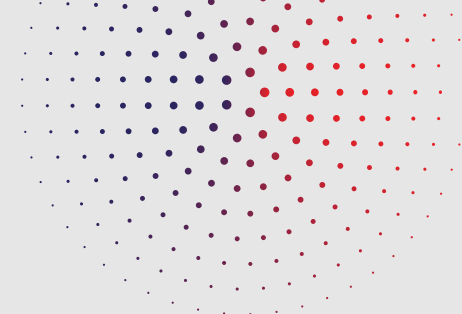
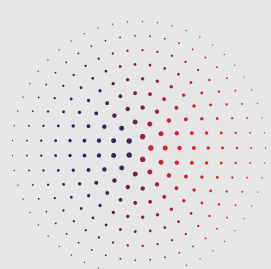


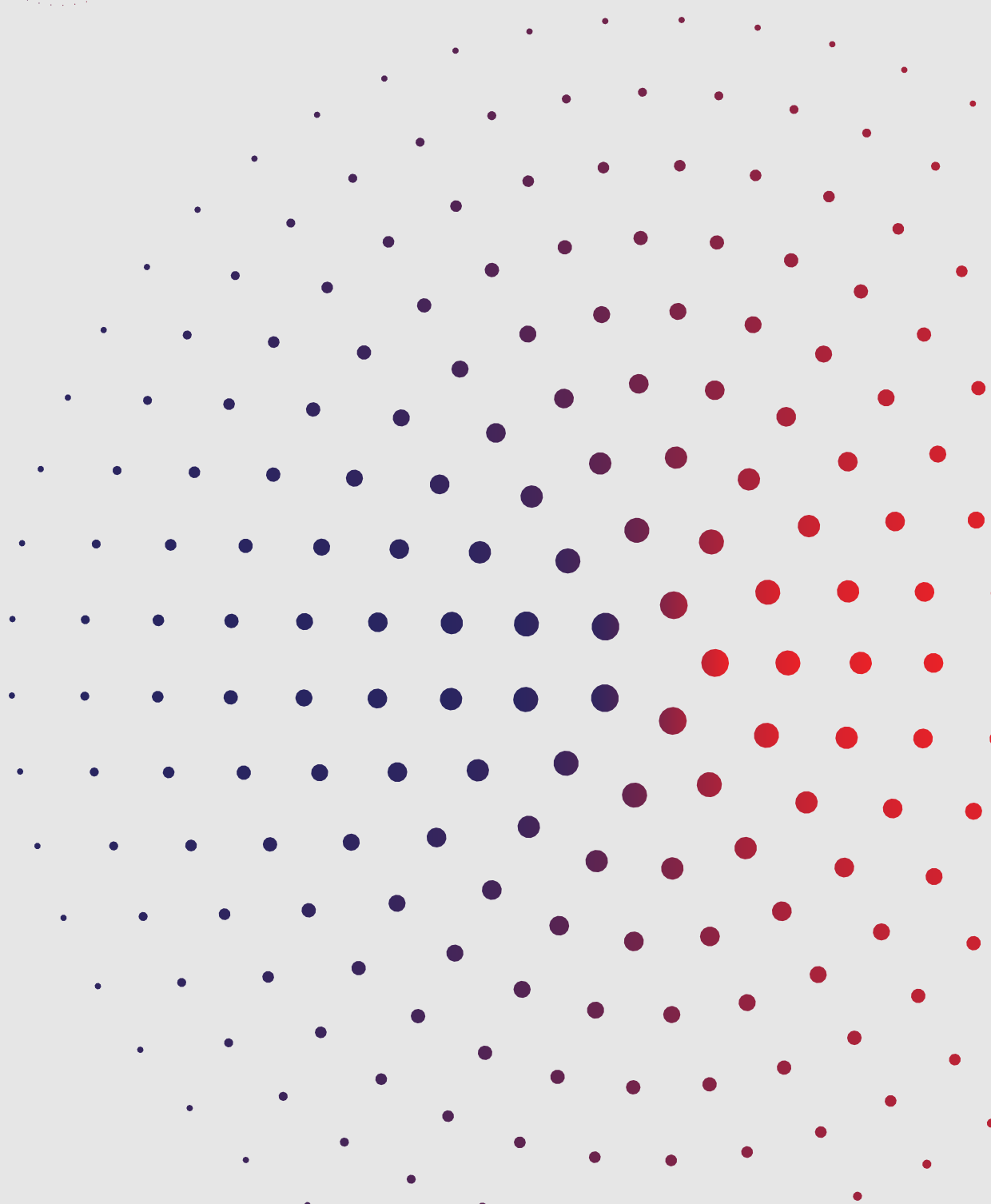
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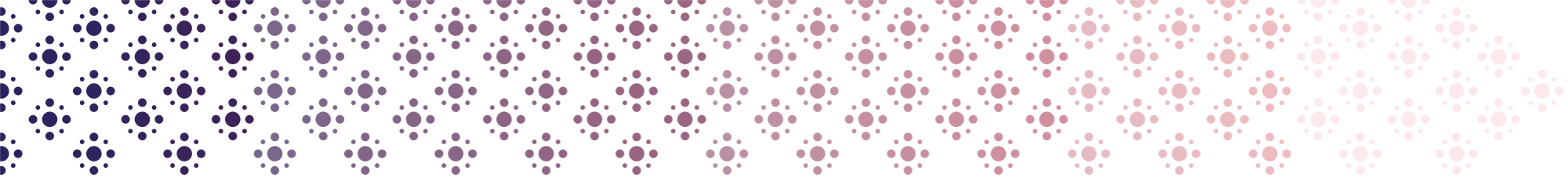


