

ASEAN Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health in the Informal Sector

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ACE	ASEAN Confederation of Employers

ASEC	ASEAN Secretariat
ASEAN-OSHNET	ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network
ALMM	ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting
AMAF	ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry
AMEM	ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting
AMME	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment
AMMin	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Minerals
AFML	ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour
ATM	ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting
ATUC	ASEAN Trade Union Council
ASCC	ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community
ALIC	ASEAN Labour Inspection Conference
ALICOM	ASEAN Labor Inspection Committee
AOSHRI	Asian Occupational Safety & Health Research Institute
APTA	Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement
APOSHO	The Asia Pacific Occupational Safety and Health Organisation
ATIGA	ASEAN Trade In Goods Agreement
AMS	ASEAN Member States
ASM	Artisanal and small-scale mining
BHR	Business and Human Rights
CPTPP	The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment Philippines
DOSH	Malaysian Department of Occupational Safety and Health
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FPRW	Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
FTAs	Free Trade Agreements
GSP	Generalised Scheme of Preferences
HRDD	Human Rights Due Diligence
IALI	International Association of Labour Inspection
IEC	Information, Education, and Communication
IPR	Izin Pertambangan Rakyat (People's Mining Permit)
LGUs	Local Government Units
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NAP-BHR	National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights
NIOSH	National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health Malaysia
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OH	Occupational Health
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
OSHC	Occupational Safety and Health Center Philippines
PAGE	UN Partnership for Action on Green Economy
PAOT	Participatory action-oriented training
RCEP	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
SMEs	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SLOM	ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting
SPFs	Social Protection Floors

TIFA	Trade and Investment Framework Agreement
TSD	Trade and Sustainable Chapter
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VZF	Vision Zero Fund
WIND	Work Improvement for Neighbourhood Development
WISCON	Work Improvement for Small Construction
WIFI	Work Improvement in the Fishing Industry
WISE	Work Improvement for Small Enterprises
WPR	Wilayah Pertambangan Rakyat (People's Mining Area)

I. INTRODUCTION

Across ASEAN Member States (AMS), the informal sector remains a critical source of livelihoods, yet it is also where the most severe deficits in occupational safety and health (OSH) persist. The informal sector is typically small-scale, dispersed, and characterised by non-waged, unorganised labour. Workers often operate outside formal employment relationships, in precarious work processes and fluid labour arrangements that fall beyond the reach of state regulation. As a result, large segments of the workforce remain unregistered, unprotected, and effectively invisible to national OSH systems and social protection schemes. Informality weakens the foundations of decent work and undermines progress towards equality and development.

Millions of workers who sustain these systems do so without the protections that underpin safe, healthy and sustainable economies. In the absence of regulatory coverage, social protection, and effective OSH measures, workers in the informal sector face daily exposure to preventable occupational risks. Their vulnerability can be further magnified by natural hazards, climate-related shocks, and human-made disasters.

Many workers in the informal sector lack the basic awareness, technical means, and financial resources required to adopt even low-cost OSH improvements. In high-risk sectors—such as small-scale mining, construction, fisheries, transport, waste picking, home-based manufacturing, and agriculture—the absence of OSH management systems, training, and supervision exposes workers to daily risks of injury, illness, and long-term health impairment. The right to a safe and healthy working environment remains distant for most informal workplaces, where survival, productivity, and income security take precedence over prevention.

The combination of high exposure to occupational hazards and low coverage of social protection places workers in informal sector in an acutely vulnerable position. Without access to health insurance, income support, or compensation mechanisms, even minor accidents can have devastating consequences for workers and their families. Women, migrant workers, older persons, and young workers are disproportionately represented in informal and hazardous activities, compounding existing inequalities. Environmental risks—heat stress, chemical exposure, unsafe equipment, poor ergonomics, and inadequate sanitation—further intensify the burden of work-related harm. Impacts of climate change can intensify the OSH risks faced by informal workers in agriculture, mining, and fishing, who are often the first and most exposed to climate-related hazards. Rising excessive heat, expanding UV radiation, more frequent extreme weather events, worsening air pollution, increased vector-borne diseases, and shifts in agrochemical use all heighten injury, illness, and mortality risks for workers who already lack adequate protections. In agriculture, heat stress, pesticide exposure, and

storms threaten health and productivity; in fishing, extreme weather, heat, and air pollution increase drowning and injury risks; and in mining, heat, dust, and unstable conditions raise the likelihood of collapses, respiratory disease, and toxic exposures¹.

ASEAN is the fifth largest economy in the world and is on track to move up to the fourth position by 2030. In addition, five AMS – Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam—are ranked among the top 30 major exporting economies of the world. On food security, Indonesia, Thailand and Viet Nam are among the world’s top 10 largest fish-producing countries. The blue economy has been critical to the prosperity of the Southeast Asian region for generations with trade in fishing and seafood-related products between AMS and countries outside the region being valued at \$13.7 billion annually². ASEAN has emerged as a major engine of global economic growth, contributing an increasingly significant share to the world economy. The region is now among the largest recipients of global Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and is deeply integrated into international production networks and supply chains, reinforcing its role as a key hub in global trade and investment flows. Despite these figures, a high prevalence of informal employment in the region weakens productivity and economic transformation.

Informality remains deeply embedded across ASEAN, accounting for a significant share of total employment and forming the backbone of livelihoods in agriculture, fisheries, mining, services and platform-mediated work. Across the ASEAN region, some 244 million workers earn their livelihoods through informal employment—nearly 79% of the entire regional workforce aged 15 and above³. This scale of informality means that decent work deficits are not the exception but the daily reality for many workers in the informal sector. Yet this widespread informality is also a major structural obstacle to achieving SDG 8 on decent work and inclusive growth. As highlighted in the Guidelines, workers in the informal sector typically operate outside labour legislation, social protection, and OSH systems, leaving millions unregistered, unprotected and effectively invisible to national institutions. These gaps weaken the foundations of decent work, hinder enforcement of labour standards, and limit progress toward safer and healthier workplaces. Persistent informality also constrains policy coherence, depresses productivity, and slows the adoption of modern OSH frameworks. Addressing these deficits is essential for advancing equitable, sustainable and rights-based labour policies across ASEAN.

While these Guidelines focus on agriculture, fisheries and mining, many of the OSH risks identified—such as exposure to environmental hazards, ergonomic strain, limited regulatory coverage and restricted access to OSH services—also arise in other informal-sector contexts, indicating that the principles and recommended measures may be relevant to a wider range of sectors.

- **OSH Issues in the ASEAN informal agriculture sector, including small-scale and community-based producers**

The informal agriculture sector—dominated by small-scale farmers, family-run plots, seasonal labourers and community-based producers, employs a large share of the region’s informal workforce, often in remote rural settings where formal OSH systems have limited reach.

Agriculture remains one of the most important sources of livelihoods across ASEAN, yet it is also one of the most hazardous sectors. Smallholder farmers, seasonal labourers, family-run agricultural units, migrant workers, and landless rural households form the backbone of agricultural production,

¹ Ensuring safety and health at work in a changing climate, Geneva: International Labour Office, 2024

² ASEAN Secretariat. First Edition ASEAN Maritime Outlook.

³ International Labour Organization. Women and men in the informal economy: a statistical picture (Geneva). 2018.

but most operate outside formal employment relationships, without contracts, social protection, or access to occupational safety and health services. This structural informality exposes millions of rural workers to preventable risks that undermine productivity, food security, and national development goals.

Informal agricultural workers face multiple and overlapping OSH hazards. Exposure to extreme heat, heavy workloads, and long hours—often intensified by climate change—contributes to dehydration, heat stress, and chronic musculoskeletal disorders. The widespread use of agrochemicals, often handled without training or protective equipment, results in acute poisoning, respiratory illness, and long-term health impacts. Unsafe machinery, unguarded tools, and rudimentary storage facilities further increase the risk of injury, particularly among older workers and young people who frequently assist in family farms.

The sector is also highly vulnerable to environmental and climate-related shocks, but most AMS have not yet integrated climate-responsive OSH measures into their national frameworks, leaving informal farmers and community-based producers exposed to escalating hazards. Floods, droughts, landslides, and vector-borne diseases disproportionately affect informal rural workers who lack insurance, early-warning systems, or resilient infrastructure. Women workers—who dominate planting, harvesting, and post-harvest processing—face additional risks linked to repetitive tasks, chemical exposure during pregnancy, and limited access to sanitation or rest facilities. Migrant workers, who play a growing role in plantation agriculture, often work in remote areas where OSH oversight is minimal and access to health services is restricted.

Institutional challenges compound these risks. Labour inspection rarely reaches dispersed rural workplaces, and OSH legislation often excludes self-employed and family workers. Training systems are fragmented, and extension services are not consistently equipped to deliver OSH guidance. As a result, preventive measures—such as safe pesticide management, ergonomic improvements, and climate-resilient work practices—remain out of reach for most informal agricultural workers.

- **OSH Issues in the ASEAN informal fisheries sector, including small-scale fisheries and aquaculture**

AMS are major global producers of fish and seafood, with some of the countries relying heavily on migrant workers in fishing and processing. The fishing sector across ASEAN is characterised by a high degree of informality, spanning small-scale artisanal fisheries, near-shore and coastal operations, and segments of distant-water and industrial fleets that rely on informal, unregistered, or subcontracted labour. This lack of formalisation increases the risk of exploitation, including excessive working hours, poor safety conditions, and inadequate social protection. It also creates significant OSH deficits⁴, exposing workers to hazardous conditions with limited protection, oversight, or access to social security systems.

In artisanal and small-scale fisheries, OSH risks stem from the use of ageing vessels, inadequate safety equipment, and limited knowledge of safe navigation and weather-related hazards. Many fishers operate without life jackets, communication devices, or emergency supplies. Capsizing, drowning, and injuries from nets, hooks, and manual handling are common. Long hours at sea, often under unpredictable weather conditions, increase fatigue and reduce the ability to respond to emergencies. The absence of training, formal registration, and structured safety protocols means that preventive measures rarely reach these communities.

⁴ ASEAN Regional Study of Labour Practices in the Fishing Sector. Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, October 2025

In informal segments of industrial and distant-water fishing, OSH risks are compounded by complex recruitment chains, informal employment arrangements, and weak enforcement of labour standards. Workers—often migrants—may board vessels without contracts, medical checks, or safety briefings. They face extreme working hours, physically demanding tasks, and exposure to hazardous machinery, slippery decks, and heavy gear. Confined living conditions, poor sanitation, and limited access to potable water contribute to health problems. Reports of excessive heat exposure, dehydration, and untreated injuries are widespread.

The lack of social protection across all segments of the informal fishing sector deepens vulnerability. Injuries, illness, or vessel accidents often result in catastrophic income loss, with no access to compensation, insurance, or medical benefits. Many incidents go unreported due to informal status, fear of retaliation, or lack of institutional channels.

Environmental and chemical hazards also play a role. Fishers may be exposed to fuel vapours, cleaning chemicals, and sun-related risks, such as heat stress and skin damage. Manual handling of heavy loads contributes to musculoskeletal disorders, while repetitive tasks increase the risk of chronic injuries.

Workers in fishing and processing industries can also face vulnerability to forced labour. Many others commonly work extremely long hours while informal fishers may be pushed into excessive overtime due to small crews, long trips, or denial of rest. Women migrant workers play a central yet overlooked role in the seafood processing industry, where low-paid, precarious and often informalized jobs expose them to heightened risks.

Addressing OSH deficits in the informal fishing sector requires integrated approaches that combine regulatory inclusion, community-based safety programmes, improved vessel safety standards, and targeted outreach to all workers in informal sector including migrant workers. Strengthening national capacities and extending OSH protections to all fishers is essential to promoting safe, decent, and dignified work across ASEAN's diverse fishing economies.

- **OSH Issues in the ASEAN informal mining sector, including artisanal and small-scale mining**

Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) is a highly diverse sector that contributes significantly to global production of minerals such as gold, platinum and certain rare earth elements. Yet from an OSH perspective, it often manifests as one of the most hazardous and least regulated forms of work. In many sites, workers in the informal mining sector operate in unstable pits, handle toxic substances, and use rudimentary tools without basic safety protections and training. This combination of high-risk tasks and minimal oversight exposes miners to severe injuries, chronic health conditions and long-term environmental hazards, underscoring the urgent need for targeted OSH interventions in ASM communities.

Informality in the mining sector, particularly in ASM creates a complex landscape of OSH risks that are often severe, persistent, and structurally embedded. Unlike large-scale industrial mining, informal and ASM operations typically function outside formal regulatory frameworks, labour protections, and state oversight. In Indonesia, the mining sector is deeply shaped by informality, with an estimated 3.6 million artisanal and small-scale miners working without permits across

extraction, processing, and transport⁵—forming one of the world’s largest and most hazardous informal mining labour forces. This absence of legal recognition and institutional support results in hazardous working environments where preventive systems, training, and monitoring mechanisms are largely absent.

A defining characteristic of informality in mining is the lack of OSH management systems. Most informal mining sites operate without risk assessments, standard operating procedures, emergency response plans, or designated safety personnel. Workers rely on rudimentary tools and improvised techniques, increasing exposure to accidents such as tunnel collapses, landslides, rock falls, and equipment failures. In underground ASM, poorly supported shafts and inadequate ventilation heighten the risks of entrapment, oxygen depletion, and exposure to toxic gases.

Chemical and environmental hazards are also widespread. In gold ASM, the use of mercury for amalgamation remains common, often handled without gloves, masks, or containment systems. Mercury vapour inhalation and environmental contamination pose long-term health risks for miners, their families, and surrounding communities. In other minerals, exposure to silica dust, heavy metals, and noise contributes to chronic respiratory diseases, hearing loss, and cumulative health damage. Waterlogged pits, unstable tailings, and unregulated waste disposal further compound environmental and OSH risks.

Informal mining is also characterised by high levels of physical strain and ergonomic hazards. Workers frequently carry heavy loads, perform repetitive manual tasks, and work in awkward postures for extended periods. Long working hours, driven by low and unpredictable incomes, increase fatigue and the likelihood of accidents. The absence of rest areas, sanitation facilities, and clean water exacerbates health vulnerabilities.

Social and labour dimensions intensify OSH deficits. Informal miners often lack training, awareness, and access to protective equipment, while poverty and livelihood insecurity push workers to accept unsafe conditions. Women and children, who are frequently involved in ASM, face additional risks due to gendered task allocation, limited access to PPE designed for their bodies, and heightened exposure to toxic substances in processing activities.

Finally, the lack of social protection—including health insurance, compensation schemes, and income support—means that injuries and illnesses have devastating consequences. Without formal employment status, miners have limited access to medical care and no mechanisms for reporting accidents or claiming benefits. This invisibility perpetuates a cycle in which hazardous work remains unaddressed and unregulated.

Addressing OSH in informal and ASM mining therefore requires integrated strategies that combine regulatory inclusion, community-based safety initiatives, capacity building, and practical, low-cost interventions tailored to the realities of informal mining communities.

- **OSH Issues in digital labour platforms**

ASEAN’s traditional informal sector—mining, construction, and agriculture—and the emerging platform-economy informal workforce share a core set of regulatory and OSH challenges rooted in their exclusion from formal labour systems. The common thread is that both groups operate outside standard employment relationships, leaving workers without legal protections, social security

⁵ Delve country profile. Indonesia Artisanal and small-scale mining sector. 2020.

coverage, and access to OSH services. Ultimately, both conventional and emerging forms of informal sector remain unprotected, invisible, and excluded from national OSH systems—highlighting the need for regulatory innovation, expanded coverage, and stronger institutional capacity.

Platform-mediated work has rapidly become one of the most dynamic and visible forms of informal employment in the ASEAN region, reshaping how labour is organised, accessed and governed. While digital platforms have expanded income opportunities for millions of workers, they have also generated a new frontier of informality characterised by unclear employment relationships, limited social protection, and significant occupational safety and health risks.

Across ASEAN, platform work—such as ride-hailing, delivery services, domestic services, micro-tasking and online freelancing—continues to expand rapidly. Platform work across ASEAN has expanded at a pace that now draws in millions of workers, even though no regional statistical system yet captures the full scale of this labour force.⁶ Yet most platform workers operate informally, without employment contracts, social protection, or OSH coverage. Evidence from global OSH research shows that platform workers face higher exposure to hazards, limited access to protective equipment, and minimal regulatory oversight⁷. This pattern applies strongly to ASEAN's platform workforce, which is dominated by young workers, migrants and women—groups already over-represented in hazardous informal work. These workers operate outside formal labour arrangements, leaving them in a regulatory blind spot where OSH legislation does not apply, and where data on injuries and illnesses is fragmented or absent.

In transport and delivery platforms—now a dominant form of informal work in Indonesia, Thailand, Viet Nam, and the Philippines—workers face high rates of road-traffic injuries, exposure to extreme weather, and pressure to work at unsafe speeds due to algorithmic incentives. These risks are compounded by the absence of employer-provided OSH training, insurance, or rest-time protections. Similar vulnerabilities affect platform-based domestic and care workers, who often work in private households where ergonomic hazards, chemical exposure, and unsafe environments are common. Online freelancers and micro-task workers face psychosocial risks linked to unstable income, long hours, and customer-rating systems that create constant pressure.

The impacts are significant. Injury and illness rates are higher among these workers, yet access to healthcare and compensation is severely limited. Income insecurity increases the likelihood that workers will accept unsafe tasks or work excessive hours. The absence of reliable OSH data on platform work further constrains evidence-based policymaking, reinforcing regulatory gaps.

In many ASEAN economies, platform work is treated as an extension of informal self-employment, leaving workers responsible for their own safety equipment, medical costs and income protection. Labour inspectorates have limited mandates to intervene in non-standard work arrangements, and OSH systems remain designed around traditional, formal workplaces. Social protection schemes often exclude self-employed and gig workers, while voluntary contribution mechanisms remain under-utilised due to low and unstable earnings. Legislation governing this sector is expected to expand rapidly, as governments increasingly recognise that this fast-growing segment of the labour market requires clear rules, protections, and rights to keep pace with its scale and impact.

