skills for everyone, regardless of their gender, race, age, and religion;
4. Supports the role of youths to help other age groups in mitigating misleading news in cyberspace;
5. Recommends continuous development of internet access and related infrastructure in all ASEAN Member States to ensure inclusive improvement of digital literacy skills, especially for youths in rural areas;
6. Further recommends ASEAN stakeholders to mainstream digital literacy in ASEAN countries' education systems through two means:
  - Formal (e.g., school curriculum) and
  - Informal (e.g., events, capacity-building programmes, training, workshops, etc.)

**Cybersecurity**

1. Calls upon ASEAN stakeholders' engagement in the safeguarding of the youth population and the underage from arising cyberthreats in a digital setting;

2. Affirms the importance of raising the awareness of youths across the region regarding the potential cyberthreats in digital space;
3. Encourages the youth to create meaningful engagement in a safe online space;
4. Recommends the dissemination of knowledge and sharing of best practices on how ASEAN citizens, particularly the youths, can protect their data on the internet;
5. Takes note of the importance of a secure digital environment by raising the awareness of youths related to personal data protection in an online environment.

**Cross-border Virtual Internships**

1. Affirms the importance of equal opportunities for all youths to access cross-border virtual internship opportunities, regardless of their gender, race, age, and religion;
2. Requests to promote wider opportunities for youths to be able to take part in cross-border virtual internship programmes through the establishment of regional platforms that provide information on virtual internship programmes;
3. Takes note of the importance of youth work readiness by providing them with mentorship and assistance for all interns to improve their skills and employability in facing changes of future jobs in the digital age;
4. Calls for ASEAN governments to provide a better legal framework to secure the rights of interns (remuneration, insurance, etc.);
5. Further invites companies to provide equal learning opportunities for all interns.

**Gig Economy**

1. Further invites ASEAN-related stakeholders to foster a safer and more conducive environment in a gig economy by providing a necessary regulatory framework;
2. Requests the ASEAN companies and employers protect the rights of gig workers;
3. Calls for action by ASEAN governments to promote wider access for gig workers to gain better job opportunities;
4. Calls for the support to offer youths with necessary digital skills to increase their adaptability and employability in the current digital workspace;

5. Further encourages ASEAN Member States to provide more programmes that focus on reskilling, skilling, and upskilling for youths to enhance their readiness to enter the digital workforce.

Please refer to ASEAN Youth Statement on ASEAN Youth Digital Forum [HERE](#).



ASEAN countries have been consistently attractive destinations for investment and growth since 1980.<sup>72</sup> Financial inclusion across the ASEAN countries is growing and could be further strengthened in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam, as they show the greatest potential for gains.<sup>73</sup> Intra-ASEAN migration skyrocketed from 1.5 million to 6.5 million migrants between 1990 and 2013, representing almost 70 percent of ASEAN's total migration at the end of the review period (ILO 2014).<sup>74</sup> The movement of migrants between Southeast Asian economies has mostly been driven by higher wages and migrant social networks in destination economies, as well as natural disasters in origin economies.<sup>75</sup>

In addition to individual characteristics, three main structural factors appear to be driving labour migration in ASEAN: (i) the demographic transition underway in most East Asian economies that affects the supply and demand of labour, producing additional migration opportunities and challenges; (ii) income differentials between economies, which eventually represent the greatest pull forces for migrants; (iii) the penetrability of porous borders, which can explain the high prevalence of undocumented migration in some ASEAN economies.<sup>76</sup> This can lead to increased risk of unsafe employment and modern slavery, which is discussed in the Safety and Security Domain.

# MY STORY

## VOICES ON MIGRANT WORKFORCES ASEAN YOUTH FORUM (AYF)

— Anu, ASEAN Youth Forum



**Anu, who is part of the ASEAN Youth Forum (AYF) youth network explained that “migration is a key pillar of economic development”. For individuals, it provides the opportunity to break out of the cycle of poverty and progress towards a better lifestyle, while for nations, it addresses potential labour shortages.**

Yet, several thousand migrant workers in ASEAN and other nations continue to face serious exploitation, violation, and other injustices. Although these issues were always visible, the pandemic brought the focus on the exploitation faced by these migrants. So, what can we do? First and foremost, we need to challenge how we talk about and perceive migrants. In neoliberal societies, for example, migration is often seen as a way for individuals - especially women-- to break away from social burdens and achieve financial freedom. That would help, but one-dimensional discourses take away opportunities for the migrants to express their opinion. Once we start listening to the migrant workers, we can better plan a course of action to ensure their well-being in a safe and dignified manner. The challenges facing them are complex and multi-layered, and any solution will need to address financial, physical, social, and emotional aspects of their work environment. Governments can take cues from grassroots organisations to better understand and address migrants' needs. Lastly, on an individual level, stereotypes and fears around welcoming the unknown need to be disputed.”

Recognising the need to raise awareness of the plight of migrant communities amongst youth, AYF created several spaces to dissect this issue. In 2020, AYF held national open spaces for Singaporean youths to discuss the layers of inequality faced by migrant workers, while young people in Malaysia were given the opportunity to have a conversation on how to counter hate against ethnic minorities and migrants in Malaysia. The Singapore forum invited Jewel Yi, the co-leader of the COVID-19 Migrant Support Coalition (CMSC). Yi explained that the transient nature of migrant works and biased portrayal by the media of migrants as “dangerous” were the reasons for the prejudice faced by migrant workers in Singapore. The youth participants pointed out that it is difficult to interact with migrant communities because of the sequestration policies. This has, in turn, created a lack of awareness among the youth about foreign workers and the discrimination they have been facing. By the end of the discussion, the participants agreed that change begins at an individual level. They committed to educating themselves on migrant issues and participating in any way they could. During the Malaysia forum, it became clear that the participants understood the danger of hate culture, and how it erodes freedom of expression. A participant explained this notion by saying that some people abuse the freedom of expression to spread racism. Participants identified the lack of social security and state protection as the root cause behind the creation of misunderstanding among local regarding migrants and ethnic minorities. The participants agreed that education and inter-generational dialogues were essential in building trust amongst communities to counter hate.

72 Loo, M.K.L., 2019. Enhancing Financial Inclusion in ASEAN: Identifying the Best Growth Markets for Fintech. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 12(4), p.181.

73 Loo, M.K.L., 2019. Enhancing Financial Inclusion in ASEAN: Identifying the Best Growth Markets for Fintech. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 12(4), p.181.

74 Tuccio, M. (2017). Determinants of intra-ASEAN migration. *Asian Development Review*, 34(1), 144-166.

75 Tuccio, M. (2017). Determinants of intra-ASEAN migration. *Asian Development Review*, 34(1), 144-166.

76 Tuccio, M. (2017). Determinants of intra-ASEAN migration. *Asian Development Review*, 34(1), 144-166.

## — Elana Wong, ASEAN Youth Forum



**In 2021, AYF held its second SEAYouth Festival with a specific Youth Town Hall session, among others, on the topic of Youth in Migration, Refugees and Asylum Seekers, and Migrant Workers.**

This space allowed for several youth speakers to convey the recommendations that they thought should be implemented by ASEAN. Elana Wong, the Global Focal Point for the MGCY Migration Youth & Children Platform and Migration Advisor of the US-ASEAN Young Professionals Association from Malaysia and Singapore, gave an overview of the multitude of issues surrounding migrants in ASEAN, including inadequate access to basic livelihood services, regional disparities in recognition of asylum seekers and refugees, inadequacies in human trafficking prevention, racism, and negative attitudes towards migrants which are harmful to the economic and mental health security of migrant communities. She recommends that ASEAN should adopt a migrant-friendly rights framework, establish more pathways to gain access to basic livelihood services and regularisation, implement migrant-friendly labour laws to protect against exploitation and wage theft, and recognise the potential of migrants in ASEAN and abroad.

## — Shaffira Gayatri, ASEAN Youth Forum



**Shaffira Gayatri, an Indonesian development worker specialising in conflict transformation and refugee rights advocacy, and who is currently working for Migrant Workers Centre Victoria in Australia, explained the challenges faced by asylum seekers, refugees, and migrant workers in Southeast Asia who are often “left behind”.**

She highlighted how not all ASEAN countries are signatories, despite having large numbers of migrants and refugees. She mentioned how this has led to the lack of human rights protection for migrant communities in need of protection in the region. She recommends that ASEAN provide better protection of their basic rights and services, impose a regional legal framework based on international standards and responsibility-sharing, and hold governments accountable for violations of the rights of asylum seekers and refugees.

With most individuals striving to achieve a better standard of living for themselves and their families, one's migration status should not be held against them when seeking greater opportunities abroad. There can be no denying the contributions that migrant workforces have made to local economies. It is therefore essential for ASEAN to mainstream tolerance and acceptance of migrants and consult with migrant communities to develop a regional framework that safeguards an adequate standard of living and protection of basic rights.

The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) tends to be much lower among youth than among adults, which is understandable, as the former are still heavily engaged in schooling. However, LFPR among rural youth tends to be higher than LFPR among urban youth.<sup>77</sup>

Adolescent fertility is the rate of childbirths for 15-19 year-old girls. There is an estimated 21 million girls aged 15-19 in developing countries who become pregnant annually, with 12 million giving birth.<sup>78</sup> This can impact many aspects of young people's lives beyond the health implications, including the ability to participate fully in society.<sup>79</sup> The time and access to education and career pathways can be severely impacted by adolescent fertility.<sup>80</sup> The demands of parenthood can inhibit workforce participation and this often has a flow-on effect to life-long earning capacity and career pathways.<sup>81</sup>

### 3.4 Participation and Engagement

The Participation and Engagement Domain seeks to measure the extent to which young people are enabled to interact positively with their communities, and actively do so, as well as youth political engagement. It is important to note the different political systems in place across the ASEAN region, making some direct comparisons problematic when measuring political engagement. Caveats for indicators can be seen in the full methodology section.

Youth form an integral part of a unified community that can demonstrate the capacity to work together to solve problems.<sup>82</sup> As young people transition from school completion through to the attainment of employment for support and into adulthood, they can become contributing members of society through active citizenship.<sup>83</sup> Engagement of young people in the community can be fostered through education and awareness programmes.<sup>84</sup> Youth forums and training with follow-up activities to check on progress toward goals have been found to be effective strategies for elevating youth engagement and participation in ASEAN countries.<sup>85</sup> Resourcing youth-led networks and strengthening recruitment for volunteerism, as can be seen through the work of NGOs, are two strategies found to be effective.<sup>86</sup>

Understanding the motivation for youth volunteerism in ASEAN countries assists with the development of effective policy mechanisms. ASEAN youth experience benefits to participating in volunteerism.<sup>87</sup> They see volunteering as an opportunity to improve abilities and skills and to gain some valuable experiences.<sup>88</sup>

77 Briones, R. (2019). Investing in rural youth in the Asia and the Pacific region. IFAD Research Series 58 [Internet]. Rome (IT): International Fund for Agricultural Development; [cited 2020 Sep 8].

78 Darroch J, Woog V, Bankole A, Ashford LS. Adding it up: Costs and benefits of meeting the contraceptive needs of adolescents. New York: Guttmacher Institute; 2016.

