

TERMS OF REFERENCE

CONSULTANT FOR THE ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY (ASCC) RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM ON FUTURE OF WORK

A. BACKGROUND

The ASEAN Leaders' Vision Statement on *A Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN* on 26 June 2020 called for concerted efforts to identify emerging challenges and opportunities to better formulate initiatives to ensure ASEAN is better positioned for the new Normal, and as we work toward developing the ASEAN Community Vision Post 2025, while taking into account ASEAN's COVID-19 exit strategy. The ASEAN Chairman's Statement of the 36th ASEAN Summit in June 2020 likewise emphasised the need to look beyond the progress and achievements, and to assess the changes on the strategic landscape of ASEAN community-building efforts and identify emerging issues that need to be taken into consideration towards 2025 and beyond.

A robust repository of information and research through proposed ASCC Research and Development Platform is expected to enable the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community to develop and implement holistic solutions will be required against the backdrop of the fast-changing and emerging challenges confronting the region. These challenges also lend greater urgency to intensify collaborative research, and embrace a greater diversity of perspectives and ideas, so that decision makers can fully understand the fault lines and underlying causes of socio-economic problems, and develop the relevant solutions.

The ASCC Research and Development Platform on Future of Work is a newly developed project aimed at addressing the concerns raised at the above-mentioned high-level regional fora. The outputs of this ASCC Research and Development Platform will contribute meaningfully to more informed decisions that ASCC sectoral bodies could take in developing and implementing initiatives. The specific research will be anchored in respective post-2020 work plans of ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM).

For this purpose, the ASEAN Secretariat invites applications from competent institutions/individuals from **ASEAN Member States** to undertake the assignment of **Consultant for the ASCC Research and Development Platform on Future of Work**.

B. OBJECTIVE AND OUTPUTS

The project aims to put in place an effective research and development framework for ASCC Sectoral Bodies that would produce deliverables in the form of (i) two flagship reports, (ii) four policy briefs, and (iii) two online forums.

For implementing the ASCC Research and Development Platform on Future of Work, the project seeks to hire a team of expert Consultant who will assist in the development and finalisation of the aforementioned series of research outputs.

The Consultant is expected to have extensive expertise and network in the key areas prioritised by the sector/s under the purview of the Labour and Civil Service Division (LCSD), particularly in labour and employment sector in the region.

C. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Consultant will be responsible in delivering the following outputs of the ASCC Research and Development Platform on the Future of Work while strictly following the project timeline:

a. Produce the Platform's two (2) Flagship Reports which are targeted at assessing current trends within the sector in ASEAN

The Consultant will produce two (2) flagship reports, focusing on major issues or current trends and gaps, within the short-to-medium term, and offer the Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM) a different perspective on the outlook of the labour sector. The flagship report will assess and monitor the current issues pertaining to the respective sectors to call for the attention of and inform the respective ASCC Sectoral Bodies of critical developments in ASEAN. The reports will focus on major issues or current trends and gaps, within the short-to-medium term, and offer SLOM different perspectives on the outlook of the sector. Each report will assess and monitor the current issues pertaining to the sector to call for the attention of and inform SLOM of critical developments in ASEAN. The report will range around 10,000 – 12,000 words (excluding annexes and references).

b. Produce the Platform's four (4) Policy Briefs which serve as “think- pieces” for the ASCC Sectoral Bodies information and consideration

The Consultant will produce four (4) policy briefs on issues of significance towards the implementation of the ASEAN Vision 2025, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025 and the sectoral work plans, respective to the work of SLOM. The policy briefs, serving as “think-pieces”, will introduce fresh perspectives on strategic long-term challenges and offer an additional layer of system thinking and analysis that complements and enhances the work of the SLOM. Topics of the policy briefs should be aligned to the findings and analysis of the flagship reports to ensure consistency of outputs. The policy brief will range around 3,000 – 5,000 words (excluding annexes and references).

c. Organise and conduct Online Forums for effective sharing of knowledge, case studies and best- practices

The Consultant, with the support of the project officer and ASEAN Secretariat, will organise two (2) online events to provide a forum for stakeholders to share knowledge, experience, and best practices on the platform topic. The platform will comprise of relevant thematic sessions with the participation of stakeholders including but not limited to policy-makers from the relevant ASCC Sectors, subject matter experts and thought leaders from all professional backgrounds and policy practitioners to inform policy decisions from the ground perspective. The Consultant will prepare substantive aspects of the forums including the preparation and finalisation of the concept note and agenda, presentations, and synthesis report, and act as a resource person/moderator for the forums. The Consultant shall also identify and contact relevant resource persons for the forums, which may include key informant interviewers for the flagship reports,

The indicative topics to be covered in the deliverables are available in **Annex A. Substantive Requirement**

D. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENT

The Consultant shall report directly to the ASCC Analysis Division and work closely with the ASCC Analysis Division as the lead division and the Labour and Civil Service Division (LCSD) of the ASEAN Secretariat as the supporting division for this project.

E. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND DATA PRIVACY

All outputs produced under this contract shall be the exclusive property of ASEAN and will be published under ASEAN copyrights. The Consultant agrees to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all organizational files and records, including usernames and passwords, which were made available or turned over by ASEAN to the Consultant. The Consultant shall also share the raw data, including interview/FGD transcript, survey/questionnaire, editable chart and graph produced and/or obtained during this project to the ASEAN Secretariat.