⁶ ASEAN Employment Outlook. The Quest for Decent Work in Platform Economy: Issues, Opportunities and Ways Forward. 2023.

⁷ Institution of Occupational Safety and Health. A platform for success. How we can build a better future in the gig economy. Leicester, April 2025.

Despite novel reforms in some AMS such as Singapore⁸ that demonstrate a regulatory model for formalising protections in the platform economy—addressing OSH, social protection and labour rights simultaneously. Malaysia’s Gig Workers Act 2025 (Act 872)—which officially took effect on 31 March 2026—marks a major shift in how the country regulates platform labour. The law creates a full legal framework for more than 1.6 million gig workers, setting out clear rules on service agreements, minimum contractual protections, transparent payment practices, and access to dispute-resolution mechanisms. Despite this, the reality for the majority of AMS is markedly different. Most countries still lack dedicated legislation for platform work, and existing labour laws do not recognise platform workers as employees or even as a distinct worker category. As a result, millions of ride-hailing drivers, delivery riders, domestic workers and online freelancers continue to operate in legal grey zones where OSH protections, social-security coverage and collective-representation rights do not apply. The adoption of the Decent Work in the Platform Economy Convention, 2026 (No. 193) provides AMS with a timely opportunity to strengthen national frameworks and extend OSH protections to workers in the informal sector. Convention No. 193 establishes clear international standards to ensure that platform workers enjoy fundamental principles and rights at work, including the right to a safe and healthy working environment. It is recommended that AMS promote a shared-responsibility framework that clearly allocates OSH duties among platform operators, workers and the relevant authorities. Such a framework should prioritise coordinated action to address key risks in platform-mediated work.

II. DEFINITIONS AND COVERAGE

Glossary of key terms with definitions

This subsection provides clear and concise definitions of the main worker groups that make up the informal sector in ASEAN, establishing a shared understanding of their key characteristics. By outlining categories, the section clarifies the diversity of informal work and the specific conditions under which these workers operate.

- Home-Based Workers⁹ — Workers who produce goods or services from their homes or adjacent premises, often using their own equipment and bearing production risks without formal employment contracts.
- Self-employed workers¹⁰ — Workers who, working on their own account or with one or more partners, hold self-employment jobs and do not engage employees on a continuous basis.
- Platform workers¹¹ — Workers who obtain, perform, and are paid for work through digital labour platforms, where the platform mediates the matching, allocation, management, or evaluation of the work

⁸ See Platform Workers Act 2024, passed by Parliament on 10 September 2024 and Platform Workers Bill 2024 from the Ministry of Manpower in Singapore.

⁹ See International Labour Organization Home Work Convention, 1996 (No. 177).

¹⁰ See International Labour Organization Resolution Concerning Statistics of Work, Employment and Labour Underutilization (ICLS-19, 2013)

¹¹ See International Labour Organization World Employment and Social Outlook: The Role of Digital Labour Platforms in Transforming the World of Work (2021)

- Informal Economy¹² — All economic activities by workers or economic units that are—in law or practice—not covered or sufficiently covered by formal arrangements.
- Informal Sector¹³ — A group of production units (unincorporated enterprises owned by households) including informal own-account enterprises and enterprises of informal employers. This study mainly focuses on the mining, fisheries and agriculture informal sector. The terms “informal economy” and “informal sector” are often used interchangeably in policy discussions, but they are not the same. The informal sector refers specifically to unincorporated household enterprises, while the informal economy is a broader concept that includes all informal employment—both within these enterprises and in formal firms or households.
- Informality¹⁴ — Productive activities and jobs not covered by formal legal, regulatory, or social-protection frameworks, meaning they operate outside systems of registration, taxation, labour regulation, and social security.
- High-Risk Sectors¹⁵ — The sectors most frequently classified as high risk include agriculture, construction, mining, fisheries, transport, and parts of manufacturing. It refers to industries where the likelihood and severity of occupational accidents, injuries, or diseases are significantly higher than average, often due to structural hazards, environmental exposure, or inadequate OSH systems and weak regulatory coverage.
- Service Workers¹⁶ — Individuals providing low-capital services such as cleaning, repair, personal care, food vending, or transport, typically without formal contracts or regulated working conditions.
- Small-Scale Entrepreneurs¹⁷ — Self-employed individuals running micro-businesses with limited capital, few or no employees, and minimal access to formal financing or regulatory support.
- Workers in the Informal Sector¹⁸ — Persons employed in unincorporated household enterprises that form part of the informal sector.
- Smallholder Agriculture Workers¹⁹ — Farmers managing small plots of land with family labour, limited mechanisation, and high exposure to market and climate risks.
- Fisheries Workers²⁰ — Small-scale fishers and aquaculture workers using basic vessels or gear, often operating seasonally and outside formal licensing or OSH systems. In agriculture and fisheries, workers occupy a range of employment statuses: while many farmers and fishers are self-employed, others work as employees—either formally or

¹² See International Labour Organization Recommendation No. 204 (Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy)

¹³ See International Labour Organization 15th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), 1993.

¹⁴ See International Labour Organization 17th ICLS Resolution on Informal Employment, 2023.

¹⁵ See International Labour Organization National practices in occupational safety and health statistics, 2025.

¹⁶ See International Labour Organization International Standard Classification of Occupations 08.

¹⁷ See International Labour Organization 19th ICLS Resolution on Statistics of Work 2013.

¹⁸ See International Labour Organization ILO, 15th ICLS Resolution on Statistics of Employment in the Informal Sector.

¹⁹ See International Labour Organization ILO–FAO, Decent Work in the Rural Economy.

²⁰ See International Labour Organization Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) & ILO Small-Scale Fisheries Guidance.

informally—under contracts or arrangements with companies, intermediaries, or larger production units.

- Small-Scale Manufacturing Workers — Micro-producers engaged in craft, assembly, or light manufacturing activities with low capital investment and limited regulatory oversight.

Coverage

This subsection outlines the scope of workers included in the informal sector, covering home-based workers, service workers, small-scale entrepreneurs, smallholder farmers, fishers, and small-scale manufacturers, self-employed workers, platform workers, construction workers, miners along with other groups operating outside formal registration and regulatory systems.

For the purpose of narrowing the scope of these Guidelines, the report focuses specifically on three priority informal sectors—agriculture, fisheries, and mining. These sectors were selected because they account for a substantial share of informal employment across ASEAN²¹, present some of the highest OSH risks, and illustrate the structural challenges faced by workers operating outside formal regulatory and protection systems. Agriculture, fisheries, and mining are characterised by inherently hazardous working environments and hard-to-reach, dispersed worksites, which together contribute to persistently high risks and limited regulatory oversight. These structural challenges are key reasons for developing dedicated ASEAN Guidelines to strengthen occupational safety and health protections for workers in these sectors. By concentrating on these sectors, the Guidelines provide a more targeted analysis of hazards, vulnerabilities, and governance gaps, while generating practical, sector-specific insights that can inform broader cross-sectoral approaches in future ASEAN work.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDELINES AND INTENDED USERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

These ASEAN Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health for the Informal Sector aim to provide a coherent, practical and regionally relevant framework for improving OSH protections for workers in the most vulnerable informal sector, including agriculture, fisheries and mining. The Guidelines translate the extensive mapping of legal frameworks, sectoral practices and emerging good practices into actionable recommendations that AMS can adapt to their national contexts. The nature of the Guidelines is voluntary and non-binding, yet AMS are encouraged to apply them broadly to strengthen national, bilateral and regional efforts aimed at extending OSH coverage and protections to workers in the informal sector.

The following are the objectives of the Guidelines:

- To continuously and proactively encourage governments, employers' organisations, workers' organisations, civil society actors, and private entities to raise OSH standards for workers in the informal sector. This includes strengthening national OSH systems, expanding coverage to

²¹ See International Labour Organization Modelled Estimates (2023) and ASEAN Regional Study on Informal Employment (2019).

unregistered and unprotected workers, and promoting low-cost, scalable interventions that reach dispersed and hard-to-inspect workplaces. The Guidelines also support AMS in aligning OSH improvements with broader decent work, social protection and formalisation strategies, recognising that workers in the informal sector remain largely excluded from regulatory oversight and institutional support.

- To support AMS in identifying gaps in OSH coverage, benchmarking national policies and sectoral practices, and updating existing frameworks to better protect workers in the informal sector. By translating regional mapping and good practices into practical recommendations, the Guidelines help AMS strengthen legislation, improve coordination, and integrate OSH strategies into agriculture, fisheries and mining.

In terms of the intended users and stakeholders, the Guidelines are designed for a wide ecosystem of actors whose coordinated efforts are essential to improving OSH in the informal sector. Key users include:

- Relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies: ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF), ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Minerals (AMMin), ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM), ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment (AMME), ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting (ATM), ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM), ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Council, ASEAN Confederation of Employers (ACE) and the ASEAN Trade Union Council (ATUC)
- National OSH authorities, labour inspectorates, and ministries responsible for labour, health, social protection/social security, agriculture, fisheries, mining, rural development and social protection.
- Employers' and workers' organisations, including those representing workers in informal sector, cooperatives and rural associations;
- Civil society organisations, community-based groups, and like-minded organisations and migrant-worker networks focusing on workers in informal sector;
- Private enterprises operating in supply chains linked to informal work;
- Private recruitment or employment agencies;
- Development partners (e.g., international organisations, donors);
- Academic and research experts
- Community leaders and community-based organisations

IV. SOURCES AND REFERENCES OF THE GUIDELINES

The following ASEAN, UN, ILO and other international instruments provide a non-exhaustive list of the legal, policy and technical foundations for these Guidelines. They offer essential reference points for strengthening OSH governance and protections in the informal mining, fisheries and agriculture sectors across ASEAN.

ASEAN instruments:

- ASEAN Charter — foundational principles for cooperation, human development and social justice;

- ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Strategic Plan — commitment to inclusive, sustainable and resilient development;
- ASEAN Human Rights Declaration — rights-based foundation for worker protection;
- Cebu Declaration and ASEAN Consensus on Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers — decent work, fair treatment and OSH protections for migrant workers;
- ASEAN-OSHNET Frameworks — refer to the set of regional cooperation mechanisms, shared tools, and coordinated initiatives developed under the ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network to support AMS in strengthening their national OSH systems;
- ASEAN Declaration and its Roadmap on the Prevention of Child Labour Including the Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour — relevant for hazardous child labour in agriculture, fisheries and mining;
- ASEAN Declaration on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Fishers;
- ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection;
- ASEAN Declaration of Portability of Social Security Benefits for Migrant Workers in ASEAN
- ASEAN Guidelines on OSH Risk Management for Small and Medium Enterprises in ASEAN Member States;
- ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Elimination of Violence Against Children in ASEAN;
- ASEAN Guidelines on Strengthening Labour Inspection in Fishing Sector;
- ASEAN Guidelines for Corporate Social Responsibility for Labour;
- ASEAN Guidelines on Gender Mainstreaming into Labour and Employment Policies towards Decent Work for All;
- Recommendations of the ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour (AFML);
- Recommendations of the ASEAN Labour Inspection Conference (ALIC);
- Joint ASEAN-SEAFDEC Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing and Enhancing the Competitive ASEAN Fish and Fishery Products.

UN and other instruments:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights — universal rights applicable to all workers.
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) — protections for migrant workers, women and children in hazardous informal sector.
- Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- ILO Fundamental Conventions and core labour rights relevant to workers in informal sector Freedom of Association Convention, 1948 (No. 87), Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105), Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111);
- ILO OSH Conventions Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)— frameworks for national OSH systems;
- Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (C161);
- Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (C190);
- C191 - Safe and Healthy Working Environment (Consequential Amendments) Convention, 2023 (No. 191);

- ILO Labour Inspection Convention (C81) — essential for extending inspection to informal workplaces;
- Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001. C184
- ILO Work in Fishing Convention (C188) and Guidelines.
- Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (C176)

UN and other frameworks and guidance:

- UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work;
- ILO Recommendation 204 on the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy (R204);
- 2011 UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework;
- ILO Decent Work Agenda — overarching framework for rights, employment, social protection and social dialogue;
- ILO Global Strategy on Occupational Safety and Health (2024 – 2030);
- ILO Guidelines on Labour Inspection in Rural and Informal Economies — practical guidance for extending inspection to hard-to-reach sectors;
- ILO Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems (ILO-OSH 2001);
- ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Agriculture, 2011 — key reference for informal farm work;
- ILO draft Code of Practice on occupational safety and health in aquaculture (ongoing discussions)
- ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Small-Scale Mining — guidance for artisanal and informal mining;
- ILO General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment — relevant for informal fisheries and seasonal agricultural labour;
- International Financial Institutions Environmental and Social Frameworks;
- FAO/ILO/IMO Guidelines on Safety in the Fishing Sector — operational guidance for small-scale and migrant fishers;
- FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries — includes labour and safety dimensions;
- WHO Healthy Workplaces Framework;
- OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Mineral Supply Chains;
- OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas;
- OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains;
- WHO and UNDP guidance on occupational health in rural and informal settings;

V. GENERAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The General Guiding Principles section provides the foundation for strengthening OSH in the informal sector, where workers in agriculture, fisheries and mining face heightened exposure to hazards, weak regulatory coverage and limited access to services. These principles emphasise respect for FPRW and specifically the right to all workers to enjoy a safe, healthy working environment. It also promotes

responsible business conduct for decent work in supply chains and responsible and sustainable trade and investment policy. Additionally, it supports rights-based protection, non-discrimination, gender responsiveness, and inclusive approaches that reach hard-to-reach workers and hard-to-inspect workplaces. They promote transparency and participation across governments, employers, workers and communities, while encouraging evidence-based policies and collaborative partnerships. Together, they guide AMS in extending OSH systems, prevention measures and decent-work protections to all workers, regardless of employment status or sector.

- Rights-based protections in line with ASEAN and international standards: requires AMS to uphold international and regional standards respecting the labour and OSH rights of workers in informal sector.
- Prevention and risk-based OSH: a risk-based approach is essential because it moves beyond theoretical safety standards to provide practical, tailored solutions for specific, high-risk environments where formal, top-down regulations are often ineffective or non-existent. It is recommended that AMS advance practices to better identify, assess, and mitigate risks that lead to chronic harm, severe injury, or fatality. This principle emphasises proactive identification, assessment and control of hazards before they cause harm, prioritising low-cost, practical measures suited to small-scale and community-based workplaces. To this extent, the Guidelines distinguish between OSH management approaches applicable to the formal sector and those suitable for workers in the informal sector. Given the unique characteristics of this segment of the workforce, community-based compliance and prevention models should be encouraged alongside conventional inspection and enforcement approaches. This may include engagement with local communities, cooperatives, workers' associations and community leaders to improve OSH awareness and compliance.
- Respect for Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW) and specifically the right to all workers to enjoy a safe, healthy working environment: This principle reaffirms that all workers, including those in informal sector such as agriculture, fisheries and mining, are entitled to the FPRW, as recognised in international labour standards. Central to these principles is the right of every worker to a safe and healthy working environment, regardless of employment status, contractual arrangement or sector. Upholding this right requires proactive measures to prevent occupational risks, eliminate hazardous conditions, and ensure that informal-economy workers enjoy the same dignity, protection and opportunities for decent work as all other workers.
- Responsible business conduct for decent work in supply chains: this principle requires enterprises across supply chains to prevent and address labour and OSH risks, uphold Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and ensure fair, safe and dignified conditions for all workers, including those in informal sector. AMS should encourage companies to conduct effective due diligence, promote transparency, and work collaboratively with governments and stakeholders to advance decent work.
- Responsible and sustainable trade and investment policy and negotiations: AMS should consider pursuing responsible and sustainable trade and investment policies that integrate labour rights, OSH protections and decent-work objectives. In negotiations, AMS should promote fair, transparent and inclusive provisions that appropriately strengthen due diligence, safeguard workers in informal sector, and ensure that regional economic integration advances safe, healthy and dignified work for all.
- Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach: the principle of a whole-of-government approach refers to the development and implementation of coherent migration and labour policies that ensure horizontal and vertical coordination across

ministries, agencies and levels of government. This principle is especially important when integrating OSH into public health, labour and economic policies, requiring alignment with ministries responsible for agriculture, fisheries, mining and other key departments so that risks in informal sector are addressed consistently and systematically. A whole-of-society approach refers to a broad, multi-stakeholder process in which all actors with OSH responsibilities—including governments, workers, employers, supply-chain actors, community organisations and other relevant stakeholders—are actively engaged in the design, development and implementation of policies. This approach ensures that OSH measures reflect the realities of the informal sector and benefit from the collective expertise and participation of all parties involved.

- Principle of shared responsibility (state-employer-worker-supply chain): it recognises that all actors across the full supply chain—from lower-tier informal producers and community-based workers to upper-tier processors, buyers and market intermediaries—have complementary and mutually reinforcing roles in preventing OSH risks and improving working conditions. Governments, employers, workers, producer groups and value-chain actors each contribute to ensuring that workers in informal sector are protected at every stage of production, and that OSH responsibilities are distributed fairly across the entire cycle of economic activity.
- Non-discrimination and equitable treatment require AMS to ensure that all workers—regardless of gender, migration status, ethnicity, age, disability or employment arrangement—enjoy equal protection, opportunities and access to OSH services and set the standards for the creation of social protection floors (SPFs). AMS should eliminate discriminatory practices, address structural barriers in informal sector, and promote fair, inclusive and dignified working conditions for every worker.
- Gender-sensitive and gender-responsive approaches require AMS to integrate gender considerations into all OSH policies and measures, in line with ILO guidelines. AMS should identify and address the specific risks faced by women and men in informal sector, ensure equitable access to OSH services, and promote inclusive prevention strategies that eliminate gender-based barriers to safe and healthy work. This would also entail investment in systematic identification and awareness of gender disparities and the improvement of gender analysis to sex-disaggregated data and gender-related information to identify specific gaps and ensure that OSH measures respond effectively to the different needs and experiences of women and men.
- Inclusion and targeted support for vulnerable or disadvantaged workers, including migrant workers, in the informal sector: this principle requires AMS to include the needs of vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, including migrant workers, in the informal sector. AMS should ensure targeted support where appropriate, equitable access to OSH and OH services, and tailored prevention measures that address their specific risks and barriers, promoting dignity, protection and decent work for all workers across agriculture, fisheries and mining.
- Transparency, integrity and accountability require AMS to strengthen reliable systems for reporting, recording and notifying occupational accidents and diseases, including in the informal sector. AMS should promote open information practices, ensure accurate data collection, and uphold institutional integrity so that risks are visible, responsibilities are clear, and OSH policies and services can respond effectively to the needs of all workers.
- Participation, representation and workers' voice: require AMS to ensure that all workers, including those in the informal sector, can meaningfully engage in OSH decision-making. AMS should promote inclusive social dialogue, support representative organisations, and strengthen mechanisms that enable workers and communities to express concerns, influence

policies and contribute to safer, healthier and more participatory and inclusive working environments.