United Cities and
Local Governments
Asia-Pacific



ASEAN MAYORS FORUM





ASEAN MAYORS FORUM Annual Report 2020

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACRF	: ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework
AMF	: ASEAN Mayors Forum
APRU	: Association of Pacific Rim Universities
ASEAN	: Association of Southeast Asian Nations
COVID 19	: Corona Virus Diseases of 2019
DRR	: Disaster Risk Reduction
GCM	: Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration
IGES	: Institute for Global Environmental Strategies
IOM	: International Organization for Migration
OSH	: Occupational Safety and Health
SMEs	: Small and Medium Size Enterprises
SDGs	: Sustainable Development Goals
UCLG ASPAC	: United Cities and Local Governments Asia Pacific
UCLG World	: United Cities and Local Governments World
UN	: United Nations
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	: United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCAP	: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UN-Habitat	: United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	: United Nations Children's Fund
UNU-IAS	: University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability



FOREWORD

Dr. Bernadia Irawati Tjandradewi

Secretary General
ASEAN Mayors Forum
United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific
(UCLG ASPAC)

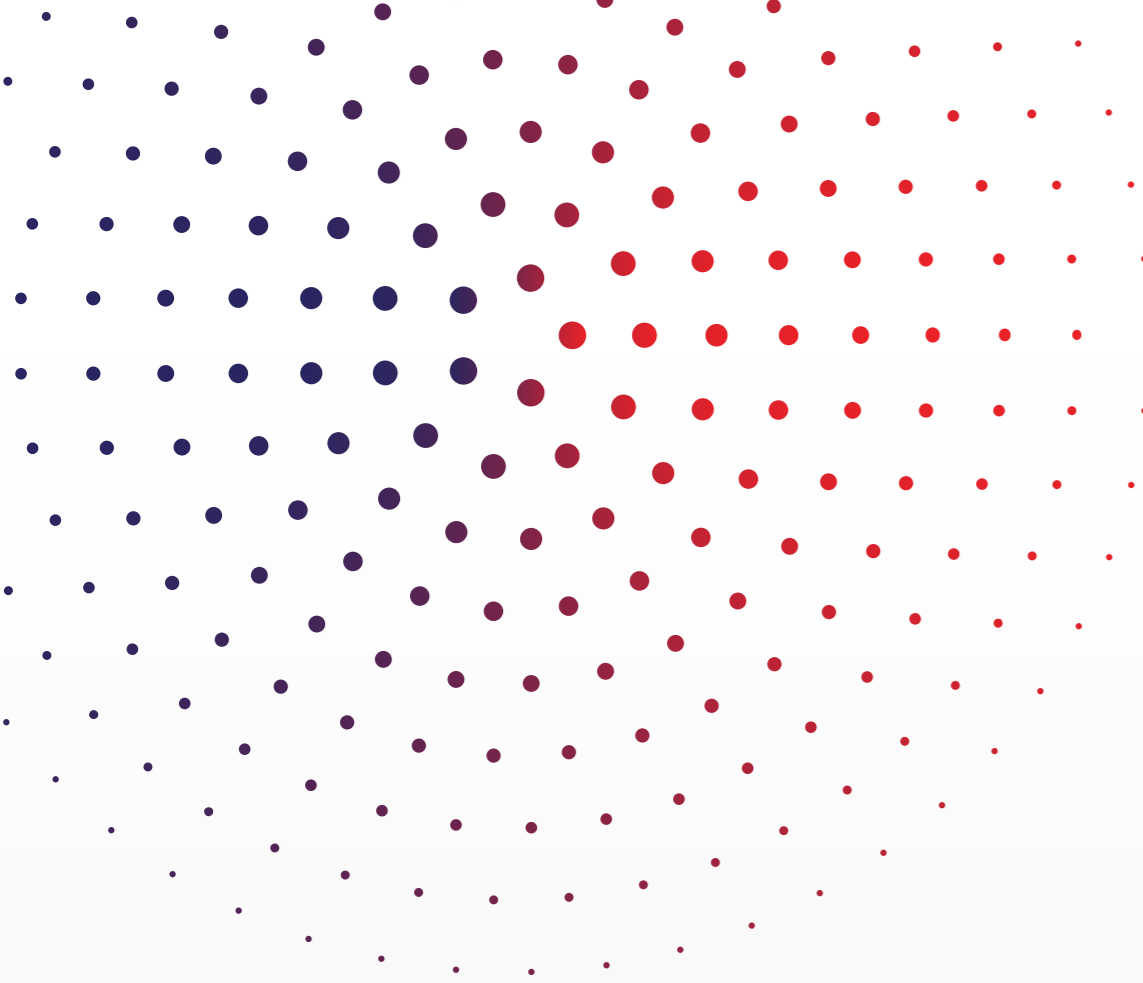
The ASEAN Mayors Forum has been advocating for local government's indispensable roles and contributions to the ASEAN and global development. Local government is the key factor to achieve a successful development in the ASEAN Community and can help ASEAN realise its goal in building an inclusive and forward-looking community that leaves no one behind.

As an association of cities and local governments in Asia-Pacific, the United Cities and Local Governments Asia Pacific (UCLG ASPAC) with its Southeast Asia Committee serves as the ASEAN Mayors Forum (AMF) Secretariat. The AMF promotes cooperation between local governments within and the wider ASEAN region, through advocacy, capacity building and training, research, knowledge management, project development and management.

During the 37th ASEAN Summit held virtually in November 2020, leaders of ASEAN countries adopted the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and its corresponding implementation plan which encompasses all three pillars of the ASEAN Community to help people and businesses overcome the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and stabilize socio-economic activities. Cities have been at the forefront in combating the pandemic's spread and impact. The role of local leaders has been extremely vital in determining how well cities have responded since the start of the outbreak.