79 WHO. Global standards for quality health care services for adolescents. Geneva: WHO; 2015.

80 The 2020 Global Youth Development Index, available at: <https://youth-development-index.thecommonwealth.org>

81 Bernhardt, EM. (1993). Fertility and Employment. *European Sociological Review*, 9(1), 25-42. <https://www.rti.org/publication/fertility-and-employment>

82 Ali, A.J., Sarang, S.G., Sarvghadi, A., Khalid, J. and May, B., 2018, December. AFLES's Inspirations and Its ASEAN Youth Community Development (ASEAN Future Leaders Summit). In ICCD (Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 362-369).

83 The 2020 Global Youth Development Index, available at: <https://youth-development-index.thecommonwealth.org>

84 Banlangpoh, m.p., 2017. The strategies of Thai volunteer service foundation in empowering youth civic engagement in ASEAN (Doctoral dissertation, Thammasat University).

85 Banlangpoh, m.p., 2017. The strategies of Thai volunteer service foundation in empowering youth civic engagement in ASEAN (Doctoral dissertation, Thammasat University).

86 Banlangpoh, m.p., 2017. The strategies of Thai volunteer service foundation in empowering youth civic engagement in ASEAN (Doctoral dissertation, Thammasat University).

87 Ismail, S., Samat, N.A., Parnabas, V., Abdullah, N.M. and Hamid, N.A., 2014, June. Youth Volunteerism in Chow Kit, Malaysia: Factors of involvement. In International Conference on Global Trends in Academic Research. Kuala Lumpur (pp. 2-3).

88 Ismail, S., Samat, N.A., Parnabas, V., Abdullah, N.M. and Hamid, N.A., 2014, June. Youth Volunteerism in Chow Kit, Malaysia: Factors of involvement. In International Conference on Global Trends in Academic Research. Kuala Lumpur (pp. 2-3).



Young people also experience a sense of purpose and satisfaction because of social integration, with volunteering helping to reduce stress and loneliness.<sup>89</sup> They also participate out of a sense of obligation and to feel appreciated; a shared sense of duty and belonging to society.<sup>90</sup>

Rural youth are disproportionately affected by reduced civil engagement.<sup>91</sup> This can be improved by way of the following policy mechanisms.<sup>92</sup> Firstly, informing young people through observing other youths in parliamentary settings and transparent communications with policymakers through different forms of media.<sup>93</sup> Secondly, consulting with youth through workshops, surveys, public forums, and youth council.<sup>94</sup> Thirdly, collaborating through internships, advisory boards, steering committees, and collaborative research. Fourthly and finally, empowering young people through youth-led campaigns, youth parliament, delegated decision making, and independent research.<sup>95</sup>

# MY STORY

## TURNING YOUTH DIALOGUE INTO ACTION

— Melissa Low, Research Fellow at the National University of Singapore's Centre for Nature-based Climate Solutions



2019 was a turning point for Singapore in relation to climate change advocacy and activism. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of March, 2019, The Straits Times, Singapore's English daily broadsheet newspaper, published a forum letter I had written on how youth in Singapore were starting to express their concern about the changing climate. The forum letter had focused on how young people had found ways of voicing their concerns without participating in climate strikes that were popular around the world at that time. Instead, climate-concerned youth chose to use social media campaigns, organised capacity-building workshops, and had conversations in partnership with the Government and other stakeholders.

One of the reasons cited for the increased traction on climate action could have been Singapore's declaration of 2018 as the Year of Climate Action by the then Minister for the Environment and Water Resources. The National Youth Council, an autonomous agency under the Ministry of Culture, Community, and Youth, which serves as the national coordinating body for youth affairs in Singapore, had organised several Youth Conversation dialogues to engage and empower youth. In 2018, more than 8,000 young people were engaged on topics such as environmental sustainability and social inequality.

Conversations, if organised well, allow for trust to be built between youth and institutions. This can and will lead to more collaborative action and partnership.

In a timely follow-up to the conversations organised in 2018, the then Senior Minister of State for Culture, Community, and Youth announced the launch of the SG Youth Action Plan in 2019, which was a call to action for the young people to shape a better future for Singapore.

### Youth Circle as a platform for Govt-Youth partnership

Turning dialogue into action was the next natural step. One of the engagement platforms that I was involved in, as a Research Fellow at the National University of Singapore looking at energy and climate policies, was the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources-National Youth Council (MEWR-NYC) Youth Circle from 2019-2021. The Youth Circles is a partnership initiative aiming to broaden the co-deliberative space and opportunities at the policy-level between youth and institutions. The first MEWR-NYC Youth Circle comprised 8 individuals from the public, people, and private sectors, with experience ranging from waste management, farming, corporate responsibility and sustainability, sustainability consulting, and research. The group convened in March 2019.

In line with MEWR's Year towards Zero Waste, the Youth Circle agreed to focus on and champion food waste reduction through a possible Good Samaritan Food Donation legislation. With support from NYC, the group convened meetings with the MEWR (which was renamed in 2020 as the Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment or 'MSE') and other key stakeholders such as the Singapore Food Agency (SFA) and National Environment Agency (NEA). The feasibility of such legislation at the national level was discussed in these meetings and served as capacity building for agencies for youth engagement. The Youth Circle also worked with Foodscape Collective and youth leaders from NYC's Youth Corps Singapore to conduct surveys with food and beverage establishments on how they are reducing food waste. At the end of the Youth Circle's term, they presented their report to the Minister for Sustainability and the Environment, Ms. Grace Fu. The report was also shared with the SFA and NEA, who provided their views on the feasibility of such a legislation in Singapore and possible trade-offs that might need to be addressed.

With NYC's support, Youth Circle succeeded in its aim to explore food waste reduction through a possible Good Samaritan Food Donation legislation. This was done through the creation of safe spaces brokered by NYC for discussion between youth and institutions. The Youth Circle members also took notes of meetings and circulated them to government officials that they had met through

89 Ismail, S., Samat, N.A., Parnabas, V., Abdullah, N.M. and Hamid, N.A., 2014, June. Youth Volunteerism in Chow Kit, Malaysia: Factors of involvement. In International Conference on Global Trends in Academic Research. Kuala Lumpur (pp. 2-3).

90 Ismail, S., Samat, N.A., Parnabas, V., Abdullah, N.M. and Hamid, N.A., 2014, June. Youth Volunteerism in Chow Kit, Malaysia: Factors of involvement. In International Conference on Global Trends in Academic Research. Kuala Lumpur (pp. 2-3).

91 Trivelli, C. and Morel, J., 2021. Rural Youth Inclusion, Empowerment, and Participation. The Journal of Development Studies, 57(4), pp.635-649.

92 Trivelli, C. and Morel, J., 2021. Rural Youth Inclusion, Empowerment, and Participation. The Journal of Development Studies, 57(4), pp.635-649.

93 Trivelli, C. and Morel, J., 2021. Rural Youth Inclusion, Empowerment, and Participation. The Journal of Development Studies, 57(4), pp.635-649.

94 Trivelli, C. and Morel, J., 2021. Rural Youth Inclusion, Empowerment, and Participation. The Journal of Development Studies, 57(4), pp.635-649.

95 Trivelli, C. and Morel, J., 2021. Rural Youth Inclusion, Empowerment, and Participation. The Journal of Development Studies, 57(4), pp.635-649.

NYC, which helped in keeping everyone accountable and moving the initiative forward. Youth Circle's success was in large part due to the matching interests of the youth and the institution at the time of engagement.

**Reflections**

Creating this space for policy co-deliberation is not always easy, but finding trusted youth leaders who are already active in the climate advocacy landscape helps to overcome any concerns that institutions may have. Looking back, the national-level focus on reducing waste also helped, since the government was keen to raise awareness and work with citizens to implement concrete ground-up projects to address the growing problem of waste in Singapore.

The Covid-19 pandemic changed the way the Government had engaged youth over the last two years. Conversations went online following the 'circuit breaker' in Singapore. To keep the national momentum of the Singapore Green Plan going among young people, NYC worked with institutes of higher learning, including the National University of

Singapore (NUS), to organise inter- and intra-varsity Singapore Green Plan Conversations in 2021. With greater interest among youth to engage with other like-minded peers worldwide and champion environmental action, NUS also worked with NYC to nominate two youth leaders to attend the 26<sup>th</sup> United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP26) held in Glasgow in November, 2021.

Climate advocacy or activism alone cannot move the needle. Governments play their part by opening more space for youth to be meaningfully involved in policy making. On the part of the young people, we need to see the value in working together with policymakers to understand the trade-offs in enacting ambitious climate policies and legislation, with a view to pushing the boundaries where possible. Youth engagement can get us there sooner.

Melissa Low is a Research Fellow at the National University of Singapore's Centre for Nature-based Climate Solutions. She serves on the National Youth Council and as a Chief Curator on the Young Change Makers Grant Programme.



Melissa organised and delivered a series of free capacity-building workshops for youth on climate change negotiations in 2018 and 2019, supported by the National Youth Council through their venue sponsorship of the Red Box. **Photo credit:** Melissa Low



Youth Circle members meeting at the Singapore Food Agency in September 2019. **Photo credit:** National Youth Council



Youth Circle members with the Minister for Sustainability and the Environment, Ms. Grace Fu following their presentation of their report titled "Insights from Our Journey & Research-Food Waste in the context of the Good Samaritan Law" on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March, 2021. **Photo credit:** National Youth Council

ASEAN youth call for youth-led organisations to have a place in policy discussions that impact the lives of young people. This can be done by creating funding opportunities for youth-led initiatives to analyse/critique existing youth policies. In addition, privacy laws need to be strengthened to allow youth organisations to mobilise their activism or participate without negative repercussions. The establishment of career bridge programmes for youth to move into leadership roles should be encouraged while involving young people from diverse backgrounds.<sup>96</sup>

Political engagement and opportunity to actively participate in decision making. The gender gap in Political Empowerment remains high, with women representing only 26.1 percent of some 35,500 parliament seats and just 22.6 percent of over 3,400 ministers worldwide. In 81 countries, there has never been a woman head of state, as of the 15<sup>th</sup> of January, 2021. At the current rate of progress, the World Economic Forum estimates that it will take 145.5 years to attain gender parity in politics.<sup>97</sup>

### 3.5 Equity and Inclusion

The Equity and Inclusion Domain seeks to show whether or not marginalised and diverse groups in society are given access to the same opportunities and freedoms as the wider community. This is a relatively new domain for YDIs, having been included for the first time in the Global YDI in 2020.<sup>98</sup>

96 Trivelli, C. and Morel, J., 2021. Rural Youth Inclusion, Empowerment, and Participation. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 57(4), pp.635-649.

