

## Terms of Reference

### ASEAN Outstanding Social Welfare and Development Awards (AOSWADA)

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#### Background

1. Ensuring human rights and well-being for all has been a long-standing commitment of ASEAN. Such commitment is reflected in the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration which states that the rights of children, older persons, and persons with disabilities, among others, are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Vision 2025 envisions that by 2025 ASEAN shall be the Community that “engages and benefits the peoples, and is inclusive, sustainable, resilient, and dynamic”. The ASCC Blueprint 2025 has identified strategic measures that promote engagement of stakeholders in ASEAN processes, enhance inclusiveness by reducing barriers and ensuring equitable access for all, and promoting and protecting human rights, among others.

2. Since the inception of ASEAN in 1967, a lot of water has flowed under the bridge and we now enjoy economic growth, prosperity and material wealth, as never before. For the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), particularly in the social welfare and development sector, key achievements include adoption of relevant regional instruments and commitments to strengthen social protection and welfare, promotion and protection of rights and social justice, and implementation of programs or projects to improve the quality of life of people in ASEAN.

3. Against this backdrop, our region is still facing a number of social challenges and vulnerabilities including the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. More efforts are needed to uplift the quality of life of people in vulnerable situations, especially children, persons with disabilities, older persons, and other marginalised and disadvantaged groups in ASEAN.

4. Towards this end, the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD), which supports the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD) by recommending regional policies, developing and implementing the five-year

regional workplan, and managing partnerships, plays a central role in advancing social welfare and development and improving the quality of life of those in vulnerable situations in ASEAN.

5. Work of SOMSWD is guided by its five-year workplan. The ASEAN Strategic Framework on Social Welfare and Development 2016-2020 comprises 4 main priority areas, to wit: Children; Older Persons; Persons with Disabilities; and Other Priority Areas. The Strategic Framework also has some stipulations to promote and enhance the participation and engagement of NGOs/CSOs, private sector, and other stakeholders to support the implementation of projects and activities in the Framework.

6. Nevertheless, SOMSWD, per se, cannot fulfil the commitment as social welfare and development is a cross-cutting issue which requires a coordinated and holistic approach, and vulnerabilities are multifaceted and solutions need to cut across multiple sectors to ensure that no one is left behind. Therefore, engagements with various stakeholders such as governments, the private sector, development partners, civil society organisations, and service providers, should be encouraged to advance social welfare and development in ASEAN.

7. Under the current SOMSWD mechanisms, participation of the stakeholders is only limited to the GO-NGO Forum, an annual consultative forum that brings together government and non-government organisations to exchange knowledge and experiences on thematic issues pertaining social welfare and development.

8. In order to enhance and elevate the engagements of SOMSWD with various stakeholders to a higher plane, a more meaningful and regular platform to foster sustained partnerships and cooperation among non-government organisations, civil society organisations (NGOs/CSOs), social enterprises, and the private sector in the ASEAN Member States should be endeavored, that in turn will contribute to the advancement social welfare and development, and to the betterment of people in ASEAN, especially those in vulnerable situations.

## Objectives

9. The objectives of the ASEAN Outstanding Social Welfare and Development Awards (AOSWADA) are as follows:

a. Acknowledge and recognise the roles, outstanding achievements and contributions of non-government organisations, civil society organisations (NGOs/CSOs), and the private sector in the ASEAN Member States to the social welfare and development;

b. Encourage the NGOs/CSOs, and the private sector to continue and strengthen their work and contributions to the social welfare and development in their respective country;

c. Promote closer cooperation and partnerships between the governments, NGOs/CSOs, and the private sector in each respective country; and

d. Promote ASEAN awareness amongst the NGOs/CSOs, and the private sector, and encourage their active and meaningful engagements in the ASEAN Community-building process.

## Eligible Participants

10. The Awards are available in two categories: 1) NGO/CSO Category which includes social enterprises; and 2) and the Private Sector Category. Eligible NGOs/CSOs, and the private sector must be registered with outstanding achievements and contributions to the social welfare and development in their respective Member State;

## Eligibility Criteria

11. Interested NGOs/CSOs, and the private sector in the ASEAN Member States must meet the following criteria. Certain details of these criteria will be determined by the respective ASEAN Member States and are applicable at the national level:

a. The eligible NGOs/CSOs, and the private sector are national or local organisations with sufficient experiences (at the discretion of each ASEAN Member State) in social welfare and development efforts in their respective countr;

b. The eligible NGOs/CSOs and private sector are able to submit to their respective SOMSWD Focal Points a certain number (at the discretion of each ASEAN Member State) of programmes or projects that showcase significant contributions to social welfare and development in their respective country. The scale of the programmes or projects will be at the discretion of each ASEAN Member State;

c. The eligible NGOs/CSOs, and the private sector should submit adequate documentation to their respective SOMSWD Focal Points which shall provide, but not limited to, the following information:

(1) The organisational profile, as annexed hereto, which outlines the background of establishment, programmes, organizational structure, experiences and achievements, impacts of the projects/programs, challenges, collaborative projects with other sectors, innovation, etc.

(2) Description of the projects dedicated to social welfare and development efforts in their respective country, and the project impacts to the target community(ies).

(3) The NGOs/CSOs and private sector may submit photos, short videos, human interest stories and other documentation related to the implementation of the projects.

## **Mechanisms**

12. The Awards will be given annually by the AMMSWD Minister of the host country of SOMSWD in an Award Presentation Ceremony that will be convened during the SOMSWD Meeting in that particular year, starting from the 17<sup>th</sup> SOMSWD which will be hosted by Thailand in 2021 onwards. On an annual basis, the awarded NGOs/CSOs and the private sector will be invited to the GO-NGO Forum and Award Presentation Ceremony. At the discretion of each AMS and on the voluntary basis, the past awarded winners from NGOs/CSOs and the private sector may continue to engage SOMSWD for 3 (three) years by reporting back via video conferencing or via a written report. The travel costs of the NGOs/CSOs and private companies will be determined by the respective ASEAN Member States, e.g., self-funded, or sponsored by the concerned government agency. The organisational costs of the Ceremony will be shouldered by the host country of the SOMSWD. In the event where the GO-NGO Forum, SOMSWD and AMMSWD are convened in the

same year, in accordance with the rotation of AMMSWD Chairmanship, the Award Presentation Ceremony will be conducted during the AMMSWD Meeting in that particular year.

13. The Awards will have annual theme that is in line with the theme of SOMSWD Chairmanship respectively.

14. Each ASEAN Member State shall adopt its own country guideline in selecting and nominating the appropriate NGOs/CSOs and the private sector to receive the Awards based on the proposed Eligibility Criteria.

15. Each ASEAN Member State shall nominate two (2) eligible organisations: one for the NGO/CSO Category; and the other for the Private Sector Category to receive the Awards each year. The nominated NGO/CSO and private company from each ASEAN Member State will be awarded together with the other eighteen (18) nominated NGOs/CSOs and private companies from the ASEAN Member States.

16. Each ASEAN Member State shall submit the names and profiles of the nominated NGO/CSO and private company to the ASEAN Secretariat by a certain deadline prior to the SOMSWD Meeting.

17. The award will be given in the form of trophies and certificates. The former will be arranged by the host country of the SOMSWD while the latter will be arranged by ASEAN Secretariat and jointly signed by the AMMSWD Minister of the host country of SOMSWD and the Secretary General of ASEAN.

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