This 2020 Annual Report provides an overview of the AMF activities that supported local governments in responding to COVID-19 and preparing for recovery. The activities complemented the ASEAN's effort to build national and regional stability and elevated local actions as foundation to a resilient ASEAN. Furthermore, these activities reflected crucial issues and aligned with the principles of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework.

We would like to express our appreciation to the ASEAN Secretariat and all other relevant ASEAN bodies for their great support to AMF and local governments. We look forward to continually working with ASEAN towards building a resilient society.



I. INTRODUCTION

Local government is the key factor to achieve a successful development in the ASEAN Community. It has become important for ASEAN to further engage sub-national governments towards building the ASEAN community.

The ASEAN Mayors Forum (AMF) has the foresight to allow the cities and local governments to establish a platform which is geared towards accelerating the regional integration process in the region. Not only can sub-national governments leaders share their experiences (including best practices) and network with each other; they can even engage in important collective actions at the local level and provide feedback to the national governments and ASEAN Secretariat. More importantly, a platform also makes it possible for these sub-national governments to take a collective stand on existing policy impediments that they need different ASEAN's national governments to address, in the course of their sub-regional economic cooperation.

The other role of the sub-national governments is as the connectors to the local communities, including civil societies/grassroots organisations and the young generation. They are the ones who know best which capacities are required and truly beneficial to the local communities; and thus, they are the indisputable implementer of the localisation of global agendas, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As such, a platform for sub-national governments will allow them to cooperate with each other in localising the ASEAN awareness regionally while also, sharing the best practices in programme monitoring, feedback-giving and choosing the right capacity-building programmes for their niche interests. The expected result will be the acceleration of the regional integration process in the locality.