97 WEF. (2021). Global gender gap report 2021. Insight report. World Economic Forum.

98 The 2020 Global Youth Development Index, available at: <https://youth-development-index.thecommonwealth.org>

# MY STORY

## DISABILITY ACCESS TO SERVICES

— ASEAN Youth Forum



**The ASEAN Youth Forum (AYF) has stood as a pillar of youth participation to create an inclusive, rights-based, sustainable, and youth-driven regional community.**

It provided over 2,500 young people with a platform to convey their thoughts through the annual forum that was hosted in Thailand (2009), Viet Nam (2010), Indonesia (2011), Cambodia (2012), Brunei Darussalam (2013), Myanmar (2014), Malaysia (2015), Cambodia (2016), the Philippines (2017), and Indonesia (2019). During the COVID-19 pandemic, AYF reinvented its forums into online SEAYouth Festivals (2020 & 2021). The forums and the festivals have produced call-to-action recommendations on human rights issues for ASEAN and government leaders, as well as other stakeholders. AYF also supports youth activism, initiatives, creative expression, capacity building on human rights and advocacy, as well as external partnerships that strengthen youth participation.

In supporting the advancement of the rights of youth with disabilities, in 2020, AYF provided mini funds for:

1. Deafability, a youth-led initiative that was started in 2020 in the deep south of Thailand (Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat and nearby areas), following research which identified 300 deaf children in the community living with little to no resources to access education. Deafability, in collaboration with the local Association for Deaf People, found that schools with appropriate audio-visual support were very far. Moreover, the religious curriculum did not support

inclusive education. These students were thus unable to converse in Thai sign language and had no standard medium of communication. Deafability aimed to educate deaf children, parents, and teachers in Thai sign language to help them integrate better into society. They did so by distributing handmade flashcards, hosting workshops, and streaming the sessions on Facebook.

2. Psycho-Education and Applied Research Centre for the Deaf (PARD) is a deaf-led non-profit organisation in Viet Nam. During the COVID-19 pandemic, news about the outbreak and safety protocols were not delivered in an accessible manner, resulting in many deaf people missing potentially life-saving information. Thus, the PARD team stepped in to translate news and make information accessible to the deaf community. They provided sign-language education through workshops and sign-language interpretations for health-related news on social media.

In the following years, AYF partnered with the General Election Network for Disability Access (AGENDA), a regional disability network in Southeast Asia, and organised a regional dialogue in September 2021 on Advancing Employment and Entrepreneurship Opportunities for Youth with Disabilities through the use of Digital Technology in the COVID-19 pandemic era. The initiative aimed to serve as a venue for youth with and without disabilities to exchange insights on key issues and be able to offer their opinions to ASEAN officials on what could be done. AYF's role of providing technical advice, mobilising young people, and facilitating discussion enabled AGENDA to engage with diverse youth participants from the region and grasp the perspectives of young people on this issue. Due to its success, AGENDA continued supporting AYF to conduct awareness-raising activities on entrepreneurship possibilities for all youth, including those with disabilities. The events saw youths with disabilities from Singapore and the Philippines share how they became successful at navigating the challenges they faced due to their disabilities.

— Beverly Bravo,  
ASEAN Youth Forum



**Beverly Bravo, from the Philippines, currently serves as an IT instructor at the local University of Muntinlupa, and is an assistive technology trainer and website accessibility auditor at ATRIEV IT Centre for the Blind. She is also undertaking post graduate studies in Information Technology.**

She has been visually impaired since birth due to corneal leukoma. Her parents decided to not pursue treatment because of the high risk of failure. She proceeded with her life as a typical child. Having spent most of her school years in regular classes, Beverly shared how challenging it was for her due to the lack of awareness among her teachers on how to handle students with visual impairment. She had to adjust and make her own accessible handouts and other learning materials. There was also limited access to websites and mobile applications prior to 2017. She needed to have a sighted guide during her time in college to assist her in accessing the different programming tools that were still not fully accessible to the screen reader. The lack of awareness was also evident among recruiters. They weren't informed of the capabilities of the visually impaired or how to accommodate them. "The journey would have been easier if more people were aware of what visual disability is and what it entails. ASEAN could work on social media campaigns to advocate for the right representation of persons with visual impairment and other disabilities."

— Heather Wong Liang Le,  
ASEAN Youth Forum



**Heather Wong Liang Le from Singapore is a spinal cord injury survivor who went on to become an entrepreneur, running her own e-commerce start-up.**

She shared some of the early challenges she faced when she decided to become an entrepreneur. "When I started to look for a place to rent an office and warehouse, the people I met often seemed to feel uncomfortable and weren't really keen on the idea of having a wheelchair user in the building. There is this stereotype that people with disabilities are fragile and we may injure ourselves and they may be liable, or that we will be troublesome tenants because of our mobility issues. All of these misconceptions stem from a general lack of awareness and understanding of disabilities. We are not that fragile and as for mobility issues, it was about communication. After clearing up the misconceptions and communicating my needs, which were reasonable, like handicap parking, they were less worried. "To increase the accessibility of opportunities for youth with disabilities, she recommends that ASEAN leaders "provide more funding for digital upskilling for the disabled. With disabilities, a lot of doors are shut for us in terms of conventional work. But with the digitalisation of businesses nowadays, what we need is just the opportunity to enter digital entrepreneurship. Digital courses can open a lot of doors for youth with disabilities."

A person's disability is not the defining factor of their identity. Having a disability does not automatically mean that the individual is incapable. In fact, people with disabilities have continuously contributed towards the overall growth of the community. Nevertheless, people with disabilities are often held back by the absence of an enabling environment that can maximise their development to reach their potential. It is therefore crucial that the ASEAN Member States provide access to education, health, employment, and social services equitably by recognising the different needs of persons with disabilities and creating policies that ensure the provision of reasonable accommodations so that persons with disabilities are not systematically excluded from any of all the aforementioned services.

The Youth Collective Statement (2021) by the AYF highlighted seven (7) thematic concerns, namely peace, politics, and democracy; decent work and unemployment; comprehensive sexuality education and access to sexual and reproductive health and

rights; youth network and organisations; freedom of expression and right to information; rights of migrants; and the climate emergency. In achieving their mission, they called on ASEAN/government leaders, civil societies, NGOs, CSOs, the private sector, and youths in the region to act on these concerns so as to secure the future of all youths across the region. The young people of South-East Asia are willing to cooperate in promising a future where empathy, respect, individuality, and inclusivity stands as principal foundations for building better communities within ASEAN.

The full statement can be found at:

<https://aseanyouthforum.org/yycs2021/#:~:text=December%2027%2C%202021%3A%20AYF%20Secretariat%20and%20Child%20Rights,on%20Human%20Rights%20and%20all%20of%20its%20representatives>

Indicator	Description	Source
Access to Electricity	Percentage of the population with access to electricity	World Bank
Access to Sanitation	Percentage of the population with access to sanitation	World Bank
Proportion of Women in Managerial Positions	Proportion of females in the total number of persons employed in managerial positions	UNDESA Statistics Division
Gender Parity in Literacy	Gender Parity in Literacy	UNESCO and Global YDI
Disability Supports	Proportion of population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit, by sex (%)	UN DESA Statistics Division

The COVID pandemic has had significant implications for gender equality and inclusion, both during the recession and in the subsequent recovery.<sup>99</sup> Gender parity in education, employment, and civic participation have been given higher priorities in more recent years through the SDGs.<sup>100</sup>

ASEAN is currently one of the most dynamic regions in the world where Women's economic participation in the region has increased, evidenced by the fact that more and more women are graduating from university and entering the workforce. However, leadership at the top of companies still lacks gender diversity.<sup>101</sup> Advancing gender diversity requires a combination of country- and company-level initiatives. A number of drivers are thought to be emerging towards a more gender-diverse agenda, such as the presence of activist stakeholders, foreign investors disseminating global best practices, and a diverse client base.<sup>102</sup>

99 Alon, T., Doepke, M., Olmstead-Rumsey, J., Tertilt, M., 2020, The Impact of COVID-19 on Gender Equity, Available at: [https://www.nber.org/system/files/working\\_papers/w26947/w26947.pdf](https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w26947/w26947.pdf)

100 UN Women, SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs/sdg-5-gender-equality>

101 IFC. (2019). Board Gender Diversity in ASEAN. Retrieved from [https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics\\_ext\\_content/ifc\\_external\\_corporate\\_site/ifc+cg/resources/guidelines\\_reviews+and+case+studies/board+gender+diversity+in+asean](https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/ifc+cg/resources/guidelines_reviews+and+case+studies/board+gender+diversity+in+asean)

102 IFC. (2019). Board Gender Diversity in ASEAN. Retrieved from [https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics\\_ext\\_content/ifc\\_external\\_corporate\\_site/ifc+cg/resources/guidelines\\_reviews+and+case+studies/board+gender+diversity+in+asean](https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/ifc+cg/resources/guidelines_reviews+and+case+studies/board+gender+diversity+in+asean)

Women around the world earn on average 77 percent of what men earn.<sup>103</sup> Globally, the average distance completed to parity is at 68 percent, a step back compared to 2020 (-0.6 percentage points). These figures are mainly driven by a decline in the performance of large countries. On its current trajectory, it will now take 135.6 years to close the gender gap worldwide.<sup>104</sup>

For every 100 men in leadership positions at the managerial level and above globally, there are fewer than 40 women in positions of a similar level. In Asia Pacific, the ratio falls to around 25 women for every 100 men. The average ratio of women to men in leadership positions in the Southeast Asian region is at 46 to 100. Overall, the level of women in leadership positions is low throughout the region, with the exception of the Philippines.<sup>105</sup> ASEAN has seen its percentage of women in senior management going up from 28 to 35 percent.<sup>106</sup>

Studies have shown that women spend nearly three times as many hours as men on unpaid housework and caregiving in every region.<sup>107</sup> Unpaid care and domestic work include both direct care tasks, such as care for children, older, or sick persons or persons with a disability.<sup>108</sup> The Addressing Unpaid Care Work in ASEAN report finds that factoring in the heavier burden and gender gap in unpaid care and domestic work that has greatly affected women's ability to engage in labour markets and aggravated time poverty for women is a crucial step towards bolstering women's economic empowerment in the region.<sup>109</sup> Improving economic marginalisation means that more young people are lifted out of extreme poverty, resulting in greater opportunities for economic security and inclusion.<sup>110</sup> The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these inequalities, therefore making women central to the pandemic recovery process.<sup>111</sup>

Rural youth face barriers to migration, education, access to land, farm technology, and financial services.<sup>112</sup> While poverty rates have been declining, it does persist in the region's rural areas.<sup>113</sup> The multiple challenges faced by young people are exacerbated in rural areas, impacting health, employment, and education. <sup>114</sup> Infrastructure remains another area where an urban-regional divide can be seen, from roads, water, and sanitation through to digital technologies.<sup>115</sup> The digital divide can be narrowed by stimulating the development of internet infrastructure to enable adequate internet access and improve digital literacy, particularly for young people in rural areas and disadvantaged communities such as ethnic minorities and indigenous people.<sup>116</sup> Positive outcomes can be seen where gender-diverse people have online access equal to their peers.<sup>117</sup>

103 ILO: Women at work: Trends 2016 (Geneva, 2016).

104 WEF. (2021). Global gender gap report 2021. Insight report. World Economic Forum.

105 The ASEAN Post Team. (20 January 2019). Making Women Leaders The Norm. <https://www.google.com/amp/s/theaseanpost.com/article/making-women-leaders-norm%3famp>

106 Toe, D. (2020, March 9). women in leadership positions.HRM Asia. <https://hrmasia.com/asean-sees-more-women-in-leadership>

107 ILO, 2018, Care work and care jobs for the future of decent work, [https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS\\_633135/lang-en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_633135/lang-en/index.htm)

108 Addressing Unpaid Care Work in ASEAN: ESCAP and ASEAN report, 2021. <https://www.unescap.org/kp/2021/addressing-unpaid-care-work-asean>

109 Addressing Unpaid Care Work in ASEAN: ESCAP and ASEAN report, 2021. <https://www.unescap.org/kp/2021/addressing-unpaid-care-work-asean>

110 The 2020 Global Youth Development Index, available at: <https://youth-development-index.thecommonwealth.org>

111 Addressing Unpaid Care Work in ASEAN: ESCAP and ASEAN report, 2021. <https://www.unescap.org/kp/2021/addressing-unpaid-care-work-asean>

112 Briones, R. (2019). Investing in rural youth in the Asia and the Pacific region. IFAD Research Series 58 [Internet]. Rome (IT): International Fund for Agricultural Development;[cited 2020 Sep 8].

