



ABOUT AFOSP



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Introduction

The ASEAN Farmers' Organisation Support Programme (AFOSP) has worked to improve livelihoods and food security for smallholder farmers across the ASEAN region since its implementation in 2015.

Funded through the European Union (EU) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), AFOSP has been implemented throughout the ASEAN region, with particular focus to Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Viet Nam.

Having begun in October 2015, the programme is scheduled to

run for 43 months, with the overall aim to support Farmers' Organisations (FOs) across ASEAN to become:

Stable, performing, accountable organisations, capable of providing effective and sustainable services to their members, with the ability to influence policy and corporate processes on agriculture and food security issues at local, national, ASEAN regional and global levels.

To achieve this goal, AFOSP encompasses two key programmatic areas – the Medium-Term Cooperation Programme with Farmers' Organisations in Asia and the Pacific (MCTP2) and Farmers Fighting Poverty (FFP).

MCTP2 focuses on engaging farmers' organisations within the wider ASEAN environment, with its key outcomes aimed to:

- Strengthen the roles and functions of Farmers' Organisations, both in servicing members and engaging in policy development and dialogue across regional, sub-regional and national levels;



- Promote and advocate for the interests of smallholder farmers, particularly through addressing concerns within the policy process; and
- Provide effective pro-poor services within ASEAN's Farmers' Organisations.
- Engage only membership-based FOs;
- Based solely on demand of FOs;
- Provide financial support and advisory functions;
- Encourage shared learning between FOs;

Farmers Fighting Poverty, on the other hand, focuses directly towards the empowerment and development of farmers' organisations themselves, with work undertaken based on 6 principles:

- Flexible, long-term and expansive mechanisms – working outside of the AFOSP scope; and
- Comprehensive support – ensuring all aspects of FO mechanisms are considered.

Key Components

The range of components and activities within AFOSP's phases, while vast and often intersectional, are defined by key components to support the achievement of the above goals and outcomes:

Institutional strengthening of Farmers' Organisations and their networks – including both institutional capacity strengthening and operational strengthening – undertaken primarily through the FFP programme interventions.

Participation of Farmers' Organisations in policy process – including participation at both national level and regional/sub-regional levels – supported by the ASEAN Foundation through a range of mechanisms.

Farmers' Organisations' services and their involvement in agriculture development programmes – including supporting development of services within Farmers' Organisations, and engagement and collaboration with ongoing development programmes.

Programme management and coordination – across all working areas, to strengthen and promote the programmes, and implement monitoring and evaluation to highlight successes and lessons learned within the AFOSP phases.

ASEAN Foundation's Role



Working alongside a range of other programme stakeholders – including the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), La Via Campesina (LVC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and ASEAN Socio Cultural Community (ASCC) sectoral working groups, and participating ASEAN Farmers' Organisations – the ASEAN Foundation is tasked with developing the key link between rural Farmers' Organisations across the region and the range of ASEAN institutions who hold interests in the programme, particularly

through policy dialogue processes. The ASEAN Foundation ensures that all stakeholders from the above groups are active and engaged within the processes, and promote the knowledge and use of ASEAN Blueprints – particularly the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community blueprint – throughout the implementation of activities. The ASEAN Foundation's key role is to increase and promote the participation local Farmers' Organisations within regional policy-making processes.

The ASEAN Blueprint

The ASEAN Blueprint (ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together) is a strategic regional plan with the vision of a united ASEAN region, under one vision, one identity and one community. The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint (ASCC 2025) as part of this overall vision, focuses towards the quality of life for the people of ASEAN, through participatory, inclusive and environmentally sustainable programming focused particularly towards sustainable development and livelihood improvement of rural communities and areas.

The ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint (AEC 2025) focuses towards the economic development of ASEAN nations across a wide range of related economic aspects. Regarding rural activities, the blueprint aims to enhance internal and external trade to improve long-term competitiveness of ASEAN's food, agricultural and forestry products, to promote cooperation, joint approaches and technology transfer among ASEAN and external bodies, and to promote, link and increase benefits for ASEAN agricultural cooperatives.



Activities

Since programme implementation, the ASEAN Foundation has developed, led and been engaged in a wide variety of activities, particularly in its strategic role to promote linkages between regional institutions and smallholder farmers. Specific ASEAN Foundation activities within the AFOSP programme often encompass:

- Familiarisation with Farmers' Organisations on the ASEAN structure, processes and dynamics, to allow for higher understanding and fluency of engagement within the ASEAN movement;
- Researching and monitoring the implementation of the relevant ASEAN work plans

affecting ASEAN Farmers' Organisations, in order to stay engaged, relevant and up-to-date across the programme's implementation;

- Convening forums to share research and monitoring findings, ensuring extensive communication of relevant information;
- Promoting policy forums between ASEAN Farmers' Organisations and relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies, as a mode of facilitating the integral engagement between the parties; and
- Facilitating thematic knowledge and learning exchanges, to promote engagement and highlight benefits gained from cross-institutional understanding.

Results

Since the implementation of the programme, significant progress has been made by the AFOSP to ensure stronger linkages and participation within policy dialogue between Farmers' Organisations and regional institutions. A range of meetings and discussions were held with smallholder farmers regarding issues such as debt and other financial challenges, lobbying for access to government loans for supporting commercial agriculture, and the development of certification processes for geographical indication.

Range of advocacy and campaign activities were implemented, including on:

- Policy amendments in Viet Nam to allow high-performing farmers to engage with vocational training;
- Engagement of farmers within bottom-up budgeting processes in The Philippines; and
- Improving farmers' rights and protection measures in Indonesia.

At the regional ASEAN level, the ASEAN Foundation undertook a range of key activities as part of implementing the AFOSP's overall core activities, including:

- Developing public awareness materials regarding ASEAN 101 and ASEAN Good Agricultural Practice (GAP);
- Contributing to overall content on the programme's international website;
- Undertaking consultations and engagement with the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Centre for the Development of Agricultural Cooperatives (ACEDAC) and other relevant organisations;
- Producing a range of AFOSP-ASEAN Foundation promotional kits for distribution; and
- Developing and implementing the ASEAN Learning Series on Agricultural Cooperatives.





ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme

(AFOSP) – Engaging With ASEAN,
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