- Evidence-based policymaking requires AMS to ground OSH measures in reliable data, research and sector-specific analysis. Policies must be continuously informed by evidence, ensuring that prevention strategies remain responsive to the real risks faced by workers in the informal sector. Evidence should guide the design, implementation and evaluation of policies to ensure that the OSH needs of workers in the informal sector are fully addressed.
- Partnership and collaboration require AMS to work closely with employers, workers, communities and development partners to strengthen OSH in informal sector. AMS should promote coordinated action, share knowledge and benchmarking of good practices, and build multi-stakeholder platforms that support prevention, capacity building and service delivery, ensuring safer and healthier working environments for all.

VI. PRACTICAL RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FOR ADDRESSING OSH IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

The ASEAN continues to face a complex set of structural, legal and socio-economic barriers that hinder the extension of effective OSH protections to workers in informal sector. Despite evidenced progress in strengthening national frameworks, informality remains deeply entrenched across the region, shaping how work is organised, regulated and experienced in sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and mining. These challenges span multiple dimensions: legal and regulatory gaps that leave workers in informal sector outside the scope of enforceable protections; institutional and governance weaknesses that limit coordination and accountability; operational and enforcement barriers that restrict inspection reach and surveillance; and socio-economic and worker-related vulnerabilities that reduce access to information, representation and safe working conditions. Widespread informality also weakens the rule of law, depresses productivity and limits the growth of sustainable enterprises²².

A major and overarching barrier is the absence of an enabling environment that supports formalisation²³. In many AMS, gaps in the declaration of employment, inconsistent classification of workers, and limited recognition of employment relationships prevent workers in the informal sector from accessing even the most basic labour and social-security protections. These shortcomings are particularly acute in high-risk sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and mining, where informal arrangements dominate and where OSH risks are most severe. Across AMS, these challenges reflect common cross-sector patterns that cut across agriculture, fisheries, and mining. Despite the diversity of these sectors, most AMS face similar structural constraints—limited data, weak OSH literacy, fragmented programmes, barriers to formalisation, and uneven access to representation. Recognising these shared patterns can allow governments to design coordinated, region-wide strategies that address root causes rather than isolated symptoms, strengthening OSH protections for all informal workers.

Together, these factors create a policy environment in which workers in informal sector—especially those in hazardous sectors—remain largely unprotected. Addressing these gaps is essential for strengthening OSH governance, improving working conditions and advancing decent work across ASEAN.

²² International Labour Organization. International Labour Conference – 113th Session, Geneva, 2025. International Labour Conference – 113th Session, Geneva, 2025.

²³ International Labour Organization. Innovative approaches to addressing informality and promoting the transition to formality for decent work.

This Guidelines are intended for a wide range of stakeholders whose coordinated actions are essential to improving OSH in the informal sector. Accordingly, the recommendations in this section outline responsibilities not only for governments, but also for employers and workers, organisations representing workers in the informal sector, community leaders, civil society organisations, cooperatives, producer groups, and private sector entities. Each stakeholder group plays a complementary role in strengthening preventive OSH measures, expanding protection, and supporting the transition toward safer and more formalised work. Because informality is shaped by both cross-cutting dynamics and conditions unique to particular industries or worker groups, no single policy solution can address all challenges equally. This diversity means that some of the generic recommendations proposed in this report may be well suited to one national context or sector but less applicable in another. Policymakers need to recognise the significant heterogeneity within the informal sectors and devise policies that avoid a ‘one size fits all’ approach and address persistent challenges and policy gaps. Recognising this variation is essential for designing interventions that are realistic, targeted and capable of delivering meaningful improvements in working conditions and meaningful protections for workers in informal sector. Tailored approaches—grounded in national circumstances and sectoral characteristics—are therefore critical to advancing decent work and reducing informality across the region.

The recommended actions are organised into national and local-level measures, which require implementation within each AMS’s own institutions and legal frameworks, and regional-level measures, which depend on collective ASEAN coordination, shared mechanisms and cross-border cooperation.

Recommended actions at national and local levels

- AMS are encouraged to ensure rigorous preparatory assessments for OSH measures affecting workers in the informal sector. Before adopting new legislation or policies, constituents should review proposed measures for their relevance and feasibility in sectors such as mining, fisheries and agriculture. This includes analysing economic, social and environmental impacts, assessing national capacity to implement and enforce reforms, and determining whether MSMEs and small-scale operators can realistically comply. Possible disadvantages and alternative approaches should also be considered to support sound, evidence-based policymaking.

Why this matters: This recommended action is essential because it directly addresses the evidence, data and knowledge gaps that currently limit sound OSH policymaking for the informal sector. Across ASEAN, many OSH reforms are introduced without reliable information on the real conditions of workers in the informal sector, the feasibility of compliance for MSMEs and small-scale operators, or the capacity of national systems to implement and enforce new requirements. These gaps mean that policies may be well-intentioned but misaligned with the realities of agriculture, fisheries, mining and other informal-sector contexts.

- AMS are encouraged to strengthen preventive OSH measures as the foundation of worker protection across all sectors and at all levels of governance. By strengthening risk prevention, hazard control, awareness-raising and access to basic OSH services, governments can reduce the incidence of work-related injuries and illnesses among informal-sector workers. Building on this preventive approach, AMS may also continue

advancing policies aimed at progressively expanding comprehensive social security coverage, including access to health care and benefits related to occupational accidents, injuries and diseases. This approach helps foster a prevention-first culture while ensuring that all workers have access to essential protections when harm occurs.

Why this matters: In many AMS, preventive OSH measures do not systematically reach agriculture, fisheries, mining or other informal workplaces due to fragmented mandates, limited coordination across ministries, and gaps in legal coverage that leave workers in the informal sector outside national OSH frameworks. These institutional weaknesses mean that prevention—risk assessment, hazard control, awareness raising and access to basic OSH services—remains uneven, inconsistent and often inaccessible to the workers who need it most.

- Address the informality of some sectors in relevant international, national strategies and plans ensuring that efforts to promote sustainable development and decent work explicitly include workers and economic units operating outside formal regulatory systems. AMS are further encouraged to make full and productive employment and decent work for all a central goal for coherent, comprehensive and integrated employment policy, and improve respect, promotion and realization of the fundamental principles and rights at work and other relevant international labour standards.

Why this matters: Across ASEAN, many policies on sustainable development, employment and decent work still focus primarily on the formal economy, leaving informal workers outside regulatory systems, OSH frameworks and labour protections. These governance gaps mean that informal workers in sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and mining remain unregistered, unprotected and effectively invisible in national planning processes.

- AMS are encouraged to increase the number of trained labour inspectors and expand inspection coverage to rural areas and workers in the informal sector, recognising that dispersed, unregistered and small-scale operations often fall outside the reach of conventional inspection systems. AMS may also pilot outreach-based and community-supported inspection models in locations where formal inspections are difficult to conduct.

Why this matters: Labour inspectorates often lack the staffing, resources and adapted methodologies needed to operate in remote rural areas, mobile worksites or informal community-based workplaces. These operational barriers mean that hazardous conditions go undetected, compliance remains low, and preventive measures do not reach the workers most exposed to risk.

- AMS are encouraged to expand legal recognition of informal worker organisations, support the formation of cooperatives and establish safe, accessible channels for representation so that informal workers can advocate for safer conditions, fairer pay and meaningful participation in OSH and labour governance. This includes enabling informal-sector associations to register more easily, providing technical and financial support for grassroots organising, and integrating representative bodies into national and local tripartite or multi-stakeholder mechanisms.

Why this matters: Across ASEAN, low organisation and weak collective voice remain some of the most persistent structural barriers facing workers in the informal sector. With most operating outside formal employment arrangements, these workers have limited access to unions, cooperatives or grievance mechanisms that could help them demand safer conditions or fairer pay. As a result, the benefits associated with occupational safety programmes, social protection schemes and skills-training initiatives fail to reach those most at risk.

- AMS are encouraged to consult and promote the active participation of employers' and workers' organisations—including representatives of workers and economic units—throughout the design, implementation and evaluation of relevant measures. AMS should also enable these organisations to participate fully in social dialogue processes related to the transition to the formal economy, recognising that inclusive dialogue is essential for shaping fair, practical and sustainable pathways toward decent work.

Why this matters: Across ASEAN, workers and economic units operating outside formal regulatory systems are often excluded from national decision-making structures, tripartite bodies and formal social dialogue mechanisms. These governance gaps mean that policies affecting the informal sector are frequently designed without the insights of those who understand the realities of dispersed, unregistered and small-scale operations.
- AMS are encouraged to mainstream OSH for workers in the informal sector into climate change and just transition policies, ensuring that national strategies fully recognise the heightened vulnerabilities of workers in mining, fisheries and agriculture. Strengthening climate resilience requires recognising that workers in the informal sector are disproportionately exposed to heat stress, extreme weather, environmental degradation, and hazardous work processes. Formalization efforts and just transition policies must therefore advance together, ensuring that the shift to greener economies generates opportunities for decent, safer, and more secure jobs. This includes embedding OSH risk assessments, sector-specific adaptation measures, and access to training, equipment, and social protection within national climate plans and green-economy initiatives so that no worker is left behind in the transition.

Why this matters: Workers in informal mining, fisheries and agriculture already face heightened exposure to heat stress, extreme weather, environmental degradation and hazardous work processes, and these vulnerabilities are compounded by their limited access to OSH services, training, equipment and social protection. Without explicit integration of OSH into climate change and just transition policies, these workers—who are often unregistered, unprotected and operating outside formal regulatory systems—risk being further marginalised as economies shift toward greener production.
- AMS are encouraged to strengthen labour force and OSH data systems for workers in the informal sector, recognising that reliable, disaggregated and sector-specific data is essential for effective policymaking. Enhanced data collection is essential for understanding working conditions, identifying OSH challenges, and designing targeted interventions. Likewise, national systems for recording and notifying occupational accidents and diseases should be expanded to include workers in informal sector, who are often absent from official statistics. AMS should promote simplified digital reporting systems that enable workers in the informal sector to easily report occupational accidents, diseases and hazardous situations. Governments are encouraged to expand mobile-based reporting tools and low-bandwidth digital platforms that function in local languages and are accessible on basic phones. These technologies can improve real-time reporting, strengthen data collection, and help address persistent underreporting in informal workplaces. Member States should also work with community groups and informal-worker associations to raise awareness and ensure that digital reporting mechanisms are trusted, widely used and integrated into national OSH information systems. Strengthening these data systems will enable evidence-based policymaking, support formalization pathways, and ensure that OSH risks in the informal sector are visible and addressed.

Why this matters: Across ASEAN, workers in agriculture, fisheries, mining and other informal sectors are often absent from official statistics due to limited reporting channels,

fragmented systems and the lack of simplified, community-based data-collection mechanisms. Not many examples exist of short reporting forms, logbooks, mobile applications or community registers that can capture accidents, hazardous exposures and work-related illnesses in small farms, fishing boats or artisanal mining sites. Likewise, the integration of OSH-related questions into labour force surveys, sector-specific registries and social protection databases is not yet widespread, despite its potential to generate reliable national data. These evidence and data gaps weaken policymaking, hinder targeted interventions and obscure the true scale of OSH risks in the informal sector.

- AMS are encouraged to promote a national preventive safety and health culture, in line with ILO Convention 187, by strengthening national OSH policies, systems and programmes in consultation with employers and workers. Embedding prevention within national development priorities reinforces shared responsibility and ensures that OSH governance is aligned with international principles and responsive to the realities of diverse worker groups, including those in the informal sector.

Why this matters: In many AMS, national OSH policies, systems and programmes do not fully reflect the realities of diverse worker groups—particularly those in the informal sector—due to fragmented mandates, limited coordination across ministries, and insufficient consultation with employers and workers. These governance gaps weaken the ability of national institutions to embed prevention within development priorities and to align OSH governance with international principles such as ILO Convention 187.

- AMS are encouraged to continue strengthening national OSH systems by extending access to OSH services to informal workplaces, in line with the principles of ILO Conventions C155 and C187. This includes enhancing access to basic OSH services, reinforcing preventive approaches, and ensuring that workers in the informal sector benefit from the same commitment to reducing occupational injuries, diseases and deaths as those in the formal economy. By expanding OSH coverage and embedding prevention across all sectors, AMS can build more inclusive, resilient and equitable national OSH systems that protect every worker, regardless of employment status.

Why this matters: National OSH structures and inspection mechanisms are often designed for formal enterprises, meaning that informal workers have limited access to basic OSH services, preventive support or hazard-control guidance. These operational barriers result in uneven protection, persistent exposure to preventable risks, and a widening gap between formal and informal workers.

- AMS are encouraged to strengthen coordination and collaboration among relevant national agencies to support community-based approaches that can effectively reach workers in the informal sector. This includes enhancing cooperation between ministries responsible for health and public health, agriculture, education, labour and local government, so that OSH messages, services and outreach mechanisms are integrated into existing community systems. AMS should enhance coordination among labour authorities, social security institutions, local governments and community-based organisations to improve the registration of worker in the informal sector. Closer collaboration across these actors will enable more comprehensive and up-to-date worker registries and support the design of evidence-based OSH and social protection policies. Improved inter-agency coordination helps ensure that preventive OSH measures reach dispersed and hard-to-access informal workplaces, while reinforcing a whole-of-government approach to worker protection. This level of coordination should review expanded access to health insurance, work-injury protection and social security schemes through voluntary or low-contribution

arrangements tailored to self-employed workers, smallholders, fishers and micro-entrepreneurs.

Why this matters: In many AMS, coordination across ministries responsible for health and public health, agriculture, education, labour and local government remains fragmented, resulting in OSH messages, services and outreach mechanisms that do not reach dispersed, unregistered or small-scale workplaces. These governance gaps are compounded by the inadequate engagement of Local Government Units (LGUs), which are often closest to informal workers but lack clear mandates, resources or coordination mechanisms to promote OSH in communities. Without strong inter-agency collaboration and active involvement of LGUs preventive OSH measures inconsistent and inaccessible to the workers who need them most.

- AMS are encouraged to include measures that address the specific circumstances and vulnerabilities of workers overrepresented in the informal sector, including women, youth, migrants, refugees, indigenous and tribal peoples, national or ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities, older persons and persons with disabilities, within the national laws, regulations and circumstances of each AMS. Across ASEAN, women, youth, migrants, refugees, indigenous and tribal peoples, national or ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities, older persons and persons with disabilities face distinct risks and barriers that limit their access to safe working conditions, OSH services and social protection. These vulnerabilities are compounded by their concentration in dispersed, unregistered and small-scale economic units that operate outside formal regulatory systems.

Why this matters: Overrepresentation of women, youth, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples without tailored OSH measures. Women, youth, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples are overrepresented among workers in the informal sector²⁴, yet most national OSH frameworks do not include gender-responsive or group-specific provisions for these workers. The absence of gender-tailored OSH measures reinforce existing inequalities and limits the effectiveness of prevention strategies in the informal sector. To ensure equitable protection, governments should embed gender-, age- and disability-responsive OSH measures into national systems, co-designing interventions with affected groups so that their specific risks, barriers and needs in informal sector are fully recognised and addressed.

- AMS are encouraged to strengthen penalties, expand occupational health services, and modernise reporting systems to ensure that workers in the informal sector are fully protected. This includes updating sanctions so they apply across supply chains, improving coordination between labour, health and local authorities, and extending community-based occupational health services to small farms, fisheries and other hard-to-reach sectors. Governments should also upgrade national systems for recording, reporting and investigating occupational accidents and diseases, ensuring that incidents in the informal sector are captured through local health posts, cooperatives and community structures.

Why this matters: Weak penalties, limited coordination between labour, health and local authorities, and outdated reporting mechanisms mean that hazardous conditions often go undetected and unaddressed. These enforcement gaps are compounded by the absence of reliable channels for recording, reporting and investigating occupational accidents and diseases in informal settings, where incidents are rarely captured by national systems.

²⁴ Marta Roig and Julie Pewitt (2021), A changing world of work: implications for the social contract, UN DESA Policy Brief No. 94, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York.

- AMS are encouraged to integrate OSH into agricultural extension and climate adaptation programmes by equipping extension officers to deliver practical OSH guidance, embedding risk-prevention modules into climate-resilient farming support, and ensuring that smallholders receive training on heat stress, chemical safety and safe equipment use as part of routine rural services.

Why this matters: Preventive OSH measures rarely reach smallholders, seasonal workers or family-based agricultural units. Extension services are often the only public institutions with regular access to rural communities, yet they are not consistently equipped to deliver OSH guidance or identify hazards.

- AMS are encouraged to undertake national assessments and diagnostics of different segments of the informal sector, measuring their full economic, social and environmental impacts. These assessments should generate disaggregated, sector-specific evidence that supports targeted OSH interventions, informs policy design, and strengthens national strategies for improving working conditions and advancing decent work for workers in the informal sector.

Why this matters: Across ASEAN, many segments of the informal economy—such as smallholder agriculture, fisheries, home-based work and artisanal mining—remain poorly understood due to the absence of reliable, disaggregated and sector-specific information. These gaps mean that national strategies often rely on assumptions rather than accurate assessments of economic, social and environmental impacts, leading to interventions that may be misaligned with real risks or unable to reach the workers most exposed to hazards.