113 ASEAN, Rural Development and Poverty Eradication, <https://asean.org/our-communities/asean-socio-cultural-community/rural-development-and-poverty-eradication>

114 ASEAN, Rural Development and Poverty Eradication, <https://asean.org/our-communities/asean-socio-cultural-community/rural-development-and-poverty-eradication>

115 Infrastructure Asia, ASIA Panel Discussion-Future of Infrastructure <https://www.infrastructureasia.org/Insights/ASIA-Panel-Discussion-Future-of-Infrastructure>

116 Youth of Southeast Asia, <https://aseanyouthforum.org/yycs2021>

117 Youth of Southeast Asia, <https://aseanyouthforum.org/yycs2021>

## 3.6 Safety and Security

The Safety and Security Domain seeks to gauge the personal and societal safety of young people. This is a relatively new domain for YDIs, having been included for the first time in the Global YDI in 2020.<sup>122</sup>

Crime and violence by individuals is one of the most detrimental and costly social problems in society.<sup>123</sup> Determining and addressing factors that lead to violence during adolescence can prevent a lifetime of criminal behaviour.<sup>124</sup> Individual perceptions of life satisfaction and access to employment are two factors significantly influencing the rate of violence in young people.<sup>125</sup>

An important aspect of safety is the protection of children from any phenomenon that may hinder their mental and physical development, such as child labour, child marriage, and the consumption of drugs.<sup>126</sup> ASEAN countries have passed laws prohibiting marriage before the age of 18.<sup>127</sup> While progress has been made in reducing traditional child marriage in some South Asian countries, the prevalence of early marriage and/or unions has not declined significantly in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.<sup>128</sup>

Many employees intentionally abuse the young worker's rights and subsequently expose them to brutal exploitation.<sup>129</sup> Youth continue to be vulnerable to exploitation through child trafficking.<sup>130</sup> Despite the commitments to address the issue, there is yet to be sufficient tangible actions.<sup>131</sup> Further actions are needed to ensure psychological support and formal identification of victims, followed up with economic empowerment, employment opportunities, and social inclusion.<sup>132</sup> According to the Global Slavery Index, 4 ASEAN countries (Cambodia, Myanmar, Brunei Darussalam, and Thailand) are amongst the top 10 Asian nations with the greatest number of people working under conditions of extreme exploitation.<sup>133</sup>

The United Nations Security Council recognises the important and productive role that young people can play in the maintenance and promotion of international peacebuilding, and on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December, 2015, it adopted resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security.<sup>134</sup> Young people make special contributions to peacebuilding such as engaging their peers, working at a community level, sustaining dialogue when others have lost hope, and bridging divides in polarised contexts. Additionally, when youth engage in peacebuilding, they learn to value it, they learn civic skills, and they often keep working to sustain peace throughout their lifetime.<sup>135</sup>

ASEAN's policy framework towards advancing the rights of disabled people started with the Bali Declaration on the Enhancement of the Role and Participation of Persons with Disabilities in 2011, and continued with the recent ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025.<sup>118</sup> An important milestone in the struggle for disability rights in the international community was reflected by the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its optional protocol in 2006.<sup>119</sup>

ASEAN established the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in 2009. In 2019, ASEAN celebrated AICHR's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which should have been an opportunity to evaluate the progress of human rights promotion and protection in the region, including disability rights.<sup>120</sup> In 2018, ASEAN leaders agreed to adopt the ASEAN Enabling Master plan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.<sup>121</sup>

118 Md Tah, I. H., & Abdul Nasir, M. N. (2020). ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Lessons for Malaysia. In Charting a Sustainable Future of ASEAN in Business and Social Sciences (pp. 253-263). Springer, Singapore.

119 ABD AZIZ, S. N., & BASIR, S. M. (2019). Unlocking the ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism in Achieving a Regional Human Rights System. The Evolution of the ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism, 18.

120 ABD AZIZ, S. N., & BASIR, S. M. (2019). Unlocking the ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism in Achieving a Regional Human Rights System. The Evolution of the ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism, 18.

121 ABD AZIZ, S. N., & BASIR, S. M. (2019). Unlocking the ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism in Achieving a Regional Human Rights System. The Evolution of the ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism, 18.

122 The 2020 Global Youth Development Index, available at: <https://youth-development-index.thecommonwealth.org/>

123 Hanniball, K.B., Viljoen, J.L., Shaffer, C.S., Bhatt, G., Tweed, R., Aknin, L.B., Gagnon, N., Douglas, K.S. and Dooley, S., 2021. The role of life satisfaction in predicting youth violence and offending: a prospective examination. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 36(11-12), pp.5501-5529.

124 Hanniball, K.B., Viljoen, J.L., Shaffer, C.S., Bhatt, G., Tweed, R., Aknin, L.B., Gagnon, N., Douglas, K.S. and Dooley, S., 2021. The role of life satisfaction in predicting youth violence and offending: a prospective examination. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 36(11-12), pp.5501-5529.

125 Hanniball, K.B., Viljoen, J.L., Shaffer, C.S., Bhatt, G., Tweed, R., Aknin, L.B., Gagnon, N., Douglas, K.S. and Dooley, S., 2021. The role of life satisfaction in predicting youth violence and offending: a prospective examination. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 36(11-12), pp.5501-5529.

126 UNICEF, 2021, Children's Rights to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment in the ASEAN Region, <https://www.unicef.org/eap/reports/childrens-rights-safe-clean-healthy-and-sustainable-environment-asean-region>

127 UNFPA, 2021, My Body is My Body, My Life is My Life: Sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people in Asia and the Pacific, <https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/en/publications/my-body-my-body-my-life-my-life-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-young-people>

128 UNFPA, 2021, My Body is My Body, My Life is My Life: Sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people in Asia and the Pacific, <https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/en/publications/my-body-my-body-my-life-my-life-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-young-people>

129 StudyCorgi. (2022, March 21). Employment and Working Conditions: Youth Exploitation, <https://studycorgi.com/employment-youth-exploitation/>

130 Rafferty, Y., 2021. The identification, recovery, and reintegration of victims of child trafficking within ASEAN: an exploratory study of knowledge gaps and emerging challenges. *Journal of human trafficking*, 7(2), pp.145-167.

131 Rafferty, Y., 2021. The identification, recovery, and reintegration of victims of child trafficking within ASEAN: an exploratory study of knowledge gaps and emerging challenges. *Journal of human trafficking*, 7(2), pp.145-167.

132 Rafferty, Y., 2021. The identification, recovery, and reintegration of victims of child trafficking within ASEAN: an exploratory study of knowledge gaps and emerging challenges. *Journal of human trafficking*, 7(2), pp.145-167.

133 Suphanchaimat, R., Pudpong, N., & Tangcharoensathien, V. (2017). Extreme exploitation in Southeast Asia waters: Challenges in progressing towards universal health coverage for migrant workers. *PLoS medicine*, 14(11), e1002441.

134 ASEAN Regional Forum (2021): Joint Statement on promoting the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/asean-regional-forum-joint-statement-promoting-youth-peace-and-security-agenda\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/asean-regional-forum-joint-statement-promoting-youth-peace-and-security-agenda_en)

135 Global Coalition on Youth, Peace, and Security (2022) "Implementing the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda at Country-level: A Guide for Public Officials". New York: Office of the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth.

# MY STORY

## UNOY-UNITED NETWORK OF YOUNG PEACE BUILDERS



United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY) is a global network of 130+ youth peace organisations from around 70 countries. UNOY works to strengthen youth participation in peacebuilding by advocating and supporting the capacity development of its member organisations and young people.

In early 2021, UNOY set up a Youth Advocacy Team in Asia (AsiaYAT) with the support of the UNFPA Asia

Pacific. AsiaYAT offers a collaborative space for young peacebuilders and youth-led peacebuilding organisations in Asia, equipping them with the competencies to have an enhanced role in national and regional peace and security discourse. At first, 8 representatives from 7 youth-led organisations from 5 countries joined the AsiaYAT core committee to design this initiative over a period of two months. Then, a total of 15 young people (7 male, 8 female), including representatives of youth-led organisations, from 8 countries of South and Southeast Asia joined AsiaYAT, with ages ranging between 22-29.

In its first year, AsiaYAT members collaboratively analysed the context, identified youth-peacebuilding advocacy priorities, and developed an advocacy strategy and action plan. Collectively, their engagement included 6 advocacy missions and representational speaking opportunities on YPS, drafting articles on youth-led peacebuilding, developing advocacy materials in local/ national languages, translating existing advocacy material into local languages (a total of 34 resources were translated into 11 languages), and organising awareness-raising sessions/ webinars /campaigns. This year, with 13 members from 7 countries, AsiaYAT is working on national advocacy missions, bringing different stakeholders together on the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) agenda, and building national YPS teams and coalitions.

A deterrent to participation in violent extremism among youths in ASEAN may be a way of empowering youth through poverty eradication, strengthening the rule of law, social development, promoting gender equality and human rights, as well as inclusive economic growth.<sup>136</sup> The regional framework and resulting ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2019-2025) provides the structure by which to implement, monitor, and evaluate progress towards the mitigation and reduction in ASM.<sup>137</sup> There are currently 213 million youths (15-34 years) in ASEAN countries, constituting the largest-ever cohort of ASEAN youth. An enormous potential is emerging from this demographic regarding ideas and innovations to prevent violent extremism and conflict, as well as to help shape a more peaceful and secure future.<sup>138</sup>

136 ASEAN, 2021, Joint Statement on Promoting the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda at the ASEAN Regional Forum, <https://aseanregionalforum.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Adopted-Joint-Statement-to-Promote-the-YPS-Agenda-at-the-ARF.pdf>

137 ASEAN, 2019, The Work Plan of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2019-2025), Available: <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Bali-Work-Plan-Narrative-and-Matrix-adopted-27November2019-1.pdf>

138 ASEAN Regional Forum (2021): Joint Statement on promoting the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda. [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/asean-regional-forum-joint-statement-promoting-youth-peace-and-security-agenda\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/asean-regional-forum-joint-statement-promoting-youth-peace-and-security-agenda_en)

During the 2021 Occasion of the 28<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN Member States adopted several recommendations, which can be found at [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/asean-regional-forum-joint-statement-promoting-youth-peace-and-security-agenda\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/asean-regional-forum-joint-statement-promoting-youth-peace-and-security-agenda_en).