II. ASEAN RESPONDING TO COVID-19

During the 37th ASEAN Summit, leaders of ASEAN countries discussed and agreed on a range of drastic and practical measures to boost cooperation to respond to and overcome challenges facing the bloc, including the COVID-19 pandemic and to make the ASEAN Community become stronger and truly become a nucleus of the region with people always put at the centre.¹ ASEAN's initiatives on cooperation in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and disease risks were announced and put into operation, including the ASEAN COVID-19 Response Fund, the Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies, the ASEAN Standard Operating Procedures in response to Public Health Emergencies and the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases. The leaders also adopted the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and a plan to carry out the ACRF on all three pillars of the ASEAN Community to help people and businesses overcome pandemic impacts

and stabilise socio-economic activities. The ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) serves as ASEAN's Community-wide Exit Strategy from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Throughout 2020 the ASEAN Mayors Forum activities addressed the role of sub-national governments in responding to the COVID-19 and elevating local actions as foundation to a resilient ASEAN as a crucial part of the Asia-Pacific region. This AMF Annual Report 2020 describes the AMF activities for 2020 that were mostly conducted virtually due to COVID-19.

¹ASEAN Secretariat website, Retrieve from asean.org › 37th-asean-summit-related-summits-begin-t..

III. 2020 ACTIVITIES

ASEAN RECOVERY EFFORTS “FIVE BROAD STRATEGIES:” KEY PRIORITIES

LOCAL CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES IN FACING GLOBAL PANDEMIC

Given the scale and impact of the pandemic, ASEAN recognises that addressing this unprecedented crisis requires unprecedented actions not only within the region but as well as outside. This is where strong coordination and cooperation among ASEAN, its stakeholders and external partners becomes important.

As local governments are the leading actor at the local level and responsible for coordinating their community’s response to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, taking the role as the host of AMF’s Secretariat, UCLG ASPAC has facilitated the immediate exchange of information regarding the outbreak by preparing a brief guide informing what local governments need to know about COVID-19. It provides information on what city leaders have done and steps they have taken in mitigating impacts, as well as protecting people’s lives from the disease. A series of WebShare sessions was also organised to disseminate the practices of cities and local governments and to update the current local challenges and strategies in facing global pandemic.

In Southeast Asia, where COVID-19 cases are constantly increasing, some Southeast Asian countries have varied approaches in addressing the crisis while some are struggling to contain its spread. During the WebShare sessions which were attended by mayors, governors, local government officials, representatives from the relevant Ministries, UN bodies and many other stakeholders including civic society and the scholars, some crucial issues were raised, such

as the need to synchronise data at local and national levels to ensure that support reaches the target groups, to improve transparency, and to provide clear information to the public. Those sessions also brought the shared experiences from many local initiatives to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and empower communities such as the establishment of the mobile market, digitalisation of the traditional public market in cooperation with online motor taxis, provision of stimulus package to small and medium-size enterprises, and taking unique approaches on social and physical distancing.

The results taken from WebShare sessions reflects key crucial issues which is in-line with ASEAN focus on recovery efforts:

1. Strengthening health services;
2. Empowerment of all people and all communities, enhance social protection by strengthening food security, food safety and nutrition for the vulnerable groups, and mainstreaming gender equality;
3. Enhancing public-private partnership and facilitating recovery of affected sectors (tourism and micro, small and medium enterprises);
4. Promoting e-commerce and digital economy along with other initiatives on e-governments and e-services, digital connectivity, the use of ICT in education, and digital transformation of MSMEs;
5. Achieving sustainability in ASEAN in all dimensions, particularly in investment, energy, agriculture, green infrastructure, disaster management, and sustainable financing.

Those five key issues are highlighted and elaborated as priorities in the document of ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework which has been adopted by Leaders of ASEAN Countries during the 37th ASEAN Summit in 2020.

ASIA PACIFIC MAYORS ACADEMY: INSIGHTS SHARING DURING COVID-19 AND THE WAY FORWARD

The Asia-Pacific Mayors Academy is a capacity building undertaking initiated by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and United Cities and Local Governments Asia Pacific (UCLG ASPAC), together with the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS), Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU) and Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES). It supports the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and New Urban Agenda by enabling the implementation of sustainable urban solutions and building a network of local leaders committed to sustainable urban development.