- AMS are encouraged to simplify and streamline registration and licensing procedures while reducing the real and perceived cost burdens on micro and small enterprises—through targeted incentives, phased social security or insurance contributions, and user-friendly digital or one-stop processes. At the same time, AMS should expand access to OSH training and essential equipment by reviewing existing subsidies, delivering flexible and mobile learning formats, and integrating programmes into community-based structures so that workers in the informal sector—especially those in remote or time-poor settings—can participate without financial or productivity losses.

Why this matters: First, complex and costly registration and licensing procedures discourage formalisation, particularly for micro and small enterprises with limited administrative capacity. Employers often perceive formalisation as increasing labour costs, reinforcing informality and weakening efforts to extend OSH protection to workers operating outside formal regulatory systems. Second, financial and time constraints limit workers' participation in OSH training or access to equipment. Across the region, the availability of OSH initiatives tailored to the informal sector remains limited. Multiple barriers restrict uptake and implementation, including the financial cost of training and equipment, the time required for participation, and the limited accessibility of programmes for workers in dispersed or remote settings. Efforts are often fragmented, operating on a small scale without sustained institutional support or integration into national OSH systems.

Recommended actions at regional level

- AMS are encouraged to invest in regional initiatives that strengthen OSH knowledge, education and literacy among workers in the informal sector, including migrant workers moving within ASEAN and between ASEAN and neighbouring countries. This includes

developing shared OSH training materials, harmonising pre-departure and post-arrival information, and promoting accessible, multilingual OSH resources that support safe and decent work for migrant workers across borders. Establish a regional knowledge platform — ASEAN could consider creating a regional digital platform to compile good practices, research, tools and case studies on OSH in the informal sector. This would facilitate peer learning, enable AMS to benchmark progress, and strengthen evidence-based policymaking across the region.

Why this matters: Weak OSH literacy and limited access to hazard information among workers in the informal sector. Limited education levels and low OSH literacy among workers in the informal sector in ASEAN significantly constrain efforts to improve working conditions in mining, fisheries, and agriculture. Workers with limited foundational education often lack access to essential information on occupational risks, safe work practices, and rights-based protections. This reduces their ability to identify hazards, adopt preventive measures, or engage meaningfully in OSH training. Low literacy also weakens the effectiveness of awareness campaigns, as standard guidance materials may be inaccessible or poorly understood. As a result, unsafe behaviours persist, compliance with basic safety protocols remains low, and the uptake of protective technologies or reporting mechanisms is limited. For policymakers, these gaps create structural barriers to implementing OSH reforms, expanding enforcement outreach, and promoting a culture of prevention across highly dispersed, isolated and vulnerable informal workforces. Training and awareness-raising for workers in informal sector can rely on practical, visual, and peer-driven methods that match real working conditions. Using visual OSH materials—pictograms, colour-coded hazard signs, step-by-step photo guides—helps understand risks without relying on text. Demonstrations and role-plays allow workers to practise safe behaviours directly on boats, farms, or small mining sites. Peer-learning models such as community OSH champions or lead workers trained to coach others build trust and ensure messages are delivered in familiar languages and dialects. Short, repeated micro-sessions fit seasonal and irregular work patterns better than formal classroom training. Simplified tools—like basic risk-mapping using drawings, coloured stickers, or hazard-spotting walks—enable workers to identify dangers collectively.

- Promote cross-border cooperation on OSH risks — ASEAN should strengthen cooperation with neighbouring countries to address shared OSH challenges in transboundary sectors such as fisheries, construction and agriculture. This may include joint campaigns, harmonised safety messages, and coordinated efforts to protect workers in the informal sector.

Why this matters: Across ASEAN, agriculture, fisheries and mining often involve highly mobile, cross-border workforces, yet national OSH systems operate largely in isolation, with limited cross-border communication. These governance gaps mean that workers moving between jurisdictions receive uneven protection, while hazardous conditions in shared maritime zones, border construction corridors or regional agricultural supply chains remain unmonitored and unaddressed.

- Develop regional OSH training modules — ASEAN should coordinate the development of shared OSH training modules tailored to high-risk informal sectors (agriculture, fisheries, mining). These modules can be adapted by AMS but maintain a common regional standard, supporting a common understanding of OSH standards and improving OSH literacy across borders.

Why this matters: Many workers in agriculture, fisheries and mining receive inconsistent or minimal OSH training. Existing materials vary widely in quality, language, and technical depth, and are often not adapted to the realities of dispersed, unregistered and small-scale

workplaces. These gaps mean that workers lack the practical skills and hazard-recognition abilities needed to prevent injuries and illnesses in some of the region's most dangerous sectors. Regional cooperation through ASEAN-OSHNET reinforces this effort by providing shared tools, inspection checklists, training modules and peer-learning platforms that help AMS harmonise approaches and adapt good practices to their national contexts. A regional baseline also improves the understanding of OSH standards, ensuring that workers—especially migrants—receive consistent OSH messages across borders. These partnerships bring specialised expertise, funding, community-level access and sector-specific knowledge that AMS may not possess individually. They also support the co-development of training materials, joint pilot programmes, and cross-border learning exchanges that strengthen national and regional OSH systems.

ASEAN is encouraged to promote the development of highly visual, low-literacy OSH training materials and expand community-based communication channels across the region, ensuring that workers in the informal sector can easily access practical hazard information and apply safer work practices in their daily tasks. Recognising that many informal workers cannot afford to forgo daily earnings to attend training, ASEAN should support Member States in bringing OSH initiatives closer to, or directly into, actual workplaces and community settings—using shorter, context-specific sessions, mobile outreach, and targeted campaigns.

ASEAN should also stimulate stronger collaboration with NGOs, public-private partnerships, and community-based organisations, and promote the development of sector-specific checklists, monitoring tools, and simplified delivery models that can be adapted across countries.

- ASEAN is encouraged to strengthen regional cooperation on awareness-raising and advocacy interventions by developing shared, highly visual OSH communication materials, multilingual guidance, and sector-specific outreach tools that AMS can adapt to their national contexts. This includes promoting participatory, action-oriented approaches—such as WISE, WIND and other PAOT methods—across the region, and supporting AMS in expanding community-based communication channels through village networks, cooperatives, fishers' associations and smallholder groups. ASEAN-OSHNET should coordinate joint campaigns on high-risk issues such as pesticide safety, vessel safety, heat stress, PPE, risk assessments, etc. while continue facilitating peer learning and the exchange of good practices among AMS.

Why this matters: This will enable AMS to pool expertise, avoid duplication, and scale up good practices that individual AMS could not develop alone. This collective approach strengthens prevention, improves hazard awareness, and ensures that informal-sector workers across the region benefit from a more coherent and accessible OSH communication ecosystem.

VII. UTILISATION, PROMOTION AND DISSEMINATION OF THE GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary and non-binding, yet AMS are encouraged to apply them broadly to strengthen national, bilateral and regional efforts aimed at extending OSH coverage and protections to workers in the informal sector.

They are also invited to engage in constructive dialogue among AMS and with relevant stakeholders within and beyond the region, fostering shared learning and coordinated action on OSH challenges affecting workers in informal sector.

The implementation of the Guidelines should be closely aligned with each AMS's broader OSH regulatory framework, policies and strategies, ensuring coherence with national priorities and international commitments. This includes coordinating their application with ongoing efforts under SDG 8 of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related Sustainable Development Goals. Such alignment helps integrate the Guidelines into existing frameworks, reinforce policy consistency, and strengthen progress toward safer and more inclusive working conditions across workers in informal sector.

AMS are encouraged to disseminate the Guidelines to intended users and stakeholders, and to the public in general. Where appropriate, publicity of the Guidelines should be given through different media, including press releases, television, radio and social media. Where needed AMS are encouraged to translate the Guidelines into local languages for wider dissemination.

Effective promotion and wide dissemination of these Guidelines are essential to ensuring that their recommendations reach the diverse actors responsible for improving OSH conditions of workers in the informal sectors. AMS are encouraged to actively circulate the Guidelines among intended users and stakeholders, as well as to the broader public, to strengthen awareness, understanding and uptake. To support this process, the Guidelines will be accompanied by a short introductory video, a presentation template, and a draft press release, enabling AMS to communicate key messages clearly and consistently across national platforms.

AMS are further encouraged to translate the Guidelines into national languages to ensure accessibility for policymakers, practitioners, social partners, civil society organisations, and community-level actors. Translation and contextualisation will help extend the reach of the Guidelines to rural areas, grassroots organisations, and informal-worker networks that often lack access to technical OSH materials. National dissemination efforts may include workshops, policy dialogues, training sessions, and integration into existing OSH campaigns or sector-specific programmes.

Beyond national dissemination, AMS are encouraged to use the Guidelines widely as a reference for progressively strengthening national OSH policies, programmes and regulatory frameworks. The Guidelines can support evidence-based policymaking, inform national action plans, and guide the design of interventions targeting workers in the informal sector. They also provide a foundation for dialogue with other countries, development partners and regional bodies on advancing OSH in the informal sector.

Promotion should be undertaken in collaboration with key regional and international networks that play a central role in OSH knowledge sharing and capacity building. These include ILO regional bodies and constituents, ASEAN Secretariat, national governments and ministries, ASEAN-OSHNET, ALICOM, the ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM), AOSHRI, IALI, APOSHO, national OSH membership bodies, and relevant international NGOs. Engaging these networks will help amplify the Guidelines across professional communities, strengthen peer learning, and encourage alignment with global OSH standards and good practices.

Cross-promotion through the communication channels of the ILO, the Philippines Department of Labor and Employment, and ASEAN's media and public-relations departments will further amplify the reach and visibility of the Guidelines. Coordinated messaging, shared press materials, and joint dissemination across institutional websites, newsletters, the ASEAN Magazine and similar outlets, social-media platforms and public events will help ensure consistent communication and broaden engagement among policymakers, social partners, practitioners and the wider public.

VIII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE GUIDELINES

Monitoring and evaluation of the voluntary implementation of the Guidelines on OSH in the informal sector should be strengthened across AMS. This process should be led by the ASEAN-OSHNET with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat and the ILO and carried out jointly by governments, employers' organisations, workers' organisations, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that the Guidelines are effectively reflected in national and regional policies. Periodic checks on the implementation of the Guidelines on OSH in the Informal Sector could be embedded into the regular meetings of ASEAN-OSHNET. Its Chair will report the progress to the Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM) periodically.

The ASEAN Secretariat may provide technical support to reinforce these monitoring and evaluation efforts. AMS are also encouraged to maintain a regularly updated repository of examples and practices—recognising that these represent a non-exhaustive set of approaches—to facilitate shared learning and support continuous improvement in OSH for informal workers.

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A. INVENTORY OF ASEAN MEMBER STATES' LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND BEST PRACTICES ON OSH IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

[Please refer to the enclosed matrix]

B. OVERVIEW OF OSH POLICY DEVELOPMENTS AND PROGRESS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL.

This section reviews recent policy reforms, national OSH programmes, and institutional developments across AMS. It highlights progress such as expanded legal coverage, strengthened OSH frameworks, improved inspection strategies, and integration of informal sector concerns into national OSH policy developments. It may also discuss regional cooperation initiatives, capacity-building programmes, and alignment with international labour standards.

OSH fundamental conventions

AMS that are advancing toward ratification and implementation of ILO Convention 155 and ILO Convention 187 are taking important steps that can significantly improve working conditions for workers in informal sector. Recognising the right to a safe and healthy working environment as a *fundamental principle and right at work* elevates ASEAN Member States' growing ratification and implementation of key ILO OSH Conventions—especially Convention 155 and Convention 187—reflects a clear, positive regional shift toward stronger, more coherent national OSH systems where OSH is framed from a technical policy area to a universal entitlement that applies to *all* workers, regardless of employment status.

For countries moving toward these conventions, the process itself—gap assessments, legal reviews, national consultations, and OSH system strengthening—creates momentum for more inclusive OSH coverage. Workers in informal sector, who are often excluded from labour laws, inspections, and employer-provided protections, benefit when governments expand OSH definitions, clarify duty-holders, and strengthen national OSH programmes in line with C155 and C187 requirements. These conventions encourage countries to develop coherent national OSH policies, improve labour inspection systems, and promote preventive safety cultures, all of which can be adapted to reach workers in agriculture, fisheries, and mining sectors.

Crucially, AMS as ILO constituents, despite not ratifying the conventions, have a responsibility to respect, promote and realise the principles concerning the fundamental right to a safe and healthy working environment. This means that advancing toward ratification demonstrates a country's effort to extend OSH protections beyond the formal sector. It encourages innovative approaches—community-based OSH services, simplified inspection tools, and targeted training—that are better suited to informal workplaces.

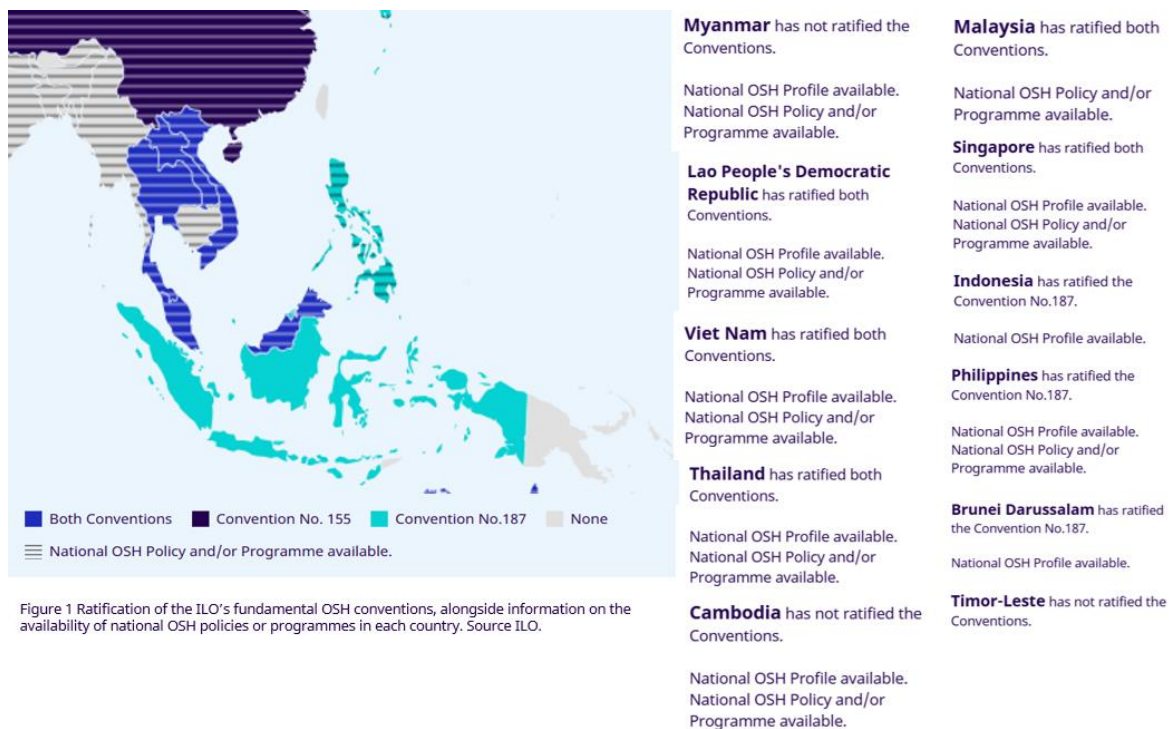


Figure 1 Ratification of the ILO's fundamental OSH conventions, alongside information on the availability of national OSH policies or programmes.

Countries such as Lao PDR and Malaysia, which have recently ratified C155, and Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, which have ratified or advanced implementation of C187, are strengthening national OSH systems, policies and inspection frameworks in ways that directly benefit workers in the informal sector.

OSH institutions within national OSH systems

ASEAN Member States maintain diverse national OSH institutions, with recent developments showing gradual expansion toward informal-economy coverage. Several countries strengthened tripartite bodies, such as Brunei's emerging advisory council and Cambodia's National Commission on OSH. Others enhanced labour-inspection capacity, including Indonesia, Lao PDR and Myanmar, often supported by ILO and Korea-funded programmes. Malaysia and Singapore advanced institutional reforms through new legislation and expanded mandates for SMEs, micro-enterprises and platform workers.

In Indonesia, the Ministry of Manpower and its Directorate-General for OSH lead national policy, supported by community-based structures such as Pos UKK, which deliver OSH outreach through primary health centres. This institutional model allows OSH services to reach rural and workers in informal sector who rarely interact with formal regulators. Lao PDR's Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare similarly integrates OSH into provincial structures, enabling targeted interventions in agriculture and small-scale mining, sectors dominated by informality.

Malaysia's Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) provide a strong institutional foundation for OSH training and enforcement. Programmes such as NIOSH OSH-MADANI, which offers free OSH coordinator training for micro-enterprises and self-employed workers, demonstrate how national institutions can tailor services to informal workplaces. Thailand's Department of Labour Protection and Welfare, supported by the OSH Bureau, combines national inspection with community-level campaigns on heat stress, pesticide safety and road safety—issues that disproportionately affect workers in informal sector.

Labour inspectorates remain central actors. Through labour inspection systems in Viet Nam, Myanmar and the Philippines, governments are gradually expanding inspection mandates and piloting simplified tools suitable for small workplaces. ASEAN-level initiatives, such as ALICOM's guidance on informal-sector inspection, further strengthen national capacity.

Finally, employment injury insurance and social-protection schemes are expanding coverage to workers in informal sector. Indonesia's BPJS Ketenagakerjaan, Malaysia's social-security reforms and Lao PDR's social-protection strategies increasingly include self-employed and rural workers, providing compensation, medical care and rehabilitation for work-related injuries.