These included:

- Ways to increase inclusive representation of youth, including youth-led organisations, in the prevention and resolution of conflict, as well as in peacebuilding and sustaining peace.
- Awareness of the Youth, Peace, and Security agenda among policymakers as well as the general public.
- Supporting youth in developing and participating in international, regional, sub-regional, national, and local networks.
- Media and information literacy among youths to enhance digital and critical thinking skills and encourage effective measures.
- Policies for, and with the involvement of, youth that positively and meaningfully contribute to conflict prevention, peaceful settlement of disputes, peacebuilding, and sustaining peace.
- Appropriate measures to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of young survivors of armed conflict, including those with disabilities, and survivors of all forms of violence, sexual exploitation, and abuse perpetrated in armed conflict situations.
- ASEAN-led mechanisms and entities, including the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation, external partners, and other international and regional organisations as well as UN mechanisms to support the implementation of the Youth, Peace, and Security agenda.<sup>139</sup>

Low self-esteem, drug and alcohol abuse, low religiosity, and minimal parenting are identified as the policy priorities for influencing sexual deviance and loss of safety among ASEAN youth.<sup>140</sup> Theft of property within ASEAN countries has been found to be motivated primarily by poverty and unemployment.<sup>141</sup> Young people engaged in education and employment are better able to contribute to society.<sup>142</sup>

139 ASEAN Regional Forum (2021): Joint Statement on promoting the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda. [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/asean-regional-forum-joint-statement-promoting-youth-peace-and-security-agenda\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/asean-regional-forum-joint-statement-promoting-youth-peace-and-security-agenda_en)

140 Kamaluddin, M.R., Chendirasagaram, K., Mey, L.S., Ibrahim, F., Rathakrishnan, B., Singh, S.S.B., Nasir, N.C.M., Muda, A.T., Hinduan, Z.R., Mokhtar, D.M.M. and Ab Rahman, Z., 2021. Psychosocial Factors Underlying Sexual Deviance Among Adolescents in ASEAN: a Systematic Review.

141 Rungrsisawat, S., Jernsittiparsert, K. and Thanetpaksapong, S., 2019. Do the crime and the socioeconomic strain affect the economic growth? A case of an emerging ASEAN economy. *Journal of Security & Sustainability Issues*, 9(2).

142 Rungrsisawat, S., Jernsittiparsert, K. and Thanetpaksapong, S., 2019. Do the crime and the socioeconomic strain affect the economic growth? A case of an emerging ASEAN economy. *Journal of Security & Sustainability Issues*, 9(2).



The ASEAN region experiences more immigration than other regions of the world.<sup>143</sup> Migration creates new opportunities for youth and contributes to economic development.<sup>144</sup> Climate change as a contributor to increased migration leaves ASEAN youth vulnerable as they move across borders and from regional to urban centres.<sup>145</sup> Recognising human rights issues and the development of regional policy frameworks can create safer pathways to opportunity for immigrant and displaced youth in ASEAN.<sup>146</sup>

Natural disasters can impact safety in a number of ways for individuals and communities. The significant role of youth in environmental action has been recognised by the AMS. ASEAN Leaders declared the 25<sup>th</sup> of November as the ASEAN Youth in Climate Action and Disaster Resilience Day. Youth and climate change are among the priorities of the ASEAN Working Group on Environmental Education, which was established to promote environmental protection through effective environmental education and awareness-raising programmes.<sup>147</sup> Using their voices, ASEAN youth have been actively advocating for bolder action to address environmental issues, including climate change in ASEAN.<sup>148</sup>

ASEAN countries such as Myanmar, the Philippines, Viet Nam, and Thailand were in the top 10 most affected by extreme climate events during 1999–2018.<sup>149</sup> The following underlying factors are responsible for high climate change vulnerability in the ASEAN region. (i) High level of extreme poverty in the region (ii) High dependency of national economies and societies on sectors that are directly affected by climate change, i.e. agriculture and other natural resources (iii) Pre-existing stress suffered by the region due to disaster loss and damage, including from droughts, typhoons, and floods (iv) Regional and global integration with implications for the globalisation of local risks through global supply chains and transboundary rivers (v) Extensive coastline with numerous coastal cities and highly concentrated economic activities in coastal areas (vi) High propensity of migration within the region (vii) High deforestation in parts of ASEAN, with negative implications for local resilience and environmental feedback effects. The region is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts due to a variety of factors including high levels of poverty in some countries, high dependency on climate-sensitive sectors for livelihoods, long coastlines, existence of multiple natural hazards.<sup>150</sup>

The progress made in Climate Change Adaption and Disaster Risk Reduction at the national level in many ASEAN Member States is very closely linked and promoted by regional cooperation efforts. The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community is one of the important enabling factors for enhanced regional cooperation on climate change in the region.<sup>151</sup>

143 Tubakovic, T., 2019. The failure of regional refugee protection and responsibility sharing: Policy neglect in the EU and ASEAN. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 28(2), pp.183-209.

144 Pickering, S. and Powell, R., State of evidence: Migration, a positive driver for development. Migration displacement and briefing note series III. Oxfam-Monash Partnership.

145 Pickering, S. and Powell, R., State of evidence: Migration, a positive driver for development. Migration displacement and briefing note series III. Oxfam-Monash Partnership.

146 Pickering, S. and Powell, R., State of evidence: Migration, a positive driver for development. Migration displacement and briefing note series III. Oxfam-Monash Partnership.

147 The-ASEAN-Magazine-Issue-5-September-2020 (1). <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/The-ASEAN-Magazine-Issue-5-September-2020.pdf>

148 The-ASEAN-Magazine-Issue-5-September-2020 (1). <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/The-ASEAN-Magazine-Issue-5-September-2020.pdf>

149 Global Climate Risk Index 2021, <https://www.germanwatch.org/en/cr>

150 The-ASEAN-Magazine-Issue-5-September-2020 (1). <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/The-ASEAN-Magazine-Issue-5-September-2020.pdf>

151 The-ASEAN-Magazine-Issue-5-September-2020 (1). <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/The-ASEAN-Magazine-Issue-5-September-2020.pdf>

# MY STORY

## YOUTH-TECH: AN INTERGENERATIONAL COLLABORATION FOR PEACE

— ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR)



Young people have always been at the forefront of progress and innovation. This is indeed the case in the ASEAN countries. More often than not, such progress needs to be balanced with guidance and direction. This is where intergenerational collaboration should take place.

In November 2018, more than four hundred (400) youths participated in the Opening Plenary Session of the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR) Youth Conference. The theme was Building Unity and Common Understanding in Countering Intolerance and Violent Extremism. The objective was to involve young people in bringing peace and reconciliation to the region. During the Conference, participants were given the opportunity to discuss and learn from experts in the field of counterterrorism, counter-intolerance, culture and arts, and information communication and technology (ICT). The output was an “ASEAN Youth Declaration on Peace and Tolerance”, along with a Plan of Action (POA) to implement the declaration. The actions not only focused on “digitally enabling youth” and developing ASEAN youth-led narratives on peace and tolerance on social media platforms, but also on empowering ASEAN youths with ICT literacy, including programming and social media.

But why ICT? Or why social media? The first ASEAN Youth Development Index indicated that there were 18.2-82.1 youth internet subscribers per 100 persons in 2016. A publication by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) identified young people as the most active users of ICT.<sup>152</sup> The rise of social media has shifted their lifestyle and priorities. With more than 40 million people in ASEAN going online in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the role of young people in maximising the use of technology has become even more significant. Moreover, a 2020 survey by the Indonesian Counterterrorism Coordination Forum and National Agency for the Prevention of Terrorism shows that during the pandemic, impact of radicalisation was high, particularly amongst Generation Z (Gen-Z), millennials, and urban youth. Therefore, the safe use of the internet (including social media) amongst the young people is extremely fundamental and crucial. This is where the ASEAN-IPR comes in.

The ASEAN-IPR, launched in 2012 by the ASEAN Leaders, has been mandated to be ASEAN’s institution for research activities on peace, conflict management, and conflict resolution. In taking-up such a mandate, the Institute took over the following functions: (i) undertaking research studies; (ii) capacity building; (iii) building a pool of expertise and support for ASEAN bodies; (iv) becoming a knowledge hub by establishing linkages/network with like-minded institutions; and (v) disseminating information. In addition, the Institute is assigned to be one of the implementing entities of the ten action lines as mentioned in the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint 2025. The action lines include the call to “intensify the involvement of all members of the community, including youth, in activities relevant to the promotion of the culture of peace and moderation...”. Within the ASEAN architecture, this makes the ASEAN-IPR a platform to ensure inclusivity of all stakeholders – whether coming from government, civil society, youth groups, women, academes, etc. – to contribute, learn, cooperate, and collaborate on peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the region through ASEAN-led mechanisms.

The Institute’s establishment comes from the notion of positive peace – not only based on the absence of conflict or war, but also sustainable investment in development and institutions, as well as societal attitudes that cultivate peace, which is reflected in its motto of Forging and Fostering Peace. The Institute’s

152 International Telecommunication Union, Measuring the Information Society (2013). [https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/publications/mis2013/MIS2013\\_without\\_Annex\\_4.pdf](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/publications/mis2013/MIS2013_without_Annex_4.pdf)

mandate and functions, as well as the APSC Blueprint 2025 action lines, helped form its strategic objectives, which were then translated to its Three-year Work Plans.

Pursuant to the 2018 POA of the Youth Declaration, the ASEAN-IPR, spearheaded by Indonesia, initiated a project entitled “Youth-Tech: Utilising technology as an instrument of peace”. The project, which was supported by the ASEAN-Republic of Korea (ROK) Cooperation Funds (AKCF), aimed to convene a Workshop and Training where participants would undergo training on the use of advanced technology and understand the impact it would have on society. Moreover, participants would also be trained on how to overcome challenges/issues such as the urgency to combat hoaxes/disinformation/misinformation, as well as cyber security issues that have the potential to provoke conflicts in the region. As an output, the project will generate a Training Module entitled “Youth and Digital Technology for Peace”, developed through two Expert Meetings (coming from the fields of peace, ICT, or youth, representing ASEAN Member States and the ROK).

Prior to the project, the ASEAN-IPR also convened a webinar in the form of its Discussion Series in August 2021 with the theme “Youth as Agents of Peace – utilising digital platforms for narratives of peace”. Leading up to the Youth-Tech Project, the Webinar brought together the Chair of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Youth (SOMY), a representative of the ASEAN Foundation, as well as a youth representative to discuss and share best practices for youth projects relating to peace on the digital platform and barriers to youth involvement in peace processes and intergenerational collaboration. One of the most standout points generated from the Webinar was intergenerational trust-building and subsequent collaboration in peace processes. There is a stigma and neglect from the older generation, as they may view peace differently. Thus, prior to such collaboration, building understanding and trust (including how each generation thinks and works) is an essential key step. For the younger generation, a significant portion of their efforts and/or contribution are done through ICT.