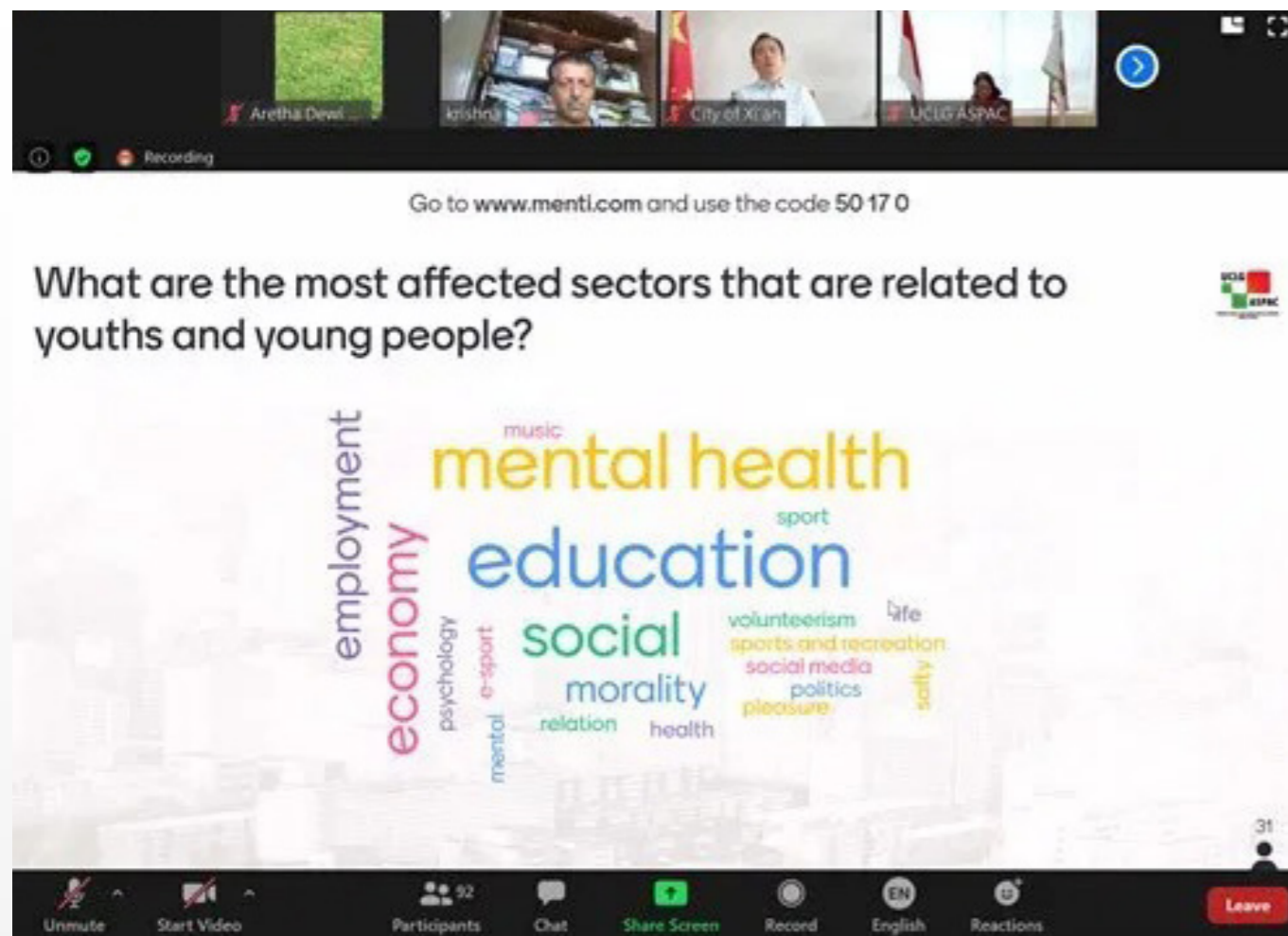
In 2019, the 5th ASEAN Mayors Forum served as one of the platforms by which the Asia-Pacific Mayors Academy reached out to newly-elected or appointed mayors/governors in the

Asia-Pacific region. The first batch of Fellows to the Academy included seven ASEAN Mayors. In 2020, the Academy welcomed eight ASEAN Mayors from four ASEAN Member States: Cauayan City (Philippines), Hang Tuah Jaya (Malaysia), Iriga City (Philippines), Koh Tao (Thailand), Kuala Selangor District Council (Malaysia), Naga City (Philippines), Ormoc City (Philippines), and Sawahlunto (Indonesia).

