

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANTS

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE ASEAN STRATEGIC PLAN FOR INFORMATION AND MEDIA (2016-2025) AND DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW WORK PLAN

Project Title	Comprehensive Review of the ASEAN Strategic Plan for Information and Media (2016-2025) and Development of a New Work Plan
Project Identification Code	CIN/MED/23/017/REG
Responsible Office	ASEAN Secretariat
Place of Work	Home-based
Timeframe	2024-2025

I. Introduction and Objective of the Consultancy

The ASEAN Secretariat is implementing a project called “Comprehensive Review of the ASEAN Strategic Plan for Information and Media (2016-2025) and Development of a New Work Plan” (hereafter referred to as “the Project”).

The Strategic Plan for Information and Media (2016-2025) guides the regional cooperation for the information and media sector. The Plan outlines 4 key strategies, and is supported by 22 priority areas of actions that guide the programme development and implementation for the sector. In 2022, the sector has also developed and put in place the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (M&E) and a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor and track the milestones of the sector’s implementation of policy and programmes. The KPIs shall be utilised for the mid-term and end-term reporting and review of the Strategic Plan.

As the Strategic Plan for Information and Media (2016-2025) has passed its mid-term implementation, and the development of a new Work Plan to succeed the current Plan is being considered, this project seeks to embark on a comprehensive review of the regional cooperation for the information and media sector, and in relation with its key Dialogue Partners including Japan. Specifically, this project will assess the continued relevance of an intervention and the progress made towards achieving the Strategic Plan’s objectives with the view that this review serves two purposes, namely: (1) to conduct a comprehensive review of the Strategic Plan to assess how the Strategic Plan differed from its actual implementation; (2) learning from the implementation of the Strategic Plan and identifying the gaps, challenges, and opportunities, to develop a new Work Plan that takes into account of the evolving media landscape and agendas of the ASEAN Member States (AMS). Further, this exercise can provide insights on whether resources, such as human and financial capital for example, are allocated and utilised efficiently.

The objective of the consultancy is to review the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Information and Media (2016-2025) and assess its relevance, identify the gaps and shortcomings in its implementation and develop a new Work Plan when the current Plan expires in 2025. Specifically, the Project aims to:

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of the Strategic Plan to assess how the Strategic Plan differed from its actual implementation;
2. Learning from the implementation of the Strategic Plan and identifying the gaps, challenges and opportunities, develop a new Work Plan that takes into account of the evolving media landscape and agendas of the AMS.

To achieve the objectives, the Project is to be implemented within the period of 2024-2025. During the period, the Project will focus on the development of a Comprehensive Review on the Implementation of the Strategic Plan (2016-2025) and a New Work Plan by the consultant. The deliverables shall be submitted through the ASEAN Secretariat to the Senior Officials Meeting Responsible for Information (SOMRI) for consideration and endorsement. The project can be understood in two parts, where the first part involves the review and evaluation of the implementation of the existing work plan and the second part involves the development of a new work plan learning from the experiences in the implementation of the current work plan. Two workshops shall be conducted, namely, a regional consultative workshop to review the existing work plan, and a regional validation workshop to develop the new work plan.

To implement the Project, the ASEAN Secretariat seeks to recruit **a consultant/ team of consultants** who will develop the Comprehensive Review on the Implementation of the Strategic Plan (2016-2025) and the New Work Plan in consultation with the ASEAN Secretariat and SOMRI as the main focal points. All consultations will be facilitated by the ASEAN Secretariat.

In order to achieve the proposed objectives above, the consultants will:

- A. Conduct a comprehensive review of the Strategic Plan for Information and Media (2016-2025)
 1. Assess and evaluate current evidence and developments and make use of existing data, documents and reports in order to assess the efficacy in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Information and Media (2016-2025).
 2. Review current practices of governments including existing media policy frameworks, administrative structures, available statistics and related systems on media, at all levels – especially at ASEAN level, national and local levels to assess whether the current Strategic Plan is in line with national-level policies and priorities.
 3. Review the KPIs of the media sector to assess the achievements and identify gaps and challenges.
 4. Develop an appropriate data collection instrument to collect data from SOMRI and relevant ASCC sectoral bodies and other stakeholders to

assess the implementation and relevance of the Strategic Plan, as well as identify the gaps in its implementation.

5. Conduct online sessions with external intermediaries including with previous beneficiaries/participants of projects implemented under the Strategic Plan to assess the alignment of projects with the Strategic Plan and to assess the relevance of the projects implemented to its beneficiaries with a view to improve the scope of and alignment to the new Work Plan.
6. Conduct an in-person Consultative Workshop with SOMRI, relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies, and external partners to review the existing work plan and to invite views on the development of the new work plan.
7. Prepare the summary records/minutes of all meetings/workshops.
8. Develop the final draft of the Comprehensive Review Report on the Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Information and Media (2016-2025) which will include a gap analysis and an evaluation of the efficacy of its implementation.

