

Terms of Reference (TOR) of the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM)

I. PURPOSE

1. The ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM) was established in 1981 to foster a greater level of cooperation among ASEAN civil services. Since its establishment, the ACCSM has, and continues to be, a platform for the exchange of information, innovations and best practices in public service management in ASEAN. The ACCSM also continues to promote effective cooperation and mutual assistance in, among others, capacity building that supports the narrowing of development gaps among ASEAN Member States and contributes to the realisation of a resilient, innovative, dynamic and people-centred ASEAN as inscribed in the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its ASCC Strategic Plan. In 2010, ACCSM also sought to strengthen ties with East Asia and adopted the Luang Prabang Joint Declaration on ASEAN Plus Three Civil Service Cooperation.

II. MISSION

2. The ACCSM shall contribute to the achievement of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 by creating a trusted, innovative, and people-centred ASEAN civil service that drives responsive governance, upholds integrity and inclusivity, and strengthens regional cooperation.
3. The ACCSM will promote ASEAN collaboration in the promotion of effective and efficient civil service, public accountability, and good governance.
4. The ACCSM seeks to leverage the strengths of ASEAN Member States through:
 - i. The enhancement of existing mechanisms for networking, mutual learning and sharing of experiences among members;
 - ii. The promotion and facilitation of exchange of best practices and other public management innovations by enhancing the role of ASEAN Resource Centres (ARCs) and ASEAN Network of Public Service Training Institutes (PSTI) as providers of expertise in their respective areas of competencies;
 - iii. The establishment of supporting initiatives to help ASEAN civil service develop and adopt cutting-edge practices; and
 - iv. The implementation of various programmes on civil service matters with the support and assistance of ASEAN Dialogue Partners, other external partners, and regional/ international agencies in line with the ACCSM Framework of Strategic Partnerships.

III. OBJECTIVES

General objective:

5. To promote the role of civil service in contributing to the development of the three pillars of the ASEAN Community, namely political and security, economic and

socio-cultural, as well as the ASEAN Connectivity.

6. To achieve the overarching objectives of the ACCSM Work Plan, ASEAN Leaders' decisions relevant to the ACCSM, ASEAN declarations/statements pertaining to civil service matters, and ASCC Strategic Plan.

Specific Objectives:

7. To develop a strategic framework and provide impetus for greater collaboration through the sharing and exchange of information, experiences, and insights;
8. To deliberate and recommend common positions or understandings where appropriate, especially in preparation for international meetings relevant to civil service matters;
9. To regularly develop a five-year ACCSM Work Plan which comprises strategies and programmes/projects for mutual support and assistance among ASEAN Member States in promoting innovation, digitalisation, and productivity; enhancing competencies, ethics, and leadership in public sector; and the development of strategies for effective, efficient and inclusive civil service and good governance; and to establish supporting initiatives towards narrowing the development gap among ASEAN Member States;
10. To strengthen the existing mechanism for networking and building closer relationships as guided by the ACCSM Framework of Strategic Partnerships;
11. To strengthen the capacity of and facilitate mutual learning among ASEAN Member States;
12. To promote and facilitate adoption of best practices and public management innovations within the civil service;
13. To implement ASEAN Leaders' directives in the field of civil service;
14. To promote joint collaboration with ASEAN Dialogue Partners, other external partners, and regional/ international agencies in implementing programmes on civil service matters; and
15. To evaluate the implementation of ACCSM projects/activities in the five-year Work Plan and further identify priority areas for ACCSM cooperation as necessary.

IV. ACCSM STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION

16. The ACCSM comprises, as listed on Annex 1 of the ASEAN Charter, the ACCSM Heads of Civil Service Meeting and ACCSM Senior Officials' Meeting.
17. The ACCSM shall comprise representatives from the ministry/agency in- charge of civil service in each of the ASEAN Member States.
18. The ACCSM+3 shall comprise representatives from the ministry/agency in- charge

of civil service in each of the ASEAN Member States and Plus Three Countries.

19. The ACCSM may decide, based on consultation and consensus, to establish an ACCSM+1 mechanism at the Senior Official level and/or Heads of Civil Service level to institutionalise and sustain its cooperation with an ASEAN Dialogue Partner or other institutional cooperation mechanisms with external partners. The ACCSM+1 mechanism shall be guided by its Rules of Procedure to be endorsed by the ACCSM Heads of Civil Service Meeting.

V. CHAIRSHIP AND VICE CHAIRSHIP

20. Chairship of the ACCSM shall be rotated among ASEAN Member States in alphabetical order with a term of two years. The Vice Chair shall be the incoming Chair of the ACCSM.
21. The Chair of the ACCSM is responsible for the following duties:
 - i. Prepare the agenda for and chair the meetings of ACCSM;
 - ii. Host meetings of the ACCSM within the 2-year term of Chairship;
 - iii. Report decisions and progress of work of the ACCSM to the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Council;
 - iv. Coordinate and consult with ASEAN Member States during the times between meetings of the ACCSM, and promote the engagement of the ACCSM with other relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies;
 - v. Coordinate the implementation of projects and activities in the Work Plans of the ACCSM and ACCSM+3 in consultation with the Country Coordinators;
 - vi. Represent the ACCSM at regional and international events pertaining to civil service matters as entrusted by the ACCSM; and
 - vii. Act as the Secretariat of the ACCSM for a term of 2 years.
22. The Chair of the ACCSM is expected to represent ACCSM in relevant ASEAN Meetings, including but not limited to the following:
 - i. Coordinating Conference for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (SOC-COM);
 - ii. ASEAN Working Group on Culture of Prevention (WG-COP);
 - iii. ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Steering Committee (AGMSC);
 - iv. Coordinating Conference for the ASEAN Political-Security Community (ASCCO); and
 - v. Other events upon invitation of other ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, Dialogue Partners, other external partners, international organisations, or other parties.
23. The Vice-Chair of the ACCSM will be responsible for the duty of the Chair in representing the ACCSM in the events specified in paragraph 18 and 19, in the absence of the Chair or as delegated by the Chair.

