ASIAN COMMUNITY BEYOND 2015

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is “a regional community of neighbours” whose members share the vision of “ASEAN Community” comprising of the three pillars, namely political and security cooperation, economic cooperation, and socio-cultural cooperation.

As envisaged by the leaders of the ASEAN Member States in 1997, the ASEAN Community will be a community of open, inclusive, and prosperous Southeast Asia.

Why Local Governments?

There are three broad roles of local governments:

- They provide the voice, leadership and strategic vision for their community.
- They provide or organise local public services that are essential for people’s well-being.
- They act as catalysts and drivers for the local development process.

ASEAN MAYORS’ FORUM

The ASEAN Mayors’ Forum (AMF) aims to promote cross-sectoral, cross-country, and cross-level local government networking and cooperation on shared issues and challenges. It is an informal platform providing a venue that allows the mayors to discuss and share experiences on how to improve the quality of life and environmental sustainability. In addition, it serves as a policy coordination and awareness platform for local leaders. Although opportunities and challenges for local governments are different from one municipality to another, sharing knowledge and insights learned about the diverse contexts will provide local authorities with potential solutions for addressing their unique challenges of development in Southeast Asia.

AMF has grown from an Accreditation to AMF in August 2016. It is still in an Accreditation process for AMF.

The combined population of ASEAN creates a world’s third largest market with more than 600 million people.

Objectives:

- To foster a regional platform for local governments in ASEAN to strengthen the networking among local governments through knowledge sharing and mutual learning with relevant stakeholders.
- To develop a policy framework and elevate issues through empowerment programs for stronger ASEAN.
- To improve awareness of local leaderships for the regional interests of ASEAN.

South East Asia's distribution of population by settlement size (%)

Key commitments from local leaders to foster regional collaboration:

- Develop a formalised exchange platform to share experiences and best practices.
- Explore financial options, accessible to local governments coming both from the ASEAN and national partners.
- Share ASEAN's Mayors Seminar, spearheaded by U.S. AALP and its seminarists to support its operation.
- The agreement to annul AMF meeting prior to the ASEAN Summit to constitute local and regional efforts.

Building Regional Cooperation

- To develop timely and coherent policy and project proposals to promote local governance issues in the ASEAN region.
- To consolidate and sustain the knowledge and experiences generated through fostering local networking and engagement processes.
- To establish a sustainable network of local government leaders and professionals to provide a platform for local government leaders to engage with the ASEAN Community.
- To continue to develop the local leadership program and the ASEAN Mayors’ Forum (AMF).