Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work towards a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community

The Road Map to Implement the Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work toward a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community

asean

one vision
one identity
one community

Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work towards a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community

and

The Road Map to Implement the Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work toward a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community

The ASEAN Secretariat
Jakarta

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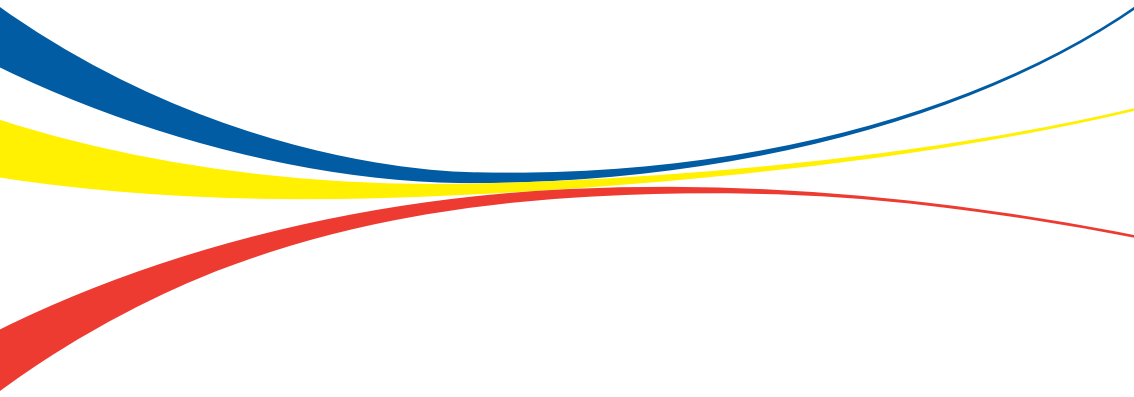
HA NOI DECLARATION ON STRENGTHENING SOCIAL WORK TOWARDS COHESIVE AND RESPONSIVE ASEAN COMMUNITY



HA NOI DECLARATION ON STRENGTHENING SOCIAL WORK TOWARDS COHESIVE AND RESPONSIVE ASEAN COMMUNITY

WE, the Heads of States or Governments of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as "ASEAN"), namely: Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, on the occasion of the 37th ASEAN Summit;

UPHOLDING the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 which seeks to build upon and deepen the integration process to realise a rules-based, people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN Community, and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025 which aims to provide mechanisms and enhance institutional capacity to promote equitable access to social protection, and basic social welfare for all, and particularly for vulnerable groups including older persons, persons with disabilities, women and children, as well as encourage institutional and technical innovations for the provision of social services;

REAFFIRMING the complementarity between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the implementation of the Complementarities Roadmap (2020-2025), particularly in addressing inequality, facilitating access to services, promoting social justice and social cohesion, preventing and responding to violence, abuse, exploitation, discrimination, neglect and family separation, and addressing harmful behaviours and social norms by creating policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, and ensuring mobilisation of resources and strengthening relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation for building capacity at all levels;

COMMENDING the progress of work of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD) and the Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) that continues to harness the potential of social welfare and development in reducing inequality, empowering peoples of

ASEAN, mitigating the impacts of economic downturn, as well as the negative impacts of public health emergencies, and natural and human-induced disasters on vulnerable groups;

ENCOURAGED by the progress of social work development in ASEAN Member States and the work of the ASEAN Social Work Consortium (ASWC), which continues to strengthen solidarity and cooperation among social work practitioners, educators, and schools of social work, which was well documented by the Annual Publication of ASEAN Social Work Journal as a part of knowledge management as well as the establishment of the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW) as noted at the 35th ASEAN Summit, with a vision to be a leading training centre on social work and social welfare in ASEAN focusing on building capacities and skills, sharing knowledge and expertise, and enhancing collaboration and partnership;

RECOGNISING the critical role of social work in mitigating the impacts of economic and social crises, and risks and vulnerabilities on individuals, households and communities, mitigating risks and improving stability and the overall resilience of vulnerable groups to withstand the impact of these crises, and addressing vulnerabilities arising from natural and human-induced disasters, conflict, climate change, rapid urbanisation, disparity and inequality.

COGNISANT of the vital role fulfilled by the social workers in ensuring high quality, timely delivery of and accessibility to social welfare and accessibility to social protection for vulnerable groups, and, as such, their immense contribution to poverty eradication, reduction of social barriers, inequality and the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensuring that no one is left behind;

ACKNOWLEDGING that social work is an essential part of social welfare and that a holistic and comprehensive approach to social service workforce strengthening is needed in order to effectively and comprehensively strengthen social work and to realise the vision of key ASEAN instruments such as the *Ha Noi Declaration on the Enhancement of Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children*, the *Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection in ASEAN*, and its regional framework and action plan, the *ASEAN Enabling Master Plan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, the *Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Ageing: Empowering Older Persons in ASEAN* and its regional action plan, the *ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Violence Against Children* and its regional plans of action, and *Complementarities Roadmap (2020-2025)*, among others, towards a more cohesive and responsive ASEAN Community;

TOGETHER, WE DECLARE OUR COMMITMENT TO promote social work and strengthen its catalytic role in realising a people-centred, people-oriented, and inclusive ASEAN Community, that enhances the capacities of the poor, vulnerable

groups, achieves inclusion and enhances equitable access of those groups, including but not limited to persons with disabilities, the elderly, youth, women, children and adolescents, migrant workers and victims of violence, trafficking in persons, pandemics and disasters, among others and, in accordance to the prevailing national laws, policies and regulations of ASEAN Member States, through the following:

1. Develop and strengthen legislation and policies on social work including defining, reinforcing and enhancing the roles and functions of social workers, validate and create (if any) social work positions in social welfare, health, education and justice systems covering the areas of prevention, response, and rehabilitation at the micro-, meso-, and macro-levels. Such legislation and policies are aimed at addressing professional practice gaps, enhancing professionalisation and competencies, promoting standards and accountability, increasing efficiency and effectiveness.

2. Develop a strategic plan for the progressive strengthening of social work, based on an assessment of needs and current social service system capacities and a multidisciplinary, inclusive and participatory approach, to deliver quality social services nationally. In order to effectively plan, develop and support the strengthening of social work, promote the adoption of information management systems for both human resource management and case management and the development of indicators for tracking and monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of policies and strategic plans.

3. Adopt, standardise and strengthen accreditation, certification, registration and licensing systems for social workers and para-social workers. Develop, standardise and strengthen quality education, research, studies, and pre- and in-service training programmes for social work professionals and paraprofessionals, and other professionals to produce social work graduates in various fields in order to fulfil the demand, and ensure responsiveness to national priorities, and alignment with international standards. Facilitate the availability of education and training opportunities at regional and international level including through the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW).

4. Enhance interagency coordination at the national level, and cross-sectoral collaboration at the ASEAN level, between social welfare, health, education, justice, labour, community development, finance, disaster risk reduction and management to explicitly reference social work in relevant mechanisms, platforms, and regulations. Encourage government and non-government agencies to provide opportunities for social workers relevant to their work setting.

5. Promote the establishment of national associations or councils of social workers, support collaboration with professional associations or councils, both government and non-government, and foster partnerships with other professionals and paraprofessionals, allied workers and civil society organisations and with the private sector through Corporate Social Responsibility.

6. Promote the retention of social workers through the provision of career progression opportunities and professional development. Promote continuous capacity building and establish and strengthen systems for quality supervision and support for social workers.

7. Allocate adequate resources to strengthen social work, including workforce development and financing for education, training, research and publications.

8. Develop and enhance regional networks of social workers and regional platforms including but not limited to the ASEAN Social Work Consortium for exchange of good practices and enhancing social work and social welfare in the region, establishing referral system, meeting the supporting needs of the citisens toward substantive equality and effective social development.

9. Work towards regional professional recognition of social work, render necessary assistance to narrow social work education gaps among ASEAN Member States, and develop regional professional and occupational standards, social work ethics, standardised competency frameworks, standards/core curriculum and guidelines for the supervision of social work.

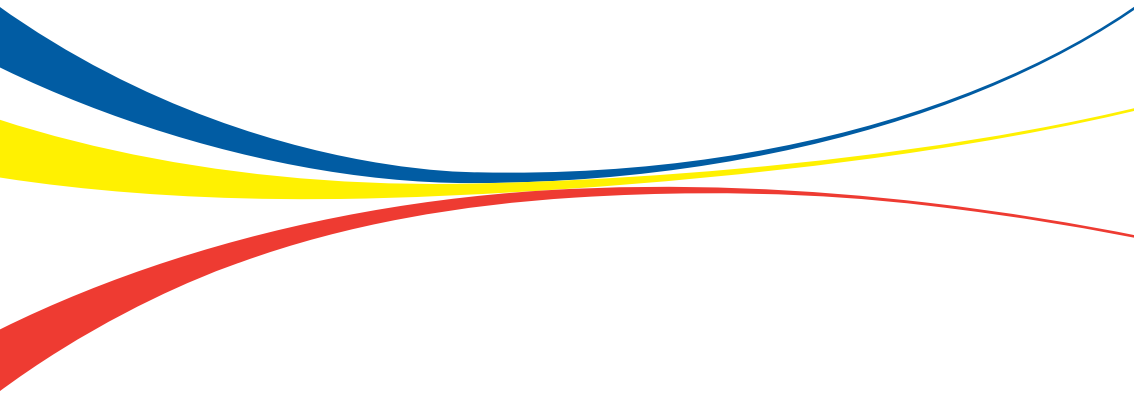
10. At the national and regional level, endeavour to develop strategies to enhance positive public perception of social work and social workers, including building the capacity and engaging various types of media, including the social media network to promote an understanding of the role and impact of social work in ASEAN.

11. Undertake cross-sectoral and inter-pillar cooperation across the ASEAN Community, as well as engage ASEAN's partners including the ASEAN Plus Three Countries, ASEAN Dialogue Partners, international organisations and civil society organisations, academe, and private sector, among others, to continue the development and support social work in ASEAN.

WE ENCOURAGE relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies in the three ASEAN Community Pillars to promote the implementation of this Declaration, and task the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD), with the support of the Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) and ASEAN Social Work Consortium (ASWC) to develop a Roadmap to implement this Declaration, and review, coordinate, monitor and report the progress of its implementation in partnership with other sectoral bodies and partners.

ADOPTED in Ha Noi, Viet Nam this Twelfth Day of November in Year Two Thousand and Twenty, in a single original copy, in the English language.

ASEAN ROAD MAP FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HA NOI DECLARATION ON STRENGTHENING SOCIAL WORK FOR COHESIVE AND RESPONSIVE ASEAN COMMUNITY



I. INTRODUCTION

Background and rationale

As set out in the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025, the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are committed to promoting equitable access to social protection, and basic social welfare for all. In particular, this should be provided to those in vulnerable situations, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, women, children and adolescents, migrant workers, as well as to victims of pandemics, disasters, violence and trafficking in persons. The implementation of the 2025 Vision and Blueprint for social protection and social welfare is key to the achievement of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; it is estimated that 65% of the 169 targets underlying the Sustainable Development Goals will not be reached without effective social services[1].

To achieve these aims it will be of critical importance to strengthen social work, and the wider social service workforce. This is because the social service workforce, properly defined in law, and recognised, developed and supported in policy and practice, plays a key role in: poverty eradication; mitigating the impact of economic, political and social crises; reducing the risks and vulnerabilities and increasing the resilience of individuals, households and communities; and promoting human rights. The workforce also plays an essential role in achieving social justice and social cohesion, in preventing and responding to violence, abuse, exploitation, in preventing family separation, and in addressing harmful behaviours and social norms. The achievement of these outcomes relies on a workforce capable of delivering high-quality and timely services, and on making social welfare and social protection effective and accessible for all.

Recognising the essential role of social service workforce and social work in reaching the goals set in key ASEAN instruments, ASEAN Member States (AMS) in 2020 identified social work as a priority for ASEAN, and, under the Chairmanship of Viet Nam and the Workplan of the ASEAN Social Work Consortium (ASWC) 2016-2020, developed the Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work for Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community.

This Declaration, adopted by the Heads of AMS on 12 November 2020 at the 37th ASEAN Summit, provided the first regional framework for social work, calling for its professionalisation and expansion in the region. The focus areas identified by the Declaration build upon the evidence generated among AMS, including the 2019 Multi-Country Review of the Social Service Workforce in the East Asia and Pacific Region[2] and priorities identified in the Kick-off Meeting for the Development of an

[1] UN Sustainable Development Solution Network (2016) Getting Started with the SDGs in Cities. A Guide for Stakeholders https://resources.unsdsn.org/getting-started-with-the-sdgs-in-cities.

[2] http://www.socialserviceworkforce.org/resources/social-service-workforce-east-asia-and-pacific-region-multi-country-review.

ASEAN Declaration on Promotion of Social Work held on 28-29th October 2019.[3]

The 2019 Multi-Country Review found that there has been significant progress in recent years in the ASEAN region in the planning and development of social work and other cadres in the social service workforces. However, there is also considerable variation in the quality and extent of deployment of social workers and social services in different countries. A wide variety of definitions of social work has resulted in a wide range of ways in which the workforce is deployed, with varying roles, responsibilities, and required qualifications, across different combinations of sectors. The 2019 Review also recorded significant differences in ratios of social workers per population, in part because of the non-uniform definitions being used across AMS.