F. QUALIFICATIONS

The Consultant shall be a team or representative of an institution, who ideally satisfy the following criteria:

- a. A reputable think tank or consulting firm or research institute with ten (10) years of experience. The Consultant shall have expertise on labour, employment including workers with disabilities and women, human resources development, productivity, development, public policy, or other relevant fields related to the topics of flagship report and policy briefs. Expertise on ASEAN or Southeast Asian region is preferred.
- b. Extensive experience working with development management teams, organisations at national, regional or international levels, national governments in a senior management position, and have an extensive network of stakeholders in the region, preferably with previous experience in providing consultancy/advisory services for ASEAN projects and initiatives or ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) context.
- c. Ability to work harmoniously in a team environment and with diverse groups of individuals in cross-cultural environment, international settings and online-based coordination;
- d. Demonstrated sound oral and written communication skills and sound interpersonal skills, including experience in cross-cultural environment and international settings.
- e. Demonstrated commitment to collaborative work practices and to meeting deadlines in a timely manner.
- f. Proven skills in problem solving in a complex organisational environment and in work planning.
- h. Excellent command of English, written and spoken.

G. DURATION OF SERVICES

The Consultant will be engaged in the main activities as indicated which will take place from 1 July to 31 December 2024 (6 months). The proposed indicative timeline of the project, which can be further discussed with the reporting parties, is specified below:

No.	Activities	Indicative Timeline
1.	First drafts submission of the Flagship Report and Policy Briefs of Topic 2	August 2024
2.	Online Forum of Topic 2	September 2024
3.	Revised drafts submission of the Flagship Report and Policy Briefs of Topic 2	September 2024
4.	Target of endorsement of the revised drafts of Topic 2 by the ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN	October 2024
5.	First drafts submission of the Flagship Report and Policy Briefs of Topic 3	October 2024
6.	Online Forum of Topic 3	November 2024
7.	Revised drafts submission of the Flagship Report and Policy Briefs of Topic 3	November 2024
8.	Target of endorsement of the revised drafts of Topic 3 by the ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN	December 2024
9.	Project Closing	December 2024

The funding for the Consultancy project shall be obtained from the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund. Consultant service fee will be released based on the following schedule:

No.	Upon Submission to the ASEAN Secretariat of the following work	Payment Schedule	Amount
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1.	Concept note and agenda for the online forum, conduct of online forum and synthesis report for Topic 2	Upon approval of the ASEAN Secretariat of the submitted concept note and agenda prior to the online forum, completion of the online forum, and synthesis report after the online forum for Topic 2	10%
2	Flagship report, first and second policy briefs for Topic 2	Upon approval of the ASEAN Secretariat of submitted one flagship report and two policy briefs for Topic 2	40%
3.	Concept note and agenda for the online forum, conduct of online forum, and synthesis report for Topic 3	Upon approval of the ASEAN Secretariat of the submitted concept note and agenda prior to the online forum, completion of the online forum, and synthesis report after the online forum for Topic 3	10%
4.	Flagship report, and third and fourth policy briefs for Topic 3	Upon approval of the ASEAN Secretariat of the submitted flagship report and two policy briefs for Topic 3	40%

The location of the assignment will be in the country of the specialist. All meetings will be held virtually through video conferencing platform. The vendor is also expected to be easily reachable through WhatsApp and e-mail for easier communication and coordination. Coordination meetings with consultant and ASEAN Secretariat may be convened when deemed necessary.

As internal review mechanism, the ASEAN Secretariat through the ASCC Analysis Division and LCSD will provide inputs to the draft flagship reports and policy briefs and provide advice vis-a-vis the priorities of SLOM, where relevant, as well as facilitating in the dissemination of the reports and communications with SLOM and Senior Officials Committee for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (SOCA). All outputs will be extensively reviewed by ASEAN Secretariat and ASCC Sectoral Bodies through feedback and ad-referendum consultations. The outputs also may be shared with the Mission of ROK to ASEAN and the AKPMT for possible additional feedback before finalisation and publication.

H. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENT

The prospective bidder is required to submit the following:

1. Technical Proposal

Interested institutions are invited to submit an application package in English including the following documents and requirements.

- 1) Provide institution/company profile that highlights the background of the company or cover letter with summary of relevant experience for individual applicants;
- 2) Provide Curriculum Vitae (CV) for all personnel to be involved in the project that highlights the following criteria:
 - Ten (10) years of experience in consulting/advisory services with regional or international organisations. The consultant shall demonstrated extensive body of recognised research work, publications, or consultancy work utilised by international or regional institutions or national governments; Demonstrable experience and good understanding of the specific social development concerns or issues, either cross-cutting or not, in reference to the specific identified needs of the ASCC division
 - Ten (10) years of research and fieldwork experience on expertise on labour, employment including workers with disabilities and women, human resources development, productivity, development, public policy, or other relevant fields related to the topics of flagship report and policy briefs. Expertise on ASEAN or Southeast Asian region is preferred.
 - Provide a dedicated team working on this project to manage and implement the various deliverables; with the team leader have advanced

degree (Master's degree, preferably PhD) in development sector or other relevant area of expertise pertaining to labour and employment in the ASEAN region.

- Have previous experience in providing consultancy or advisory services for ASEAN projects and initiatives, experience in working with ASCC context is preferred.
- 3) Provide verifiable portfolio of previous consultancy/publications that are consistent in quality to the ToR, including a client list with three of current or past clients that can be used for reference checking. Sample of related research publications should be submitted;
 - 4) Provide clear methodology and research framework for the whole project which clearly outlines objectives and project approach, including but not limited to the methodology used for data collection;
 - 5) Provide detailed timeline of the activities with proposed deliverables within the stipulated timeframe.

2. Financial Proposal

A detailed financial proposal indicating the costs (IDR for local bidders and USD for international bidders) required for undertaking the assignment. The financial proposal should indicate a "lump sum amount" for the expected tasks specified in the terms of reference.

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