B. Develop a new Work Plan

1. Analyse the developments in the media and information landscape while cross-referencing with the current Strategic Plan to see how the new Work Plan can be forward-looking.
2. Conduct trends, needs and gap analysis arising from analysis of national policies, and global developments especially from deliberations arising from the UNESCO, International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and other reports or policy recommendations from think tanks or organisations working in the field of media and information, among others.
3. Develop thematic studies and environmental scans to support the new Work Plan and identification of trends, opportunities, challenges and gaps that also function as evidence for the progress of the implementation of the current Strategic Plan.
4. Conduct online sessions with relevant sectoral bodies in ASEAN to identify potential cross-sectoral and inter-pillar issues in the development of the new Work Plan.
5. Develop a set of specific and targeted recommendations, and the new Work Plan.
6. Conduct an in-person Validation Workshop with SOMRI and selected external intermediaries to finalise the new Work Plan.

To achieve the objectives, the Project is to be implemented within the period of April 2024 to December 2025.

II. Expected Deliverables

The following deliverables are expected from the consultant/ team of consultants within the timeline of the project:

- (i) An inception report defining the scope and limitations, the methodology the consultant/team of consultants will be undertaking to conduct the comprehensive review;
- (ii) The Comprehensive Review of the Strategic Plan for Information and Media (2016-2025) (draft and final versions);
- (iii) Participation in all meetings;
- (iv) Summary records/minutes of meetings/ workshops;
- (v) The New Work Plan that shall include writing up the sections comprising "Introduction", "Objectives", "Key Strategies", "Proposed Actions", "Priority Areas of Actions", and "Implementation Arrangements". The envisaged new Work Plan shall also clearly define the above agreed parameters. It shall also include analysis of information and media landscape, trends, opportunities, challenges, needs and gap analyses as well as thematic studies and recommendations on how the KPIs can be updated to monitor the new Work Plan.

III. Approach to Achieve Objectives and Deliver Expected Deliverables

To achieve the objectives of this project, the consultant/ a team of consultants should undertake the following activities in close consultation with the ASEAN Secretariat:

- (i) Prepare an inception report that defines the scope and limitations, the methodology, and the proposed annotated outline of the Comprehensive Review Report;
- (ii) Compile and review secondary data including existing researches, literature and analyses of secondary data, and review various ASEAN declarations/instruments relating to information and media;
- (iii) Develop appropriate and relevant data collection instrument and document the meetings/workshops and prepare the summary records/minutes;
- (iv) Prepare the draft Comprehensive Review Report with the scope as stipulated on the project proposal, and the new Work Plan including recommendations to AMS as a whole;
- (v) Serve as resource persons at the meetings/workshops;
- (vi) Revise and finalise the Comprehensive Review Report and the new Work Plan based on substantive feedback from the ASEAN Secretariat and the AMS obtained through the meetings, and ad-referendum;
- (vii) Submit project deliverables in a timely manner;
- (viii) Closely coordinate with the ASEAN Secretariat for guidance in ensuring that the objectives of the Project are fully met and views of the AMS are adequately addressed.

IV. Indicative Contents

Chapters	Content	Remarks
Part 1	Comprehensive Review Report of the Strategic Plan for Information and Media	
1.	Introduction	Background and statement of the problem
2.	Literature and Methodology	What will be the approach in evaluating the implementation of the Strategic Plan? On what terms will the Strategic Plan be evaluated? How effective are its KPIs in measuring its implementation?
3.	Landscape Analysis	What were the developments in the information and media sector in 2015 when the Strategic Plan was developed? What are the developments in the media landscape in AMS? What are the emerging issues and trends in the information and media sector? How much of the issues and priorities have changed in the information and media sector? What are the issues foreseen to emerge and become mainstreamed that should figure prominently in ASEAN's information and media agenda in the next decade?
4.	Evaluation	Are the strategies and priority actions in the Strategic Plan relevant? How much of it is a reflection of the period when it was created? Are the aims of the Strategic Plan on track to be achieved? Does the Strategic Plan affect national policies and priorities among AMS? How? To what extent?
5.	Achievement and Gaps	What are the key achievements of the Strategic Plan? Which areas require more work? What are the identified best and good practices, what are the learnings?
6.	Conclusion	
Part II	Draft New Work Plan	
1.	Analysis	What are the current priorities of the AMS in the fields of information and media? How can we ensure that these priorities are taken into consideration in developing the new Work