ASEAN countries also differ to the extent that they have been able to codify the social work profession in legislation, so as to clearly define the functions required for statutory social work, and to ensure that social workers are equipped with the required status, resources and competencies to be able to effectively execute their functions. In most ASEAN countries, such legislation is either absent or in the early stages of development, while, in several countries, legislation is more comprehensive. A more fundamental challenge across the region is the voluntary nature or the low level of pay for social work positions, and other roles in the social service workforce, compared to other professions, limited opportunities for career progression, which makes it challenging to recruit and retain adequate staff in these roles, and leads to them feeling undervalued and demoralised. This challenge to the status of social work is exacerbated by negative public perceptions, which include viewing social workers as carrying out charity work. It is also undermined where there are low levels of quality and professionalism in the delivery of services, owing to a lack of knowledge, skills and insufficient training for the workforce.

Combined, these challenges, of inadequate legislation, unclear and divergent definition of roles, responsibilities and required competencies, and low pay and status, limit the reach and effectiveness of the social service workforce, the wider demand for social services, the public perception of the workforce and the extent to which it is adequately recognised and resourced.

In aspiring to realise a people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN Community, where people enjoy human rights, quality of life and the benefits of community, AMS commit to build the necessary human and institutional capacity to ensure equitable access to social protection and basic social services. One key means to achieve this end is to strengthen social work and the social service workforce, whose role it is to deliver a system of care and support that will protect those in vulnerable situations, enhance

[3] Regional Workshop on Social Service Workforce Strengthening. Kick off Meeting for the Development of an ASEAN Declaration on Promotion of Social Work. Ha Noi, Viet Nam. 28-29 October, 2019.

the well-being and build the resilience of all individuals, families and communities, and protect human rights.

International and regional frameworks

The Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work for Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community (2020), and this Road Map for its implementation, build upon and align with a range of existing ASEAN commitments, instruments and regional plans of action, including:

- ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025 (2016).
- ASEAN Community Vision 2025 (2015).
- Ha Noi Declaration on the Enhancement of Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children (2010).
- ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection (2013) and Regional Framework and Action Plan to Implement the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection (2018).
- Bali Declaration on the Enhancement of the Roles and Participation of the Persons with Disabilities in ASEAN Community and Mobilisation Framework of the ASEAN Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2011), and ASEAN Enabling Master Plan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2018).
- Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Ageing: Empowering Older Persons in ASEAN (2015).
- ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Violence Against Children (2012), and Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Children Complementarities Road Map 2020-2025 (2019).
- Declaration on the Protection of Children from all Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse in ASEAN (2019).
- ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration (2019).
- ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (2007), ASEAN Consensus on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers (2017).
- The Joint Statement of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting for Social Welfare and Development on Mitigating the Impact of COVID-19 on Vulnerable Groups (2020), which also recognises the critical link between the social service workforce and social protection.
- ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework and its Implementation Plan (2020).

These ASEAN declarations and plans, in turn, reinforce the commitments of AMS towards a number of United Nations and other international conventions and standards, including:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).
- UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979).
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (1990).
- The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002).
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006).
- The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (2018).

Social workers and the wider social service workforce play a key role in preventing and responding to human rights violations, and upholding the rights of children, girls and women, persons with disabilities and other groups in need, as enshrined in the above Conventions. They support and enable governments and other duty bearers to fulfil their obligations to establish strong systems to prevent and respond to rights violations of individuals and groups.

The workforce also plays a crucial role in supporting the work of AMS in meeting the targets for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[4], including but not limited to the following:

- **Target 1.3** on implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.
- **Target 1.5** on building the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reducing their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.
- **Target 5.2** on eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- **Target 5.3** on eliminating all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- **Target 11.1** on ensuring access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.

[4] Adopted by UN Member States in 2015. https://sdgs.un.org/goals.

- **Target 16.1** on significantly reducing all forms of violence and related death rates.
- **Target 16.2** on ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

The complementarity of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and other ASEAN regional frameworks is clearly highlighted in the Complementarities Road Map (2020-2025), emphasising the importance of poverty eradication, strengthening resilience and capacity building of service providers.

In addition to international and regional standards, as part of collective efforts towards the achievement of the SDG targets, the Road Map takes into account the Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Service Workforce for Child Protection[5], the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (UN, 2010), the INSPIRE Strategies for Ending Violence against Children[6], the RESPECT Women: Preventing Violence Against Women Framework[7], the Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence (2015)[8] and the International Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights (2006).

II. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work for Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community sets a clear vision for empowering peoples of ASEAN through building comprehensive social work and delivering multidisciplinary, inclusive and quality social services. To support AMS to achieve this vision and translate the Declaration into concrete action, the Road Map aims to:

- Provide specific and practical guidance on the implementation of the priority areas enshrined in the Declaration.
- Guide AMS to promote social work and strengthen its catalytic role in realising a people-centred, people-oriented, and inclusive ASEAN Community.
- Provide a framework for harmonised efforts and close coordination among ASEAN Member States in the implementation of the priority areas of the Declaration, in cooperation with civil society organisations, professional association, academic bodies, UN agencies and other international non-state actors.

[5] UNICEF and GSSWA (2019). Guidelines to Strengthen Social Service Workforce for Child Protection | UNICEF.
[6] WHO (2016). INSPIRE: Seven strategies for Ending Violence against Children.
[7] RESPECT Women: Preventing Violence Against Women Framework (2019). UN Women, WHO.
[8] Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence. 2015. UN Women.

- Facilitate the work of the ASEAN Social Work Consortium (ASWC) and the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW) in strengthening solidarity and cooperation among social work practitioners, educators, and schools of social work across the region.
- Strengthen the individual and collective capacity of AMS to develop the competencies and knowledge base of social workers and the wider social service workforce through exchange of learning and enhanced collaboration in training, education and research.
- Provide a monitoring framework based on a set of measurable indicators, against which to track progress of the implementation of the Ha Noi Declaration across the region.

III. TIMELINE

The timeframe for the Road Map is ten years – 2021-2030.

The key activities prioritised for the first five years of implementation, 2021-2025, are outlined in detail in Annex 1.

The Road Map envisages a baseline to be established for the indicators in Annex 2 and a mid-term review in Year 5 (2025). This will enable progress against actions and indicators to be evaluated. Key actions will then be identified for the second five years of the Road Map, 2026-2030.

IV. DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

The Declaration acknowledges that social work is an essential part of social welfare and that a holistic and comprehensive approach to social service workforce strengthening is needed to effectively strengthen social work and realise the vision of key ASEAN instruments set out in section II of the Road Map.

To develop an effective Road Map for strengthening social work in the ASEAN Community, it is important to clearly define the terms and concepts used in the Road Map and included in the Declaration, namely:

The Social Service Workforce: includes a wide range of governmental and nongovernmental[9] professionals and paraprofessionals and community level volunteers, who work with children, youth, adult women and men, older persons, families and communities, focusing on those with additional needs who are marginalised, in vulnerable situations or at risk, to protect and ensure their healthy development and well-being and the fulfilment of their rights. To do so, the social

[9] For the purpose of this document, NGOs include Organisation for Persons with Disabilities (OPDs).

service workforce provides preventative, responsive and promotive services that are informed by the humanities and social sciences, indigenous knowledge, discipline-specific and interdisciplinary knowledge and skills, and ethical principles. Social service workers engage people, structures and organisations to facilitate access to needed services, alleviate poverty, challenge and reduce discrimination and social isolation, promote social justice and human rights, and prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and family separation.[10]

The wider workforce includes practitioners, researchers, managers and educators. Social service workers include social workers, case workers, community workers, case managers, among others, including those working with specific groups or on specific issues e.g. child protection and youth care workers, those specialised in addressing violence against women and children, and those working with people with disabilities, people with mental health needs, migrants and the elderly. The exact job titles and functions vary from one country to the other, in line with local laws, policies, culture, traditions and the historical development of these roles and professions in each context.

The Social Work profession is the leading and core profession in the social service workforce. It is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion and participation, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, gender responsiveness, cultural sensitivity, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.[11]

Social workers are professionals trained at academic level. Professional qualifications of social workers generally involve tertiary (i.e. bachelor) level education of between three and four years, or an equivalent advanced level national (professional competency-based) vocational training qualification. Graduates of those courses can later take up opportunities for further studies at Honours, Master and Doctoral levels. In many countries, a bachelor-degree in social work is considered the entry-level requirement for the profession.

Countries use diverse approaches to regulate the social work profession, but generally have in place, or are working towards, an expectation that on receiving an academic degree, social workers are certified, and then may need to fulfil certain requirements before being nationally licensed and/or registered to practice. The worker may then be required to renew their license or registration every few years, at which point they need to demonstrate continuing professional development.

[10] Adapted from the definition of the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance: Definition-Social-Service-Workforce.pdf.

[11] Adapted from the definition of IFSW and IASSW, 2014: https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/global-definition-of-social-work/.

More than other social service workers, social workers play a central role in assessing needs then providing, coordinating, managing and reviewing the delivery of services to a specific individual or family.

In addition to social workers, many other actors with varied competencies and qualifications, play an important role in ensuring human well-being and development, some of whom are referred to as paraprofessionals or community volunteers, owing to their auxiliary role in supporting the work of social workers and filling gaps in service provisions that, because of resource constraints, cannot be fully covered by professional qualified staff.

Paraprofessional or para social workers are trained through non-degree training to perform certain social work functions, while working next to or supporting the work of a professional in the same field. They seek to meet the needs of individuals in vulnerable situations and groups through outreach and support at community level and are critical to delivering social services particularly in low resource settings. Paraprofessionals serve in various roles as paid staff or as volunteers.

Volunteers contributing to the social service sector do not constitute a homogenous group. They may be professionals, paraprofessionals or non-professionals, receiving or not receiving a stipend. Volunteers play an auxiliary role by filling gaps not covered by professional qualified staff or paid paraprofessionals, most often at community level. Volunteers should be expected to abide by the core ethical principles that guide the social service sector, with the overarching value being 'do no harm'. It must remain the responsibility of organisations, professionals and paraprofessionals who utilise the services of volunteers to regulate their conduct and ensure that volunteers have the requisite levels of competence, skills, training, support and supervision, to engage safely in work in specific settings[12].

Many professional social workers and other member of the social service workforce start their career having gained experience as volunteers, and the role of voluntary service as a stepping-stone into the workforce should be encouraged. This development should be within a competency-based and regulated career framework, that enables individuals who first serve their local communities on a voluntary basis to step up, having gained competency-based training and supervised practice, to higher levels of the profession.

[12] Adapted from the definition of IFSW and IASSW, 2014: https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/global-definition-of-social-work/.

V. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The overarching principles of this Road Map draw on the principles and values of the social work profession[13], international human rights treaties, ASEAN declaration and guidance listed in Section I. These principles include:

i. Respect for the inherent worth and dignity of human beings.

ii. All services and interventions should first and foremost aim to do no harm.

iii. Respect for confidentiality of personal information, and protection of personal data, alongside the responsibility to disclose information in line with statutory reporting obligations to protect a child.

iv. Leave no one behind, which requires equal access to services and resources and non-discrimination, based on a commitment to address all forms of discrimination.

v. A rights-based approach, upholding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international human rights conventions listed in Section I.

vi. Respect for diversity and upholding the basic human rights and fundamental dignity of all humans.

vii. Alongside individual rights, the importance of collective responsibility, reciprocal relationships and inter-dependence among people and between people and the environment.

viii. Meaningful participation of the people for whom services are intended, including children and people and children with disabilities, in the design and evaluation of those services, and in assessments and decision making which determine how the services will be delivered.

ix. Person- (and child-) centred and survivor/victim-centred approach, services and interventions that are disability, gender and age-responsive, and sensitive to the needs of the individual, not the convenience of the system or bureaucratic requirements, and are provided based on the informed consent from the individuals.

x. An evidence-based approach to the design, development, evaluation and improvement of interventions and services.

xi. Adequate training and supervision for the responsibilities of the various social service workforce positions.

xii. A multidisciplinary, and multisectoral approach, ensuring close coordination and partnership in the design, delivery and evaluation of services.

[13] Informed by International Federation of Social Workers (2018), Global Statement of Ethical Principles. https://www.ifsw.org/global-social-work-statement-of-ethical-principles/.

xiii. Regional cooperation between AMS and all ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and between key sectoral bodies at country level with key roles in strengthening the social service workforce. Wider engagement and cooperation with the private sector, civil society organisation (CSOs), service providers, UN agencies, other multilateral organisations and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) at regional and international level.

VI. PRIORITY AREAS

The Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work includes eleven pillars, of equal importance, which together provide a holistic and systemic approach to workforce strengthening in ASEAN. The purpose of this Road Map is to identify actions for the implementation of each pillar, which are based on evidence of need and priorities, and are designed to achieve the most impact at regional and national level. Where relevant, **pillars are clustered together in seven priority areas**.

Strengthening social work and the social service workforce across a large and diverse region, requires flexibility and adaptability. The actions proposed are selected for their strategic importance in the region, though, not all of them are equally relevant in all countries given the different status of social work development. Therefore, each AMS will determine the applicability of the following actions. This process will also include refining timelines and identifying specific collaborating partners. For initiatives that aim at sharing knowledge and experiences across AMS, the AMS are encouraged to consult and agree on the modalities and the timeline for joint implementation.

Priority Area 1: Establishing and Strengthening the Legal and Policy Framework for Social Work

Declaration Pillar 1 - Develop and strengthen legislation and policies on social work including defining, reinforcing and enhancing the roles and functions of social workers, validate and create (if any) social work positions in social welfare, health, education and justice systems covering the areas of prevention, response, and rehabilitation at the micro-, meso-, and macro-levels. Such legislation and policies are aimed at addressing professional practice gaps, enhancing professionalisation and competencies, promoting standards and accountability, increasing efficiency and effectiveness.