Key OSH governance instruments: National policy, programme and profile

AMS continue strengthening their national OSH governance instruments, with several updating OSH profiles, strategies and master plans. Cambodia's Third OSH Master Plan and Indonesia's 2024–2029 Programme integrate community-level outreach and informal-worker training. Lao PDR and Viet Nam revised OSH strategies to address high-risk sectors, while Malaysia incorporated informal workers into its 2021–2025 Master Plan and is developing a new 2026–2030 plan. Many AMS still lack explicit informal-sector mechanisms, but ongoing revisions signal movement toward broader, more inclusive OSH coverage.

Across ASEAN, national OSH frameworks are evolving in ways that increasingly support safer working conditions for workers in the informal sector in agriculture, fisheries, mining and micro-enterprises.

National OSH profiles—such as those in Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia and Myanmar—provide the evidence base for identifying high-risk informal sector, mapping institutional gaps, and guiding targeted interventions. These profiles often highlight the limited visibility of workers in informal sector in national statistics, prompting governments to strengthen data systems and community-level reporting.

National OSH policies and legislation also play a critical role. Viet Nam’s OSH Law 2015 explicitly extends OSH rights and services to informal and self-employed workers, while Malaysia’s amended OSH Act (2022) reinforces employers’ duties to provide information, training and supervision to all workers, including those in small and unregistered enterprises. Thailand’s OSH and labour protection laws similarly recognise domestic, home-based and agricultural workers, even if enforcement remains uneven. These legal reforms create the foundation for extending OSH protections beyond formal enterprises.

National OSH Programmes and Master Plans translate policy commitments into practical mechanisms. Cambodia’s three OSH Master Plans integrate pesticide-safety training and community outreach for small farms, explicitly identifying workers in informal sector as a priority group. Indonesia’s National OSH Programme 2024–2029 supports community-level OSH awareness through Puskesmas and Pos UKK, reaching rural workers. Lao PDR’s Five-Year OSH Programme includes agriculture and mining—sectors dominated by informality—while Malaysia’s successive OSH-MP cycles embed MSME-focused training and outreach.

National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights (NAP-BHR), Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) frameworks and emerging Human Rights Due Diligence obligations

These have the potential to become important drivers of safer and healthier working conditions for workers in informal sector. These policy instruments require governments and enterprises to identify, prevent and address labour and OSH risks across entire value chains, including smallholders, home-based workers, informal fishers, and micro-enterprise workers who are often invisible in national OSH systems.

RBC frameworks, promoted through ASEAN economic and labour cooperation, reinforce expectations that businesses must ensure safe working environments regardless of employment status. This is particularly relevant for export-oriented sectors where global buyers increasingly demand evidence of OSH compliance throughout supply chains.

Countries such as Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines have adopted or are developing NAP-BHRs that prioritise high-risk sectors—agriculture, fisheries, mining and construction—where informality is widespread. These plans encourage companies to map OSH risks beyond their direct employees and extend protections to subcontracted, self-employed and community-based workers. HRDD processes also require enterprises to strengthen grievance mechanisms, improve access to remedy and collaborate with suppliers to raise OSH standards. Thailand’s National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (1st NAP 2019–2022) places strong emphasis on migrant workers, supply chains and high-risk sectors such as fisheries and agriculture—areas where informal and precarious work are widespread.

Trade agreements

AMS have potential to link more effectively trade agreements with labour and OSH commitments, creating incentives to strengthen protections for workers in the informal sector. Across AMS, FTAs and labour chapters reference labour inspection, supply-chain due diligence, and safer working conditions.

Some regions participate in EU, US, and regional initiatives that promote OSH in agriculture, fisheries, mining, and MSMEs, indirectly benefiting workers in the informal sector through improved compliance, training, and risk-management standards.

Region-wide initiatives

ASEAN-OSHNET plays a central and increasingly strategic role in improving working conditions for the millions of workers who earn their livelihoods in the region's agriculture, fisheries and mining sectors. Because workers in these sectors often operate outside formal regulatory systems—on small farms, in coastal fisheries, in home-based production, or in micro-enterprises—traditional OSH approaches rarely reach them. ASEAN-OSHNET fills this gap by creating shared regional tools, knowledge systems and capacity-building platforms that member states can adapt to their own informal-sector realities.

A major contribution is the development of SME-focused OSH risk-management guidebooks used by agribusiness MSMEs. These practical tools translate OSH principles into simple, low-cost steps that small enterprises and informal producers can apply immediately. Complementing this, ASEAN-OSHNET has produced a regional OSH inspection checklist for SMEs and informal sector, enabling inspectors and community facilitators to assess risks in small workplaces where formal inspection is limited.

The network also strengthens sector-specific OSH capacity. Workshops on OSH for informal fishers and coastal MSMEs and low-cost OSH training modules for small agriculture and fisheries units help address hazards such as unsafe vessels, weather risks, chemical exposure and manual-handling injuries. These are complemented by regional workshops on OSH for informal and SME workers, which promote peer learning and adaptation of good practices across ASEAN.

To build sustainable national capacity, ASEAN-OSHNET delivers training of trainers on labour inspection for SMEs and for workers in the informal sector, equipping officials and community actors with the skills to reach small and dispersed workplaces. The ASEAN Risk Management Guidebook for MSMEs and the scorecard system for OSH data harmonization further support consistent standards and evidence-based policymaking. Finally, ASEAN-OSHNET promotes community-level OSH initiatives that bring safety directly to workers in informal sector through local leaders, cooperatives and grassroots organisations.

C. COUNTRY-LEVEL INITIATIVES AND SECTOR-BASED PRACTICES

This section presents concrete examples of preventive or protective strategies and interventions implemented at national or local levels. It serves as a repository of real-world models that AMS might adapt to their own contexts.

Effective country-level initiatives and sector-based practices depend not only on policies and programmes, but also on the clear distribution of responsibilities among the key actors who shape safety and health outcomes for workers in the informal sector. The below list outlines the foundational duties that underpin all effective OSH systems. Governments are responsible for creating an enabling regulatory and institutional environment; employers and small-scale operators are responsible for implementing safe work practices; and workers contribute through active participation, hazard identification and community-level cooperation. Together, these responsibilities form the backbone of a preventive OSH culture that can be adapted to diverse informal settings. Community leaders, civil society organisations, cooperatives and producer groups, are also essential for extending OSH protections to workers in the informal sector.

By clarifying these roles upfront, the section provides a coherent basis for understanding how national initiatives and sector-specific practices interact, why certain models have proven effective, and how they can be scaled or adapted across different contexts.

Government Responsibilities

Governments carry the primary responsibility for establishing an enabling environment where OSH protections extend to all workers, including those in the informal sector. Their duties include:

- Developing and enforcing inclusive OSH legislation that explicitly covers workers in the informal sector, self-employed persons, small-scale producers and micro-enterprises. This includes adapting regulatory frameworks to reflect the realities of agriculture, fisheries and mining.
- Strengthening national OSH systems, including labour inspection, data collection, and coordination across ministries responsible for labour, health, agriculture, fisheries, mining and social protection.
- Expanding access to OSH services, such as mobile clinics, community-based outreach, and integration of OSH into primary health care.
- Investing in awareness-raising and training, ensuring that preventive messages reach rural communities, small-scale fishers, artisanal miners and platform-based workers.
- Supporting formalisation pathways, including simplified registration, incentives for compliance, and linkages to social protection schemes.
- Facilitating social dialogue, ensuring that workers' and employers' organisations—including those representing workers in the informal sector—participate in OSH policymaking.
- Promoting gender-responsive and migrant-inclusive OSH policies, recognising the disproportionate risks faced by women, youth and migrant workers.

These responsibilities reinforce the government's role as the central guarantor of safe and healthy working environments across all sectors.

Employers' Responsibilities

Employers, including micro-entrepreneurs, small-scale producers, vessel owners, farm operators and mining supervisors in the informal sector, play a critical role in implementing preventive measures at the workplace level. Their responsibilities include:

- Providing safe tools, equipment and work processes, even in low-capital settings, and ensuring that machinery and tools are properly maintained.
- Identifying and mitigating hazards through basic risk assessments adapted to informal workplaces.
- Ensuring access to personal protective equipment (PPE) that is appropriate, affordable and suitable for women and young workers.
- Offering OSH training and supervision, especially for new workers, seasonal labourers and migrants.
- Promoting fair working hours, rest periods and safe work organisation, particularly in high-risk sectors such as fishing and mining.
- Supporting reporting of accidents and near-misses and cooperating with authorities and community-based monitoring systems.

Facilitating access to social protection, including voluntary schemes, micro-insurance and community-based coverage.

Workers' Responsibilities

Workers in the informal sector—farmers, fishers, artisanal miners, home-based producers and self-employed individuals—also play an essential role in maintaining safe and healthy workplaces. Their responsibilities include:

- Participating in OSH training, applying safe work practices and using PPE when available.
- Identifying hazards and reporting unsafe conditions, including environmental risks, equipment failures and dangerous work practices.
- Cooperating with employers, community leaders and authorities in implementing preventive measures.
- Organising collectively, through cooperatives, associations or informal workers' groups, to strengthen representation and voice in OSH decision-making.
- Promoting peer-to-peer learning, sharing low-cost improvements and community-based innovations.

Community Leaders, Civil Society, Cooperatives and Producer Groups Responsibilities

- Community mobilisation and awareness-raising delivering OSH messages through trusted local channels—village meetings, cooperatives, producer groups, women's associations and migrant networks.
- Supporting hazard identification and reporting by maintaining community registers, logbooks or simplified reporting tools for accidents and exposures, especially where formal systems are absent.
- Facilitating access to OSH services linking workers to mobile clinics, primary health centres, agricultural extension officers or fisheries safety programmes.
- Strengthening representation and voice, providing platforms for workers in the informal sector to express concerns and participate in OSH decision-making.
- Enabling group-based enrolment through cooperatives and associations in social protection (e.g. voluntary insurance or employment injury schemes).

Across ASEAN, a wide range of country-level initiatives and sector-specific practices demonstrate how governments, employers, workers and communities are working to strengthen OSH for workers in informal sector. These efforts encompass preventive and protective strategies, including awareness-raising campaigns, advocacy interventions and targeted programmes designed to reduce risks in high-hazard sectors.

Sector-based practices and initiatives

ASEAN Member States have introduced a wide range of sector-specific OSH initiatives to address the diverse risks faced by workers in the informal sector, with countries adopting participatory training models, simplified guidelines and community-level outreach. Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand expanded WIND, WISE and WISCON programmes, while Lao PDR and Myanmar strengthened OSH in small-scale mining and rural sectors. Fisheries safety initiatives—particularly in Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines—demonstrate growing cross-border cooperation.

In 2023, the ILO, in coordination with ASEAN, released one of the region's first consolidated compilations of OSH good practices for SMEs and the informal sector²⁵. This publication marked an

²⁵ Good Practices and Lessons Learned on Occupational Safety and Health Initiatives for Workers in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and the Informal Economy, Jakarta, ASEAN Secretariat, April 2024.

important shift: for the first time, examples from diverse sectors and countries were brought together in a single reference to help policymakers understand what practical, low-cost and scalable OSH solutions look like in real informal-sector settings. The document also underscored the need for more up-to-date, systematically collected examples of what works in practice.

The following sector-based practices and initiatives have been compiled specifically to inform these Guidelines on OSH in the informal sector. They represent a non-exhaustive selection of approaches drawn from AMS, intended to illustrate practical models, emerging innovations and context-appropriate solutions that can support policymakers in strengthening OSH systems for workers in the informal sector.

The ILO's *Improving Workers' Rights in Indonesia's Rural Sectors* project (2021–2024) aims to strengthen labour rights, improve working conditions, and enhance compliance with national labour standards in two key rural industries: palm oil and fish processing. These sectors are characterised by high levels of informality, limited access to social protection, and persistent OSH risks. WIND was applied in this project through a structured collaboration with GAPKI, the national palm oil association, and BPJS (employment and social security authority), ensuring that participatory OSH methods were adapted to the realities of smallholders and workers across the supply chain.

The ILO Ship to Shore Rights Southeast Asia regional programme (ILO–EU–UN programme), funded by the European Union, plays a central role in strengthening labour migration governance in the fishing and seafood processing industries across Cambodia, Lao PDR, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. The programme supports governments and social partners in improving legal, policy and regulatory frameworks so that labour migration systems are fair, transparent and aligned with international labour standards. This work is particularly relevant for informal and migrant workers in the fishing sector, who often face gaps in protection, weak enforcement, and limited access to safe and decent working conditions. Through its focus on protecting labour rights and promoting safe and secure working environments throughout the migration cycle, the programme contributes directly to improving OSH outcomes for some of the region's at-risk workers in informal sector. In the Thai fishing and seafood processing industry, the Ship to Shore Rights programme, combined with the ratification of ILO Convention No. 188, has strengthened labour inspection, OSH standards and regulatory compliance in a sector previously characterised by extreme informality and unacceptable forms of work. Operating under this regional programme it is also worth noting the ILO's Work Improvement in the Fishing Industry (WIFI) programme²⁶ that strengthens safety, health and living conditions for fishers across ASEAN by promoting low-cost, practical improvements on vessels, supporting safer recruitment, and reinforcing decent-work standards in a sector marked by high informality and hazardous conditions. Its participatory approach helps reduce risks and improve daily working practices.

ILO's long-standing WISE (Work Improvement in Small Enterprises) a Participatory Action-Oriented Training (PAOT) approach designed to help small businesses identify practical, low-cost solutions to improve safety, health and productivity. WISE is built around simple tools, hands-on demonstrations and worker–employer collaboration, making it particularly effective in settings where formal OSH systems are limited or absent. This locally adapted solution has proven to be adaptable to sectors with high levels of informality. Workers in the informal sector—whether in agriculture, fisheries, mining, or

²⁶ ASEAN Secretariat (2025). ASEAN Regional Study of Labour Practices in the Fishing Sector. Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat.

other informal sector—benefit from training that does not require expensive equipment, complex compliance systems or advanced technical knowledge.

In Myanmar, international funding has focused on high-risk rural supply chains. The ILO Vision Zero Fund has supported projects “to prevent work-related deaths and injuries in Myanmar’s ginger and garment supply chains... [and] pesticide safety in action,” alongside the ILO Flagship programme *Safety + Health for All* and community OSH campaigns reaching over 12,000 people. These initiatives bring OSH training, safer pesticide use and basic risk awareness directly to small farmers.

In Malaysia, a dense web of national and international programmes explicitly targets informal and rural workers. The NIOSH OSH-MADANI free training programme “targets microenterprises, self-employed workers, and workers in very small firms,” while Occupational Health Posts are “one of the few interventions explicitly designed to reach informal palm oil plantation workers.” ILO PAOT tools (WISE, WIND, WISCON), the EXPAND project, and FAO/ILO rural OSH guidance embed low-cost OSH improvements in smallholder agriculture and rural MSMEs, complemented by EU-funded SWITCHAsia projects (EU’s initiative promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production) and Safe and Fair migration initiatives.

Viet Nam participates in UN and ILO decent work and social-protection programmes, while EU-funded Ship to Shore Rights focuses on labour conditions in fishing, including informal and migrant fishers. National risk-assessment tools in high-risk sectors can be adapted for small farms and small-scale mining, supporting more preventive approaches in informal workplaces.

In the Philippines, the ILO-implemented *Improving Workers’ Rights in Rural Sectors* project (funded by US DOL) targets rural, often informal, workers, while EU–UNICEF child-labour prevention in agriculture addresses hazardous informal farm work. Ship to Shore Rights covers migrant and informal fishers, and “safety-at-sea training and weather-risk early-warning systems” directly benefit small-scale fishing communities. OSHC and DOLE run national OSH campaigns that increasingly reach workers in informal sector.

Timor-Leste has received an OSH framework project funded by the Republic of Korea and has benefited from “ILO and Indonesia 3-day training [on] enforcement of Timor-Leste’s new national OSH legal framework,” building institutional capacity to extend OSH beyond the small formal sector.

Thailand combines national and international funding. The Japan-funded ILO project *Promoting a Safe and Healthy Working Environment in Thailand and Cambodia* supports implementation of C155 and C187 and strengthens inspection systems. Thailand also participates in Ship to Shore Rights, and national campaigns on “road safety, heat stress, pesticide safety and disaster risk reduction” have clear OSH implications for informal farmers, fishers and rural workers. Together, these programmes show how targeted funding, cooperation, training and information efforts can progressively bring OSH into the everyday reality of workers in informal sector across the region.

Global initiatives such as PAGE, the United Nations Partnership for Action on Green Economy as a joint initiative of UNITAR, UNIDO, UNDP, UNEP and the ILO that supports countries in advancing environmentally sustainable growth in sectors such as agriculture through coordinated policy advice, capacity building and long-term institutional support. The programme promotes green jobs and green SME development while strengthening livelihoods and social equity. By integrating decent work principles into climate adaptation and mitigation policies, PAGE helps countries enhance occupational safety and health, improve productivity, and build more competitive and resilient industries aligned with a just transition.

Country level initiatives

Several AMS have advanced bilateral cooperation mechanisms that strengthen OSH outcomes for workers in the informal sector. Bilateral MOUs are important because they create structured, mutually agreed frameworks that improve worker protection, harmonise OSH practices, and strengthen coordination.

ASEAN's progress on SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth provides an essential lens for assessing improvements in OSH and labour protections for workers in high-risk sectors such as mining, agriculture and fisheries²⁷. These sectors remain central to rural livelihoods and national economies, yet they are characterised by persistent informality, hazardous working environments, limited access to social protection and weak enforcement of labour rights. Recent national initiatives across ASEAN demonstrate meaningful advances aligned with SDG 8.3 on informal employment, SDG 8.7 on child labour and SDG 8.8 on labour rights and safe working environments.