		Plan? How can we ensure that the new Work Plan will be able to positively impact national policies in turn?
2.	Thematic Studies	Thematic studies and environmental scans to support the new Work Plan and identification of trends, needs and gaps that also functions as evidence for the progress of the implementation of the current Strategic Plan
3.	Proposed New Work Plan	Write-up of the New Plan that includes sections on the Introduction, Objectives, Key Strategies, Proposed Actions, Priority Areas of Actions, and Implementation Arrangements. Outlines the new set of Key Strategies, Proposed Actions, and Priority Areas of Action. What are the proposed strategic areas and priority areas of actions as well as recommendations and way forward in view of the completion of the Strategic Plans in 2025 and as informed by the thematic studies, of focus after 2025?
4.	Proposed KPIs	

V. Term and Fee for the Consultant/ Team of Consultants

The Professional Fee will be released based on the following schedule:

No	Upon Submission to the ASEAN Secretariat of the following work	Latest date of submission	Amount
1.	Inception meeting report	14 days after the Inception Meeting	20%
2.	Final draft of the Comprehensive Review of the Strategic Plan	30 days after the acceptance of the Final Draft of the Comprehensive Review of the Strategic Plan	40%
3.	Final draft of the new Work Plan	60 days after the acceptance of the Final Draft of the new Work Plan by the ASEAN Secretariat	40%

The consultant/team of consultants are required to complete the deliverables within the timeframe of the Project. ASEAN will provide written comments or approval for each deliverable within 10 working days, unless there is time extension requested by ASEAN sectoral bodies or the ASEAN Secretariat. The payment will be made in

tranches based on acceptance of satisfactory deliverables as determined by the endorsing body.

There is no restriction on the team to procure other support and resources who will assist them in their work. However, there will be no additional payment for these ancillary support and resources.

The location of the assignment will be in the country of the consultant/team of consultants, with tentatively 2 trips to Jakarta, Indonesia for the in-person meetings. The expenses for which will be covered with the following regulations:

1. One (1) in-person Consultative Workshop in Jakarta: international return airfare to Jakarta, economy class, most direct route, not exceeding USD 800; per diem allowance (inclusive of accommodation) for two days based on applicable UN DSA Rate.¹
2. One (1) in-person Validation Workshop in Jakarta: international return airfare to Jakarta, economy class, most direct route, not exceeding USD 800; per diem allowance (inclusive of accommodation) for two days based on applicable UN DSA Rate.

Travel arrangement covered by the Project is budgeted for only 1 (one) consultant or person from the team of consultants.

The payment of per diem (inclusive of accommodation) and reimbursement of airfare for the physical meetings will be paid by the ASEAN Secretariat upon the submission of original invoice and/or official receipt and other relevant documents.

The ASEAN Secretariat shall have the right to refuse any request for reimbursement by the consultants should the consultants fail to present the proper invoice, receipt or related documents as supporting materials in requesting for the reimbursable expenses.

VI. Qualifications

The consultant/team of consultants is ideally able to satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Demonstrated professional experience in research and consultancy, and in conduct and development of systematic technical reviews, including producing reports (Mandatory to provide CV and the best sample of relevant previous works);
- b. Relevant professional experience in research in the area of media and information, and/or related fields. Ideally, with demonstrated professional experience in research and/or practice in disinformation, media information and digital literacy, and information dissemination strategies (Mandatory to provide a list of all related previous works and the best sample);

¹ In the event where the consultant is based in Jakarta, per diem and travel cost to the meeting venue will not be covered.

- c. Familiar with the work of ASEAN or similar intergovernmental organisation or has experience in collaborating with international and national experts and institutions (Mandatory to provide all samples of relevant previous works);
- d. Availability to respond to urgent requests for assistance and coordination;
- e. Excellent command of spoken and written English;
- f. Excellent analytical abilities, writing, and presentation skills;
- g. Must be based in ASEAN countries.

VII. Institutional Arrangement

The consultant/team of consultants will be working under the guidance of the SOMRI in consultation with the Culture and Information Division (CID) of the ASEAN Secretariat.

The consultant/team of consultants shall report to CID who will then report the progress of the project at relevant meetings.

VIII. Duration of Service

The consultant/team of consultants will be engaged in the participation of the Consultative and Validation Workshops, as well as online sessions with relevant stakeholders to take place from April 2024 to the end of 2025. The consultancy service will only be required on an ad-hoc and intermittent basis throughout the stipulated period, and the duration may be reduced depending on the pace and desired outcomes achieved.