VI. ACCSM SECRETARIAT

24. The Secretariat of the ACCSM shall be responsible for substantive, administrative, and protocol arrangements of the meetings of the ACCSM.
25. The Secretariat of the ACCSM supports the Chair in facilitating coordination and consultation with ASEAN Member States during times between meetings of the ACCSM.

VII. ASEAN SECRETARIAT

26. The ASEAN Secretariat may bring relevant issues to the attention of the ACCSM.
27. The ASEAN Secretariat shall provide the necessary secretarial support to the ACCSM, including on the following:
 - i. Support the Chair of the ACCSM in preparing agenda of the meetings;
 - ii. Support, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the ACCSM, the documentation and drafting of reports of the meetings of the ACCSM;
 - iii. Support the Secretariat of the ACCSM in hosting meetings of the ACCSM; and
 - iv. Support the Country Coordinators in the conceptualisation, implementation and evaluation of projects as well as mobilising needed resources.
 - v. Support the Chair of the ACCSM in preparing presentations for the ASEAN meetings listed on paragraph 22, as needed.

VIII. DECISION MAKING AND LINE OF REPORTING

28. Decision making in the ACCSM shall be based on consultation and consensus in accordance with the ASEAN Charter.
29. The ACCSM Senior Officials' Meeting reports to the ACCSM Heads of Civil Service Meeting.
30. The ACCSM Heads of Civil Service Meeting reports to the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Council.

IX. MEETING AND OTHER RELATED EVENTS

31. The ACCSM shall have the following regular meetings/side events, which will be hosted by the Chair of the ACCSM:

Name of Meeting	Objectives	Schedule	Level of Participation
First Year of Chairship			
Preparatory Meeting of the ACCSM	The Meeting will, among others, consider and agree upon the organisation of the ACCSM (i.e. provisional agenda for the meetings, document format and procedures, etc.) proposed by the host country.	Early part of the first year of Chairship	Senior Officials
Senior Officials' Meeting for the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM SOM)	The Meeting will review the progress and updates of the ASEAN Resource Center projects by all ASEAN Member States, presentation of concept papers of projects/ programmes identified in the Work Plan, discussion of priority area of civil service matters with Dialogue Partners and recommend additional programmes/projects for regional cooperation.	Early part of the first year of Chairship	Senior Officials
Second Year of Chairship			
Senior Officials' Meeting for the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM SOM)	The Meeting will discuss preparatory matters for the Heads of Civil Service Meeting as well as other concerns that may be raised by any ASEAN Member State.	Second part of the second year of Chairship back-to-back with the Heads of Civil Service Meeting for ACCSM	Senior Officials

Senior Officials' Meeting for the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM+3 SOM)	The Meeting is established to assist the ACCSM+3 in promoting the cooperation with the Dialogue Partners, particularly in implementing the Luang Prabang Joint Declaration on ASEAN Plus Three Civil Service Cooperation which also includes the ACCSM+3 Work Plan.	<i>Back-to-back with the ACCSM SOM or back-to-back with the ACCSM HCSM (as applicable).</i>	Senior Officials
Heads of Civil Service Meeting for the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM)	The Meeting will be a platform for ASEAN Heads of Civil Service to share information, best practices and experiences on innovations in civil services. The format of the Meeting will allow free flow of exchange of ideas. This Meeting is to be preceded by the ACCSM+3 Forum on Good Governance.	Second part of the second year of Chairship	Heads of Civil Service + Senior Officials
Heads of Civil Service Meeting for the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM+3)	The Meeting will be a platform for ASEAN+3 Heads of Civil Service to share information, best practices and experiences on innovations in civil services. The format of the Meeting will allow free flow of exchange of ideas.	<i>Back-to-back with the ACCSM+3 SOM (as applicable).</i>	Heads of Civil Service + Senior Officials

ACCSM+3 Forum on Good Governance	A One-Day Forum for sharing and learning among AMS and the Plus Three Countries. The AMS may present country/ technical papers in relation to/ support of the work plans.	<i>Back-to-back with the ACCSM SOM or back-to-back with the ACCSM HCSM (as applicable).</i>	Senior Officials Heads of Civil Service (optional)
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32. ASEAN Member State assuming ASEAN Chairship and/or ACCSM Chairship may propose the conduct of ASEAN Heads of Civil Service Retreat. ASEAN Member States may also propose the conduct of other additional Meetings as the need arises. Hosting of such Retreat or Meetings shall be on a voluntary basis.

X. SUPPORT FOR MEETINGS

33. The ASEAN Secretariat shall provide support to the Chair in the conduct of the Meetings and be the repository of reports of the ACCSM Meetings and other related events.

XI. ACCSM'S COOPERATION WITH OTHER PARTNERS

34. ACCSM may wish to expand its cooperation with ASEAN Dialogue Partners, other external partners, and other networks on a need basis by tapping their expertise to support the planned projects/activities.

35. ACCSM cooperation with other partners shall be based on the principles of ASEAN consultation, consensus, centrality and non-discrimination.

XII. APPROVAL AND AMENDMENT

36. The Terms of Reference for the ACCSM shall be adopted by the ASEAN Heads of Civil Service.

37. Any ASEAN Member State may propose amendments to the Terms of Reference. Any amendments shall be decided through consultation and adopted by the ASEAN Heads of Civil Service.