In Indonesia, OSH improvements in artisanal and small-scale mining and smallholder agriculture reflect a broader regional trend of strengthening legal and policy frameworks to address hazardous work and informality²⁸. Community-based training and safer pesticide-handling practices have contributed to reducing risks for informal agricultural workers. In the Philippines, progress in fisheries and coastal agriculture has been supported by stronger social dialogue and collaboration among government, employers and workers, helping address OSH deficits and child labour risks in these sectors. Thailand has undertaken some of the most significant reforms in the region, particularly in the fishing and seafood industries. Enhanced labour inspection, improved OSH standards and alignment with international labour norms have contributed to safer working conditions for migrant and informal fishers. Viet Nam has strengthened OSH governance in agricultural supply chains dominated by MSMEs, improving compliance with labour standards and expanding social dialogue mechanisms. Cambodia has advanced OSH in rural agriculture by addressing hazardous work, strengthening labour institutions and expanding social protection coverage for workers in informal sector.

Cambodia's rollout of the Social Security Law and the National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPPF) 2024-2035²⁹ together with the Operational Plan on Social Security Formalization (2024–2026)³⁰, represents a major step toward extending labour protections to workers in informal sector, particularly those in agriculture and rural sectors. The initiative aims to progressively expand access to health insurance, maternity benefits, employment injury protection and income security schemes for workers traditionally excluded from formal systems. By integrating workers in informal sector into national social protection mechanisms, the reforms strengthen occupational safety and health outcomes, reduce vulnerability to work-related risks, and support more resilient livelihoods.

In Indonesia, the ILO Safety and Health for ALL programme supports community-based OSH training for smallholders, introduces simplified hazard-identification tools suitable for workers with low OSH literacy, and enhances labour inspection capacity in remote districts. In Viet Nam, the programme

²⁷ International Labour Organization. ILO Brief. Decent work in food and agricultural supply chains. Trends, challenges and innovations in Asia and the Pacific. Geneva, September 2025.

²⁸ See ILO's Vision Zero Fund country profile Indonesia.

²⁹ National Social Protection Council. National Social Protection Framework 2024 – 2035. October, 2024.

³⁰ National Social Protection Council. Operational Plan on the Social Security Formalization 2024-2026. October, 2024.

works with cooperatives and micro-enterprises to integrate OSH into small-scale manufacturing and agriculture.

The Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND) programme, a PAOT programme targeting small scale family running agriculture workplaces is designed to improve safety, health and working conditions among community-level producers and micro-enterprises—groups that make up a significant share of the informal sectors in ASEAN. By improving OSH in neighbourhood-based work, WIND tries to help create the minimum conditions needed for workers to transition into more formal and protected employment relationships. Indonesia has applied WIND principles in rural agricultural communities, particularly in smallholder farming and village-based food production. Activities included participatory hazard mapping in villages, safer pesticide handling demonstrations, improved drying and storage areas for crops, community-level OSH committees linking farmers, cooperatives and local authorities. This shows how programmes such as WIND can support collective OSH improvements for workers in the informal agricultural sector, where formal inspection systems rarely reach.

Indonesia's National Social Security Administering Body for Employment (BPJS Ketenagakerjaan) introduced the 345 Strategy³¹ in 2022 to expand coverage to vulnerable groups, including those in village ecosystems, markets, small enterprises, and supply chains—areas where agriculture, fisheries and mining workers are concentrated. BPJS Ketenagakerjaan provides compensation for work accidents, medical treatment, disability benefits, and death benefits, reducing the economic shock that often pushes informal households into poverty. This protective strategy uses community agents, public figures, and supply-chain actors to register workers who are otherwise difficult to reach. Despite its importance, participation among workers in informal sector remains extremely low.

The Local Initiative for OSH Network (LION) and the Women Workers Forum (PPMI-SPSI Bekasi) deliver basic OSH training tailored to women workers, many of whom work informally in small factories, home-based units, and agro-processing processing. Training components include body and hazard mapping to identify risks in low-resource workplaces; OSH principles linked to women's health, including reproductive health and ergonomic risks; awareness of gender inequality in OSH and strategies for collective action. This initiative fills a major gap, as women in informal work are often excluded from mainstream OSH training.

In Indonesia's mining sector, legalisation practices through permits can help strengthening compliance with OSH regulations, and because community mining is often carried out without permits (known as PETI), Law No. 4/2009—amended by Law No. 3/2020—establishes a framework for formalising these activities through People's Mining Permits (IPR) and designated People's Mining Areas (WPR). WPRs are zones designated by Indonesian authorities where small-scale, community-based mining is legally permitted. They are part of a broader effort to address the country's massive informal mining sector, which includes millions of artisanal and small-scale miners (ASM) working without permits, often in hazardous environments. The policy is designed to shift miners from operating illegally—often under dangerous, exploitative conditions—into a regulated framework where government oversight and community benefits are possible. Once an area becomes a WPR, authorities can enforce basic safety standards, including safer excavation practices, environmental controls and reduced use of toxic substances.

³¹ International Social Security. Extending social security coverage to vulnerable groups with the "345 Strategy" of BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Sustainable growth of informal workers and small micro-sized enterprises. Geneva, 2022.

The ILO project Rural Sector Project, funded by the US Department of Labor and implemented under the ILO's programme Safety + Health for All, aimed to advance and sustain decent working conditions in rural communities in the Philippines and Indonesia.

In Indonesia, the Improving Workers' Rights in Indonesia's Rural Sectors initiative³² strengthened labour rights and working conditions in Indonesia's rural sectors, focusing on palm oil, fisheries, and other rural work. From 2021–2024, it expanded OSH training, improved compliance systems, and supported government institutions to better enforce labour standards. Thousands of workers and employers received guidance on safety, wages, contracts, and social protection. The initiative promoted gender-responsive approaches, reducing risks for women in hazardous roles and led to engagement of communities.

In the Philippines, the ILO project *Improving Workers' Rights in Rural Sectors of the Philippines*, targeted sectors where women and workers in informal sector are most vulnerable—particularly fishing, banana production, and small-scale mining. The project included improving inspection systems, strengthening coordination through the OSH Intergovernmental Council, and enhancing strategic compliance planning and the delivery of OSH Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials. Improving OSH in hazardous rural sectors, including training workers and employers (under PAOT and WIND and WIFI programmes), developing sector-specific OSH tools, and facilitating safety dialogues—for example, with small-scale banana farmers and fishing communities. Strengthening tripartite and community-level institutions, working with employers' groups, trade unions, cooperatives, and rural workers' associations to embed safer and fairer work practices.

Lao PDR demonstrates how multi-partner OSH cooperation can strengthen the OSH of workers in informal sector such as agriculture, mining and rural transport. The country benefits from a wide range of UN-supported initiatives, including the ILO/Korea Partnership on OSH and Social Protection, the ILO/China South–South Cooperation Project (2023–2026), and FAO's Farmer Field Schools, which deliver hands-on training on safe pesticide use, post-harvest handling and ergonomic practices. UNDP and IFAD rural-livelihoods projects incorporate OSH modules on safe equipment use and hazard prevention, while Mekong River Basin programmes address water-related risks for small-scale fishers. Lao PDR's Five-Year National OSH Programme (2022–2026) explicitly includes agriculture and mining

Timor Leste improved capacity building for labour inspectors and local authorities to identify OSH risks in small fish-processing units. These sector-oriented trainings emphasized the identification of risks such as cold-room exposure, sharp tools, slippery floors, repetitive-motion injuries, and chemical hazards common in small fish-processing units; using OSH measurement tools to assess noise, lighting, temperature, and air quality; applying inspection findings to real-world scenarios to strengthen enforcement capacity.

Cambodia offers a strong example of how UN-funded OSH programmes can be leveraged to reach workers in informal sector in agriculture, construction and rural micro-enterprises. Under the Cambodia Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) 2024–2028, OSH is integrated into national priorities for rural development and social protection, helping extend basic safety training and hazard awareness to workers who operate outside formal enterprises. The PAGE Cambodia initiative strengthens green and safe production practices among small producers, while the ILO–Jana “Safety + Health for All” programme specifically targets OSH capacities in MSMEs and informal workplaces. These programmes introduce practical tools—such as participatory training, simplified

³² International Labour Organization. Improving Workers' Rights in Indonesia's Rural Sectors Key Achievements 2021–2024.

risk-assessment methods and community outreach—that are well suited to small farms and craft producers.

Synthesis of Country-Level Initiatives and Sector-Based Practices: Key Lessons and Replicable Models

Across ASEAN, country-level initiatives and sector-based practices reveal a set of common, transferable lessons for strengthening OSH in informal sector. Despite the diversity of national systems, several approaches consistently demonstrate impact, scalability and adaptability across the agriculture, fisheries, and mining sectors.

A first lesson is that community-based and participatory OSH training models—such as Work Improvements in Small Enterprises programme (WISE), Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND), Work Improvement for Small Construction Sites (WISCON) and other Participatory-Action-Oriented-Training (PAOT) approaches—remain among the most effective and replicable tools for reaching dispersed workers with low OSH literacy. These models succeed because they rely on peer learning, low-cost improvements and locally adapted solutions. Countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Cambodia have shown that these methods can be applied across smallholder agriculture, fisheries, rural supply chains, small construction sites and micro-manufacturing units with minimal resources.

A second lesson is the value of integrating OSH into existing community and sectoral systems, rather than creating parallel structures. Indonesia's use of Puskesmas and Pos UKK, Viet Nam's work with cooperatives and craft villages, and Lao PDR's integration of OSH into agricultural extension and rural development programmes demonstrate that embedding OSH into familiar institutions dramatically increases reach and sustainability. These models are highly replicable because they leverage existing networks—health posts, cooperatives, village committees, fisheries groups, and rural associations—to deliver OSH training, hazard identification and basic services.

A third lesson is the importance of simplified tools and low-cost engineering controls. Across AMS, the most successful interventions are those that translate OSH requirements into practical, accessible formats: simplified risk-assessment checklists, pictorial guidance for workers with low literacy, basic ventilation or guarding solutions, and ergonomic improvements using locally available materials. Viet Nam's craft-village pilots, Malaysia's NIOSH OSH-MADANI programme, and Thailand's sector-specific PAOT modules illustrate how small, affordable changes can significantly reduce risks for workers in informal sector

A fourth lesson is that multi-stakeholder partnerships—involving government agencies, employers' and workers' organisations, cooperatives, community groups and development partners—are essential for reaching informal workers at scale. Programmes such as Indonesia's Safety and Health for ALL, the EU-funded Ship to Shore Rights initiative, and Korea-supported OSH frameworks in Lao PDR and Myanmar show that coordinated action strengthens inspection capacity, expands training coverage and supports policy reforms. These partnerships are replicable because they align incentives across institutions and mobilise technical and financial resources.

Finally, the mapping highlights that models combining OSH with social protection, formalisation pathways and livelihood support are particularly effective in informal sector where OSH alone cannot address structural vulnerabilities. Cambodia's informal-economy registry, Indonesia's BPJS expansion strategies, and Thailand's efforts to extend OSH and social security to fishers demonstrate that integrated approaches produce more durable improvements. These models are replicable when adapted to national systems and supported by clear legal frameworks.

Taken together, these lessons show that the most successful and transferable approaches are those that are participatory, low-cost, community-embedded, and supported by coordinated institutional partnerships. They offer AMS a practical foundation for scaling OSH improvements across informal sector while strengthening national OSH systems and advancing decent work.

A. Inventory of ASEAN Member States' Legal Frameworks and Best Practices on OSH in the Informal Sector

AMS OSH Framework	Brunei Darussalam	Cambodia	Indonesia	Lao PDR	Malaysia	Myanmar
The Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)	Not ratified	Not ratified	Not ratified	Ratified in July 2022	Ratified in 2024	Not ratified but ratified 4 Fundamental Conventions
The Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)	Ratified in 2024 In the process of establishing a national tripartite advisory body on OSH	Not ratified the National Commission on Occupational Safety and Health (tripartite body)	Ratified in 2015.	Ratified in July 2022	Ratified in 2012	Not ratified
Other key OSH-relevant areas for workers in the informal sector (labour inspection, fishing, mining, agriculture, violence & harassment)	No ratifications of C81, C129, C184, C188 or C190	Not ratified C190 Violence and harassment Convention 188	No ratifications of C81, C129, C184, or C190 Announced the ratification of C188, Work on Fishing Convention, ratified in 2026	No ratifications of C81, C129, C184, C188 or C190	Ratified C81 (Labour Inspection) No ratifications of C129, C184, C188 or C190	No ratifications of C81, C129, C184, C188 or C190
National strategies or plans	Wawasan Brunei 2035 (Brunei Vision 2035). No direct OSH or informal-sector emphasis	Vision 2030 and 2050. No direct OSH or informal-sector emphasis One of six strategies in Cambodia's National OSH master Plan is to promote Safety and Health working environment in SMEs, rural areas, community and the informal economy, while strengthening OSH awareness. This strategy includes compiling data on subcontractors and informal operators studying rural work hazards, and providing adequate training and resources for inspectors. Specialized training should focus on agriculture, SMES, and self-employment, while social protection service such as ID Poor and the NSSF should be expanded to cover informal workers.	Vision 2045 reforms include expanding basic OSH services through community health centres and informal-worker OSH initiatives	Not identified	Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 (SPV2030). No direct OSH or informal-sector emphasis. DOSM Informal Employment Statistics & Inclusion of Agriculture (Since 2021).	National Social Protection Strategic Plan (2014) targets vulnerable groups but does not address workers in the informal sector as a labour category or include OSH.

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		Promotion and training program, in cooperation with social partner and networks such as WISE, WISH, WISCON, WIND and WINDY, should target SMEs, domestic work, and rural economies to improve working conditions, productivity, and self-improvement				
National OSH profile	Not available	National OSH and Asbestos Profile available. No explicit mention of workers in the informal sector.	The Indonesian National OSH Profile 2022. KEMNAKER (2018), National OSH Profile in Indonesia. No explicit mention of workers in the informal sector.	The National OSH Profile of Lao PDR 2021. No explicit mention of workers in the informal sector.	Malaysian Occupational Safety and Health Profile (DOSH, 2016). No explicit mention of workers in the informal sector.	Myanmar National Occupational Safety and Health Profile – 2018. No explicit mention of workers in the informal sector.
National OSH policy and OSH relevant legislation	No national OSH policy available; OSH governed mainly through the Workplace Safety and Health Act.	No national OSH policy available; workers in the informal sector excluded from statutory OSH protections and routine labour inspections	No national OSH policy available; OSH core laws focus on legally recognised employment relationships.	National OSH Strategy identifies informal workers as vulnerable but lacks dedicated mechanisms. Lao PDR's Decree on Occupational Safety and Health (2019) only applies to formal enterprises and registered employers. Plan to develop a dedicated OSH Law by 2029. Ongoing revision of its Labour Law to expand access to social security protections for informal workers	Generic legislation applies to all workers. Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994 (OSHA 1994), Section 18 places a general duty on every employee to take care of their OSH. ; amendments (2022) strengthen training and supervision duties for all workers;; national OSH policy under development. Gig Workers Act 2025 (Act 872) expands protections.	OSH system fragmented across older laws and the 2019 OSH Law; no provisions tailored to informal workers; National Tripartite OSH Council exists.
National OSH Programme, National Occupational Safety and Health Master Plan	No national OSH programme or master plan is available.	The Third Master Plan on Occupational Safety and Health (2023-2027) The Second Occupational Safety and Health Master Plan 2018-2022 (2018) The First Occupational Safety and Health Master Plan 2009-2013 (2009). National OSH Master Plan includes pesticide-safety training and community OSH outreach for small farms.	The National OSH Programme 2024–2029 promotes community-level OSH awareness and includes capacity-building for informal workers.	The 3rd Five-Year National OSH Programme (2022–2026) covers agriculture, mining, transport and other high-risk sectors, but does not explicitly reference workers in the informal sector. National OSH Strategy identifies informal workers as vulnerable but lacks dedicated mechanisms.	Multiple OSH Master Plans (2015; 2016–2020; 2021–2025) exist; Informal sector has been put under Malaysia OSH Masterplan 2021-2025, and a new 2026–2030 plan is under development.	No national OSH programme or master plan is available. Myanmar Decent Work Country Programme 2018–2021

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		National OSH Master Plan includes informal workers as a priority group.				
Human Rights Due Diligence, National Action Plan (NAP) on BHR, ...	No national action plan or HRDD framework is available.	No national action plan or HRDD framework is available.	Presidential Regulations No 60/2023 on National Strategy on Business and Human Rights.	No national action plan or HRDD framework is available.	National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (2025–2030); includes themes on labour rights and supply chains, but no explicit mention of informal workers in the provided text.	No national action plan or HRDD framework is available.
OSH funded and cooperation projects and capacity building	SHENA and the Labour Department run OSH training and promotion units and collaborate with international partners on capacity building.	ILO–Japan Safety + Health for All programme strengthens OSH capacities in MSMEs and informal workplaces.	Supported by ILO's Safety + Health for All and rural-sector OSH projects, including the Decent Work in Marine Fishing survey and rural OSH initiatives. SCORE Project is an ILO global programme which improves productivity and working conditions in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) KOSHA ODA Project (based on the Implementation Agreement between KOSHA and MoM).	Receives support through an OSH framework project funded by the Republic of Korea.	Hosts the ILO EXPAND project on forced and child labour; national OSH capacity building includes training for small enterprises and workers in the informal sector.	Supported by an OSH framework project funded by the Republic of Korea; additional ILO programmes target OSH in agriculture and supply chains.
OSH Training Programs	General OSH promotion through SHENA and the Labour Department, but not on sector-specific or informal-sector OSH training.	Targeted to informal economy workplaces such as WISE, WIND, WINDY and WISCON	WIND programme in rural agricultural communities. OSH awareness training initiative of 1800 workers in the fisheries sector (2015-2017). Safety-at-sea training and weather-risk early-warning systems	OSH training covers pesticide handling, safe harvesting, ergonomics, and heat-stress prevention (ILO–EU SoLaR). Fisheries training delivered through WWF and FAO includes safe gear use, boat operation, net handling, cold-chain safety, and water-related OSH risks. Mining OSH training delivered through ILO small-scale mining programmes.	NIOSH OSHMADANI provides free OSH training for microenterprises, self-employed workers, and very small firms, many of whom are informal. Occupational Health Posts reach informal palm-oil plantation workers.	Mining Trade Union Safety Workshops: Conducted collaboratively by the International Labour Organization (ILO), IndustriALL, CTUM, and MWFM. Safe Work for Youth Kit (Fishing & Aquaculture): An ILO-developed toolkit aimed at young and informal workers. WIND programme for informal farmers.
ASEAN-OSHNET	- ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network (ASEAN-OSHNET) Workplan 2026–2030 in collaboration with the ILO (e.g. inspector training programme) - Development of SME-focused OSH risk-management guidebooks used by agribusiness MSMEs. - Workshops on OSH for informal fishers and coastal MSMEs. - Regional OSH inspection checklist for SMEs and informal sectors. - Training of trainers on labour inspection for SMEs and informal economy.					