Declaration Pillar 2 - Develop a strategic plan for the progressive strengthening of social work, based on an assessment of needs and current social service system capacities and a multidisciplinary, inclusive and participatory approach, to deliver quality social services nationally. In order to effectively plan, develop and support the strengthening of social work, promote the adoption of information management systems for both human resource management and case management and the development of indicators for tracking and monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of policies and strategic plans.

Declaration Pillar 3 - Adopt, standardise and strengthen accreditation, certification, registration and licensing systems for social workers and para-social workers.

Considerations

A comprehensive, evidence-based and well-defined strategy, policy and normative framework are prerequisites for delivering quality, accessible social services and establishing professional social work and the wider social service workforce on the basis of clear roles, functions and competencies.

Laws, policies and strategic plans may be specific to social work or embedded into normative frameworks for wider systems of social welfare or social protection, or related systems. These include systems for child protection and prevention of and response to violence against women and girls, health, education, justice, social protection, poverty reduction and other relevant national strategic frameworks. Including measures to define and strengthen the roles and competencies of social workers and other social service workforce in legislation, policies and strategies in certain key sectors, such as social welfare, health, education, justice, early childhood development (ECD), labour, community development, and disaster risk reduction is important. An example would be defining their functions and competencies in a specific setting such as schools or for the delivery of key services, such as mental health and psychosocial support. However, to ensure integrated and holistic development of the profession and wider social service workforce, it is important for the roles of social workers to be reflected in the normative framework of all related sectors, in considerations specific to the profession and workforce.

A specific national law, policy and strategic plan centred on strengthening social work and on the development of the social service workforce[14] is important for enshrining the definition of social workers and other social service workers, as well as for framing the certification, licensing and/or registration[15] of professional social workers, and other social service workers in specific auxiliary roles (such as para social workers and volunteers). This provides an overall normative framework for the workforce. At entry level, it covers the accreditation[16] of providers of certified courses in social work and related social service disciplines (such as youth and community work), and also can provide a framework for ongoing assessment of the competencies of social service workers engaged with different client groups.

[14] See Section IV of the Road Map for the definition and concept of the social service workforce and social workers.

[15] **Licensing or certification** refers to the act of being legally recognised as a professional practitioner and is typically outlined in national policy or legislation as a requirement to perform a certain set of professional responsibilities. While they are similar terms, a license is usually understood to be a status that needs to be periodically renewed, whereas a certificate is issued at only one point in time.
Registration is usually linked to the act of submitting information to be included as part of a professional registry. This registry acts as a repository of a professional's qualifications or credential data over his/her career and can contain information on a practitioner's identity, education, exam results, licensing history and any reported disciplinary actions.

[16] **Accreditation** describes the action or process of officially recognising an educational or training institution as meeting an established standard of quality.

In order to be effective, such strategic plans, policies and laws must be informed by national and international guidance. In addition, they must be based on evidence of the key social work roles required at community level, as well as at national and sub national level, and the estimated ratio of social workers or other social service workers to a unit of overall population or child population (e.g. per 100,000) that would be required to effectively address the population's critical social welfare needs.

Human resource needs should be identified based on a vision for the social welfare system in the medium and long term. These plans also need to be informed by an accurate mapping and assessment of the current state of the workforce at local level, including number and qualification of social service workers at all levels working with specific groups and in specific settings, the number of vacant posts, and the number of professionals with required qualifications and training. Planning for the workforce will be most effective when an integral part of or aligned with the visioning/planning process for the social welfare system as a whole.

In identifying a country-specific target workforce to population ratio, AMS should consider the main tasks that will be assigned to those workers, their qualification, skills and competencies, the population density, extent and nature of the population's needs, the time needed to access populations in remote locations, and other aspects of their country context that may require a higher ratio or enable a lower one. Countries in earlier stages of social service workforce development may choose to have one minimum ratio for the entire workforce, while countries with more established systems and more clearly defined categories of workers, could establish minimal and optimal ratios for different categories. Currently, there is no globally recognised standard ratio of social workers and other social service workforce.[17] Workforce ratios are best used in combination with other indicators of social work strengthening.

It is also important that the workforce needs are costed. In addition to salary costs, these costs need to include recruitment, pre-service and in-service training, education, management, professional supervision,[18] support and self-care, and the resources for performing required duties. These resources include adequate office equipment and space, workplace adaptation and accessibility, confidential meeting space. They also include resources for safe travel to home and community visits, and, where required in emergency cases, for safe travel and visits outside of working hours.

[17] Recent studies covering over 40 countries from diverse regions, including 4 ASEAN countries, showed a low average figure of 50 social service workers per 100,000 child population, a figure that provides a baseline rather than a standard or target. http://socialserviceworkforce.org/resources/state-social-service-workforce-2018 (see p.18, annex 1, p. 36) http://socialserviceworkforce.org/resources/state-social-service-workforce-south-asia; http://socialserviceworkforce.org/resources/blog/mapping-and-planning-social-service-workforce-middle-east-and-north-africa.

[18] **Supervision** in the social services is a supportive relationship. It is carried out in regular meetings, which focus on accountability, well-being and skill development. Through regular contacts, the supervisor provides coaching and encourages the supervisee to critically reflect on their practice. The ultimate aim of supervision is to improve the service to clients. GSSWA (2020) Guidance Manual on Strengthening Supervision for the Social Service Workforce.

Managing human resources requires the establishment or strengthening of a national or sub-national human resource information management system.

Case management by the social service workforce can also be significantly enhanced by the establishment or strengthening of interoperable digital information management systems designed for case management[19]. Such efforts can build from and learn lessons from countries that have already introduced such systems, including Child Protection Information Management Systems (CPIMS). They can be utilised by front line workers to effectively manage and refer cases, by supervisors to enhance support for social workers and by policy makers to track incident patterns and the capacity and performance of the social welfare system.

Actions at National Level

1.1 Carry out national situation analyses and disability, gender and age sensitive needs assessments for social work and social services. This process should:

- Assess the population's needs in terms of care, support and protection in the context of social welfare, and prevention of and response to violence including for the most marginalized, excluded and at-risk groups (including children, women, people with disabilities, older persons, those with mental health needs and migrants), taking into account urban and rural differences in terms of needs and in terms of quality and accessibility of support services, and identify the gaps in legal and policy frameworks, critical gaps in support and services, and the unmet needs.
- The situation analysis should also analyse fiscal space, governance models and capacity for decentralisation – fiscal and administrative – in order to allow the integration of social service workforce and social services development models and roadmaps into the planning and financial systems at national/subnational level.

1.2 Develop and adopt a costed, multi-sectoral national action plan for progressively developing and strengthening social work and social services, based on assessed needs, including the required human resources. Based on the situation analyses and needs assessment (under Priority 1.1.) this plan should:

- Include a nationally contextualised vision for the social welfare system that would enable people in need to access required support.
- Establish the minimum package of disability, gender and age sensitive essential social services required to address the needs of the population,

[19] Examples of interoperable information management systems include – Primero https://www.primero.org/ (i.e. for child protection information management systems and GBV information management systems). Primero also enables incident monitoring.

including specific at-risk groups identified in the Ha Noi Declaration and the Road Map. Essential services encompass a core set of the context-specific social services, aiming to secure the rights, safety and well-being of individuals.

- Identify the required workforce at national and sub national level to deliver the social welfare system and minimum package of essential services and the steps needed to put in place the required workforce. This should include the social worker per population and per child population ratio.
- Include a costing of the system, social workers and the social service workforce based on estimated workloads and competency analysis. (see Priority 6.1)
- Identify financing options/scenarios for the implementation of the national action plan, which are in line with the specificities of the national public finance management/budgeting systems. (see Priority 6.1)
- Involve all key ministries and agencies in the development of the national action plan, including those responsible for social welfare, social protection, women, children, elderly, disaster risk reduction, education, home affairs, justice, health, ECD, labour, immigration, as well as planning and budgeting, as well as non-state actors including national associations of social work, in its development.
- AMS are also encouraged to translate national action plans into costed multi sectoral local action plans, aiming to guide local level efforts on strengthening social work and social service in decentralised systems.

1.3 Develop and adopt legislation specific to the profession of social work, which also recognises and underpins the wider social service workforce. Ensure that laws in other sectors also define the roles, responsibilities, and requirements of social work in that sector, where applicable. Where relevant legislation is already in place, AMS are encouraged to review and, where necessary, amend existing laws to ensure their relevance to current realities of social work and the social service workforce development in the country.

As a minimum this legislation should:

- Define social work and the social service workforce, and related terminology, in terms of roles, functions and responsibilities, including the roles of paraprofessionals.
- Identify the role of social workers in different fields, including, but not limited to social welfare, health, education, justice, and disaster risk management.

- Establish required resources and support systems for professional social work and the wider workforce, including supervision, certification, licensing, registration and accreditation, as well as a monitoring and reporting mechanisms.
- Consider continuing education of social workers, as a required part of the regulation of professional standards. This may entail workers demonstrating continual attainment of the required level of practice competence in order to renew their professional license to practice or accreditation status.
- Outline required qualifications, competency standards, and other requirements to be licensed and registered to practise in social work or accredited as a social worker.
- Facilitate professionalisation of the paraprofessional and volunteer social service workforce through including them in academic and continuing education, supervision and registration mechanisms.
- Define the role of professional associations and a national council for social work.
- Guide and direct the overall and continuous strengthening of social work and the wider workforce.

1.4 Develop or strengthen relevant secondary legislation and policy for social work. At a minimum, this includes:

- Regulations, minimum standards and standard operating procedures for social workers and related workforce in different roles and settings.
- Regulations on roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals and mechanisms for their supervision, where possible, by professional social workers.

1.5 Develop a comprehensive human resource information system for the social service workforce. This system should include:

- A system for monitoring and evaluating numbers and distribution of human resources across all social work posts in, at least, all state structures, including number of vacant posts.
- A system of tracking pre- and in-service trainings received by the social service workforce.
- The highest level of qualification of personnel in different roles and functions.

1.6 Develop an effective digitised information management system(s) (IMS) for case management by social service workers[20]. Such an IMS should:

- Assist case workers managing workflows and documenting case management processes.
- Support supervision of case workers.
- Support data accuracy and case documentation, in line with guidelines for ethical practice, safety, client confidentiality and informed consent.
- Enable tracking performance against existing standards.
- Enable incident monitoring.
- Be interoperable across relevant case management systems.

Actions at Regional Level

1.7 Develop a regional guidance on essential services for groups in vulnerable situations to support AMS

- With engagement of relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, ASEAN will develop regional guidance on the essential services for social work, with a focus on the most in-need groups, including but not limited to child victims and women survivors of violence, trafficking and exploitation, persons with disabilities, the elderly and children affected by migration. (led by ASWC and SOMSWD)

1.8 Develop sectoral guidance on the role of social workers and the social service workforce in key sectors, including social welfare, health, education, disaster risk reduction, justice sectors and other priority sectors

- Develop regional guidance notes on the role of social work and social service workforce strengthening for their sector to strengthen the multi-sectoral delivery of social work, support the needs assessment and the development of national plans of action. (led by the relevant sectoral body for each sector/guidance note – SOM-ED, SOMHD, SOMTC, SOMRDPE, SOMTC, SLOM, ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) – with support from SOMSWD and ASWC)
- Proposed priority sectors include health, education, social welfare, ECD, justice, social protection, disaster risk reduction and mental health.
- Develop a regional guidance note on the role of social work and social service workforce strengthening for social protection. (SOMSWD and ASWC)

[20] Examples of interoperable information management systems for case management include – Primero https://www.primero.org/.

1.9 Develop a regional guidance note on the minimum ratio of social workers per unit of population to support AMS planning of the social service workforce

- The guidance note should cover a minimum ratio of social workers per unit of population and social workers per unit of child population.
- The guidance note may provide additional guidance on the workforce ratio required to meet the needs of specific groups in order to further support AMS in their planning.

Priority Area 2: Expanding and Strengthening Education and Regulation

Declaration Pillar 3 - Develop, standardise and strengthen quality education, research, studies, and pre- and in-service training programmes for social work professionals and paraprofessionals, and other professionals to produce social work graduates in various fields in order to fulfil the demand, and ensure responsiveness to national priorities, and alignment with international standards. Facilitate the availability of education and training opportunities at regional and international level including through the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW).

Considerations

Social workers and the social service workforce need to be equipped for a challenging range of tasks and responsibilities. This entails a range of education and training programmes and opportunities for continued professional development being in place, delivered by qualified and experienced teachers, facilitators and trainers.

Bachelor's and master's degree programmes in social work ensure a thorough academic preparation for social workers, provided by qualified academic educators, practice teachers and assessors. These programmes equip the workforce for complex and demanding roles, and so should be accompanied by a component of supervised and assessed field practice.

Bachelor's degrees typically provide a comprehensive grounding in core social work knowledge, theory and practice, while a master's degree in social work enables a greater deal of specialisation, proof of readiness for policy or managerial roles, and an introduction to techniques and approaches to social work research. Professional university qualifications provide an opportunity to enhance the status and professional reputation of social workers, and help put social work on a level with other well-recognised professions.

However, university degrees alone cannot cover the full range of specialist practice skills social workers may require in specific roles. Additional pre- or in-service specialist courses and competency-based trainings are important to equip workers with required functional competencies for specific roles and working with certain client groups.

The availability of a clear framework for competencies of various social service workers, education of social workers and training of the wider social service workforce allows the diverse actors involved in training and education to apply unified standards covering curricula, examinations, qualifications and field placements. Enforcement of these standards helps ensure a high quality of social services for those in need.

