ASEAN Community & the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

Positioning Sustainability at the Heart of Regional Integration

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Challenges & Research Question

“ASEAN ... RESOLVED to ensure sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations, and to place the well-being, livelihood and welfare of the peoples at the centre of the ASEAN community building process.”

Source: Preamble, ASEAN Charter (2007)

• How can ASEAN promote the realisation of SDGs?
  • Learnt from the experience of MDGs (the predecessor to the SDGs?) and other relevant regional integration experiences (e.g. the EU)
  • Conducted mock exercise of formulating an ASEAN Agreement on SDGs (a workshop)

• Who could do what?
<table>
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<tr>
<th>LEVELS OF ACTIONS</th>
<th>MDGs</th>
<th>SDGs ACTIONS (recommended)</th>
<th>Lead Actors</th>
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<td>High-level Expression of commitment</td>
<td>• Joint Declaration on the Attainment in ASEAN (2009) → ‘relatively late’</td>
<td>Incorporate SDGs using pre-existing mechanisms (UN-ASEAN Summit etc.) → ‘timely’</td>
<td>• UN  • National SDGs focal points</td>
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<td>Policymaking</td>
<td>• Incorporated as ‘actions lines’, mainly in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural pillar → ‘complementary, yet fragmented’  • ASEAN Roadmap on the Attainment of the MDGs (2012)</td>
<td>Incorporate SDGs into ASEAN Community Roadmaps (2016 – 2025) (being developed) → ‘timely’  Establish ASEAN SDG Expert Committee, backed by ‘SDGs Fund’) → ‘dedicated, independent from sectoral pillars’</td>
<td>• National SDGs focal points  • ASEAN Dialogue Partners</td>
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<td>Implementation</td>
<td>• National agencies acted on agreed action lines at the ASEAN level</td>
<td>Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) and National ASEAN Secretariats link to proposed ‘regional SDG Expert Committee’</td>
<td>• National agencies  • Supporting orgs. (esp. in terms of strengthening capacity)</td>
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<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>• ASEAN Secretariat, supported by ASEAN Member States and partners</td>
<td>Build on M&amp;E work of MDGs</td>
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Other Issues/Recommendations

Coordination
• Strengthen ASEAN Secretariat’s capacity (regional)
  • Directly (core funds for ASEAN Secretariat operations)
  • Indirectly (project-based funds)
• Strengthen cross-sector, inter-ministry collaboration (national)

Multi-stakeholder Participation and Contribution
• Increase the engagement and meaningful involvement of non-state actors (NGOs/CBOs, academia, private sector, supporting organisations etc.) in ASEAN meetings
  o Support the inter-ministry and multi-stakeholder coordination efforts of governments (being the ‘bridge’ or ‘catalyst’)
  o Related to the above, create ‘Coalition of Willing’ to realise alternative models of development (to counter ‘BAU’).

Thank you