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	• ASEAN Risk Management Guidebook focusing on MSMEs. • Scorecard system for OSH data harmonization. • Community-level OSH promotion for informal workers • Low-cost OSH training modules for small agrifood and fisheries units • Regional workshops on OSH for informal and SME workers					
ASEAN initiatives	• Strengthening labour inspection in informal sectors and SMEs outlined in the ASEAN Labour Inspection Committee (ALICOM) Work Plan 2022–2030 • ASEAN Labour Ministers' Work Programme • ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection • ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development (SAPSMED) • SEAN Coordinating Committee on MSMEs (ACCMSME) • ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) • ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum (AFCF) • ASEAN Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (RDPE) • ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection (2013) and Roadmap on Social Protection • ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) • Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI)					
UN-funded programmes	Food Stall Safety Awareness Programmes: The ILO, via ASEAN-OSHNET networks, supports SHENA in rolling out OSH guidelines specifically tailored for the workers in the informal sector. ILO proposal to establish a national tripartite platform on OSH.	Cambodia Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) 2024–2028 PAGE Cambodia Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE), Cambodia	ILO 2024 Survey on Decent Work in Marine Fishing ILO's Safety + Health for All Programme. Improving Workers' Rights in Indonesia's Rural Sectors project (2021–2024). ILO and Government of Japan funded programme on Extending social security coverage in ASEAN.	ILO/Korea Partnership – OSH and Social Protection. ILO/China South–South Cooperation Project (2023–2026). FAO Farmer Field Schools (FFS). UNDP / IFAD Rural Livelihoods Projects include modules on basic OSH, safe equipment use. UNDP Mekong River Basin Projects. FAO Small-Scale Fisheries Capacity Building. UNDP / GEF Mercury Reduction Projects.	ILO Participatory, Action-Oriented Training (PAOT) for informal economy workers. WISE (Work Improvement in Small Enterprises) –micro-agrifood processing units. WIND (Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development) – applied to smallholder agriculture and rural informal workers. WISCON (Work Improvement for Small Construction Sites) – relevant for small informal mining and quarrying operations. ILO EXPAND Project (Funded by Canada). FAO/ILO rural OSH guidance – applied in smallholder agriculture training.	Vision Zero Fund Myanmar's ginger and garment supply chains (May 2020 – April 2023). Vision Zero Fund Pesticide Safety in Action (October 2021) and Banning hazardous pesticides (October, 2021). ILO Flagship programme on OSH Safety + Health for All (March 2020 - December 2023) ILO Community engagement on OSH: 12,429 community members reached through OSH campaigns. ILO and UN partners programmes to combat child labour and forced labour in agriculture and other rural sectors ILO Good Agricultural Practices training.
Other national programmes	Memorandum of Understanding between the Safety, Health and Environment National Authority (SHENA) and the Ministry of Manpower, Republic of Singapore.	National Social Protection Policy Framework (2024–2035) and Operational Plan on Social Security Formalization (2024–2026), including pilots for an informal economy registry and simplified contribution schemes; plus Thailand–Cambodia labour cooperation agreements —	Social protection expansion initiatives (PERISAI, BPJS 345 Strategy) and annual Labour Force Survey focused on formal sector; Non-wage recipient workers (old age security, employment injury security and death security). OSH-related rules for small-scale mining permits	MoLSW–ILO OSH training programme for high-risk sectors; National Social Protection Strategies (2021–25, 2026–30) prioritising formal and informal workers; and Vietnam–Laos cross-border labour cooperation supporting safer seasonal agricultural work.	Malaysia–Thailand cooperation on fisheries safety — Joint initiatives on vessel safety, migrant fisher training, and coordinated inspections in shared maritime zones. Philippines–Malaysia maritime cooperation — Collaboration on vessel safety standards, training for fishers, and emergency response coordination.	Thailand–Myanmar MOUs on migrant worker protection, including OSH briefings, rights awareness, and safer recruitment pathways for informal-sector workers.

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		MOUs covering migrant worker recruitment, OSH information sharing, and pre-departure/post-arrival training alignment.	(IPR/WPR); and Malaysia–Indonesia migrant labour agreements including OSH responsibilities for employers, safe recruitment and mechanisms for reporting workplace incidents.	Vietnam–Laos cross-border labour cooperation — Agreements supporting safer working conditions for seasonal agricultural workers.	Malaysia–Indonesia agreements on migrant labour — Bilateral arrangements that include OSH responsibilities for employers, safe recruitment, and mechanisms for reporting workplace incidents.	
EU-funded programmes	Safe and Fair (EU-UN Spotlight Initiative): Funded by the EU and implemented by the ILO and UN Women, this programme works to ensure safe and fair labour conditions, prevent violence, and protect the rights of women migrant workers.	Ship to Shore Rights Southeast Asia (fishing-sector labour migration). SWITCH-Asia projects supporting small farmers, craft producers, and informal MSMEs to adopt safer, greener production.	Ship to Shore Rights Southeast Asia (fishing-sector labour migration). SWITCH-Asia projects on sustainable palm oil, fisheries, and waste management, engaging smallholders, fishers, and informal waste pickers. EU–UN Joint Programme on Social Protection, expanding access for informal workers.	Ship to Shore Rights Southeast Asia (fishing-sector labour migration). SWITCH-Asia clean agriculture and organic value-chain projects improving OSH in pesticide use and post-harvest handling. EU–ILO SoLaR Project (2021–2024) strengthening labour rights, OSH, and social protection in agrifood (coffee and tea).	EU–UN Women Safe and Fair Migration initiative supporting informal migrant workers in agriculture. SWITCH-Asia sustainable palm oil and rubber projects engaging smallholders and informal workers in OSH and environmental improvements.	Ship to Shore Rights Southeast Asia (fishing-sector labour migration). SWITCH-Asia MSME development projects supporting informal micro-enterprises in food processing and crafts. EU–ILO Decent Work in Agriculture improving OSH for smallholder farmers.
OSH risk assessments	No interventions or programmes listed in this section.	No interventions or programmes listed in this section.	Governmental Regulations No 50/2012 has mandated OSH-MS a company which employed 100 workers or less than 100 workers with high potential hazards. Government Regulation No. 28 of 2025 concerning Risk-Based Business license administration.	INGO-led ASM Safety Workshops (e.g., Pact, PlanetGOLD partners) provide basic mine-safety risk assessments, safer equipment use, and hazard-identification training for artisanal and small-scale miners.	NGO-led safety training for artisanal miners (adapted from ILO mining safety manuals).	No interventions or programmes listed in this section.
OSH Information, Education, and Communication initiatives	Safety Month campaigns from SHENA.	No specific national IEC initiatives listed, but Cambodia participates in ASEAN-OSHNET regional IEC activities, including OSH workshops for informal fishers and coastal MSMEs, and dissemination of SME-focused OSH risk-management guidebooks.	2018 (LION) and the Women Workers Forum (PPMI-SPSI Bekasi). OSH Month (during January-February each year) 2025-2026 socialization for Trade Union in Indonesia concerning OSH socialization on OSH for OSH personnel at the enterprises.	Social Protection and OSH awareness campaigns (ILO–Korea, ILO–China)	Regional workshops on low-cost OSH improvements for small-scale agriculture and fisheries supported by the EU and ILO/Japan.	No standalone national IEC initiatives listed, but Myanmar benefits from ILO community-level OSH engagement under the Vision Zero Fund and Safety + Health for All programmes.
Enforcement mechanisms	No specific enforcement mechanisms for workers in the informal sector listed; OSH enforcement	No explicit OSH enforcement mechanisms for informal workers; routine labour	Labour Inspectors has mandated for labour law enforcement (Ministerial Regulations on Labour	Inspectorate designed mainly for formal enterprises.	Labour-inspection capacity building includes training inspectors on informal-sector OSH, but	Labour-inspection capacity building underway, including development of national training strategies for

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	is oriented toward formal workplaces under SHENA and the Labour Department.	inspections exclude informal-sector workplaces	Inspector Procedures); Capacity building for labour Inspector on OSH	ILO OSH and Labour Inspection Capacity-Building (MoLSW partnership).	enforcement remains primarily formal-sector focused.	inspectors, but no dedicated informal-sector enforcement.
Trade and investment and FPRW	Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP): As a signatory, Brunei is bound to a dedicated labour chapter. Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership (TPSEP): has an accompanying parallel Agreement on Labour Cooperation. ASEAN Framework Agreements (e.g., RCEP). Bilateral EPA with Japan Economic Partnership Agreement.	Trade-related labour dialogue increasingly framed by FPRW through the regional Trade, Labour and FPRW in Southeast Asia project. U.S.–Cambodia Bilateral Trade & Textile Agreement. United States-Cambodia Agreement on Reciprocal Trade. Cambodia-China Free Trade Agreement (CCFTA).	Canada (2025–2028) ILO project on FPRW and gender-inclusive workplace policies in export sectors, including OSH and sexual-harassment prevention, linked to trade and investment. EU–Indonesia CEPA negotiations include labour provisions referencing ILO fundamental conventions, with dispute-settlement and sanctions as a last resort. Indonesia has ratified IPEF (Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity Agreement) relating to Supply Chain Resilience towards Presidential Regulations No.136/2024. United States-Indonesia Trade Commitments. Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (IA-CEPA). EFTA-Indonesia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.	No bilateral FTA-linked labour provisions detailed. Benefits indirectly from regional Trade, Labour and FPRW in Southeast Asia work on export-sector compliance and FPRW. ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA). Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA). US-Lao Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA). Lao-Vietnam Trade Agreement.	Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) for the EU–Malaysia FTA examines labour and FPRW implications, including OSH and social-protection dimensions in export sectors. Also covered by the regional Trade, Labour and FPRW in Southeast Asia project. Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Malaysia–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (MNZFTA). Malaysia–Australia Free Trade Agreement (MAFTA).	No specific trade-and-labour FTA provisions listed; trade-related OSH and FPRW issues addressed mainly through supply-chain projects (e.g. Vision Zero Fund, agriculture and garment chains) rather than formal FTA labour chapters. EU's "Everything But Arms" (EBA) Scheme. ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) and broader ASEAN Plus partnerships (e.g., with Australia, New Zealand, China, and India).

AMS	The Philippines	Singapore	Thailand	Timor Leste	Viet Nam
OSH Framework					
The Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)	In 2025, national and regional tripartite bodies endorsed ratification and prepared a National Action Plan	Ratified (11 June 2019)	Ratified (instrument deposited 10 June 2025); ratification makes OSH a national priority across all sectors, with	Not ratified; Timor-Leste has ratified six fundamental conventions but no technical OSH conventions.	Not ratified

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	for C155, but the instrument has not yet been deposited.		progressive extension of OSH protection to all workers expected.		
The Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)	Ratified (17 June 2019)	Ratified (11 June 2012)	Ratified 23 March 2016 (in force since 23 March 2017).	Not ratified	Ratified (2014)
Other key OSH-relevant areas for workers in the informal sector (labour inspection, fishing, mining, agriculture, violence & harassment)	Formal adoption of C176 has led to strengthened mine-site inspections, dust-control measures, and mandatory OSH committees in mines. Ratified C81 No ratifications of C129, C184, C188 or C190	No ratifications of C129, C184, C188 or C190. Ratified C81 (Labour Inspection). Maintains a robust national WSH framework with sector-specific guidelines.	Ratification C188 strengthening minimum OSH, accommodation, medical care and safety standards on vessels. Leading to reforms in vessel safety, worker registration, and OSH training for migrant fishers. Ratified C81 No ratifications of C129, C184 or C190	No ratifications of C81, C129, C184, C188 or C190	Ratified several labour conventions (including on labour inspection and seafarers), but not the main sectoral OSH conventions for mining, agriculture or fishing (C176, C184, C188).
National strategies or plans	National labour and decent-work strategies increasingly recognise rural and informal workers, especially in agriculture and mining	WSH 2028. Strong tripartite approach with targets including sustained fatality rate below 1.0 per 100,000 workers. Platform Workers Act 2024 extends protections to gig/platform workers.	National strategies on productivity, social protection and decent work increasingly reference informal and migrant workers, especially in fisheries and agriculture.	The Strategic Development Plan 2011–2030 provides the macro-framework for OSH planning, with broad commitments to human capital and rural development.	Vietnam's revised Labour Code has updated provisions regulating the working environment, hazard reporting, and specific safety protections for various demographics, including minors and female employees.
National OSH profile	ILO-style national OSH profile (through DOLE/OSHC and ILO dashboards). No explicit mention of workers in the informal sector.	Comprehensive and regularly updated OSH data published by MOM and the WSH Council through annual reports and public dashboards.	Occupational Safety and Health in Thailand, 2018 OSH Profile. No explicit mention of workers in the informal sector.	Occupational Safety, Health, and Hygiene profile in Timor-Leste is embedded in the OSHMS country report. No explicit mention of workers in the informal sector.	The Profile of OSH in Vietnam, 2020. No explicit mention of workers in the informal sector.
National OSH policy and OSH relevant legislation	National OSH Framework recognises workers in the informal sector, but enforcement remains formal-sector focused; OSH governed by Republic Act 11058 (2018) and updated DOLE guidelines just for the formal sector.	Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Act 2006 (amended) – cornerstone legislation with broad duties on stakeholders. Work Injury Compensation Act (WICA). Platform Workers Act 2024 (effective 2025) introduces WSH duties, training, hazard mitigation, and mandatory injury compensation for platform workers. Strong coverage of formal sector, SMEs, contractors, and platform economy.	OSH governed by the OSH&E Act (2011) and Labour Protection Act; some protections extend to domestic, home-based, and agricultural workers, but enforcement gaps persist.	Labour Code (2012) and Law No. 11/2023 establish general OSH obligations across sectors.	OSH Law (2015) extends OSH rights to all workers, including informal and self-employed; strengthened provisions on hazard reporting and vulnerable groups.
National OSH Programme, National Occupational Safety and Health Master Plan	The National OSH Framework is in place and a National Action Plan for C155 ratification is being developed. National Occupational Safety and Health (NOSH) Strategy: 2024-2028, which provides a roadmap of medium-term priorities for enhancing	WSH 2028 roadmap supported by tripartite Workplace Safety and Health Council (WSHC). BizSAFE programme for stepwise capability building in SMEs and self-employed. Emphasis on prevention, risk management, and culture change.	Three OSH Master Plans (2002–2006, 2012–2016, 2017–2021) exist, with the latest developed under C187 obligations; sectoral focus includes high-risk and migrant-worker sectors.	No national OSH programme or master plan is available.	No national OSH programme or master plan is listed in the document.

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	OSH and bridging formal and informal businesses.				
Human Rights Due Diligence, National Action Plan (NAP) on BHR	National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights with attention to migrant workers, agriculture, and supply chains is still under development.	No NAP on BHR or HRDD framework	National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP-BHR) (1st NAP 2019–2022), with a strong focus on migrant workers, supply chains and high-risk sectors	No NAP on BHR or HRDD framework	No NAP on BHR or HRDD framework
OSH funded and cooperation projects and capacity building	BuildCA2P Project to promote OSH for vulnerable agricultural workers.	WSH Council and MOM run capacity-building programmes for SMEs, contractors, and self-employed persons in high-risk sectors.	Participatory, action-oriented training (PAOT) and sector-specific modules (WISE, WIND, WISCON) delivered through ASEAN-OSHNET and ILO partnerships.	ADRA Timor-Leste Agriculture and Livelihoods Programmes: ADRA provides community-level vocational training in agriculture.	ILO OSH for Hazardous Work: extending OSH protection to hazardous sectors, including workers in the informal sector and small-scale operations ENHANCE Project: Funded by the US Department of Labor, for rural and informal settings to reduce and prevent child labour. Oxfam DGD Shrimp & Rice Value Chains Project
OSH Training Programs	Safety-at-Sea and weather-risk early-warning training for fishers	Robust infrastructure via WSHC/MOM: bizSAFE, sector-specific (construction, marine, platform), multilingual materials, and public campaigns	Sector-specific OSH training for informal and migrant workers in fisheries, agriculture, and rural sectors (e.g., vessel safety, heat stress, chemical exposure).	WorldFish Processing & Business Skills Training. Seafood Safety and Financial Literacy implemented via the University of the South Pacific	High-Tech Agricultural Vocational Training: Co-managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA)
ASEAN-OSHNET	- ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network (ASEAN-OSHNET) Workplan 2026–2030 in collaboration with the ILO (e.g. inspector training programme) - Regional training on risk assessment for small-scale mining. - Development of SME-focused OSH risk-management guidebooks used by agribusiness MSMEs. - Workshops on OSH for informal fishers and coastal MSMEs. - Regional OSH inspection checklist for SMEs and informal sectors. - Training of trainers on labour inspection for SMEs and informal economy. - ASEAN Risk Management Guidebook focusing on MSMEs. - Scorecard system for OSH data harmonization. - Community-level OSH promotion for informal workers - Low-cost OSH training modules for small agrifood and fisheries units - Regional workshops on OSH for informal and SME workers				
ASEAN initiatives (all regions)	- Strengthening labour inspection in informal sectors and SMEs outlined in the ASEAN Labour Inspection Committee (ALICOM) Work Plan 2022–2030. - ASEAN Labour Ministers' Work Programme - ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection - ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development (SAPSMED) - SEAN Coordinating Committee on MSMEs (ACCMSME) - ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) - ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum (AFCF) - ASEAN Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (RDPE) - ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection (2013) and Roadmap on Social Protection - ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) - Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI)				

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UN-funded programmes	ILO led Improving Workers' Rights in Rural Sectors of the Philippines funded by US DOL.		Promoting a Safe and Healthy Working Environment in Thailand and Cambodia (Japan-funded, ILO): Supports ratification and implementation of C155 and C187, including strengthening OSH systems and inspection	Participatory Action Training for Informal Sector (PATRIS) and Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND) Safety at Sea (FAO & Regional Fisheries Livelihood Programme)	Participates in UN and ILO decent work and social protection programmes. WIND (Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development) WISE (Work Improvement in Small Enterprises) Vision Zero Fund (VZF) Coffee Supply Chain Initiative ILO and Government of Japan funded programme on Extending social security coverage in ASEAN.
Other national programmes	Rural development, social protection, and child-labour elimination programmes with OSH elements in agriculture and mining; plus Philippines–Malaysia maritime cooperation — Collaboration on vessel safety standards, training for fishers, and emergency response coordination. DOLE leads on the following programmes: DILP/Kabuhayan Program - Provides direct production equipment and asset grants to registered cooperatives, small farmers, and municipal fisherfolk groups to formalize community enterprises TUPAD Program - deploys emergency wage interventions during seasonal displacement or climate disruption for projects like clearing irrigation canals, road repairs, and mangrove preservation. Enhanced TUPAD Framework - enables informal sector workers to transition from short-term employment to grassroots entrepreneurship, where informal sector workers who are graduates from the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) will be provided with capital to start collective enterprises.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Safety, Health and Environment National Authority (SHENA) and the Ministry of Manpower, Republic of Singapore.	National OSH agenda “Decent Safety and Health for Workers”; expanded social security for informal workers; and multiple bilateral cooperation agreements (with Malaysia, Cambodia, Myanmar) covering OSH for migrant and informal-sector workers. Malaysia–Thailand cooperation on fisheries safety — Joint initiatives on vessel safety, migrant fisher training, and coordinated inspections in shared maritime zones. Thailand–Cambodia labour cooperation agreements — MOUs covering migrant worker recruitment, OSH information sharing, and pre-departure/post-arrival training alignment. Thailand–Myanmar MOUs on migrant worker protection — Provisions for OSH briefings, rights awareness, and safer recruitment pathways for informal-sector workers.	No additional national programmes listed in this section.	Vietnam–Laos cross-border labour cooperation — Agreements supporting safer working conditions for seasonal agricultural workers.

