

# EMPOWERING WOMEN FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE

## PREVENTING VIOLENCE AND PROMOTING SOCIAL COHESION IN ASEAN

### ASEAN-UN Partnership on Women, Peace and Security Agenda

The UN has been a strong partner of ASEAN in advancing Women, Peace and Security (WPS) since 2017. This includes the technical support to the organization of the Regional Symposium on Implementation of the WPS Agenda in 2018 - the first regional inter-sectoral dialogue that demonstrated ASEAN's commitment to the WPS agenda - leading to the development of [ASEAN Regional Study on WPS](#) launched in March 2021. Many of these efforts underlines the importance of ASEAN ownership and multilateral cooperation to advance WPS in the region.

Under the ASEAN-United Nations Plan of Action 2021-2025, UN Women is mandated to lead on Women, Peace and Security in close collaboration with other UN agencies leveraging its coordination mandate to ensure the UN system delivers on gender equality and on the empowerment of women and girls. The Regional Project [Empowering Women for Sustainable Peace](#) builds on the partnership and collaboration with ASEAN, including the recommendations from the ASEAN Regional Study on WPS.

#### Key Milestones of ASEAN-UN Partnership on WPS

- The ground-breaking [Track 1.5 Regional Dialogue on Women, Peace and Security](#) co-organized with Malaysia and the ASEAN Secretariat focused on the critical role of women in preventing violent extremism in 2017
- Launch of [the ASEAN Women's Peace Registry](#) in 2018
- Organization of the [Regional Symposium on Implementation of the WPS Agenda](#) in 2018
- Development of the [ASEAN Regional Study on WPS](#) in March 2021
- Launch of [ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security](#) in December 2022

### Why are we implementing this project?

The project seeks to operationalize a simple but revolutionary idea first introduced in the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) – that peace is inextricably linked to equality between men and women.

Engaging women will promote long-lasting peace and security in the region. This project is the first of its kind to use the WPS approach in promoting inclusive and sustainable peace and security in support of ASEAN's regional priorities, while addressing systemic gender inequality and discrimination that provides a fertile ground for intolerance and radicalization that has at times led to violence in the region.

It was developed in support of the robust commitment among ASEAN Member States and their leaders to advance WPS in the region. It aims to advance the WPS agenda in the context of Southeast Asia, including preventing gender-based violence and promoting social cohesion, as well as women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution and recovery.

This project will also support ASEAN in building regional and national capacity and in becoming a knowledge hub on WPS. It is opportune to advance the WPS agenda in the ASEAN region given the steadfast leadership from Member States, such as Indonesia and Viet Nam, which are both members of the United Nations Security Council. This will be the first multi-year regional project co-created by ASEAN for ASEAN, with all the key ASEAN bodies and actors.

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## Objective

ASEAN, ASEAN Member States and non-state actors have advanced and strengthened implementation of the WPS agenda, including preventing violence and promoting social cohesion in the region

## Focus Areas

ASEAN Secretariat, sectoral bodies and institutions have increased gender and WPS expertise to develop regional policies on WPS and related frameworks

ASEAN sectoral bodies and institutions and non-state actors have strengthened capacity to implement the WPS agenda

Regional platform for cooperation and advocacy among ASEAN Member States, Observer State, sectoral bodies, and institutions as well as civil society and women organizations is strengthened to promote good practices and evidence on WPS

ASEAN Member States, Observer State and non-state actors have increased knowledge and capacity to develop, implement and monitor WPS policy frameworks and test and upscale innovative approaches to implementing the WPS agenda and conflict prevention at the national level

## Activities

Policy Dialogue

Evidence-based Research

Capacity Development

Tools Development and Implementation

Pilot Testing of Initiatives

## How we work

The project aims to support ASEAN in advancing the WPS agenda, including prevention of gender-based violence and promoting social cohesion, and will support ASEAN to build regional and national capacity and become a knowledge hub on WPS. The project will contribute to the SDGs, specifically **Goal 5: Gender Equality**, and **Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions**. At the regional level, the project would promote women's participation in conflict prevention, resolution and recovery.

In addition, given the disproportionate nefarious impact of COVID-19 on women, the recovery of women's organizations in the region needs supporting so that the hard-won gains in advancing gender equality are not lost.

Over the five years, UN Women will support ASEAN in developing a knowledge and innovation hub on Women, Peace and Security and lead the advancement of the WPS agenda through regional policy dialogue, evidence-based research, capacity development, tool development and implementation, and the pilot testing of initiatives.

Facilitated by the ASEAN Secretariat, the project will directly support ASEAN sectoral bodies and institutions, as well as ASEAN Member States including the ASEAN

Committee on Women (ACW), the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), as well as gender advocates, civil society and women's organizations and associations at regional and national levels.

The project also includes country-level component in support of the national implementation of the WPS agenda in Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Timor-Leste, and Viet Nam and recognizes the significance of addressing the humanitarian-peace-development nexus in the ASEAN region, given the overlapping challenges of conflicts and crises at the sub-national level. Ultimately, the project aims to promote conflict prevention, gender equality and women's participation and leadership in all spheres of peace and security decision making.

The project (2021-2025) which is funded by Global Affairs Canada the United Kingdom and the Republic of Korea is endorsed by the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN as an ASEAN cooperation project. Under the strategic guidance of ACW, ACWC and the broader ASEAN WPS Advisory Group, UN Women is the lead implementing partner working closely with the UN system to support ASEAN in advancing the WPS agenda.