Capacity building efforts also need to encompass all social service workforce including paraprofessionals and community volunteers, through harmonised and standardised competency-based academic and training programs.

Indigenised and authenticated training and education curricula and programs will need to incorporate theory, research and evidence-based practice models, drawn from international, regional and national sources, as well as national priorities in different sectors and related to different groups served by social workers, underlined by quality control mechanisms.

Strengthening the education system for social workers and aligning curricula with the regional and international standards developed by the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) will build a foundation for developing professional regulation system, in the form of certification, licensing and accreditation across all AMS, which at this stage is not available in most of the ASEAN countries and is not standardised.

Actions at National Level

2.1 Establish social work academic programs, including advanced academic programmes, meeting national, regional and global standards for social work curricula

- Develop national standards for social work education (curriculum, and qualification requirements) in alignment with regional standards (see Priority 2.4).
- Provide education and competency-based training suitable to develop professional competencies required for specific roles and functions at different levels of the social service workforce, including at the local/ community level.
- Promote and expand scholarships and grants for social work students.
- Promote social work research by academic faculties to generate local evidence for developing policies and services, to capacitate academic staff and to facilitate regional and international collaboration.

Social work academic programmes should:

- Align with national priorities and aim to meet global standards, and be informed by both local and indigenous knowledge, and regional and

international knowledge, concepts and academic research and rights-based approaches.

- Offer field placement in state and non-state organisations providing quality social services, as part of social work education. Students on field placement will need to be supervised by an experienced and suitably trained practitioner. Innovative ways of providing ongoing support, including through online platforms should be considered.
- Ensure access and development of disability-accessible quality rights-based teaching materials in local languages, while also enabling access to international resources.
- Collaborate with advanced academic programs in social work within the country, across the ASEAN region, and where possible, internationally, to share learning and experience, in both teaching and research in social work.
- Be made more accessible, including through the provision of scholarship, sponsorship and fellowship programmes.

2.2 Support harmonised development of social work faculty and trainers providing academic, pre-service and in-service training to social workers and paraprofessionals

- Build strong social work education faculty and a cadre of trainers capable of developing competency-based training programs.
- Set unified professional standards for teaching staff including the required relevant type and level of qualifications for teaching social work, ensuring that academic courses to prepare professional social workers are taught by faculty with professional social work qualifications and experience.
- Embed faculty development efforts in the process of developing new academic programs, in order to ensure the long-term supply of high-quality teaching by qualified social work faculty and field teachers in academic programs, as well as non-academic trainings for other social service workforce.

2.3 Establish and standardise competency-based training for social workers, other social service workers, paraprofessionals and volunteers, including those with limited/no access to academic education, to meet their training needs

- Ensure that competency-based training programs are standardised for specific groups of the social service workforce through the country, and where applicable, through the region (linked with the development of competency frameworks under Priority 4.1).

Actions at Regional Level

2.4 Adopt regional qualification standards in social work education to ensure the high quality of training programs (ASWC and ATCSW)

- Develop regional qualification standards for social work and social service workforce education.
- Develop/finalise the ASEAN Core Curriculum for Social Work Education.
- Develop a unified professional standard for teaching/faculty staff.

2.5 Facilitate the availability of education and training opportunities at regional and international level including through the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW) and ASWC

- ATCSW to undertake a needs assessment for training and capacity building on social work.
- ATCSW to develop and accredit general and specialised training programmes/certified courses for social work, including to plug identified gaps in professional pre service and in service training. (with the support of ASWC)
- ATCSW to deliver general and specialist training programmes/certified courses for social work utilising online platforms and face to face modalities.
- ATCSW to work to standardise curriculum developed in consultation with ASCW, partners, and the governing board.
- ATCSW to develop and implement a regional programme to promote raised academic standards in social work, including research opportunities and exchanges, and online learning opportunities for social work faculty.
- ATCSW and ASWC to develop regional learning exchange opportunities, including between countries that do and do not have advanced academic courses and specialist courses.
- Support the development of social work education, including through the sharing of information on social work curriculum across the region. (ASWC)
- ATCSW to consider becoming a regional assessment centre for providing certification for competency-based training.
- Promote/undertake social work research to capacitate academic staff.

Priority Area 3: National Councils and Associations of Social Workers

Declaration Pillar 3 - Adopt, standardise and strengthen accreditation, certification, registration and licensing systems for social workers and para-social workers.

Declaration Pillar 5 - Promote the establishment of national associations or councils of social workers, support collaboration with professional associations or councils, both government and non-government, and foster partnerships with other professionals and paraprofessionals, allied workers and civil society organisations and with the private sector through Corporate Social Responsibility.

Considerations

Professional social work associations have a key role to play in strengthening social work and the social service workforce, by advocating for, promoting and defending the status, recognition and working conditions of the profession and workforce, and providing technical support to state and non-state actors. They can also advocate for policy development relevant to social work and social services. They generally support their members through promoting, enabling or providing training, mentoring and supervision, and through promoting, revising and upholding a professional code of ethics. They are typically an entity independent of government control, but ideally they are formally recognised and regulated in law, with a similar mandate and status to other professional associations. There are also hybrid models in which a government controlled regulatory social work or social service workforce council also fulfils the role of a professional association, but while this can enable better resourcing, it may constrain the independence and thus ability that a professional association would otherwise have to strongly advocate for the workforce. Legal status and ongoing and consistent funding enable professional associations to grow, develop and sustainably support the social work profession and social service workforce in the country. Through partnering with international associations, national professional associations can stay up to date with the latest developments in social work and test, adapt and apply and adapt modern evidence-based practices to their specific national and local contexts. However, such associations are not established in all countries in South East Asia.

Alongside professional association, **national regulatory bodies**, often called national councils, for social work or the social service workforce, are usually established in law, regulated and funded as statutory bodies. Their mandate typically includes some or all of the following: developing and enforcing or overseeing requirements for certification, licensing and national registration of social workers (and this may include other social service practitioners); developing social work educational standards; conducting or overseeing national examinations in social work; accreditation of education and training programmes for social workers; defining competencies and minimum occupational standards; investigating and applying sanctions in cases of professional misconduct; and promoting quality professional supervision.

Actions at National Level

3.1 Support the establishment of a national professional association of social work

- Define the mandate of a national professional association in law, or otherwise recognise it formally in government policy and budgets. This mandate may include developing, promoting and enforcing a professional code of ethics and professional standards, supporting professional regulation and supporting continuing education.
- Enable associations to disseminate a code of ethics, which is endorsed and signed by the members of the association, and protocols for ensuring adherence to the code. National codes of ethics should be aligned with the ASEAN Social Work Code of Ethics 2015.
- Ensure involvement of associations in the work of the national leadership groups and other consultative bodies for the strengthening of social work.
- Engage national professional associations in efforts for promoting a positive public image of social work and social workers.
- Prioritise support and funding of national professional associations through state, donor or development partners funding.
- Ensure autonomy of national professional associations in their work with members and other activities.

3.2 Establish a national regulatory body or council for social work/the social service workforce

- Define in law the mandate of a national council or other regulatory body, or otherwise recognise it in government policy.
- Provide ongoing and consistent funding from the government and other sources to support the operation of such councils or regulatory bodies and enable capacity building of their staff.
- Support efforts for raising awareness on the role of social work councils and regulatory bodies among social workers and decision makers from different sectors employing social workers.
- Ensure involvement of social work councils and regulatory bodies in the work of the national leadership groups and other consultative bodies.

Priority Area 4: Increasing Professional Recognition, Development and Support

Declaration Pillar 3 - Adopt, standardise and strengthen accreditation, certification, registration and licensing systems for social workers and para-social workers.

Declaration Pillar 6 - Promote the retention of social workers through the provision of career progression opportunities and professional development. Promote continuous capacity building and establish and strengthen systems for quality supervision and support for social workers.

Declaration Pillar 9 - Work towards regional professional recognition of social work, render necessary assistance to narrow social work education gaps among ASEAN Member States, and develop regional professional and occupational standards, social work ethics, standardised competency frameworks, standards/core curriculum and guidelines for the supervision of social work.

Considerations

Across the region there are differences in terms of the levels of education and training and differences in or an absence of systems for accreditation, certification, registration and licensing systems for social workers and para-social workers. As a result, standards and qualifications for social workers vary or remain undefined.

These challenges, and the fact that qualified social workers cannot easily transfer and work from one ASEAN country to the other, also underline the need for a regional approach for increasing professional recognition, development and support for social workers and the wider social service workforce.

Professional social workers and the wider social service workforce are prone to stress and burnout, compassion fatigue and lack of work-family balance, exacerbated by high workload, low salary and lack of professional recognition. These stressors result in poor quality of service, as staff are demoralised, and impacts retention. This situation can be managed by developing clear job descriptions, ensuring good professional supervision, self-care and wellness, and offering career progression and professional development opportunities.

Defining core and functional competencies of social workers and social service workers in different roles, and ensuring their competency based training and ongoing support, will strengthen their confidence and ability to manage complex situations. Defining their competencies, and achieving professional status through certification, will also enhance respect and recognition for their roles, and enable allied professionals to coordinate and link their roles and functions more clearly with those of the social service workforce, through joint assessment and referral mechanisms.

Employing these strategies may also increase the resilience of social workers and their willingness to remain on their jobs. Increased retention of qualified workers in the workforce will also enable the accumulation of a pool of experienced practitioners, thus reducing the need for high levels of spending on training new, unqualified staff. This will also lead to ongoing improvements in the consistency and quality of service experienced by children, families, marginalised and in-need groups. Enhancing professional recognition of social work by ensuring that certain civil service posts are reserved for trained social workers, can also support retention and raise morale in the profession.

Actions at National Level

4.1 Develop competency frameworks for the social work profession and wider social service workforce

- Develop national competency frameworks with different roles and functions of social workers, and other members of the social service workforce, including community-level, paraprofessionals as well as professionals, in response to the assessed needs of the population and in line with new or amended legislation on social work (under Priority 1).
- Develop national frameworks for progressive development, assessment and recognition of competencies (skills, knowledge, professional values, career paths, and behaviours) at each level and in each role of the social service workforce.

These frameworks should be aligned with regional standards (see Priority 4.8).

4.2 Develop and enforce national minimum standards for professional social work, and occupational standards for different functions within the wider social service workforce

- Set minimum professional standards for social workers and other social service workers in all roles and settings based on the national context, as well as regional and international minimum requirements for qualified social workers. These national minimum standards (NMS) will set the threshold necessary for safe and effective person-centred practice.
- Develop occupational standards for the wider social service workforce in line with various roles identified in each country.

4.3 Develop and implement a system/mechanism(s) for accreditation, certification, registration and licensing for social work practice

- Mandate in law and/or policy the process and standards for accreditation, certification, registration and licensing for social work.

- Mandate in law and/or policy the role of social work councils and professional associations in supporting different aspects of professional regulation of social workers including certification, registration and licensing, plus accreditation of professional and continuing education (see Priority 3).
    - Depending on the country context, introduce different levels of professional regulation, with a requirement for initial certification, and registration of social workers, with an accredited degree in social work – (basic level), followed by the obtaining of a full professional license following a certain period of supervised professional practice.

4.4 Ensure continued professional development opportunities for social workers and the wider workforce

- Ensure the provision of continuing education opportunities for social workers, as a required part of the regulation of the profession and professional development. This will also entail continual attainment required for renewal of the professional license to practice.
- Align training requirements with minimum professional standards for social workers and occupational standards for the wider social service workforce.
- Aim trainings at maintaining the level of knowledge and practice required to renew social work license and registration, as well as at facilitating promotion and specialisation.
- Through promotion of professional development opportunities (including in-service training, a ladder of professional certification and licensing rising through different levels and linked to pay, and promotion and redeployment opportunities), enhance workers' job satisfaction and staff retention.

4.5 Strengthen supervision of social workers, including through the development of guidelines for supervision of social workers and the wider workforce

- Develop and adopt supervision guidelines/SOPs for social workers.
- Align supervision requirements, professional and occupational standards, and competency frameworks.
- Ensure establishment and strengthening of a professional supervision system which balances the managerial, developmental and supportive functions of supervision.
- Introduce training on supervision for supervisors.

- Introduce mechanisms for training and incentivising supervisors and guidance to promote and enable full use of both regular individual and group supervision sessions.
- Through regular and high-quality supervision, enable critically reflective practice, ongoing professional development, and alignment of individual work with organisational priorities and requirements.

4.6 Introduce mechanisms for supporting social worker well-being and self-care

- Set a minimum ratio of number of workers to a unit of population, as well as an optimal ratio to aim to achieve, in order to address social work staff workload and caseload challenges. Work towards the achievement and maintenance of the minimum and optimal ratio.
- Develop and apply staff grievance and feedback mechanisms.
- Introduce measures for ensuring the physical and psychological well-being of social workers and the social service workforce in both development and humanitarian contexts, including creating online and offline peer support platforms, supporting work-life balance, promoting physical exercise and recreation opportunities, providing work-based confidential telephone and online counselling and other forms of individual and group psychosocial support for staff.

4.7 Develop human resource policies enabling a positive and safe work environment for social workers and the wider social service workforce

- Address issues of salary equity and parity, across gender, regional and urban/rural differences.
- Ensure comparative equity of pay compared with other similar professions and worker roles and responsibilities.
- Introduce adequate remuneration and salary scales linked to promotion and professional development for social workers and others social service workers.
- Promote positive and safe work environments, positive work-life-family balance, employee benefit systems and adaptation and accessibility of the workplace.