Due to the pandemic, most of the Workshop and Training was done virtually. The Workshop and Training, held from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup> of November, 2021, provided participants with step-by-step capacity building in technology and peace – taking the Training Module into action. The Workshop part – in plenary combined three elements: youth, peace, and technology. In the peace dimension, the youth become instrumental in the prevention and countering of radicalism and

violent extremism. It is also important for the youth to know and understand the ever-growing non-traditional security challenges such as human trafficking, drug trafficking, climate change, and environment. The ICT facet encouraged the utilisation of technology to spread messages of peace and counter incitements of hate and fake news. Participants in the Workshop also took part in an interactive activity where they had to make decisions based on videos of different hypothetical scenarios related to the young people’s experiences on digital platforms. The Training portion was done in an interactive and participate format. It provided participants with an avenue to connect with other ASEAN youths, expand their network, and develop capacity in creating peace narratives and/or initiatives using ICT – such as peace campaign design and/or capacity-building initiatives using digital platforms in their community. Trainers explained several issues related to digital malice, such as cybercrime, cyberbullying, hate speech, and hoaxes/fake news. In the interactive portion, participants were invited to share their experiences and discuss ideas and lessons learned to prevent the aforementioned issues.

Following the Workshop and Training Sessions, the Training Module went through another round of review before it was finalised. This Training Module is envisioned to be the main reference point for the ASEAN-IPR to convene a regularised annual training of the same nature and topic – with room for improvement every time the Workshop and Training is convened.

As was the case for so many activities in the past couple of years, restrictions from the pandemic continue to be the project’s main challenge. With participants coming from 10 ASEAN Member States, issues related to online activities (such as internet connection; short attention span/commitment/focus of some participants) would be one consideration for improvement in convening a future Workshop and Training for Youth-Tech. With the situation improving in most ASEAN Member States, it is also hoped that face-to-face formats could be convened in the future – which would enrich the dynamics of the Workshop and Training and provide opportunities to network in person.

The Youth-Tech project has been an exceptional manifestation of inter-generational collaboration in peacebuilding and sustaining peace for ASEAN. In addition to many other initiatives, namely in the aspects of business, education, and technology, an inter-generational collaboration on peace is instrumental for ASEAN’s community-building process. Thus, the ASEAN-IPR stands ready to be the platform for this very purpose.

## 3.7 ASEAN Values and Identity

The design ASEAN Awareness, Values, and Identity Domain followed the first iteration of the ASEAN YDI, culminating in a survey of young people across the region.

Young people are important stakeholders in fostering the ASEAN Identity; an identity which can be nurtured and developed as an innovative, creative, entrepreneurial, and proactive member of the international community.<sup>153</sup> Ideas of ASEAN Identity and an ASEAN Community must dovetail with the young peoples’ sense of their own national identity. These ideas must offer a framework for each youth, so that their unique and diverse nations can thrive and maintain autonomy in an increasingly competitive, interconnected, and ever-changing world.<sup>154</sup>

Youth learn about ASEAN primarily through national school systems, national media, the internet, and social media. Awareness can be enhanced by promoting ASEAN content in school curricula and through national mass media (especially television) and social media.<sup>155</sup> Beyond that, young people are more adept at networking with their peers, locally and across the ASEAN region, with networking being increasingly relevant to their lives.<sup>156</sup> With this comes the natural integration of youth from various backgrounds, languages, and cultures.<sup>157</sup> Educators have an opportunity to address networking within the school and tertiary curriculum, and to look at the diversity that comes with networking as well as to identify the benefits that can be leveraged.<sup>158</sup>

While, in general, economic cooperation issues were rated most important by students, the social and cultural aspects of ASEAN were of greatest prominence to youth, followed by ASEAN’s economic aspects, and, finally, its political and security aspects. For the most part, the ASEAN youth value being part of a socially and culturally diverse region. The emphasis on ASEAN relevance and pride is detailed in “The Narrative of ASEAN Identity”.<sup>159</sup>

Awareness, Values, and Identity are not strongly correlated. It may be beneficial to separate Awareness from Values and Identity, which should merge into a Values-Oriented Identity Index. ASEAN stakeholders must think about Awareness, Values, and Identity, but separately.<sup>160</sup>

153 Baviera, A. and Maramis, L., 2017. Building ASEAN Community: Political-Security and Socio-cultural Reflections. Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia.

154 ASEAN Secretariat, 2021. Understanding how young people see ASEAN: ASEAN Awareness, Values and Identity (Brief Version), pp. 46.

155 ASEAN Secretariat, 2021. Understanding how young people see ASEAN: ASEAN Awareness, Values and Identity (Brief Version), pp. 46.

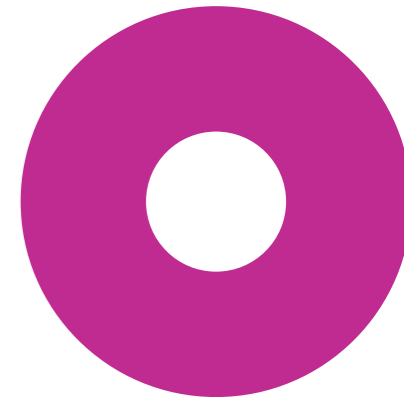
156 Baviera, A. and Maramis, L., 2017. Building ASEAN Community: Political-Security and Socio-cultural Reflections. Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia.

157 Baviera, A. and Maramis, L., 2017. Building ASEAN Community: Political-Security and Socio-cultural Reflections. Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia.

158 Baviera, A. and Maramis, L., 2017. Building ASEAN Community: Political-Security and Socio-cultural Reflections. Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia.

159 ASEAN Secretariat, 2021. Understanding how young people see ASEAN: ASEAN Awareness, Values and Identity (Brief Version), pp. 46.

160 ASEAN Secretariat, 2021. Understanding how young people see ASEAN: ASEAN Awareness, Values and Identity (Brief Version), pp. 47.





## 3.8 Digital and Media Citizenship

While digital and Media Citizenship has not been included as a Domain in this iteration of the ASEAN YDI, it has been deemed an important topic and one to watch over the coming years as more data becomes available.

Digital literacy empowers youth with the knowledge and skills to participate in various sectors of society.<sup>161</sup> Digital literacy can be defined as the ability and awareness to access, critically evaluate, manage, navigate digital devices and types of information in order to build new knowledge, communicate with others, participate in constructive social interactions, and synthesise digital information.<sup>162</sup> Literacy also includes the ability to discover and assess the truth of information from different sources including images, text, and video from sources such as the media and government.<sup>163</sup>

In AMS, education plays a vital role in developing essential skills in technology, providing the opportunity to participate in the regional and global economy, leading to increased economic development.<sup>164</sup> Digital literacy increases access to financial services and promotes small businesses, leading to improved welfare of households.<sup>165</sup> There is not a significant difference in digital literacy between ASEAN countries, with Singapore showing the highest levels and Cambodia the lowest.<sup>166</sup> Digitalisation has accelerated during the pandemic, with youth playing a critical role in educating others in new digital skills.<sup>167</sup> The digital market, which has increased threefold between 2018 and 2021, provides young women and mothers greater access to employment.<sup>168</sup>

Political participation by youth occurs increasingly through digital forms of communication.<sup>169</sup> Youth, in a case study of Malaysia, have been found to self-regulate the content of online communication, striking a balance between free speech and seeking to avoid bullying or loss of reputation.<sup>170</sup> Forms of suppression on free speech of youth online through surveillance programmes have been found to weaken the ability of government to listen to citizens and secure re-election.<sup>171</sup>

ASEAN youth are some of the most engaged internet users globally, and with this comes the emerging risk of being targeted by cyber security threats for sexual exploitation and bullying.<sup>172</sup> A review of policy frameworks for internet safety found a need for greater legal safeguards between ASEAN countries to increase cyber safety for youth.<sup>173</sup>

161 Kusumastuti, A. and Nuryani, A.F., 2020. Digital Literacy Levels in ASEAN (Comparative Study on ASEAN Countries).

162 Kusumastuti, A. and Nuryani, A.F., 2020. Digital Literacy Levels in ASEAN (Comparative Study on ASEAN Countries).

163 Kusumastuti, A. and Nuryani, A.F., 2020. Digital Literacy Levels in ASEAN (Comparative Study on ASEAN Countries).

164 Maneejuk, P. and Yamaka, W., 2021. The Impact of Higher Education on Economic Growth in ASEAN-5 Countries. *Sustainability*, 13(2), p.520.

165 Tjahjadi, A.M., 2018. Assessment Role of Youth in Financial Inclusion: ASEAN Context. *Jurnal Studi Pemuda*, 7(1), pp.59-63.

166 Kusumastuti, A. and Nuryani, A.F., 2020. Digital Literacy Levels in ASEAN (Comparative Study on ASEAN Countries).

167 World Economic Forum, Insight Report October 2021, ASEAN Digital Generation Report: Pathway to ASEAN's inclusive digital transformation and recovery, Available: [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_ASEAN\\_Digital\\_Generation\\_2021.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_ASEAN_Digital_Generation_2021.pdf)

168 UN Women, 2021, ASEAN Gender Outlook, Achieving the SDGs for all and leaving no woman or girl behind, [https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/ASEAN/ASEAN%20Gender%20Outlook\\_final.pdf](https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/ASEAN/ASEAN%20Gender%20Outlook_final.pdf)

