

TERMS OF REFERENCE

ASEAN REGIONAL RESERVE OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in complex health impact with political, economic and social implications at global and regional levels. Beyond the effects of a health crisis, this rapidly evolving outbreak has resulted in loss of lives, productivity, livelihood, and well-being. This pandemic has severely impacted ASEAN Member States' public health systems, and their economies including travel, services, tourism, and trade.
2. ASEAN Member States have faced critical challenges related to inadequate supply and access to essential medical supplies including test kits, diagnostic tools, personal protective equipment (PPE), medicines and vaccines as well as other relevant health care items at national and regional levels. This has hindered timely and effective efforts in the prevention, detection and response to the pandemic.
3. To address these challenges and rectify the gaps with a view to strengthening ASEAN's capacity, resilience and enhanced preparedness for effective response to future public health emergencies, ASEAN has proposed to set-up a Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies (RRMS) for Public Health Emergencies (PHE) to distribute readily-available stockpiles of essential medical supplies to support ASEAN Member States affected by public health emergencies and pandemics.

OBJECTIVE

4. To strengthen ASEAN's preparedness, prevention, detection and timely response to public health emergencies and pandemics through: (1) the swift mobilisation and distribution of earmarked supplies, or accessible and readily-available stockpiles in regional reserve of essential medical supplies and pharmaceutical products; (2) rapid containment of an outbreak by using the readily available stockpiles or regional reserve; and (3) the development of an emergency operation mechanism for immediate and rapid mobilisation and distribution of these readily available stockpiles or regional reserve.

DESCRIPTION OF ASEAN REGIONAL RESERVE OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

5. This ASEAN RRMS will initially consist of **earmarked assets of medical supplies**. These would include stockpiles, among others, of various types of personal protective equipment such as protective clothing, face shields, goggles, medical masks, N95 masks, surgical gloves (sterilised) or other garments or equipment designed to protect the wearer's body from infection; and, also various types of emergency health kits.
6. Medical supplies must be based on international healthcare safety standards. The ASEAN SOMHD, in coordination with WHO, shall determine the standards, minimum quantities and categories of medical supplies to be contributed by each ASEAN Member State on a voluntary basis to meet the critical needs for the containment of outbreaks and response to public health emergencies.

SOURCING OF REGIONAL RESERVE OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

7. The RRMS will comprise initially of earmarked medical supplies, as described above, committed by each ASEAN Member State on a voluntary basis. Earmarked assets of medical supplies are specific quantities of various types of personal protective equipment such as protective clothing, face shields, goggles, medical masks, N95 masks, surgical gloves (sterilised) or other garments or equipment designed to protect the wearer's body from infection; and, also various types of emergency health kits. These are voluntarily designated, managed and controlled by the government of the earmarking country in their respective warehouses, for the purpose of meeting public health emergency requirements or supporting the surge capacity of one or more ASEAN Member State in addressing outbreaks or public health emergencies and impact of pandemics.
8. The RRMS should be equally accessible to all AMS and will be open to voluntary contributions from ASEAN Member States and ASEAN's external partners, international organisations and other sources, including public and private sectors.

MODALITIES FOR MOBILISATION, DEMOBILISATION, MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF ASSISTANCE

9. The RRMS shall be placed under the overall supervision of the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC); it will be managed by the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group on Public Health Emergencies (ACCWG-PHE), and monitored by the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Health Development (SOMHD) with support from the ASEAN Secretariat.
10. The ASEAN Member State requesting additional assistance in addressing their national response to the outbreak can tap the earmarked reserves by sending a letter of request to the current Chair of the ACCWG-PHE copy-furnishing the CPR and SOMHD. This letter of request will include brief information about the current situation; rationale of the request; description of list of specific medical supplies with their corresponding description, number of units or amount needed, and other relevant information; and, their contact person for direct liaison or follow-up.
11. The possible origin of the requested reserve of medical supplies will be dependent on geographical distance from the requesting ASEAN Member State and will be recommended by the SOMHD, in coordination with the CPR. Confirmation or approval by the country of origin needs to be obtained to start the process of mobilising the requested reserves.

MONITORING OF REGIONAL RESERVE OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES

12. The ASEAN Secretariat will manage the inventory of all earmarked contributions to the ASEAN RRMS and provide regular reports to the ACCWG-PHE and ACC.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF RECEIVING COUNTRY

13. The requesting ASEAN Member State is encouraged to make their own arrangements with the confirmed country of origin in transporting and receiving the medical supplies.
14. The requesting AMS shall be responsible to ensure that the specifications of medical supplies are in accordance with its national regulations prior to the shipment of donations.

LIQUIDATION

15. The liquidation of the ASEAN RRMS or the disposal of any unused portion of the earmarked medical supplies due to near-expiring or expired status will be the responsibility of the contributing ASEAN Member State following its own internal procedures, and reported to the ACC.

ENTRY INTO EFFECT

16. This Terms of Reference shall enter into effect upon the approval of the ACC.
17. Amendments to this Terms of Reference may be made with the approval of the ACC.

-X-