Actions at Regional Level

4.8 Recognise and facilitate social work as a profession across ASEAN countries, including through promotion of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement

- Explore the steps required for social work to be recognised as a profession under the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA). To facilitate this, ASEAN will develop a concept note and draft strategy and hold a consultation(s) on the steps and actions required for the MRA for social work. (led by ASWC)
- If agreed, ASEAN will implement the strategy on MRA. (SOMSWD and ASWC)
- Establish a framework and mechanism for mutual recognition of qualifications and licensing for social work and for registration of social workers in the region. (ASWC, with ATCSW)
- Establish a regional accreditation system for schools of social work to support mutual recognition of academic qualifications/credentials. (ASWC and ATCSW)
- ASEAN will develop a regional competency framework with different roles and functions of social workers, and other members of the social service workforce at all levels. ATCSW for ASEAN will develop relevant materials to guide the AMS in adoption of this framework, adapted to their context. The development of the regional competency framework and implementation guidance will be led by the ATCSW and the ASEAN Social Work Consortium.
- Facilitate regional dialogues on supervision mechanisms for professionals and paraprofessionals. (ASWC)

4.8 is also closely linked with 2.4 - Adopt regional qualification standards in social work education

Priority Area 5: Enhancing National, Regional and International Collaboration

Declaration Pillar 4 - Enhance interagency coordination at the national level, and cross-sectoral collaboration at the ASEAN level, between social welfare, health, education, justice, labour, community development, finance, disaster risk reduction and management to explicitly reference social work in relevant mechanisms, platforms, and regulations. Encourage government and non-government agencies to provide opportunities for social workers relevant to their work setting.

Declaration Pillar 8 - Develop and enhance regional networks of social workers and regional platforms including but not limited to the ASEAN Social Work Consortium for exchange of good practices and enhancing social work and social welfare in the region, establishing a referral system, meeting the supporting needs of the citisens toward substantive equality and effective social development.

Declaration Pillar 11 - Undertake cross-sectoral and inter-pillar cooperation across the ASEAN Community, as well as engage ASEAN's partners including the ASEAN Plus Three Countries, ASEAN Dialogue Partners, international organisations and civil society organisations, academe, and private sector, among others, to continue the development and support social work in ASEAN.

Considerations

Promoting collaboration and coordination among the multiple sectors and actors contributing to social work and social service workforce strengthening at national, regional and global levels will help underpin the progressive development of the profession and wider workforce and will ensure the delivery of quality and coordinated people-centred social work and social services.

At the country level, there is a need to address the currently limited coordination, engagement and understanding among different sectors of the importance and role of social work, and of the wider social service workforce. The ongoing development of social work and strengthening of social services through government and non-governmental agencies will require close cooperation between different governmental bodies across sectors, academic institutions, national civil society organisations, national disability representative organisations and other representative groups and with continued cooperation with international actors including UN agencies, notably UNICEF, UN Women and UNFPA, other regional and multi-lateral bodies and donors.

The multi-faceted nature of the social service workforce, covering social welfare, health, education, and justice sectors that address the needs of the most marginalised and excluded groups of people (including children, women, the elderly, people with disabilities, people with mental health needs and migrants) makes it essential to ensure ongoing coordination among the many actors and sectors involved in training and employing the workforce. This will also require coordination with and support from allied sectors and ministries of finance, planning and public services, decentralised structures, as well as the direct line ministries responsible for social welfare, health, education, ECD, justice, labour, community development and disaster risk reduction, which are together responsible for the range of services reaching children, women, elderly, migrants and other persons in vulnerable situations, in which social workers and the wider social service workforce are employed or are working as volunteers. Consideration of guidelines and protocols in place or being developed in allied sectors will further support coordination of these efforts.

It is recommended that a dedicated national coordination mechanism is established (or the function integrated into existing mechanisms) to coordinate the developing and strengthening of social work and the social service workforce (e.g. a National Leadership Group (NLG)). The NLG would act as the platform to convene key national stakeholders from government, education and training institutions and civil society. The NLG would agree its own composition and terms of reference, and then meet regularly to jointly lead and coordinate workforce strengthening efforts. The NLG is normally chaired or co-chaired by the lead government agency for social welfare.

In addition, AMS will benefit from partnering with the key international social work actors like the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), through international platforms and their regional offices, as well as the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance (GSSWA) and INGOs.

Given the vulnerability of the countries of the region to natural disasters, which are likely to increase in frequency and intensity with climate change, and the risk of political instability and conflict, the social service workforce will need to be ready to respond to humanitarian emergencies, through adequate planning and support for capacity development. This would include the development of capacity in humanitarian action for child protection, preventing and addressing all forms of violence, and disability inclusion. Social workers and social work must also be included as a component of emergency responses, be recognised as essential workers and services in times of crisis and be able, enabled, facilitated and supported to continue delivering social work and social services.

Collaboration with organisations supporting humanitarian response and disaster preparedness such as national civil society organisations and volunteer bodies, UN Agencies, national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross is important to strengthen the social work response in emergencies.

Meanwhile, technological, professional and practical innovations developed in humanitarian settings should be documented and shared to enable transfer of learning and capacity across development and humanitarian settings, address the wider and longer-term challenges faced by the workforce across the region.

Strong collaboration and internal organisation of the social work profession and social service workforce, at national level, facilitated by professional association and other organised groups, will in turn enable stronger collaboration and integration with key regional bodies specifically aiming to strengthen the social work profession, including the ASEAN Social Work Consortium (ASWC), the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW) and the ASEAN Social Work Journal (ASWJ).

The significant contribution of these bodies and initiatives is acknowledged. It is critical to continue and build on the work of the ASWC, ATCSW and ASWJ to further support AMS in their efforts to strengthen social work.

Actions at National Level

5.1 Establish a government-led mechanism (National Leadership Group (NLG)) responsible for multisectoral coordination for workforce strengthening and engagement with regional and international actors

- National leadership groups can either be newly set up, or established as part of the existing relevant national coordination mechanisms for plans or strategies by adding the responsibility for leading social work strengthening efforts at the national level.
- Ensure wide participation of the key state and non-state actors representing different sectors and branches of government, academic institutions, professional associations and/or social work councils, etc.).
- Build capacity of NLG (particularly in developing policy and legislation) including through international and regional technical assistance and learning exchange.

5.2 Promote and develop, including through the NLG, the role of social work, and the wider social service workforce, at the senior leaders level and across key and allied sectors (social welfare, health, education, justice, ECD, labour, community development, finance, disaster risk reduction) to help strengthen disability, gender and age responsive multi-sectoral service delivery and coordination by the workforce

- Organise high level forums to promote the role of social work and the wider social service workforce and secure commitment of senior officials and policy makers.
- Organise multi-sectoral workshops and learning events that offer social workers opportunities to demonstrate their role and impact, to raise professional awareness of the role of social workers and the wider social service workforce.
- Develop recommendations for how to develop policy and practice guidance on social work and social service workforce role and responsibilities so as to then insert it into secondary legislation, guidance and standard operating procedures for different sectors.

5.3 Strengthen coordination between state and non-state actors, including international associations and alliances for social work and the social service workforce

- Identify focal points within the key state entities responsible for supporting regular exchange with national and international NGOs, international associations and alliances.[21]
- Support and enable these focal points and other representatives of state and non-state actors to participate in and contribution to regional and international conferences and events of learning and exchange in policy and practice.

5.4 Strengthen the social work response in emergency settings

- Integrate social welfare and social work into emergency planning and disaster preparedness, risk reduction and response.
- Designate social workers and social work (both Government and non-government) as essential workers and services during emergencies and disasters, including major disease outbreaks and pandemics, to ensure continuation of social work and delivery of social services during such emergency situations.
- Map and identify gaps in the capacity of the social service workforce, including but not limited to professional social workers, to deploy and respond in humanitarian settings and sudden onset emergencies, including those occurring as a result of pandemic or climate change. Include this capacity assessment in the national assessment envisaged in Priority 1.1.
- Develop adaptations that can be deployed in emergencies to ensure populations in vulnerable situations can be reached by the social service workforce.
- Build the capacity of the social service workforce to respond during emergencies.

Actions at Regional Level

5.5 Strengthen and improve coordination between regional cooperation mechanisms including the ASEAN Social Work Consortium (ASWC), the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW) and the ASEAN Social Work Journal (ASWJ) and regional platforms and tools for information sharing

[21] e.g. International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance (GSSWA), etc.

- Convene an intersectoral regional conference(s) on strengthening social work and the implementation of the Road Map. This initiative should link with public financing of social work, social services and social welfare. (SOMSWD and ASWC)
- Convene annual ASEAN regional dialogues/symposiums to facilitate cross sectoral collaboration, including with the education, health and disaster preparedness and response sectors, as well as the planning and budget sectors. (ASWC)
- Develop events and create platforms for learning, exchange, collaboration and coordination run by and involving ASWC, ATCSW and ASWJ, with active participation of representatives of the workforce and state and non-state social work employers and educators in AMS.
- Continue the publication of the ASWJ.
- Undertake an assessment of the reach and impact of the ASWJ with a view to enhancing content and dissemination.
- Revitalise and maintain the ASEAN Social Work website to have up to date courses, social work tools, resources, research and opportunities.
- Conduct and promote research, including, action-based and multi-disciplinary research, to generate regional evidence and capture regional best practices for social work and social welfare, including on the role of social work in the health sector and in disaster preparedness and response, to inform and support the development of policies and services. (ASWC)

5.6 Expand collaboration and coordination with ASEAN dialogue partners to strengthen social work, including social work training, and implementation the Road Map (ASWC and ATCSW)

- Convene a partners' forums/conferences on collaboration on and resource mobilisation for strengthening social work, including social work training, and implementing the Road Map, Dialogue Partners, UN agencies and other relevant organisations and bodies.
- Expand partnership with ASEAN dialogue partners for exchange programmes, apprenticeships, and potential scholarship opportunities in the field of social work and other relevant disciplines.

Priority Area 6: Increasing Resource Allocation to the Social Welfare System and for Social Work

Declaration Pillar 7 - Resource Allocation

Allocate adequate resources to strengthen social work, including workforce development and financing for education, training, research and publications.

Considerations

The normative and policy frameworks outlined above will only be effectively implemented if supported by adequate financial resource allocation. This will ensure adequate levels of recruitment, training, continuing professional development and supervision in all roles and functions to enable the workforce to develop a social welfare system. Resource allocations will also need to take account the needs of training, education and research providers, whose work is essential for the maintenance and development of professional standards, and for continued innovation, adaptation and improvement of practice, in social work, and in the wider social service workforce. Allocations will also need to consider the cost of delivering the social welfare system to the range of in-need families and persons, including children, women, elderly, migrants, and people with disabilities and mental health needs.

Accurate planning, budgeting and decision making in resource allocation requires accurate and comprehensive assessments of needs for social service delivery, plus up to date human resource data, drawn from human resource information systems.

The required level of resource allocation will depend on continued political commitment reinforced through support of representatives at sub national/provincial and national levels, and buttressed by regional commitments among AMS. Additional sources of funding will be required to supplement government funding, in particular in response to new and emerging areas of need, and to fund innovative practice and research, and for this AMS should collaborate with ASEAN dialogue partners, development partners, private sector and civil society partners.

Actions at National Level

6.1 Undertake a comprehensive costing of the social service workforce and minimum package of social services

- On the basis of the assessment and plan of action (under Priority 1), cost the full range of workforce needs to deliver the minimum package of social services across the social welfare system.
    - These workforce costs should include not only salaries, but the costs of work and confidential meeting space, office supplies, IT and communications equipment, safe transport at all hours, adapted

and accessible workplaces, supervision, pre- and in-service training, professional education and continuing professional development, recruitment of qualified personnel in the required roles, staff support and supervision, and to ensure the resources and up-to-date professional tools for a positive and safe work environment, which ensures job retention and continued service improvement.

- Cost the minimum package of social services covering essential services, including for all in-need groups identified in the Ha Noi Declaration and this Road Map – vulnerable elderly, persons with disabilities, women, children and adolescents, migrant workers, as well as victims of violence and trafficking in persons and those impacted by pandemics and disasters, as envisaged in Priority 1.2.
- Engage planning departments in ministries, and ministries of planning as well as ministries of finance at national and sub national level for the process from the onset, and ensure they are involved in the generation of evidence for making the investment case, and costing exercises, costing and subsequent implementation.
- Develop financing options/scenarios for funding the implementation of the national plan of action, the operationalisation of the minimum package of services and the required social service workforce.

6.2 Ensure sufficient allocation of resources for the full and effective implementation of the national costed plan of action, and regularly monitor its progressive implementation, and regularly monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the performance of the budget for the social service workforce and the implementation of the minimum package of services

- Develop an investment case, or business case for investment in the social service workforce, which also highlights the cost of inaction, workloads, and competency requirements.
- Develop relevant and required budgetary tools and budget lines, to allow for continued development and strengthening of the capacity of the workforce to provide quality disability, gender and age sensitive social services, in response to continually assessed needs at population level.

Priority Area 7: Developing Strategies to Enhance Positive Public Perception of Social Work

Declaration Pillar 10 - Public Perception

At the national and regional level, endeavour to develop strategies to enhance positive public perception of social work and social workers, including building the capacity and engaging various types of media, including the social media network to promote an understanding of the role and impact of social work in ASEAN.

Considerations

The general public, members of other professions, and decision-makers across the ASEAN region still often view social work only as a charitable endeavour, rather than a professional role or statutory responsibility. This results in social work not being viewed as a legitimate profession worth investing in, and in workers receiving low pay and recognition. Similar perceptions shared by policy makers undermine efforts to professionalise and strengthen social work.