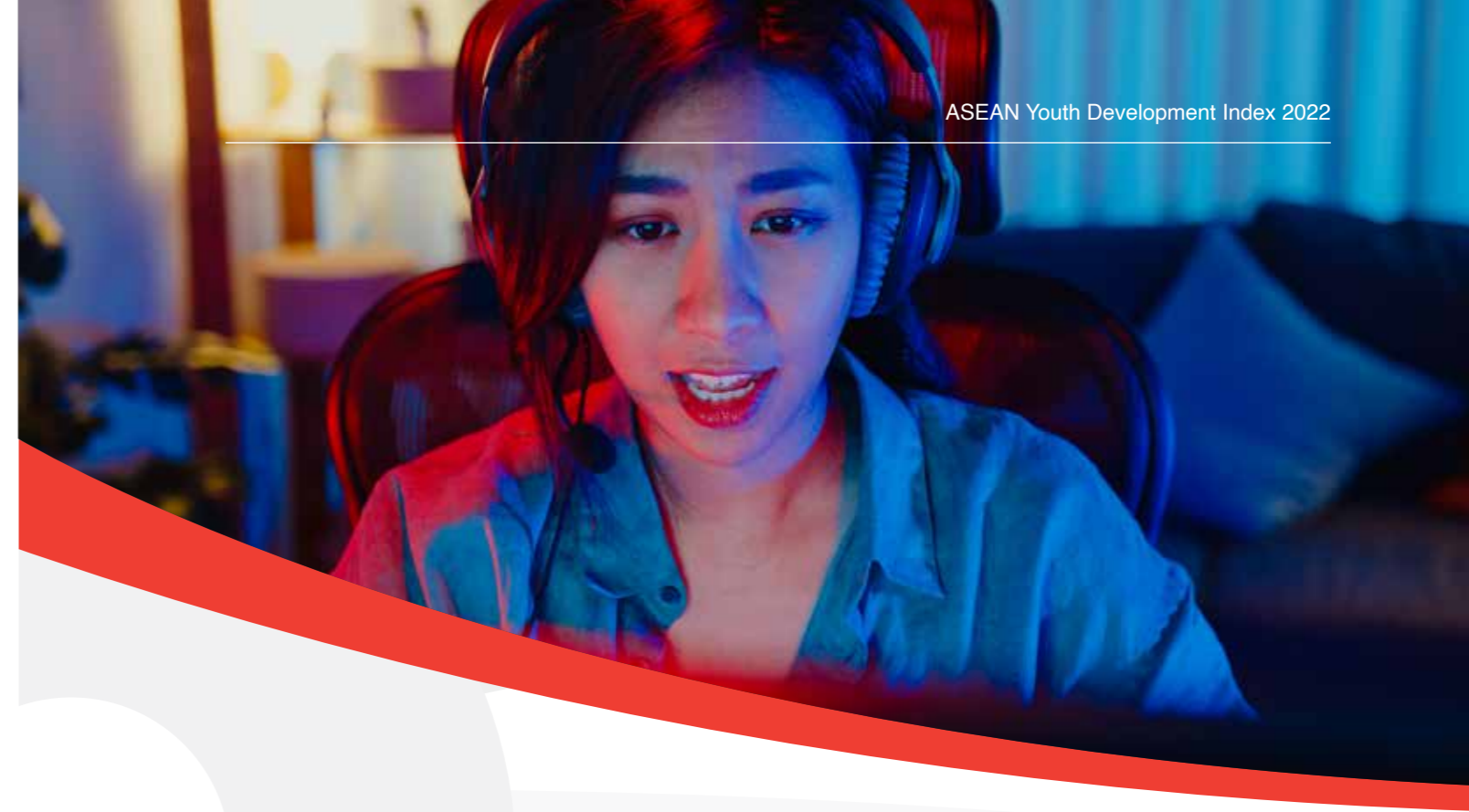
169 Johns, A., 2021. "Are We Becoming the Kind of Nation That Just Blocks Out All Criticism?": Negotiating the Gap Between Digital Citizenship Education and Young People's Everyday Digital Citizenship Practices in Malaysia. *International Journal of Communication*.

170 Johns, A., 2021. "Are We Becoming the Kind of Nation That Just Blocks Out All Criticism?": Negotiating the Gap Between Digital Citizenship Education and Young People's Everyday Digital Citizenship Practices in Malaysia. *International Journal of Communication*.

171 Johns, A., 2021. "Are We Becoming the Kind of Nation That Just Blocks Out All Criticism?": Negotiating the Gap Between Digital Citizenship Education and Young People's Everyday Digital Citizenship Practices in Malaysia. *International Journal of Communication*.

172 Rahamathulla, M., 2021. Cyber safety of children in the association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region: a critical review of legal frameworks and policy implications. *International journal on child maltreatment: research, policy and practice*, pp.1-26.

173 Rahamathulla, M., 2021. Cyber safety of children in the association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region: a critical review of legal frameworks and policy implications. *International journal on child maltreatment: research, policy and practice*, pp.1-26.



High media literacy can be defined as the ability to search and verify content, analyse messages within the content, and the ability to construct messages and participate in engaging with the content.<sup>174</sup> Empowering youth to understand media content, whether it be social media or other forms of broadcast media, requires a whole-of-society approach, whereby government regulation, sound policy, and the primary influence of family each play a part.<sup>175</sup> The emphasis ought to be less on censorship and more on equipping young people with the skills and knowledge to be discerning with media content.<sup>176</sup>

174 Kusumastuti, A. and Nuryani, A.F., 2020. Digital Literacy Levels in ASEAN (Comparative Study on ASEAN Countries).

175 Dhamanitayakul, C., 2019. Conceptualizing Digital Citizenship for Digital Natives in Thailand. *Journal of Communication Arts Review*, 23(3), pp.60-73.

176 Dhamanitayakul, C., 2019. Conceptualizing Digital Citizenship for Digital Natives in Thailand. *Journal of Communication Arts Review*, 23(3), pp.60-73.

# MY STORY

## SOCIAL MEDIA'S IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

— Ms. Alleine Nicole Namuco  
Presidential Communications Operations  
Office of the Philippines



The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 imposed a drastic shift in people's daily activities. Working and learning environments demanded quick and innovative means to deliver outputs. Work-from-home setups were implemented while modular and online classes were introduced to students. This change has increased the usage of social networking sites. In the Philippines, for instance, based on the 2021 Statista report, the number of Facebook users ballooned to 76 million in 2020 from 68 million in 2019. This does not even include the emergence of new platforms such as TikTok. Due to this shift, various contents are now more accessible, and exposure can go unmonitored.

Consumption of content from social media can have a direct effect on the mental health of young people. While there are some contents published for educational reasons, there are also others which appeal to a person's desire to "belong", and these are trends that the young people can easily imitate to feel that they are a part of a "community." This is one of the effects of media dependency. Although scientific in nature, media dependency is based on the uses and the Gratification theory, where consumers rely on media to fulfill their needs. But when the need for validation, self-value, and sense of belongingness is what we seek on social media, then dependency can lead to unhealthy consequences.

To have a deeper understanding of the purpose of social media and its effects on the Philippine youth, the researcher conducted a survey that gathered feedback from 49 respondents across all regions of the Philippines. Respondents were between 13-30 years of age, from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, and all active users of social networking sites, with Facebook being the most used platform.

When asked about the main purposes of social media in their lives, respondents generally mentioned communication. However, depending on the age bracket, additional reasons were expressed. Those aged 13-19 mentioned education as their primary reason; for respondents aged 20-25, entertainment was the biggest reason, while information on current affairs was a big reason for the age groups 20-25 and 26-30. Leaning a little closer to questions on the effects of social media on our respondents, both positive and negative impacts were asked. Positive impacts include being able to communicate with colleagues and family who are far, and entertainment when taking breaks in between classes or work. For the younger respondents, feeling that they belong is seen as a positive impact. Negative impacts, however, include poor time management and procrastination - a sentiment expressed across all three age brackets. Physical health problems caused by lack of sleep were also mentioned by respondents aged 26-30.

While reviewing feedback from the surveys, the researcher noticed effects on how the youth valued their achievements. One respondent, aged 26, mentioned effects on their self-esteem due to expectations they feel they need to meet: "It makes you feel less of a person (for) not achieving something because of all of the things that you see on social media."

Respondents in their early 20s mentioned cross-sectional effects. The re-occurring comparison between their personal achievements, insensitive comments online, and cyberbullying impact their mental health the most. A 21-year-old respondent shared "I encounter insecurities because of negative views or perspectives of other people that may seem toxic," while another respondent said, "It tends to make me feel insecure about my looks sometimes and I can have the tendency to envy their success when I shouldn't feel that way." Another respondent, 20 years old, said: "It pressures you to achieve something that others already did." Regarding comments on social media, one respondent specified "anxieties and depression" which was further elaborated by another respondent who said that "social

media is depressing, really. You can come up with political, social, and personal posts that can make me happy, sad, (or) angry, and sometimes, owing (to) things that can stress us, it can even push me to build a personal, uncontrolled temper." The amount of reliance on social media evidently puts a substantial amount of people at risk of anxiety, envy, mental and physical stress over posts they see online.

To cope with the negativity experienced in social media, respondents generally take a break from social media. "Social media detox" was mentioned repeatedly, followed by several methods of distraction like going through other websites, listening to music, and watching videos. Some channel distraction through physical activities, and only two were able to mention talking to someone about their experiences.

Lastly, participants are asked how positive emotions can be encouraged in social media. The themes can be divided into three categories: Self, Community, and Policies.

Under actions that can be taken on a personal level, a lot of the respondents practise being cautious about the content that they follow and share. Self-awareness and mindfulness are also being practised by the respondents. Two respondents shared: "Accept that everyone has their own pace in life in terms of success and be aware that what we usually see on social media are the good things in life, but, actually, everyone has their own problems to face." Another respondent expressed "Learn how to detach yourself from social media if it already affects you. Try to unlearn some

things that you get from these platforms because most of them are unreliable". On a community level, education was encouraged, while in terms of policies, a respondent mentioned lobbying for better regulation of social media sites.

While the methods suggested by our respondents are viable, social media's reach continues to grow and it is undeniable that there is a need for action that **prioritises** a healthier online environment. When we look at the methods suggested, the users did mention distraction, but that was still within the internet (rather than through physical interaction). On the contrary, people should try to improve relationships outside of the internet and find people who they feel safe talking to about anxieties and ill feelings. That is the type of "belongingness" individuals should strive for. Young people could try to use this method, along with putting in effort to become part of the community. Access to education and awareness on how to safely use social media as well as laws that are set in place to protect us and our mental health should also be provided. Media and information literacy initiatives, such as the ASEAN #cyberREADI and RISE ASEAN (Right Information Saves and Empowers ASEAN) which seek to promote cyber wellness and make the youth resilient to online negativities, should be carried on and built on to reach a wider youth audience in the region. The youth as primary consumers of media content should also be **front and centre** in the creation of relevant development plans and policies so that even more than directly targeting problems that affect them, we also create sustainable and inclusive solutions for all.

# 04

## CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS



The second iteration of the ASEAN YDI expands on the first, utilising learnings both from youth development within the region and also from YDIs globally. ASEAN witnessed an overall improvement in its YDI at both the regional level and the national or Member State level. Cambodia showed the greatest YDI improvement in the period 2013-2022. The good performance in the region can be attributed to the ownership and commitment of all ASEAN Member States toward the enhancement of the lives of young people in the region.

While ASEAN is performing well in many aspects of youth development, there are areas where there are opportunities for greater progression. For some of the key priority areas pertaining to young people, including education, equity, inclusion, security, and safety, there were quite a number of Member States that did not have data publicly available. It is hoped that data will be made available in subsequent years so that it can be used in future iterations of the ASEAN YDI.

This ASEAN YDI will not be comparable to the first iteration, the global YDI, or any national YDIs in the region, but instead provides a decade of longitudinal data for comparison over time and within and between countries.

The main opportunities for improvement at the Member States' level can be considered as follows:

- Brunei Darussalam may benefit from targeted policies on Graduation Tertiary, Mental Disorder, and Disaster Risk Reduction as well as Employment and Opportunity. Employment and Opportunity was affected by the Labour Force Participation, which dropped from 0.29 to 0.20 from 2013 to 2022 and scored low on NEET and Youth Unemployment.
- Cambodia may benefit from targeted policies on Disaster Risk Reduction, Adolescent Fertility, Financial Institution Account Rate, Volunteered Time, and the entire Education and Skills Domain.
- Indonesia may benefit from targeted policies on Severe Disability Rate, National Youth Policy, Digital Natives, and Child Marriage.
- Lao PDR may benefit from targeted policies on Severe Disability Rate, Adolescent Fertility, Child Marriage, National youth Policy, and Educational Attainment Rate.
- Malaysia may benefit from targeted policies on Graduation Tertiary, Youth Labour Force Participation, STI, and Women in Managerial Positions.
- Myanmar may benefit from targeted policies on Disaster Risk Reduction, Life Expectancy, Severe Disability Rate, Digital Natives, and National Youth Policy.
- The Philippines may benefit from targeted policies on Interpersonal Violence, Severe Disability Rate, Youth Labour Force Participation, Digital Natives, and Life Expectancy.
- Singapore may benefit from targeted policies on National Youth Policy, Youth Labour Force Participation, Women in Managerial Positions, and Gender Parity in Literacy.
- Thailand may benefit from targeted policies on Access to Sanitation, STI, Youth Labour Force Participation, Youth Mortality, Volunteered Time, and Child Marriage.
- Viet Nam may benefit from targeted policies on Substance Use Disorders, STI, Women in Managerial Positions, Volunteered Time, Graduation Tertiary, and Gender Parity in Literacy.