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EU-funded programmes	Ship to Shore Rights Southeast Asia (fishing-sector labour migration). EU–UNICEF Child Labour Prevention in Agriculture, addressing hazardous informal farm work.	No EU-funded programmes listed in this section.	Ship to Shore Rights Southeast Asia (fishing-sector labour migration). EU engagement in fisheries reforms, including the 2015 “yellow card” process (lifted in 2019) that drove OSH and labour improvements.	ILO Agroforestry Skills Programme. Enhancing Rural Access Agro-Forestry Project (ERA Agro-Forestry). Partnership with SEFOPE, trade unions, and employers' organizations to protect vulnerable workers, improve formal labour market policies, and build the regulatory framework for standardized OSH reporting and compliance.	Ship to Shore Rights South-East Asia (ILO–EU–UN programme)
OSH risk assessments	No interventions or programmes listed in this section.	Mandatory risk assessments required under the WSH (Risk Management) Regulations. Sectoral tools, codes of practice, and guidance available, including support for SMEs via BizSAFE and high-risk sectors.	Regional training on risk assessment for small-scale mining, delivered through ASEAN-OSHNET, strengthens inspector and enterprise capacity to identify hazards in informal mining operations.	No interventions or programmes listed in this section.	Risk-assessment tools in high-risk sectors; these can be adapted for small farms and small-scale mining
OSH Information, Education, and Communication initiatives	OSHC and DOLE run national OSH campaigns and guidance	WSH Council and MOM run continuous public campaigns, sector-specific guidance, and multilingual materials and awareness programmes for small workplaces and platform workers.	National campaigns on road safety, heat stress, pesticide safety and disaster risk reduction have OSH implications for informal workers in agriculture	ILO and Indonesia 3-day training enforcement of Timor-Leste's new national OSH legal framework	No standalone IEC initiatives listed, but OSH communication is embedded in Vision Zero Fund, ENHANCE, and value-chain OSH projects.
Enforcement mechanisms	No explicit enforcement mechanisms for workers in the informal sector listed; OSH enforcement remains focused on formal workplaces despite recognition of informal workers in the national OSH framework.	Enforcement under the Workplace Safety and Health Act applies mainly to formal employers; informal and home-based workers fall outside practical enforcement.	Enforcement under the OSH&E Act and Labour Protection Act covers formal workplaces.	No OSH enforcement mechanisms listed; OSH obligations exist in law but no evidence of enforcement structures targeting workers in the informal sector.	No specific enforcement mechanisms for workers in the informal sector listed. Labour inspection is carried out by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA)
Trade and investment and FPRW	Sustainability Impact Assessment SIAs for the EU Philippines FTA EU. Philippines region benefited from the EU's Generalized Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+), which tied zero-tariff access directly to the ratification and implementation of 27 international conventions.	EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA) embeds labour provisions within a dedicated Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) chapter. US-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (USFTA) includes a labour chapter. Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) includes a labour chapter	Sustainability Impact Assessment SIAs for the EU Thailand FTA. EFTA-Thailand Free Trade Agreement features a dedicated TSD Chapter. EU-Thailand Free Trade Agreement (ongoing negotiations). Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) includes broad chapters on economic and social cooperation. Canada's Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and Trade Readiness Project.	No trade-and-labour FTA provisions or FPRW-specific initiatives identified.	Labour commitments as part of Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) EU. Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA): Includes a dedicated Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) Chapter. UK-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (UKVFTA): Replicates the strict labor and sustainability commitments of the EU deal. Trade, Labour and FPRW in Southeast Asia to enhance FPRW compliance in export sectors.

The Inventory of ASEAN Member States' Legal Frameworks and Best Practices on OSH in the Informal Sector provides a consolidated overview of national legislation, policies, institutional arrangements and practical initiatives relevant to improving occupational safety and health for informal-economy workers across the region. It compiles information submitted by AMS and

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drawn from publicly available documents, recognising that additional national data or emerging practices may not yet be captured. This Inventory reflects developments up to June 2026 and should be treated as a living document, benefiting from regular updates as Member States continue to strengthen their OSH systems, expand coverage to informal workers and introduce new programmes, regulations and community-based approaches.

Summary of the Inventory's Structure and Key Information:

- **ILO Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)** Convention 155 is the foundational international standard requiring governments to establish coherent national OSH systems. While Convention No. 155 has a universal scope of application; it applies to all branches of economic activity and to all workers some regions could exclude groups of informal workers in exceptional cases as part of their OSH frameworks. C155 relevance to informal mining, fisheries, and agriculture lies in its emphasis on preventive safety culture, national coordination, and inspection systems—areas where informal workers are typically excluded. In the document, several ASEAN Member States have “Not ratified” C155, highlighting gaps in aligning national frameworks with global OSH norms. This has the potential to affect informal sectors where hazardous exposures, weak employer accountability, and absent reporting systems are common. Efforts towards ratification would compel states to extend OSH protections beyond formal enterprises, ensuring that informal workplaces—often unregistered and unregulated—are integrated into national OSH strategies, risk assessments, and enforcement mechanisms.
- **ILO Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187).** Convention 187 requires countries to develop national OSH policies, systems, and programmes. Many of the sections object of this mapping and included into this chart are a key part of C187, including support mechanisms for MSMEs and the informal economy. These mechanisms are essential for reaching workers in the informal sector, who are typically outside formal regulatory coverage. These obligations encourage ASEAN countries to extend OSH services to MSMEs and workers in the informal sector. C187's emphasis on continuous improvement, national OSH profiles, and tripartite participation is crucial for informal mining, fisheries, and agriculture, where fragmented governance and limited data impede risk prevention. By adopting C187, countries commit to building inclusive OSH systems that can extend training, inspections, and awareness programmes to workers in the informal sector.

OSH is now a Fundamental Principle and Right at Work (FPRW), anchored in ILO Conventions 155 and 187 requiring states to guarantee safe and healthy working environments for all workers, including those in informal sectors. Every AMS must advance OSH protection for all workers, regardless of whether they have ratified OSH conventions like C155 or C187.

- **Other key ILO Conventions (Labour Inspection, sector-based, etc.)** These conventions directly influence OSH for workers in the informal sector by setting minimum standards for inspection, working conditions, and sector-specific protections. The document highlights ongoing efforts toward ratifying C176 – Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995, C184 – Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001, C188 – Work in Fishing Convention, 2007, as well as C190 on violence and harassment. Other initiatives object of this review are Labour Inspection Conventions (C81 and C129), particularly relevant because informal mining, agriculture, and fisheries often operate outside inspection mandates. Ratifying and implementing these conventions would strengthen governments' ability to monitor hazardous informal workplaces, enforce OSH rules, and protect workers in the informal sector such as small-scale fishers and artisanal miners. Sector-specific conventions also address risks like vessel safety, accommodation, and exposure to violence—common in fishing communities.
- **National strategies or plans.** National development strategies can shape the policy environment in which OSH systems operate. Although some plans can be described as “macro-economic and structural, not labour or OSH-standards-focused,” they might influence resource allocation and institutional priorities. For workers in the informal sector, national strategies can determine whether OSH is integrated into rural development, environmental management, and economic modernisation agendas. When different aspects of OSH are absent from national visions, worker in the informal sector remain invisible in policy planning. These plans set the long-term direction for institutional reforms that enable inclusive OSH systems.

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- **National OSH profiles.** National OSH profiles compile data on legislation, institutions, risks, and programmes, forming the evidence base for policy development. Such profiles are critical for understanding the scale of hazards that workers in the informal sector are exposed to. They help identify gaps in inspection coverage, training needs, and sector-specific risks such as asbestos exposure, pesticide use, or vessel safety. Profiles also support alignment with ILO conventions and guide donor-funded interventions. Without accurate OSH profiles, informal workers remain statistically invisible, limiting governments' ability to design targeted OSH programmes. Depending on the level of maturity of the AMS, a profile can entail an explicit inclusion, partial inclusion, or minimal inclusion. AMS OSH profiles can acknowledge workers in the informal sector, but few tend to integrate them into OSH inspection, reporting, or enforcement systems.
- **National OSH policy.** A national OSH policy establishes the government's commitment and strategic direction for improving workplace safety. For workers in the informal sector, a national OSH policy is essential because it defines how OSH services will reach workers outside formal enterprises. It can mandate inclusive inspection systems, community-based OSH training, and integration of OSH into rural development programmes. Policies also clarify institutional roles, enabling coordination across ministries responsible for mining, fisheries, and agriculture. Without a national OSH policy, interventions remain fragmented, and workers in the informal sector lack structured protection mechanisms. There is no single model for a national OSH policy, and governments have wide flexibility in determining its structure. What matters is that the policy aims to prevent work-related accidents and ill-health by reducing hazards at their source, to the extent that is reasonable and feasible.
- **National OSH Programme / OSH Master Plans.** National OSH programmes translate policy commitments into concrete actions, timelines, and budgets. They can include an explicit recognition of workers in the informal sector in the OSH strategy, dedicated mechanisms (training, outreach, inspection alternatives, OSH services) or sector-specific interventions tailored to high-risk informal work. OSH Master Plans also help governments coordinate donor-funded projects and integrate OSH into broader social protection and labour market reforms. For workers in the informal sector, national programmes provide the framework through which OSH services—training, awareness, risk assessments—can be systematically extended beyond formal enterprises. To be fully effective, these interventions must integrate sector-specific, community-based, and low-cost OSH measures that reflect the realities of workers in the informal sector.
- **Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD), UN Global Compact, National Action Plans (NAP) on Business and Human Rights (NAPBHR), etc.** HRDD requires companies to identify and address OSH risks across entire value chains, including smallholders, home-based workers and informal contractors. The UN Global Compact encourages businesses to apply its labour and human-rights principles to all workers affected by their operations, promoting safer practices among micro-suppliers. NAPs push governments to embed HRDD in national policy, improve oversight of high-risk sectors and expand access to remedy and social protection. Together, these initiatives might close protection gaps and drive OSH improvements for workers in the informal sector in hazardous sectors.
- **OSH funded and cooperation projects and capacity building interventions.** International cooperation projects play a major role in strengthening OSH for workers in the informal sector, where national systems often lack resources. These initiatives bring technical expertise, training, and tools to high-risk sectors such as small-scale mining, rural agriculture, and fisheries. They also support governments in developing inclusive OSH policies, improving labour inspection, and piloting community-based OSH models. For workers in the informal sector, such projects often provide the only access to OSH training, awareness campaigns, and protective equipment. They also help build institutional capacity for long-term OSH governance.
- **OSH Training programmes.** Training programmes are essential for informal workers, who often lack formal education, written contracts, or employer-provided safety instruction. Tailored community-based training frameworks are specifically designed for informal workplaces, using participatory methods to teach hazard identification, safe practices, and low-cost improvements. In mining, fisheries, and agriculture—where workers face risks such as chemical exposure, unsafe machinery, and drowning—training programmes can significantly reduce accidents. They also empower workers in the informal sector to advocate for safer conditions and adopt practical solutions using locally available materials.

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- **ASEAN-OSHNET initiatives.** ASEAN-OSHNET serves as the regional platform for cooperation on OSH, enabling member states to share good practices, harmonize standards, and strengthen institutional capacity. Through regional guidelines, training exchanges, and joint research, ASEAN-OSHNET can help countries develop community-based OSH models, improve labour inspection in remote areas, and address cross-border issues. The network also supports alignment with ILO conventions and fosters political commitment to improving OSH systems. For workers in the informal sector, regional cooperation of this nature can accelerate the adoption of innovative, low-cost OSH solutions.
- **ASEAN OSH-related initiatives.** ASEAN initiatives encompass broader regional frameworks on labour, social protection, and sustainable development. ASEAN policies increasingly address informality, decent work, and occupational safety. Initiatives on migrant labour, rural development, and environmental sustainability intersect with OSH risks in mining, fisheries, and agriculture. ASEAN can promote harmonized safety standards, support regional training programmes, and encourage member states to integrate OSH into national development plans.
- **UN, IFIs or INGOs and NGOs funded programmes.** UN agencies, international financial institutions (IFIs), impact-investment actors and INGOs all run programmes that directly or indirectly improve OSH and working conditions for workers in the informal sector by expanding social protection, strengthening local institutions, and promoting safer, more productive workplaces. UN-funded programmes play a major role in strengthening OSH in informal sectors by providing technical assistance, research, and capacity building. UN programmes and institutions (ESCAP, UNDP, etc.) also help governments develop OSH profiles, policies, and inspection systems aligned with international standards. For workers in the informal sector, UN-funded projects frequently deliver the only structured OSH interventions available, addressing gaps in national systems and promoting inclusive approaches to risk prevention. IFIs funded-projects may require risk assessments, training for small-scale producers, or improved equipment for rural workers. This is particularly important for workers in the informal sector who benefit indirectly from improved infrastructure, safer technologies, and community-level capacity building. Finally local and international NGOs strengthen OSH through cooperative models, training, and advocacy. These networks can emphasize the role of cooperatives and social-and-solidarity-economy units in improving OSH and transitioning workers toward formal rights and protections. These initiatives often target this segment of the workforce, supporting safer agricultural practices, improved fishing vessel conditions, and community-based OSH training.
- **Other national programmes.** This category captures national initiatives that indirectly support OSH, such as social protection reforms, informal economy registries, or small-scale regulations and procedures. These programmes can be indirectly relevant for improving OSH protections because they formalise informal activities, improve access to social security, and help regulating hazardous sectors.
- **EU-funded programmes.** The EU has funded a wide range of programmes in ASEAN that directly or indirectly strengthen the economy, especially by improving working conditions, OSH, productivity, and access to social protection. These initiatives typically combine value-chain upgrading, skills development, formalisation pathways, and support for vulnerable workers in the informal sector such as small farmers, fishers, waste pickers, home-based workers, and MSMEs. EU-funded programmes often focus on labour rights, migration, and supply chain due diligence—issues closely linked to OSH in the informal sector.
- **OSH risk assessments.** Risk assessments awareness and capacity building initiatives are fundamental to identifying hazards and designing preventive measures. Conducting OSH risk assessments in the context of this study helps uncover exposure to chemicals, unsafe machinery, drowning risks, and structural hazards in small-scale mines. Risk assessments also inform national OSH profiles, training programmes, and regulatory reforms.
- **OSH Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) initiatives.** IEC initiatives can disseminate OSH knowledge through campaigns, community workshops, posters, radio programmes, and digital tools. IEC can be particularly important as workers in the informal sector often lack formal training and rely on peer-to-peer learning. With limited exposure

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to formal training, regulation, or labour inspection, workers in the informal sector often rely on community networks for information. Effective IEC materials translate technical OSH concepts into accessible messages, helping workers adopt safer practices using low-cost solutions. IEC also supports behavioural change, empowers communities, and complements training programmes. In remote rural areas, IEC may be the only OSH intervention reaching workers in the informal sector.

- **Enforcement mechanisms.** Labour inspection targeted to workers in the informal sector is limited, but countries are adopting alternative enforcement models—community outreach, simplified inspection tools, and sector-specific interventions. These approaches can help extend OSH protections to millions of workers in the informal sector who fall outside traditional regulatory systems. Mapping enforcement capacity helps identify gaps in institutional reach and opportunities for strengthening inspection systems.
- **Trade and investment and FPRW.** Regional and bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) and foreign direct investment (FDI) can play a transformative role in improving the working conditions and protections of informal workers in mining, agrifood and fisheries. ASEAN participates in a broad network of FTAs—both as a regional bloc and through individual member states. These agreements connect ASEAN to major global markets, support supply-chain integration, and increasingly include cooperation on labour, sustainability, and responsible business conduct. Trade agreements and foreign investment can have a positive impact on OSH for workers in the informal sector when they include labour or social clauses that require stronger protections across entire value chains—not just in formal enterprises.