The Academy builds and strengthens the knowledge and skills of ASEAN Mayors around the framework of four priority areas: urban and territorial planning, urban resilience, smart and inclusive cities, and urban finance. A new module on COVID-19 Response and Recovery was also introduced which increased awareness on the development of a recovery plan. The Asia Pacific Mayors Academy is a unique program that fosters exchange among Mayors within and outside ASEAN.

More information on the Asia Pacific Mayors Academy is available on its official website: <https://www.asiapacificmayorsacademy.org/>





ASEAN RECOVERY KEY PRIORITIES: STRENGTHENING HUMAN SECURITY

PROMOTE HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT: "EMPOWERING YOUTH ON RESILIENCE (POST COVID-19)"

Empowering youth on resilience is a crucial step in achieving the empowerment of all people and communities in the post COVID recovery. As it is highlighted in the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework, this region has a relatively young age demographic, with more than a third of the population falling under the youth category. Therefore empowering youth becomes one of key priorities in ASEAN Recovery Efforts.

As AMF secretariat, UCLG ASPAC has advocated the importance of the involvement of youth in local development towards resilience in post COVID recovery. Using the theme "Empowering Youth on Resilience," the webinar was organised on 3 July 2020. The webinar was attended by representatives from UNDP and UNICEF.

Youth are part of the solution, actively contributing to efforts to reduce the spread of the virus and mitigate the pandemic's impact. We need to build resilience with particular focus on protecting young people and children; and involve young people in the process of creating solution to the problems caused by COVID-19. Education is very important for

young people in responding and adjusting to the current pandemic. The online learning is very crucial for students to achieve all learning objectives during the unprecedented times such as this pandemic.

The local governments should engage young people in all steps of COVID-19 response and recovery. Based on theory of change, there are three crucial part related to young people: upstream, mid-stream, and downstream. The upstream part consists of systemic approaches to youth employment, ecosystem diagnostic and policy support, and action-oriented research. The midstream part consists of youth empowerment alliance, network of network, regional summits, financial solutions, and advocacy for behaviour change, whereas the downstream part consists of national dialogues/innovation challenges, springboard incubation programmes, and movers/skills for self-employment.

In responding to those discussion, the ASEAN Declaration on Digital Transformation of Education Systems is also envisaged to strengthen the linkages between expanding digital access, digital literacy, transferable skills, inclusion and equity, private sector partnerships and the future of work and the role of young people in the digital transformation process.²

Some youth initiatives on COVID-19 from ASEAN Member States were also shared during the webinar. Ms. Lei Motilla, Founder of A14GOV youth led-startup in The Philippines, shared about an initiative called "A14GOV." A14GOV is a government technology startup dedicated to improve public service and promote citizen participation. And Ms. Rebecca Kiew from Malaysia shared about the "Kita Jaga Kita," an initiative which aims to help vulnerable communities, SMEs, front-liners, and people who need various kinds of support

during pandemic times in Malaysia. UCLG ASPAC Secretary General who also serves as the AMF Secretary General, Dr. Bernadia Irawati Tjandradewi gave her closing remarks highlighting the impact of COVID-19 pandemic that has been affecting everyone from all layers of society, including women, children, and the youth. She hoped many local leaders would pay more attention to embracing young people, especially girls, in COVID-19's recovery plans and actions.



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² ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework Document asean.org/storage/FINAL-ACRF_adopted_37t..



MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGHOUT THE RECOVERY: “COVID-19 AND GENDER (POST COVID-19)”

The crisis has created the momentum to encourage a structural transition to an economy that better values gender equality and women’s empowerment.

The ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework highlights that women form 70 percent of front-line responders, social workers, health professionals and community volunteers, making significant contributions to COVID-19 responses. Women also constitute the majority of caregivers at home and in communities. However, there has been a marked increase in incidence of gender-based violence in times of pandemic. It is compounded by risk of infection and loss of

employment and economic livelihoods as well as decreased availability of quality healthcare and essential services, especially sexual and reproductive health as well as psychosocial and legal support. Gender specific impact of the pandemic must be recognised in all response and recovery efforts to safeguard human security.³

With focus on mainstreaming gender equality, a Web-Share on Gender and COVID-19 was organised on 26 June 2020 that aimed to address how gender equality and women’s empowerment could be instrumental to a more inclusive and effective design of transition to the new normal, and to learn from ongoing initiatives to support cities and

³ ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework Document [asean.org > storage > FINAL-ACRF_adopted_37t..](http://asean.org/storage/FINAL-ACRF_adopted_37t..)

local governments’ COVID-19 response and recovery strategies.

This webinar highlighted the importance of women’s role in COVID-19 response. There was also strong voice emphasising gender equality towards good governance.

One representative city from ASEAN Member States, Ms. Stephany Uy-Tan, City Councillor of Catbalogan shared best practices in her City of Catbalogan, Philippines that there is 50% representation of women in their council, as well as the active participation of women in the COVID-19 response in monitoring of checkpoints, survey of beneficiaries to national programs, distribution of food assistance and health kits.

Dr. Bernadia Irawati Tjandradewi strongly highlighted that local governments play a huge role in creating effective enabling environments to support gender equality. This comes in many ways, such as through equal representation of women in government which can aid in the development of inclusive and empowering policies. And as closing statements she addressed, “We as local governments also can’t work alone, we need to have a co-creation to engage various stakeholders, because it is especially important as well to note that women should be part of the recovery post-COVID 19.”

LABOUR POLICIES FOR THE NEW NORMAL: “CITIES AND MIGRATION AN ASEAN AND ASIA PACIFIC SITUATIONER”

ASEAN commits to develop a recovery framework that puts the welfare of people at the core, by strengthening the protection and empowerment of all people and all communities in COVID-19 recovery and beyond. This one of key priorities of the ASEAN’s recovery effort which is considered



as most impactful to the recovery process. The development of occupational safety and health (OSH) standards in the work place and, where applicable, improvement in living facilities of workers are especially important for jobs that cannot be done remotely and thus, exposing the workers to COVID-19 risks. Labour migration policies that could effectively protect migrant workers in time of pandemic or other crises needs to be pursued further. The implementation of the action plan for the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers is an important step.

The above commitment has been reflected in ASEAN Mayors Forum activity in 2020. On 18 December 2020, the ASEAN Mayors Forum organised the webinar “Cities and Migration: An ASEAN and Asia-Pacific Situationer” in line with the International Migrants Day. Experts from several institutions were invited to deliver their insights on migration governance in the region. Dr. Maria Nette Motus, Regional Director for IOM Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, provided an overview of migration

in ASEAN and Asia-Pacific and some of the tools on migration governance. Dr. Srinivas Tata, Director of the Social Development Division of UNESCAP, briefly discussed the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM). He also explained how local governments can take part in the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of GCM Implementation which is scheduled on 10-12 March 2021. Ms. Mega Irena, Assistant Director and Head of the Labour and Civil Service Division, presented the highlights of the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers and its Action Plan, and the regional initiatives to protect and promote the rights of migrant workers. Ms. Emilia Saiz, Secretary General of UCLG World, emphasised the importance of aligning global and regional perspectives on migration. Ms. Sophie van Haasen, Coordinator of the Global Forum on Migration and Development - Mayors Mechanism, highlighted the significance of partnerships and the need to foster balance in narratives on migration.

During this webinar, local leaders shared their experiences and initiatives on migration. Iriga City Mayor Madelaine Alfelor, who earlier participated in the Abu Dhabi Dialogue on July 2020, raised how the role of local governments increased in response to the COVID-19 pandemic since they deal with internal and international migration. This was seconded by Passi City Mayor and Focal Mayor for Migration and Development of the League of Cities of the Philippines Mr. Stephen Palmares. He recommended that national and local governments should cooperate to develop and implement comprehensive programs to support affected migrant workers. Mr. Mitsuo Suzuki, Director of International Affairs Division of Hamamatsu City, indicated three (3) clear actions that local governments welcoming migrants need to do: have a clear vision to build an intercultural city, cooperate with foreign

and local city residents, and share information between cities. Dr. Ngo Trung Hai, Secretary General of the Association of Cities of Viet Nam, stated that migration should be integrated into development policies at all levels of government.