# APPENDIX A

# METHODOLOGY



The Commonwealth (2020) defines youth development in the Global YDI as ‘enhancing the status of young people, empowering them to build on their competencies and capabilities for life. It will enable young people to contribute and benefit from a politically stable, economically viable, and legally supportive environment, ensuring their full participation as active citizens in their countries.’

The methodology to develop and populate the ASEAN YDI has been designed in line with other prominent global indicators, and substantial effort has been made to use the best existing data. However, the major challenge to developing a harmonised YDI is in attempting to overcome the paucity of consistent and comprehensive data across the diverse AMS.

## A1. The Lack of Data and Imputation Methods

The issue of low availability for current or historical data has been a factor in several of the methodological decisions made, from what indicators to include to how to calculate the final scores. There are many empirical and statistical techniques that can be employed to deal with these missing data issues when creating a composite index. Improved coverage and consistency in collections and dissemination will increase the use of data collected as indicators in future ASEAN YDIs.

In using primarily hot/cold deck and trend imputation methods, the ASEAN YDI used the best possible data without an overly complex methodology. Hot deck is assigning missing data the value of a ‘similar’ data point and observed historical data used to impute data. In calculating Domain and final scores, each indicator was weighted in terms of its relative importance to the other indicators. Below, in Table 1, is an overview of the methods available for use in the ASEAN YDI.

**Table 1.**

Statistical imputation methods

Source: Adapted from The Commonwealth (2016).<sup>177</sup>

Imputation Method	Description	Application in YDI
Hot Deck Imputation	Assigning missing data the value of a “similar” data point	The YDI uses this approach when it assigns certain missing indicators the value of the region in which the division is located.
Substitution	Replacing missing data with other unselected units in a sample	This is not applicable in the YDI because all available data is used in some way.
Cold Deck Imputation	Replacing the missing value with a value from another source	The YDI uses this either when it uses the most recent data point in a series as the current data point or uses additional divisional statistics to fill in gaps.
Unconditional Mean Imputation	Replacing missing data with sample means	This has not been used in the YDI across indicators because of the diverse nature of the divisions. It was also not used across domains because averaging over different indicators implies assumptions about interrelatedness.
Regression Imputation	Correlating combinations of indicators to imputed missing values	With some potential indicators and five domains, no simple way could be devised to reliably impute data across the YDI.
Expected Minimisation Imputation	Using a maximum likelihood iterative approach to impute data	This was not used due to the diversity of countries and indicators (see Unconditional Mean Substitution).
Matching Quartiles	Imputing data from observed historical trends	As development indicators are slow moving, regression was generally not seen to add value to the single imputation methods.
Multiple Imputation	Using a Monte Carlo Simulation approach to determine final “robust” results	This approach in its most basic form when lower and upper bounds of a division’s YDI score can be determined.

Main methods used were:

- Where only one year of data was available, it has been held constant across all years of the index.
- Where multiple data points were available, the line of best fit was used to impute missing years.
- Where no country data was available, “like” countries from the 2020 Global YDI Domains were used.
- Where no “like” country existed, the ASEAN average was used.

<sup>177</sup> Commonwealth Secretariat (2016). Global Youth Development Index and Report 2016. London.

Below is the list of indicators used and which countries were used as “like” countries based on the Global YDI. Please note that where there is no “like” country, the ASEAN average was used.

Domain	Indicator	Country with no Data	Country Used
 Education & Skills	Youth Literacy Rate	-	-
	Gross Graduation Tertiary	Cambodia	Myanmar
	-	Malaysia	Viet Nam
	-	Philippines	Indonesia
	Mean Years of Schooling	Lao PDR	Cambodia
	Educational Attainment Rate	Lao PDR	Cambodia
	Digital Natives	-	-
 Health & Well-being	Youth Mortality	-	-
	Mental Disorders	-	-
	Life Expectancy at age 15	-	-
	STIs including HIV	-	-
	YLL substance use disorders	-	-
 Employment & Opportunity	Unemployment	-	-
	Labour Force Participation	-	-
	NEET	-	-
	Financial Institution Account	Brunei Darussalam	ASEAN Average
	Adolescent Fertility Rate	-	-
 Participation & Engagement	Volunteered Time	-	-
	National Youth Policy	-	-
	Voter Turnout Rates	Brunei Darussalam	ASEAN Average
	Internet Usage	Indonesia	Philippines
 Equity & Inclusion	Access to Electricity	-	-
	Access to Sanitation	Brunei Darussalam	Singapore
	-	Cambodia	Myanmar
	-	Indonesia	Malaysia
	-	Viet Nam	Malaysia
	Women in Managerial Positions	-	-
	Gender Parity in Literacy	-	-
Severe Disability Rate	-	-	
 Security & Safety	Child Marriage	Brunei Darussalam	Viet Nam
	-	Malaysia	Viet Nam
	YLL_Interpersonal Violence	-	-
	Poverty_headcount	Cambodia	Philippines
	-	Singapore	Malaysia
	-	Brunei Darussalam	Malaysia
	YLL_Conflict and Terrorism	-	-
Disaster Risk Reduction	-	-	
 ASEAN Values	AVI Index	-	-

## A2. Standardised Data Processes (Normalising Data)

The full range of datasets for all indicators were normalised so that they could be added together in a statistically valid way and weighted so that they attribute the correct amount to the overall index score.

There are many methods of normalising or standardising data. The simple methods of banding or ranking are often effective and require less statistical knowledge. Banding data in the case of the ASEAN YDI is a way of dealing with comparing otherwise incongruous information. It takes each indicator and scales it to a score between 0 and 1 relative to the whole dataset. To do this, appropriate minimum and maximum values for the dataset are decided so that anything below the minimum is assigned zero and anything above the maximum is assigned 1, and everything else is scaled evenly between the two.

**Table 2.**  
Data overview

Domains (i)	Indicators (j)			
	Indicator <sub>1</sub>	Indicator <sub>2</sub>	...	Indicator <sub>n</sub>
Domain <sub>1</sub>	y <sub>11</sub>	y <sub>12</sub>	...	y <sub>1n</sub>
Domain <sub>2</sub>	y <sub>21</sub>	y <sub>22</sub>	...	y <sub>2n</sub>
...	...	...	...	...
Domain <sub>m</sub>	y <sub>m1</sub>	y <sub>m2</sub>	...	y <sub>mn</sub>

When developing a YDI, it is important to consider the nature of the data, as this has positive meaning if the data has positive correlation between the indicator and the meaning of youth development; it has negative meaning if the data has negative correlation between the indicator and the meaning of youth development. Every single indicator has to be standardised by using Equation One for positive data and Equation Two for negative data.

### Equation 1: Banding Equation

$$Banded_j = \frac{Indicator\ Value\ y_j \sum Minimum\ Cut\ Off_j}{Maximum\ Cut\ Off_j \sum Minimum\ Cut\ Off_j}$$

The fact that Cultural Participation is banded this way indicates the implicit assumption that more years of schooling is inherently better for youth development. However, higher levels of some indicators, such as mortality rates, represent a less desirable case for youth. In such cases, the banded score is reversed and is calculated by Equation 2.

### Equation 2: Reverse Banded Equation

$$Reverse\ Banded_j = 1 - \frac{Indicator\ Value\ y_j \sum Minimum\ Cut\ Off_j}{Maximum\ Cut\ Off_j \sum Minimum\ Cut\ Off_j}$$

Once a banded score has been calculated for each indicator, the Domain score is calculated in a similar fashion as is done for indicators and adding the weights. The score for the *j*-th Domain is calculated by Equation 3.

**Equation 3: Domain Score Calculation**

$$Domain\ Score_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n Weighted\ Indicators_j \square Banded\ Score_j}{\sum_{i=1}^n Weighted\ Indicators_j}$$

Once a Domain score has been calculated, the ASEAN YDI index is calculated in a similar fashion as is done for Domains and adding the weights. The score for ASEAN YDI is the average of the Domain scores. The score of ASEAN YDI for data is segregation by country using Equation 4 and the ASEAN score is an average of all countries.

**Equation 4: Final ASEAN YDI Score Calculation**

$$YDI\ Score = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^m Weighted\ Domain_j \square Domain\ Score_j}{\sum_{j=1}^m Weighted\ Domain_j}$$

### A3. Indicator Weighting

In calculating Domain and final scores, each indicator can be weighted in terms of its relative importance to the other indicators by using available methods. It is important to have agreement on the weights for the Domains and indicators.

The ASEAN YDI has to be measured by a suitable approach and method. Table 3 lists the Domain weightings that have been chosen by the Commonwealth for the Global YDI.<sup>178</sup> These weightings were used to inform the weighting in the first ASEAN YDI. In the 2016 Global YDI, three Domains were chosen as primary indicators as they aligned best with the Human Development paradigm of Health, Education, and Employment. ASEAN Values and Identity has been given a quarter of the weight of other Domains, as it is a single indicator with only 1 point in time to date.

178 The Commonwealth, *Youth Development Index 2016*, available at: <https://thecommonwealth.org/youthdevelopmentindex>

**Table 3.**

The weighting domain measuring YDI by the Commonwealth (2016)

Reference of YDI	Domain	% Weight
The Global YDI (2016)	Domain 1: Education	25%
	Domain 2: Health and Well-being	25%
	Domain 3: Employment	25%
	Domain 4: Political Participation	12.5%
	Domain 5: Civic Participation	12.5%

**Table 4.**

The weighting 2017 ASEAN YDI<sup>179</sup>

Reference of YDI	Domain	% Weight
The ASEAN YDI 2017	Domain 1: Education	30 %
	Domain2: Health and Well-being	30 %
	Domain3: Employment	30 %
	Domain4: Participation and Engagement	10 %

**Table 5.**

2022 weightings of ASEAN Domains

Reference of YDI	Domain	% Weight
Pakistan YDI 2020	Domain 1: Education and Skills	16%
	Domain 2: Health and Well-being	16%
	Domain 3: Employment and Opportunity	16%
	Domain 4: Participation and Engagement	16%
	Domain 5: Equity and Inclusion	16%
	Domain 6: Safety and Security	16%
	Domain 7: ASEAN Values and Identity	4%

179 UNFPA, 2017, First ASEAN Youth Development Index, [https://asean.org/storage/2017/10/ASEAN-UNFPA\\_report\\_web-final-05sep.pdf](https://asean.org/storage/2017/10/ASEAN-UNFPA_report_web-final-05sep.pdf)

# APPENDIX B

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# APPENDIX C

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