Promoting positive public perceptions, and addressing negative perceptions of social work, is essential to ensure positive uptake and response to services provided and to reduce any stigma involved in receiving social services. Clarifying the mandate, roles and functions of social workers, as well as the wider social service workforce and promoting the professionalisation of social work through training and qualifications is also essential for increasing recruitment and retention of staff at all levels.

Public campaigns, including positive portrayal of the role of social workers in TV and radio series, and in social media, can help raise awareness of the importance of these roles, and of the career opportunities involved, and more widely to promote the positive image of social workers and others in the social service workforce. Professional associations can also play a key role in promoting positive perceptions of social work, and in continuing to encourage new recruits into the profession and wider workforce. These campaigns ideally should be based on a prior assessment of human resource needs and gaps in the workforce, particularly to enable them to address inequalities and imbalances within the workforce and under-representation of any social and ethnic groups and communities. Assessments should also be conducted to demonstrate the positive impact of the workforce on the lives of persons in vulnerable situations. Such strategies to enhance positive public perception of social work and social workers are more effective when they build on and are adapted to the national context and take into consideration regional and global experience of recognising and promoting the role of social work.

Actions at National Level

7.1 Develop and implement national public awareness strategy aimed at enhancing positive public perception of the social work profession and the wider roles in the social service workforce

- Define key messages tackling negative perceptions regarding social work and social service workers, based on the evidence available from prior assessments.
- Highlight the unique role of social workers in addressing social problems and protecting human rights.
- Amplify the voices of social workers and social service users to show the impact of the workforce.
- Promote high profile social workers and role models from diverse backgrounds and recognise social workers through awards and scholarships, giving access to training and qualifications.
- Build the capacity of different forms of local and national media to understand the role of social work and enhance the image of the social work profession.
- Develop a media engagement strategy and guidelines, especially on how to utilise clips, films and documentaries effectively. Media should encompass traditional media and social media.
- Promote social work and multidisciplinary research on the role of the social work and disseminate findings among allied professional groups.
- Align national public awareness strategy with regional and global messages in promoting the profession and wider workforce.
- AMS are encouraged to collaborate with national associations and NGO and INGO partners to implement public awareness campaigns.

Actions at Regional Level

7.2 Develop and implement a strategy to support region wide recognition of the value social work

- Develop a strategy to support region wide recognition of social work and social workers, including by capitalising on the work of the ASEAN Social Work Consortium (ASWC), ASEAN Social Work Journal and the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW) and ASEAN Social Work website to strengthen solidarity and cooperation among social workers throughout the region, and help support and guide national public awareness efforts.

- Continue and expand to implement regional campaign to promote positive perceptions of social work and social workers with partners with the full engagement of the AMS, using traditional and social media.
- Initiate the celebration of an ASEAN Day of Social Work.
- Run annual positive public perception campaigns linked with World Social Work Day (March) (or the ASEAN Day of Social Work). Annual themes will be selected each year highlighting key aspects of the contribution of social work or key advocacy priorities, as identified in the regional strategy to support region wide recognition of social workers and social work.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATION MECHANISMS

The ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD), with the support of the Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) and ASEAN Social Work Consortium (ASWC) will review, coordinate, monitor and report on the progress of the implementation for the Ha Noi Declaration and this Road Map in partnership with other sectoral bodies and partners.

Following the adoption of the Road Map a ASEAN Regional Conference will be convened with representatives of relevant Ministries of the AMS in order to be sensitised on the Declaration and the Road Map and exchange promising practices and lessons learned to accelerate the strengthening of social work and the social service workforce.

- **Role of Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD)**

  In view of the mandate of SOMSWD to foster regional cooperation in social development aimed at raising the standard of living of disadvantaged groups and the rural population, and seek the active involvement of all sectors of society through promoting quality social services and strengthening social work and social welfare in ASEAN, SOMSWD will be the lead body in the implementation of the Road Map ensuring closer and effective cooperation with ASWC members, and with other ASEAN Sectoral Bodies actively contributing to it in accordance with their respective mandates, as well as in making follow-up the national commitments, particularly those in the SOMSWD Work Plan and ASWC Work Plan that are of relevance to the Road Map. SOMSWD will also efficiently mobilise support and resources from its development and dialogue partners for technical expertise, funding, and knowledge exchange.

  Progress on the implementation of the Road Map shall be a recurrent agenda item during SOMSWD Meeting being held annually. The SOMSWD reports its work on the Road Map to AMMSWD with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat.

- **Role of ASEAN Social Work Consortium (ASWC)**

  The ASEAN Social Work Consortium (ASCW) serves as a platform that brings together social work practitioners, educators and schools of social work to promote capacity building, and policy and action research in the social work profession. The ASWC will play a crucial role in operationalising the Roadmap through its Workplans, starting with its 5-year ASWC Work Plan 2021-2025, particularly towards strengthening solidarity among social work practitioners, educators and schools of social work through its three priority areas of action: i) capacity-building; ii) knowledge development and management; and iii) strengthening regional and national social work and social welfare institutions.

  The ASWC reports the progress of its work to SOMSWD.

  The ASWC can help to follow up the national commitments in the ASWC work plan and similarly the national commitments in the Road Map that are within its function and mandate, and share the information on the progress during the ASWC Conference held annually.

  With this Roadmap, the ASWC's critical pathways to contribute to developing human resources in ASEAN through closer cooperation in social work education and life-long learning on social work and social welfare will be more strategically pursued.

- **Role of the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW)**

  The Training Centre located in the Royal Kingdom of Thailand is established to be the lead training centre on social work and social welfare in ASEAN to develop and provide training courses, curriculum on social work and social welfare for technical and professional skills. It is also well placed to develop regional guidelines and a framework for professional certification and development of qualifications in social work and social welfare in ASEAN.

  The Training Centre plays a pivotal role in operationalising the Road Map by building the capacity of social workers and paraprofessionals and to further enhance collaboration amongst relevant stakeholders in training of social work and social welfare among ASEAN Member States.

  ATCSW is governed by the State Coordinators of the ASEAN Social Work Consortium who assume the duties of the Board mutatis mutandis. The Board shall report the operations of ATCSW to ASWC through its annual Conference. Its report shall include and highlight its significant contributions to the implementation of the Road Map.

- **Role of other key Pillars and Sectoral Bodies**

  Active support of other ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Entities to the implementation of the Road Map shall be pursued in accordance with their respective mandates and priorities. Given the critical role of social work in education, health and justice sectors, as well as for the protection of the rights of women and children, key sectoral bodies include: SOM-ED, SOMHD, SOMTC, ACDM, ACWC, and ACW. The ASEAN Sectoral Bodies shall follow the monitoring framework established by SOMSWD and ASWC in reporting its contributions to the realisation of the priority action points in the Road Map as reflected in Annexes 1 and 2 based on regular reporting by AMS.

- **Partnerships with other entities to support implementation of the Road Map**

  Partnerships are critical for the implementation of the Road Map. SOMSWD and ASWC with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat will work closely with partners including the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), other UN partners, international associations of social workers, specialised agencies, professional groups, and civil society organisations for effective and efficient implementation of the Road Map.

  Collaboration and support will be provided through funding, technical assistance, policy and program advocacies, and through facilitating sharing of experiences and joint-learning across AMS, among others.

- **Reporting by ASEAN Member States**

  Regular reporting on Road Map implementation by AMS will be a recurrent agenda item of SOMSWD and ASWC including the provision of base line data. The ASEAN Secretariat shall assist and provide technical support to SOMSWD and ASWC in consolidating updates from relevant ASEAN bodies on the status of implementation of this Roadmap.

  Achievements and milestones resulting from this Road Map and outcomes and impact will be evaluated in 2025, with a particular focus on progress against priority action as set out in Annex A and the indicators set out in Annex B with a view to continue efforts towards strengthening social work in ASEAN in line with the realisation of UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and other ASEAN regional frameworks highlighted in the Complementarities Road Map (2020-2025).

  Key activities identified and prioritised for the second five years of implementation, 2026-2030 will form a new Annex A. If necessary, the indicators will be updated in Annex B to reflect additional priority actions.

A second evaluation will take place in 2030 to evaluate progress, achievements and impact of the 10-year period of the Road Map.

Evaluations will be undertaken with the AMS, including with support of partners.

VIII. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: PRIORITY ACTIONS AND TIMELINE PER PILLAR FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
Priority Area 1: Establishing and Strengthening the Legal and Policy Framework for Social Work				
1.1 National situation analyses and needs assessments for social work, the social service workforce and social services	Carry out comprehensive, disability, age and gender-sensitive assessment of the size, scope, structure, legal basis and capacity of the social service workforce/social work workforce and social services for groups in vulnerable situations (include rural/urban differences, and gaps in normative framework, support and services, and unmet needs).	2021-2023	AMS Ministry responsible for social welfare, other lead national ministries/agencies (social welfare, health, education, justice, women, children, elderly, migration, disaster management, local government, labour, community development), professional association.	Academic institutions, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs
1.2 Multi-sectoral national action plan for strengthening social work and social services	Develop a costed multi-sectoral national action plan for progressively strengthening social work and social services. Establish a minimum package of disability, gender and age-sensitive essential social services required to address the needs of the population, including specific at-risk groups.	2022-2024	AMS Ministry responsible for social welfare, Ministry responsible for finance and planning, other lead national ministries/agencies (social welfare, health, education, justice, women, children, elderly, labour, migration, disaster management, local government, community development), local authorities, national council for social work, professional association for social work.	

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
1.3 Social work legislation and **1.4 Secondary legislation**	Develop & adopt or amend legislation that defines the status, roles, functions and responsibilities and functions of social work and the wider social service workforce. Develop and adopt secondary legislation (regulations or SOPs) for social workers in all settings across sectors, for paraprofessionals and to govern supervision mechanisms.	2022-2025	AMS legislature, Ministry responsible for social welfare, other lead national ministries (social welfare, health, education, justice, women, children, elderly, labour, migration, disaster management, local government, community development), national council for social work.	Professional association, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs
1.5 Human resource information system	Develop and scale up an online/ offline human resource information system (HRIS) for social work and the social service workforce, to enable collection, updating and analysis of workforce data disaggregated by sex and geographic area.	2022-2025	AMS lead national ministries, local authorities, national council for social work, professional association.	Office for National Statistics, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs
1.6 Information management system (IMS) for case management	Develop and deploy a digitised information management system(s) (IMS) for use by social service workers for case management.	2021-2025	AMS lead national ministries, local authorities.	UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
1.7 Essential social services package for groups in vulnerable situations to support AMS (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Develop regional guidance on the essential social services, with a focus on the groups in vulnerable situations, including child victims of abuse, violence, exploitation and neglect and women survivors of violence, trafficking and exploitation, those impacted by disasters and pandemics, persons with disabilities, the elderly and children affected by migration and child protection.	2021-2023	ASWC, SOMSWD, SOMHD, ACW, ACWC, SOM-ED, SOMTC, ACDM	UN agencies, INGOs
1.8 Role of social workers and the social service workforce in priority sectors including health, education, ECD and justice (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Develop regional sectoral guidance on the role of social workers and the social service workforce in priority sectors: social welfare, health, education, ECD, justice, disaster risk management, labour, community development and mental health. Develop regional sectoral guidance on role of social work and social service workforce strengthening for social protection.	2021-2023	SOMHD, SOM-ED, SOMTC, SOMRDPE, SLOM, ACDM, supported by SOMSWD and ASWC SOMSWD and ASWC Viet Nam lead/co-lead	UN agencies, INGOs, Professional Associations of Social Work