The ASEAN Mayors Forum, through UCLG ASPAC, supports the participation of local leaders in regional and global processes on migration. These actions undertaken in 2020 are important first steps for a stronger advocacy on the role of local governments in migration.



**ASEAN RECOVERY KEY PRIORITIES:
ADVANCING TOWARDS A MORE
SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT FUTURE**

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ALL DIMENSIONS: "ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION TO THE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES"

In enhancing the resilience of ASEAN economic development post-pandemic, ASEAN should

step up efforts to promote sustainability and socially responsible policy-making at national and regional levels. The advancing towards a more sustainable and resilient future concerns ASEAN's commitment to develop a recovery framework that is durable, long-lasting, and inclusive, capable of safeguarding the region's natural resources, social fabric, and the prosperity of its people.

Highlighting the above point of view, UCLG ASPAC, as the Secretariat of the ASEAN Mayors Forum, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) invited cities and local governments and local government associations in ASEAN to join the webinar on "Circular Economy Jobs in ASEAN Cities" held on 27 November 2020. This webinar aims to seek alternative solutions for the economic and environmental challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The fundamental of the circular economy concept is based on how cities can protect nature, particularly on how its sustainable consumption and production can provide a balanced life for each living being. Circularity demands sustainable collaboration and innovation along the way. A city cannot work alone but must also be in collaboration with neighbouring cities, so that behaviour change can occur everywhere to promote a sustainable solution that can benefit everyone. The idea of circular economy based on the reality shows how cities around the world become environmentally devastated and need to change or rethink the way they work as soon as possible. It can begin with rethinking the way cities manage their resources, provides cleaner and more sustainable energy, establishes a circular building supply chain, as well as designs their food system and food waste.

During the webinar, there were shared of showcases practices by Iriga City (Philippines)

and Malang City (Indonesia). Mayor Madelaine of Iriga City shared some examples practiced in Iriga City: 1) converting biodegradable waste into active carbonate charcoal to substitute fossil fuel, and 2) converting the vegetable waste into a solar panel that combines a resin, as conducted by a Mapua Engineering Student. She also shared challenges in implementing a circular economy is the frequent disasters such as typhoons which causes the destruction displaces of city and their job prospects.

Mr. Renung (Head of Waste Management of toxic and Hazardous Materials, Environmental Agency) from Malang Regency also explained that they are already implementing a circular economy model for the waste management system. It helps the city to manage a huge amount of waste that previously contaminated the water as well as triggering other environmental issues. Through this initiative, Malang Regency now has several activities that promote the circular economy model to the citizens. They are trained to recycle plastic waste into crafting products and separating organic and inorganic waste so it could be recycled into a development of valuable products. And this initiative also successfully created job opportunities for 80 households and it now becomes one of the best practices in Malang Regency.

The discussion in this webinar acknowledged that ASEAN local governments, businesses, and civil society requires to work collectively to enable systemic change needed by the region for a sustainable and resilient future. To implement this strategy, the ASEAN priorities should focus on achieving sustainability in all dimensions, particularly in investment, energy, agriculture, green infrastructure, disaster management, and sustainable financing.



IV. CONCLUSION

Given the scale and impact of the pandemic, ASEAN recognises that addressing this unprecedented crisis requires unprecedented actions not only within the region but as well as outside. This is where strong coordination and cooperation among ASEAN, its stakeholders and external partners becomes important. Throughout 2020 the AMF activities addressed the role of local governments in responding to COVID-19 and elevating local actions as foundation to a resilient ASEAN. The role of local leaders has been extremely vital in determining how well cities and local governments have responded COVID-19 since the start of the outbreak. Local Governments are in the front line and responsible for coordinating their community's response to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic.

There is opportunity for local governments to build resilience community. It is emphasised that cooperation of various stakeholders and city-to-city solidarity plays a key role in enabling effective response at the local level.

The crisis has created the momentum to encourage a structural transition to an economy that better values gender equality and women's empowerment. Strengthening the protection and empowerment of all people and all communities in COVID-19 recovery and beyond, is one of key priorities of the ASEAN's recovery effort. It is considered as most impactful to the recovery process.

AMF will continue supporting sub-national governments in responding to COVID-19 and preparing for the local recovery plans and building towards resilient community. AMF will also help cities and local governments localise the global agenda, SDGs, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Paris Climate Agreement that will subsequently contribute to the achievement of ASEAN Community.

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