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
1.9 Minimum ratio of social workers per unit of population (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Develop a regional guidance note on the minimum ratio of social workers per unit of population to support AMS planning of the social service workforce.	2022-2023	ASWC, SOMSWD	UN agencies, INGOs
Priority Area 2: Expanding and Strengthening Education and Regulation				
2.1 Social work academic programmes, including advanced academic programmes, meeting national, regional and global standards	Informed by the needs assessment of the workforce and the national action plan, adopt a strategy for strengthening social work academic programmes, to meet the workforce's learning needs, address capacity gaps and integrate field placements including ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities and those with insufficient financial means. Develop (or update) national standards for social work education (curriculum and qualification requirements) in alignment with regional standards.	2022-2025 2023-2024	AMS Ministry responsible for social welfare, with academic institutions, national council for social work, professional association, Ministry responsible for further education and vocational training.	ATCSW, ASWC, IASSW, IFSW, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
2.2 Qualified social work faculty and trainers	Integrate actions to recruit, strengthen and retain suitably qualified university faculty, practice teachers, and pre- & in-service trainers for social work and the social service workforce in line with national (and regional) education standards, and provide opportunities to teaching staff to strengthen/ maintain their field experience. Adopt unified professional standards for teaching staff (faculty staff and trainers).	2022-2025 2022-2024	AMS Ministry responsible for social welfare, with academic institutions, national council for social work, professional association, Ministry responsible for further education and vocational training.	UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs, IASSW and IFSW
2.3 Competency-based trainings for social workers, paraprofessionals and volunteers	Establish and standardise national competency-based pre-service and in-services training for social workers, paraprofessionals and volunteers.	2022-2025	AMS Ministry responsible for social welfare, with academic institutions, national council for social work, professional association, Ministry responsible for further education and vocational training.	UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
2.4 Regional qualification standards in social work education to ensure the high quality of training programmes (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Develop regional qualification standards for social work and social service workforce education. Develop a unified professional standard for teaching/faculty staff. Develop/finalise the ASEAN Core Curriculum for Social Work Education.	2022-2023 2022-2025 2021-2022	ASWC, ATCSW, SOMSWD, SOM-ED, SOMHD, SOMTC ASWC, ATCSW, SOMSWD, SOM-ED ASWC, ATCSW	National professional associations, national councils of social work, national academic institutions, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs
2.5 Education and training opportunities at regional and international level including through the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW) (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Undertake training needs assessment for social work. Develop and deliver general and specialised training programmes/ certified courses for social work utilising online platforms and face to face modalities. Standardise the curriculum developed in consultation with ASCW, partners, bodies and the governing board.	2021 2021-2025 2021-2025	ATCSW ATCSW and ASWC, SOMSWD, SOM-ED ATCSW and ASWC, SOMSWD, SOM-ED	National professional associations, national councils of social work, national academic institutions, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
	Develop regional learning exchange opportunities, including between countries that do and countries that do not have advanced academic courses and specialist courses.	2021-2025	ASWC and ATCSW	
	Develop and implement a regional programme to promote raised academic standards in social work, including research opportunities and exchanges, and online learning opportunities for social work faculty.	2021-2025	ASWC and ATCSW	
	Develop a concept note and plan for ATCSW to serve as a regional assessment centre in support of a framework for certification for workers completing competency-based training.	2022-2025	ASWC and ATCSW	
Priority Area 3: National Councils and Associations of Social Workers				
3.1 National professional association of social work	Support the establishment of a national professional association of social work, with funding provided or enabled, and its mandate defined in law including its role of developing the professional code of ethics.	2021-2024	AMS legislature, Ministry responsible for social welfare	ASWC, IFSW, academic institutions, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
	Enable the professional association to develop and disseminate a code of ethics, and develop and engage its membership. Engage professional associations in the work of the national leadership groups (NLG – see priority action 5).			
3.2 Council for social work/regulatory body	Establish a national regulatory body or council for social work/the social service workforce, with its mandate defined in law/formally recognised, and with adequate resourcing. Engage social work councils and regulatory bodies in the work of the NLG (see priority action 5).	2021-2024	AMS legislature, Ministry responsible for social welfare, Ministry of Education	ASWC, IFSW, IASSW, academic institutions, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs
Priority Area 4: Increasing Professional Recognition, Development and Support				
4.1 Competency frameworks for the social work profession and wider social service workforce	Develop a national competency framework for the social work profession and wider social service workforce, including community-level, paraprofessionals as well as professionals, in response to assessed needs of population and in line with new or amended legislation (and regional standards – see Priority Action 4.8).	2022-2024	Professional association, council for social work, lead national ministries (social welfare, health, education, justice), local authorities	ATCSW, ASWC, academic institutions, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
	Develop a framework for progressive development, assessment and recognition of competencies on the job at each level and role.			
4.2 National minimum standards for professional social work and **4.3 System/ mechanism for accreditation, certification, registration and licensing for social work**	Develop national minimum standards (NMS), and professional regulation mechanisms, aligned with competency framework, covering requirements for certification, accreditation, licensing and registration of professionals. Review standards and regulation mechanisms after first year of piloting the NMS.	2022-2025	AMS lead national ministries, professional association, council for social work	Academic institutions, UN agencies, CSOs, local authorities
4.4 Continued professional development	Develop and resource a system for continued professional development to the entire workforce, at all levels, aligned with NMS, facilitating promotion and specialisation, supported by supervision, performance management and professional regulation requirements.	2022-2025	Council for social work, professional association, academic institutions	ATCSW, ASWC, UN agencies, CSOs

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
4.5 Professional supervision and support	Develop/strengthen a national supervision framework, minimum standards and SOPs, for development and emergency settings, including roles and requirement for supervisors and supervisees, and training and monitoring to ensure continued high quality individual and group supervision of the social service workforce (social workers and para-social workers).	2021-2025	Council for social work, professional association, social services, AMS lead national ministries	ASWC, UN agencies, CSOs
4.6 Social worker well-being and **4.7 Human resource policies**	Set a minimum ratio of number of social workers to a unit of population, as well as set an optimal ratio to aim to achieve, and work towards establishing these ratios in practice (informed by regional guidance – see Priority 1.9). Undertake a survey of the social service workforce to assess their well-being needs.	2022-2025 2022	AMS lead national ministries	Council for social work, professional association, CSOs

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
	Develop a comprehensive package of support for well-being and a positive and safe work environment (including supervision, helplines, peer support, fair and transparent salary scales, human resource policies for preventing stress and burnout, and professional association support).	2022-2025		
4.8 Recognise and facilitate social work as a profession across ASEAN countries, including through promotion of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Develop a draft strategy and hold a consultation(s) on the steps and actions required for social work to be recognised under an MRA. Develop a plan and hold a consultation on the establishment of a framework and mechanism for mutual recognition of qualifications and licensing for social work. Develop a concept note/plan and hold a consultation on the establishment of a regional accreditation system for schools of social work to support mutual recognition of qualifications.	2022-2025	ATCSW, SOMSWD, ASWC, SLOM, academic institutions, SOM-ED, SOMHD, SOMTC, ASEAN Secretariat	Council for social work, professional association, UN agencies, INGOs, ASEAN University Network

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
	Develop and adopt a regional competency framework for social work and a framework to support assessment of competencies of social workers, paraprofessionals and volunteers.			
Priority Area 5: Enhancing National, Regional and International Collaboration				
5.1 Government-led National Leadership Group (NLG) for workforce strengthening	Establish (or identify an existing body to act as) a multi-sectoral government led coordination mechanism (NLG) with state and non-state membership, with a clear TOR.	2021	AMS Ministry responsible for social welfare, other lead national ministries (including social welfare, health, education, justice, women, children, elderly, labour, migration, disaster management, local government, community development)	Professional association, council for social work, academic institutions, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs
5.2 Promotion of the role of social work and the social service workforce amongst policy makers and across sectors, including by the NLG	Integrate in the TOR and mandate of the NLG the role to promote social work and the social service workforce, including across all sectors. Build capacity of NLG (particularly in developing policy and legislation) including through international and regional technical assistance and learning exchange.	2021-2025	AMS lead national ministries (social protection, health, education, justice), professional association, council for social work, media outlets, local authorities	ATCSW, ASWC, academic institutions, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
	Organise high level forums and multi-sectoral workshops and learning events to raise awareness of the role of social workers and the wider social service workforce across sectors amongst policy makers, sectors and professionals.			
5.3 Coordination between Government and non-government actors, including international associations and alliances on social work	Identify focal points within the key state entities responsible for supporting regular exchange with national and international NGOs, international associations and alliances.	2022-2024	AMS lead national ministries, academic institutions, professional association, council for social work	IFSW, IASSW, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs
5.4 Social work response in emergency settings	Integrate social work into disaster preparedness and humanitarian response plans. Designate social workers and social work (both Government and non-government) as essential workers and services during emergencies, pandemics and disasters and ensure continuation of social work services.	2021-2025	AMS lead national ministries, UN agencies, CSOs	AADMER, ACDM, Professional associations, academic institutions

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
	Map and identify gaps in the capacity of the social service workforce, including but not limited to professional social workers, to deploy and respond in humanitarian settings and sudden onset emergencies (see Priority Action 1.1). Build the capacity of the social service workforce to respond during emergencies.			
5.5 Regional coordination (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Convene an intersectoral regional conference on strengthening social work and the implementation of the Road Map. Develop events and create platforms for learning, exchange, collaboration and coordination across sectors, government and NGOs. Undertake an assessment of the reach and impact of the ASWJ. Revitalise and maintain the ASEAN Social Work website to have up to date courses, social work tools, resources, research and opportunities.	2022 2022-2025 2021-2022 2022-2025	AMMSWD, SOMSWD, ATCSW, ASWC, SOMED, SOMHD, SOMTC, ACWC, AWC, ASEAN Finance Ministers Meeting, ASWJ	UN agencies, CSOs academic institutions, professional association, council for social work, AMS lead national ministries, ASEAN dialogue partners

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
5.6 Collaboration and coordination with partners (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Convene a partners' forum on collaboration on strengthening social work, including social work training and implementing the Road Map with ASWC and ATCSW.	2021	ASWC and ATCSW	National professional associations, national councils of social work, national academic institutions, UN agencies, CSOs, INGOs
Priority Area 6: Increasing Resource Allocation to the Social Welfare System and for Social Work				
6.1 Workforce and service costing	Undertake a costing of the minimum package of essential social services and of the workforce required to deliver this minimum package of services (linked with Priority 1.2). Engage planning departments in ministries, in costing exercises, as well as the Ministries responsible for planning and finance from the outset, and in making the case for investment in the workforce.	2022-2024	AMS Ministry responsible for social welfare, Ministry(ies) responsible for planning, finance and budgeting and the civil service, other sectoral national ministries (including health, education, justice), local authorities, professional association	UN agencies, CSOs

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
6.2 Resource allocation	Develop required budgetary tools for social work and the social service workforce. Develop an investment case/ business case for investment in social work and the social service workforce.	2022-2024	AMS Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Social Protection	UN agencies, CSOs
Priority Area 7: Developing Strategies to Enhance Positive Public Perception of Social Work				
7.1 Public awareness strategy	Develop and implement a strategy to raise public awareness of the importance of social work and the wider SSW, based on a simple set of agreed key messages, and personal accounts of members of the workforce and their beneficiaries, targeting schools, universities, faith-based organisations, volunteer bodies and other NGOs, and involving all forms of media, including social media. Develop media (traditional and social media) engagement strategy, including sensitisation on the value of social workers.	2021-2025	AMS NLG, professional association, council for social work, lead national ministries (social welfare, health, education, justice, information and communication), media outlets, local authorities	ATCSW, ASWC, ASEAN Social Work Journal, academic institutions, UN agencies, CSOs

Priority Area	Priority Actions	Timeframe	Implementing Bodies	Potential Collaborating Partners
7.2 Regional strategy for region wide recognition of social work (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Develop a strategy to support region wide recognition of social work and socials workers. Build on the work of the ASEAN Social Work Consortium, Journal and Training Centre, and on the ASEAN Social Work website to strengthen solidarity and cooperation among social workers.	2022 2022-2025	ASEAN Secretariat, SOMSWD, ASWC, ATCSW, ASEAN Social Work Journal, media outlets	AMS lead ministries on social welfare, academic institutions, professional association, council for social work, UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs

ANNEX 2: MONITORING FRAMEWORK PER PILLAR

The proposed indicators in this monitoring framework are intended to provide benchmarks, against which to measure achievements of key results and impact. The indicators are not designed to measure delivery of outputs or overall progress in implementation. This must be done within national monitoring frameworks.

Data to verify indicators will be provided by AMS. The initial data provided will become the baseline for the Road Map's key results, and subsequent monitoring will be done against this baseline by each AMS.

Given that each ASEAN Member State has their own unique monitoring frameworks adopting varying data collection tools and strategies, not all indicators listed below may be applicable. Thus, these indicators will serve as a guidance material for the AMS to consider, where applicable and appropriate, including to fill gaps in data and information, in accordance with the context and stage of development of each Member State.

Key Result Area	Indicator	AMS Data - means of verification
Priority Area 1: Establishing and Strengthening the Legal and Policy Framework for Social Work		
1.1 National situation analyses and needs assessments for social work and the social service workforce	Number of AMS with a national comprehensive assessment of the size, scope, structure, legal basis and capacity of the social service workforce/social work workforce and social services for groups in vulnerable situations completed in the past four years. % of assessments which are: - gender, disability and age sensitive; - assess rural/urban differences (where relevant); and - Identify gaps in laws, services and unmet needs.	Assessment reports

Key Result Area	Indicator	AMS Data - means of verification
1.2 Multi-sectoral national action plan for strengthening social work and social services	Number of AMS with costed multi-sectoral action plans for strengthening social work and social services adopted Action plans, as a minimum, include: - Vision for the social welfare system. - Defined and costed minimum package of essential social welfare services. - Identification of social service workforce competencies and needs across relevant sectors. - Costing of the social service workforce. - Lead ministry for implementation. - Coordination and accountability mechanism. - M&E framework. Number of AMS that have developed a minimum package of disability, gender and age-sensitive essential services required to address the needs of the population, including specific at-risk groups.	Adopted action plans
1.3 Social work legislation and **1.4 Secondary legislation**	Number of AMS with laws on social work, which as a minimum include: - Definition of social work, and roles, functions and responsibilities. - Roles, functions and responsibilities of paraprofessionals. Number of AMS which have supervision mechanism for professionals, paraprofessionals and volunteers that are defined in secondary legislation or Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and operational.	Government gazettes Ministry decrees

Key Result Area	Indicator	AMS Data - means of verification
1.5 Human resource information system	Number of AMS with a digitalised system to keep up-to-date data on the social service workforce, disaggregated by sex, age, disability status and geographic area, is in place.	Human resource information management system Relevant reports
1.6 Information management system (IMS) for case management	Number of AMS with a live and operational digitised information management system(s) for case management by social workers (general and specialised).	Record of deployment and/or operation of Information management systems for case management Relevant reports
1.7 Develop a regional guidance on essential services for vulnerable groups to support AMS (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Regional guidance on essential social services for groups in vulnerable situations adopted.	Guidance endorsed by SOMSWD
1.8 Develop sectoral guidance on the role of social workers and the social service workforce in priority sectors (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Regional sectoral guidance on the role of social workers and the social service workforce developed for: a) social welfare; b) education sector; c) health sector; d) ECD sector; e) justice sector; f) disaster risk management; g) mental health sector; h) labour; and i) community development.	Guidance endorsed by SOMHD, SOM-ED, SOMTC, ACDM, SOMSWD, as relevant
1.9 Develop a regional guidance note on minimum ratio of social workers per unit of population (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Regional guidance note on minimum ratio of social workers per unit of population developed.	Guidance endorsed by SOMSWD

Key Result Area	Indicator	AMS Data - means of verification
Priority Area 2: Expanding and Strengthening Education and Regulation		
2.1 Social work academic programmes, including advanced academic programmes, meeting national, regional and global standards	Number of AMS with a) degree courses in social work; b) advanced degree courses in social work. Number of academic programs established and staffed with qualified personnel and funded (per AMS). Number of social work students/program graduates (per AMS per year). Number of field placement organisations and practice teachers trained and included in academic training (per AMS). Number of AMS with national standards for social work education in place.	Academic program accreditation records University/Ministry of Education records Academic journals
2.2 Qualified social work faculty and trainers	Number of AMS with professional standards for teaching staff agreed and published in a national set of standards.	Government decrees Reports of the council and/or other responsible agencies
2.3 Competency-based trainings for paraprofessionals and volunteers	Number of standardised competency-based training courses at the country level for a) paraprofessionals; b) volunteers; c) social workers by AMS.	National record of accredited training programs

Key Result Area	Indicator	AMS Data - means of verification
2.4 Regional qualification standards in social work education to ensure the high-quality of training programs (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Regional qualification standards for social work and SSW education adopted. Regional professional standard for teaching/faculty staff adopted. ASEAN Core Curriculum for Social Work Education adopted.	Published standards (SOMSWD with ATCSW, ASWC)
2.5 Availability of education and training opportunities at regional and international level including through the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW) (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Regional training needs assessment for social work published. Number of ATCSW regional (general and specialist) training/certified courses a) available online and face to face; b) standardised. Number of participants in regional training/certified courses. Concept note and plan for ATCSW to serve as a regional assessment centre in support of a framework for certification for workers completing competency-based training developed.	ATCSW publications ATCSW website listing education and training opportunities Training records of attendance at courses (ATCSW, ASWC) Concept note/plan available
Priority Area 3: National Councils and Associations of Social Workers		
3.1 National professional association of social work	Number of AMS with a National Association of Social Workers established and operational. - With law/government policy defining the role and mandate of the association adopted. Number of AMS with a professional code of ethics for social workers developed by the professional association, and endorsed by government and other stakeholders.	Government gazette Association's constitution, reports and other materials Association webpage

Key Result Area	Indicator	AMS Data - means of verification
3.2 Council for social work/ regulatory body	Number of AMS with a Government mandated regulatory body/council for social work established and operational. - With law/government policy defining the role and mandate of the regulatory body/council adopted. Number of AMS for which annual government funding is provided to the regulatory body/council.	Government gazette Council's constitution, reports and other materials
Priority Area 4: Increasing Professional Recognition, Development and Support		
4.1 Competency frameworks for the social work profession and wider social service workforce	Number of AMS with national competency frameworks for the social work profession and wider social service workforce developed and adopted.	Regional documents National government decrees
4.2 National minimum standards for professional social work and **4.3 System/mechanism for accreditation, certification, registration and licensing for social work**	Number of AMS with professional regulation mechanism governing a) certification; b) licensing; c) registration; d) accreditation; and e) continuing education, in place. Number of AMS that have adopted minimum professional standards for social workers and other social service workers. Number of certified/registered/licensed social work professionals per AMS.	Government decrees Reports of the council and/or other responsible agencies
4.4 Continued professional development	Number of social workers engaged in continuing education per AMS.	Reports of the council and/or other entities responsible for continuing education activities

Key Result Area	Indicator	AMS Data - means of verification
4.5 Professional supervision and support	Number of AMS with a national framework and SOPs for supervision of social workers and para-social workers, outlining resourcing, support and monitoring, adopted and in operation.	Reports of the council, professional association and other responsible bodies for continuing education activities
	Percent of social workers who feel they are receiving adequate supervision per AMS.	Survey of social workers
4.6 Social worker well being and **4.7 Human resource policies**	Number of AMS that has set a minimum ratio of number of social workers to a unit of population.	Government decree
	Number of AMS with human resource policies and mechanisms for supporting staff well being adopted.	
	Number of AMS where salary and equity parity has been achieved amongst social workers and is comparative to workers in similar professions.	
4.8 Mutual Recognition Agreement (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Draft strategy developed and consultation held on the steps and actions required for social work to be recognised under an MRA.	Draft strategy for MRA endorsed by SOMSWD
	Plan to establish a framework and mechanism for mutual recognition of qualifications and licensing for social work adopted.	Availability of the plan
	Concept note developed and regional consultation held on the establishment of a regional accreditation system for schools of social work to support mutual recognition of qualifications.	Consultation summary and availability of the concept note
	Regional competency framework developed and adopted.	Framework endorsed by SOMSWD

Key Result Area	Indicator	AMS Data - means of verification
Priority Area 5: Enhancing National, Regional and International Collaboration		
5.1 Government-led National Leadership Group (NLG) for workforce strengthening and **5.2 Promotion and development of the role of social work and the social service workforce amongst policy makers and across sectors, including by the NLG**	Number of AMS with active coordination mechanism (NLG) for multisectoral coordination of social service workforce strengthening established (that include key sectors and members from the key state and non-state organisations, academic institutions, professional associations and/or social work councils, etc.).	NLG Terms of Reference, reports, meeting notes and events reports
5.3 Strengthen coordination between Government and non-government actors, including international associations and alliances on social work	Focal points within the key state entities are appointed and support regular exchange with national and international actors.	Ministerial decrees, reports
5.4 Strengthen the social work response in emergency settings	Number of AMS that have explicitly integrated social work in national and subnational disaster preparedness and humanitarian response plans. Number of AMS that have designated social workers and social work (both Government and non-government) as essential workers and services during emergencies and disasters. Number of AMS whose national assessment on social work includes a needs assessment for emergency response.	Government adopted plans, decrees and assessments

Key Result Area	Indicator	AMS Data - means of verification
5.5 Strengthen regional coordination (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Regional intersectoral Conference on strengthening social work and on the implementation of the Road Map held. Assessment of the reach and impact of the ASWJ undertaken. ASEAN Social Work website kept up to date. Number of regional events for exchange, learning, collaboration, and coordination run by and involving ASWC, ATCSW and ASWJ.	Meeting and conference records Publications
5.6 Collaboration and coordination with partners (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Partners' forum on collaboration on strengthening social work, including social work training and implementing the Road Map with ASWC and ATC held.	Meeting records
Priority Area 6: Increasing Resource Allocation to the Social Welfare System and for Social Work		
6.1 Workforce and service costing	Number of AMS which have undertaken a costing listing essential services, including services provided by social workers and other social service workforce listing and quantifying the minimum inputs required to deliver those services, and the unit costs for those inputs (including salaries and other HR costs, office costs, transport, management, supervision and ongoing training).	National costed plans and financing strategies at national/subnational level
6.2 Resource allocation	Number of AMS which have put in place required budgetary tools for social work and the social service workforce. Number of AMS which have developed a case for investment in social work and the social service workforce.	National/sectoral budget - % of national budget or % of GDP for social work and the social service workforce Costing/investment case document

Key Result Area	Indicator	AMS Data - means of verification
Priority Area 7: Developing Strategies to Enhance Positive Public Perception of Social Work		
7.1 Public awareness strategy	Number of AMS with a strategy on public awareness on social work in place to promote positive public perceptions of social work and social workers. Number of AMS with a media engagement strategy (traditional and social media) and guidelines in place to promote positive public perceptions of social work and social workers. Number of AMS running positive public perception campaigns/events promoting social work and social workers (per year).	Events, programs, articles, etc. Government strategy
7.2 Regional strategy for region wide recognition of social work (Action at REGIONAL LEVEL)	Regional ASEAN strategy to support recognition of social work and social workers developed and implemented. ASEAN Day of Social Work celebrated. Annual regional public perception campaigns run linked with World Social Work Day or ASEAN Day of Social Work (with annual themes).	Campaign materials Event records

ANNEX 3: PLANNED NATIONAL ACTIONS AND TIMELINE PER PILLAR FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

The below Annex is provided as a planning tool for AMS. AMS complete and submit this planning matrix with key actions and the timeline for implementation on a voluntary basis.

Priority Area	Planned Actions at National Level (per AMS)			Timeframe (proposed per AMS)
	Viet Nam	Country	Country	
Priority Area 1: Establishing and Strengthening the Legal and Policy Framework for Social Work				
1.1 National situation analyses and needs assessments for social work, the social service workforce and social services	Assessment of the need for social work services of social targeted groups. Assessment of the need for human resources to provide social work services in 4 areas including social welfare, health, education and justice.			2021-2023
1.2 Multi-sectoral national action plan for strengthening social work and social services	Study and develop the Law/Decree on Social Work Develop, amend under-law documents of related ministries (Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Justice, Public Security, Courts). Development of a national minimum package of Social Work Services for disadvantaged groups. Work towards the ratio of 1/10,000 professional and semi-professional social workers per unit of population at national level (Priority Action 1.9).			

Priority Area	Planned Actions at National Level (per AMS)			Timeframe (proposed per AMS)
	Viet Nam	Country	Country	
1.3 Social work legislation and **1.4 Secondary legislation**	Implementation of the Master Plan on Social Work Development 2021-2030. Integration of the regional guidance on the role of social workers in different sectors into national legislation and policies (Priority Action 1.8).			2022-2025
1.5 Human resource information system	Development of information system on social workforce management.			2022-2025
1.6 Information management system (IMS) for case management	Promoting digitisation of case management.			2022-2026
Priority Area 2: Expanding and Strengthening Education and Regulation				
2.1 Social work academic programmes, including advanced academic programmes, meeting national, regional and global standards	Consolidation of the social work training program from bachelor and higher levels. Development of the network of field placements that meet minimum standards.			2022-2026 2023-2024
2.2 Qualified social work faculty and trainers	Support/cooperate in training and education to improve the capacity of lecturers to meet regional and international standards. Enhancement of the capacity on social work research for teaching staff (faculty staff, lecturers/ trainers).			2022-2025 2022-2024

Priority Area	Planned Actions at National Level (per AMS)			Timeframe (proposed per AMS)
	Viet Nam	Country	Country	
2.3 Competency-based trainings for social workers, paraprofessionals and volunteers	Development of capacity building training courses on social work for professional and semi-professional social workers based on existing competencies and national standards. Viet Nam's goal: Provide training for 30,000 professional social workers in the next 5 years.			2022-2030
Priority Area 3: National Councils and Associations of Social Workers				
3.1 National professional association of social work	Establishment of the National Association of Social Work.			2021-2025
3.2 Council for social work/ regulatory body	Establishment of National Council for Social Work. Sharing of good practices among AMS on the process of establishment of National Council for Social Work.			2022-2025
Priority Area 4: Increasing Professional Recognition, Development and Support				
4.1 Competency frameworks for the social work profession and wider social service workforce	Development of standards of social work profession in 4 areas including social affairs, health, education and justice.			2022-2026

Priority Area	Planned Actions at National Level (per AMS)			Timeframe (proposed per AMS)
	Viet Nam	Country	Country	
4.2 National minimum standards for professional social work and **4.3 System/mechanism for accreditation, certification, registration and licensing for social work**	Development of minimum national standards for social work profession. Review of standards and regulation mechanisms after first year of piloting the NMS.			2022-2025
4.4 Continued professional development	Organisation of national and regional workshops/ training courses on promotion of social work.			2022-2026
4.5 Professional supervision and support	Development and enhancement of capacity of supervisors and trainers.			2022-2026
4.6 Social worker well-being and **4.7 Human resource policies**	Development of appropriate allowance policies for social workers including professional and paraprofessional and volunteers.			2022-2025
4.8 Recognise and facilitate social work as a profession across ASEAN countries, including through promotion of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement (ASEAN Action)	Strengthen legal documents.			2021-2025

Priority Area	Planned Actions at National Level (per AMS)			Timeframe (proposed per AMS)
	Viet Nam	Country	Country	
Priority Area 5: Enhancing National, Regional and International Collaboration				
5.1 Government-led National Leadership Group (NLG) for workforce strengthening				2022-2023
5.2 Promotion and development of the role of social work and the social service workforce amongst policy makers and across sectors, including by the NLG				2021-2025
5.3 Coordination between Government and non-government actors, including international associations and alliances on social work				2022-2024
5.4 Social work response in emergency settings	Development of set of criteria on the assessment of quality management of cases in need of emergency protection for children/women victims of violence/ abuse/exploitation.			2021-2025
Priority Area 6: Increasing Resource Allocation to the Social Welfare System and for Social Work				
6.1 Workforce and service costing	Continue to finalise the economic and technical norms for services of centres paid by the State and by users/customers.			2022-2024

Priority Area	Planned Actions at National Level (per AMS)			Timeframe (proposed per AMS)
	Viet Nam	Country	Country	
6.2 Resource allocation	Allocation of resources for investment, upgrading and new construction of social assistance facilities. Viet Nam has the national targeted Program on Social Protection and Sustainable Poverty Reduction. Currently, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs is consolidating the Master Plan on Investment on Social Assistance Facilities.			2022-2026
Priority Area 7: Develop Strategies to Enhance Positive Public Perception of Social Work				
7.1 Public awareness strategy	Promotion of communication programs, raise awareness of social work for leaders, State managers, officials and all citisens.			2021-2025

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